



LAMEJAM

LEARN. GAME. JAM.

November 26th - 28th, 2021

www.lamejam.com

Welcome!

What to expect from this...

1. Overview of LameJam and the schedule
2. Keynote from Connor on jamming and creativity
3. Theme announcement!

Who are we?
Meet the coordinators!

Code of Conduct

What is LameJam?

Your **first** game jam.

Started by **local jammers, students, instructors**, to promote the awesome local industry and get more people out to game jams!

Our second run, and hopefully an annual event.

What should I do right now?

1. Join the jam on Itch.io
2. Form a team, or look for a team taking new members if you don't have one (**post if you're accepting new folks! Please be open :)**)
3. Consider any talks you might be interested in joining!
4. Hang out, listen up, and get ready to brainstorm.

Jam Rules, Allowances

Your jam, your goals, your experience.

1. Absolutely no harassment. This is a positive place for people just starting out! Message [@Organizers](#) if you encounter ANY issues
2. You may use any premade assets, code - as long as you are licensed to do so.
3. Tabletop submissions are fine! Submit instructions, printables, or try out PlayingCards.io

Where should I be jamming?

- Message @Organizers to get a channel on the LameJam Discord!
 - Show off progress! Use it as a dev log! Share what's happening
 - Mentors can stop by on occasion and see how things are going
 - Late additions may be looking for teams
 - Call for playtests!
- Feel free to start your own Discord chats!

Where should I get help?

- For any issues with harassment, finding teams, or questions about the event: DM or ping any [@Organizers](#) for help
- For help with making your game, ping [@Mentors](#) or post in the [#Mentors](#) channels

Friday Schedule

8:00-8:30 PM EST

Jam Skills: Quick, Iterative Prototypes

Learn some hacky quick tricks and tips to speed up certain aspects of making your jam entry, including quick sound effects, art, and faking level transitions

10:00 PM EST

Day End

The Discord will become inactive. Get some sleep and come back refreshed tomorrow!

Saturday Morning Schedule

9:00-9:45 AM EST

Open Source Game Development

Forest Anderson of open source RPG *Veloren* will be talking about his experiences in the world of open source game development.

10:00-10:30 AM EST

Production Skills for Game Jams

Agile Game Development instructor Connor Hillen will be discussing production techniques to help keep teams organized and on track during game jams (and beyond!).

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM EST

Retro Repair Stream

Join Carleton BITSoc's Matthew King in a relaxed stream where he discusses and repairs pieces of retro game equipment. Feel free to drop by while working and hang out!

Saturday Evening Schedule

7:30 - 8:00 PM EST

Exporting and Publishing Godot Games

To kickstart our first jam playtesting session, Forest will be giving a brief instruction on how to take a game in Godot and export it to publish to Itch.io, making it accessible to anyone wanting to play.

8:00 - 9:00 PM EST

Playtest Session

Try to have something prepared! We'll be announcing a call to post your progress, get feedback on GIFs or screenshots, or have folks play your game and offer advice. Use the feedback to discuss with your team and come back with ideas for wrapping up on Sunday!

10:00 PM EST

Day End

The Discord will become inactive. Get some sleep and come back refreshed tomorrow!

Sunday Schedule

3:00 - 4:00 PM EST

Submission Period

Submissions close at 4:00PM, so make sure to have your game posted to Itch.io before then! For help with submissions, organizers will be on hand to answer questions.

4:30 - 5:00 PM EST

Local Industry Panel

Join Ottawa based SkyPyre Studios in a Q&A panel about their experiences in the local industry and getting up and running with a studio!

5:30 PM EST

Closing Statements

Here we'll be offering a few closing words and talking about your next steps after LameJam.



