




The Game Development Process

Artistic Content Creation




WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE



New Artistic Courses

- **AR 1100. ESSENTIALS OF ART.**
This course provides an introduction to the basic principles of two and three-dimensional visual organization. The course focuses on graphic expression, idea development, and visual literacy. Students will be expected to master basic rendering skills, perspective drawing, concept art, and storyboarding through both traditional and computer-based tools.
- **AR 1101. DIGITAL IMAGING AND COMPUTER ART.**
This course focuses on the methods, procedures and techniques of creating and manipulating images through electronic and digital means. Students will develop an understanding of image alteration. Topics may include color theory, displays, modeling, shading, and visual perception.
- **AR 3000. THE ART OF ANIMATION.**
This course examines the fundamentals of computer generated 2D and 3D modeling and animation as they apply to creating believable characters and environments. Students will learn skeletal animation and traditional polygonal animation, giving weight and personality to characters through movement, environmental lighting, and changing mood and emotion. Students will be expected to master the tools of 3D modeling and skinning, and scripting of behaviors.

(Ask: IMGD-Art majors? Artists?)



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Outline

- Introduction
- 3D Art
 - Modeling, Texturing, Lighting
- Animation (mostly 2D)



Introduction

- Computer artist is modern-day alchemist
 - Turn polygons and pixels into wondrous worlds
- Job of artist is to interpret world
- Quality toolset can empower, but doesn't make you an artist
 - Need passion, talent and practice
- Should love world around you
 - New adventures, experiences, moving, traveling
 - Gather more data on how world works
 - Take a digital camera! New textures
 - *How does water splash? Smoke billow? Metal rust?*
 - Knowing way pieces fit together crucial for building world
- Next up ... "unsolicited advice"

Based on Foreword, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Embrace the Constraints

- Year 2098, Macrosoft will release FunStation 3000, 14 million terabytes of RAM, quantum-holographic drive with near infinite storage, processors at the speed of light
 - Game developers complain not fast enough
- Game artists must be creative *inside confines of technology*
 - All disciplines: engineering, design, sound
 - But often constraints biggest on artist

Based on Foreword, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Play Games

- Duh, but many don't ... (Ask: how many played computer game this weekend?)
- Easy trap to fall into when busy
- But need to play games for comparison of competitive products, seeing other solutions to problems, etc.
- Plus, how can make fun game if not having fun yourself?

Based on Foreword, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Engineers are your Friends

- Great, they agree 😊
- Engineer passionate about art-technology can do wonders
- Similarly, make artists appreciative, if not interested, in engineering-tech
- (Doing both is a goal of this course)

Based on Foreword, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Learn to Communicate

- Artists with non-artists
- Engineers with non-engineers
- (Also, developers with marketers)
- Large group of people, diverse skill sets and jobs are *intertwined*
 - Ex: Beautiful outdoor environment ruined if ambient audio sucks or engine cannot render fast enough
- (Is a goal of this course)

Based on Foreword, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Steal from Real World

- Tenet of Game Design: "The real world is always more interesting than anything we can make up"
 - Ex: even Dark Forces II: Jedi Knight, environment made real-world sense
 - Spaceport had entertainment area for pilots, cluttered maintenance bays, refueling pipes
 - ...
 - And all was dirty
- (More examples later)

Based on Foreword, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Hone Traditional Skills

- Artist first, game artist second
- Take drawing classes, photograph for pleasure, sculpt
- Work you do outside games will inform your work inside
 - Holds for Technical part of game development, too
- Learn by doing, don't wait around

Based on Foreword, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Mini-Outline

- Preparing to Create
- Modeling Theory
- Texturing
- Lighting



Preparing to Create

- Using *reference* essential
 - Difference between mediocre and exceptional game
 - Gives you goals, direction, clues, motivation
- Ex: portrait of friend
 - Could: sit down, imagine friend, draw
 - Or, could: use photo and draw
 - Latter will include details didn't think of
 - Same holds for buildings, cars, etc.
- Reference is not "cheating"
 - Yeah, many want to create directly in minds, but using the *right* reference a skill in itself!

Based on Chapter 1, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



How and Where to Collect Reference

- Search 'net - Google image search (show demo)
 - Ex: Couch, lazy-boy, lounge chair
 - 2 minutes can provide a lot of details
- Books
 - Ex: on submarines for U-boat
- Movies
 - Ex: U-571
- Physical location
 - Ex: visit U-boat tour, tour country/climate of game. Even fantasy world has trees, etc.

