

OBJECTIVES

Whether the stage be a puzzle or combat mission, the ultimate goal is to have both players exit the room together. This may be through one door, but in instances where Tim and Chrono are separated, such as in puzzle chambers, there are two clearly-marked exit doors for the players to make use of.

Combat levels:

- Both players must reach the exit door alive
- Players must kill as many enemies as the counter above the exit door demands of them
- In boss stages, the players must 'kill' the boss

Puzzle levels:

- Both players must reach the exit door(s) alive
- Players may have to obtain a key for that level's door in order to open it, or otherwise clear an obstacle in the path

MECHANICS

Float Engine makes use of gravity and friction forces, put to use in keeping its characters and enemies planted on the ground. Players are allowed to push certain objects around, lay trails of gunpowder and carry key objects. Cheat functions, unlocked once the players have collected enough of the game's arbitrary collectibles, will allow for low gravity jumps when re-visiting levels.

Movement in the game is controlled with the left thumbstick on an Xbox 360 controller, with manual jumps available on . See *'Control Scheme'* for details.

RULES

All player characters, enemies and destructable objects within the game possess health bars, although only the players' own are displayed, via the heads-up display (HUD). See *'Interface'* for details.

- Player characters start each level with 10 health points (HP)
- A player character or enemy 'dies' when his HP reaches 0, with the exception of bosses
- If either player 'dies' inside a level, play ends and the level is reset, including any scores and bonus collectibles gathered in that stage

Both players work towards a single score throughout the game, which is displayed on the HUD. Points are earned for enemies killed, the time taken to complete a level, remaining health and for finding bonus weapons and arbitrary collectibles. Points may be collected for finding bonus items regardless of whether this is the players' first claim of that item or not. Scores are tallied at the end of each level, and the final score for completing the game is added to *Floaters'* online scores

table. These points may be spent in the *Floaters* shop, exchanged for "arbitrary collectibles" and extra weapons.

COMBAT RULES

Floaters' players will face a number of Evil Villain X's creations during each era's combative stages. They come in the form of lowly pawns, as seen in our prototype, as well as knights and bosses, where X himself joins in the fray aboard mechanical behemoths. Tim and Chrono can arm themselves with standard fare weaponry, capable of killing 'pawns' in one hit, or they can collect and invest in special weapons for an advantage against harder enemies.

- Player characters may recover their maximum HP by collecting health pickups, which affect both characters
- Player characters and enemies cannot be hit when a weapon is being struck - the offending attack is blocked
- Players can jump and move freely when attacking
- A cool-down is put into effect on weapon strikes to prevent 'button bashing' - invincibility from pressing the 'strike' button repeatedly



- Each player receives one 'combo point' (CP) for every enemy struck (in which it is not blocked), to a maximum of 30CP
- When both players possess 30CP, a team attack move is unlocked in which both must follow a quick-time button combination
- A successful team attack inflicts 2HP damage upon all enemies on-screen

Players earn score multipliers based on the total number of enemies killed. Scores are ranked in a medals system, with bronze for a standard play, silver for a good score and gold for the optimum. These represent a single, double and triple multiplier respectively.



PUZZLE RULES

Floaters' puzzle stages are free of combative enemies, with the exception of invulnerable sentries, which are capable of killing on sight. Player characters can also be harmed by any environmental hazards in the world, such as fire or deep water.

Scores for the puzzle stages are based on the time taken to complete. As with combat scores, these come in bronze, silver and gold multipliers.

SAVING & REPLAYING

Saving of the game is handled by an 'autosave' feature, in which the players' progress is stored after each level is completed and scores have been tabulated. Each game save is stored on the host (player one)'s machine, irrespective of whether the file reflects online or local play. *Floaters'* game saves may be named after the two players involved for easy identification.

Players can re-try a level at any time during play using the 'Pause menu', or by revisiting the portals found in the Hub. Those who have completed the game will be allowed to attempt them armed with tools from the 'Extras menu'. As well as unlocking cheats, some of which will open previously hidden areas, players will be invited to activate a 'hard mode', in which more enemies are spawned, the layout of some puzzles is changed to make their solution harder, and bosses are made to possess higher health values.

MEDIEVAL ERA 16th century

The medieval era is a time for crusades and religious learning. Ordinary citizens of the peasantry are found working agriculture or crafting goods. Its lands are vibrant and forested, with the castles and townships forming the stage for the floaters' adventures.

