

Rigidbody Basics

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Lab Introduction

In this lab, you will explore different properties of the Rigidbody2D component, and how changes made to them will affect the behavior of the GameObject that they are attached to. You will also be introduced to a few different types of movement control, as well as different methods of capturing user input from a keyboard or a controller.

You will complete a series of exercises designed around different properties of the Rigidbody2D component; each one can be completed by varying the property in question in order to achieve a desired behavior for the GameObject. You will also explore movement control by using different movement methods to navigate a ball through a maze. Finally, you will combine the concepts covered in the previous sections in order to create a Rube Goldberg machine in Unity.

Upon completion of this lab, you should understand how to use the Rigidbody2D properties covered in the exercises. You should also be able to explain, in your own words, the differences between different types of movement control. You should be familiar with a few different ways to process user input and how changing the values of different fields in the Input Manager can affect gameplay.

Lab Instructions

Gravity

1. Verify that the GravityChamber Scene is currently open (your screen should match Figure 1). If it is not, Navigate to File > Open Scene > Scenes > GravityChamber.

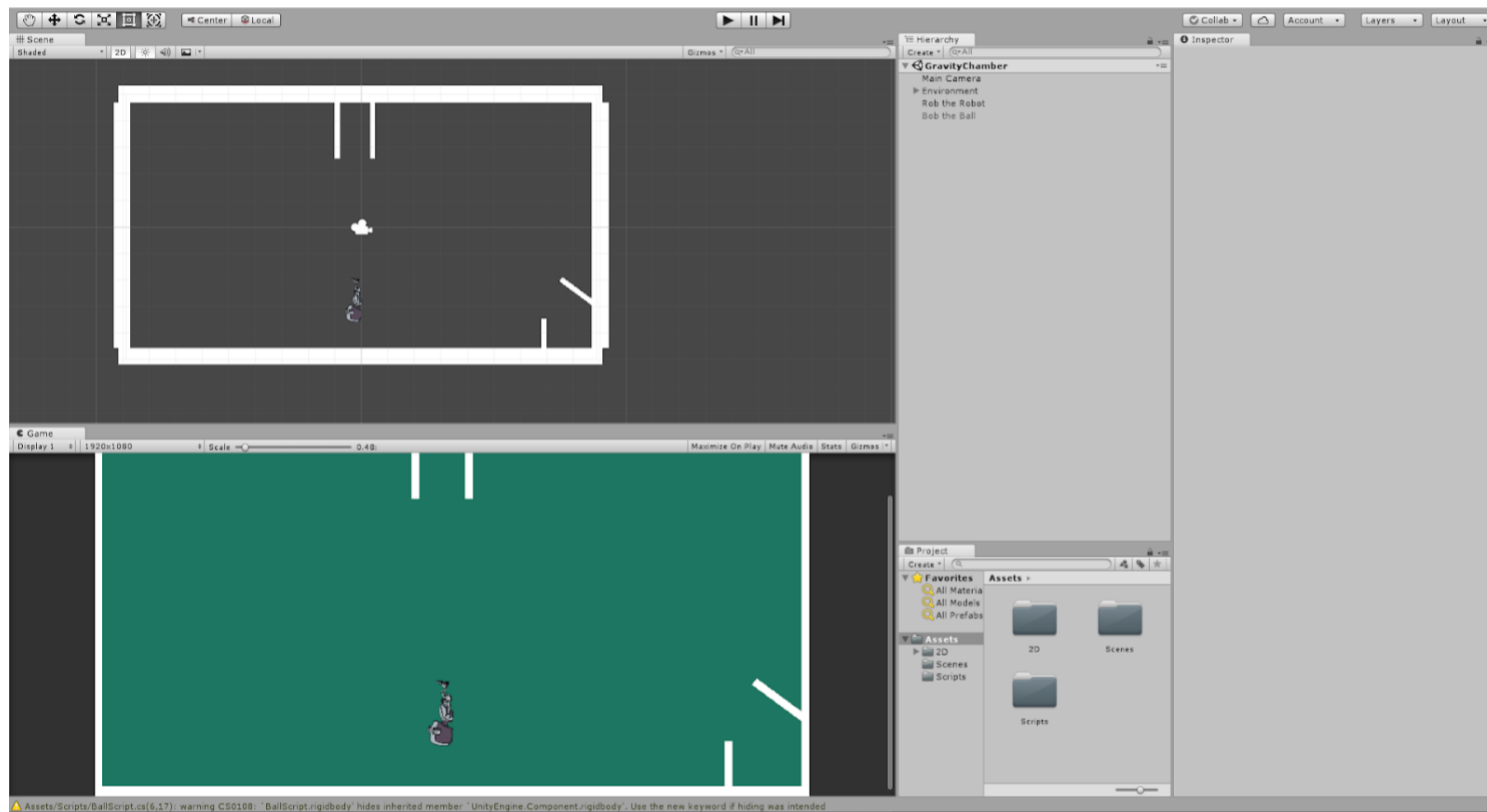


Figure 1

2. Deactivate the GameObject labeled **Bob the Ball** by clicking the box next to the object's name in the *Inspector*. If it is already deactivated, proceed to step 3.
3. Select the GameObject **Rob the Robot** in the *Hierarchy*.