Based on Chapter 1, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Concept Art

- Pre-visualize art for communication, color, inspiration
 - Establish "look and feel", like storyboarding for film
 - Saves time and money since iterate before rendering
- Even if company has concept artists, digital artists should still do their own
 - Remember, computer is just another tool
 - Figure drawing helps understand shape and line
 - And often required for portfolio!



Based on Chapter 1, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick

- Paolo Piselli





Setting the Quality Bar

- Need to continually improve own work
- Video games, especially
 - Competition to outdo
 - Driven by hardware improvements
 - Every new release raises expectations
- Look at other games, movies artwork for inspiration
 - Look in past for right, and wrong, and improvement

Based on Chapter 1, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Blocking Out Your Scene (1 of 3)

- Mantra: "Broad strokes, then add detail"
 - Ex: painting mountain scene.
 - Start with blue sky, define brown mountains, lake. Finer brush for trees, clouds. Finer for rocks, birds in sky ...
 - Start in corner. Paint all details and move over. You'd go crazy! Would be skewed.
 - Ex: animating a character.
 - Set two keyframes, point A and point B. Get speed right, basic idea. Add frames for up and down. Then legs and arms swing ...
 - When done, smooth walk

Based on Chapter 1, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Blocking Out Your Scene (2 of 3)

- For scene, use simple primitives to define scale and layout
- Ex: create village.
 - Working with designer, create plane (crudely drawn map) of layout
 - Scan and import into 3D tool (say, *Maya*)
 - Import 5'11" character (just shape)
 - Use to decide how tall building or how wide door
 - Add objects in right scale
 - Quickly → basic, functional scene of right size and scale. Broad stroke number 1!

Tip: get artists & designers to agree upon measurement units & heights of characters

Based on Chapter 1, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Blocking Out Your Scene (3 of 3)

- If game engine working, can export into game and run around
 - Often designer will do this, anyway, but artist should have input
- Can throw in some lighting (later) and colors (later)
- Add a few textures (not final ones, but canned that show right feel)
 - Can even add text saying "brick"

Based on Chapter 1, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Mini-Outline

- Preparing to Create
- Modeling Theory (next)
- Texturing
- Lighting



Intro to Modeling Theory

- Understand core philosophy of polygonal modeling for games
- Want to do it fast and efficiently
 - Allow "broad strokes" in model early
 - More time (and polygon resources) for refinement later
- If quick, but sloppy, end up with stray vertices, overlapping faces ...
 - Wasted resources
 - Plus bugs! For collision detection (p. 268)

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Primitives

- *Primitives* are basic shapes
- Most 3d packages have same primitives:
 - Sphere, Cube, Cylinder, Plane
 - Use for "broad strokes"
- Concentrate on primitives within object
 - Ex: human body (ovals for shoulders, cylinders for legs, sphere for head...)
- *Components* are parts that make up primitive
 - Ex: vertices, edges, triangles, faces, elements
 - Similar across all packages but terminology can vary
- *Transformation* allows moving, rotating, scaling object or component

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Polygons

- Polygons preferred since made up of triangles
 - Note, NURBS (Nonuniform Rational B-Splines) uses curves, but more complex to model (not broad!) and render
- Face may have triangles that share vertices (Ex: square down middle)
 - Software may hide shared edge for cleaner look

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Normals

- Face normals are at right angle to polygon
 - Tell what direction it's facing, how to render, how light will react
- Viewed from other side, is invisible
 - Fine if on inside (say, of solid cube)
- When debugging, pay attention to normals as well as polygons



Backface Culling

- Toggles display of faces that point away from view
 - When on, see through wireframe
 - When off, looks solid (not drawn)
- Makes look less cluttered



Polygons and Limits

- 3d Software renders scene of triangles like game
 - But 3d software slow (Toy Story 1 frame / 15 hrs)
 - Game is real time (30 frames / second)
- Need to limit polygons. How spent depends upon world size and where needed.
 - Ex: *Medal of Honor* versus *Soul Caliber 2*. MH details spread across world, less on avatars. SC can have detailed avatars since only 2 in one ring.
- Think of *how many* polygons each item needs. Estimates, educated guesses. Then, make pass. (Tools will give count)
 - Used wisely, can make detailed scenes with few (Ex: 2.5, page 24)

