

GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT



Project Code: TOOG

Team: Crayon Coded

Engine: Unreal Engine 5

Platform: Windows PC

Mode: Local co-op only (2 players)

Age Rating Target: PEGI 7

Status: Post-launch (free on Steam), ongoing polish

Overall Info to That one Otter Game

Camera:

3D

Genre:

Co-op Adventure

Pitch

That One Otter Game is a mischievous co-op adventure where two young otters take on a wild rite of passage to prove their worth. Complete silly park challenges to fill up your stamp card - catch a panicked penguin, race a hyped-up zebra, or haul a stolen radio to a mountaintop.

Tone of voice

lighthearted | chaotic | silly | cute | charming

Overview:

"That One Otter Game" is a comedic couch co-op game where players control two young otter brothers navigating an animal park to complete a stamp rally through collaboration and mischief.

Setting:

The game is set in a large enclosed animal park with various themed areas, including:

1. Otter enclosure
2. Penguin enclosure (Water park)
3. Flat field enclosure for animals like zebras and elephants
4. Food court with cafes and restaurants
5. Main park office

Objective:

Players start as otters in their enclosure and discover a park pamphlet with a stamp rally. Their goal is to explore the park, cause mischief, complete the stamp rally, and win a reward.

Player Experience

- Player feel like an otter
- Dynamic Co-op to generate chaos
- Laughs
- Cute



Design Pillars

1. **Be An Otter** - Movement, posture states, water behavior, and goofy vocalizations make you *feel* otter-y.
2. **Co-op Capability** - Nearly every system gets better with two: stack, throw, distract, hand off, improvise.
3. **Playful Chaos, Safely Contained** - Everything “boings,” “yeets,” or reacts. Failure is funny, recovery is fast.
4. **Stamp-Rally Structure** - Clear, bite-sized goals keep momentum; freedom to approach challenges creatively.

Gameplay (a brief summary):

- Tutorial Sequence: The otter enclosure serves as a tutorial to familiarise players with the main controls, moveset and mechanics

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- Exploration: Players freely explore the park, finding new areas and engaging in various activities.

- Otter Behavior: Gameplay mechanics are heavily inspired by otter behaviours and personalities, such as:

- Stamp Rally Objectives: Players complete small objectives throughout the park to fill out their stamp card and win the rally.

Co-op Gameplay:

- Players team up with a friend, each controlling one otter brother.
- Cooperation is essential for success, with actions requiring coordination and teamwork.
- The game encourages chaos and fun as players explore and cause mischief together.

Target Audience:

The art style and mood of the game suggests to be targeted towards a younger audience due to its heavy characteristics in cuteness, vibrance and stylization. However, the gameplay and experience is meant to be targeted more towards older teenagers and young adults whilst keeping its appeal to a broad/casual co-op player audience. It looks “kid friendly” but is actually targeted for a more mature audience.

Positioning

Short, punchy, free local co-op sandbox emphasizing emergent solutions (closer to *Untitled Goose Game* tone with light “It Takes Two”-style tandem maneuvers).

Product Requirements & Constraints

Players: 2 players only. No single-player or online modes.

Input: Gamepad preferred; keyboard fallback.

Display: Shared screen

Session Length: 20–60 minutes; each stamp is a 2–8 minute micro-scenario.

Core Game Loop

1. **Explore** an open park zone and poke at reactive props/animals and collect unlockables.
2. **Locate a stamp challenge** (pamphlet/card UI).
3. **Co-op solve** via mechanics + verbal communication (grab/throw/screech/swim/steal).
4. **Earn stamp** → juicy reward sequences (VFX/SFX).
5. **Repeat** until the card is complete.

Onboarding (Tutorial Path)

The otter enclosure teaches: pick-up/throw → pass items → knockdown targets → cross water → platforming. Teaches rules for *small* vs. *large* items, *stacking*, *swimming carry*, and *environmental interactions*.