 - a. In the Inspector, select Add Component and add a Rigidbody2D component to the object (Figure 2).
 - b. Set the **Gravity Scale** field (Figure 3) to a value of 5 and press Play. Repeat this process with values of -1 and -2.5 and notice how these changes affect the movement of the Player.
4. Activate **Bob the Ball** by clicking the same box that we selected to deactivate it earlier.
5. Adjust the Gravity Scales for both the ball and the robot so that the ball ends up in the bottom right corner of the box and the robot ends up in the goal zone on the ceiling.
6. **Save this Scene before moving onto the next task.**

Checkoff Requirement: Demonstrate that you can land the robot and ball in the desired goal zones.

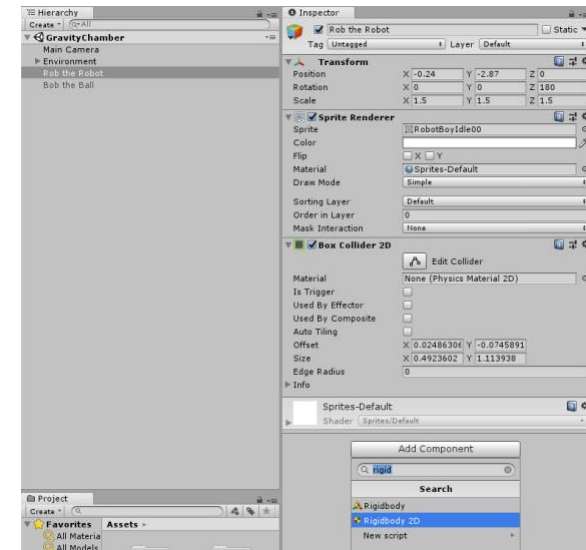


Figure 2

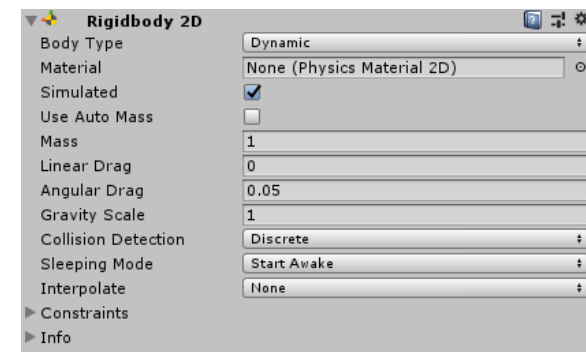


Figure 3

Drag

7. Navigate to the **DragRoom** Scene.
 - a. **Drag** is a force that acts opposite to the motion of a moving object, slowing it down over time.
 - b. The **Mass** of an object determines how forces will interact with it. For instance, an object with more mass will require more force to move it.
8. In this Scene, the script moving the ball adds a singular, horizontal push to the ball with a constant force. Consequently, increasing or decreasing the ball's Mass will affect its initial speed in different ways. Adjust the values for Mass and Linear Drag to get the ball into the goal area in the bottom right corner.
 - a. Note that while it is possible to achieve this task by only editing one of these fields, we encourage you to explore different values in order to gain a better idea of how different changes affect the object's movement.
9. **Save this Scene before moving onto the next task.**

Checkoff Requirement: Demonstrate that you can land the ball in the desired goal zone.

