Labyrinth of the Goblin King

Games Design Document

Labyrinth of the Goblin King is the First-Person Shooter I developed for my Game Design CA1. It is a dark fantasy dungeon-crawling game, where the player must fight their way through the Goblin King’s labyrinth, killing goblins and grabbing treasure along the way. To escape from the maze, the player must leap into the glowing portal at the other side!

# Concept

As a huge fan of tabletop games, roleplaying videogames, and general science fiction, I wanted to create a game in the conventional and popular dark medieval fantasy style. Drawing inspiration from games such as Skyrim and Dark Souls for my aesthetic, I wanted to recreate the feelings invoked by more fast-paced games such as DOOM. From the start, my concept had simple, clear objectives to win. To conquer the maze and earn score!

# Narrative

You are a goblin vying for the Crown of the Goblin King. To prove yourself, you must escape the labyrinth, killing all who stand in your way. The Goblin King’s treasure has been hidden in the tunnels for you to find and lay claim to… Rise up beyond his challenge and claim the throne for yourself!

## Goals

* A person in a dark room

  Description automatically generatedMaze: As a traditional directional puzzle, mazes show up consistently in games and stories as a fun, engaging obstacle. A glowing portal awaits you at the other end of the maze as your only hope of escape!

Figure : The Goblin of LotGK

* Score: Score is tracked by defeating the goblins of the maze and collecting treasure chests! A classic feature across countless games, it is a simple way to identify how well a player did in comparison to other players.

# Obstacles

* Time: Solving a maze puzzle is simple enough, given the time to do so. Adding time pressure offers an element of difficulty that makes the game more of a challenge to play.
* Goblins: The goblins of the maze are fearsome and vicious – if they get close enough to you, they will damage the player. Keep your health up if you can… When it runs out, it’s game over!

# Concept Art

Figure : Original Game Concept

I wanted to give the game an ominous, subterranean look and feel, which is why I chose earthy stone colours and textures, as well as choosing goblins as the “enemy” obstacle of the game. The labyrinth needed to feel like the player was trapped in there with the goblins, so I used textures to mimic this. Pictured above is a simple conceptual graphic where I laid out my ideas for the game.

In addition to the visuals, I wanted to give the game an old-school soundscape, so I created my own sound files and music, except for the hit and death sounds for the enemies. This gave me great control over the overall audio engineering, giving the labyrinth the atmosphere I was going for.

# Map Design

Originally, the map would have been built by hand-placed assets, but I elected to use random generation to offer the player more replayability within the game. Due to this, I was slightly limited when it came to placing permanent assets. The player always starts in the bottom right corner, and their goal is to make it to the top left. There are several treasure pickups dotted throughout the labyrinth, and an array of glowing crystals light the way through.

# A picture containing diagram Description automatically generatedLevel Design

Due to the nature of the game, despite only having a single level, it has a new layout every time. While this could make raising difficulty harder, there are plenty of other ways to tweak it; from raising the number of enemies to increasing their damage. The maze algorithm also accepts a height and width value, so it can be set to any size from a 2x2 grid upwards. The static assets (Player, End portal, lights & floor) are configured for a 10x10 cell grid.

Diagram, shape

Description automatically generated

Figure : Level Design

Figure : Player Perspective

Pictured above is a top-down sketch of a sample level generated by the maze scripts. Throughout the labyrinth is a series of obstacles and collectibles:

* Blue: The player, who spawns in one corner of the map.
* Green: The exit, which appears in the opposite corner.
* Red: Enemies, which meander through the maze, chasing and damaging the player. They can be killed for more score points.
* Yellow: Treasure. These are pickups the player can find to add to their score.

Shown in Figure 4 is a sketch of how the player would see the game. Solving a maze from above is one matter but finding your way through in first person is another. From within the maze, it feels less like a traditional puzzle and more a winding mesh of tunnels. Due to the nature of the maze, it is easy to be surprised by a goblin rounding the corner, or sometimes even ambushed by a few them, depending on how they happened to spawn.

# Conclusion

Overall, Labyrinth of the Goblin King is a simple game with clear objectives and obstacles. Its key features are its PlayStation One style and its random maze generation. Featuring a modular design, easily incremented difficulty and an immersive audio environment, I was pleased with the game overall. Future goals for Labyrinth of the Goblin King include advanced code for the Navigation Mesh for smarter enemy AI, as well as multiple levels that increment in difficulty as the player progresses, both in size, enemy count, and enemy strength.