

CRASHLANDS

Design by Chaos

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BUTTERSCOTCH
SHENANIGANS

Our Studio

- Founded November 2012
- Four-person team
- Five launched titles
- **Crashlands**
 - Action-Crafting RPG
 - Mobile GOTY 2016
 - Over 500,000 units sold
 - 93 Metacritic for Mobile



20 MINUTES!

DOWN WITH NUANCE.

QUESTIONS? UNDERSTANDABLE.

How do we design our games?

Why do studios crunch?

Why do studios go bankrupt?

Why do projects get cancelled?

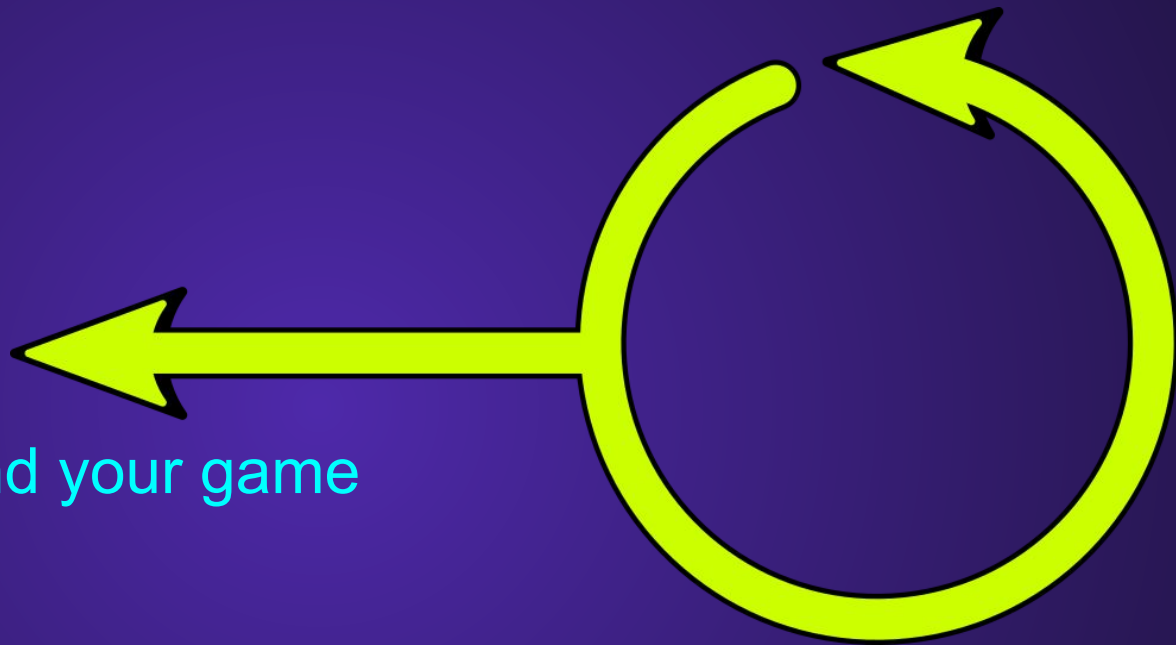
PLANS.

Iterate

“How does that work?”

