

# LEVELING UP YOUR COMPANY

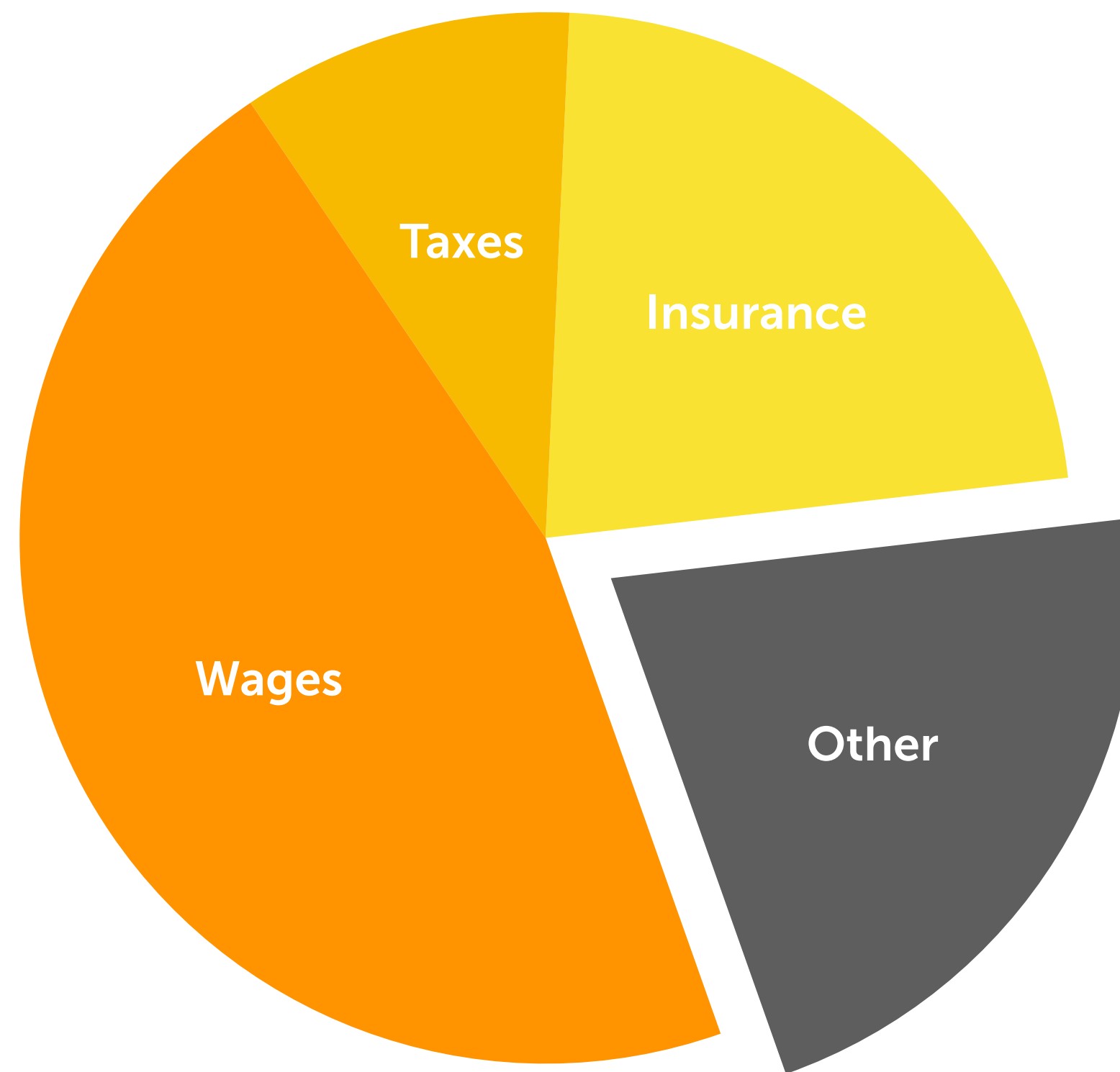
HOW TO UP YOUR GAME

# LEVELING UP PRODUCTION

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## FUNDING GAMES

<b>COST OF LIVING</b>	1.000€
<b>+ TAX &amp; INSURANCE</b>	800€
<hr/>	
<b>KEEPING 1 DEV ALIVE</b>	1.800€
<b>+ DEV COSTS</b>	400€
<hr/>	
<b>1 DEV COMPANY</b>	2.200€



- Rent
- Hardware
- Software
- Licenses
- Servers
- Food
- Ratings
- Travel
- Legal
- Marketing
- Tax Advisor
- etc.

# LEVELING UP PRODUCTION

## FUNDING GAMES

- Contract Work
- Publisher
- Local & International VG Funding
- Private Investors
- Crowdfunding
- Self-Financing / Cross-Financing

**LEVELING UP PRODUCTION**

**RISK MITIGATION  
THROUGH  
PLATFORM  
DIVERSIFICATION**

# LEVELING UP PRODUCTION


## PLATFORM DIVERSIFICATION

- More platforms → More players → More sales potential
- The more people pay you, the better
- Security through income diversification
- Possible vendors include Valve, Nintendo, Sony, Microsoft, Apple, Google, Amazon, Facebook

# LEVELING UP **MARKETING & PR**

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## INFLUENCER MARKETING

- Content Creators will market your game for you
- Organic reception of your game 
- Press copies (in moderation) will pay for themselves (Keymailer, etc.)
- Different creators have different tastes
- They're still people!

