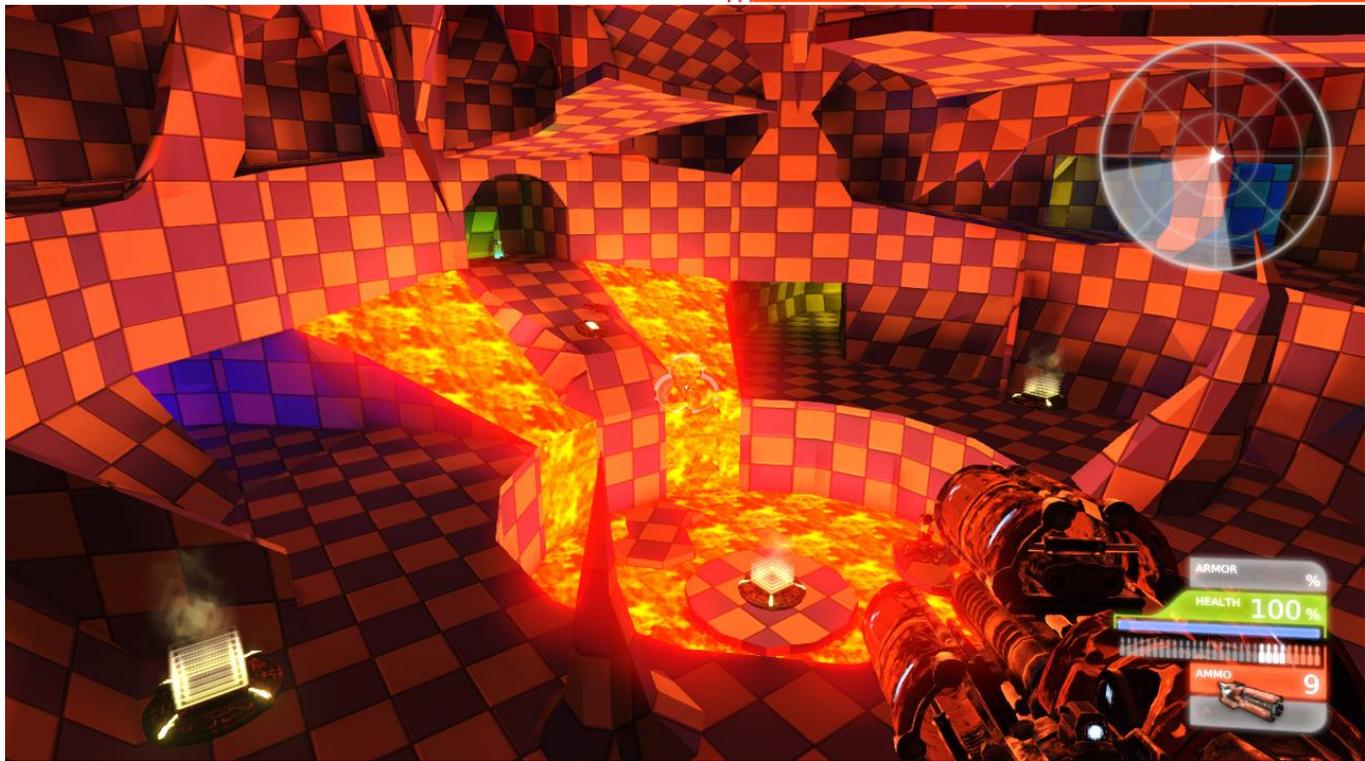


2014

The Temple of Doom

4-Player Deathmatch Map



LD1 – 3D Level Design

Design By:

- Angelo Nouwens 132088

2GA-4DP

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Version History

Version 1.0 – (27-10-2014)

- Checked for spelling errors

Version 0.3 – (26-10-2014)

- Added cover page
- Added page numbers
- Added headers
- Finished iteration log
- Added conclusion about the Final Level

Version 0.2 – (22-10-2014)

- Wrote text about the Conception Phase
- Wrote text about Theme coverage and Usability
- Wrote a quick draft and added images of three iterations

Version 0.1 – (18-10-2014)

- Added screenshots from ‘Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom’
- Added first level design sketches
- Added Drawing Plans

Theme

My level is based on the theme of 'The Temple of Doom' from the film *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984) directed by Steven Spielberg.



