

Project Drift GDD

Project Drift

Game Design Document

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Core Concept

- Project Drift is a cosy drifting game that invites players to unwind in solitude as they drift through stylised Japanese environments with lo-fi beats playing in the background.
- It is a top-down isometric POV game.
- It emphasises player freedom and the relaxed design philosophy.
- Players can complete orders(optional) and earn enough money to unlock new car skins or new tracks.

Design Pillars

- **Cosy:** Players must feel a sense of relaxation and comfort.
- **Flow:** Players feel the flow while driving and drifting
- **Lofi Visuals and Audio:** Players must feel surreal and relaxed while traversing through the scenery.

Core Gameplay

This is an untitled game (codename “Project Drift”), which is a cosy driving game that lets you unwind and relax by listening to lo-fi music and exploring the beautiful scenery.

The player will be able to explore a full, seamless, open-world game, reaching points of interest to find different views of the scenery, along with rewards like new vehicles and new lo-fi music.

Controls

	Keyboard
Movement	WASD
Handbrake	Space
Order Accept (Upon Arrival)	Enter
Menu	M
Menu Cycling	(A or D)/Mouse
Menu Accept	Enter
Menu Back	Space

Gameplay Mechanics

Movement

The car will have omnidirectional movement.

Camera

Ref Art of Rally

Drifting

Intro

Turning the car while having enough forward speed to cause the car to drift.
Handbrake can be used to drift easily.

Drift Scoring (Needs reworking)

The longer the car drifts, the more LXP the player earns.(Specification rework)

Level Experience (LXP) and Progression

Level Experience (LXP)

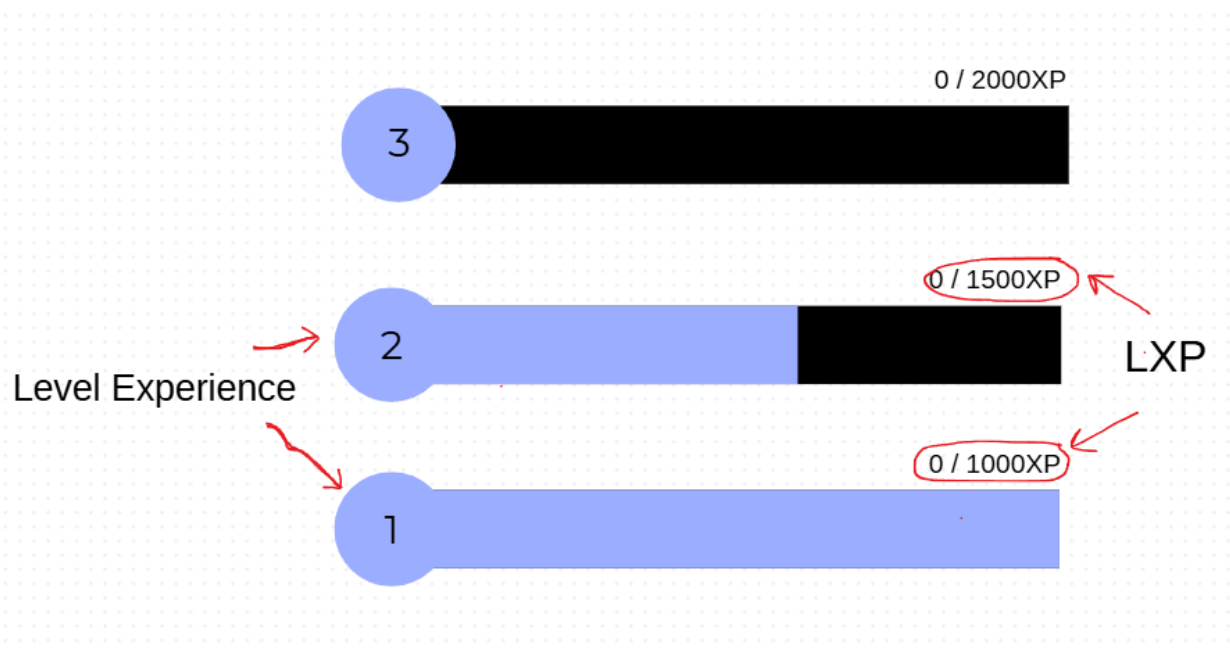
LXP increases your level bar, and upon filling it, the level increases and resets the bar.

- For every successful drift, you gain **LXP**.
- For every successful mission, you earn **LXP**.
- Unsuccessful drifts don't contribute to earning **LXP**.

How does Level Progression work?