Creativity and Your First Jam

Connor Hillen @ChillenLD

LameJam

Nov. 26-28, 2021

www.lamejam.com

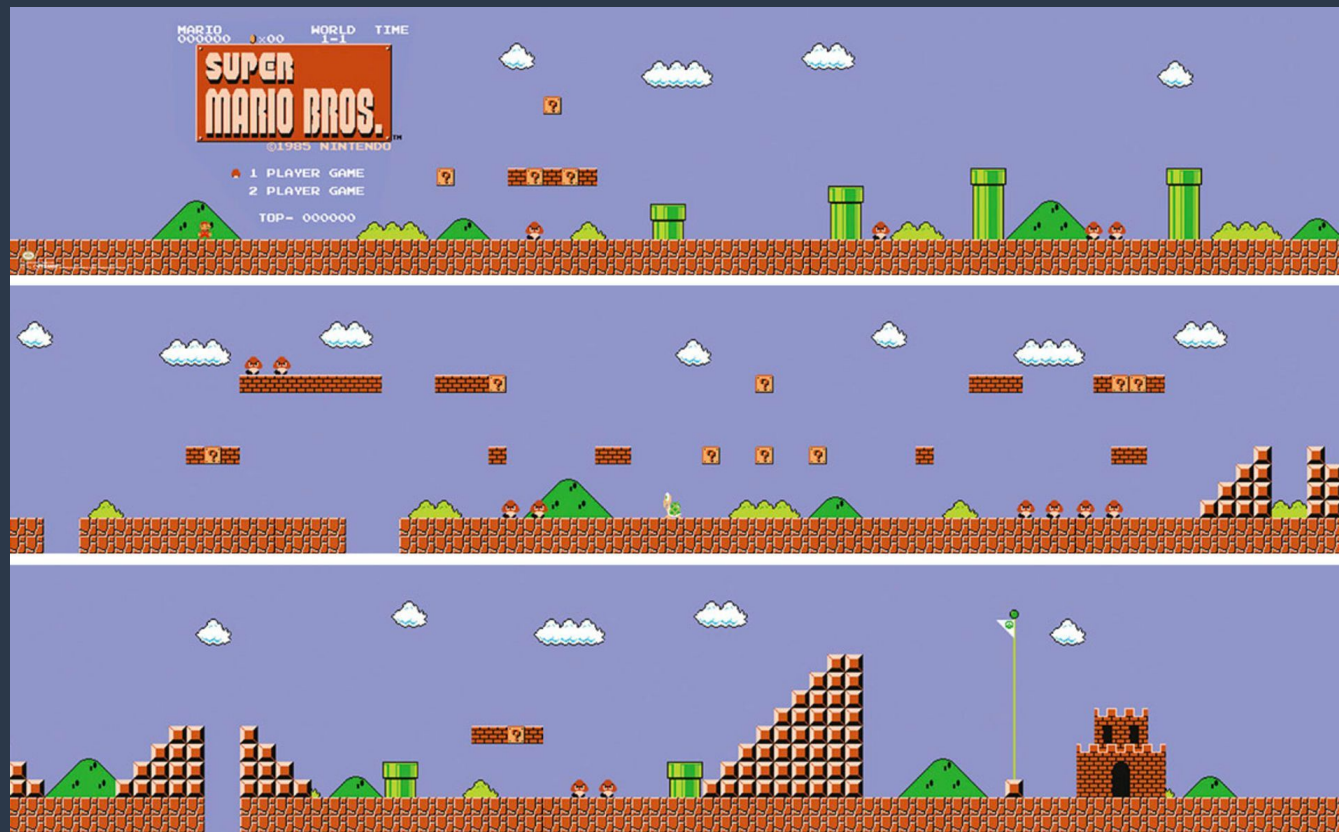
What is a game?

Design and play

Disclaimer!