Movement Control

10. Navigate to the Scene labeled **Maze** and verify that your screen matches Figure 4. The ultimate goal for each of the tasks in this section will be to move the white ball through the maze until you reach the red square.

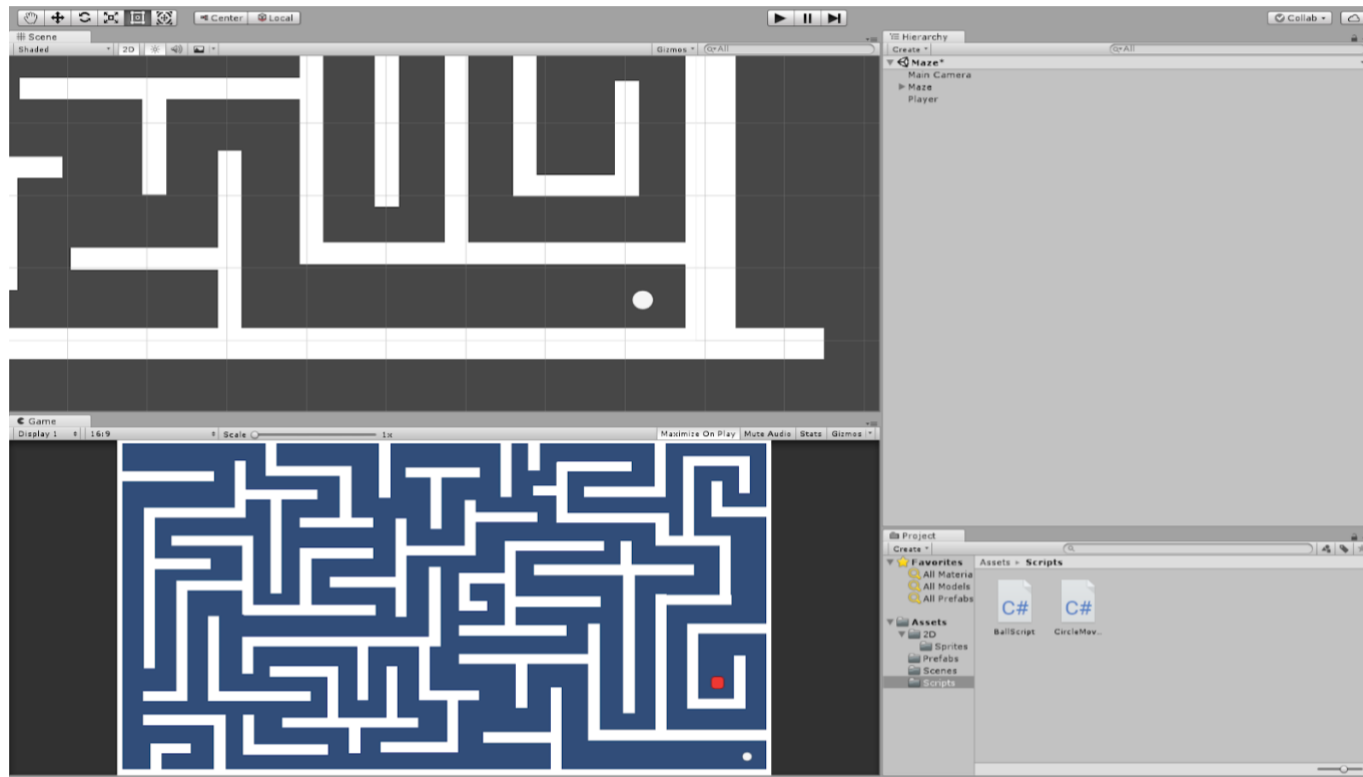


Figure 4

11. Open the **CircleMovement** Script. Examine the block of code that matches the one transcribed below:

```
// Update is called once per frame
void Update () {
    xAxis = Input.GetAxisRaw("Horizontal");
    yAxis = Input.GetAxisRaw("Vertical");
    moveFunction1()
}

void moveFunction1() {
    Vector2 movementVector = new Vector2(xAxis, yAxis);
    playerRigidbody.AddForce(movementVector);
}
```

This is the first of three different movement control functions that you will be exploring during this section.

