

MARS

Game Design Document



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Summary

Mars is a fast-paced action-RPG game. The experience's lifespan should be about 10 hours to finish the main quest.

Mars is a transcendent combat oriented experience. You will experience a real monster hunting simulation. Its engaging combat systems lead to a cathartic experience.

Mars's very dynamic and innovative parkour-based movement system allows endless fighting possibilities.

During your hunt, you will access a wide variety of equipment and power-ups. It will be your responsibility to choose the right tool to fight the terrifying monsters you will face in your quest.

Its handmade levels guarantee a perfect experience. Players move from zones to zones without losing their focus.

As you are fighting the hordes of monsters sent against you, you will discover the dark intentions of the leaders behind your mysterious assailants.

Inspirations and similar games: Darksiders genesis, Hades, Doom Eternal, Ghostrunner, Diablo 3, Returnal, Darksouls 3, Death's Door, Darksiders 3

Unique Features

Push forward combat

Encourages players to face the enemies. Also, it prevents all hiding behaviors. This allows the game to be very dynamic. It strengthens the immersion and the sense of power.

The goal is to bring players in a “flow” state. They should feel that they are initiating the action.

Parkour based movement

Players’ movement are not restricted. They are allowed to dash, jump, wall run, wall jump, slide. This system allows us to create interesting combat set up where players have to figure out the most rewarding way to get rid of the enemies.

The goal is to enhance the “Push forward combat” feature, with unlimited movement plus interesting combat situation. Players are in a “kill before get killed” situation.

“Strategic” combat system (Rock paper scissors)

All the situations that players will be facing should have their counterpart. For example, each monster should have a weakness that players should exploit to defeat it. If players don’t play by the book, the game won’t have mercy and they will be punished accordingly.

The goal is to unify the experience. To succeed, players must play the way intended by the game. This should be the funniest way possible.

Pre-made levels

The game’s level design is key to a successful experience. Levels are created so that players don’t feel lost, they are also constantly part of the action. Players move forward switching from target to target, the level design enhances this feeling.

Camera

Considered cameras

3rd Person Camera

PROS	CONS
Players feel in the action (immersive) .	Decreases strategic combat aspect.
Combat and executions are satisfying .	Decreases screen readability (players haven't a full perception of the environment)
The speed of movement of the player is easily felt .	
Height/verticality is easily perceived .	
Parkour feels good.	

Isometric Camera

PROS	CONS
Increases screen readability (players have a full perception of the environment).	Less immersive than other cameras.
A must for strategic combat aspect (due to the perception players have of their environment).	Combat and executions are less satisfying (due to a lack of immersion).
	A compelling parkour system is harder to implement .
	Height/verticality is difficult to perceive .
	miro

Figure 1: Comparison between the two considered cameras

Conclusion

A 3rd person camera would be better for the overall immersion of the game. The feeling of combat, speed, parkour would be better with this type of camera.

The isometric camera would increase readability and enhance the strategic aspects of the game.

The goal is to create a satisfying and cathartic experience. The most natural choice is the 3rd person camera. However, we will need to find solutions to make up for the loss of readability.

Camera choice: **3rd person**

Gameplay

Design Pillars

Guide sentences:

- A challenging fast-paced action-RPG experience
- A transcendent combat-oriented experience
- A monster Hunting simulation

Keywords: Fast-paced, combat, hunting, powerful, cathartic, challenge, ruthless, fearless, engaging

Core Loops

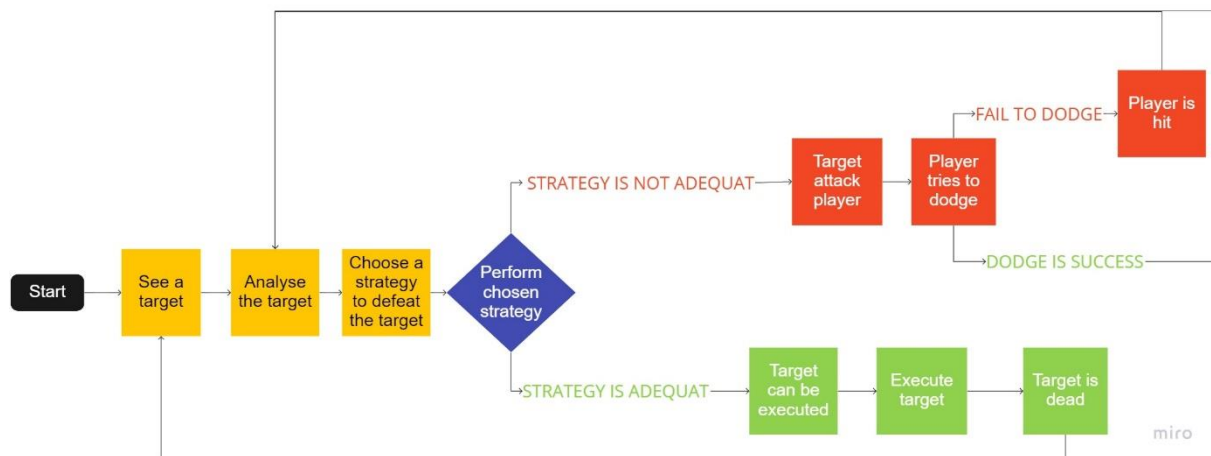


Figure 3: Primary Loop

Players should be at the initiative therefore they should have the first “shot” at their target. Players have to identify the type of each target they face. Based on this information, they will adopt a specific behavior. If the adopted behavior was the right one for the target, players are able to quickly kill the target. If it wasn't, the target will be able to answer players' attacks.