There's endless ways to look at games

We'll focus on ones to help in a jam

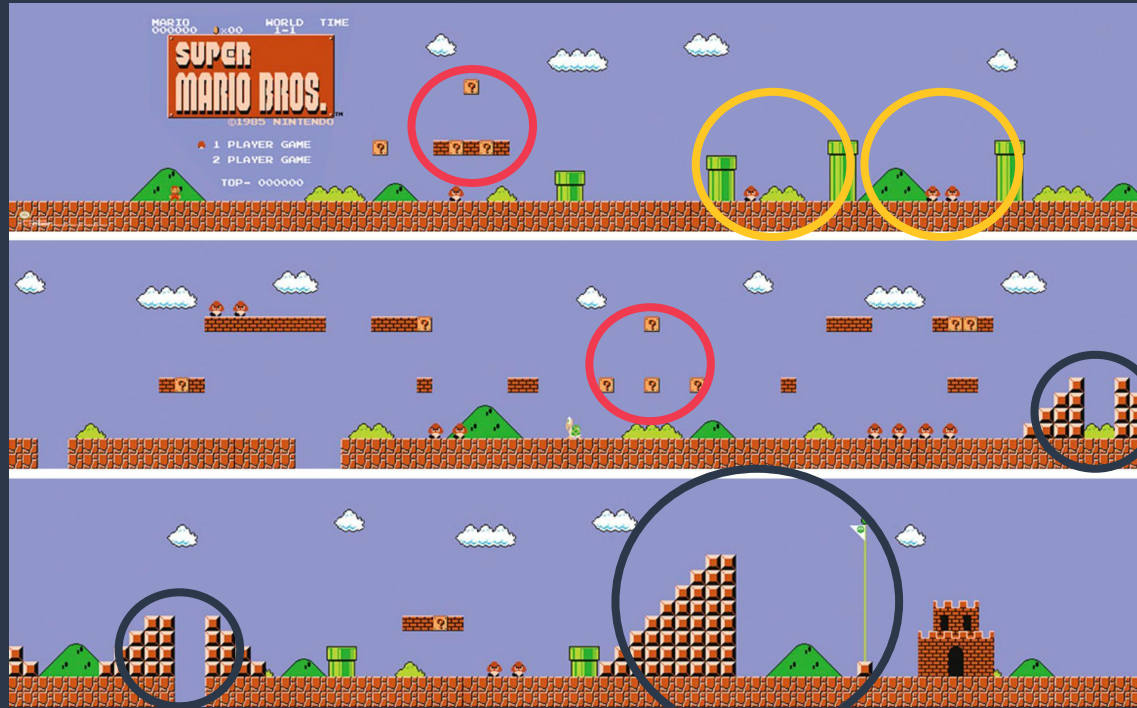


Games are goals, space, obstacles, and interactions

Goals, Obstacles, Space, Rewards, and Interactions

Start simple. (Brainstorm each in chat! Goal: ... , Obstacles: ...)

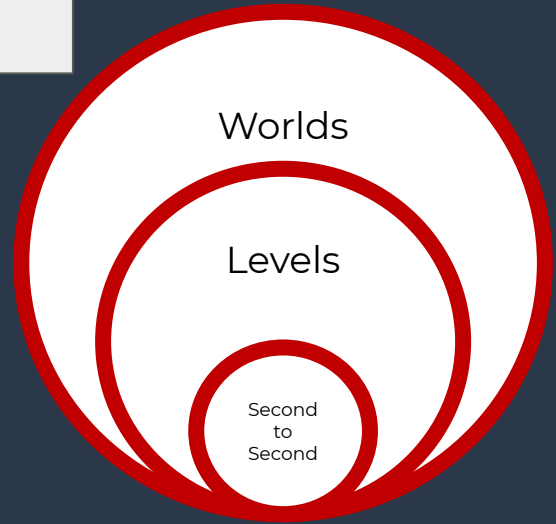
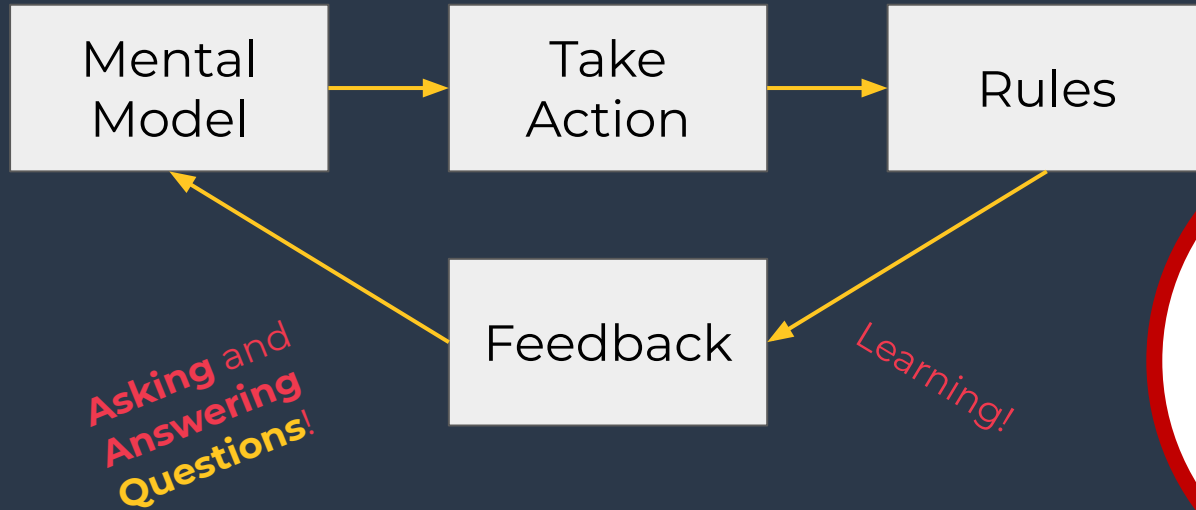
- Pick a big goal
 - Get to the finish
 - Find the item(s)
 - Find the liar
 - Acquire territory
 - ...
- Pick interactions to reach that goal
 - Two joysticks
 - Motion controls
 - WASD
 - Conversation
 - Brain-Computer Interface
 - Bananas
- Design the space
 - Square grid
 - Side-scroll platformer
 - Tunnel
- Put obstacles in the way
 - Blockades
 - Locks
 - Enemies
 - Hidden information
 - Rivalries
 - Resources



