

Get Home

Naurway Studios

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1. CORE CONCEPT

I. Game Concept

The core concept of Get Home is an objective-based battle and timed survival, where the main idea of the game is that you play as a mother duck protecting your 5 ducklings to return home to your coop before the sun sets. Once the sun sets, you will no longer be able to see your way home, making you easy prey to the wolves and predatory birds that you can already hear circling around you and your brood.

II. Genre

The genre of the game is action, thriller and timed survival, with some similar games in this genre being Don't Starve (a wilderness survival game) and Terraria. However, these games were not the main influence for this project, the main games that inspired this are the Untitled Goose Game, Doki Doki Literature Club and Minecraft.

III. Unique Selling Point

What makes our game unique is that it's a game with a visually cute theme, graphics and UI juxtaposed with a darker theme and progression. The game's first impression should be of a cute duck family-based theme however as the game tension rises, the risk of losing your ducklings to a bloody death becomes less of a chance and more of a reality. Get Home aims to blend many different beloved features from the games that inspire us from different genres (including but not limited to Stardew Valley/MOBA point of view, and Untitled Goose Game's endearing theme). We focus heavily on the theme of family, specifically having the duck ensure the protection of its ducklings.

IV. Unique Selling Point

The game is primarily aimed towards an older audience, although it is not exclusive to them. It features a simple concept, straightforward controls, and light graphics. However, it would likely resonate better with individuals who possess a fundamental grasp of gaming controls due to its fast-paced nature and time-sensitive challenges. Given the darker and more tense atmosphere progression of the game, players are recommended to be comfortable with themes of violence.

2. STORY AND NARRATIVE

I. Backstory

You are a mother duck who, along with your brood of 5 ducklings, was taken out for an outdoor trip by your farmer to a lake in a forest. Your entire family had an amazing day out playing in the woods and water, however before you knew it, the sun had started to set and it's only you and your family in the area, having been forgotten by your farmer when he left. You know you won't be able to see in the dark once the sun sets which usually doesn't pose an issue since you can simply find shelter for your family for the night. But you can hear it, *feel it* - the threat in the woods, and they're only going to get more brave with the darkening sky. Thus starts the journey of guiding your family back to your home, encountering and fending off predators that aim to snatch your children for an easy meal within the 5 minutes of daylight you have.

II. Characters

- Mama duck:
 - The mother duck is the main and only playable character in the game. She's a single mother to 5 children and lives a peaceful life on a farm raised by the farmer. Her motivation throughout the game is to bring all her kids back home and ensure their survival in the best-case scenario. She also understands that it's possible to lose any of her kids to the predators of the forest, so she will push through to bring back as many as she can.
- Wolves and Predatory Birds:
 - Predators of the forest looking for an easy meal. These predators get braver and more aggressive the darker it gets in the forest, they understand that they have the high ground the moment it goes dark.
 - Predatory bird type will be either eagles or falcons - Subject to change

3. GAMEPLAY AND MECHANICS

I. Player Perspective

We plan on giving the player a third-person perspective, something akin to a MOBA game, Stardew Valley and The Untitled Goose Game, giving players a view of both the character and the environment. The camera will be fixed on the character to allow immersion and the players to focus on the environment instead of another control mechanic.



II. Controls

The main controls will be from the classic WASD keys for their respective direction: up, down, left and right. The player will also have access to 3 abilities. These will be available through Q, E and R which are all easy to reach from the left side of the keyboard but these are subject to change after testing. We aim to have cutscenes thus we will have the space key as a skip option and a potential option to sprint. All key-bindings will be subject to change after testing.

III. Progressions

Since the game's goal is to bring home as many ducklings as possible, the challenge lies in defending your ducklings from the increasingly aggressive wolves and predatory birds as the day darkens. Their numbers also increase alongside the limited visibility, see below for example. Players lose the game when they become the last one alive and become the victim to the wolves or when the sun fully sets, losing their ability to attack.