Before we delve into the details of moveFunction1(), we will briefly examine how Unity processes user input from the keyboard. Note the line of code in the Update() function that reads:

```
xAxis = Input.GetAxisRaw("Horizontal");
```

1. Return to the Scene and navigate to **Edit > Project Settings**. Select **Input**, then click the triangle next to **Horizontal**. Verify that the window matches what you see in Figure 5.
2. Here is a brief explanation of the Input fields that will be important for this task:
 - a. **Name** — This field is the string that will be used to access this axis. For example, “Horizontal” in `GetAxisRaw(“Horizontal”)`.
 - b. **Negative and Alt Negative buttons** — These are the buttons that will return a value of -1 when pressed. Under the current project settings, for example, `Input.GetAxisRaw(“Horizontal”) = -1` if you were to press the left arrow key or the ‘a’ button.
 - c. **Positive Button and Alt Positive buttons** — These are the buttons that will return a value of 1 when pressed. Similar to the previous example, `Input.GetAxisRaw(“Horizontal”) = 1` if you were to press the right arrow key or the ‘d’ button.

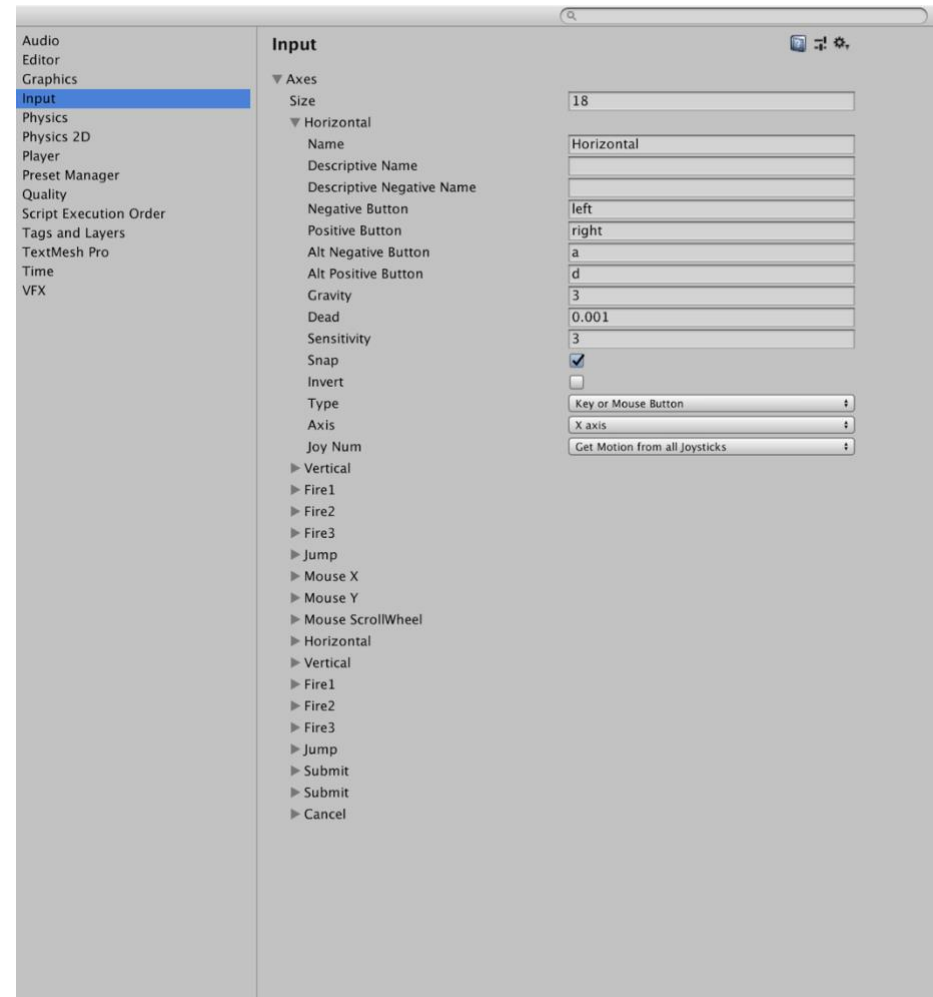


Figure 5

Return to the CircleMovement script and re-examine the code block for `moveFunction1()`. This function defines a 2D vector using our horizontal and vertical input axes. The **AddForce()** function applies this vector as a force to the Rigidbody2D, resulting in movement.