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Polygon Reduction

- Being able to model without wasting polygons important → takes practice
- Ask if a player will see face?
 - Ex: oil barrel as cylinder. Will see bottom? Nope, then delete.
- Are all faces necessary? Looks great, yeah, but some can be removed.
 - Ex: 12-sided cylinder still looks "round" with 8 sides? Then do it.
- (Example exercise p30-31)

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Modeling Techniques

- Once master understanding of efficient model, talk about building objects from scratch
 - *Low-polygon modeling* inaccurate since many real-time engines can handle more than low (greater than 500) polygons
 - Rather, creating modeling ... make use of what you have
- *Vertex surgery* - crafting of vertices to get desired result
- Certain tools and techniques used 80-90% of the time
 - Extrude
 - Lines

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Extrude

- Take component (often face) ,duplicating it, pulling pushing or scaling to refine model
 - Ex: take cube. Extrude face outward and smaller
 - Ex: take cube. Extrude part of face to make window

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Line Tool

- Draw outline of object and extrude to get 3-d shape
 - Ex: profile of car. Use line tool. Then, extrude outward to get shape. "Broad stroke"
- Some risk in may have vertices and faces you don't need, but careful planning and practice helps

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Common Mistakes

- A few no-no's when modeling for export to game engine. Will look different. Need to be aware
 - Good tip is modeling with triangle edges visible. Helps identify problems and mistakes
- Briefly:
 - Overlapping faces
 - T-Junctions
 - Stray Vertices
 - Star-like Faces

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Overlapping Faces

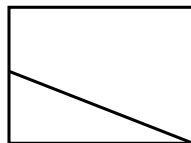
- Face on top of another
 - Wastes vertices and lighting problems
- Typically occur when duplicating geometry
- Can see with eye, flashing/flicking as move around

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



T-Junctions

- Caused when edge does not share a vertex with another edge
 - Looks ok in tool, but rendered as triangle
 - Subtle, but can cause visual problems
 - And collision and surface detection problems



Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Stray Vertices

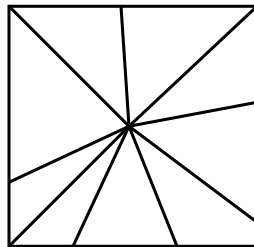
- Vertex "in-space", floating
- Similar to T-junction problem
 - visual problems, collision problems
- Software can help → "weld" or "merge" vertices

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Star-Like Faces

- Thin and problematic triangles
- Messed up normal smoothing to inconsistent normals (and odd lighting)



Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Summary

- Think about modeling, texturing, lighting as part of whole
- Why add detail with geometry if can be represented better (and more cheaply) with texture?
 - May have lighting artist, even, so be aware of other roles

Based on Chapter 2, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Mini-Outline

- Preparing to Create
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- Texturing (next)
- Lighting



Texturing

- Motivation
 - Games rely heavily for realism
 - Important to compensate for low geometry
 - Challenging, yet rewarding
- Distinction between texture and shader
 - *Shader* - define surface property of object
 - how shiny, bumpy, how light effects
 - *Texture* - bitmap plugged into shader that defines image we want to appear on object

Based on Chapter 3, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Detail in Texture

- Add depth, lines, etc. without polygons.
- Box is 12 polygons, bricks would take many more



(Taken from <http://www.mostert.org/3d/3dpdzscnem.html>)

Based on Chapter 3, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Make Interesting Textures

- Consider story behind object
- Consider door (contoured, so could do geometry, but cheaper to put picture up)
- Could just take one on Internet and put up
- But can make more believable
 - How old? Who uses it?
 - Repainted? How long ago?
- Add grunge around knob, show nicks at bottom, flecks of color where repainted ...



Based on Chapter 3, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Textures are Their Own Artwork

- Rarely ready to go ... spend time in Photoshop massaging, customizing
- Think of each texture as custom artwork
- Before and after page 49
 - Wood → with coffee mug stain, nicks and scratches
 - Window → depth in reflections, uneven opacity
 - Concrete → cracks, discoloration
- Need to be aware if tiled and reused
 - Interesting textures harder to re-use since noticeable

Based on Chapter 3, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Resolution

- Analogy:
 - Smiley face with 15 rocks
 - Hard to make out
 - Smiley face with 30 rocks
 - Looks Better
 - Smiley face with sand
 - Looks great
- So, always use high resolution for textures? Not necessarily. Takes more video memory.

Based on Chapter 3, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Where To Use Pixels?