To motivate the player, the countdown timer will be clearly visible on the UI, changing colours as the time approaches the end. Moreover, with a swarm of cute ducklings following you, how can any player not want to try their best to bring them home? Once the player reaches home, their performance will be graded by how many ducklings survive to the end. (STC - survival of player only)

IV. Gameplay Mechanics

- Player Abilities - The player will start with 3 basic abilities:

- *Peck* - the player's basic ability. Used to fend off predators, when used in quick succession to each other and within a time frame. More on this in under *Battle*
 - *Wing Assault* - one of two special abilities available to the player. A jump to an enemy with wings reared (equivalent to a goose's chase towards you when threatened). Has the ability to push back the enemy and will require a *peck* attack follow-up to disengage the aggression from wolves.
 - *Honk Surprise* - one of two special abilities available to the player. A loud squawk/honk from mama duck capable of rendering an enemy stunned in surprise, opening a window of attack for mama duck.
 - Special abilities will have a cooldown to avoid spam (subject to change)
- Enemy Spawning: The spawn points of wolves and birds are dynamically calculated and spawned before a player enters the chunk. The player should notice no wolves appearing out of thin air, but feel as if they have been wandering in the wilderness.
- Enemy Pathfinding: Wolves will start following when the player enters their range, and will follow them until the player exits.
- Enemies:
 - Wolves:
 - Attacks in a pack. You will only be able to rescue a duckling from a wolf's jaw once as due to their powerful bite, your ducklings won't be able to survive the bite a second time. Will require more strategizing in approach of defending against them
 - Predatory birds:
 - Will have a warning to signal their air approach
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 - Will need to chase away with *honk*
 - There will be no chance to rescue your duckling for their claws once their attack due to your inability to fly
- Battle - strategies and mechanics:
 - The player has the ability to disengage the enemies from their aggression by using abilities. A knockback or honk followed up by a peck for big wolves or a honk to chase away flying predators.
 - The enemies will be able to reach and attack the last duckling in your line, where then you will have a small window of opportunity to use your abilities to get the enemy to let go of your child. You have the option to stun them then attack or straight attack with

- peck in quick succession, which when done fast enough will get the enemy to let go and disengage. (*details are subject to change*)
- Ducklings lost to enemies will be lost permanently.
 - **Upgrades, Items and Power Ups:** The mpa has a chance to drop items, upgrades and power ups that alter the gameplay.
 - **Time Limit:** As the limit approaches, the sun lowers leading to decreased vision. When time is up, the game will fade out to a black screen, and audio will indicate that the ducks have been overwhelmed by the predators.
 - **Home Indicator:** Hoovering arrow which will point towards the goal destination.
 - **Interactive Environment:** There will be water (either as a river or a pond) which will speed you up, and as wolves will not be able to pass water, will disengage them automatically. Mud puddles will slow you down if stepped on and not avoided, etc. (*details are subject to change*)

4. LEVELS AND WORLD DESIGN

I. Game World

The game world is 3D polyart-centric where the player progresses forward through a forest at sunset. Our world is only one level but progresses through and initiates different difficulties flagged by time. The environment that our players encounter and see is largely a worn forest floor and trail which is the main path of travel, flanked on both sides by trees and bushes to create the forest environment. Elements are subject to change depending on available assets for all options. The player will occasionally encounter a river that cuts horizontally across the map and mud puddles as interference. We aim to have the player restricted to the trail. There will be an arrow near the top of the screen that will give a general idea of where the character should go in order to make it home and the game will be restricted to two axes but still rendered in a 3D environment. Below is an example created in Unity.



II. Objects

The objects we have in the game are our enemy entities. Both wolves and predatory birds are low poly in style and should be larger in scale compared to the ducks. More on interactions in the next section.

III. Physics

The environmental physics we have are the interactions between the mud/water(river) and the player, and we aim to have their effects both visual and game-related implemented into the game (speed/slow). Next is the interaction between the player and the enemies, all are collideable with each other. The only other interaction to note is between the ability *Wing Assault* where there is a knockback mechanic between the player and the wolves. The enemy birds will also have a flying mechanic and an interaction with the wind.

5. ART AND AUDIO

I. Art Style

We aim for the art style of the game to be of a low poly style, similar to the image that is below. This style will be consistent across the game, including the forest environment, the villains and our main character and family. We aim for the colours to be vibrant in order to stay consistent with the feeling of the art style, however, base colours will look different after effects of potentially shaders for the effect of sunset and visibility. Refer to below for an example created in Unity with potential assets.