1. Player Capabilities - Verbs & Rules

1.1 Movement States

Bipedal: Precise handling; highest vertical jump. Full interactions; can carry Small, Medium or Large objects.

Quadrupedal: Fast sprint; long horizontal jump; low-clearance crawl; can carry S (mouth), not M or L.

Swimming (surface only): Drifted acceleration; grabbed objects rides on belly; jump exits at shores/ lips.

Carrying-L: Slower walk; low jump.

Being-Carried: Passive locomotion; can still screech, aim, throw, and interact.

1.2 Throw

Hold to aim, release to throw; physics impulse applies; collides with props/NPCs/PCs.

S-Throw: Low, strong throw arc.

M-Throw: Medium, predictable throw arc.

L-Throw: Low, short throw arc.

Bro-Throw: High, medium throw arc.

1.3 Shared Constraints

Carry Slot = 1 (no inventory UI).

Interaction Cooldowns are sub-second to keep pace snappy.

Fail States are comedic setbacks; no hard fail/lose conditions in free-play; challenges can be retried instantly.

Picking up:

Activation: Players can pick up objects, small, medium or large, even the other player by holding down the designated button **(RT)** while controlling their otter.

Clarification:

- When activated, the otter character reaches out and grabs the targeted object (*or the other player*).
- You can jump when holding a small object, you cannot jump when holding a large object
- You move like normal when carrying small objects but your movement speed is stunted when carrying something large
- You are able to switch to quadrupedal state when holding a Small object - placing it in your mouth. However, this action will render unavailable if carrying a medium or large object.
- If you're carrying something large, you may need to drop whatever it is to perform certain actions or interact with specific objects or elements in the environment.
- If you're carried by your bro, you cannot move. However, you are able to cancel this constraint at any time by jumping off

Impact on Gameplay:

Picking up objects or the other player opens up new possibilities for solving puzzles, navigating obstacles, and interacting with the environment.

Picking up the other player enables cooperative actions, such as boosting them to higher platforms, crossing gaps together, or reaching otherwise inaccessible areas.

Stacking:

Picking up objects also includes picking up and holding your brother above your head, allowing you to pick up and transport him around the environment as well as throwing him to reach new areas.

Your bro will be considered a "Medium object", resulting in slightly stunting your movement capabilities when carrying him.

Impact on Gameplay:

Picking up objects or the other player opens up new possibilities for solving puzzles, navigating obstacles, and interacting with the environment.

Picking up the other player enables cooperative actions, such as boosting them to higher platforms, crossing gaps together, or reaching otherwise inaccessible areas.

Throwing:

Activation: Players can initiate the throwing action by releasing the designated button (RT) while controlling their otter.

Clarification:

- When activated, the throwing action allows players to hurl small objects or their bro through the air in the direction they're looking
- Thrown objects can include rocks, fruits, tools, or other small items found within the game world.
- The throwing mechanic utilises the same physics-based logic for all small objects to determine the trajectory, speed, and distance of the thrown object.
- Thrown objects interact dynamically with the environment, potentially causing damage or triggering events based on their impact.

Impact on Gameplay:

The throwing mechanic offers players a versatile tool for interacting with the environment, solving puzzles, and overcoming obstacles.

Players can use throwing to distract NPCs, trigger switches, break obstacles, or attack from a distance.

The ability to throw your bro opens up cooperative gameplay opportunities, allowing players to assist each other in reaching distant areas or executing coordinated strategies. The success of a throw depends on factors such as aim, timing, and environmental conditions, rewarding players who master the mechanics with satisfying outcomes.

Swimming:

Activate: Insert yourself into a body of water either through jumping or walking into it

Controls: Inputs stay the same as the regular moveset. The controlling of the character changes slightly in the way that there is a drift in the movement due to the water.

Movement: As the otters move through the water, they experience a subtle drift due to the fluid dynamics of the environment. The drift mechanic simulates the natural currents and movements of the water, affecting the otters' ability to control their movement.