# LEVELING UP **MARKETING & PR**

## COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

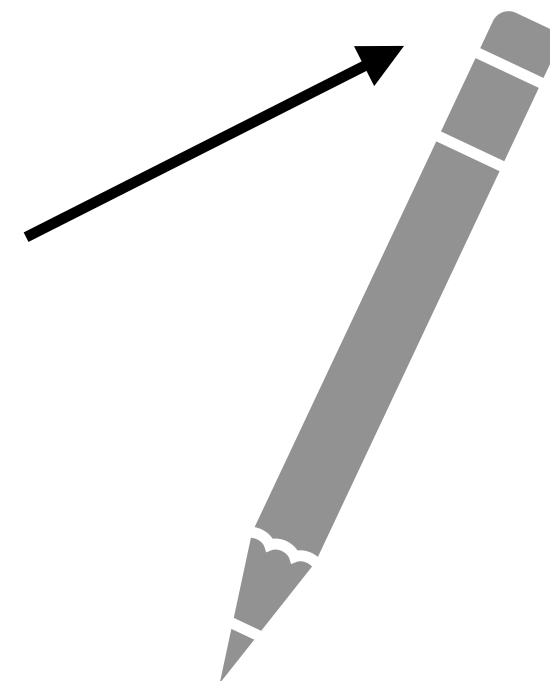
- Good: Community around your game
- Better: Community around your brand
- Spend time on Community Management & Social Media
- Dev Streams are a great opportunity

# LEVELING UP DESIGN

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## ITERATIVE DESIGN

- Write a GDD!
- You're not gonna get it right on the first try
- Have a playable prototype early on
- Game Jams are perfect practice
- Use this part of your pencil a lot