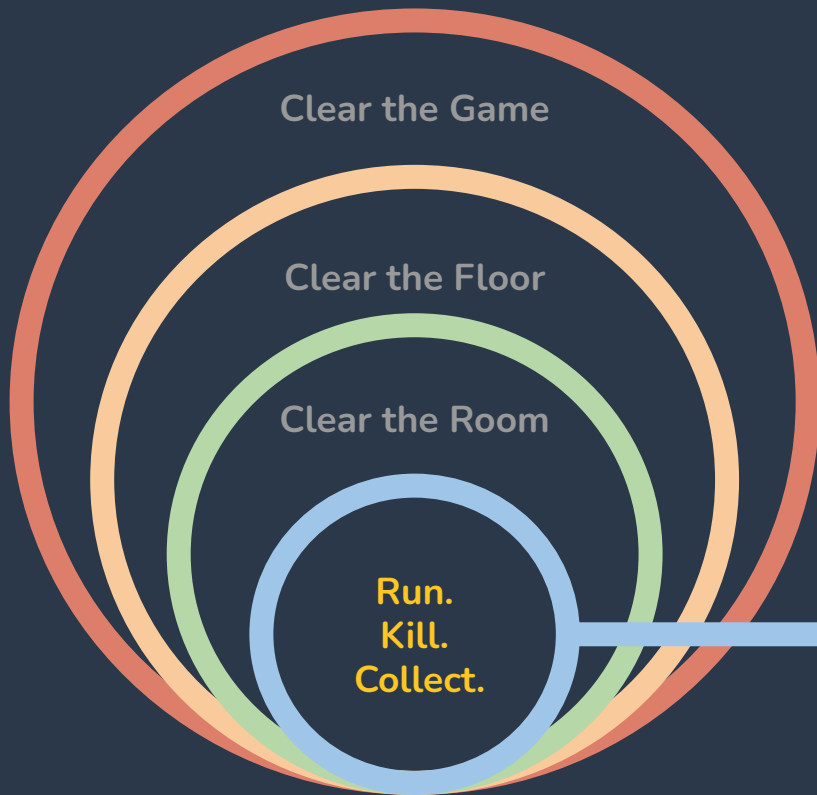
How many goals, subgoals are there?
What keeps us from reaching these?

Are there patterns we can tweak and reuse in new ways?

Evaluating and solving problems



Games are loops of varying sizes



What questions does the loop ask?

Should I run past the enemy?
What's that enemy?
What's this item do?
Can I kill this?
Can I reach that item?
How much health do I have?

Consider the loops in your game - what are the rewards?
The questions? The inputs, obstacles, etc?

**Consider a flowchart before
making the game**



Game design is **experience design**

Designing Emotional Experience

Designing a game is designing an experience, but **we can't directly create an experience** - only the **path** to get there.