The above description refers to the “second by second” aspects of the game. Everything happens in real time; therefore, players success is a combination of a well-chosen strategy and a good execution.

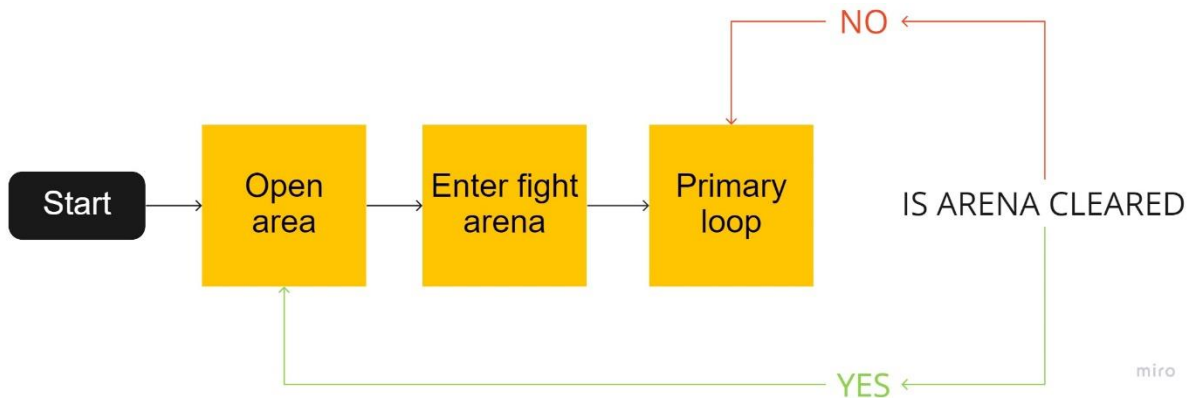


Figure 4: Secondary Loop

Levels are a mix of fight arenas and open areas. Open areas are places where players can explore and find power ups. Parkour situations and enemies will be placed to keep the players' flow going. Players can skip them entirely if they want to.

In arenas, players experience a high-tension situation where they have to fight hordes of enemies.

During a level, players alternate between tense situations in arenas and more calm situations in open areas.



Figure 5: Tertiary Loop

Some arenas are "special". Special arenas have different fight set-ups than the "classic" ones, and usually finish by "a mini-boss fight". Their purpose is to increase the challenge. A Success gives players a major "monster's soul", these allow players to access the boss room.

Game's flow:

