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Introduction To Game Design, Prototyping, And Development: From Concept To Playable Game With Unity And C#



Synopsis

Learn Game Design, Prototyping, and Programming with Today's Leading Tools: Unity, C# and C#

Award-winning game designer and professor Jeremy Gibson has spent the last decade teaching game design and working as an independent game developer. Over the years, his most successful students have always been those who effectively combined game design theory, concrete rapid-prototyping practices, and programming skills.

Introduction to Game Design, Prototyping, and Development is the first time that all three of these disciplines have been brought together into a single book. It is a distillation of everything that Gibson has learned teaching hundreds of game designers and developers in his years at the #1 university games program in North America. It fully integrates the disciplines of game design and computer programming and helps you master the crucial practice of iterative prototyping using Unity. As the top game engine for cross-platform game development, Unity allows you to write a game once and deliver it to everything from Windows, OS X, and Linux applications to webpages and all of the most popular mobile platforms.

If you want to develop games, you need strong experience with modern best practices and professional tools. There's no substitute. There's no shortcut. But you can get what you need in this book.

COVERAGE INCLUDES

- In-depth tutorials for eight different game prototypes
- Developing new game design concepts
- Moving quickly from design concepts to working digital prototypes
- Improving your designs through rapid iteration
- Playtesting your games and interpreting the feedback that you receive
- Tuning games to get the right "game balance" and "game feel"
- Developing with Unity, today's best engine for independent game development
- Learning C# the right way
- Using Agile and Scrum to efficiently organize your game design and development process
- Debugging your game code
- Getting into the highly competitive, fast-changing game industry

Book Information

Series: Game Design

Paperback: 944 pages

Publisher: Addison-Wesley Professional; 1 edition (July 21, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0321933168

ISBN-13: 978-0321933164

Product Dimensions: 7 x 1.4 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 54 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #42,201 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in Books > Computers & Technology > Games & Strategy Guides > Game Design #14 in Books > Computers & Technology > Games & Strategy Guides > Game Programming #51 in Books > Textbooks > Computer Science > Graphics & Visualization

Customer Reviews

Praise for Introduction to Game Design, Prototyping, and Development

“Introduction to Game Design, Prototyping, and Development combines a solid grounding in evolving game design theory with a wealth of detailed examples of prototypes for digital games. Together these provide an excellent introduction to game design and development that culminates in making working games with Unity. This book will be useful for both introductory courses and as a reference for expert designers. I will be using this book in my game design classes, and it will be among those few to which I often refer.”

—Michael Sellers Professor of Practice in Game Design, Indiana University, former Creative Director at Rumble Entertainment, and General Manager at Kabam

“Prototyping and play-testing are often the most misunderstood and/or underutilized steps in the game design and development process. Iterative cycles of testing and refining are key to the early stages of making a good game. Novices will often believe that they need to know everything about a language or build every asset of the game before they can really get started. Gibson’s new book prepares readers to go ahead and dive in to the actual design and prototyping process right away; providing the basics of process and technology with excellent ‘starter kits’ for different types of games to jumpstart their entry into the practice.”

—Stephen Jacobs Associate Director, RIT Center for Media, Art, Games, Interaction, and Creativity (MAGIC) and Professor, School of Interactive Games and Media

“Jeremy Gibson’s Introduction to Game Design, Prototyping, and Development deftly combines the necessary philosophical and practical concepts for anyone looking to become a Game Designer. This book will take you on a journey from high-level design theories, through game development concepts and programming foundations in order to make your own playable video games. Jeremy uses his years of experience as a professor to teach the reader how to think with vital game design mindsets so that you can create a game with all the right tools at hand. A must-read for someone who wants to dive right into making their first game and a great refresher for industry veterans.”

—Michelle Pun Senior Game Designer, Zynga

Jeremy Gibson is a lecturer teaching computer game design for the Electrical Engineering and

Computer Science department at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor and is the founder of ExNinja Interactive, LLC. From 2009 to 2013, he was an Assistant Professor teaching game design and prototyping for the Interactive Media and Games Division of the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, which was the number one game design school in North America throughout his tenure there. Jeremy serves the IndieCade independent game festival as the Chair for Education and Advancement, where he is responsible for the IndieXchange and GameU conference tracks, and he has spoken at the Game Developers Conference every year since 2009. Jeremy earned a Master of Entertainment Technology degree from Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center in 2007 and a Bachelor of Science degree in Radio, Television, and Film from the University of Texas at Austin in 1999. Jeremy has worked as a programmer and prototyper for companies such as Human Code and frog design, has taught classes for Great Northern Way Campus (in Vancouver, BC), Texas State University, the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, Austin Community College, and the University of Texas at Austin, and has worked for Walt Disney Imagineering, Maxis, and Electronic Arts/Pogo.com, among others. While in graduate school, his team created the game Skyrates, which won the Silver Gleemax Award at the 2008 Independent Games Festival. Jeremy also apparently has the distinction of being the first person to ever teach game design in Costa Rica.

