

# Video Game Design

## Chapter 2 Game Design

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Witcha Feungchan

# Game Design Criteria

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- Goal: to design a good video game and engage wide players
- No “fun” means no game
- Players will not play a game if they do not enjoy (fun) it.
- There are lot of rules and guideline to create the good video games.
- Industry
- Academic

# “Fun”

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- An essential goal for games is enjoyment or “fun” of users, which is the most significant key of success in games.
- The definition of “fun” is behavior or an activity that are enjoyable or amusing.
- How to make a “fun” game?
  - No silver-bullet solution
  - Trials
  - Possible to make *high quality* games that *satisfy* players

# “Fun” for people

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- Diversity is one of the challenged key for game design.
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Races
  - Languages
  - Cultures
  - Locations

# Industrial criteria

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- Industrial side cares about the profit, their criteria mostly focus on how to make their games to become a blockbuster.
- Profit is a big key.
- They learn from the past (successful sequel or crappy games).
- Publisher's rules publisher's games
- Marketing (time to release)
- Restrict to game engines and technologies

# Industrial criteria cont.

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- There are some keys from the industrial side

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Gameplay                        |
| Graphic                         |
| Sound                           |
| Fun, Entertainment              |
| Value                           |
| Replayable,                     |
| Lifespan, Longevity, Durability |
| Control                         |
| Innovation, Originality         |
| Concept                         |

# Industrial criteria cont.

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- There are some keys from the industrial side

|                   |
|-------------------|
| Impression        |
| Presentation      |
| Community         |
| Multiplayer       |
| Learning Curve    |
| Tilt              |
| Lasting appeal    |
| Mainstream appeal |
| Experience        |
| Plot, Story       |
| Polish            |
| Interface         |

# Academic criteria

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- The academic side focuses on how to create good video games.
- Covers from game design through development
- Four main criteria
  - Game interface
  - Gameplay
  - Game mechanic
  - Immersion
  - Social interaction

# Game interface & control

Controls should be customizable and default to industry standard settings

Controls should be intuitive and mapped in a natural way

Minimize control options

The interface should be as non-intrusive as possible

For PC games, consider hiding the main computer interface during game play

A player should always be able to identify their score/status in the game

Follow the trends set by the gaming community to shorten the learning curve

Interfaces should be consistent in control, color, typography, and dialog design

Minimize the menu layers of an interface (menus within menus)

Use sound to provide meaningful feedback

Do not expect the user to read a manual

Should include online help so players do not need to exit the game

Provide means for error prevention and recovery through the use of warning messages

Players should be able to save games in different states.

Players should feel a sense of control over the game shell (starting, stopping, saving, etc.)

# Gameplay

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There should be a clear overriding goal of the game presented early

Intermediate goals should be clear and presented at appropriate times

There should be variable difficulty level

Challenges in games must match the players' skill levels

The level of challenge should increase as the player progresses through the game and

There should be multiple goals on each level

“A good game should be easy to learn and hard to master” (Nolan Bushnell)

The game should have an unexpected outcome

Artificial intelligence should be reasonable yet unpredictable

Game play should be balanced so that there is no definite way to win

Play should be fair

The game should give hints, but not too many

The game should give rewards

Games should increase the players' skills at an appropriate pace as they progress through

Pace the game to apply pressure to, but not frustrate the player

# Gameplay cont.

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Provide an interesting and absorbing tutorial

Players should be able to start playing the game without reading the manual

Allow players to build content

Make the game replayable

Create a great storyline

There must not be any single optimal winning strategy

Should use visual and audio effects to arouse interest

Should provide a lot of stimuli from different sources

Include a lot of interactive props for the player to interact with

Teach skills early that you expect the players to use later

Design for multiple paths through the game

One reward of playing should be the acquisition of skill

Build as though the world is going on whether your character is there or not

If the game cannot be modeless, it should feel modeless to the player

Get the player involved quickly and easily

# Gameplay cont.

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Should quickly grab the players' attention and maintain their focus throughout the game

Should not distract player from tasks that they want or need to concentrate on

# Game mechanic

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Mechanics should feel natural and have correct weight and momentum

Players should feel a sense of control over their characters or unit and their movements and interactions in the game world

Players should feel a sense of control over the game interface and input devices

Feedback should be given immediately to display user control

# Immersion

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Players should become less aware of their surroundings

Players should become less self-aware and less worried about everyday life or self

Players should experience an altered sense of time

Players should feel emotionally involved in the game

Players should feel viscerally involved in the game

# Social Interaction

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| Should support competition and cooperation between players     |
| Should support social interaction between players (chat, etc.) |
| Should support social communities inside and outside the game  |
| Strong communities   |

# Summary

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- “Fun” is the most important key for video game
- Game design criteria from industry and academic
  - Gameplay, game mechanic, game interface, control, immersion
  - Social interaction, graphic, sound, multiplayer, plot, and etc.

**“Think like a child and release your imagination”**