

Lizard with a Sword

DESIGN DOC

Introduction

Drought has stricken the land, and it's been years since the last good rain. You are Koggie, an Agama lizard that embarks on a quest to bring water back to your home. A journey that will take you further than you could have imagined starts when Koggie steps out of the cave that they have called home.



Inspiration

Another Crab's Treasure - Difficult but rewarding combat that makes extensive use of animation in its combat system to create its tough-but-fair gameplay.

Sifu - a Third-person brawler with tight Kung Fu combat mechanics with an interesting combo system we draw inspiration from.

Legend of Zelda - Classic top-down adventure. We love the way it sequences its challenges and creates digestible blocks of content

Tunic - We draw specific inspiration in how it uses its camera to modernise the Legend of Zelda

Player Experience

Over the course of a series of linear sequential levels, players will gradually learn more about Koggie and the drought-stricken world where insects and animals fight over any bit of spare water.

The game focuses on creating interesting combat scenarios that require **tactical planning** and **combat system mastery** in order to progress. Players also need a strong sense of **environmental awareness** as they play through the game.

Platform

The game is developed to be released on PC.

Development Software

- Unity
- Maya
- Substance Painter

Genre

Singleplayer, action, adventure

Target Audience

With difficult combat requiring strong general knowledge of and skill with action games, the game is targeted at gamers with an **established love for combat-focused action games**. With a softer, cuter aesthetic than most games in this genre, we are also targeting the game at a younger audience of gamers, age 14+.

Concept

Prototype

In the **prototype** prepared for Pirate Jam 2024, we focused on nailing the combat systems. For the purposes of this exploration, we reimagined the game as an arena wave survival game, where Koggie is faced with waves of ever increasing difficulty.

Gameplay overview

The player controls Koggie, his movement and his attacks. Attacks are based on a simple **combo and block** system. The player needs to manage their **heat level** by moving in and out of regions of shadow and sunlight.

Theme Interpretation (Shadow + Alchemy)

When thinking on the theme we quickly landed on the idea of a lizard protagonist. A cold-blooded creature that would react differently to being in sunlight or shadow. Alchemy led us to thinking about all kinds of forms of arcana and witchcraft, which gelled very naturally with the aesthetic we had in mind for the game. A lizard that is made to be bipedal and forced to fight other changed creatures by alchemists.

Mechanics

- **Movement**

Movement is on a 2D flat plane (while graphics are 3D). The characters can move in any direction (barring obstacles). The player character has a dash for quick movement. During the dash the player will be invulnerable.

- **Attack/Defense System**

The player character has a 3-combo attack, and a block.

- **Heat System**

The player character is a cold-blooded lizard. If they stay in the sun they warm up and get hotter, and they cool down in the shade. As they get hotter they are stronger/faster/more powerful, but if they get too hot they overheat.

- **Enemy waves**

The enemies appear in waves that increase in difficulty. There is a limited number of waves.

- **Potion Drops**

At the end of every wave a healing potion is dropped for the player to use. Moving over it will restore some of their health.

Art

We used low-poly art assets to convey a simple design. We chose a limited colour palette that emphasises the dry desert setting. Bright colours are used to create easily readable combat scenarios.

We use a fixed isometric camera to create a sense of scale while also making it easy to track multiple enemies at the same time. This also helped with creating simple but recognisable poses for animation.

Audio

For the purposes of our initial prototype audio systems and aesthetics were not a priority for us. We made use of a number of free assets as we felt some sense of audio was important, but it does not reflect a larger design direction.

Music

The audio direction of the game will focus on amplifying the broad visual aesthetic. We plan on using minimalist soft music to amplify the sense of drought and death prevalent in the story. During combat sequences the additional rhythmic tribal drum music is used to add pressure to the scene.

Game Experience

Controls

Keyboard

WSAD moves the player through the isometric view. Holding Spacebar causes the player to dash in either the currently inputted direction or the already facing direction if there's no input.

Mouse

Left click starts the first attack of a three attack combination.

The animation of each attack flows into the other, with a small window of forgiveness if the player does not click in time.

Holding down the right click causes the player to lift up their shield and block all incoming attacks.