This image is the main inspiration for the level. The following elements were most interesting for me to use in the design:

- Varying height levels between the cave tunnels, temple floors and ledges, the ceremonial area and lava pit.
- The lighting within the area is very red toned, which gives the area a dangerous atmosphere.
- The cave walls are clear boundaries for the area.
- Lava can be used to make the level more interesting, by creating environmental hazards.
- The theme allows for a lot of interesting art assets, like Mayan artefacts and building decorations.
- The various tunnels and trapdoors seen in the movie can be used in the level design to provide the player with enough options for moving through the level, thus enhancing flow.
- The open area in the picture shows an open area where most of the action takes place. In the upper left corner we can see Dr. Jones and his companions look down on the spectacle from one of the tunnel entrances. This suggests ways in which layering of gameplay spaces can be naturally introduced into the theme by having a big central combat area and a network of tunnels connecting to it from various directions and heights.

Inspirational Images	Usability
	<p>This image depicts Dr. Jones walking across the ledges of the upper levels of the area. I want to add height variety to the level by adding ledges like these for players to navigate across.</p>
	<p>This image clearly shows the whirling 'lavapool' in which humans are sacrificed in the movie. I want the lavapool to be in the centre of the level. It will be the most dangerous zone as falling in the lava will kill you immediately. Placing pickups in this risky area allows for some nice risk-reward gameplay.</p>
	<p>This image depicts the 'Mayan artefact' style of art assets I want the level to be decorated with. Macabre decorations around the walls like skulls and masks, iron chains and cages with bones of their former prisoners in them. In the movie, the chains are connected to a big spinning wheel, with which the cage could be lowered into the lava. 'Medieval' technology like this would fit the theme nicely, and could be used to make the level more dynamic.</p>
	<p>This image depicts a wall of the cave tunnels in the movie and in particular, the way it is lit. Candles melt their way across the rocky terrain and slightly light up the level.</p>
	<p>This image depicts a tunnel with mining karts and rails from the movie. I plan to use tunnels to connect certain parts of the central area to each other. Some of these tunnels could be made to look like these, with rails and perhaps some primitive mining materials.</p>

Conception

To get a clear picture of what I wanted the level to look like, I decided to start from the one thing I was sure about. I wanted the level to feel like the inside of a volcano. The big pool of lava in the centre surrounded by caves and tunnels through the mountain. I browsed the internet and found these inspirational pictures:



These images were consistent with the 'atmosphere' I wanted my level to have. Most of the lighting in the level emits from the lava that flows through it. The rocky formations around the level provide spiralling pathways,

platforms to jump on and all shapes of rocks navigate between and use for cover. With these pictures and the movie in mind, I made the first rough drawings of the level.

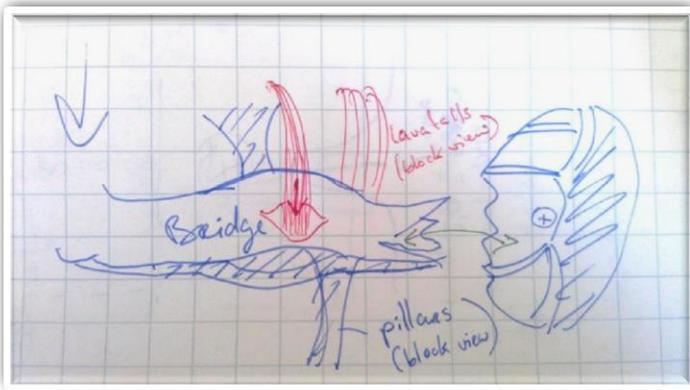


Rough Sketches

This drawing depicts the central platform, with lava around it. The platform is accessible from two sides and there is an important pickup in the middle to encourage players to navigate there.