12. Try to run the maze using **moveFunction1()** as the function called in **Update()** (you do not have to finish the maze in this step). Notice what was easy and what was difficult using this type of movement and control.

13. Now examine the code block for **moveFunction2()**, transcribed below:

```
void moveFunction2() {  
    Vector2 movementVector = new Vector2(xAxis, yAxis);  
    playerRigidbody.MovePosition(playerRigidbody.position + movementVector);  
  
}
```

This function creates the same movement vector as the first. However, rather than applying a force to the object, this function moves the actual Rigidbody to the new coordinates specified by the movement vector; for example, if your Player is at (3, -3), pressing the left arrow key and up arrow key simultaneously will transform the object's coordinates to (3-1, -3+1), resulting in a new position of (2,-2).

14. Change the function call in **Update()** to **movementFunction2()**. Try to navigate the maze using this function.

- a. You may notice the ball clipping out of the map, skipping walls, and exhibiting other puzzling behavior. This is due to the fact that the frame time in Unity does not always remain constant; the gameObject translation occurs one frame at a time, so changes in the frame time result in the object appearing to move at an irregular speed. For example, a frame time of 10 milliseconds means the object will step forward one hundred times per second. However, the frame time may increase to 25 milliseconds due to factors like CPU load, meaning that the object will only step forward forty times a second. We can correct for this by scaling our movement with the frame time, allowing for a smoother and more controlled translation. Add the following line to `moveFunction2()` before moving the Player Rigidbody:

```
movementVector = movementVector * Time.deltaTime;
```

The **Time.deltaTime** property reads out the frame time, therefore scaling the size of the movement step with changes in framerate.

15. Examine the code block for **moveFunction3()**, transcribed below:

```
void moveFunction3() {  
    Vector2 movementVector = new Vector2(xAxis, yAxis);  
    playerRigidbody.velocity = movementVector;  
}
```

This type of movement is called velocity control. We define a Vector2 movement vector in the same way as with the previous functions, then set the velocity of our gameObject to our movement vector (recall that a vector has both a direction and magnitude). If you try to run the maze, you may notice that moveFunction3() in its current state feels identical to moveFunction2(); however, moveFunction2() moves the actual rigidbody, while moveFunction3() instantaneously sets the velocity.

16. We can speed up the movement of our object by adding a multiplier to our movement vector. Try out a few values greater than 1 and select the one that you feel most comfortable with. Note that this type of vector scaling can be done with all of your movement.

```
void moveFunction3() {  
    Vector2 movementVector = new Vector2(xAxis, yAxis);  
    movementVector = movementVector * 4;  
    playerRigidbody.velocity = movementVector;  
}
```

17. Run the maze with whichever function you feel the most comfortable with.

18. **Save this Scene before moving onto the next task.**

Checkoff Requirement: Demonstrate that you can complete the maze and explain the different types of basic movement control covered in this section.

Body Types

19. Navigate to the **BodiesIntro** Scene.

The body type of a `Rigidbody2D` determines which forces can and cannot be applied to it. There are three types of bodies: **Dynamic**, **Kinematic**, and **Static**.

- **Dynamic** — the body can be affected by both scripts and physics
- **Kinematic** — the body can only be affected by scripts, not by physics
- **Static** — the body cannot be moved

We have been using dynamic objects so far. Briefly return to the different movement functions from the previous section and observe that `moveFunction1()` does not work if the circle is kinematic, since the script applies a physics force. The other two movement functions should work correctly, however, because they directly modify the object.

- Dynamic objects are best for objects that are controlled by the player.
- Kinematic objects can be used for moving obstacles, platforms, or any other moving objects that the player can interact with but not move (outside of script interactions).
- Static objects should be used for objects that are not meant to move (e.g. walls or floors).

20. Keep your circle as a dynamic object with the gravity set to 0. Use whichever movement script you feel most comfortable with. Use the player object to run into the robot, noticing if and when the robot responds to the collision across different body types.

Checkoff Requirement: In your own words, explain the main points of this section to the facilitator who is checking you off.