- Each level is depicted by a level bar.
- The level bar for every level ranges from 0 to the corresponding LXP threshold.
- To progress past every level, the player will have to gain more LXP than the LXP threshold of that particular level. LXP threshold for every level increases consecutively.

- Any excess LXP remaining after the LXP threshold is achieved will be transferred to the next level bar.
- The player can level up if they get enough LXP from drifting or completing missions.
- As the level progresses, the maximum amount of rewards that the player gets is shifted towards the last second of the drift timer, forcing the player to drift till the last moment. *(This will increase the difficulty for the player as the Exp Level increases.)*



Driver Experience (DXP)

DXP is like a currency in the game that can be used to purchase items like skins, new car blueprints, and modifications for your car from the shop.

How does DXP work?

- **DXP** depends on the level experience and **LXP** earned. You will have to gain more **LXP** to increase your level experience. Level experience will act as a multiplier for **DXP**.

$$\mathbf{DXP} = \mathbf{LXP} * \text{Level Experience}$$

- **DXP** decreases as soon as:
 - There is a crash and thus damages the car.
 - Any normal damage to the car.
 - Damage to the cargo (packages, human).
 - Incomplete missions. (Missions are incomplete when the specific requirements of the missions are not completed.)

[Damage calculation metrics](#) are mentioned in the doc below.

DXP- pts

Damage during drift

Depending on the level experience, the damage for an unsuccessful drift increases. *(Values for the damage will be decided after testing)*

Mission System (Under Progress)

Missions are optional to the progression of the game and are solely meant to gain more **DXP** and **LXP**.

Players can find missions as they explore the world.

- Initiate mission

- The player must move close to the mission point, where the mini-map will open and the mission requirements and destination will appear.

Mission Requirements

Requirements can vary from mission to mission and can include things like

- Damage Cap
- Timer
- Taking a route that doesn't have freezing temperatures or heights.
(Mostly for human cargo missions)
- Retrieving packages near points of interest back to the mission point.

Mission Progression

- Upon accepting the mission, the cargo {package(s) or Human(s)} will automatically load into the vehicle, and the destination marker will be displayed on the mini map.
- The player can choose any route as long as they fulfil the mission requirements.

Mission Destination

The player will have to reach the mission endpoint to complete the order, upon which the player will receive the mission results.

Damage Calculation System

- The damage received by the packages and the car, upon collision, depends on the speed at the time of collision.
- The speed range of the vehicle will be divided into different tiers, and the damage will be determined based on the selected speed tier.

E.g. 10-50 kmph Damage: 25 (If the vehicle is travelling 10-49 kmph, then the damage that occurs if it collides is 25). 0-10kmph Damage: 0 (If the vehicle is travelling from 0-9kmph, then the car will have no damage).

Mission Results

- Upon reaching the destination, depending on the level of success of the mission, the player will be assigned **mission grades**. (*Values for the grades will be decided after testing*)
- Upon meeting certain thresholds indicating excellent mission progression like minimal cargo damage / fast delivery, the player can gain more **LXP**.
- Upon failing to meet the requirements, the mission will fail, prompting the player to restart the mission at that mission point, even without reaching the destination.

Exploration Rewards

- Exploring new areas to unlock new car blueprints, different car skins and (car modifications?).
- Exploring areas will also unlock different songs.

As the player navigates the world, they can find blueprints for new vehicles, unlocking them for purchase via the shop.

Unlocking each vehicle requires one or more blueprints, after which the vehicle will be available for purchase in the shop along with its skins.

Starting Screen (Main Menu)

Upon starting the game, the player will be able to select Play, Settings, Exit.

Pause Menu

The pause menu is divided into three tabs: map, shop and settings. The player can cycle through these tabs. Accessing the menu pauses the game.

Minimap

- The minimap will always be present on the screen, and it will rotate on the basis of the player's perspective.
- The minimap can be accessed at any time via the menu. This can be used to check points of interest and (view the mission pickup points and their destination?) Players can additionally place markers on the map, which can be seen in-game (Not Confirmed).

Shop

The shop can be accessed via the menu. The player can spend **DXP** to purchase unlocked vehicles and its skins.