Around the pool of lava is a circular platform to navigate on, and there are stairs to take the player up a higher level on a wider circular platform. This way, the level is kind of constructed like the Coliseum of Rome, with the Lavapool as the arena.



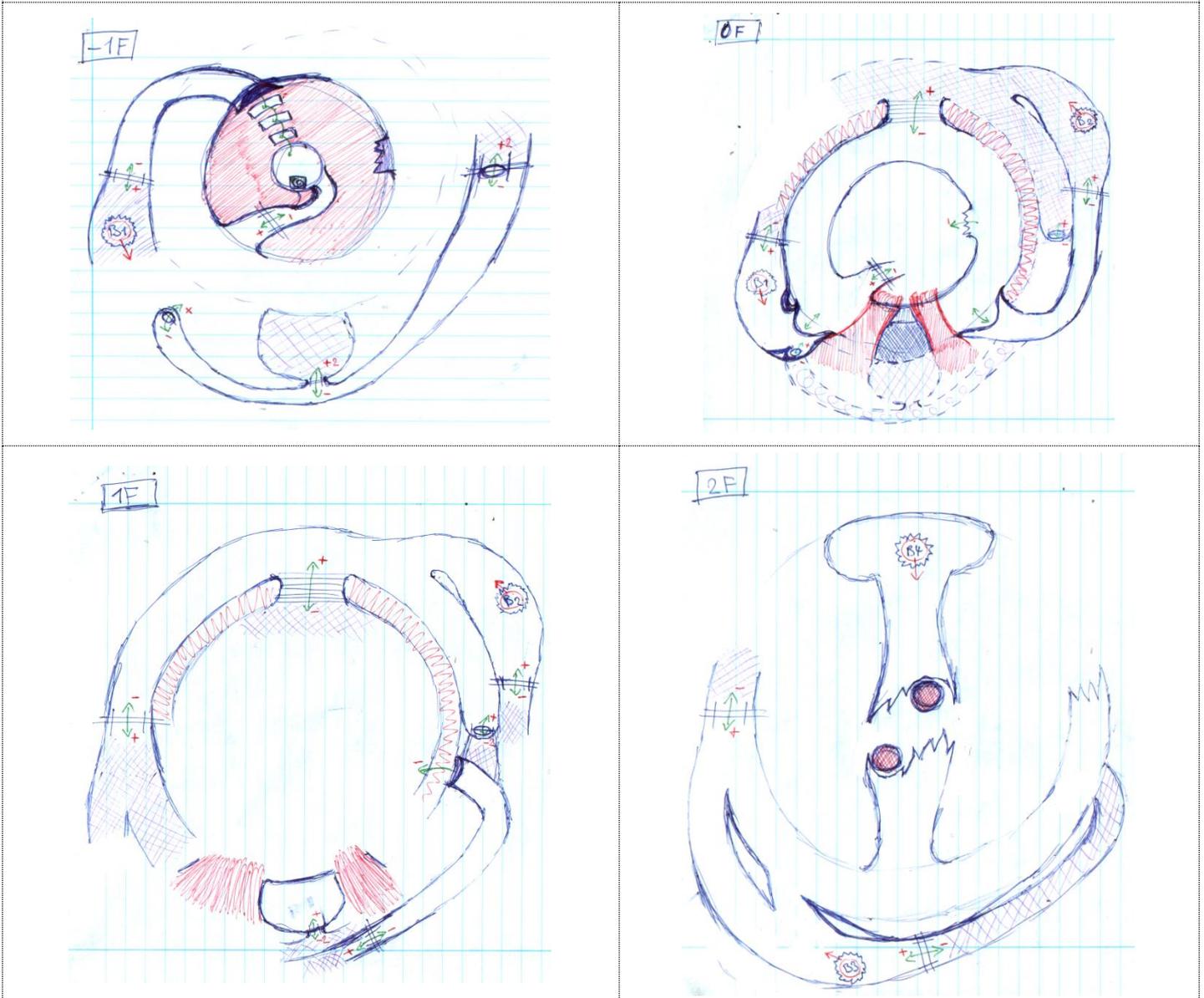


Going up high enough, there would be a bridge connecting one side of the arena to the other. At the top would be a sort of 'balcony' with another pickup item to make it interesting to go there.