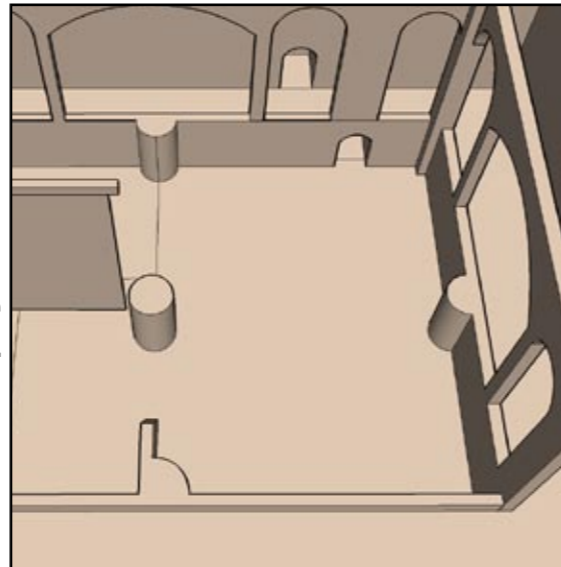
Floaters' medieval lands consist of two castles, tracts of forested land and a small market town. We start at the first castle - an outpost, with a keep and small courtyard occupied by a battalion of Evil Villain X's cloned knights. Tim and Chrono are, as yet, unaware of the task ahead of them and know only that they are likely to meet their nemesis soon...

Level One

The floaters arrive inside the castle's keep. Tim (player one) has landed behind some travelling cases which are stacked inside the large store, while Chrono (player two) has arrived on a mezzanine catwalk above. He's able to observe Tim and the deadly sentries who're in the room with him.

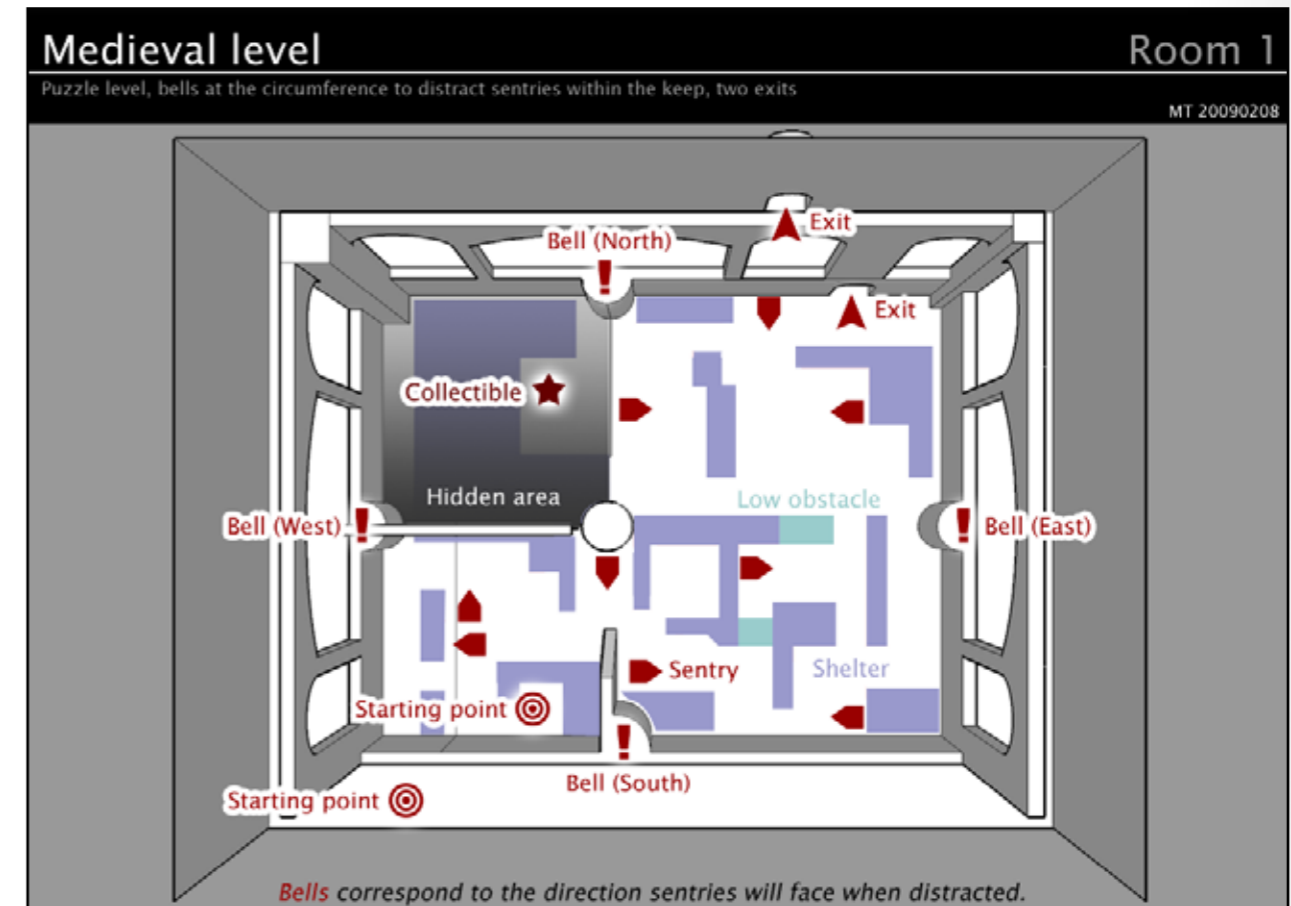
The room may be seen in its entirety, with Chrono allowed around its perimeter by means of the raised mezzanine. Player one, Tim, has been placed inside a maze, with tarpaulin draped over simple obstacles and a hidden collectible in the North-West corner. Twin doors lay at the Northern wall - one at floor level and one on Chrono's mezzanine. Sentries have been posted throughout the course of Tim's maze, and bells are hung around the maze border at the cardinal points (North, South, East and West).

