

A Heuristic is a way of evaluating a dimension of a game. It can provide useful information to a game designer to guide the design process. Each heuristic gives a value between 1.0 and 0.0, higher is better.

Balance Heuristic: How equal are the win rates between any pair of players. In some games a certain player, for instance, the one with the first move, has a decisive advantage. Unbalanced games can obviously be unsatisfying for the disadvantaged player.

Drawishness Heuristic: The proportion of games that end in a win/lose for a player, instead of a draw. Many players do not like games which are too drawish.

Completion Heuristic: The proportion of games that reach an end state. Games that consistently fail to reach conclusive outcomes are generally unsatisfying.

Ideal Duration Heuristic: The average number of moves required to complete a game, based on a given ideal range. Players usually do not like when games are too short or too long, and it can indicate flaws in games in both directions: trivial games that end within a few moves, and excessively long games that are difficult to conclude.

Decision Moves Heuristic: The proportion of turns for which the player has more than one legal move. Players like when the game is not deterministic, and provides variety of play.

Board Coverage Default Heuristic: The proportion of board sites that get occupied by a game piece at least once in a playout. Low board coverage indicates that the starting position or movement rules of the game may not be suitable for its board topology, or perhaps the board is simply too big.

Skill trace Heuristic: Measures how much of the game relies on luck versus skill. This metric is important as games with these characteristics can be engaging for players for a long duration of time, especially in games with many strategies that can be learnt in a linear fashion, which makes them easy to learn and encourage further play as deeper strategies are discovered, improving the longevity of the game.

A heuristic is most relevant when its value is smaller, since it may suggest a problem with the game.