Final Task

22. Your final task for this lab will be to design a Rube Goldberg machine in Unity like the one seen in Figure 7 (press Play to observe how the machine works). You are required to have at least 5 static bodies, 5 dynamic bodies, negative/positive/zero gravity, and some utilization of drag, mass, and rotation freezing in order for your machine to be checked off.

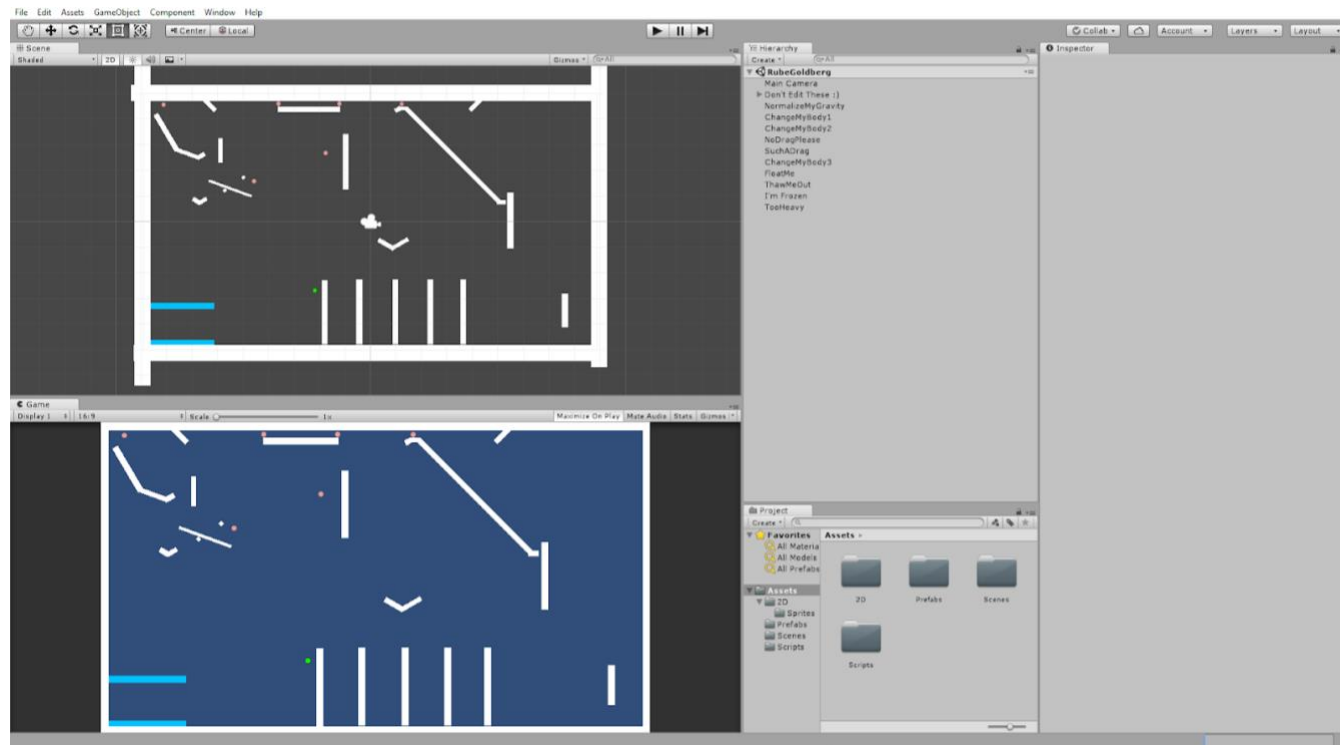


Figure 7

Checkoff Requirement: Design a Rube Goldberg machine in Unity according to the specifications outlined in step 22.

Advanced Inputs

As you saw in the movement control section of this lab, getting the correct user input is a key aspect of scripting movement. We used `GetAxisRaw`, which returns values of -1, 0, or 1 according to the user input. `GetAxis` is other method of capturing input; it is similar to `GetAxisRaw`, but the values that it returns are conditional on how hard a button is being pressed or how far a joystick is being moved. The two methods are nearly indistinguishable on a keyboard, but have different effects for joysticks and controllers.

