

HOTDOG HUSTLER — MASTER GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT (GDD v2)

Author: Terry Teng

Studio: Kato.8 Studios

Engine: Unity 2D

Version: v2 (Unified + Finalized v1 Scope)

Platform: PC (Steam + itch.io)

Project Type: Short Commercial Micro-Game

Target Build Length: ~2 Months

1. HIGH CONCEPT

Hotdog Hustler is a fast, cozy, multi-day hotdog cart simulator where players toast buns, grill sausages, add toppings, serve customers, earn money, and unlock new ingredients as they build their street-food empire.

Gameplay blends **relaxing routine**, **manageable pressure**, and **light progression** across multiple days with a simple but satisfying upgrade loop.

Tagline:

“Serve fast. Rise slow.”

2. TARGET AUDIENCE

- Casual players
- Cooking/time-management fans
- Overcooked / Cook Serve Delicious / PlateUp audience
- TikTok/itch.io gamers

- Short-session players

Ideal session length: 3–5 minutes per day

Age range: 13–40+

3. CORE DESIGN PILLARS

Pillar	Description
Precision Under Pressure	Simple actions, tight timing, light challenge
Relaxing Routine	Rhythmic flow, cozy animations, accessible pace
Upgrade & Progression	Unlock toppings, scale difficulty, meaningful growth
Satisfying Game Feel	Crisp audio, responsive inputs, readable visuals
Replayability Through Days	Multi-day progression, scaling customer demand

4. CORE GAME LOOP (MOMENT-TO-MOMENT)

Loop Flow

1. Receive Order → 2. Toast Bun → 3. Grill Sausage → 4. Add Toppings → 5. Serve → 6. Earn Money → 7. Next Customer

Player Actions

- Move between stations
- Interact with toaster, grill, topping station
- Select unlocked toppings
- Verify correct order
- Serve customer before patience expires

Systems Triggered

- OrderManager
- CartStateMachine
- CustomerSpawner
- OrderValidator
- CurrencyManager



5. META LOOP (DAY-TO-DAY PROGRESSION)

After 10–15 customers...

End of Day Summary

- Customers served
- Customers failed
- Total money earned

- Accuracy breakdown

Shop Phase

- Spend money to **unlock new toppings**

Next Day

- Difficulty scales:
 - Slightly faster customer spawn
 - Slightly lower patience
 - Orders can include newly unlocked toppings

- ✓ Persistent unlocks
 - ✓ Uses Save/Load
 - ✓ No combo system in v1
 - ✓ No events/rush hour in v1 (saved for v2)
-



6. TOPPING SYSTEM (FINALIZED)

Start with ONLY:

- Ketchup
- Mustard

Unlockable Toppings (Full List Kept)

Basic Tier

- Relish
- Mayo

- Hot Sauce
- BBQ Sauce

Better Tier

- Onions
- Sauerkraut
- Tomatoes
- Jalapeños
- Pickles
- Coleslaw
- Avocado
- Cilantro
- Lettuce
- Pico de Gallo

Premium Tier

- Chili
- Grilled Onions
- Cheese
- Guacamole
- Bacon
- Pulled Pork
- Potato Chips

- Pork Rinds

Rules

- Only unlocked toppings appear in customer orders
 - All toppings are ScriptableObjects:
 - Name
 - Icon
 - Price
 - Tier
 - Display sprite(s)
 - Higher tier = higher payout
 - Pricing progression balances economy
-

7. SYSTEMS DESIGN

7.1 Cart State Machine (Core to v1)

Handles transitions:

- Toasting
- Grilling
- Toppings
- Serving

7.2 Order System

- Randomizes orders based on **unlocked topping pool**
- Tracks order accuracy
- Validates serving

7.3 Customer System

- Spawn logic
- Queue up to 5
- Patience meter
- Simple happy/neutral/angry reactions

(No VIP personalities in v1)

7.4 Queue System

- Max 5
- If full → customers walk past

7.5 Currency System

- Earn money based on accuracy & topping values
 - -50% payment for 1st wrong topping
 - -10% more for each additional wrong topping
- Used to unlock toppings in shop

7.6 Upgrade System (Topping Unlock Shop Only)

- Single shop panel

- Unlock toppings permanently

7.7 Day Cycle Manager

- Tracks current day
- Difficulty scaling
- Integrates with Save System

7.8 Save/Load System (Included in v1)

- JSON file
 - Autosaves after each day
 - Saves:
 - Unlocked toppings
 - Money
 - Current day
 - Difficulty variables
-



8. ART DIRECTION (v1)

Style:

- Pixel art or clean 2D
- Soft, warm colors

- Readable ingredients
- Low animation frame count (6–8 frames)

Required Assets:

- Hotdog cart
 - Bun (raw → toasting → toasted)
 - Sausage (raw → cooking → cooked → burnt)
 - All topping icons + sprites
 - Customers (3–5 variations)
 - Background (single)
 - UI elements (tickets, buttons, money counter, shop icons)
 - SFX cues (steam, grill, topping squirt, order ding)
-



9. AUDIO DESIGN (v1)

Music:

- One looping daytime track
- Light & cozy

SFX:

- Toast sound
- Grill sizzle
- Topping application

- UI clicks
- Order ready
- Customer reaction

(No dynamic music or event stingers in v1)



10. TECHNICAL DESIGN

Engine:

- Unity 2D (URP optional)

Input:

- Keyboard only (WASD + interact)

Core Scripts (Recommended, not mandatory)

- GameStateManager
- CartStateMachine
- OrderManager
- CustomerSpawner
- UpgradeManager
- CurrencyManager
- DayCycleManager
- PanelRouter
- AudioManager

Structure:

- Single scene
 - Manager-based architecture
 - ScriptableObject-driven data
 - Dev chooses implementation details (flexible for programmer)
-



11. BALANCING (v1)

Variables:

- Customer patience: 30–45 seconds
- Grill timer: 5–7 seconds
- Topping unlock prices: Basic < Better < Premium
- Daily difficulty scaling:
 - +5% customer spawn frequency
 - -5% patience

Order Complexity:

- Day 1: 1–2 toppings
 - As upgrades progress: up to 5 toppings
 - Only unlocked toppings eligible
-



12. PRODUCTION ROADMAP (v1)

(Simplified for GDD – Detailed roadmap stays in Production Plan)

Phase 1 – Pre-Production

- Topping list finalized
- Art style locked
- Architecture outlined

Phase 2 – Core Systems

- State machines
- Order + Customer system
- Stations working

Phase 3 – Progression & Day Cycle

- Shop system
- Summary screen
- Save/Load

Phase 4 – Content Completion

- Full topping set
- Customer variations
- UI polish

Phase 5 – Polish & QA

- Timing tuning
- SFX polish
- Performance

Phase 6 – Release Prep

- Steam + itch.io builds
- Screenshots / trailer clips

13. FUTURE FEATURES (v2 / Next Iteration)

These are intentionally excluded from v1:

- Combo System
- Rush Hour Events
- VIP Customers
- Weather & Lighting variations
- Cart equipment upgrades
- Reputation to increase popularity
- Cosmetics & visual upgrade shop
- Achievements
- Leaderboards
- Mobile version

- Additional foods (burgers, tacos, etc.)

These expansions plug naturally into the existing v1 architecture.