# LEVELING UP DESIGN

## EXPERIMENTAL PROTOTYPING

- The fastest prototyping method may be very, very strange

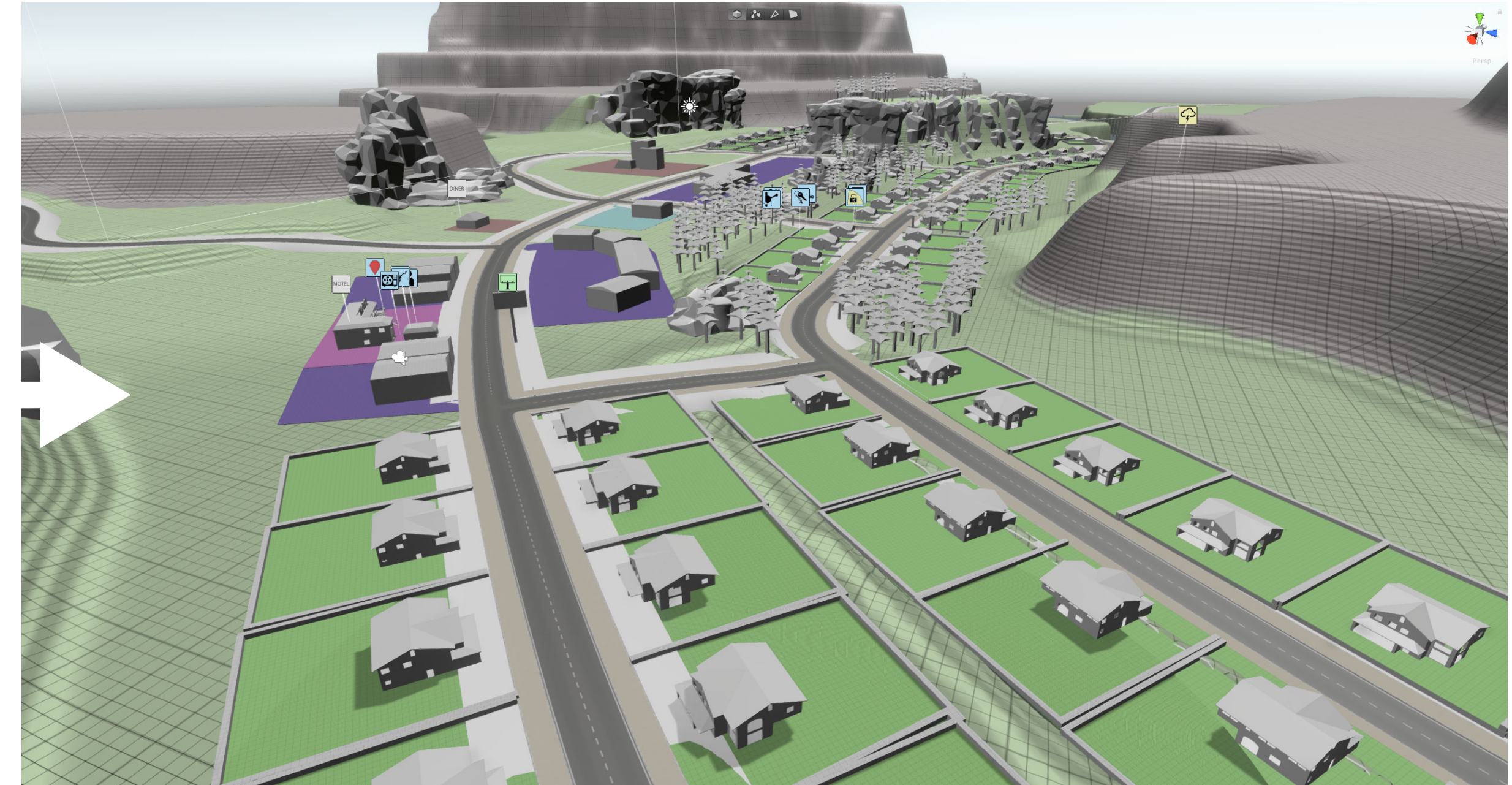
# LEVELING UP DESIGN

## EXPERIMENTAL PROTOTYPING

- The fastest prototyping method may be very, very strange



CITIES  
SKYLINES



unity

PIXEL  
MANIACS

# LEVELING UP DESIGN

## EXPERIMENTAL PROTOTYPING

- The fastest prototyping method may be very, very strange
- Can be very different from actual game
- Not necessarily inside your engine (e.g. BoTW)

