

The Game Design Document

Remember:

- Ultimate goal is to convey design idea
- It is a living document - always changing
- It should be organized modularly (think wiki format)

Contents:

- Overview/Mission Statement
- Audience, Platform, Marketing
- Gameplay
- Characters
- Story
- World
- Media
- Technical Details

Sample Structure ([Game Design Workshop](#), pg. 397)

1. Design History
 1. Versions
2. Vision Statement
 1. Logline (one sentence description)
 2. Gameplay Synopsis
 1. Uniqueness
 2. Mechanics
 3. Setting
 4. Look and feel
3. Audience, Platform, and Marketing
 1. Target Audience
 2. Platform
 3. System Requirements
4. Legal Analysis
5. Gameplay
 1. Overview (core gameplay)
 2. Gameplay Description (detailed)
 3. Controls
 1. Interfaces
 2. Rules
 3. Scoring
 4. Winning Conditions
 4. Modes, other features
 5. Levels
 6. Flowchart

7. Editor
6. Game Characters
 1. Character Design
 2. Types
 1. Player (PCs)
 2. Non-Player (NPCs)
 1. Monsters and enemies
 2. Friends and allies
 3. Neutral
 4. Other types
 5. Guidelines
 6. Traits
 7. Behavior
 8. AI
7. Story
 1. Synopsis (1-2 paragraphs)
 2. Complete Story (how it unfolds as gameplay progresses)
 3. Backstory (for reference)
 4. Narrative devices (how is the story revealed?)
 5. Subplots
8. The Game World
 1. Overview
 2. Key Locations
 3. Travel
 4. Mapping
 5. Scale
 6. Physical Objects
 7. Weather Conditions
 8. Day and Night
 9. Time
 10. Physics
 11. Society and Culture
9. Media List
 1. Interface assets
 2. Environments
 3. Characters
 4. Animation
 5. Music and Sound Effects
10. Technical Spec (sometimes its own document)
 1. Technical Analysis
 1. New technology
 2. Major software development tasks
 3. Risks

4. Alternatives
 5. Resources required
2. Development Platform and Tools
 1. Software
 2. Hardware
3. Delivery
4. Game Engine
 1. Specs
 2. Design
 3. Collision detection
5. Interface
6. Controls
7. Lighting models
8. Rendering system
 1. 2D/3D
 2. Camera
9. Internet/Network
10. System Parameters
 1. Max. players
 2. Servers
 3. Customization
 4. Connectivity
 5. Websites
 6. Persistence
 7. Saving states
 8. Loading games
11. Other
 1. Help
 2. Manual
 3. Setup