

Design Document

Programming and Story

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2 VERSION HISTORY

2.1 APRIL 27, 2016

Initial draft of the document.

Added:

- Game Overview
- Dame Details
- Audience, Platform, and Marketing
- Game Mechanics
- Characters and Art
- User Interface
- Music and Sound Effects

2.2 May 2, 2016

Changed underlying concept of game and genre from a cat themed zombie horde game.

- Moved "Mutant Werecats from Outer Space" specific content to Rejected Ideas section.
- Started "The Most Popular Cat on the Internet!" content.
- All sections updated or rewritten (not itemized) to match new game concept, story, and vision.
- Characters, concept art, and gameplay prototypes remain the same.

2.3 May 4, 2016

Appended old design document onto rewritten document to preserve original instructor comments.

• Removed section headers from old document to prevent indexing on table of contents.

2.4 May 11, 2016

Folded in changes from feedback collected during prototype and clarified gameplay elements.

- Added Cary Kawamoto as primary artist.
- Changed domain term "cat tricks" to dance moves to reflect direction of gameplay.
- Updated Genre description.
- Updated Celebrity Cats description.
- Defined Coolness gameplay element.
- Defined Fame gameplay element.
- Defined Events gameplay element.
- Updated Completion Standards description.
- Defined Scoring gameplay element.
- Reduced player cat art asset list.
- Redacted celebrity cat art asset list.
- Reduced human art asset list.
- Removed special encounters, distractions, and hazards from game scope for this release cycle.
- Created menu interaction flow chart.
- Defined expected actions for gameplay mechanics related to events.
- Defined expected actions for gameplay mechanics related to player score.
- Defined expected actions for gameplay mechanics related to the combo system.
- Clarified examples of level transition cut scenes.
- Created music and sound effect asset list.
- Created prototype UI for game interface and user experience related to exploring, cat challenges, human challenges, earning fame, and level completion.

2.5 May 18, 2016

Beginning feature cuts for planned release due to lack of time. List is subject to change.

- Shelved: Options menu.
- Change of scope: Input devices reduce to keyboard only.
- Shelved: Extended button support and modifiers for sequences.
- Shelved: Level load screen.
- Shelved: Star Power.

- Shelved: Pause Menu.
- Shelved: Dialog sequences for entering/exiting events.
- Shelved: All cut scenes.
- Change of scope: Interactive menu reduced to mouse buttons for 'Play' and 'Quit'.
- Shelved: Indoor level artwork.
- Shelved: Emoji dialog support.
- Shelved: Save system.
- Shelved: Cat dancing artwork.
- Change of scope: Reduced cat sprite assets.
- Change of scope: Reduced human sprite assets to just profile. Redefined human appearance.
- Shelved: Event taunts / dialog.
- Change of scope: Reduced complexity of core game elements.
- Updated sound effect listings

2.6 May 25, 2016

Alpha to Beta release cycle. Most changes do not fall inside the scope of the design document.

- Update: Replaced all Lori Collins concept art with finished artwork from Cary Kawamoto.
- Shelved: Removed celebrity cat concept.
- Shelved: End of game scoreboard.
- Update: Penalty for Fame event reduced.

2.7 June 9, 2016

Final Release

- Added final logo art to document
- Shelved: Other Cats have unique names.
- Shelved: Celebrity Cats section.
- Update: Dance moves and animations returned to game scope.
- Shelved: Save system.
- Added: Level victory and failure animations
- Update: Human pose art returned to game scope.
- Update: Added music requirement for intro, level success, and level failure states.
- Change of scope: Reduced sound effects asset list.
- Removed unused "Mutant Werecats from Outer Space" section from final document.

3 GAME OVERVIEW

"The Most Popular Cat on the Internet!" is a casual 2D side-scrolling pattern matching game where you, Piper the cat, gather other cats to help you to win the adoration of your human admirers, to become the most popular cat on YouTube.