- Think about
 - Physical size - actual size of object relative to character
 - Distance - how far away and how close can character get to it
- Example p.55
 - Room with box, window, clock
 - Each has a different resolution texture applied to it
 - Box not much (on floor and can't crawl) 128x128
 - Wall more since big (but still uninteresting) 512x512
 - Clock small and high, but numbers so 64x64
 - Window has picture of lighthouse but far so 32x32

Based on Chapter 3, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Color Depth

- How many bits to use to color each pixel
 - Ex: 16 colors (4-bit) lot less memory than 65,536 colors (16-bit)
 - Recommendation, try low and see if holds
- Sometimes low-bit gives "washed out" look that can be desired
- In fact, T.V. and real-world have lower color depth than most computer monitors
 - Try for yourself
 - Vibrant on computer may not be realistic
 - Worse, if port to T.V. reds bleed together

Based on Chapter 3, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



A Brief Word on Alpha Channels



- Grayscale image embedded in extra 8 bits of 32-bit image (24 bits gives true color)
- Use for:
 - *Transparency* - parts that are black are transparent, white parts are not (can use gray for semi-transparency)
 - *Bump maps* - use to create illusion of varying heights - light areas out, dark areas in - tweak each pixel based on grayscale
 - *Secularity* - define what areas reflect light most - human face shiny where oil, water secular for ripples

Based on Chapter 4, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Mini-Outline

- Preparing to Create
- Modeling Theory
- Texturing
- Lighting (next)



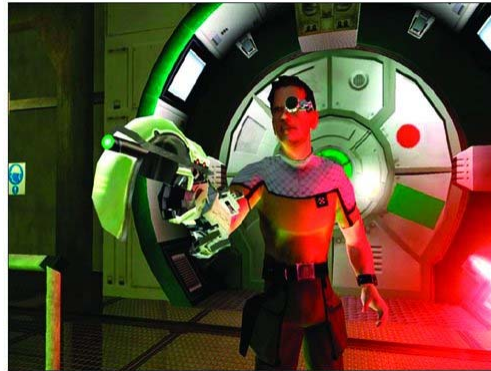
Lighting

- Can conjure feelings, emotions, even change what you are seeing
 - Reveal (or hide) depth
 - (Many books on traditional lighting)
 - AR/ID 3150. LIGHT, VISION AND UNDERSTANDING
- Remember, when see things is really reflection of light
- Sub-outline
 - Color
 - Mood
 - Setup
 - 3-D lights

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Color Indicates Danger



RTX Red Rock

<http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174370>



Color

- Powerful in setting mood
- Move beyond cliché
 - Green is ok, Red is danger
- Powerful associations
 - Ex: *The Matrix*
 - Green is in Matrix
 - Blue is in real-world
- Culture specific
 - Red danger, but in China red happy
 - White purity, but in China white death
- Balance -
 - too many and chaotic, over-stimulation
 - too little and drab and boring
 - color theory classes can help

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Pleasing Colors



Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic

<http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174370>



Mood

- Intensity, direction, angle, number of lights, and shadows all affect mood
- Even humidity, dust, air quality

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Mood by Lighting Example (1 of 3)

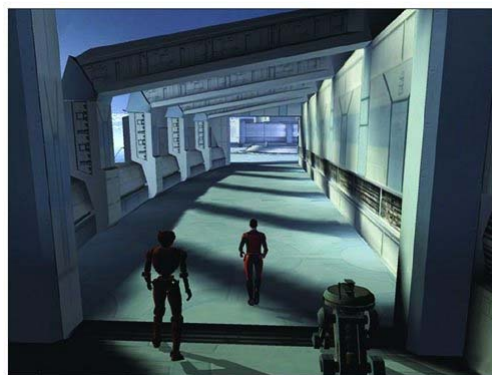


A calming outdoor scene using simple, yet effective, lighting

<http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174370>



Mood by Lighting Example (2 of 3)



Long shadows not only add to the atmosphere, but also help break up repetition

<http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174370>



Mood by Lighting Example (3 of 3)



Light beams and rays give clues as to the humidity, dust, and air quality in a scene

<http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174370>



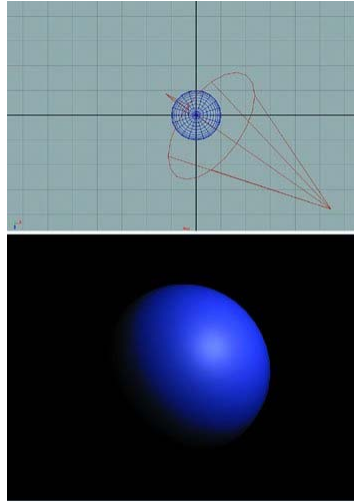
Lighting Setup (1 of 3)

- Traditional lighting
 - Key light, Fill light, Back light
- 3-D lighting different than traditional lighting
 - Start with traditional and modify until you get desired affect (broad strokes)
- *Key light* - main light source. Most intense and majority. Put at angle to define 3-D forms.