You can also use **GetButton** and its variations (`GetButtonDown`, `GetButtonUp`, etc.), as well as **GetKey** and its variations to capture input. These return true or false instead of a number, depending on whether or not the button or key in question meets the criteria specified by the function (i.e. is the button down for `GetButtonDown`). `GetMouse` can be used to receive mouse inputs. Feel free to explore the Unity documentation for these methods; there are a large variety of these Get functions that you can use in your game.

You can also adjust the sensitivity of inputs in the *Input Manager*. Navigate to Edit > Project Settings > Inputs (you should see something similar to Figure 8). The Name is what can be called in scripts. Negative and positive buttons are what should be pressed to create the desired effect: for example, the negative button for a Horizontal would be the left arrow, since negative values go towards the left. The names of the buttons can be found online.

- **Gravity** is how fast an object will re-center and is only used when the keyboard and mouse are involved.
- **Dead** is how much error Unity will tolerate before it begins an input. This is more applicable to controllers and joysticks, which may not always be centered at 0. It ensures that the slightest offset doesn't cause movement.
- **Sensitivity** is related to how fast keyboard input is picked up by Unity; the higher the number, the faster Unity will process it.
- **Snap** determines whether or not the input will be set to 0 if the opposite axes are being pressed.

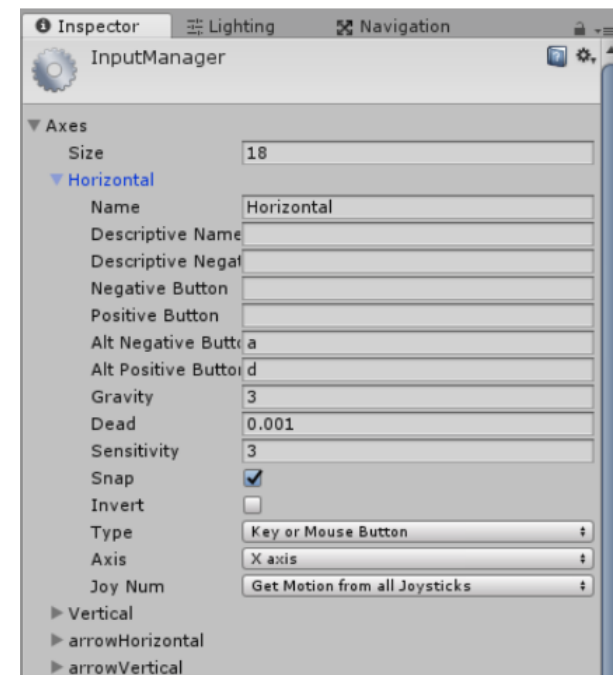


Figure 8

- **Invert** reverses the negative and positive axes.
- **Type** is whether or not the input is from the mouse and keyboard or from a controller.
- **Axis** is what axis Unity will be receiving input for.
- **Joy Num** is used for controllers, especially when there are multiple controllers present.

Fields like gravity, sensitivity, and dead can all have an effect on how the controls feel — especially when using a joystick or controller. Keep that in mind when designing your games in the future.

Checkoff Requirement: In your own words, explain the main points of this section to the facilitator who is checking you off.

Jumping (Optional)

1. Open the Scene called **Challenge**. You can make your own player in this scene, or you can simply copy Bob the Ball from a previous section.
2. Your task is to implement a movement system similar to the one from the original Super Mario Bros games. Take a look at this emulator for inspiration: <https://supermarioemulator.com/>
 - a. Hint: identify which type of horizontal movement is used first. Then, move on to jumping.

Summary

You have successfully constructed a Rube Goldberg machine using only Rigidbodies and your own creativity. Great job! You are also now familiar with movement control and user input, two powerful concepts that will likely play a crucial role in the games you create in the future.

Checkoff Requirements

1. Demonstrate that you can land both the ball and the robot in the desired goal zones for the GravityChamber Scene.
2. Demonstrate that you can land the ball in the desired goal zone for the DragRoom Scene.
3. Demonstrate that you can complete the maze in the Movement Control section of this lab and briefly explain the different types of control covered in the section.
4. In your own words, explain the main concepts covered in the Body Types section to the facilitator who is checking you off.
5. Design a Rube Goldberg machine in Unity according to the specifications outlined in the Final Task section of this lab.
6. In your own words, explain the main concepts covered in the Advanced Input section to the facilitator who is checking you off.