As play begins, and only moments after the players have been given chance to observe the level in front of them, a bird is seen to fly into one of the bells, causing every sentry in the room to look up to it.



The sentries will eventually turn back to their default positions as described in 'Encounters', below. The players must use this mechanic to sneak Tim past the guards, winding his way around the maze until he safely reaches the door.

MAP:



ENCOUNTERS:

The room is rendered with enemies already in place. No agents will spawn during active play in this stage. Additionally, as they are sentries the enemies cannot be attacked or killed in this stage.

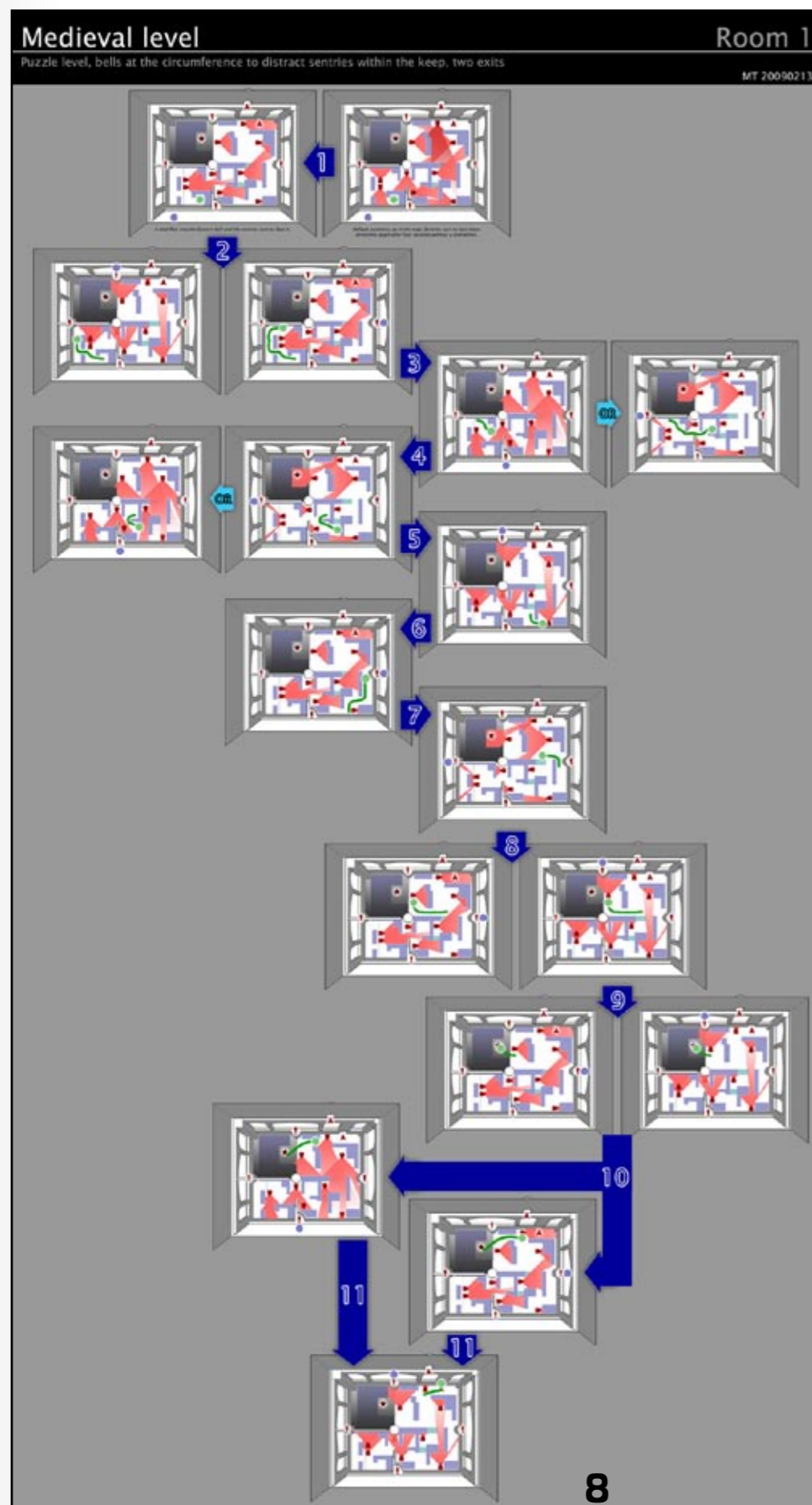
- The sentries are placed with one default position each, as shown on the map. Each possesses a 90° field of vision directly ahead of them. This field extends to the bounds of the level unless any obstacles are present to block it.
- When a bell is struck by Chrono, it triggers all enemies to turn on the spot by the smallest possible rotation (i.e. 90° turn instead of 270°), and look in that direction (the field of vision turns to face that direction too).
- After a timeout period of four seconds, all enemies will return to their default orientation.
- If Tim is caught in any field of vision, the sentry will express alarm, the screen is faded to black and the level reset for the floaters have been spotted.

