



## LET'S PLAY:

# GAME DESIGNER

Game Designers are the architects of the system of play and usually the vision holders of the game. They're the ones who develop gameplay concepts, balance values to make the systems work, and design the player journey. While creative ideas are an important part of game design, a Game Designer will usually be responsible for some measure of technical work, whether it's **constructing design documentation** or **building spreadsheets so the game has numbers to function from** (e.g. how much damage *does* that goblin do?) as well as thematic.

## NOTABLE CHAMPIONS



- **Shigeru Miyamoto** (Donkey Kong, Super Mario 64)
- **Brenda Romero** (Wizardry series)
- **Sid Meier** (Civilization series, Railroad Tycoon)
- **Kim Swift** (Left 4 Dead, Portal, Half-Life 2)

## TOMES OF KNOWLEDGE



**"The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses"**  
Jesse Schell (2008, CRC Press)

**"Game Design Workshop: Third Edition"**  
Tracy Fullerton (2014, CRC Press)

## PARTY ROLES



These are some of the roles you might encounter underneath the umbrella of **Game Designer**:

- Game Designer
- Level Designer
- Combat Designer
- Mission Designer
- Systems Designer
- Economy Designer
- World Builder
- Monetisation Designer
- Narrative Designer

## SKILL TREE



### BASIC CODING

Usually for scripting (e.g. LUA, Python, C#), as well as understanding the limitations of your engine.



### MATHEMATICS

Especially statistics, with a good handle on formulae and spreadsheets.



### COMMUNICATION

To communicate ideas to the team, and the design to the player. This is the core of game design.

## KEY ITEMS



- **Spreadsheet software** - Google Sheets (free), Microsoft Excel (trial)
- **Planning tools** - Asana (free), Trello (free), Evernote (free)
- **Diagram-drawing tools** - Google Drawings (free), yEd (free)
- ... and carry a notebook with you wherever you go!

## QUICKSTART QUESTS



- **Try restricting your ideas for interesting results.** Come up with a game concept based around only one game 'mechanic' - for instance, what kind of design could you achieve with only using a jump function?
- **Use familiar game's tools and experiment.** Select a game you enjoy that comes with a map editor or sandbox mode, and try designing an area you think would fit within that game's paradigms - for instance, a Warcraft 3 map.
- **Practice communicating succinctly.** If you have an existing game idea, try to explain your concept to another person in only one sentence. Does that sentence capture the essence and uniqueness of your idea?