# LEVELING UP DESIGN

## EXPERIMENTAL PROTOTYPING



# LEVELING UP ART

# LEVELING UP ART

## ITERATIVE, NON-DESTRUCTIVE WORKFLOW

- Using Raw files facilitates iteration
- Begin with crude art, add details over time (if necessary)
- Sometimes, crude art will suffice
- Applies to all artistic departments

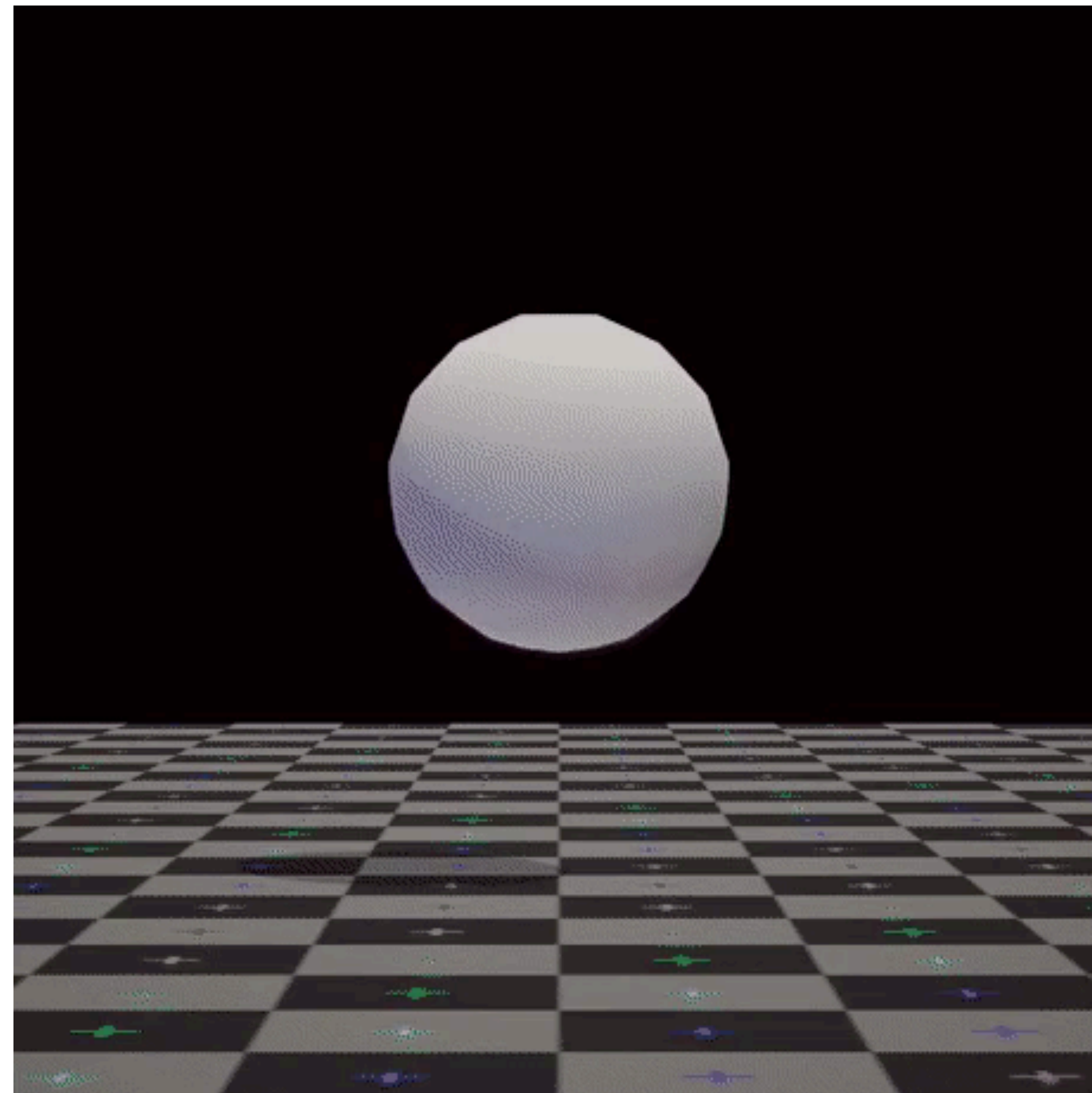
# LEVELING UP ART

## LEARN SHADER CODE

- May seem insignificant, but has widespread benefits
- Simplified shaders improve performance
- Custom effects improve visual quality → production value
- Not everything can be done with standard shaders (e.g. customization)
- At least learn node-based shader editing (e.g. Amplify)

