

# Ahex Notes

## Introduction

Ahex is a minimalistic puzzle game with hexagonal movements. This document lists thoughts and ideas.

## Aesthetic

- I'd like to go for a soft pastel aesthetic, inspired by games such as [Tunic](#).
- The world has a baseline made of water, which is implemented using the `bevy_water` crate.
- Tiles are hexagonal with the tip pointing up. This is a stylistic design choice. The hexagon is defined through a circumcircle with unit radius, yielding the following geometry:

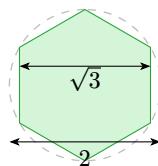


Figure 1: Geometry of a hex tile

Due to Bevy, the  $xz$ -plane is the “flat” ground plane. The  $y$  axis points up. Hence, Figure 1 uses the  $x$  and  $z$  axes.

## Mechanics

- The camera can rotate, so that the player can see behind tall objects.
- The camera should rotate only in intervals of  $\frac{\pi}{3}$  radians at a time, so that the hexagons always end up looking the same. Of course this transition should be fluent.
- The controls (`W/E/A/D/Z/X`) should adapt based on the angle of the camera. Otherwise controls are too confusing for the player if the camera is rotated.
- The player should be able to restart a level using some button, remote from the usual controls. It could be a combination like `Ctrl+R`. Currently: `Backspace`.
- If a level has become unwinnable (due to the player or the *star* falling into the water), the game should hint to use this restart combination.

## Puzzle ideas

- The objective is a *star*. Upon collecting the *star*, the level is completed.
  - Levels may be replayable by implementing a secondary *star* after completion. I'm not sure yet if I want to do this for every level.
  - A *star* is subject to physics just like the player. Hence, a *star* can fall down or be lost to the abyss.
- The player can fall *down*, but not jump *up*. This causes a significant asymmetry for the  $y$  axis.
- The player has a certain height. This disallows him from squeezing between two tiles (one above the other) if there isn't enough height left.
- Tiles can be programmed to move along a *path*. This can have multiple sub-variants:

- Back and forth between two coordinates: this is useful for simple elevators (going up and down the  $y$  axis) or short hops to form bridges.
- A line segment: an extension of just moving back and forth; specify a direction and an amplitude.
- A circle: to recreate floating platforms that can take the player to multiple places, or to even simulate conveyor belts.
- The full solution: a directional path, i.e. a `Vec<isize, isize, isize>`. This would allow a tile to move multiple coordinates in one step, as well as take any arbitrary path. Of course this path *should* return to the tile's original position, although this is not a strict requirement.
- If the player is on a tile that is moving, the player should move along with it.
  - This should keep in mind collisions, e.g. the player can be shoved off if it hits a wall along the way.
- Tiles may be *slippery*. If the player moves on them, the player will continue to move until an end is reached (wall, or edge of the map).
- Tiles may be *fragile*. After the player has stepped on it, it will crumble as soon as the player steps off it.
  - Some *fragile* tiles might be rechargeable.
- Crates* are solid objects that the player can't traverse through, but can push. A push is only possible if the crate can occupy the target hex.
  - Crates* could come in two variants: small hex and full hex. A full crate occupies the entire ground of the tile that it is on. These big crates cannot squeeze through pairs of pillars (like the pillbug in the game [Hive!](#))
- The player is only strong enough to push one *crate* at a time (I think). A series of crates are therefore not pushable in the direction that they form a series in.
- Lasers* block the player from moving through them, much like walls. Lasers extend across the entire level, until blocked by something solid.
  - Lasers* may be blocked by the player pushing a *crate* into its path.
- Trampolines* cause the player or any other solid object to jump one tile. This can be used to cross bridges.
  - Trampolines* could come in fixed or in *crate*-like variants (which can be moved). Note that for this, tile heights must be uniform!
  - If a player falls down flat on top of a *trampoline*, they can no longer move in any direction. This should trigger the restart hint.
  - Jumps should keep into account collisions. The jump might be canceled halfway if the player would otherwise hit a wall. This could cause the player to fall down early.

## Level file format

- The format will be TOML. This is because it allows comments, is not indent-sensitive, has sensible types, and is supported by the `serde` crate.
- The format should be easily extendible. Everything should start in a section to allow for extension.
- Most levels will need only one layer of tiles (i.e. at most one tile at a given  $y$  value). However, the format should allow for multiple layers in case a level will contain caves, stacked layers, and so on.

- The height map can be rectangular, and should map to corresponding  $xz$ -coordinates. The values of tiles can range from 0 to 9 by default. In practice tiles probably won't get higher than this.
- Tiles can be applied one or multiple sets of *modifiers*. Modifiers include:
  - Has a player on top of it
  - Has a goal on top of it
  - Is slippery
  - Is fragile
  - Has a crate on top of it
  - Is a trampoline