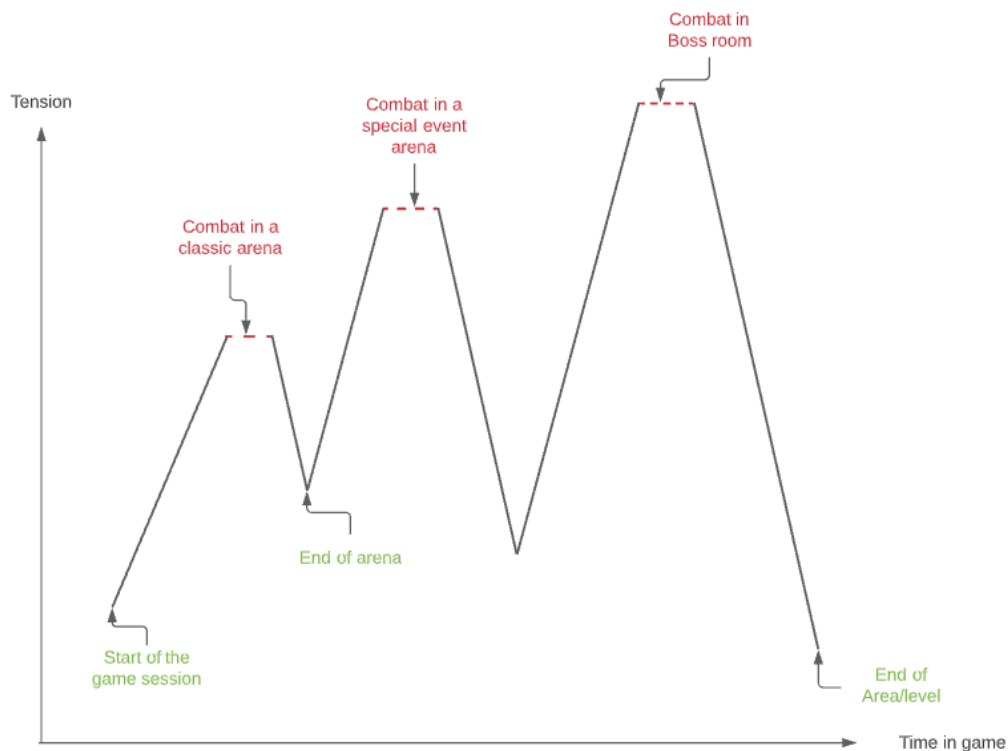


Figure 6 : Game's flow

The figure above represents the flow of the game. At the start of a game session tension is at its lowest. As players progress in the level tension rises due to the fights and parkour situations players have to overcome.

The tension reaches a pic when players enter the first arena. The fight is much more intense, players reach a focus/flow state at this point. After clearing the arena tension decreases. Players must again fight and parkour their way in open areas to the next arena.

The pattern repeats itself until players enter a special event arena. Here players enter an epic fight against waves of monsters and their chief for a major monster soul. Therefore, tension is much greater than the one in classic arena.

Finally, after collecting enough major monster souls, Players experience a legendary battle facing one of the primordial monsters. The tension is at its maximum. After defeating the "boss", players feel a great release in tension.

Mechanics

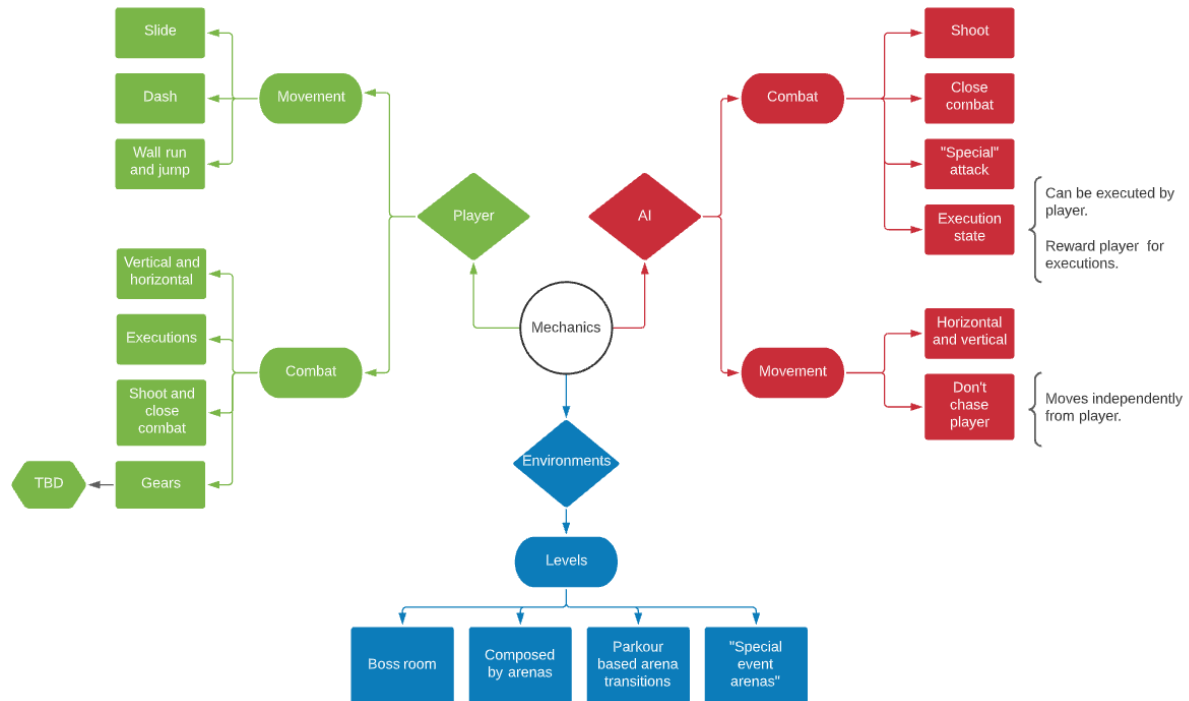


Figure 7: Mind map of envisaged mechanics

Dynamics

Player Dynamics:

Players should be constantly shooting, dodging and executing enemies. These mechanics encourage close combat.