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Lighting Setup Example (1 of 3)



A sphere lit only by a key light positioned at an angle. The detail and form of the sphere are not as clear as if we added another light source.

<http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174370>



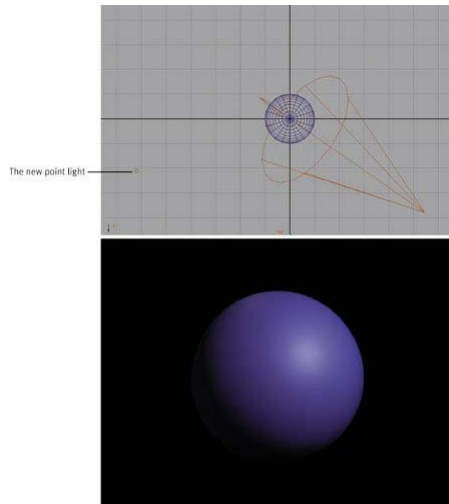
Lighting Setup (2 of 3)

- *Fill light* - Brings out some details out of shadow. Works well at angle.

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Lighting Setup Example (2 of 3)



A fill light brings out more form. Notice the point light has been added to the left of the sphere.

<http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174370>



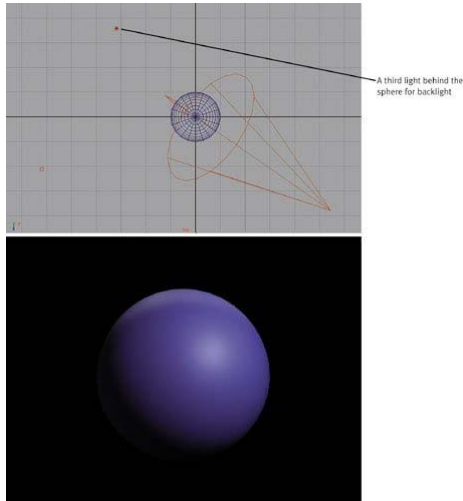
Lighting Setup (3 of 3)

- *Backlight* - Placed behind and slightly above or below object to help define shape. Highlights edges, pulls away from background.

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Lighting Setup Example (3 of 3)



The addition of the third light highlights the edge, helping give the sphere more dimension.

<http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174370>



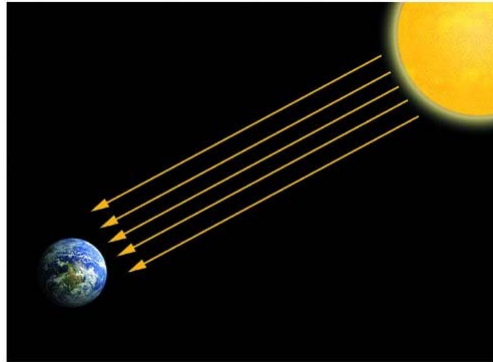
Working with 3D lights (1 of 4)

- 3-D lighting different than traditional lighting
 - Start with traditional and modify until you get desired affect (broad strokes)
- Tools give different kinds of lights
 - (next)
- A few effective practices
 - (after)



Working with 3D lights (2 of 4)

- *Directional Lights* - used for sunlight or moonlight. Often as key light. Predictable.



By the time the sun's rays reach the earth, they are nearly parallel to one another.

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Working with 3D lights (3 of 4)

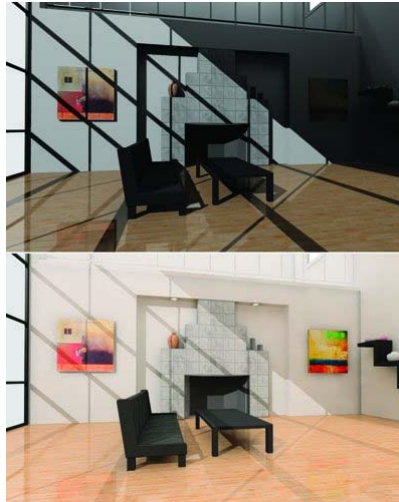
- *Ambient Lights* - spread everywhere, equally. Uniform diffuse lights.
- *Spot Lights* - focus beam on single location. Great control.
- *Point Lights* - single point in all directions. Light bulbs, candles, etc.