- What should the player **feel as they play**?
- **Who are our players**, what are they bringing in?
- What is **essential** in capturing that experience... What **isn't**?
- What **moments** do I want the player to experience?
 - "Oh, I didn't expect that!"
 - "AHHHHHHHHHH this is so annoying"
 - "Lmfao what?"

What can we change to make the player feel what we want, when?

Different Approaches

Narratively Driven

- Start with a story, a theme, a set of experiences you want the player to feel
- Consider the real world systems in play
- Consider mechanics that evoke similar feelings in games you've played... Could they work here?

Mechanically Driven

- Consider a cool interaction, rule, or toy that's fun to play with
- Explore what makes it fun, interesting
- Follow that fun and build the game around it

The more your elements harmonize, the better it feels

Does your story make sense for the gameplay?

The aesthetic and world?

The characters and the interactions?



Creativity

What is it?



Play

Discovery

Creativity

What is it?

Novelty

Connections

Problem Solving

Creativity is **discovering novel solutions** to creative problems

Start with a creative problem

Constraints create unique problems to solve

Quick Brainstorming Methods

Mix and Match

- Consider some elements from the previous breakdown discussions
- Brainstorm a few for each category
- Randomly mix one from each category, and try to pitch a game that follows it

Example:

- Goals
 - Capture the flag
 - Don't fall off
 - Find the keys
- Story
 - Quitting a terrible job
 - Falling in love
 - Saving the prince
- Space
 - Platformer
 - Conversation (dialogue screen)
 - "Space" (floating around webcam view)

Quick Brainstorming Methods

Disruption

- Take an existing (**simple**) game or mechanic you know well. Break it down.
- Tweak one aspect of it
 - Remove something, add something
 - Change the goal, keep the interaction
 - Add a different style of obstacle
- Test it, **improve** it
- **Make it make sense**

Example:

- Mario, without jumping
- Tic-Tac-Toe, on a hex grid
- Chess, with hidden information

Brainstorming Tips

- No Bad Ideas
 - Don't shoot down anyone's idea!
 - **Yes, And** to build upon ideas
 - Reign it in when it's gone too long without fresh ideas
- Throw away your early ideas
 - Try to dig a little! Early ideas tend to be more common than you think
- Start Simple
 - Start with *just* the goal
 - It's going to be boring, so **fix it**
 - Fixing, improving, is easier than starting with a blank page

Jam Tips

From idea to playable

Ideas: Keep it small. No, smaller. SMALLER!!!!!!

- Pick an idea, and stick with it
 - Jams can get discouraging - you may dislike your idea
 - That's fine: Make it anyways, and if you have time, use that energy to pick it apart and improve it one step at a time
- No, your idea is too big
 - Aim to have a basic version hacked together within **hours** - on paper, with a one page rulebook played over voice chat, in a spreadsheet, or in a powerpoint presentation
 - Aim to have a proper playable (digital version, components for pen/paper) by Day 2 and get it out to playtesters! It will be very early, but feedback will help
 - Avoid learning too many new things at once. The more you don't know for certain, the smaller the scope of the project should be

Collaborate

Playtest early, often.

Share ideas, struggles, discoveries

Bring diverse opinions, share ownership

Design

Consider the experience of the player

- Design levels
- Consider playtest feedback
- Try mechanics to create experiences

Art

Create the sensations of the game

- Create a mood board
- Conceptualize the look, feel, sound of the aesthetic
- Create sprites, music, sound effects, backgrounds

Development

Technically create the experience

- Setup the project
- Find the quickest implementation of the design
- Negotiate design feasibility

Production

Keep the project moving

- Keep the deadlines in mind, suggest cutting scope
- Keep the team communicating
- Coordinate the “meta” aspects (submissions, marketing)

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Have Leads, Not Dictators

A leader takes into account everyone's opinions.
You're ultimately responsible, but not the sole owner.

Missing a role? Consider alternatives.