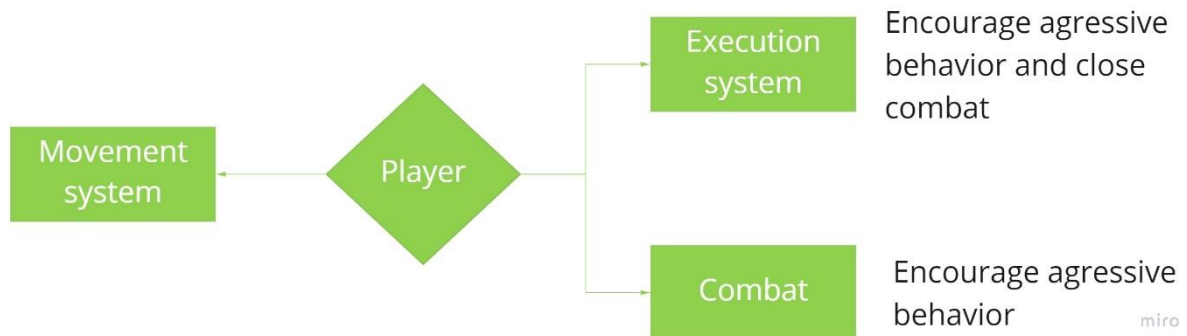


Figure 8: Player Dynamics

AI Dynamics:

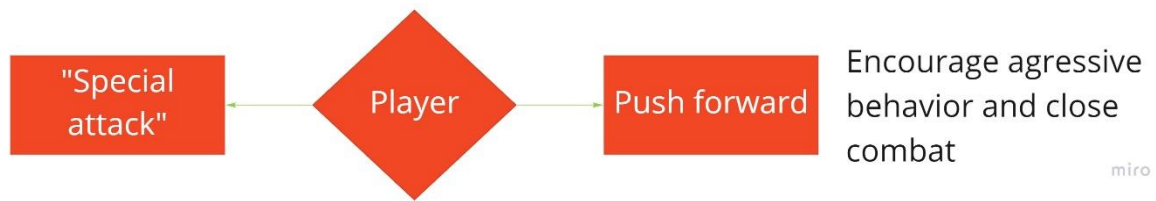


Figure 9: AI Dynamics

Environment Dynamics:

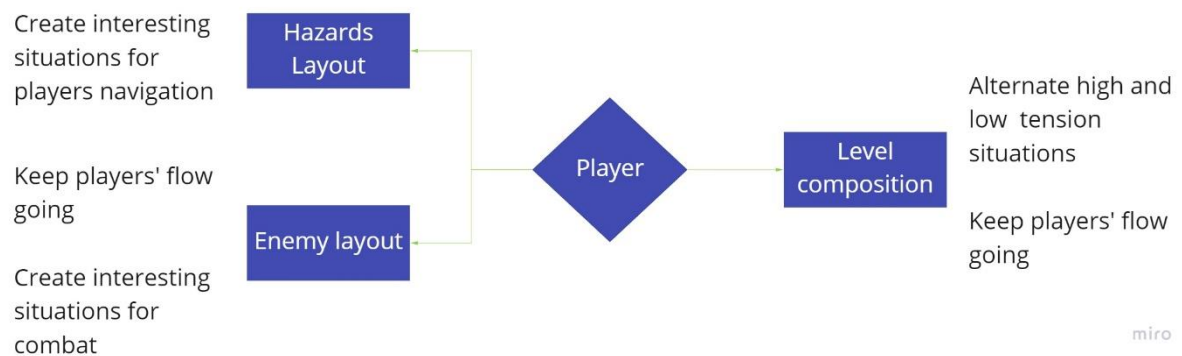
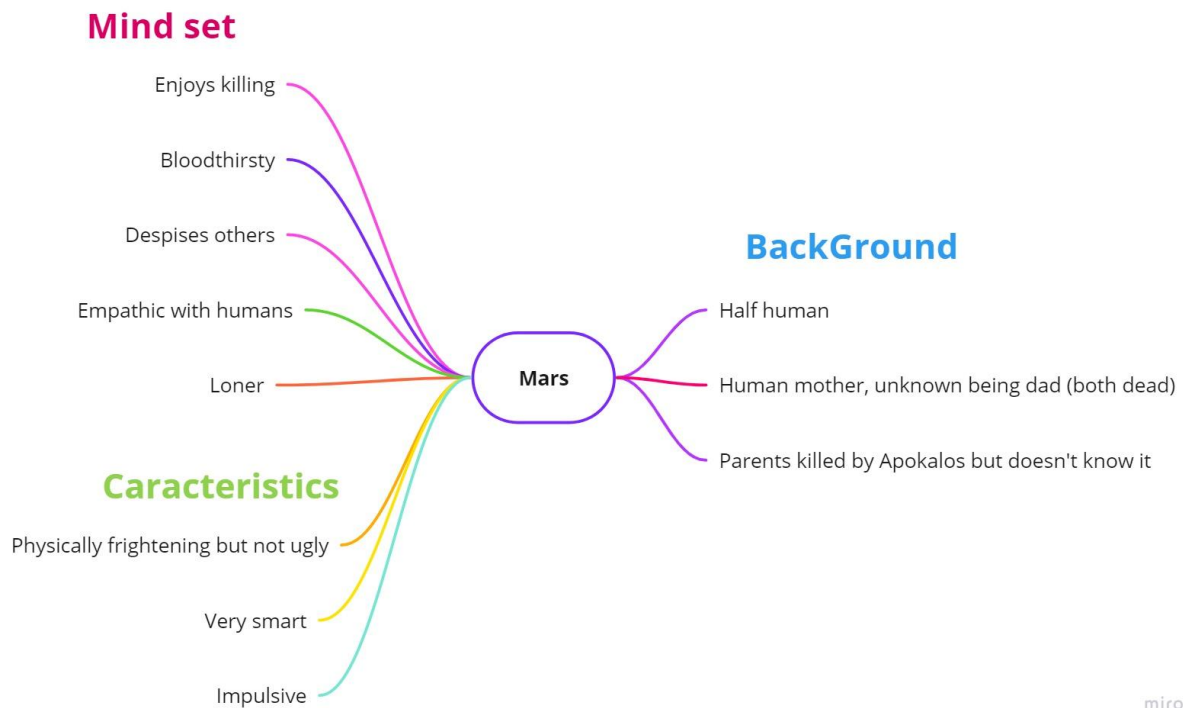