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Working with 3D lights (4 of 4)

- *Global Illumination* - attempt to mimic real-world lighting by calculating bouncing, etc.
 - Can be expensive to compute
 - May be limiting



A room lit without radiosity. Bottom The same room with a radiosity solution.

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Effective Lighting Practices (1 of 3)

- Pools of light
 - Don't always try to light evenly.
 - Gives sense of mystery

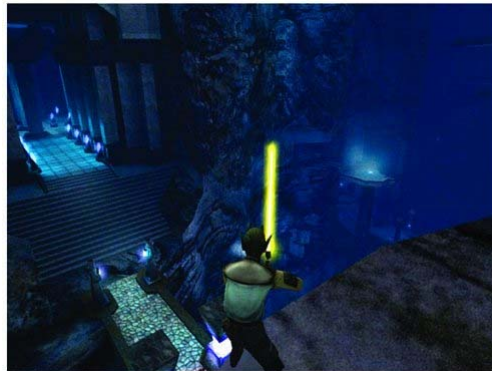


Pools of light in Indiana Jones: The Emperor's Tomb

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Effective Lighting Practices (2 of 3)



Using light to guide the player. Helps highlight areas that are accessible and important to the objectives.

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Effective Lighting Practices (3 of 3)

- Be Creative
 - Try not to stick to the standard solutions
 - Tell a story with your lights
 - Talk to level designer about scenes, even
 - Ex: Maybe your level harder than last, convey that tension
- Experiment
 - Start simple, add detail.
 - Experiment at early stages.
 - Try crazy combinations of color, reverse the intensities, or reposition lights in unorthodox places.

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick





Lighting Summary

- Study real-world light carefully to understand 3D light
 - 3D is at best only an approximation
- Study different conditions - rain, sunny, indoor, outdoor....
- Study lights from photos
- The key to developing skills as lighting artist → observe and re-create what you see

Based on Chapter 7, *Creating the Art of the Game*, by Matthew Omernick



Outline

- Introduction
- 3D Art
 - Modeling, Texturing, Lighting
- Animation (mostly 2D) (next)



Animation

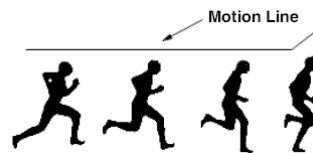
- Animation → produces the illusion of movement
- Display a series of frames with small differences between them
- Done in rapid succession, eye blends to get motion
- Unit is Frames Per Second (fps)
 - 24-30 fps: full-motion (Game Maker does 30)
 - 15 fps: full-motion approximation
 - 7 fps: choppy
 - 3 fps: very choppy
 - Less than 3 fps: slide show
- To do successfully, need to keenly observe, focus on differences in movement
 - Apply basic principles (next)

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



Motion Line

- Invisible line created by object as moves
 - Locate in center of gravity
- Straight if flying
 - Ex: bullet
- Up and down if bounces
 - Ex: rubber ball
- Depends upon speed and desire for exaggeration
 - Ex: Human sprinting versus walking
 - Ex: Warcraft III



Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



Key Frames



FIGURE 9-3:
Key-frame
Example

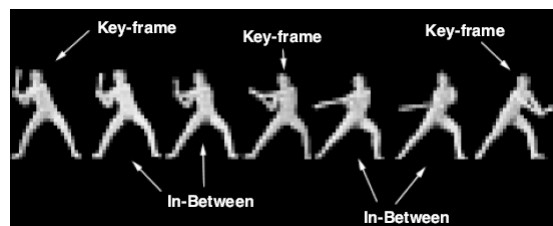
- Images at extremes in movement
 - Most noticeable
 - Ex: for flight wings up and wings down
 - Ex: for walking, right leg forward, leg together
- The more the better?
 - Smoother, yes
 - But more time to develop
 - And more prone to errors, "bugs" that interfere with the animation

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



In-Between Frames

- Generated to get smooth motion between key-frames
 - Can be tedious and time consuming to make
 - Most software allows duplication



Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



Frame Animation Guidelines

Object	Minimum # of Frames	Maximum #
4-legged animal running	4	16
Animal biting	2	5
Crawling	2	12
Explosions	5	16
Falling	3	5
Flying	2	12
Jumping	2	10
Kicking	2	6
Punching	2	6
Rotating/spinning	4	16
Running	2	12
Swinging (an object)	2	8
Throwing (an object)	2	6
Vehicle flying	2	4
Vehicle moving	2	8
Walking	2	12

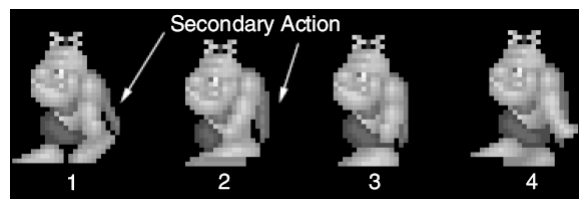
(See GameMaker tutorial shooter for examples
Enemy Planes, Explosions)

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



Secondary Actions

- Animation part that does not lead movement, but follows it
 - Add extra dimension of reality
 - Ex: Hair moving in wind
 - Ex: Cape billowing backward



Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



Sprites

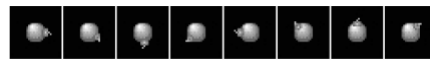
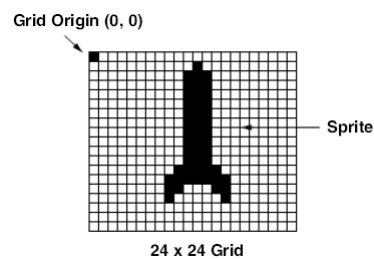
- Graphic objects that can move separately from background
- Often animated
- Topics:
 - Grid Squares
 - Primitives

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Grid Squares

- "Mini-Screen" to depict
 - Individual pixel modifications
- Help observe animation progression
- (Show Game Maker image editor example)
- Strips for tools



<http://www.flyingyogi.com/fun/download.cgi?spritelib>

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



Primitives

- Used in many games. If identify, can apply primitive rules and use:
 - Cylindrical primitive
 - Rotational primitive
 - Disintegration primitive
 - Color flash primitive
 - Scissors primitive
 - Growing primitive
 - Shrinking primitive
 - Minor primitives (used less often)

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



Cylindrical Primitive

- Spinning, rotating objects (hulls, wheels, logs...)
- Easy to master since doesn't require major changes
- Instead, uses *markers* that change
 - Show go from one end to another
- Need at least 3 frames

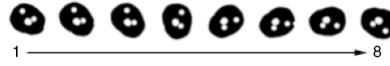


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Rotational Primitive

- Object moving in place (gun turret, asteroid...)
- Again, easy since rotate picture fixed degrees



Arcade Game Object	Degree Increments per Frame	Total Frames Required	Comments
Asteroids/meteors (coarse)	45°	8	Minimum required to produce convincing animation.
Asteroids/meteors (smooth)	225°	16	Sufficient to render convincing animation.
Gun turrets (coarse)	90°	4	Minimum required to produce convincing animation.
Gun turrets (smooth)	45°	8	Sufficient to render convincing animation.
Spinning objects (coarse)	90°	4	Minimum required to produce convincing animation.
Spinning objects (coarse)	45°	8	Sufficient to render convincing animation.
Vehicle/character facings (coarse)	90°	4	Minimum required to produce convincing animation.
Vehicle/character facings (smooth)	45°	8	Sufficient to render convincing animation.

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Disintegration Primitive

- Remove object from screen (character dies, explosion...)
 - Melting - reduce vertical area
 - Dissolving - remove random pattern
 - Color fading - extreme color change
- Take fixed percentage out for smooth

Selected Removal Method	Estimated Percent Removed per Frame	Total Frames
Melting (coarse)	25	4
Melting (smooth)	10	10
Dissolving (coarse)	25	4
Dissolving (smooth)	10	10
Color fade (coarse)	12.5°	8°
Color fade (smooth)	6.25°	16°



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Color Flash Primitive

- Flickering behind object (flash of jewel, sparkle of torch, pulse behind rocket...)
 - Usually intense, contrast color
 - Usually short animation (but can be complex)



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Scissors Primitive

- One of most popular (walking, biting)
- Few key frames, large changes in between