4 GAME ELEMENTS

4.1 CONCEPT

Piper the cat lives in a small house owned by an old woman along with his many brothers, sisters, and cousins.

Piper has a cushy life with his owner, but he's ambitious, and decides to strike it out on his own by becoming the most popular cat on YouTube. In order to attain this goal, Piper knows that he has to attract the attention of humans and get them to film him doing cat tricks. However, it turns out that being an Internet cat celebrity is a lot harder than it appears.

Piper is able to attract the attention of humans, but the more popular he becomes, the more he has to compete with other Internet cat celebrities (such as Grumpy Cat and Bubz). He decides his way to Internet fame is through his natural leadership abilities and sweet dance moves, and seeks out other cats to join him in his quest for stardom.

4.2 GAME TAGS

Action, Combos, Cute, Single Player, 2.5D, Friend Gathering, Non-Violent

4.3 GENRE

"Pattern and Movement Matching Game"

This is a casual game. It shouldn't require a lot of strategy or micromanagement. Only simple movement actions and completing timed button sequences, similar to Simon Says. The player is one step ahead of the current situation, and has only basic reactions.

4.4 GAME LOCATION

Gameplay will occur in select indoor rooms and outdoor areas such as neighborhoods.

4.5 CHARACTERS

4.5.1 Player

The player, Piper, is a wannabe Internet celebrity cat. This cat is differentiable from the other cats in the game by a unique texture and coloring. The player has the ability to walk, run, jump, and perform cat tricks to attract the attention of human admirers.

4.5.2 Other Cats/Non-Player Cats

If watching one cat dance is fun, watching many other cats all do them at the same time is even better. Non-player cats can be found throughout levels and will join your posse if they are impressed by the quality of your dance moves. The non-player cats will have predetermined names which will be chosen when the levels are created.

4.5.3 Cat Posse

The cat posse is a group of other cats that follow the player as he or she moves around a level. Your posse will perform tricks in unison with the player. A larger posse allows the player to more easily obtain the attention of humans and amuse them.

4.5.4 Humans

Humans are non-playable characters who will film Piper and his posse of other cats. The player must get the attention of humans. If humans find you interesting, they will record you on their phones' cameras. Humans also react to the quality of entertainment, illustrated by an amusement level UI element.

4.5.5 Celebrity Cats

Celebrity cats may join your posse if encountered in a level and they are won over by the quality of your cat tricks. A celebrity cat can significantly increase your appeal to humans. Adding a celebrity cat to your posse is more difficult than a regular non-player cat.

Celebrity cats are listed on leaderboards and are ranked by Fame or high scores. Piper competes with these other celebrity cats to become the most popular cat on the internet.

4.6 GAMEPLAY

4.6.1 Performing Dance Moves

Dance moves can be used to get the attention of an audience in the form of other cats and humans. Performing moves correctly will increase audience amusement level and interest in the player, and failures will decrease it.

4.6.2 Dance moves

Dance moves are executed by the player seeing a combination of controller buttons to press, and then repeating that combination on a controller. The player must repeat the pattern within a short time span, in the correct order, and without incorrect inputs. If the player is successful, the player's cat (and cat posse, if available) will perform a trick.

4.6.3 Amusement Level

Amusement level is the measure by which the player is graded. Amusement level is raised by performing dance moves for humans. Amusement level will rise faster and scales with the size of the cat posse. When humans are fully amused, they will film Piper and he begins to gain Fame. Amusement level will deteriorate over time if no dance moves are being performed due to combos dropping or sequences being failed. Amusement level range is 0 to 100%.

4.6.4 Coolness

Similar to amusement level, coolness is the measure by which you are graded by an individual cat. By initiating an event with other cats, coolness will rise by successfully performing dance moves. Other cats will join your posse after a certain coolness threshold is met. Other cats will become bored with you and leave your posse over time if not performing. Coolness range is 0 to 100%. Other cats will increase or decrease coolness at different rates.