Use free assets, codeless game engines, share production (with alarms, meetings), recreate existing designs

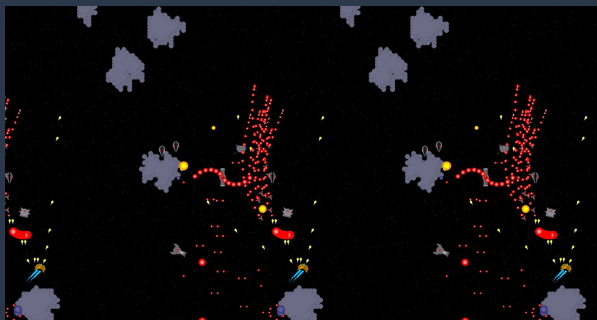
Implementations

Assets

- Make your own cheap “programmer art”
- Artists, ask about how assets work in the game engine
- Find copyright-free game assets - look at licenses!
 - CC0 - Fully free to use with no restrictions
 - CC-BY - Free to use, credit the creator
 - CC-SA - Your work must also be shared under creative commons

Development

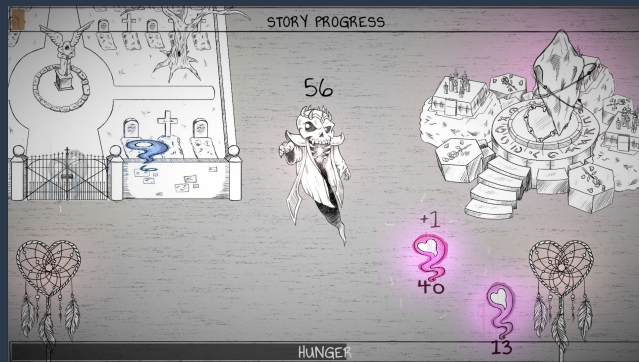
- Find the fastest implementations. Negotiate the design to get it up faster... **Is that bug really a feature?**
- Work *with* the tools, do what they're good at
- Avoid “frivolous” features
 - Can you get by without menus or fancy transitions?
 - Do you need to waste time on resolution scaling?
 - If it's not working, is it really worth it?



<https://ldjam.com/events/ludum-dare/38/bullet-wrap>



<https://ldjam.com/events/ludum-dare/43/diortem>



<https://ldjam.com/events/ludum-dare/46/lich-clicker>



<https://ldjam.com/events/ludum-dare/42/rainforest>

Only played popular games? Check out jam entries for inspiration!

<https://ldjam.com/games/smart/all/everything>

What is your team interested in?

A fun, quirky mechanic?

A compelling story, aesthetic?

Just making something run?

**Keep it small.
Focused.
Simple.**

**Share a vision.
Communicate.
Be open to change.**

**Have fun.
Sleep well.
Eat healthy.**

Make this your first jam.
Not your best.
Not your last :)



Theme Announcement!

Forest Anderson @AngelOnFira

LameJam
Nov. 26-28, 2021

www.lamejam.com

About Themes

Your team can interpret the theme any way you like!

It's meant to unify submissions, to be a creative prompt, but how you incorporate the theme is up to you.

We also provide a list of optional constraints to spice up your design!
Discuss with your team if any sound interesting.

Optional Constraints

These can help with brainstorming.

You can start with one, or multiple, and remove them if it's too challenging.

It's up to you.

Visuals

Nitro Boost

The only sprites in your game are emoji.

Palette 404

Your game has at most 4 distinct colours.

Personification

At least 3 assets come from pictures taken during the jam.

Sound

Bleep Box

All sounds were made by the team recording themselves.

Recycle

All sound effects are modifications of the same starting sound.

Development

Data Scientist

Your entire game is playable in a spreadsheet.

Web 3.0

Your game looks like a normal website, but looks are deceiving.

Gameplay

30 Seconds or Less

Your game is played in at most 30 second sessions.

Four Buttons

Your game can be played with at most four inputs.

And now the theme....

Brainstorm Session

- Take 10 minutes to brainstorm ideas solo
- If you have a team...
 - Meet up with your team and brainstorm!
 - Try not to spend long - after an hour, you should be trying to solidify an idea
- If you do not have a team...
 - Drop into the Speed Friending Lounge
 - We'll do small group speed friending to chat about your ideas for the jam!
 - If you find someone you'd like to join, breakaway and work on ideas