



Play the game at:
yeojoeey.itch.io/ramen-simulator

Initial Game Rules

This was the initial design of the prototype of *Ramen Simulator* that I submitted on March 28th.

In this single-player game, players must drag ramen ingredients into a bowl of ramen to complete a recipe as accurately as possible within 60 seconds.

Players drag the ingredients into the bowl using LEFT-CLICK. The ingredients collide with each other and the noodles in the bowl, and constantly drift from the initial point where they are placed.

Players can only view the recipe by holding down RIGHT-CLICK, which obscures their current arrangement of ingredients in the bowl. The accuracy of the player's arrangement is displayed as a percentage (out of 100) in the top-left corner of the screen, while the time remaining is displayed in seconds in the top-right corner of the screen.

If players are done arranging their ramen before their 60 seconds is up, they can click on the "good enough" button to end the game prematurely.

When the game ends, the player is given their score in words (from worst to best, TRASH / BAD / GOOD / GREAT / AMAZING).

Final Game Rules

In this single-player game, players must drag ramen ingredients into a bowl of ramen to complete as many randomly-generated recipes as possible within 60 seconds.

Players drag the ingredients into the bowl using LEFT-CLICK. The ingredients collide with each other and the noodles in the bowl, and constantly drift from the initial point where they are placed.

Players can only view the randomly-generated recipe by holding down RIGHT-CLICK, which obscures their current arrangement of ingredients in the bowl. The accuracy of the player's arrangement is displayed as a percentage (out of 100) in the bottom-left corner of the screen, while the time remaining is displayed in the form of a clock ticking down on the top-right corner.

When a player is done assembling a bowl, they press Space to submit it and move on to the next recipe. Depending on the accuracy of the submitted bowl, players can earn 0-6 seconds of extra time.

When the game ends, the player is given a numerical score, calculated by number of bowls completed * average accuracy * 100.

Playtest Analysis

While a few of my playtest sessions were carried out in person, some of my playtesting was conducted remotely, where I uploaded the latest game build to itch.io and posted the link on social media asking for feedback. I'd follow up with people who gave me feedback to ask them more questions.

March 27

Playtester	Yuchuan (M) [remote]
Feedback	Ingredients felt way too floaty, which was frustrating. Placing an ingredient down in the right position didn't seem to matter much if the object was going to drift away in the next few seconds, or bounce off the side of the bowl into a different spot.
Notes	While the game is meant to be frustrating to some level (hence the drift), I didn't want it to seem unreasonable.

Changes Made:

- Gave the ingredients more weight, making them less likely to drift.
- Made ingredients less bouncy.

March 28

Playtester	Tara (F)
Feedback	She really enjoyed the ramen theming. The length of the game should be longer by about 10 to 15 seconds. She would have liked to be able to assemble more than 1 bowl of ramen during the game.
Notes	Feedback like this quickly made me see that the game's aesthetic appeal was going to be the biggest sell for the experience. It was obvious that the pacing of the game was a little strange -- 60 seconds felt like a very long time to assemble a single bowl, but the game itself was very short and had little payoff. Having to complete more than one bowl in the time limit seemed like a good extension of the current prototype.

Playtester	Chance (M)
Feedback	He wanted more difficulty in the act of putting ingredients in the bowl, such as by having more ingredients than is necessary. He also noted that everyone's score, including his, tended to hover around the middling region of GOOD. He wanted more variety in gameplay.
Notes	Because I intended on testing players' ability to move objects into the bowl accurately, rather than recognize the ingredients, I decided not to implement having more ingredients than those which go in the bowl.

Playtester	Naomi (F)
Feedback	Like Tara, she really enjoyed the ramen theme and wanted to play the game over and over again. However, she wanted a clearer way of knowing how well she was doing, rather than just a flat percentage accuracy. She suggested maybe displaying accuracy of each ingredient on the ingredient itself.
Notes	I wanted to keep accuracy relatively ambiguous--I wanted players to have to judge for themselves, using the reference image, how far their arrangement was from the truth, rather than give them more hints.

Playtester	Shaun (M)
Feedback	He'd figured out a dominant strategy -- to place all ingredients into the bowl and press "good enough" once they floated into place with an accuracy of above 80%, which was what was necessary to get the highest grade, AMAZING.
Notes	This wasn't an intended way to play the game, so I needed to make tweaks to discourage this kind of play. While I initially thought a percentage was an unfriendly way to display the player's final score, I decided to bring it back because it was the most accurate representation.

Changes Made:

- Players now have to assemble as many bowls as they can, as quickly as they can.
- Added more ingredients to give a better impression of variety.
- Scoring is now done purely using percentage accuracy (or average accuracy with multiple bowls, rather than a word-based grading system).

April 7

Playtester	Brian (M)
Feedback	It wasn't obvious to him when the clock was running out of time because he was so focused on the main task of assembling the ramen.
Notes	It made sense to telegraph the clock running out more obviously.

Playtester	Sarah (F) [remote]
Feedback	She actually enjoyed the floatiness of the ingredients and how the accuracy updated with each new ingredient added. She wanted more vegetable-based ingredients in the ramen. She wanted to be able to add the noodles as an ingredient. She wanted to see a leaderboard so she could keep track of her score better.
Notes	At this stage in development, a leaderboard was out of scope for me to add, but is definitely a planned feature for the future.

Changes Made:

- Added a change in music speed during the last 12 seconds of the game.
- Added more variety in ingredients.