4.6.5 Star Power

Several dance moves performed in a row unlocks star power, a bonus that allows audience amusement levels to increase more rapidly. A streak of successful dance moves causes the patterns to be longer and more complicated.

4.6.6 Fame

Piper begins to get fame when he is recorded by fully amused humans after performing dance moves during an event. A streak of successfully executed dance moves increases fame. Earning Fame is a sudden death activity. An unsuccessful combo execution will end the event and force the player to start from scratch.

4.6.7 **Events**

Events are challenges between the player and other cats, or the player and humans. During an event, the player must supply a given sequence of button/keyboard inputs in a time limit. Trigger an event by approaching a target and using the 'Meow' action to get his or her attention. Events are used to build coolness/amusement level.

4.7 COMPLETION STANDARDS

The player must get a level-specific number of humans to film Piper while maintaining the minimum Amusement Level for a small time period. These two goals must be completed in a prescribed total time allowed for each level.

When the required number of humans are filming you and the minimum amusement level is attained, the player must sustain the amusement level for 10 seconds so the humans can record quality footage and upload their videos to the Internet.

The player must get a specific amount of Fame to successfully complete a level before the level song (background music) ends, somewhere between five and eight minutes. If the required level of Fame is attained, the player successfully completes the level. If the level's time runs out and the required fame has not been attained, the player fails the level.

4.8 Scoring

A player's score is a persistent statistic maintained in the game's memory save file. The score for each level indicates the quality of overall play, where higher is better. Cumulative score indicates the player's progression to become the most popular cat on the internet by ranking Piper against other Internet Celebrity Cats.

4.9 GAME LENGTH

There are multiple levels that are created for this game, with each level taking a different amount of time to complete based on its difficulty, but as this game is designed for casual and completionist players, the time to play the game is variable. Levels are intended to be replayed to complete secondary challenges and earn better scores.

5 CHARACTER AND WORLD ART

5.1 PLAYER

The player cat should be visually distinct from any other cat. Movement will be restricted two speeds (walking or running) and allow jumping. Visually, the character is restricted to facing left or right. As the focus of this game, cats have the most distinct poses and the most movements. At minimum, art assets for the following states need to exist:

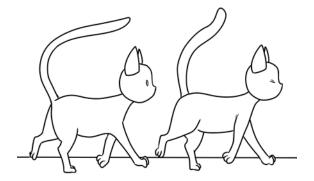
- Sitting (Can be static images, more variety is better. Entering this state will load one at random.)
 - Looking forward
 - o Looking toward screen
 - o Looking away from screen
- Standing (Ready to walk, maximum tail motion.)
 - Looking forward
- Walking forward (minimal tail movement, looping different leg positions)
- Jumping (Can be static poses)
 - Leap (traveling upward)
 - Mid-air (top of arc)
 - Landing (traveling downward)
- Dance 1
- Dance 2
- Dance 3
- Level or sequence failure animation
- Level victory animation

All sitting, standing, and walking sprite sheets should be of a common (left or right, but consistent) direction which can be mirrored. Walking up or down on the screen will cause the player to "shimmy" with left or right walking motions. Running will be accomplished by running the sprite sheet at a faster frame rate. All sprites must be of a common size.

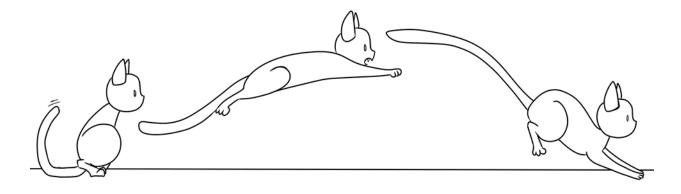
5.1.1 Concept Basic (undetailed) Body Poses Sitting



Walking



Jumping



5.1.2 Concept Sample Body Variations and Colorings Sitting



5.2 OTHER CATS

Other cats should be visually distinct from the player cat, differentiated through different fur markings. Other cats require the same range of motion as the player cat.