The Vision

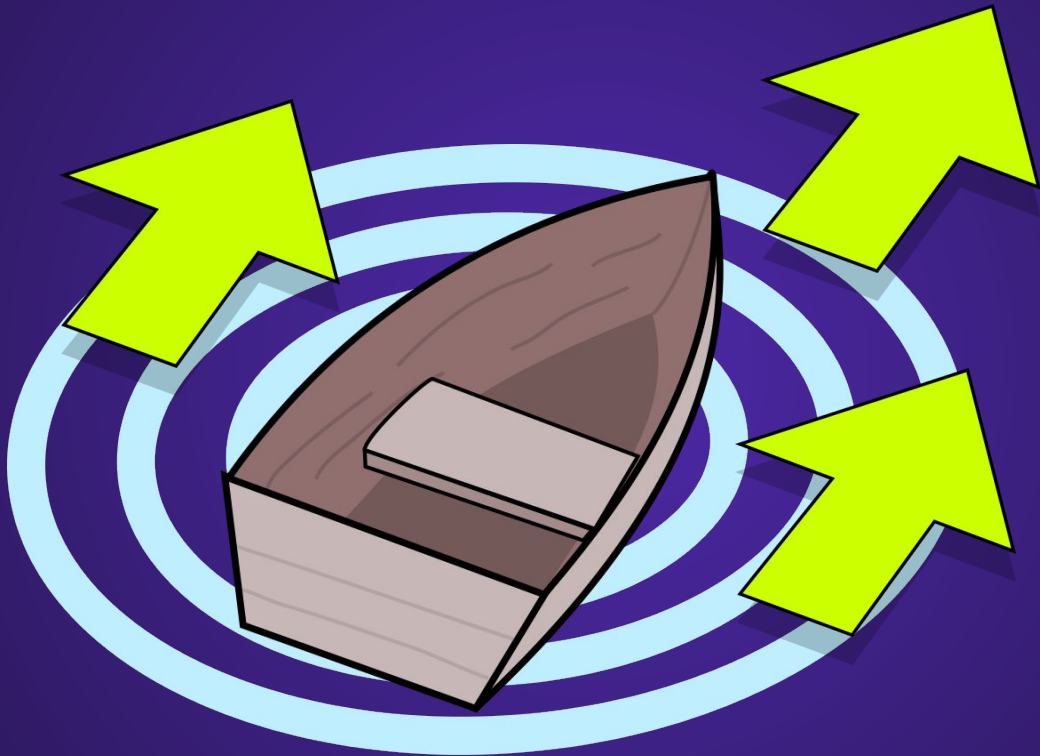
The core idea behind your game



The Vision

- No such thing as a good or bad game **idea**; only good or bad **execution**
- **Any** game idea can become a good game
- *What your game idea is doesn't matter*

Gameboat Rowing



How to Have Visions

- A single phrase or sentence
- Very high-level. Lacks specifics
- Focuses on a mechanic, experience, or feeling

Crashlands: **A light-hearted, open-world crafting adventure with tameable creatures and lots of jokes.**

Prototype!

- We need something to iterate *on*
- Find the **foundation**
- Crashlands: “Collect things to craft.”





10/10 Leaves

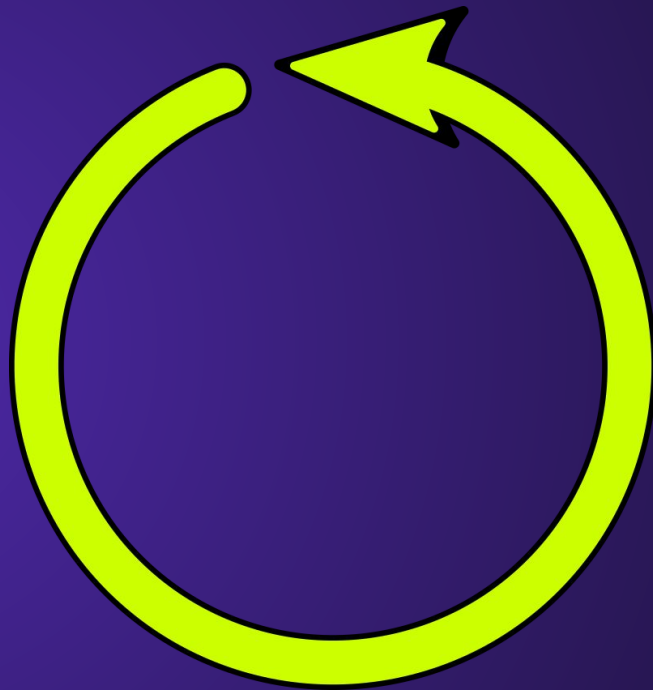


The Iteration Loop

- Play the Game
- Compare game to vision
- Invent solutions
- Implement

Don't plan too far ahead.

Iterate based on what the game **is**,
not what it **will be**.



Day 1



Week 2



Month 2



Year 2 (Launch)



The Game Discovers Itself



Iteration Philosophies

Focus on Speed of Development

- Iteration is a **compounding** process
- “Take the time to go fast.”
- “Can we not?”
- Speed comes from what you **don't** do

The “Good Enough” Principle

- “Perfect is the enemy of good.”
- Need a creature
 - Simple, avoidable attack
 - Friendly-looking
 - Fit with the environment
 - Few moving parts

YUP



Understanding Player Reactions

- “Help! I’m being chased by a one-legged hippo!”
- **Not:** “Its ears *could* be slightly larger...”
- The player accepts the world as you present it. **SO QUIT WORRYING ABOUT IT!**



Debate-Crushing Prototypes

- “How long would it take to prototype this idea?”
- The Crashlands floors problem
- Time arguing: **3 hours**
- Time to prototype: **7 minutes**

What about story?

“Baconweed”



“Potted Baconweed”



Legend says if you leave a Potted Baconweed by your back step, the Baconweed Fairy will steal your teeth.

The Baconweed Fairy is Born



Binding Content with Story

- Finish the game first. The game is the setting for the story.
- Look for story pieces lying around, and weave them together

Be Unapologetic

Let your game tell the stories it wants to tell

IN SUMMARY

- Ideas don't matter
- Quit worrying so much
- Don't plan everything. Or anything, if you can help it.
- Don't sweat the small stuff, or most of the big stuff
- Speed is your best friend
- Don't tell stories; find them

THANKS!

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