Based on: Bonus Level 3, [LevelUP: The Guide to Great Video Game Design](https://eu.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/44WHELF_CMU/citation/6612313800002425?auth=SAML) by Scott Rogers and other examples.

**Note:** Sections highlighted in Red are options for this assignment!

Key:

Ammar Sheraz-st20247757

# Game Design Document (GDD) (Template)

## **COVER**

(Insert evocative cover image here)

## **YOUR GAME’S TITLE**

Document version number (keep this current!)

Written by (your team name here)

Point of contact (producer or lead designer with phone number)

Date of publishing

Version number

Footer should always have:

Copyright © Team name Date Page Number Current Date

**GDD Outline**

**Table of contents**—Remember to keep this current.

**Revision history**—Update this information with publishing dates and track which author updated the material.

**Game goals—**Why should the audience/readers care about your game? Aim for five “back of the box” goals.

* **Game’s “high concept”**—Provide a brief description of your game. Make sure to mention the game’s genre.
* **Who, What, How?**
  + **Who**—Tell who this game is for. What ages? What ESRB rating?
  + **What**—Provide a game summary. What is this game about? Include a concise description of the gameplay.
  + **How**—Explain how this game will be awesome. Mention “back of the box” items like new/novel mechanics or gameplay features.
* Explain what platform this game is for. Will it feature multiplayer capability? Does it have any technical requirements?
* Provide short descriptions of gameplay types (stealth, battle arena, driving, flying, and so on) in the game.

**Story overview**—Remember to keep this description short and frame it in the context of the gameplay. Include the setup (how does the player start the game?). List all locations and how they relate to the narrative (how does the player get from one location to the next?). Don’t forget the finale (What is the ending? What is the player expected to be/have done by the end of the game?).

* How are you communicating the story? Movies? Cutscenes? In-game?

**Licensor points and concerns**—List all goals of the licensor and how they will be addressed.

**Publisher concerns**—List all potential legal, social or ethical issues not covered in other sections and how these can be mitigated.

* Is there any social stereotyping, bias, or prejudice?
* Is there consideration of representation?
* Does the theme of the game generate any ethical questions?
* Are there any legal issues or concerns which need to be mitigated?

**Game controls**—Provide an overview of the controls. List specific moves the player will be doing, but don’t go into detail on the actual moves … yet.

* Show an image of a controller, touchscreen, or keyboard with corresponding control mapping.

**Technological requirements**—Keep this information brief because many of these features will be included in the game’s technical design document (TDD).

* Provide a rational for the tools, used and any scripting languages employed, are there alternatives?
* What are the key technical features of the game, e.g. pathfinding, VR/AR, NPC AI etc. and what alternatives exist to implement them?
* What additional research / prototypes are required to identify the optimal technology in each case?

**Front end of the game—**Indicate what credit screens will be shown when the game is first turned on, including the following:

* Publisher
* Studio logo
* Licensors
* Third-party software manufacturers
* Legal screen

**Attract mode description (if applicable)**—Give a description of what in-game material will be shown if the game is left idle on the start screen.

**Title/start screen**—What is the first impression of the actual game? Include the following:

* An image of the title/start screen and any associated animation and graphics.
* A list of what selection options are available to the player.
* Save/load file—Describe how a game file is saved and loaded and naming conventions for the player.
* Player options—Include image, sound and music, and player interface details. Include details on connecting links to options:
  + Video, audio, music, and subtitle settings; contrast tool; and alternate control settings (airplane controls, feedback on/off, and so on)

**Game flowchart**—Show how all the screens from “title/start screen” to “game over” connect with each other.

**Loading screen**—Explain what the player sees when the game is loading. What images or information is presented?

Come back to this

**Game camera(s)—Call out any specific camera types.**

* What kind of camera is used? (First person, third person, forced scroll, locked camera, and so on.)

For the cam,

* What is the logic system for the camera? Include the following:
  + Game-specific situations requiring unique cameras
  + Camera troubleshooting guide with examples of what the camera will do when encountering problems

**HUD system**—Describe and/or illustrate how information will be presented on-screen to the player. Include images of all associated imagery such as health/status, power/fuel, money, timers, maps, plings, speedometer, lives/continues, targeting, and special view like “predator vision” or bullet-time.

**Player character(s)**—Provide information about the player character (if applicable) including images, names, and relationships to other characters in the game.

**Player metrics**—List and detail the player character and provide metrics pertaining to movement, combat, context-sensitive moves (such as QTEs), health, player death, and idles.

**Player skills**—List the player’s skills and provide a list or “tech tree” of the player’s upgrades.

**Player inventory tools (equipment, spells, buffs, and so on)**—List all tools and inventory items—things the player will use and how to use them. Describe or illustrate the Inventory screen and how the player will access items.

**Combat**—Describe and/or illustrate all combat moves and reactions including combo moves; different weapon types (melee and ranged); weapon tech tree; ranges; how the player equips, reloads, and changes weapons; lock-ons; and targeting systems.

**Power-ups/state modifiers**—List power-ups and state modifiers. Show images and list what their effect and duration are.