While swimming, the inputs have a slightly delayed response as the otters adjust to the water flow.

In terms of movement speed, you'll be swimming at a speed between your walking- and running speed.

Clarifications:

- Swimming only happens on the surface, no underwater diving
- You can bring or pick up smaller objects in the water and you may also interact with them
- Carried objects are placed on your belly
- Screech as much as you'd like
- Objects thrown into the water will float and you can pick them back up

Transitioning In and Out of Water:

When the otters transition into the water: It's quite a sudden switch between your walking state animation to lying down on your back and swimming.

Upon exiting the water: Once again, if it's a smooth transition where you reach solid ground, you simply stand up and keep walking. Transitioning from swimming to walking may require the otters to reach a designated exit point, such as a ladder or a shallow shoreline, to ensure a smooth and natural transition. However you may also jump out of the water which is simply playing a jumping animation and wherever you land, you'll enter that movement state.

Screeching:

Activation: Players screech by pressing a designated button (**Y**) while controlling their otter character.

The screech action can be performed at any time during gameplay and does not require specific conditions to trigger.

Clarification:

- When activated, the otter emits a loud and high-pitched screeching sound.
- The screech sound effect is designed to attract the attention of nearby characters, animals, or objects within a certain radius of the player's location.
- The effectiveness of the screech may vary depending on factors such as distance, line of sight, and the awareness level of nearby characters or animals.
- To provide feedback to players, the game displays visual indicators or animations when the screech is activated, such as a ripple effect emanating from the otter character.
- A very short cooldown is set between each screech, making it spamable but also manageable

Impact on Gameplay:

The screeching mechanic can be used strategically to distract NPCs, allowing players to bypass obstacles or complete objectives. For example, screeching near a guard or park ranger may cause them to investigate the source of the noise, creating an opportunity for the player to sneak past unnoticed.

Jumping:

Activation: Players can execute a jump by pressing a designated button **(A)** while controlling their otter.

Clarification:

- When activated, the otter character performs a vertical leap into the air, allowing them to clear obstacles, reach higher platforms, or avoid hazards.
- The height and distance of the jump are affected by the otter's posture: bipedal jumps prioritise vertical height, while quad-pedal jumps prioritise horizontal distance.
- Players can control the direction of their jump by adjusting the otter's orientation before initiating the jump action.

Impact on Gameplay:

Jumping is a fundamental movement mechanic that enables players to traverse the environment, evade obstacles, and reach elevated platforms or distant locations.

The ability to perform different types of jumps (bipedal and quad-pedal) offers players strategic options for navigating varied terrain and overcoming obstacles.

Players may need to experiment with different jump techniques to overcome challenges, such as timing jumps to clear gaps, combining jumps with other actions like sprinting or throwing, or using jumps to access areas or shortcuts.

States (Conditions, Specifics, Movesets):

Bipedal State:

Provides precision, versatility and higher jumps but lacks certain speed and mobility.

- **Conditions:** The otter stands on its hind legs, with its front limbs free to interact with objects or perform actions.

- **Specifics:** In this state, the otter maintains a vertical posture, allowing for precise movements and interactions.

- **Movesets:** The otter can walk, jump vertically, pick up big and small objects, use tools, interact with the environment, and perform bipedal-specific actions.

Quadrupedal State:

Offers agility and speed for traversal but sacrifices vertical reach and certain interactions.

- **Conditions:** The otter moves on all four limbs, resembling a quadrupedal stance that utilises all limbs to increase movement speed and nimbleness.

- **Specifics:** In this state, the otter maintains stability and balance while prioritising mobility and speed over vertical height. Using all four limbs also makes the otter “shorter”, allowing them to pass through low pathways, resembling a “crouch” mechanic..

- **Movesets:** The otter can move swiftly, sprint, jump horizontally, pick up small objects, and perform quadrupedal-specific actions.