# LEVELING UP ART

LEARN SHADER CODE



MESH DEFORMATION by @\_kzr

# LEVELING UP ART

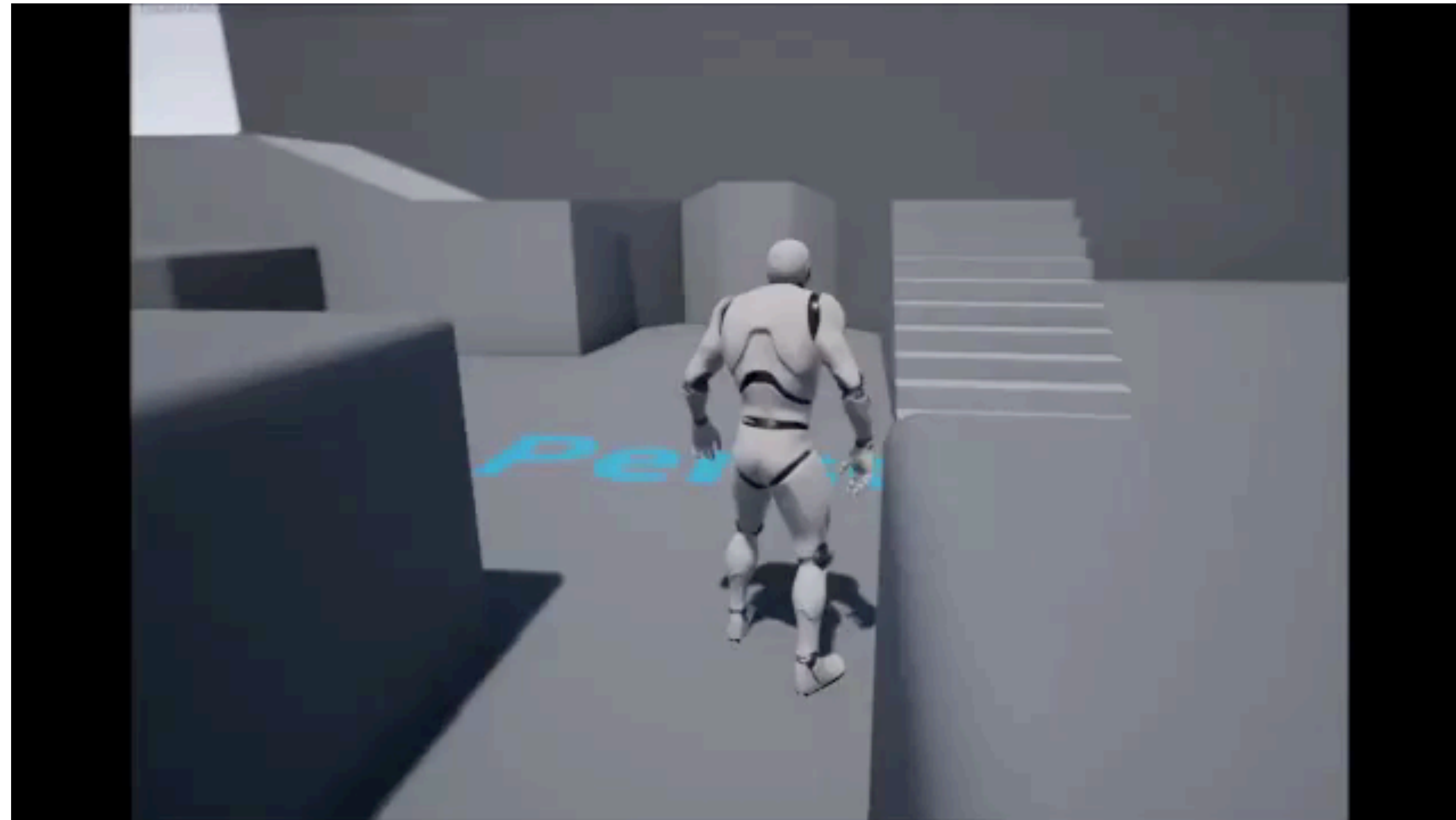
LEARN SHADER CODE



MESH SMEAR by @jordy\_j\_s

# LEVELING UP ART

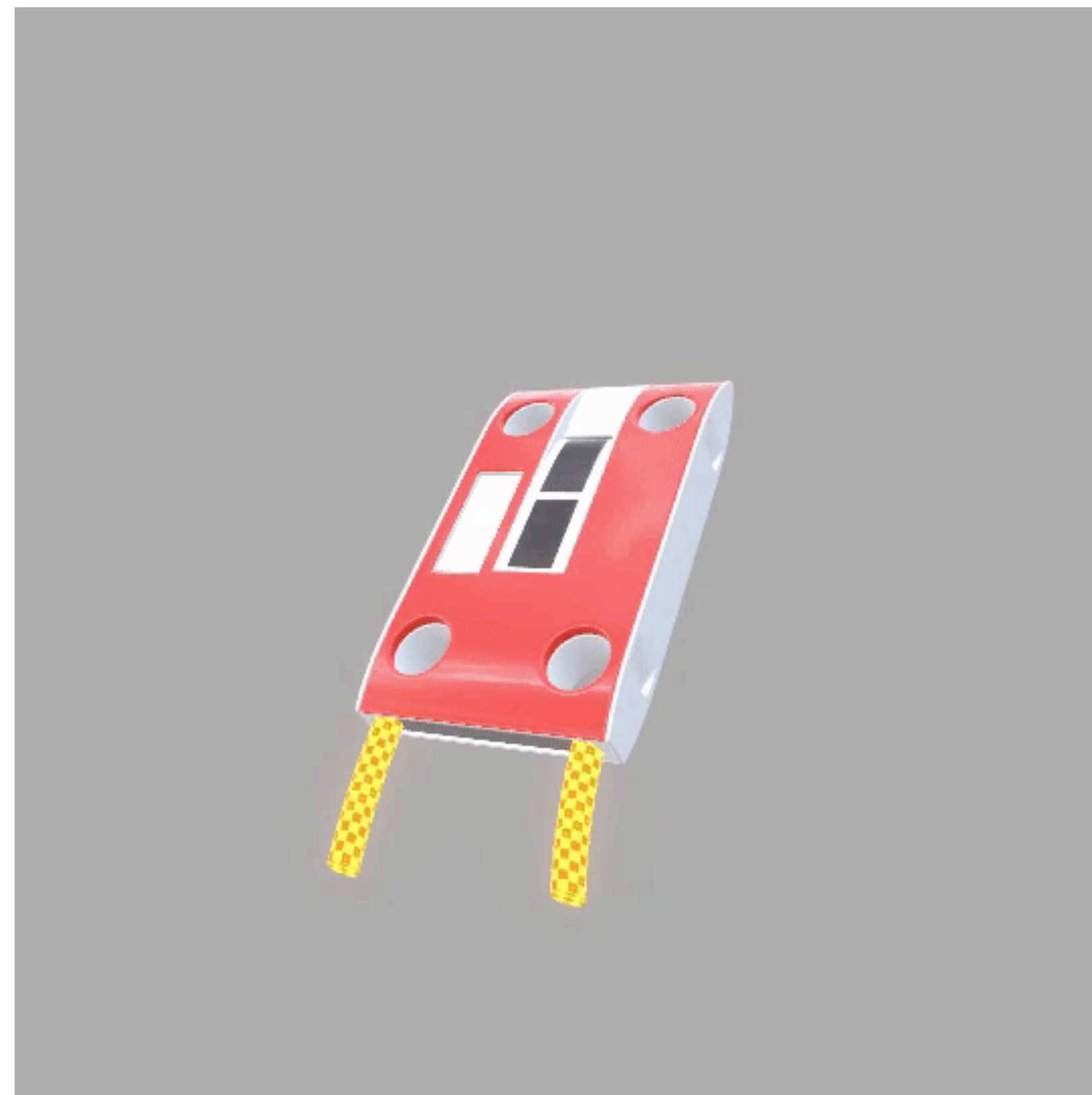
LEARN SHADER CODE



OCCLUSION by @MattWoelk

# LEVELING UP ART

LEARN SHADER CODE



FAKE PHYSICS by @JP\_Jaschkowske

# LEVELING UP ART

LEARN SHADER CODE



CUSTOMIZATION by @verlijme

# LEVELING UP ART

## LOOK POLISH

- Look can completely kill your game
- Use coherent art style
- Color correction → instant production value
- Avoid uncanny valley



# LEVELING UP ART

## UNCANNY VALLEY



# LEVELING UP ART

## UNCANNY VALLEY



Images  
• Credit: Wellcome Library, London. Wellcome Images  
• "Repliee Q2" by Max Braun from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Repliee\\_Q2\\_face.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Repliee_Q2_face.jpg)