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Growing/Shrinking Primitive

- For explosion, growth/reduction potion
- Pay attention to scale (ex: 2 works well)



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Minor Primitives (1 of 3)

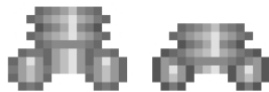


FIGURE 9-18: Piston Primitive Example

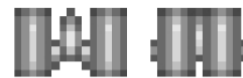


FIGURE 9-19: Squeeze Primitive Example

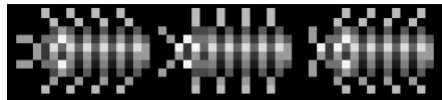


FIGURE 9-20: Swing Primitive Example



FIGURE 9-21: Slide Primitive Example



FIGURE 9-22: Open/Close Primitive Example

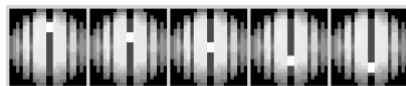


FIGURE 9-23: Bounce Primitive Example



FIGURE 9-24: Stomp Primitive Example

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Minor Primitives (2 of 3)



FIGURE 9-25: Slinking Example



FIGURE 9-26: Simplified Flying Sequence

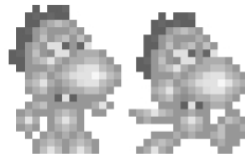


FIGURE 9-28: Basic Walking Example #1



FIGURE 9-29: Basic Walking Example #2

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Minor Primitives (3 of 3)



FIGURE 9-30: Complex Walking Example



FIGURE 9-33: Running Primitive Example (Humans)



FIGURE 9-38: Running Primitive Example (Animals)



FIGURE 9-43: Crawling Primitive Example (Part 1)

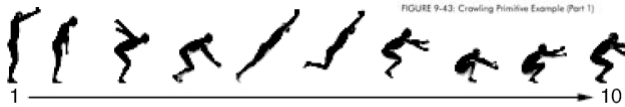


FIGURE 9-40: Complex Jumping Primitive Example

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Steps in Creating Animation Sequences (1 of 3)

- Conceptualize - have vision (in mind or on paper) of what animation will look like
- Decide on object behavior
 - animated continuously (using cycles) or
 - animated once (no looping)
- Choose a grid size - will contain and constrain object
 - Test and experiment briefly to have plenty of room
- Design key-frames - drawing the motion extremes
 - Use simple shapes to represent main actions
 - Ex: stick figures or basic shapes (circles, squares)

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman




Steps in Creating Animation Sequences (2 of 3)

- Estimate the in-betweens - think of how many you will need to complete the sequence smoothly.
 - Be conservative. Easier to add additional transition frames than remove them.
- Create object motion lines - trace the motion line and motion angles for the sequence. Make sure properties are consistent with object, else adjust
 - Use your painting program's Line tool
 - If not, make the appropriate adjustments to the sequence and repeat
- Apply secondary enhancements - Embellish to look convincing and enticing

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman





Steps in Creating Animation Sequences (3 of 3)

- Test each movement
 - Can be done with 'copy' and 'undo' in tool
 - Others have animation rendering (ex- Game Maker)
 - Look for flaws (movement, discolored pixels ...)
- Repeat - Repeat for all animations

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



General Animation Tips (1 of 3)

- Remember the relationship between frames and animation smoothness
 - More frames, more smoothness (but more time)
- Always account for color
 - Primary actions and secondary actions should be rendered in colors that make them easy to see.
 - Otherwise, the effectiveness of the animation can be compromised (ch 7 and ch 8)
- Use tempo wisely- Never too fast or too slow
 - Try to mimic nature. Observe yourself. Study the speed at which different types of objects move in different situations.

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General Animation Tips (2 of 3)

- Try to individualize your objects
 - Unique and individualized touches make seem real. "Personality" that distinguishes it
 - Easiest, use exaggeration and embellishment (i.e., secondary actions)
- Keep it simple - Unnecessary complexity can ruin animation
 - Stick with primitives and minimal frames
 - Don't do any more work than you have to!

Based on Chapter 9, *Designing Arcade Computer Game Graphics*, by Ari Feldman



General Animation Tips (3 of 3)

- Use exaggerated elements - as an animation device, adds depth
 - Especially important for short animation sequences to make convincing
- Constantly observe - study of the objects around you. Study how different things move. Study books on animation. Observe your favorite games
 - Will give insights into animation techniques, make better animations yourself