Having drawn these two rough sketches. I was starting to get a clear idea of what I wanted the level to look like. After that, I drew a detailed, layered version of the level in my mind.

Drawing Plans

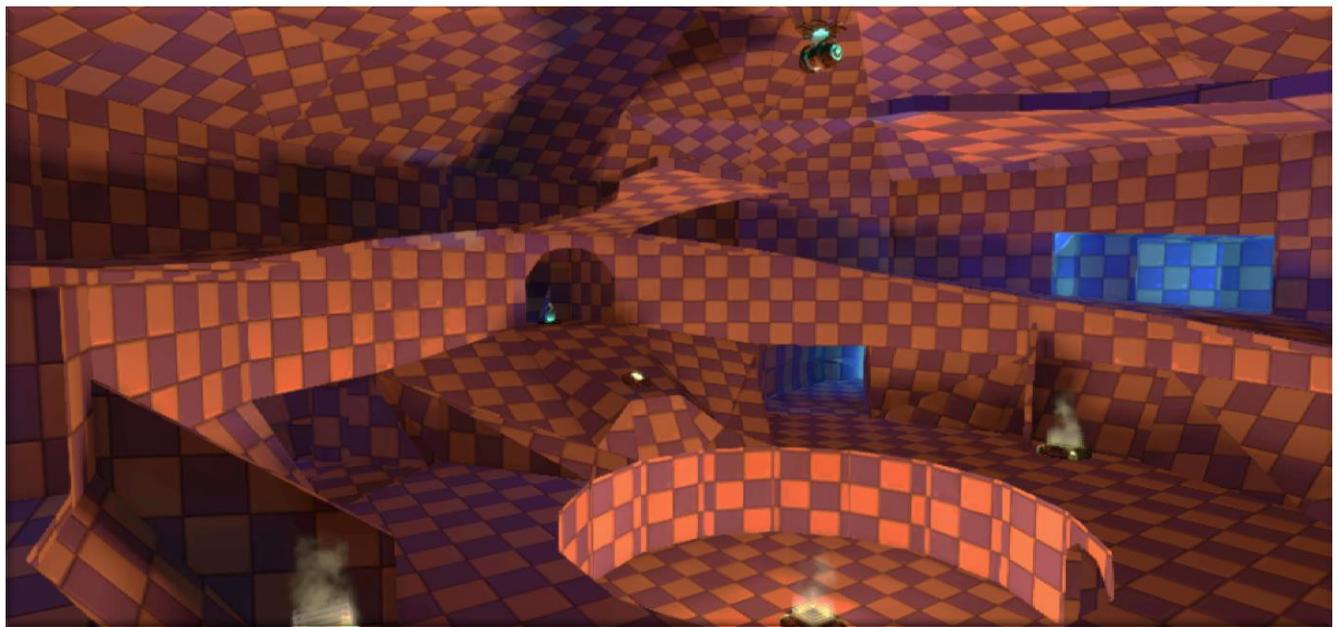
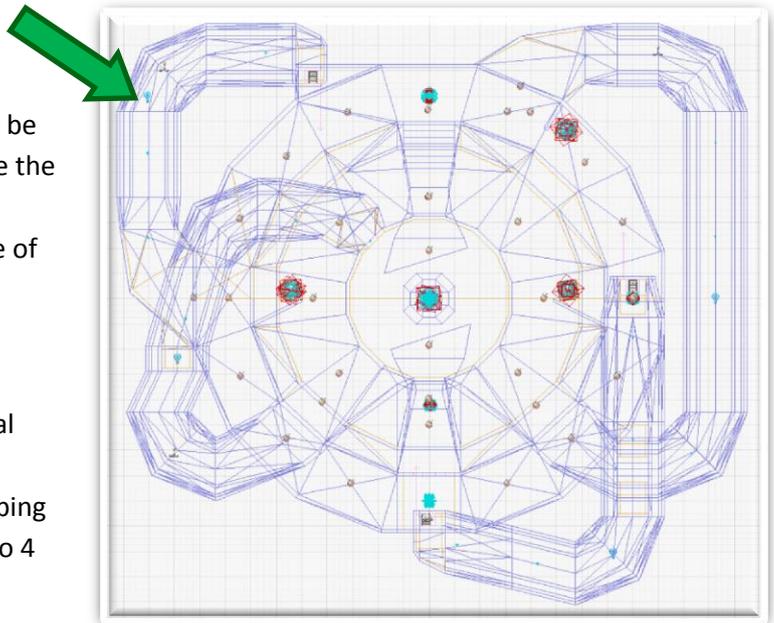
In the next set of drawings, the red coloured area represents lava, the green arrows represent a transition between height levels, the red + and - symbols (sometimes with a '2' next to it) signify an ascension or descension. B1 to B4 represent the 4 spawning locations I envisioned.



