

RPG Turn Based Combat

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Polemic

Two opinions.

1 - Turn Based Combat is enjoyable and overall good. It is great to have time, and requires deep knowledge and thought for each fight.

2 - Turn Based Combat is outdated and obsolete. It is boring and should be avoided.



Systems of Turn Based Combat

We will see five different systems. But only one in depth: the Classic.

- Classic where positioning matters
- Classic where positioning does not matter
- Simple Grid System
- Complex Grid System
- **Free** (This is probably not considered, but I believe we should take it into account)

Classic: Positioning matters



Chrono Trigger (1995)

Classic: Positioning does not matter



Sinjid: Shadow of the warrior
(2012)

Grid System: Simple



Pit People (2016)

Grid System: Complex



Xcom 2 (2016)

“Free”

you miss the snake misses

```

+-----+
| .....|
| .....B...S@. +
| .....*....|
| .....|
+-----+

```

Level: 2 Gold: 25 Hp: 16(17) Str: 16(16) Arm: 4 Exp: 2/ 10

Rogue (1980)

What makes a TBC BAD?

- Boring
- Grinding
- There is always a best choice
- Long animations
- Broken attacks, strategies...

What makes a TBC GOOD?

- Balanced
- Meaningful choices
- Rewarding
- Easy to learn, hard to master
- For all publics
- Control of Time
- Innovation



Therion

HP 803 / 803
SP 54 / 54

H'aanit

HP 803 / 803
SP 69 / 69

Ophilia

HP 722 / 722
SP 169 / 169

Primrose

HP 475 / 475
SP 60 / 60



- Boost **R**
- Attack
- Summon
- Dancer Skills
- Item
- Defend

Go on the defensive to reduce damage taken, and act earlier next turn.



Therion

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H'aanit

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HP 475 / 475

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1 VULNERABLE

2 VULNERABLE

Boost R

Attack

Summon

Dancer Skills

Item

Defend

Go on the defensive to reduce damage taken, and act earlier next turn.



Turn order bar showing 8 characters. The first character is highlighted with a white box. Below the bar, the text "NEXT TURN" is visible.

Therion
HP 803 / 803
SP 54 / 54

H'aanit
HP 803 / 803
SP 69 / 69

Ophilia
HP 722 / 722
SP 169 / 169

Primrose
HP 475 / 475
SP 60 / 60

Red box containing two enemy units:

- Unit 1: Labeled "1 VULNERABLE" with a shield icon and status icons (question mark, lightning, fire, ice, wind, poison).
- Unit 2: Labeled "2 VULNERABLE" with a shield icon and status icons (question mark, lightning, fire, ice, wind, poison).

Green box containing a character unit and a purple box containing a menu:

Character unit: Primrose

Menu:

- Boost **R**
- Attack
- Summon
- Dancer Skills
- Item
- Defend
- 60 on the defensive to reduce damage taken, and act earlier next turn.

Elements: What we see and what we don't

Visible

- Three enemies
- Four playable characters
- Turn bar
- Current stats of each character (Impulse points, HP, SP)
- Enemies weakness and Rupture counter
- Options Panel (Boost, Attack, Summon, Skills, Item, Defend and Run)

Invisible

- Enemies health
- Experience
- Hidden enemies weakness
- Entities stats (damage, speed, dodge...)
- Escape chance
- ...

Loops: Example Pokemon

Outer Loop

Choose an enemy pokemon from a pool. Detect which pokemon do you have in the first position. Compare speeds.

Inner Loop

Player's turn: Chose an action (Attack, Item, Swap or Run)

Enemy turn: Depending on its intelligence, choose an action.

End of Inner Loop

If player won, give rewards. If lost, send to medical center, etc...

End of Outer Loop

Designing a TBC in 7 steps

- 1 - Understand the role that it has in your game
- 2 - Mechanics
- 3 - Sketch the loops
- 4 - Develop the entities
- 5 - Create the options for those entities
- 6 - AI intelligence
- 7 - Design the UI and art style



Case Studies: Pokemon



Pokemon Emerald (2004)

Case Studies: Darkest Dungeon



Darkest Dungeon (2016)

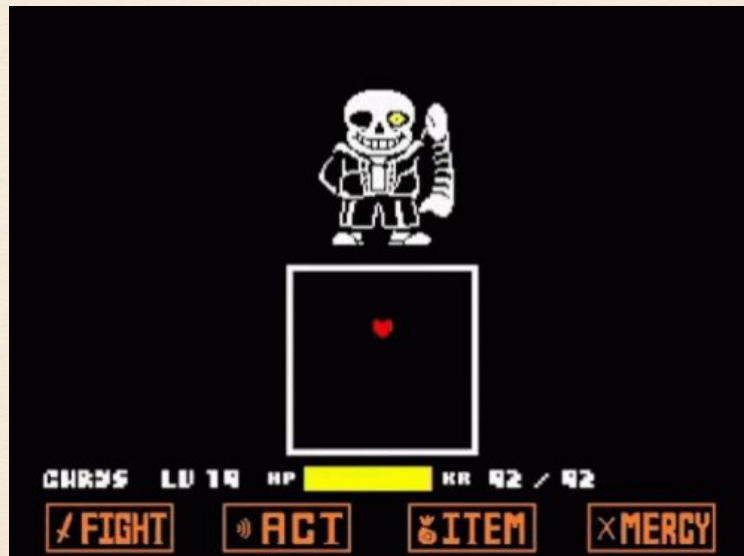
Case Studies: Undertale



Undertale (2015)

Tips

- Please! Think at least of **one original mechanic**.
- There should not always be a best option.
- **Meaningful choices.**
- Balance



Webgraphy

Videos:

[Abstraction and Turn Based Combat](#)

[Turn based RPGs are boring](#)

[Turn Based combat doesn't suck](#)

[More engaging turn based combat in RPGs](#)

[Top 10 innovative turn based battle systems](#)

Images:

All google images

Forums:

[What makes a good turn based combat system?](#)

[What are some good ways to make a turn based combat more compelling?](#)

Articles:

[Turn based combat is the best kind of combat](#)

[Turn based Strategy](#) (Wikipedia)

[Redesigning turn based RPGs](#)

[12 ways to improve turn based RPG combat system](#)