Level Pacing

Techniques to encourage the player to move forward

* Introduce a threat from behind
* Present an objective ahead
* Limiting the navigation space, architectural pressure – long corridors, junctions, tight quarters
* Drawing the eye – items of interest (could be bright colours)
* Taking a desired object away from the player will lead to them chasing it down

Impeding the progress of the player

* Obstacles
* Introducing threat ahead
* Increasing tension
* Providing multiple routes for the player to take/ branching paths

Threat

* Combat – frantic, fast-paced
* Proximity of threat – the closer the enemy is, the more threatened the player feels

Tension

* Occurs from the belief in an unknown danger (can be achieved through use of sound and music)
* Proximity of threat

Constraints

When designing levels, keep in mind where the certain levels fit into the level progression and adjust the challenge accordingly. Areas you design need to consider things like the player’s movement speed, the size of the player, the size and type of the enemies, and so on.

Use visual storytelling

Teach players about new enemies, and then combine the different types of enemies together over the course of the level to increase the complexity.

Path Types

Linear  
Forked  
Spiderwebs

Layout

Can be used as a natural tutorial; we ought to create scenarios in which the player must use a specific, core technique to advance. Show currently-inaccessible areas, which draws on the desire to explore

Level Flow

The Rhythm at which a player moves through and experiences a level. This is very much tied up with Layout and Pacing. Flow will underscore and enforce overall pace of the game

When introducing new mechanics, do it in isolation – remove all challenges and distractions.

Iteration is key

Constantly re-evaluate the layout of levels. Test, observe, change, repeat.

Have clear and consistent affordances (a rule that is created through your games level design)