First 'Complete' Version

This is the first version of the level I considered to be somewhat 'complete'. It has been mostly built like the drawings, except for the '**B3 spawnpoint tunnel**', which I have flipped to connect to the 'North' side of the map.

The reason for this change is that, with the original plans, the south side of the map had about 5 entrances, where the northern had only 2. By flipping the tunnel, I managed to change those numbers to 4 and 3 respectively.



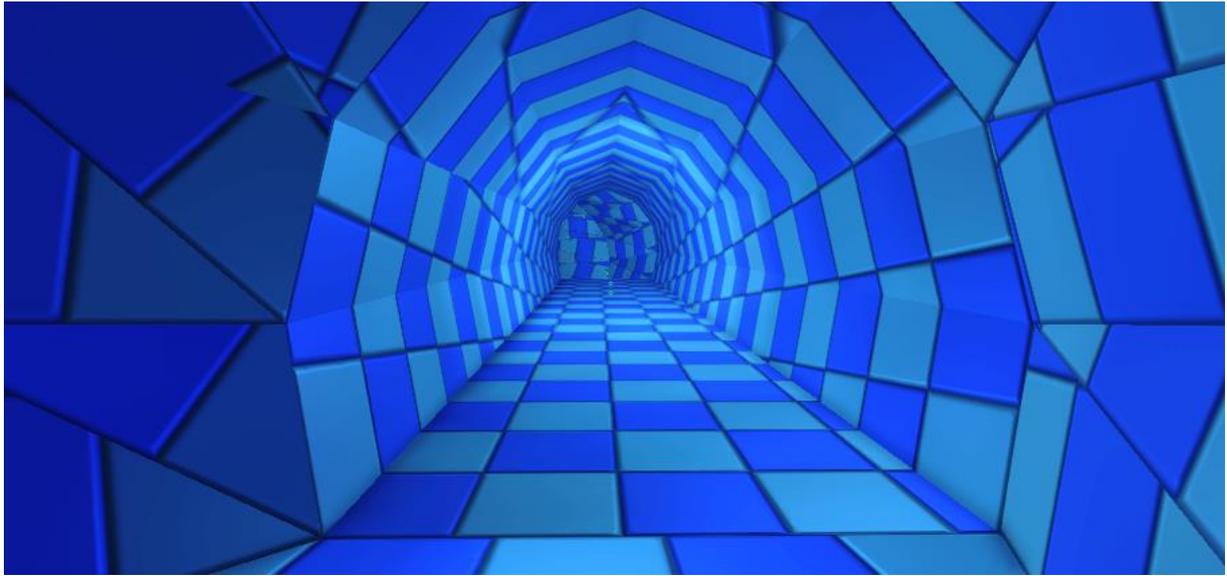
The level consists of the big lavapool a jump pad in the middle. The central area contains the weapon pickups and the tunnels around it contain all the health boosts, with the exception of the giant health pickup floating in the air in the middle of the central area.

