

Space Simulator

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Design

Your title screen was clean and attractively retro. Since this game will be rendered in 3D, it was unclear whether this design style will carry over into the final implementation. If it does (if only for menus and other UI elements), you might consider using text colors that are always visually distinct from the background they lay upon. In particular, the labels on the title screen were somewhat dark; tending to blend rather than contrast with the black background.

The white, square stars of the background intersect with player's available options; threatening to obscure these choices. You mentioned that this screen may even be animated with moving stars and planets. While this could certainly be awe-inspiring, it may further obscure selectable menu items. If the interactive elements are not always clearly visible, players may have difficulty navigating this and other menus. A semi-transparent overlay between the background and text could make it much more legible.

Consider the articles on **color**, **consistency**, **entry points**, **highlighting**, **legibility**, and **visibility** in the *Universal Principles of Design* book required for this course.

Your menus contain many options that allow players to modify the way the space simulation is experienced. However, it is not always obvious what certain options will change. Some explanatory text for every selected menu item may be beneficial, especially if fun names like “realistic controls” will be retained in future iterations of this design. There may be many menus where explanatory text is necessary. It may even appear as the player is interacting with the simulation. You might consider always presenting this text in a consistent font, color, style, and screen orientation (like center-bottom).

Since there are many options to fiddle with, users may accidentally toggle settings that they later find undesirable. You might consider having users confirm changes in settings (upon exit) or allow them to revert to the game's default options.

Consider the articles on **recognition over recall** and **forgiveness**.

The premise for the game/simulation is novel and interesting. However, the simulation might be game-ified by including objectives that fully demonstrate its features. For example, having players orbit a planet by following a pre-calculated path might be made even more interesting if their efforts were sensitive to limited time, fuel, oxygen, or other resources. They might be motivated to travel space in search of broken satellites or aliens.

Consider the articles on **immersion** and **storytelling**.