Swimming State:

Enables movement through water but limits precise controls, strength and certain interactions.

- **Conditions:** The otter navigates through bodies of water on the surface, using its limbs and tail to propel itself.
- **Specifics:** In this state, the otter lies down on their back, allowing them to comfortably float in the water, allowing for smooth and responsive movements.
- **Movesets:** The otter can swim forward, change direction, interact with smaller objects, and perform swimming-specific actions.

Carrying Large Object State:

Grants strength but reduces mobility and limits actions.

- **Conditions:** The otter holds a large object with its front limbs, altering its posture and restricting its mobility.
- **Specifics:** In this state, the otter's movement speed is reduced, and certain actions may be limited or unavailable due to the size and weight of the object.
- **Movesets:** The otter can walk slowly, drop the object, but cannot jump or perform agile manoeuvres.

Being Carried State:

Opens opportunities for collaborative traversal but adds certain restrictions.

- **Conditions:** The otter is held or carried by another otter or character, relinquishing control over its movements.
- **Specifics:** In this state, the carried otter is passive and dependent on the carrier for transportation and navigation.
- **Movesets:** The carried otter cannot move independently but may still interact with objects or perform certain actions until he is dropped or thrown.

2. Challenges - Stamp Catalog (Representative)

Each stamp = *Goal* + *Space* + *Gimmick* + *Collaboration Hook*.

1. **Enclosure Targets (Intro)** - Hit all targets using rocks, seesaws, timed events. *Hooks:* pass rocks, collaborative platforming, timed actions; get familiar with the core mechanics.
2. **The Zebra Race** - Point-to-point vs a faster rival (the zebra). *Hooks:* collaboratively drive a kart, sabotage path, throw obstacles, find shortcuts.
3. **Boombox challenge** - Steal and deliver a boombox to the mountain peak. *Hooks:* tricking staff, object-handoffs, challenging platforming.
4. **Make a Penguin fly** - Make a specific penguin "fly" (Must be airborne for 3+ seconds). *Hooks:* capture-resist behavior, chasing, meeting timed conditions.

3. NPC & Animal Behavior

Staff: Roam the area, find tasks to do, react to players.
Idle/Patrol → Locate task → Perform task → Continue.

Staff (Guards): Notice noise/theft; investigate source; chase if item is stolen; recover to post.
Idle/Patrol → Notice → Investigate → React → Return.

Otter NPCs: Roam around, provide chatty hints.

Penguin: Roam, scared by otter screech.

Elephant: Passive, can be used as platforming structure

AI authored via simple state machine; tuned per challenge to remain readable and engaging.

4. World & Level Structure

Hub-like Park Layout with themed sub-zones: Otter Enclosure (tutorial), Penguin Water Park, Savannah Field, Food Court/Plaza, Admin/Office.

5. UX, UI & Accessibility

- **HUD** minimal; **Stamp Card** diegetic overlay (progress pips, hover tooltips).
- **Prompts** are verb-agnostic icons (Pick Up, Throw, Screech, Use).
- **Tutorialization:** First enclosure is highly guided; later stamps lean on affordances and signage.

6. Audio, Art, Animation

Audio: Playful soundtrack; water and squeak foley; dynamic layers on chaos intensity.

Art: Bright stylized palette; legible silhouettes; readable prop affordances; VFX for pulses/impacts/bursts.

Animation: Distinct locomotion per state; exaggerated reactions; cooperative lifts/throws have squash-and-stretch beats.

7. Testing & Telemetry

- **Playtest Cadence:** Weekly 2–5 pairs; cohorts: friends/couples/siblings.
- **Key Metrics:** time-to-first-laugh; time-to-first-stamp; failed attempts per challenge; merge/split frequency; % using bro-throw; % discovering hats.
- **Success Definition:** 90% of pairs complete 1 stamp within 8 minutes; 70% complete 4 stamps within 40 minutes; SUS ≥ 80.