**Health (if applicable)**—Describe how health is tracked on HUD and how players can lose and replenish health. Describe how players can tell when health is low.

* **Alternate states**—Describe any alternate states (stunned, poisoned, turned into a baby, etc.) the player can get into and how it might affect controls.
* **Lives (if applicable)**—Explain how lives are earned or lost and what happens when the player runs out.
* **Death (if applicable)**—Describe what happens when death occurs. List situations requiring unique animations (fire, drowning, and so on). What happens when the game is over? What does the game-over screen look like? Is there a penalty for dying?
* **Checkpoint system**—Describe the in-game checkpoint system. How does the autosave system work?

**Scoring (if applicable)**—Assign point values to actions and explain what happens when players reach them. How do players earn bonuses in the game (like chaining or combos)?

* **Leaderboard setup**—What does it look like? What stats are being tracked?
* **Achievements**—What achievements are available and how are they earned? List them and provide images for badges if applicable.

**Rewards and economy**—Describe the game’s monetary system including how money is earned, spent, and saved (if applicable). List purchasable items and cost. Describe how the shopping interface works.

**Collectibles/object sets**—Provide a list of all items in the game, where they can be found, and what they do. Provide images.

**Vehicles**—What vehicles are used? Provide visuals. How does a vehicle interact with the world, enemies, objects, and so on? How does it control? Does it require a different camera system? How does the player enter or exit the vehicle? What abilities does the vehicle have?

**Game progression outline**—Provide an overview of all game levels. Insert a beat chart here. Show how gameplay and story intertwines. Indicate introduction of major elements such as enemies, bosses, rewards, items, puzzles, or twists to the story.

**World overview/level select/navigation screen**—Provide images and a control scheme showing how the player will navigate. List locations and where they lead to. Provide sound and music requirements.

**Universal game mechanics**—List mechanics that will be found throughout the game. Always include images of each mechanic. List each platform, portal, breakable, hazard, interactable object, and puzzle element and how the player interacts with them.

**Game levels**—List each of the levels mentioned in the world overview including name, short description, major gameplay, enemies, and items found in the level. Describe how the level relates to the story if applicable. Include a list of time of day, colour guide, and music needs.

**General enemy rules**—List behaviour types (patroller, flyer, and so on) and how the behaviour type AI operates. Describe spawn and defeat parameters. List reward rules.

**Level-specific enemies**—Provide an image and description of the enemy and where it appears in the game. List all movement and attack patterns and ways the player can defeat the enemy. Describe any combination attacks or encounters between different types of enemies. Describe what happens when the enemy is defeated and what the player gets for doing so.

**Bosses**—Provide an image and description of each boss and its environment. Describe the encounter and what it will be like to play it. List all movement, attack patterns, and ways the player can defeat the boss. Describe what happens when the boss is defeated and what the player gets for doing so.

**NPCs**—List characters in the game. Provide descriptions, images, and where they appear. List what function they serve in the overall context of the game. List what rewards or items they are associated with.

**Minigames**—List the types of minigames and provide illustrations showing each game type. Describe how to play and use control schemes. List what original and repurposed game elements the minigames require. List what levels the games are found on and what rewards they yield.

**Monetization**—Describe how monetization will work over the course of the game. Show the interface for purchasing content. List purchasable items and estimated cost.

**Downloadable content**—List the DLC. Give estimated time frame for content release.

**Cutscenes**—List the cutscenes. Provide a short outline of each cutscene and where each one is presented.

**Music and SFX**—List all music needs. Describe the tone or feeling of each piece. List on what level the music is needed, and don’t forget the title, pause, and option screens as well as end credits.

**Other screens**—Describe this unlockable content accessed from the title screen. Make sure to include image, sound and music, and player interface details. Possible screens include

* **Credits**—Include names, job titles, a team photo, or images of the studio at work.
* **Bonus material**—Include images of screens. Explain how the player will interact with the interface and activate this material (unlockable, Easter eggs, and so on).
  + List all alternate costumes or weapons, cheats, art galleries, video players, and special features such as commentary, interviews, deleted material, documentaries, and gag reels.

**Appendix(es)**—This is the place where long lists go, including player animation, enemy animation, sound effects, music, cutscene scripts, in-game text, and VO scripts.

# Examples

There are lots of examples on-line, however many combine the GDD and TDD into a single document (bible).

[Diablo](https://www.graybeardgames.com/download/diablo_pitch.pdf) – A very short GDD more a pitch document.

[Deus Ex](https://deusex.fandom.com/wiki/Deus_Ex_design_document) – Annotated versions of the GDD spanning 3 years have been documented, difficult to find an actual document to link however.

[Doom Bible](http://5years.doomworld.com/doombible/doombible.pdf) – both GDD and TDD but perhaps not something you could show a producer.

[Gamedocs](https://gamedocs.org/documents/) has a list of older games.

[Monaco](https://www.facebook.com/notes/10159380697433606/) – An indie game developed originally for PC around 2010/2011 and released on Switch in 2019, the document’s a little hard to scroll though as it was posted on Facebook.