5.3 CELEBRITY CATS

Celebrity cats require do not require the same range of motion as the player cat. These cats will be limited to the following basic motions and poses:

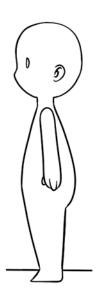
- Sitting
 - Looking toward screen
- Standing (Ready to walk, minimum tail motion.)
 - Looking forward
- Walking forward (with looping different leg positions)

5.4 HUMANS

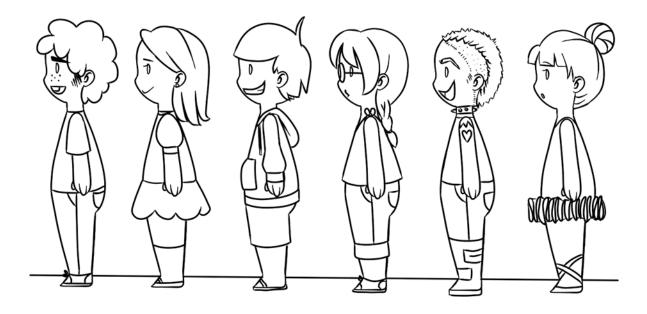
Humans have the most visual variety with character design but are restricted to walking, standing, and taking videos. All humans look alike to cats, so there is no variation in their textures. Visually, the character is restricted to facing left or right. At minimum, art assets for the following states need to exist:

- Standing
 - Normal (loitering)
 - Neutral pose
 - You got my attention pose
 - Taking videos (happy facial expression, posed with smart phone or point and shoot camera)
- Walking forward (with minimal arm movement and looping different leg positions)

5.4.1 Concept Basic (undetailed) Body Poses Standing



5.4.2 Concept Sample Body Variations Standing



5.5 HAZARDS Currently there are no assets for hazards.

5.6 DIMENSIONALITY

This 2.5D game uses the following axis alignments to define perspective:

Facing right: 0 degrees
Facing left: 180 degrees
Facing up: 60 degrees
Facing down: 240 degrees

5.7 BACKGROUND TEXTURES

Backgrounds will be made to be modular, so they can be easily be reused to enable larger levels. These backgrounds will include both inside and outside elements. Exterior environments must conform to the perspective angles described in Dimensionality. All backgrounds will contain three elements:

- Sidewalk / Floor: Space where the player and humans can walk. This is going to be the bottom half of the background.
- Building / Wall: The top half of the background where the player and humans cannot walk on.
- Obstacles: Random elements, such as trees, on the sidewalk / floor part of the background
 which the players cannot walk over. Characters will appear to pass in front of them or behind
 these objects depending on their relative positions within the scene.

6 AUDIENCE, PLATFORM, AND MARKET

6.1 TARGET AUDIENCE

This game appeals to players who are looking to pick it up and play for a few minutes, as well as completionist type players who will be able to go back to previously completed levels, and try to meet specific challenge objectives that will give them bonus throughout the game.

6.2 PLATFORM

This game is being developed with the intention of running on desktop platforms using either keyboard or gamepad controls.

6.3 SIMILAR GAMES

There are a few games currently on the market that present similar themes:

Space Channel 5

Space Channel 5 is a rhythm-based video game. Challenges are handled by the player repeating a sequence of actions to the rhythm of the music. Successful execution of these sequences allows the player to progress through the game. While our game does not contain a rhythm element, matching patterns of controller inputs is a key feature of our gameplay.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space Channel 5

River City Ransom

River City Ransom is an example of the "2.5D" environment that will be utilized in this game, and the world design will reflect this. Movement in this game will also be similar to how movement will be handled in this game. The player will be facing either left or right and the player will travel up and down facing these directions also.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River City Ransom

Agar.io

Agar.io is a multiplayer game where players start as a circle and compete with other players to "eat" smaller circles to grow in size. This is similar to Piper's area of influence and his ability to have cats and humans follow him. As he brings other cats into his horde, his area of influence increases and allows him to get the attention of humans and cats further and further away.

http://agar.io/

6.4 UNIQUENESS AND APPEAL

Description text.

