



How to make a game in a week

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Who am I?

- Studied Computer Science 2005-2009
- Warwick Game Design exec member
- But the only thing that's actually relevant:
 - I make games
 - Not very good games
 - Rarely finished
 - But I make them anyway



Why make one week games?

- Best way of learning
 - For all disciplines
- Stops you aiming for the moon
- Prototype a game idea to see if it's fun



“I have a game idea already”

- If it's a good game idea, you could probably make a prototype of it in a week
 - If you know what you're doing
 - You probably don't know what you're doing
- If it can't be prototyped in a week, it's probably not a good game idea
 - Simplify ruthlessly



How to get a suitable idea

- Don't think that you have to be innovative
- Think of something REALLY simple
 - No, simpler
- “Good artists copy; great artists steal”
 - Try taking an existing game or a gameplay mechanic from an existing game
 - Make a new game from it



What not to do

- Networking
- Physics
- 3D graphics

What to make the game in



- It's a lot faster to make something in Game Maker than in C++
 - Game Maker
 - Construct
 - Flixel (for programmers)
 - Unity (for programmers)
- Linux users
 - Flixel or PyGame are probably your best bets



Graphics tools

- Whatever you're comfortable with
 - GIMP
 - Photoshop
 - Graphics Gale
 - MS Paint
 - mtPaint (if you hate yourself)
- Don't ignore vector graphics
 - Inkscape
 - Illustrator



Audio tools: sound effects

- SFXR: http://www.drpetter.se/project_sfxr.html
- Audacity: <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>
- Free sound effect websites:
<http://blog.princeporter.com/awesome-sources-for-sound-effects/693/>



Audio tools: music

- Probably not a good use of time to compose it during the week unless you're brilliant
 - But if you ask, I can provide links for that
- Free music websites:
<http://www.newgrounds.com/audio/>
<http://incompetech.com/m/c/royalty-free/>
And more...



Timeline

- Very, very rough guide
- By hour 1, you should have something moving
- By hour 3-4, it should be fun
- By hour 7-8, it should be vaguely presentable
- There are never enough hours in a week



Tips and tricks

- Your priority is to make it fun immediately
 - Then you make it funner
- Don't spend too long on graphics
- Don't underestimate sound/music
- If it doesn't look impressive, add particles
- Don't be afraid to fail



The challenge

Make Pong
(with a twist)



Ideas

- Breakout is a Pong-like
- Mix Pong/Breakout with another genre
 - What if Pong was a shoot-em-up?
 - What if Pong was a platformer?
- Mix Pong/Breakout with another game
 - Pong meets Breakout
 - Pong meets Snake
 - Breakout meets Space Invaders
 - Breakout meets Conway's Game of Life



Ideas: what if?

- What if Pong/Breakout was grid-based?
 - Balcube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T10B6UDXOq0>
- What if you can remove parts of the other player's paddle?
 - Mortal Pongbat: <http://pongbat.sourceforge.net/>
- What if the ball paints the background?
 - “Where's the ball gone?”
- Go crazy!



Resources

- These guys didn't even know programming:
 - <http://www.trsp.net/teaching/gamemod/>
 - Includes source code (in Processing)
- My very basic Pong in Actionscript 3.0:
<http://www.draknek.org/games/devpong/basecode.zip>
- Many examples of Pong in Game Maker
 - Go go internet!



Support

- Post on the forums!
 - <http://www.warwickgamedesign.co.uk/forums/>
- IRC channel:
 - #wgd on codd.uwcs.co.uk
- TIGSource
 - <http://forums.tigsource.com/>



For the artists/writers

- I realise there's not much art/storyline in Pong: sorry!
- Try playing around in Game Maker/Construct
- It will make you a better team member



Final advice

- FIRST make Pong
- THEN add your twist
- Above all: do what you want to do
 - If you have to ignore this advice, do
 - But try not to have to
- “Try and fail, but don't fail to try.”



Good luck!

Any questions?