Iteration Example #1

The first iteration worth mentioning is about one of the tunnels of the level. Playtesting revealed that one of the tunnel in was very long in particular and boring to navigate through.

Before

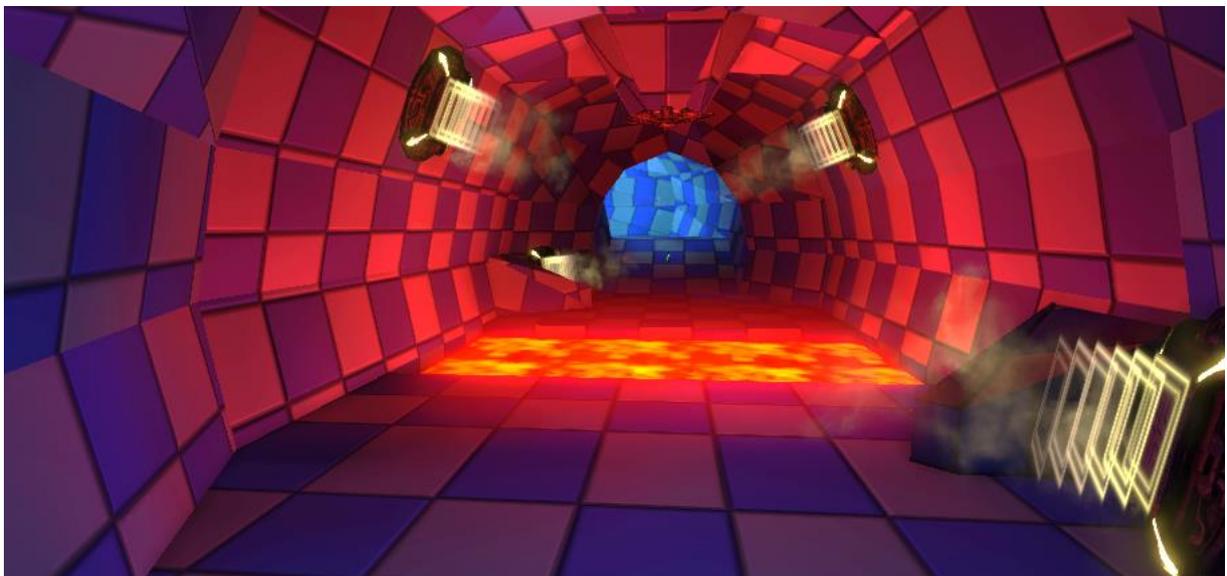
The tunnel looks very boring. Walking from one side to the other takes about 3 seconds, which feels like a long time without action.



After

I have made the tunnel wider to make room for an interesting area. I've put a damage enhancing pickup item in the centre of the tunnel to encourage players to go there. The item is floating above a pit of lava to make it dangerous to grab and create some risk-reward gameplay. However, it still took the player too long to navigate through the tunnel. Additionally, the player would run into a tunnel looking for health items, to find nothing but more danger. To solve this problem, I've put in jump pads to help the player navigate through the tunnel both safely and quickly.

An extra benefit to this solution was that players really enjoyed the quick jumping and bouncing.



Iteration Example #2

The second iteration I would like to discuss is about the tunnels surrounding the central area. Players were complaining about feeling disoriented in the tunnels. They said they all looked alike and that makes it very hard to get to know the map.