II. Sound and Music

We aim for something akin and inspired by Doki Doki Literature Club, quiet background music with environmental noises such as trees rustling and wind blowing. We aim to have sound cues for when difficulty increases in the set minute intervals (i.e: wolves howling) and a falcon screech when the alert for falcon incoming is on screen.

- Resources: <https://mixkit.co/free-sound-effects/game/>, <https://www.sounds-resource.com/>, <https://www.zapsplat.com/sound-effect-category/game-sounds/>, SoundCloud,
- Sounds used:
 - Duck quack
 - Bird wings flapping
 - Wolves howling
 - Forest sounds

- Cartoon collide sound effect
- Cannon sound effect for when you lose a ducking

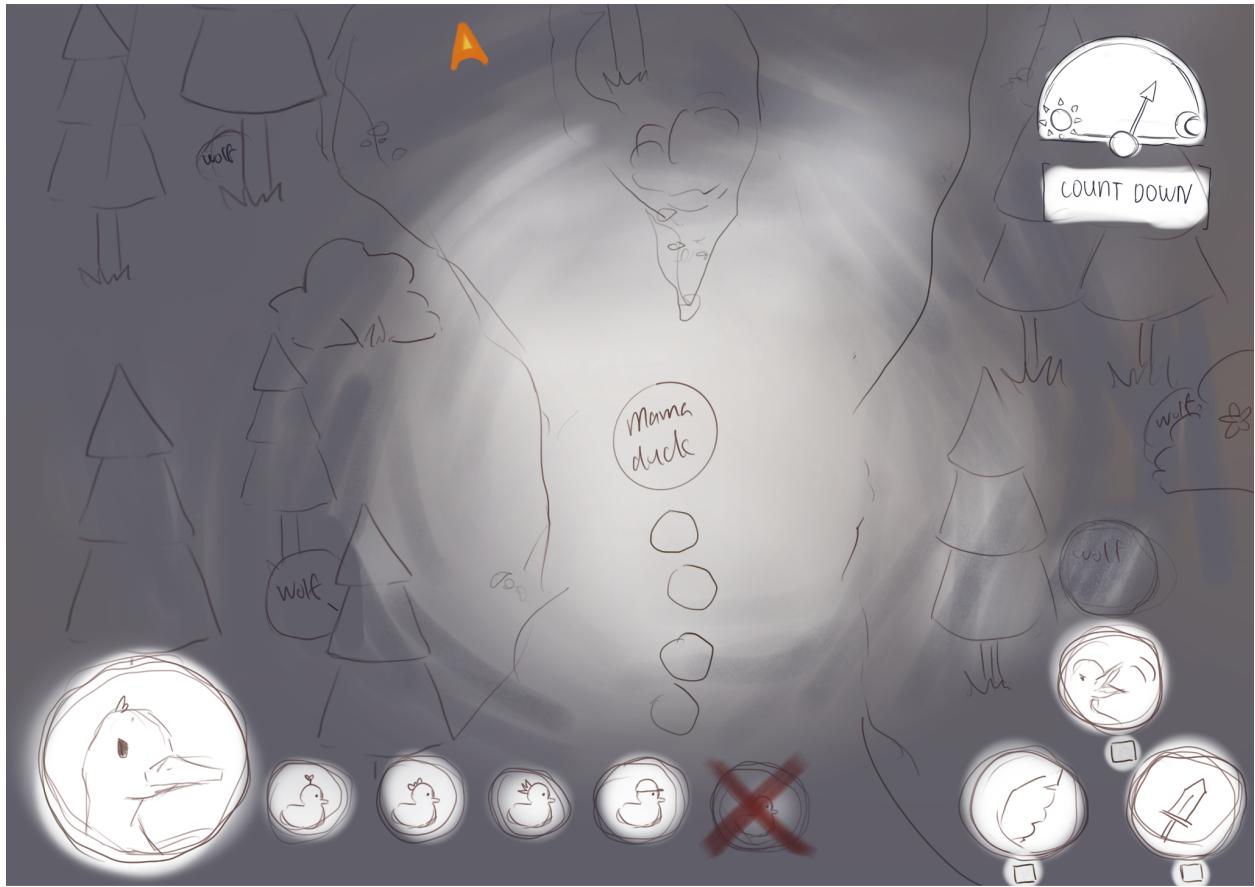
III. Assets

We aim to source these assets, refer to below for our potential candidate assets.