Settings?? (To be decided)

- Master volume
- SFX volume

- Auto-detect system specs and adjust the graphics settings accordingly.
- Motion blur
- Fps limit
- Vsync
- Graphical fidelity
- Resolution and Full-screen
- Post-Processing
- Texture quality
- Shadows on/off
- Mappable Controls/ Controls Section

Feature Implementation List

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- ☐ Level Blockout - In Progress
- ☒ ~~Camera Movement Research (Art of Rally)~~
- ☒ ~~Controller Research (Art of Rally for input, Karting demo for control)~~
- ☐ Concept Art
- ☐ Music Research
- ☐ Car Stats Balancing

Brainstorm Ideas

Brainstorm Ideas

- Finish deliveries with fewer bumps/crashes to earn more coins for upgrades, customisation and new vehicles. It can unlock new soundtracks, too.
- Upgrades to better deal with the weather, like a cowcatcher to push off the snow. Cover the package to protect it from rain/sunlight.
- Better tires for more responsive movement.
- Headlight upgrade to see better through snow/rain/fog.

Project Drift LDD

Project Drift

Level Design Document

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Art Style

Art Style

Drift Scoring Research

Drift Scoring Research

Games Researched

1. Absolute Drift
2. Tofu Drifter
3. The Crew Motorfest

Both games require you to turn sharply using W, A/D.

Drift Score Calculation in these games

When the car drifts by sharply turning to the left or right after every time interval, the player gains drift points. Even if the drift stops happening, a countdown will occur after which the multiplier will reset, and during this countdown, the car can start drifting again. The multiplier will continue to increase as usual.

The Crew Motorfest

Feels like an arcade game, it's stylised and not realistic.
The controls feel beginner-friendly and are forgiving.
Drifting scoring based on combos

Has a drift vehicle class

You can customize the cars to make it easier to drift, like the tyres being more slippery and having good control while drifting.

Gameplay & Scoring System

The more the car turns, the higher your score multiplier will be, increasing your score.

The game tracks the following while drifting

Drift angle - Players try to maximise it, low turn angle, low no. of points gained, higher turn angle -> more risk of losing control and spinning off.

Drift speed - Faster drifting -> Higher Multiplier

Drift duration - The longer you drift continuously, the higher the base score of the player will be.

Track positioning and combo flow

Transitions - The player earns points awarded when switching drift direction fluidly.

Combos - How long the player drifts without interruptions or collisions.

Proximity Bonus - Small bonus for staying close to walls or clipping points

3) Forza Horizon 5

Has a drift zone (Zones marked just for drifting)

Has a leaderboard for drift points

Crashing or stopping resets your combo.

Smooth, long drifts with a high angle give more points

Drift zones

Tracks meant for drifting, your drift time, speed and angle is tracked.

Each Drift Zone offers three star thresholds (1, 2, 3 stars)

Fail conditions

Leaving the zone like off-road can fail the attempt.

Driving backwards, stopping the car, or clipping too often may reduce score or cause a reset.

4) BeamNG.drive

Focuses on realistic physics rather than arcade-style scoring.

Acts like a driving/drifting sim.

Feels deeply technical and immersive.

Doesn't have a drift scoring system.

5) DRIFT21

Drifting sim, not racing

Different parts of the cars can be disassembled, reassembled to get more drift performance

Modes

Free drift: Practice tracks

Time Attack Drift Events: Score-based competitions.

Workshop Mode: Build and tune cars by assembling parts.

6) The Crew 2

Open world game, u can switch b/w a car, a plane and a boat.

The longer you drift higher, the multiplier

7) Japanese Drift Master

Arcade racer

Open-world Japanese with maps and areas to explore

Has AI cars and normal street traffic with narrow roads and more grounded

Drift

The longer the drift, the more score is earned, and the multiplier increases along with the drift time. eg 1.1x, 1.2x

The world design is interesting to explore

Has tracks that are meant for drifting only

Has missions involving drift

Car customisation

Missions

Mission Systems Ideas

1. Café Order Delivery (Cozy Café Style)

Deliver pastries/ coffee / other bakery items

Reference: Animal Crossing cafés, Tokyo small-town coffee culture.

2. Community Bulletin Board Requests

Bulletin board in town hall or smth. Choose whatever they want. Creates a “small-town community” vibe and player agency.

Reference: Stardew Valley bulletin board, Japanese neighborhood boards.

3. In-Car Delivery App

Player opens an in-car mobile UI to accept delivery requests from a stylized delivery app. Kind of modernism.

Reference: Death Stranding order terminal, Uber Eats interface aesthetics.

4. Postal Parcel Run (Classic Delivery Loop)

Players pick up multiple parcels at a local post office and deliver them in any order. Encourages route optimization and smooth exploration.

Reference: Lake

5. Neighborhood Aid Requests (NPC-Driven) - Optional

NPCs wave at the player as they drive past, requesting small deliveries like groceries, letters, or forgotten items. Very personal, with short dialogues that humanize the world.