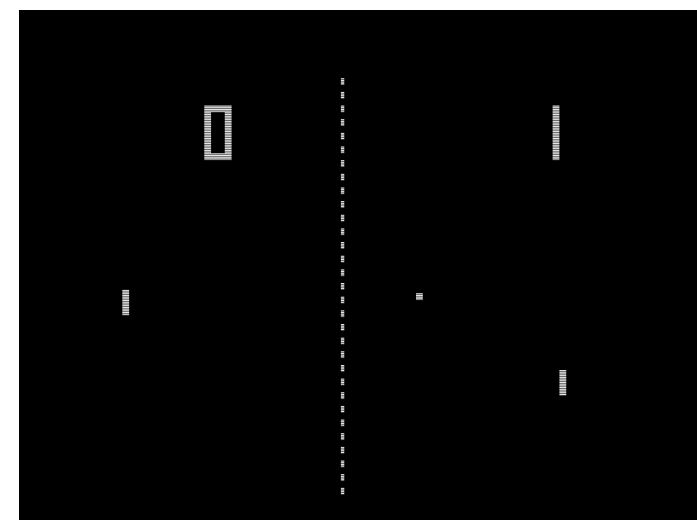
# LEVELING UP ART

## UNCANNY VALLEY

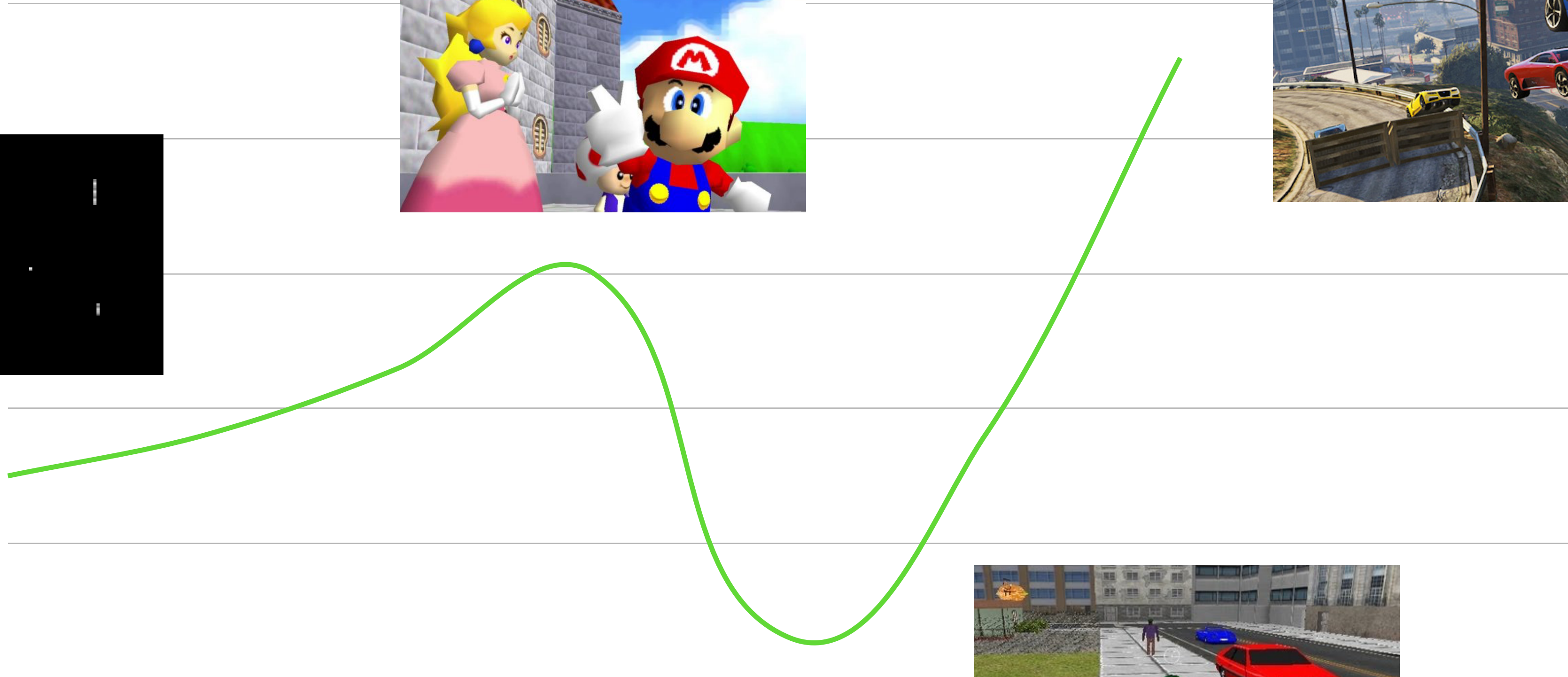


# LEVELING UP ART

## UNCANNY VALLEY



BELIEVABILITY



REALISM



Images  
• <https://www.dualshockers.com/super-mario-64-online-fan-project-lets-play-classic-platformer-friends/>  
• [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVDen\\_hbhJ4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVDen_hbhJ4)  
• BagoGames <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bagogames/16170944316>

# LEVELING UP ENGINEERING;

# LEVELING UP ENGINEERING

## ITERATIVE CODE

- Plan your feature set ahead (at least slightly)
- Have your logic work as early as possible
- Add more features as they become necessary
- Sort feature implementation by difficulty & uncertainty
- Don't be afraid to refactor  $\longleftrightarrow$  If it ain't broke, don't fix it