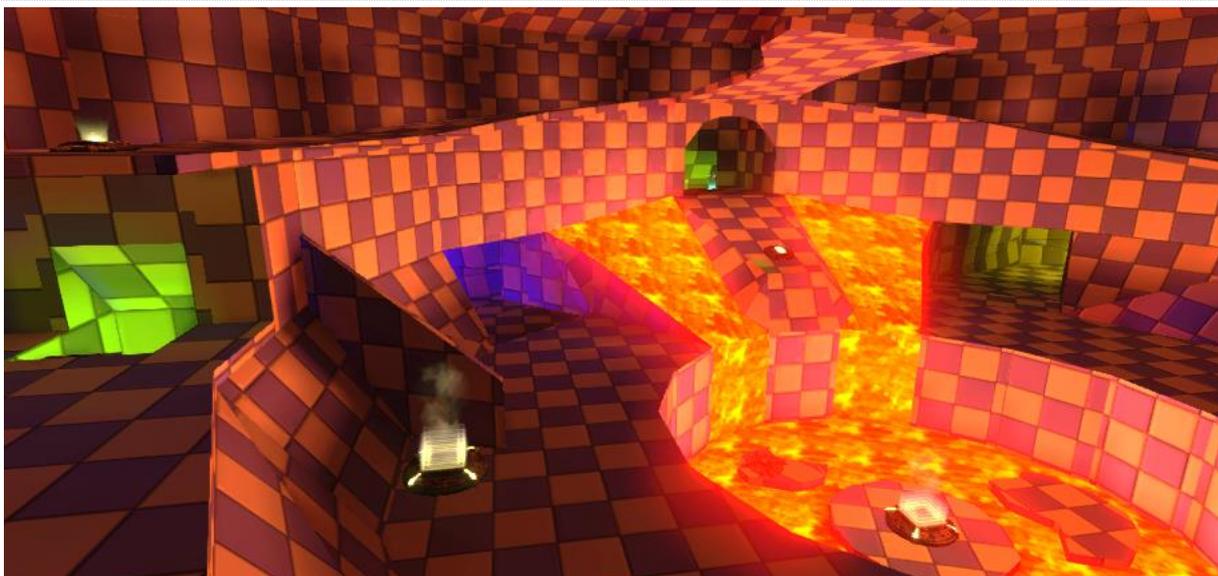
Before

The tunnels were all lit with the same blue lighting. I liked the idea of having the 'red' danger zone and the 'blue' healing zones, which would be the tunnels. I imagined players fighting it out in the arena and healing up in the tunnels when their health drops too low.



After

I made sure every tunnel had their own distinct colour of light, to make each one of them recognizable. An additional benefit of this is that players can easily recognize the different entrances to the same tunnel, which helps a lot with player navigation.



Iteration Example #3

The third iteration example I would like to mention is about the SuperHealth pickup floating in the top centre of the combat area.

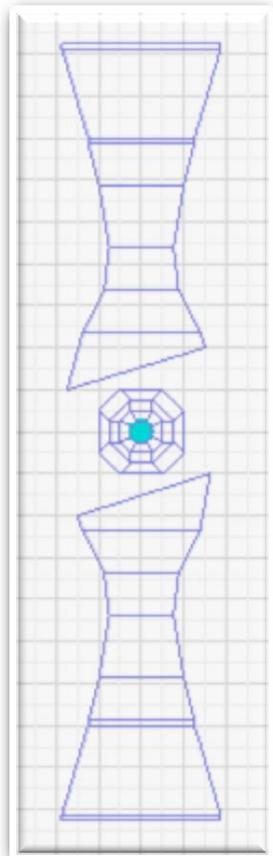


The image depicts the SuperHealth pickup floating above the lavapool. In order to grab it, the player must perform a skilful double jump, while being exposed to the entire area. Failing to jump at the right time will likely result in falling into the lava and dying.

Before

When performed at the right time, a double jump would safely get the player across the platforms, with a nice chunk of extra health.

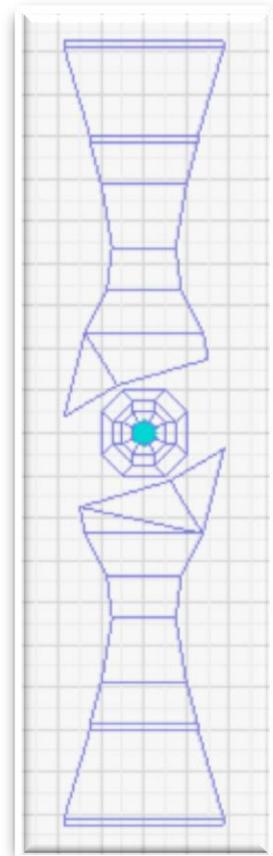
A lot of players complained about the jump being too hard and the punishment of death being too harsh.