Tim is given opportunity to collect a non-functional revolver from the Wild West era, should he venture underneath the tarpaulin towards the end of this level.

SOLUTION:

In order to solve the puzzle in the quickest time possible, the players will have to ring the bells and move Tim quickly in the following sequence, also illustrated below:

East, West, West, North, East, West, East, North, East, South



This chart tracks the possible flow of moves, starting from default positions and the scripted bird's collision with a bell to the East.

To prevent a long chain of sequenced moves, Tim is offered a safe spot before beginning the second half of the stage, between steps 3 and 4. This is to allow the players time to plot their next moves.

At the start of play, the players are offered multiple choices of direction for keeping Tim hidden from the guards' attention. This changes later on in the level, when often there is only one ideal path, or else Tim will run into problems.

The path climaxes with a daring run directly behind the sentries' backs. One false move and Tim will be spotted.

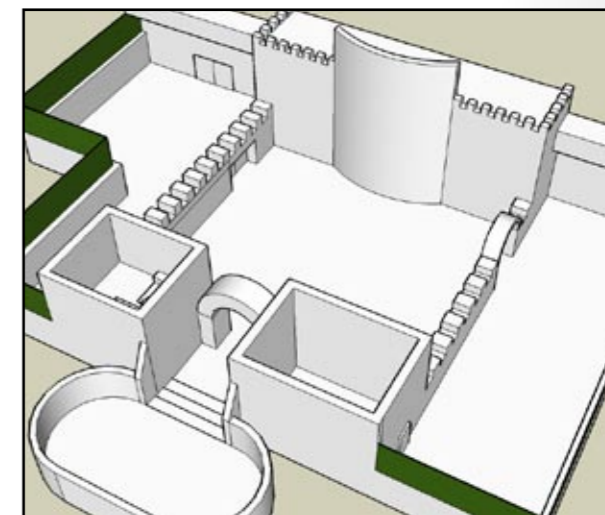
Theoretical high score limits place the gold score ranking on a completion time of less than 1 minute, 30 seconds and silver at less than 1 minute 50.