7 Core Game Elements

7.1 MOVEMENT

The player has influence over Piper's posse, directing travel locations by moving around a map. If a human is encountered, the player must move the posse toward the human. As the posse also becomes aware of the human (through relative proximity), the posse will independently move to get the human's attention.

7.2 Adding Cats to your Posse

When Piper approaches a new cat in the wild (a challenger), Piper initiates an encounter by "staring down" meowing at the challenger. The challenger responds by performing presenting a sequence of cute cat actions, such as exposing his belly, purring, loafing, etc keyboard or controller inputs. Piper shows performing skills by replicating the sequence without error. The challenger cat is so impressed, he joins Piper's posse. Additional cats joining your posse increases your effectiveness of appealing to humans. Some cats need more convincing to join Piper's posse making their challenge harder, but they will provide a boost your fame when humans film you.

7.3 RETAINING CATS IN YOUR POSSE

Other cats will lose interest in Piper over time if he is not actively trying to fulfill his ambition to become the most popular cat on the Internet. Unsuccessfully executed tricks and lengthy time spent walking around will cause them to grow bored and bolt away.

7.4 GETTING NOTICED BY HUMANS

Humans are very aware of cats doing unexpected things or getting close to them. Humans will stop walking when Piper or another member of his posse get their attention. If dance moves are successfully performed, the human will continue to pay attention and their amusement level will rise. No action or unsuccessful tricks will cause them to grow bored with you, and they will continue on their way go back to standing around, being uninterested and indifferent towards you.

7.5 GETTING HUMANS TO FILM YOU

A human will film Piper when they are actively being amused by dance moves after a certain amusement level threshold has been met. Piper and his cat posse must continue to build up amusement level in humans through successful completion of cat tricks to encourage humans to continue to record the cat antics.

If the player does not successfully perform moves, the human will begin to lose interest and put their camera away, returning to the lower noticed/interested state.

8 OTHER GAME ELEMENTS

8.1 Special Encounters

Sometimes celebrity cats appear on the scene while you're trying to attract the attention of a human. When this occurs, attention is taken away from you and directed toward the existing celebrity cat. To counter this, you must "defeat" the celebrity cat by outperforming them. This will re-attract the attention to you and your posse. Additionally, the Internet celebrity cat will concede defeat and join your posse.

8.2 DISTRACTIONS

Distractions are things that will cause cats in your posse (cats are easily distracted) to leave. It is the player's job to see these distractions and maneuver their group of cats around them; keeping the distraction out of Piper's area of influence, which gets larger when more cats are added. Some examples follow.

- Boxes: Cats enjoy sitting in boxes, and if they find one it will jump in.
- Balls of Yarn: Cats love playing with these and if one is encountered, a cat will leave to play with
 it
- Rocking Chairs: These are fun for cats to sit on, so if encountered a cat will leave your posse to sit on it.

8.3 HAZARDS

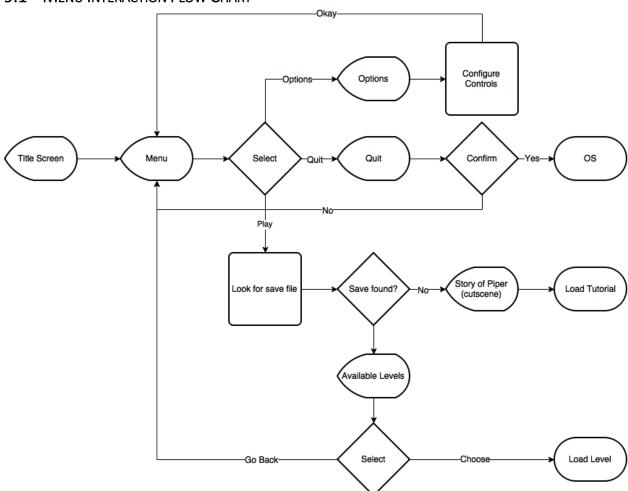
Hazards will be encountered in more difficult levels. The player will have to avoid these by keeping them out of Piper's area of influence, which is more difficult when there are more cats in the horde.

