Combat Outline – Lonely Sorceress

Basics

First person shooter

Aiming and confirming

Managing different spells

Eliminating enemies before they get too close

Desired Feeling

Combat

Fast-paced

Tense

Tactical

Player

Powerful

Vulnerable

Versatile

Player

Available actions

Moving

Jumping

Aiming

Firing

Selecting spells

Aiming

Mouse movement

Always centered, camera is rotated

Aim assist?

Crosshair indicating where you shoot

Decal on ground for AoE spells

Ability System

4 spells

Secondary casting mode found later

May be casted while moving

Cycle back and forth at any time

Each has own function

Based on a charges system

Charges

Each spell has a unique amount of maximum charges

Once current charges reach 0, can’t be used anymore

Using another spell replenishes 1 charge of any other spell

Forces players to switch back and forth

Avoid mono-skill using

Danger of switching between two spells only

Fixed by very different ability functions

1 hit means death for the player (i.e. enemies have to be killed before they get too close)

Enemies

Amount

No bosses

High amount of enemies

Lets players feel powerful when using AoE spells

Combination of various types

Amount as key variable to create difficult

Types

Basic Zombie approaching player

Gets faster with every hit (-> burst)

Splits up into two enemies when killed

Teleports to player location after some casting time

Basics

Variations  
 Resistances

No explicit resistances against any ability

Implicit weaknesses / resistances by the way they behave (more subtle)

Damage

Each spell potentially deals its own amount of damage

Feedback

Rewards

Function of Combat

Why fight?

References / similar games

UI

Enemy health bars

With 1 hit deaths, it’s important to know exactly if you can kill the approaching enemy with one more hit or not

Movement in combat

Same as out of combat

Movement depends on where you’re aiming

Can move backwards while aiming forwards

Movement does not interrupt casting / selecting new ability

Moving backwards is significantly slower than forwards because you can cast while doing that (players have to choose when they keep casting while retreating and when it’s best to turn around and run away before facing enemies again)

How is feeling achieved in mechanics

Study of combat systems:

Feedback

Knock back

Flash white / red when hit

Alter crosshair when over an enemy

Custom crosshairs for abilities that match their shape somewhat

High damage numbers

Slow travelling times of projectiles make player anticipate strong impact

Think about how damage differences are communicated

Differentiate hit reaction to death reaction with enemies

Play around with enemy hitboxes to alter actual challenge without altering perceived challenge

Aim assist

Acceleration

Friction

Snapping

Bullet magnetism

Exaggerate on the hit animations of enemies to sell the impact (does it still communicate when shown in a YT video)

Attacks have to be dominant in some situations but can’t be dominant in all situations

Make underlying theoretical differences between weapons tangible to the player

With inaccuracy, part of the crosshair can move to where the shot went for feedback and motion on the UI

Crosshair feedback when no charges / no ammo is left

Short crosshair scale up animation after each shot for feedback and game feel

Arrows on the UI hinting at the positions of off-screen enemies

Weapon trembling during rapid fire shots

No actual head bobbing but strong motion of the arms suggesting fast movement

Blood overlays on the screen when wounded (may feel like extra punishment in a situation where you really don’t need it)

Muzzle flash effects

Show subtracted parts on health bars

Crosshair

Color change when hovering over an enemy (usually to red)

Scale up / parts moving outwards animation on hit

Additional visual element when hit led to death

Lowered opacity plus text when reloading is required

Highlight tip of health bar to make it clear in an instant how much percent is left

Parts of the enemy falling apart is very satisfying to watch and good feedback

Each spell hat its own crosshair

Camera shakes on high impact spells

Weapons are usually displayed in the lower left or lower right corner (right makes most sense when you’re mainly casting with the right hand imo)

Combat sequences rarely last longer than 2-3 minutes