Figure 10: Environment Dynamics

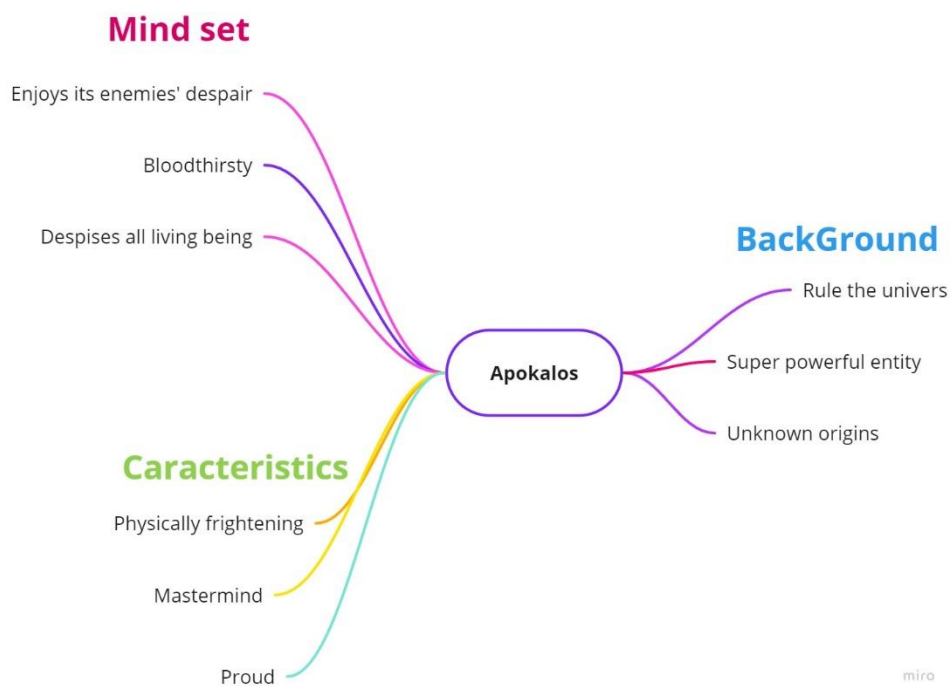
Story

Characters

Mars:



Apokalos:



Narrative

Players embody Mars: an entity (half human) which absorbs every monster that he can find. He chases them relentlessly and enjoys the execution of his victims. Mars is the ultimate rampart of human kind against the demonic forces of Apokalos: A evil being that wants to turn every living thing into a mindless monster. Mars' goal is to become the most powerful being. The only thing that is keeping Mars from reaching his goal is Apokalos. Mars goes on an adventure with only one thing in mind : find Apokalos and kill him.

Mars must cross a lot of different environments to find him. Those places have been long occupied by the Apokalos's forces. Therefore, the atmosphere of these places will be horrific and frightening.

Several Apokalos's Generals (very powerful primordial monsters) will also cross his path to shut him down for good and prevent him from finding Apokalos. The full game takes place in four different monster's lairs each one with their own General with the final one being Apokalos's lair.

Level Progression

Level Description:

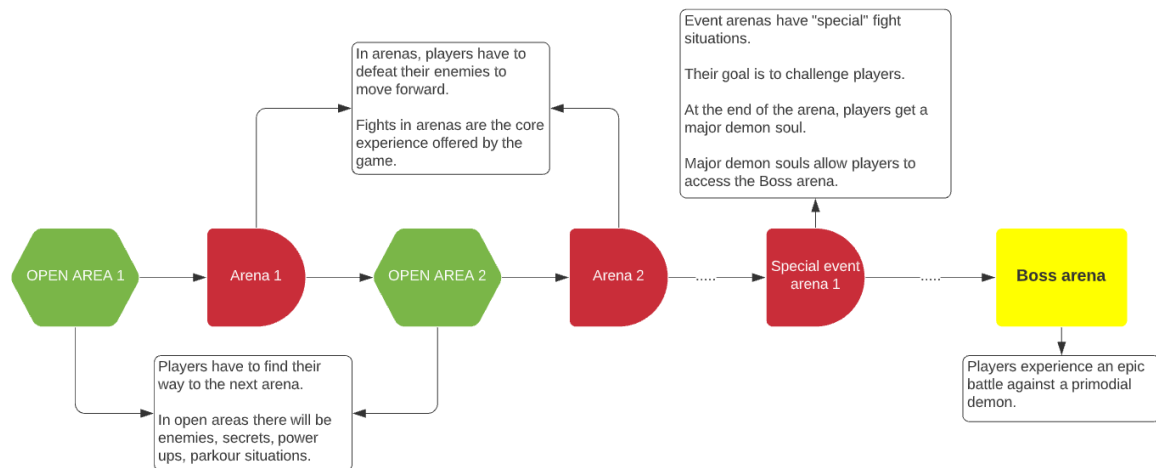


Figure 11: Level Description

Progression:

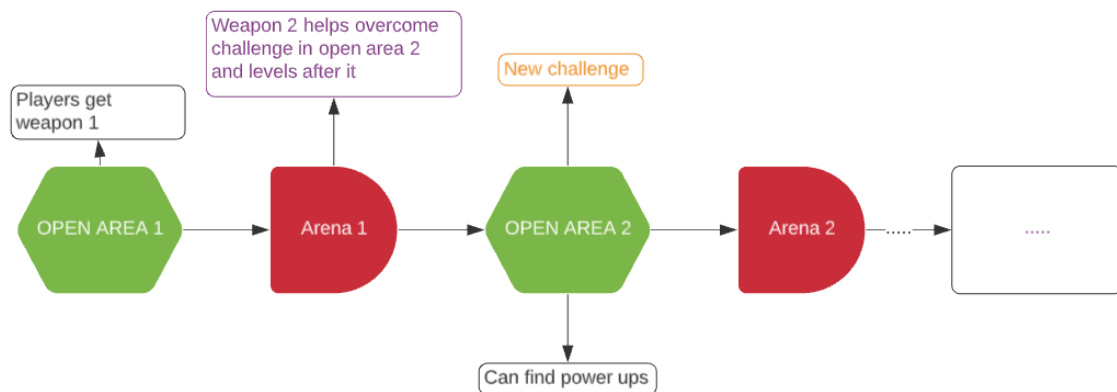


Figure 12: Progression

At the start of the adventure players start with the first weapon. As players move forward, they find new weapon. The new weapon that players find help them overcome the new challenge that the game puts in their way. Also, they are able to access power ups for their weapons in open areas (optional).

