

Game development survival tips

What changed, what didn't, what you should know.

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Complexity of game development

Easy to work in the industry and never fully realize the complexity of a whole game. Independent development makes it more clear.

Need to deal with: Low/high-level code, art, animation, audio, UI, controls, debugging, QA, fun factor, marketing, publishing, multi-platform, psychological factors (!)

Rough evolution of priorities

- 80s: getting anything on screen with very crude gfx and music.
- 90s: similar to 80s, but with 3D, texture mapping, etc.
- 00s: easier to make basic games. Coding skills still make a visible difference
- 10s: even easier, but everyone can distribute on App Store
- 20s: infinite number of games, mostly with UE and Unity

1 - Beware of narrow focus

Getting a 3D model moving on screen may feel like being halfway there. It's actually maybe 1% of the work.

Anecdote: started in '95, went independent in 2010 and felt almost like a beginner!

- New responsibilities: audio, controls, gameplay code, UI, publishing, etc.

You'll be surprised how much time is spent on menus, options screen, gameplay code, asset pipeline and more.

2 - Scaffolding

The unseen code that lets you build the rest.

Important in all software, even more in games. Boring and makes you want to postpone it.

- Debug rendering and log system
- Real-time tweaks
- Build-bot & regression testing
- Quick access to game stage or state
- Stage/model editors (later in dev)

Don't get used to the rebuild & relaunch cycle.

2 - Scaffolding



3 - Reach & maintain MVP ASAP

Can you ship tomorrow?

If not, it becomes easy to give up or worse yet, start different projects and eventually give up on those, too.

4 - Learn to be realistic

Key psychological issues:

- Underestimating work ahead (not 100% negative...)
- Too much focus on unimportant details

Learn to work with what you have:

- Build 2D instead of 3D
 - A big mess with 3D formats, materials, textures, geometry
- Go for retro style (no textures, etc.)
- You can always add more in the next version/game

LAP: 0'15".93

Start

Pirelli

Mopii
RACING



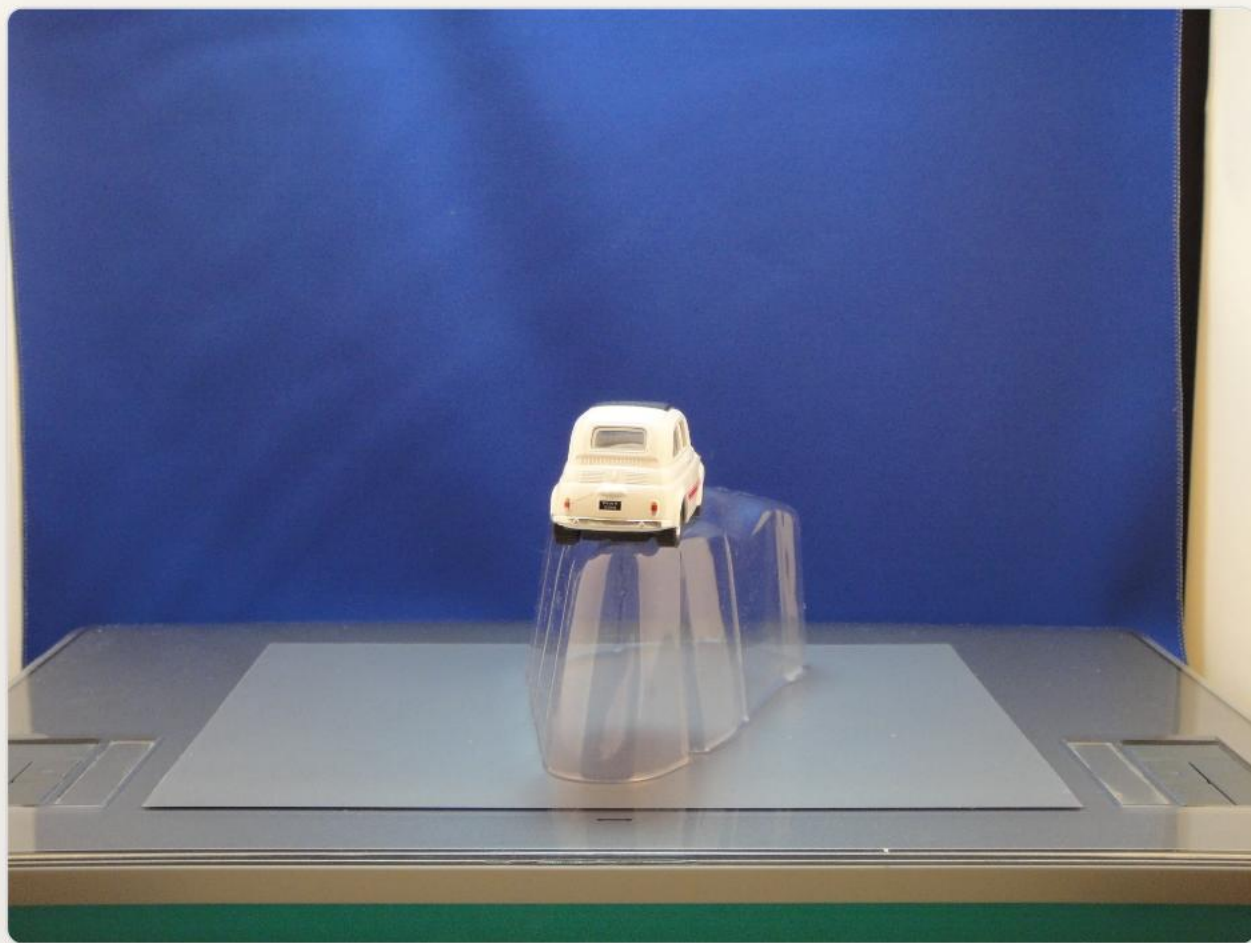
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kazuya.com

STAGE 1





5 - Testing and criticism

Ask others to test and critique.

Take a deep breath, put your pride aside and evaluate objectively.

- Some criticism is golden.
- Some criticism is not useful.
- Some is just hate (especially from strangers)

6 - Take a break and reevaluate

Momentum is important but... projects also need physical time to mature.

Take a break for one week to have a fresh perspective.

7 - Marketing and publishing

Too much to discuss here. Be prepared to:

- Write store descriptions, tags, manage releases
- Make and update screenshots & promo videos
- Upload on multiple stores, deal with certifications, etc.
- Handle bad reviews and crash reports
- Ship an update with a major bug and get more bad reviews

It's very time-consuming. Here, AI is your best friend!

Thank you

Questions and discussion