

GAME TITLE  
A Game For [state platform here]  
Copyright 2007 [insert your name here]

The primary goals of a game design are to (1) excite and (2) inform the reader.

First paragraph must excite the reader and make the reader want to read more of the first page.

The first page must be interesting, concise, and informative, and must make the reader want to read the remaining pages.

When the reader has finished reading the entire design, if the reader does not have a clear understanding of what you want the game to be, you have failed to communicate your vision of the game.

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Give a brief description of the game. First paragraph must get the reader interested by creating a mental image of the excitement of the game.

Overview with a bit more detail.

Through the use of illustrations and word pictures, walk the reader through the main points of the gameplay, focusing on the important aspects of the game which need communicating.

The reader should have a clear idea of what the game looks like, what the POV is, and how fun it will be to play this game.

## II. DETAILED GAME DESCRIPTION

Basic Concept -- What is the "high concept" of the game?

Background Story -- If applicable, tell the story of the game that leads into the beginning of the game, and tell the story that unfolds during gameplay, if any (in the

case of a puzzle game like SHANGHAI, for instance, this is probably unnecessary -- but it would be necessary for something like ALIENS VS. PREDATOR).

What is the tone? What is the basic narrative? What is the "heart" of the story? Is it a linear story?

Objective -- Describe the objective of the game.

If the objective is simply "get as many points as possible," then state it so. But if the objective is "rescue the princess," then that's another matter. In either case, give as much detail as possible to aid the reader in having some basis in understanding the rest of the design document as he reads on. What is the player's goal and why would they want to accomplish it?

Gameplay -- Describe the way the game works, from beginning to end.

After powering up (or booting), is there a title screen, what does it look like, is there an options screen, what are the choices, is there an animated sequence, can it be bypassed and how...

Then, when the game begins, we see our hero appear in a scene. Describe the scene and what happens next. If nothing happens until the user does something, describe what the user's options are and what happens as a result of all possible actions. Keep in mind that most games to some extent are controlled by the user. The hero doesn't automatically do anything; the user, when playing the game optimally, might cause the hero to do such-and-such an act, which would cause the computer-controlled enemy to do this, and the user's options are to do X and Y...

Describe the A.I. of the computerized opponent(s), if any. It is sometimes helpful to write a "walkthrough" of the game to further enhance the reader's ability to visualize the game.

What is the planned interface?

What is the planned perspective (1st person vs. 3rd person)?

What is the basic interactive structure? (e.g. Chapters vs. Great Middle Section, Levels, etc.).

What is the "heart" of the gameplay? (e.g. speed, actions, style, continuous, turnbased, etc.?)

How does multi-player work?

How difficult is the game?

How long will it take the average player to complete?

### III. OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PRODUCT DESIGN

Characters -- List and describe the characters in the game, if any. Tell something about their personalities and capabilities, and how they act in the game. Who does the player play?

Single/multi player? Are there other key characters?

License Exploitation -- If the characters are based on a license (such as in ALIENS VS. PREDATOR), provide some discussion of how the licensed characters will exploit the popular features of the license.

World -- Describe the scene(s) in which the action takes place, if applicable. In the case of an adventure game, the design document should probably be organized primarily by location, showing all characters and objects there, and indicating what events occur there. If locations in the game can be visited in any order, then list them in either the optimum order or in the order one might visit them if traveling in the simplest path.

Controls -- Describe the user interface.

How does the user cause all game actions to occur? In the case of a cartridge game, describe all uses of the buttons on the controller. In the case of a computer game, describe which peripherals the game supports and how they are used to accomplish all game actions.

Describe the on-screen interface (if there is a score and a life gauge... if there is an inventory icon and dialogue choices...), and how it works.

Describe all menus in detail.

Onscreen text messages are also part of the interface -- if not detailing all onscreen messages in this document, describe in general terms what they will be like.

Graphics -- Describe the general style of the graphics.

In the case of a game with multiple graphics modes, tell which one will be used. Whenever there are other games or products to which the reader can refer for a feel of the graphics style, it's a good idea to mention it.

It is best to include some sketches of some game scenes to aid in the visualization of the game. Show a typical scene and give some indication of what we're looking at.

Sketches should be included of what the characters (if any) will look like.

Show what the on-screen user interface looks like, and include callouts so the reader knows what's what.

Detailed art list will be a separate list (not part of this document).

Sounds and Music -- Describe at least the general manner in which sound effects will be used in the game.

Every action in the game should be accompanied by a sound, and the sounds should be prioritized so that the important sounds don't get "stepped on" by less important sounds.

Describe how the sounds will be created. If sampled digitized sound effects or voices are to be used in the game, tell about that in some detail.

Describe the general style of the music, with some references to other well-known music for the reader's edification. Tell how music will be used in the game.

Detailed sound, voice, and music lists will be separate (not part of this document).

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