April 8

Playtester	Hanif (M) [remote]
Feedback	<p>He found the unpredictability of noodle and ingredient movement frustrating--he knew that was by design, but wished they moved more naturally. He enjoyed the aesthetics of the game and thought it gave good feedback about how well the player was doing via the accuracy display.</p> <p>He felt there was no progressive difficulty. Because all bowls were more or less equally hard to assemble, ingredient variety only served an aesthetic, rather than gameplay purpose. He also felt the final scoring system seemed arbitrary and would have liked to be able to see some kind of progression on future playthroughs--or at least see how score is calculated.</p>

Notes	<p>I <i>did</i> want to implement an animation that would show how score is calculated (number of bowls * 100 * average accuracy) but unfortunately ran out of time. For progressive difficulty, I decided to “fake” it by making the first few bowls require less ingredients than the rest of the bowls. To reinforce that the gameplay loop required skill, I decided to grant players a couple of seconds of extra time if they completed a bowl with more than 40% accuracy.</p> <p>While progression is out of scope for this game, it’s definitely something I thought of adding to give the main gameplay loop more gravity and to encourage people to play more.</p>
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Changes Made:

- Players now get extra time if they complete a bowl above a certain amount of accuracy
 - +3s for >80%
 - +2s for > 60%
 - +1s for 40%
- Adjusted ingredient movement so they don’t drift away immediately

Playtester	Aakash (M)
Feedback	Even after going through the instructions screens, he was still unsure of what to do during the game. He figured out a game-breaking strategy, which was to hold down right-click when dragging ingredients so he could drop the ingredient off at the precise spot required.
Notes	The instructions screens were likely too cluttered with information. I also prevented players from holding right-click when dragging an object--this was behaviour my other playtesters hadn’t exploited before, so it was a new discovery.

Changes Made:

- Split instructions screens into more pages with less information overload.
- Made it impossible to view the recipe while dragging an ingredient.

April 9

Playtester	Chance (M)
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Feedback	<p>He didn't like that ingredients overlapped differently from how they were shown in the sample recipe. In general, he enjoyed the flow of the game. He wanted to be forced to have to click on the broth and move the noodles more--the game can often be played to completion without ever doing that.</p> <p>He also didn't notice he was earning time with each bowl.</p>
Notes	I made the time-earning feedback more obvious.

Playtester	Parker (M)
Feedback	<p>He said it seemed difficult to complete all bowls with the same amount of accuracy. He kept accidentally submitting bowls with Space, confusing that particular control with right-clicking to view the recipe. He mentioned that he didn't know how many bowls he'd completed.</p> <p>He thought the game had good presentation, and felt like it had a complete loop. He felt like clicking the broth wasn't useful -- there was already not enough time to put ingredients in the bowl, and so it was hard to think about using that mechanic.</p>
Notes	<p>While I originally wanted to keep the bowl count a mystery that would be revealed to the player at the end, it makes sense that players should be able to see their progress (especially if they're trying to beat their previous score).</p> <p>I couldn't see a way to make things imperative that players attempt to reposition noodles. I decided to treat that as a higher level mechanic that not everyone would need/want to use.</p>

Playtester	Hanif (M) [remote]
Feedback	The addition of extra time was good, but needs to be tweaked to make the game longer (his average was 3-4 bowls complete) because it feels a little too short as it stands.
Notes	Tweaked.

Playtester	Niki (F) [remote]
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Feedback	She still thought the unpredictable floatiness of the ingredients was frustrating. She enjoyed the quick/casual aspect of the game. She wanted to be able to hold down right-click while dragging ingredients.
Notes	Being able to view the recipe while dragging ingredients makes the game a little too easy if you figure out how to exploit that, so I didn't put changing it on the agenda.

Playtester	Liam (M)
Feedback	He thought the ambient SFX in the main menu screen was very jarring in comparison to the actual experience. He liked that ingredients didn't seem to float off as easily as he did when he played an earlier iteration. He really liked the BGM of the main game section. However, he wanted more surprises/curveballs after the first few bowls--perhaps an introduction of a new mechanic, or a more obvious ramp up in difficulty.
Notes	He suggested adding a muted version of the main BGM track to the main menu to give the impression that the music was coming from within the restaurant.

Changes Made:

- Doubled the amount of time received when completing a bowl successfully.
- Made it more obvious when you earned time by completing a bowl.

Planned Changes:

- Add a muted version of the game BGM to the main menu to make the transition between scenes smoother.

Total Playtesters: 12 (+ more, via informal playtesting)

Closing Thoughts

I'm pretty proud of this game for something that I made in less than a month. I think it was a smart choice to lean heavily into the game's theming and aesthetics, because that was what immediately gripped people when they first started playing the game. I also think that uploading my build online made it much more accessible to people, and I got a lot of informal feedback by being able to share a link and have people play the game remotely.

However, I feel like the game could definitely have more depth. Right now, it feels more like a mini-game in what should be a larger experience. Because of the small scale of the game, playtesters couldn't really give me very deep feedback on what few mechanics were present. I could see myself implementing what Hanif suggested in his feedback somewhere down the line, e.g. making this game into a ramen restaurant simulation and use the money gained from each level to upgrade parts of the restaurant, buy more ingredients, et cetera.

Ultimately, I'm excited to keep iterating on this game beyond the assignment and add more features, such as a leaderboard, or some kind of cumulative progression system.

RAMEN SIMULATOR

IN THIS **FAST-PACED ACTION GAME**,
ASSEMBLE AS MANY BOWLS OF RAMEN
AS **ACCURATELY** AS YOU CAN
IN 60 SECONDS
TO GET THE MOST POINTS.
BE CAREFUL - THINGS **FLOAT** IN SOUP!

FEATURES:

- WEIRD PHYSICS
- DELICIOUS NOODLES
- HIGH REPLAYABILITY
- SINGLE-PLAYER ACTION
(WHO NEEDS FRIENDS?)



a game by
Joey Yeo
@yeojoe yoejoe@gmail.com