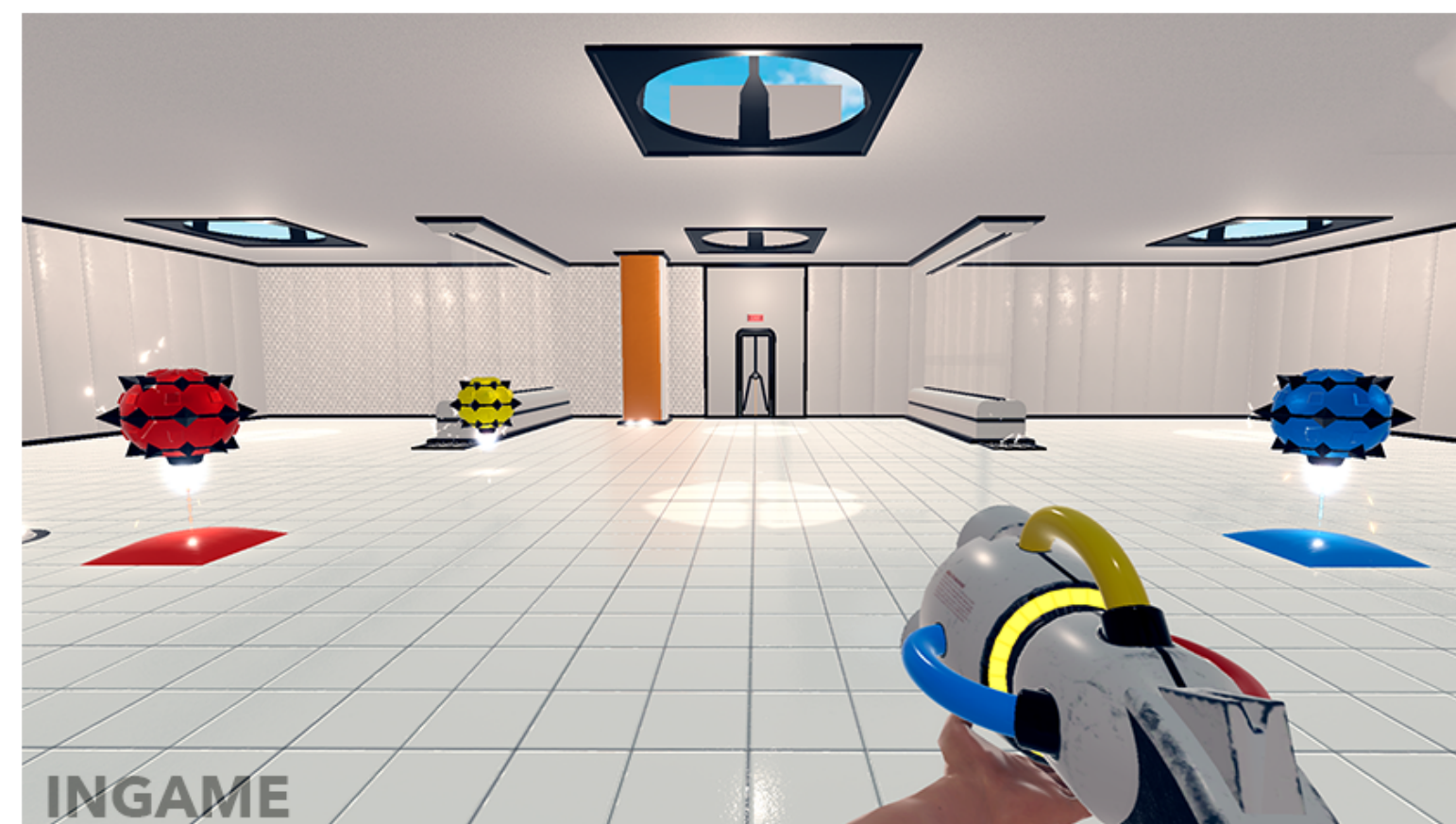
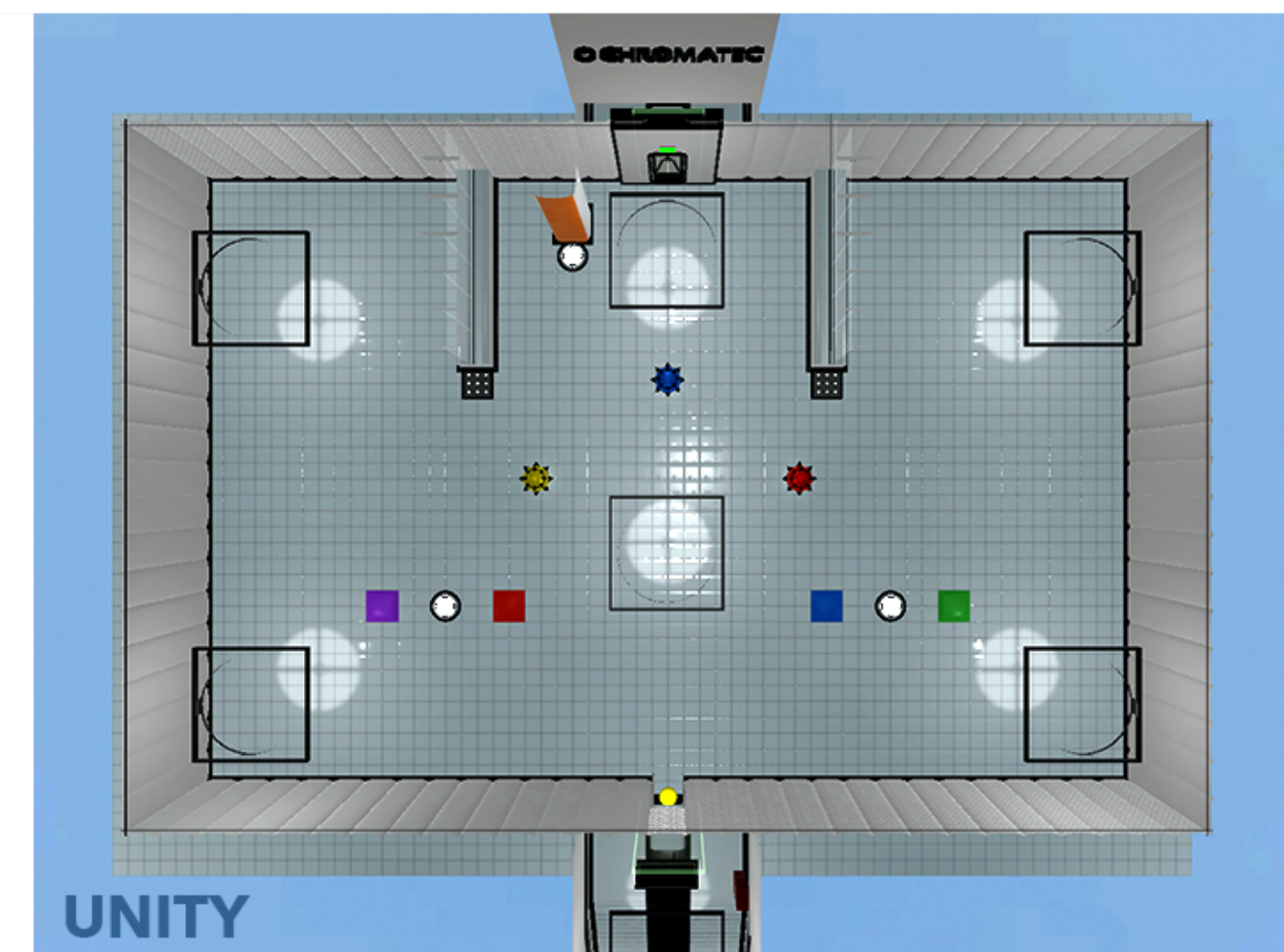
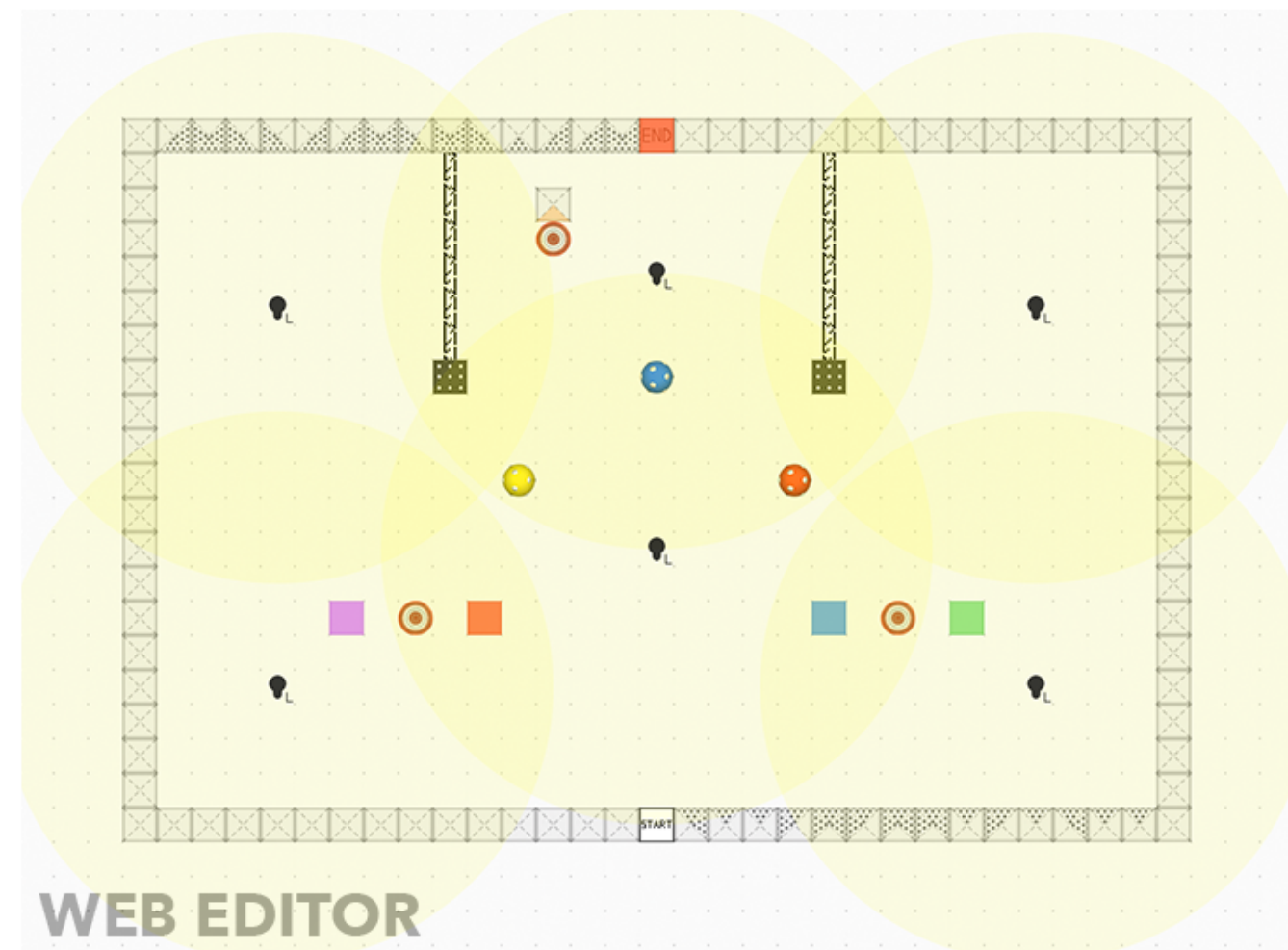
# LEVELING UP ENGINEERING

## ENGINE ABSTRACTION & EXTENSION

- Use prefabs as much as possible
- Your engine is not complete. Extend it.
- Think outside the engine (e.g. map editor)

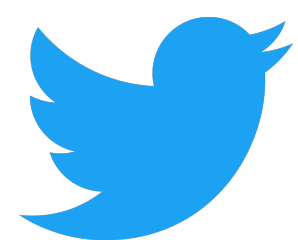
# LEVELING UP ENGINEERING

ENGINE ABSTRACTION & EXTENSION



# THANK YOU

**STEVE CROUSE**



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@pixel\_maniacs