These hazards cause both a few humans and cats to leave, causing the player to try and find more if they are encountered. Some examples follow.

- Cucumbers: Some humans will place cucumbers behind cats in order to surprise them, and
 other humans find this hilarious making them pay more attention to that. The cats scared by
 the cucumber will run off and some humans will follow.
- Dogs: Dogs may be roaming the world and if the posse encounters them, the dog will begin
 chasing a cat. Humans, not wanting to see a cat and dog fight, will leave.
- Lost Cat Posters: Owners of the cats in your posse may miss their cat, so they will put up missing cat posters. If a human sees the poster of one of the cats in your posse they will pick up that cat and take it to the owner for a reward.

9 GAME MECHANICS

9.1 Menu Interaction Flow Chart



9.2 Actions (Normal)

- Move Left
- Move Right
- Move Up
- Move Down
- Meow

9.3 ACTIONS (AFTER MEOW)

- If not in target attraction radius, then nothing.
- If near a cat, then attract cat attention.
- If near a human, then attract human attention.

9.4 ACTIONS (AFTER CAT ATTRACTION, START EVENT)

- Anytime, walk away (Lose some coolness with all other cats in cat posse, event ends.)
 - Anytime, if other cat in posse coolness reaches zero, other cat will leave posse and walk back to starting position.
- Do combos (Random order, timed, bonuses for successes in a row. Modify coolness with new cat and all other cats in cat posse)
 - o If minimum coolness threshold met, cat joins posse and event ends.
 - o If repeated combo failures, new cat bolts off screen (permanently lost) and player loses coolness with all in cat posse.

9.5 ACTIONS (AFTER CAT EVENT)

Same as Actions (Normal)

9.6 ACTIONS (AFTER HUMAN ATTRACTION, START EVENT)

- Anytime, walk away (Lose some coolness with all other cats in cat posse, event ends.)
 - Anytime, if other cat in posse coolness reaches zero, other cat will leave posse and walk back to starting position.
- Do combos (Random order, timed, bonuses for successes in a row. Modify coolness with all other cats in cat posse. Gain amusement level with humans.)
 - o For each human reaching maximum amusement, they will film you and Fame increases.
 - If maximum fame is reached, the level is completed and the event ends.
 - If the player fails a combo, the event suddenly ends. Your failure causes a large loss in coolness with the other posse cats.

9.7 Actions (After Human Event)

- If level time remains, same as Actions (Normal).
- If max fame reached, end level.

9.8 ACTIONS (LEVEL ENDED)

- Display score breakdown.
 - o If maximum fame attained, display success score card.
 - Load next level, or credits if last level.
 - o If timer ran out, display failure score card.
 - Game over. Option to retry, or load menu.

9.9 SCORING SYSTEM

Player score is increased through a variety of ways, promoting advanced gameplay techniques.

- Each successful button combo in an event increases score by a set value.
- Streaks of successful combos increase the score by the value of the combo multiplied by a scalar set by the length of the streak.
- Star Power: A long streak adds additional multipliers (2x, 3x, 4x, etc.) for every successful combo:
- Level clock time remaining after successfully completing a level above the required Fame threshold is added to overall score.

9.10 COMBO SYSTEM

Speed and accuracy are the two primary tenets of the combo system used during events. The player is allowed and encouraged to enter the combo sequences as fast as possible for maximum point gain.

