Fimbulvinter Playtesting Review

# Playtest 1

**Number of Testers:** 4

**Average Play Time:** 1 minute

**Concepts/Features Tested:** Movement mechanics, basic interaction/inventory system, navigation between scenes.

## Findings

This prototype was minimally functional – players could move, pick up or examine some items, and navigate between scenes. Essentially, this was a test that to ensure that the built elements were functional. This version of the game was released as a web-based game because I initially thought this would ensure quick testing.

The Pros: Users liked the art style and graphics.

The Cons: The controls weren’t very clear, and there were some collision issues (users could walk to the end of one scene and walk off the edge, even though the camera stopped following. In addition, the web-based release cut off portions of the screen, and playing in full mode negated the efficacy of using the escape key to open the menu (it would shut down the full screen mode instead).

## Proposed Changes

For future iterations, I intend to add a small onboarding alert at the beginning to inform the player what controls are available. In addition, I’ll add a controls window to the options tab of the menu as a refresher.

The collision issues that were reported are a simple matter of programming interfering. They’re an easy fix. I do intend to eventually add some cinematics between scenes to help with story and explain why certain paths are un-navigable.

Finally, any future releases will be a PC/Mac download, to eliminate issues with accessing the options menu.

# Playtest 2

**Number of Testers:** 3

**Average Play Time:** 3 min

**Concepts/Features Tested:** Enemy AI and shooting combat, real-time rules, consumables, death state.

## Findings

Again, the graphics received positive reviews, so did the new animations. The current combat mechanics have also been well-received, but the enemy’s disappearing on death is a little awkward. In addition, players expressed uncertainty over the use of the health items – it wasn’t clear they had regained any health until they left the menu.

## Proposed Changes

At this stage, there’s really not many changes I can make due to scope. However, if I had the time (or when I re-visit this at a later date), I would make a smoother transition from an enemy’s death to a dropped item – I had some animations in the works already, but due to the way I built things events are happening simultaneously, rather than in sequence (a dead NPC disappears before the player can see the animation). Attempts to fix this resulted in a dead NPC sprite that could still hurt the player on contact.

I’ve got a similar problem with the health bar. Currently, it’s hidden when the menu is open for aesthetic purposes. However, if I were to enable it, the screen is still paused, so I’m not entirely sure how to adjust this so the bar can keep working.

# Playtest 3

**Number of Testers: 1**

**Average Play Time: 7 min.**

**Concepts/Features Tested:** Game feel (added cinematics and audio), dialogue, general improvements.

## Findings

The atmosphere created by the soundscape and cinematics was well-received, however several bugs – such as buttons suddenly not working and menus freezing after playthroughs – were detected by the player. Some additional quality-of-life changes were also suggested, such as using the same music for the Main Menu and Credits scenes.

## Proposed Changes

Bug correction is a priority at this point. With the deadline looming, what can be fixed for smoother gameplay is paramount. There are a few screen scaling issues that I don’t know how to fix, but they’re relatively minor compared to menus freezing.