- Environment:
 - <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/3d/environments/landscapes/free-low-poly-nature-forest-205742>
 - <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/3d/environments/stylize-low-poly-wooden-house-248654>
 - <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/3d/props/low-poly-cartoon-houses-227484>
 - <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/3d/environments/landscapes/low-poly-simple-nature-pack-162153>
- Ducks:
 - <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/3d/characters/animals/quirky-series-farm-animals-vol-2-182396>
 - <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/3d/characters/animals/quirky-series-animals-me-ga-pack-vol-1-137259>
- Enemies:
 - <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/3d/characters/animals/birds/low-poly-bird-mallard-duck-231310>
 - <https://assetstore.unity.com/packages/3d/characters/animals/low-poly-animated-animals-93089>

6. USER INTERFACE (UI)

The game's UI is simple, we want everything to have a soft, round feel to it. We have attached an example for the sample UI for the game. The aesthetic should feel in line with the game's poly art cute style, however have colours that are slightly less saturated compared to the game's palette to draw less attention away from the main game. A menu can potentially be added for rebinding of keys as an extension.



7. TECHNOLOGY AND TOOLS

Following list of software and tools we intend to use for this project:

- Github
- Unity
- Discord (for communication)
- Trello (to track feature implementations)
- Ableton Live & Audacity (Creating and modifying game audio)
- Blender (3D modelling)
- Clip Studio Paint/Procreate (Creating cutscenes)
- Photoshop (Image editing for UI, etc.)
- Premiere Pro (creating & editing the game trailer)
- Jetbrains Rider / Visual Studio Code (code editing)

8. TEAM COMMUNICATION, TIMELINES AND TASK ASSIGNMENT

Development:

- We will first develop the base game, creating any basic interfaces and abstract classes needed for the project.

- Once the basic features are implemented, new features will be assigned to each group member. (e.g. implement the fog of war as the night gets dark).
 - Tasks during this step of the project will be distributed in a meeting to ensure equal and comfortability between members with workload and task. Communication will be either online through text or calls using Discord or in person.
- We will use branches on Github to keep track of features, and a merge request will be required to enable the feature in the main branch.
- All committed code should be reviewed by at least one other team member before merging.
- Any non-code features (e.g. UI, visual design, Audio Effects, etc.) should follow the same idea. Progress will be regularly updated both on Trello and to members.
 - The art and sound design will be skill-specific tasks delegated to individual members of the team for consistency across the entire project.
- Code should not be allowed to be directly committed into the main branch.
- We will communicate in English.

9. POSSIBLE CHALLENGES

Some potential problems we foresee happening include being able to effectively use Unity to create the game and implement all our ideas into the game. Being able to create the game mechanics we wish to achieve alongside making sure all the objects and images are rendered correctly. Time management, if not managed correctly, may result in a game not meeting up to our expected standard.

The way we plan to address these issues includes utilising online resources to help us further understand Unity and how to write the scripts in accordance with our plan.

- We should also start working on this game early and be flexible so that we can adjust and adapt our game whenever we encounter challenges technically.
- Prototyping and frequent testing is also essential to track our progress and resolve issues early on to prevent difficulties further into the game development

10. POTENTIAL EXPANSIONS

- Cutscene: Cutscenes throughout the game, i.e: when a duckling dies, or when you first encounter a new terrain
- NPCs: Interactable NPCs which give power ups, new abilities, cut scenes.
- Procedural Generation: multiple chunks of the map will be pre-built, and an algorithm will stitch the chunks together to create a unique map on every play through. (Below is an example taken from the Minecraft Gamemode “Hypixel Skyblock Dungeons”. A map is generated on every play, making the experience non-repetitive.)