Art

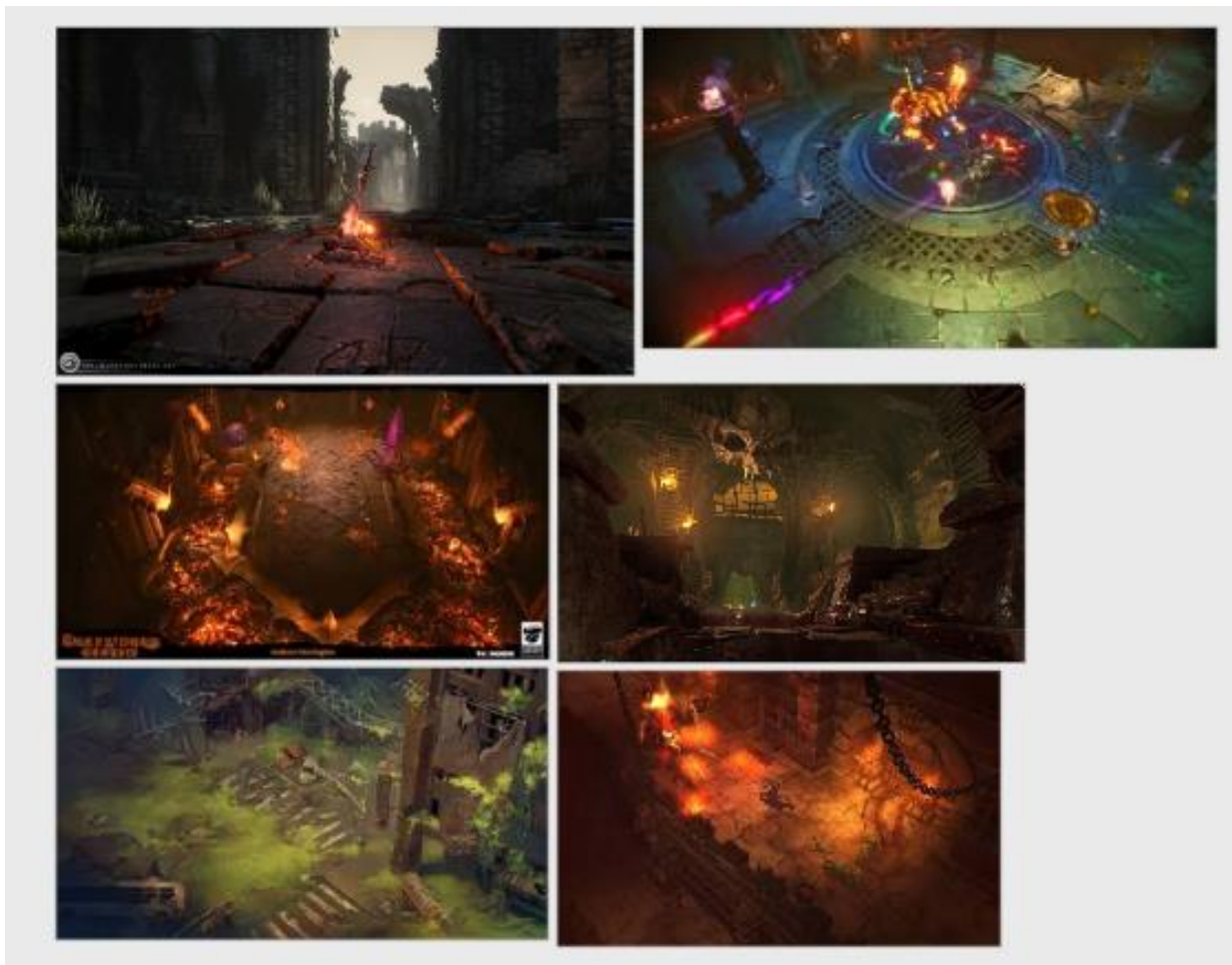
Summary

Atmosphere: Terrific, frightening, scary, oppressive.

Enemies: Scary, deformed, monsters, demonic, disgusting, anthropomorphic.

References

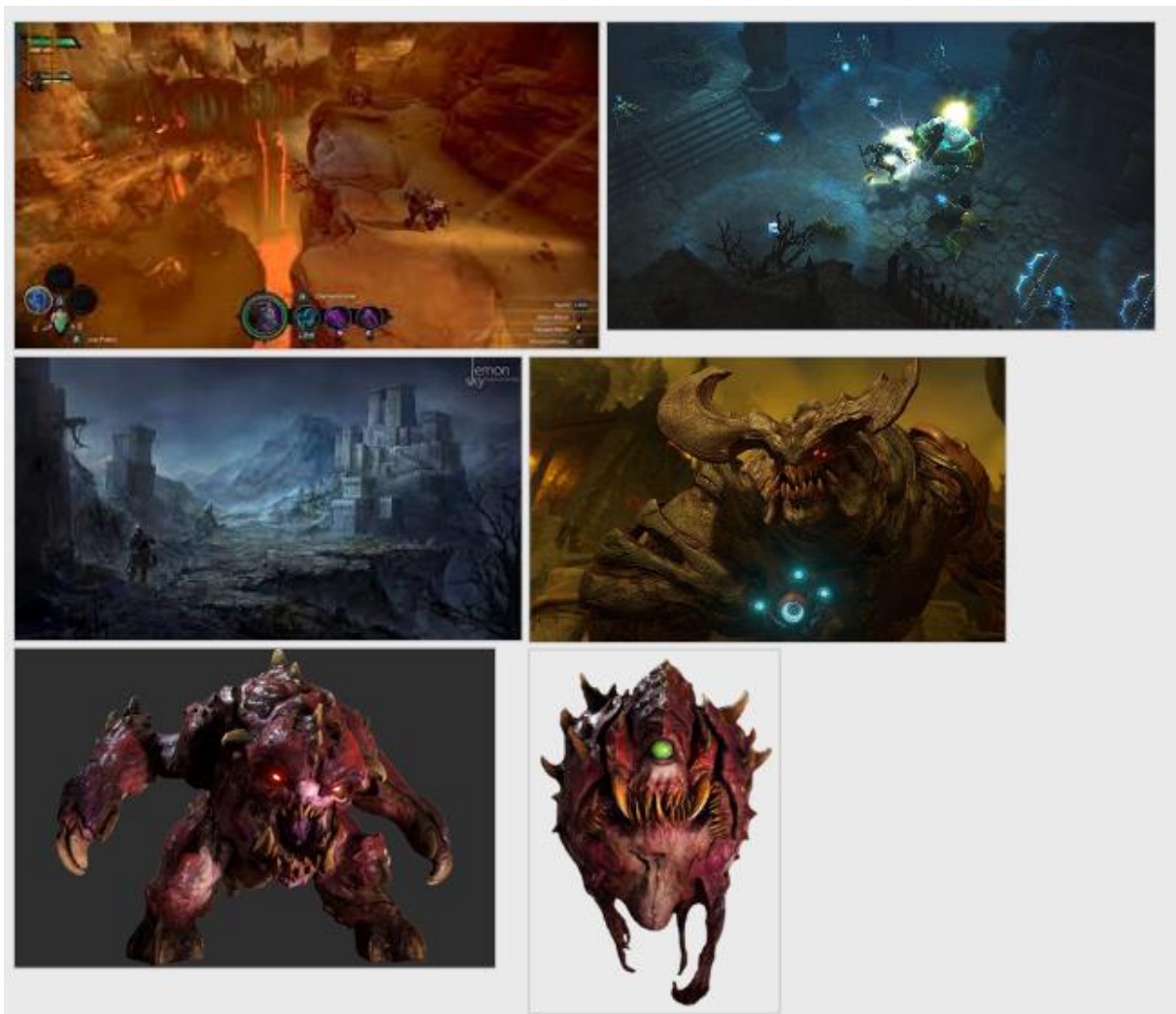
Shape/ color/ visual identity:



To remember:

- Warm, aggressive and dark colors during fight arenas (bring aggressivity to players)
- Cool, calm and bright colors and environment in open arenas (peaceful, more suitable for exploration).

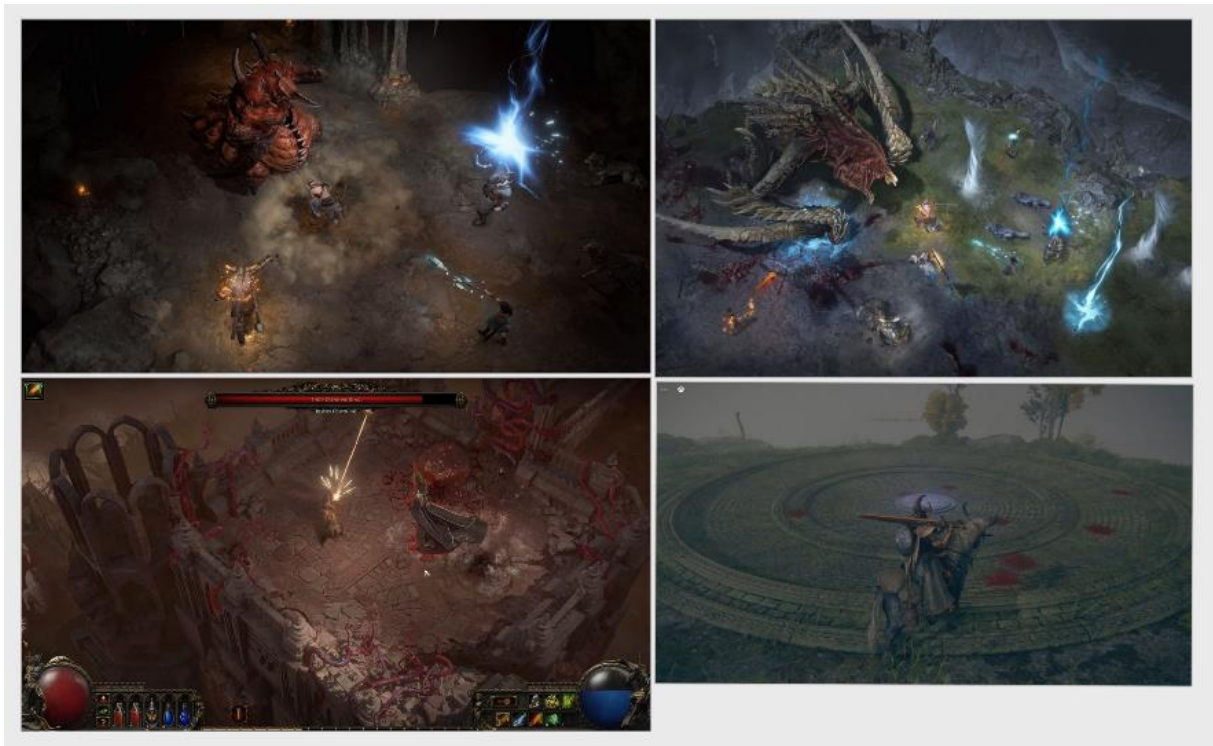
Emotions/ Intentions:



To remember:

- Terrific, frightening, scary, oppressive.
- Impressive, great

Graphic style:



Audio

Summary

Description:

The music must echo the game's atmosphere and pace. Therefore, music in the game will be dynamic, heavy and dark.

Intended emotions: Trans, aggressiveness, mightiness, cathartic

References

Mike Gordon (Doom Eternal):

- [BFG division](#)
- [The only thing they fear is you](#)

Joonas Turner (ScourgeBringer):

- [Fury](#)
- [Frozen Keep](#)

Target

Target Audience

The target is a player of at least 14 years old that enjoys a fast-paced fighting game. They should never give up and never be afraid to take on a challenge. Also, they often play video games, they own a lot of games on steam. They are constantly looking for new video games to play.

Target Device

Devices: PC, PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X, Nintendo Switch

Platform: Steam