After

I made the gap between the platforms a bit smaller to make it easier for the player to jump across safely.

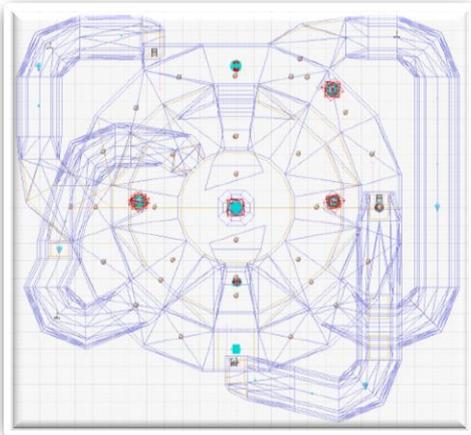
Failing the jump still likely results in death, but I wanted to keep that in the level, seeing as how I think it creates an exciting risk-reward situation.



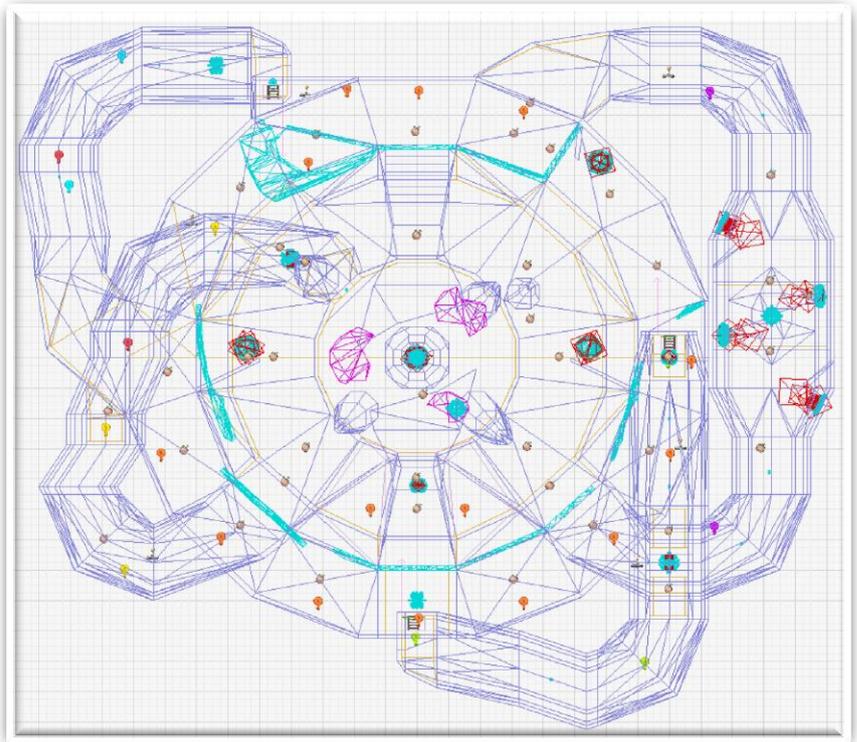
The Final Level

After many iterations, big and small, I am finally happy with my level.

A quick top-down comparison with the 'first complete level' reveals a lot of changes that have been made.



FIRST LEVEL



FINAL LEVEL

The most noticeable change that has been made between these versions is the pit of lava with floating platforms on it. Other important changes are the meshes I have placed around the level to be used as cover or to obstruct the view in the large open area. The final level also contains ambient sound and the tunnels have been made less boring with the addition of hazards and pickups. The rest of the changes are mostly 'minor' ones, like changing the location of a spawning point or armour pickup. These changes may seem less important, but playtesting has proved they have been of significant importance. All in all, I am satisfied with the way things turned out and I enjoyed working with UDK. I just hope that grading my level will be even more fun than it was creating it.