Reference: Lake , stardew valley, short hike

Visual Rewards for Drift

Visual Rewards for Drift

1. Maple Leaf Trails

Inspired by: Animal Crossing

Pink leaves behind the car or pink leaves raining after a perfect drift in sync with the Japanese theme.

Link: <https://youtu.be/NwMiEtOFJQ0?t=563>

2. Paper Lantern Glow Burst

Inspired by: Spiritfarer, Sky: Children of the Light

Soft lantern orbs floating upwards as soon as the perfect drift happens, celebrating your drift.

Link: <https://youtu.be/AbVTLYhtr3I?t=54>

3. Petal Streams (Sakura or Wildflowers)

Inspired by: Journey, Flower

A ribbon of petals flows behind you, making a peaceful cinematic moment.

Link: <https://youtu.be/bkL94nKSd2M?t=350>

<https://youtu.be/g5XoGH29yqU?t=547>

4. Firefly trails

Inspired by: Stardew Valley, A Short Hike

Not actually fireflies, but a dim yellow light swirling around the car during a clean drift, maybe at night.

5. Floating Ink Calligraphy

Inspired by: Okami

Japanese letters trail temporarily paint the drift line like traditional Japanese ink art.

Link: <https://youtu.be/TmYtJqUnXvI?t=2171>

6. Origami Birds in the trail

Inspired by: The Last Campfire, Sky: Children of the Light

Small paper cranes floating upward during smooth drift

7. Flower Bloom Trail

Inspired by: Flower

Tiny flowers blooms instantly where the car drifts, turning drifts into magical gardening moments.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ytRArDh3GM&t=10s>

8. Lo-Fi Particle Beats (Music-reactive)

A floating equalizer ripple around the car only when drifting smoothly, in sync lightly with the lo-fi beat.

(Idk how to create something like this but should be cool)

Chill Spots

Interactive Spots vs Delivery Spots

Delivery spots:

the only interaction is delivering parcels

Interactive spots:

- -Player can interact with it in different forms
- - not only deliver parcels

Types of interaction spots

- Home : Has inventory and can access all customisation and audio tracks
- Garage Shop / Gas station: Spend money in buying mods for car + gas.

- Chill spot : relaxing zones such as
 1. Outdoor movies



2. Jukebox area (need to iterate): listen to songs + buy songs to add to custom playlist
3. Scenery / nature chill spot - ?

Progression idea

Progression

The progression system can be a mix of basic progression like locking some areas and providing a particular object to unlock the area.

The object can be bought for a certain amount and you can earn after delivering certain things.

We can mix the simple progression with a loop of contributing to the community.

Community Contribution Loop

In the world, you're helping a town come alive. Every delivery you make takes the community forward.

Working of the Loop

1. Picking Up Cozy Missions

There are soothing missions like dropping off flowers, bringing fresh food, carrying supplies for a building, something a real life friend might ask you.

2. Town is progressing because of the players

Every contribution causes visible change:

- A lantern you delivered now glows on the street.
- Seeds you bought and delivered change into flowers.
- Maybe some decorations or murals you dropped off appear on buildings and roads.

Action is causing a difference in the world.

Each cycle completion unlocks a new chill spot

When a project is complete, a new chill spot is unlocked.

- A garden
- A lit up streets with lanterns
- The lighthouse/buildings lights up.

A New Community Project Begins everytime when a cycle ends

Cycle Examples

1st cycle -Garden Revival

The town wants to revive its old garden.

- You bring seed packets, fresh soil, and handmade watering cans.
- Flowers slowly start popping up each day.
- At the end, maybe there's a garden to go and add it to a chilling spot.

2nd cycle- Lantern Festival Setup

The lighting up of lanterns

- You deliver lanterns in all colors.
- Roads slowly fill with glows.
- A new chill spot is made

3rd cycle- Lighthouse Area Restoration

The lighthouse area is locked and you need to build it up again to enter the area.

- Deliver paint, tools, and fresh supplies.
- The structure transforms
- At the end of the cycle, the lighthouse area gets unlocked.

4th cycle- Mural Project

Artists want to paint a community mural.

- You deliver paint cans, brushes, and snacks for volunteers.
- The wall slowly fills with color.
- The final mural becomes a new landmark or something.

Why?

- It rewards kindness, and there is no hurry and no speed.
- The world feels alive.
- Every action has a meaning.
- Seeing progress without feeling any pressure.

Rewards

At the end of each cycle, some rewards like

- A new car sticker inspired by the project like flowers or lanterns.
- A special drift effect like petals or tiny lantern sparks.
- Scrapbook system to add pictures maybe.