- Feedback: Given visually and immediately with each input.
- Correct input: Turns arrows green.
- Incorrect input: Turns arrows red.
- Combo success: If the combo sequence is input successfully before the sequence timer expires, credit is given to the player audibly, the player's score is increased, a new sequence is loaded, and the timer is reset.
- Combo failure: A combo sequence can only be failed if the player does not provide the correct inputs before the sequence timer expires.
 - An incorrect input will cause audible and visual feedback and a brief pause before
 resetting the player's progress for that sequence to the initial condition. The player has
 the opportunity to re-enter the sequence correctly without penalty. During any
 sequence reset, the sequence timer is NOT reset and remains running.

9.11 VISUAL FEEDBACK

Successfully completing controller combinations for executing dance moves causes Piper or other cats in his posse to begin a trick animation or pose. There is no direct controller mapping for initiating dance moves.—Bonuses such as Star Power provide additional visual effects to reward the player.

9.12 Level Transition Cut Scenes

As the player increases their score, they will be featured on many different types of media. Or, if the player keeps on performing poorly, they may start appearing on more shady, clickbait sites.

Some examples of positive media influence include:

- Featured video on YouTube.
- Trending on Twitter.
- Front page on Reddit.
- Viral video on Facebook.

Some examples of negative media influence include:

- Buzzfeed: "10 cats that are trying too hard. You won't believe number 8."
- PSA: Animal control releases statement saying to stay away from dancing cat posse.
- Poll: Dogs found to be better than cats.
- News: Distractions from dancing cat allows bystanders to get robbed.

10 MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS

10.1 Music

Music requirements and asset list:

- Intro, Title screen, Options screen, and Menus, and Level Selector (can be one continuous song)
- Credits Screen
- Cut scene: Story of Piper
- Level 1 (Tutorial): Needs A/B track for exploration/event switching
 - o Original composition for this game by Danny Morris
- Level 2 (Street): Needs A/B track for exploration/event switching
 - Original composition for this game by Danny Morris
- Level success
- Level failure

Music will be provided by Danny Morris. https://soundcloud.com/dannymorris-1

10.2 SOUND EFFECTS

Sound effect assets will be sourced by from websites like http://www.freesound.org/ or created by us.

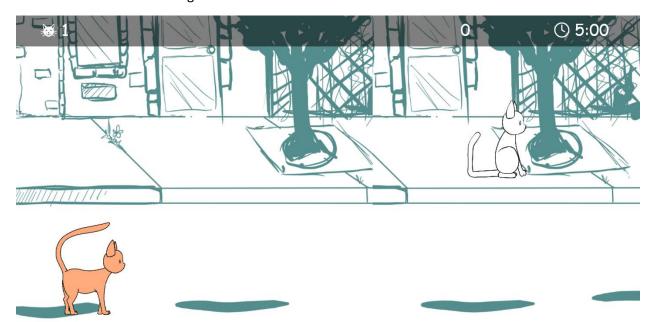
Action	Sound Effect(s)	Filename(s)
Idle for 15 seconds	Purring	IdlePurring.wav
Start button combo event	Meow (5 variations)	Meow1.wav
		Meow2.wav
		Meow3.wav
Humans becomes interested	"Ooh", "Aww", "Hey"	
Human starts filming	Camera shutter	CameraShutter.wav
Player runs out of time on	Hiss, angry meow, mrrrrrr	
sequence		
Player messes a key up	Honk	
Player messes one sequence	Startled cat sound	AngryMeow.wav
up		
Cat joins posse	Purring	
Player gets sequence right	Ding noise	Ding.wav
Select new option from menu		
New challenge event	Bam, slam, etc	
Pause chime		

11 GAME INTERFACE

11.1 EXPLORING

Basic UI elements during normal gameplay:

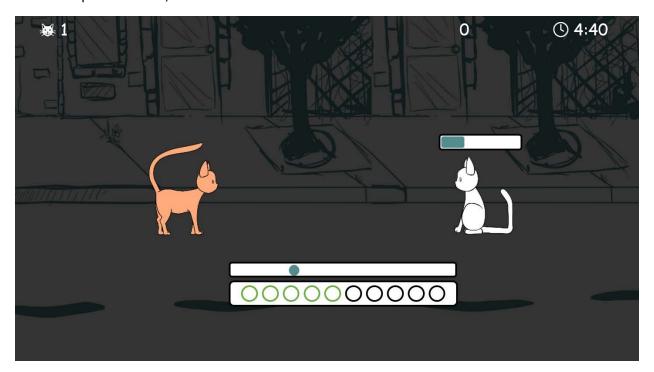
- Posse size
- Level Score
- Level Time Remaining



11.2 CAT CHALLENGE

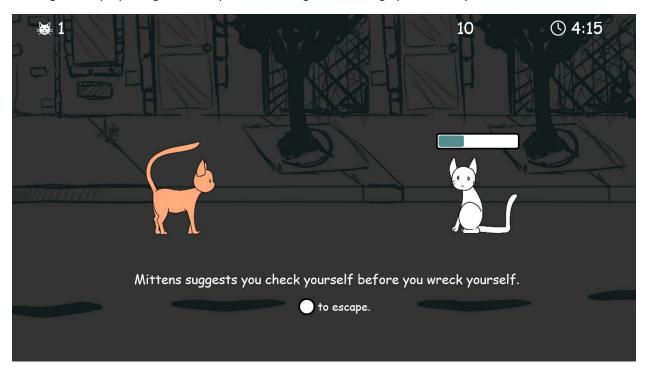
Entering an event triggers a darkening of the background and adds the following UI elements:

- Coolness gauge, over the target's head. Note: Starts low, but never empty.
- Sequence timer, in middle of screen.
- Sequence combo, below timer.



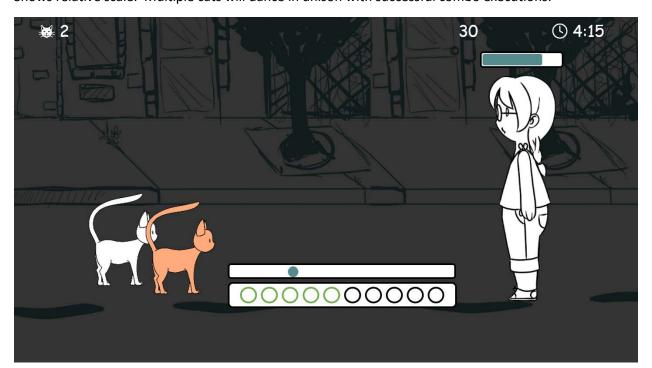
11.3 CAT CHALLENGE ESCAPE

Failing a number of sequences in a row will pause loading of a new sequence and instead load a taunt message. The player is given the option of ending the challenge prematurely.



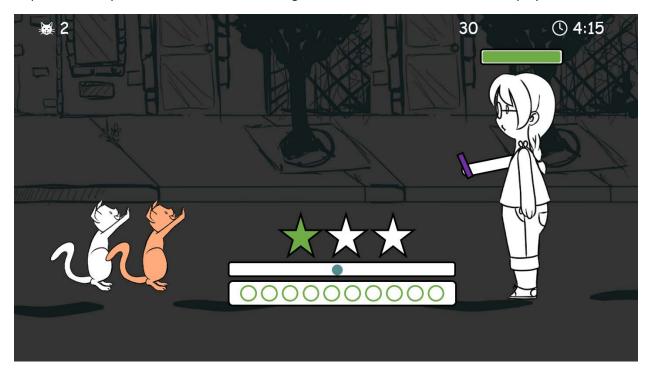
11.4 HUMAN CHALLENGE

Shows relative scale. Multiple cats will dance in unison with successful combo executions.



11.5 EARNING FAME

Earning maximum amusement will cause humans to pull out their cameras. The amount of Fame required to complete a level is illustrated, along with the current Fame status of the player.



11.6 Level or Game Completion

Winning or losing loads single page cut scenes for amusement and story progression.