Level Seven

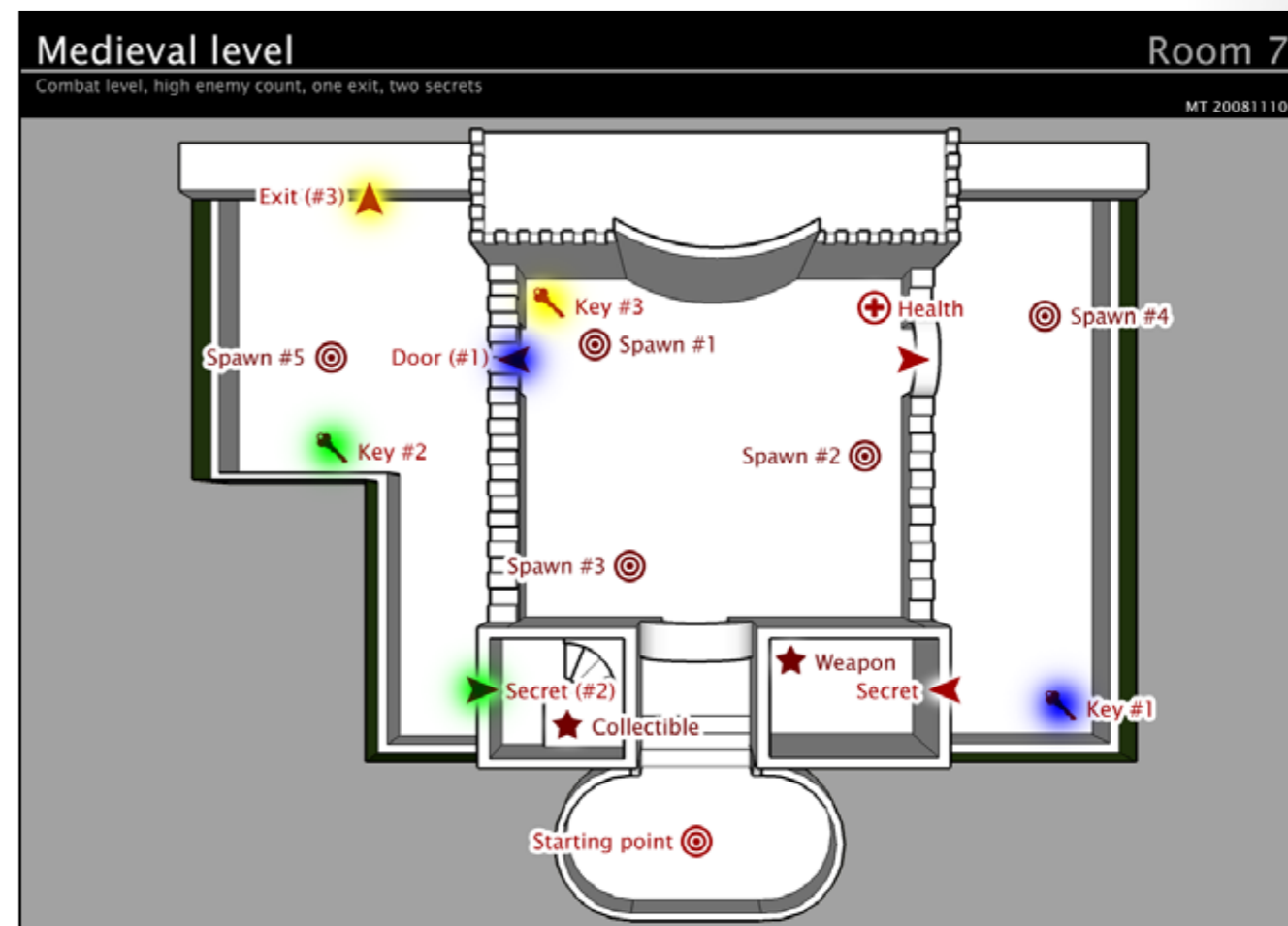
Having cleared the castle's outer walls, our heroes have finally reached the secret entrance to Evil Villain X's castle. They arrive from a secluded forest clearing just as the encampment rebels suggested, but their attempts to get around the heavily-fortressed portcullis have only led them directly to a barracks full of X's enemy knights. They must now make their way through the heavily-populated courtyard in order to face Evil Villain X and banish him from the medieval realm.

The players enter into the courtyard down a small flight of steps from the forest. Once the battle is finished in this first section, players can enter the smaller courtyard and find the first door key. This permits entry to a door on the opposite side of the courtyard, which in turn contains a key to the castle keep and the exit door.

Players can either unlock the two keeps to claim their bonuses and then escape, or leave as soon as battle is finished in the last courtyard.



MAP:



In this diagram, key #1, in blue, would unlock door #1, key #2 for door #2 etc. The first secret chamber has no key for entry - instead it's a secret door, textured similarly to the wall.