Part 1 of this book (game-design theory) is a clear and illuminating overview of what is obviously a big topic. It makes clear that there's a lot more preparation required when designing a game than many designers realise. Part 2 introduces C#. If you've programmed before, you can skim most of it. Chapter 18 ("Hello World") is a must-read, though, as it introduces Unity and demonstrates how to create a project and add elements to it. (Not having used Unity before, I was shocked that I could create a particle storm with only two-lines of code.) Part 3 walks the reader through creating eight games of increasing complexity. I recommend this book to you if you'd like to learn how to create well designed games using Unity and C#.

If you are brand new to programming, this might not be the best book to use as an introduction to the trifecta of Unity, programming, and game design. I would consider it more of an advanced beginner to intermediate level book. If you already know a little programming or if you have read one of the other Unity by Example books, then is a great second step on your path to becoming a game developer. I found Part One of the book, Game Design and Paper Prototyping, to be the most difficult of the three sections. It reads like a college text book with lots of theory and philosophical

discussions. Part One begins with a lengthy discussion of what a "game" actually is, discussing the conflicting definitions presented by several people. Next comes a discussion on Game Analysis Frameworks. Mr. Gibson discusses three Frameworks developed by other individuals, and then presents his own Framework. He compares and contrasts his new framework to its predecessors, and explains how they are different and alike. Heavy stuff. Honestly I only made it through Chapter 4 before I put Part One on hold, and moved on to Part Two. I will get back to Part One day, I promise. Part Two begins with more definitions, a summary about the advantages of using Unity and C#, and a brief introduction to the C# programming language, but you quickly move on to the Unity installation and running Unity's demo game: Angry Bots. Next comes a very, very brief (1/2 page) explanation of Unity's various windows. Your first Unity program is the standard "Hello World!", but then you get to "Unity-fy" it by adding some falling cubes. Snazzy! The rest of the Part Two - Chapters 19-27 - include hard-core lessons/lectures in various computer programming topics: variables, Vector3s, Quaternion, boolean operations, conditionals, loops, lists, arrays, functions, object-oriented classes. My favorite chapter was the one on Debugging. You need to learn to love debugging if you are going to be a programmer. Part Three (page 419) starts the fun stuff: building games using Unity. The first game is Apple Picker, and I found it liberating when Mr. Gibson talks about using "programmer art" which is just a placeholder for the "real" art that will be incorporated later. He stresses that you don't need fantastic art to get your game up and running. I know it is common sense, but it was nice to hear those words from an expert. My new mantra is, "Don't worry about the art, just start coding." As for the actual code instructions, they are clear and concise, but they are not what I would call the step-by-step hand-holding variety. How to do something is fully explained once, and after that it is assumed that you will remember the steps. If you don't remember you are directed to the index so you can look up the instructions. If you are new to programming AND Unity this method of instruction might get a little frustrating. The examples/prototypes in this book also have a level of code complexity which is much greater than in other absolute beginner Unity books. You will learn a lot more fancy coding tricks, and not so obvious ways to accomplish a task. Again, this may be intimidating if you have never coded before. So in summary if you have never opened a programming book before, it might be better to start with a book like Unity by Example or Unity in 24 Hours and save this one till you are a little more comfortable with navigating Unity. If you have used Unity before or if you have programmed in the past, this book is a great place to start.

Started reading this book on 8/7/2014 When i was looking for a book that covered Unity

programming (C# that is) i found a few books that seemed like they could very well get the job done. This book is brand new and full of good research. It does not teach you how to program until about page 250. The amount of text on each page is enormous, full of information. Im on chapter 4 already and i feel like before i get to the programming side of this book i will have a better understanding of what i will even be needing to program. There is 8 games that you program near the last part of the book after a thorough intro to C# script in unity. The logic that he programs into the games is broad and clever enough to get you on your feet, and there are many tools and tricks that follow. In conclusion: This book goes deep into game design and getting your ideas into code. I have a large library of books covering animation, programming, art, game design.... and this book seems like one i will be happy to finish. Cheers! 5 out of 5 for how much research is in this book alone Plus how clear he talks in his text.

As a Software Development student off for the summer, I decided that I could learn C# on my own and get introduced to Unity and actually try to make a game; being an avid gamer, such a thing appeals to me. Introduction to Game Design, Prototyping, and Development seemed like it had very solid reviews and I bought the book in early May of this year, 2015. I must say, I am very happy that I did and this book is a great summer project. There are great insights into the art of game making itself and concepts of probability, an excellent primer on the basics of C#, and very fun and useful tutorials that are very sound from a software development standpoint. Also, the author, Jeremy Gibson, is approachable and actually took the time to answer a few email questions that I have had. It is pretty obvious that he lives for gaming and loves teaching about it and being involved with it. Being very passionate about the subject matter, Jeremy's writing comes off as entertaining and is never boring or flat, at least, in my opinion. The Appendices are also very good and there is a ton of useful information. One must keep in mind that this is an introduction to gaming and C# and is only meant as such. It is a great starting point to get yourself acclimated to the Unity environment, while learning good software techniques and practices in what is probably the best language for Unity--C#. Thanks for reading my review.

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