

Super Smash Bros. Adaptation

Team Members

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Design Process

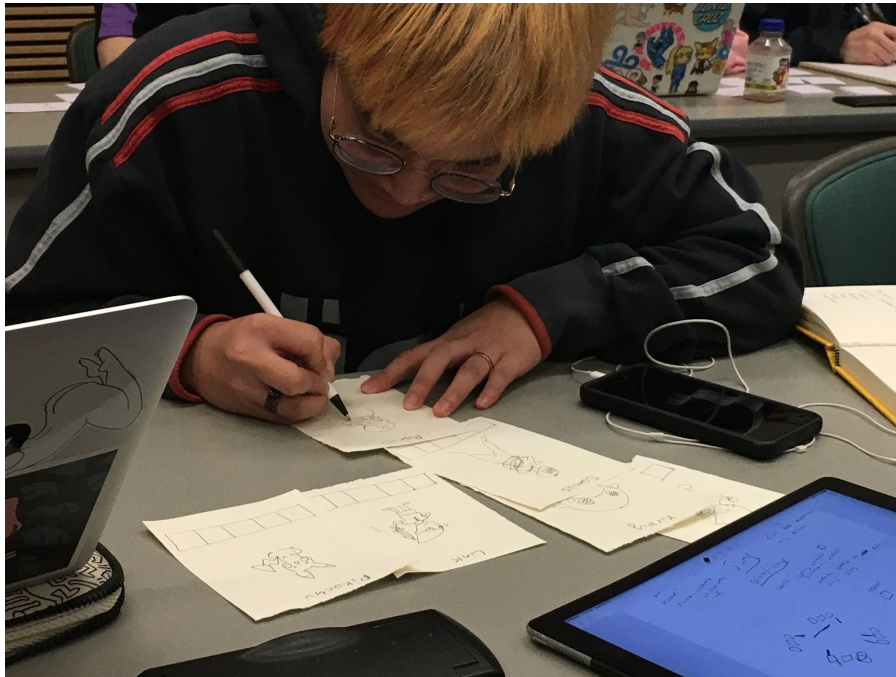
When designing our adaptation of *Super Smash Bros (SSB)* our greatest focus was on translating the game's combat system to a tabletop game. We decided to represent game actions (attack, block, jump, etc.) with cards that would then have a special range where that action could take place on the game's board. The range element lead us to give the game an isometric view, rather than the frontal view in the original game, with a multi-tiered board made up of hexagons. This meant that players would need to be tactical in their maneuvering when dealing attacks, which all have different statistics depending on the player's character, as well as when attempting to avoid damage.



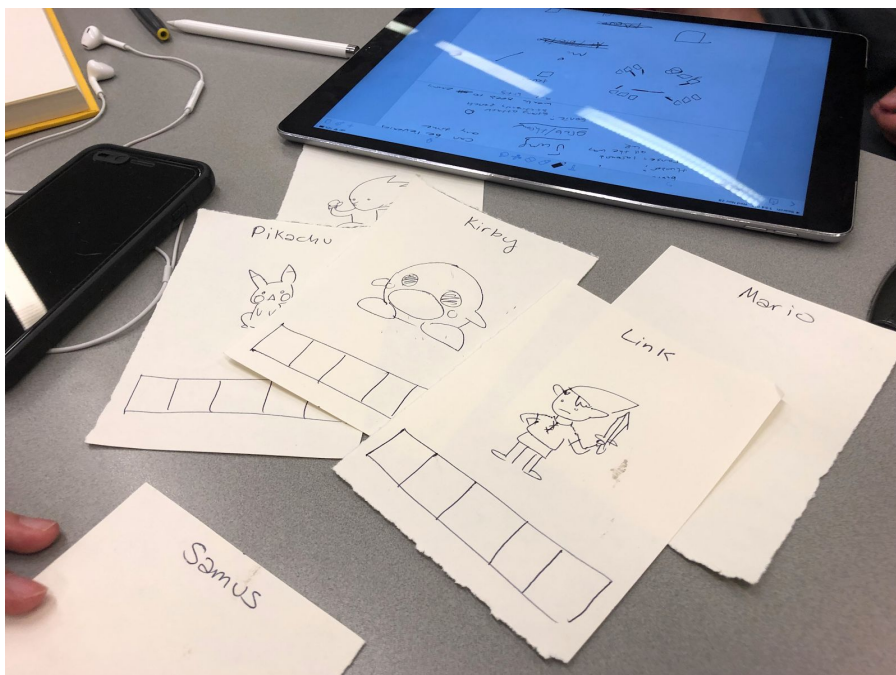
The first board mock-up.

We decided that to keep the variety of actions that *SSB* offers, we would give each playable character, which we narrowed to 6 for scope reasons, their own set of movement abilities and attacks, as well as differing stats in terms of attack, grab and throw, and jump distances. These stats would be listed on the player's character card and set of action cards. We wanted each character to be strong in certain areas and weak in others while keeping

character choice balanced, so that no character is more superior to the others. This was tested using an iterative process. The differing stats would increase the potential probability space for players' actions.



Thovatey working on sketches of potential character card designs.



Close-up of the original character cards.

Our goal was to design every action to be balanced, to a degree, with another action in order to keep damage and knockback from being overpowered reinforcing loops. Defensive strategies should be as equally viable as offensive, in our minds. So as a result, attacks are balanced by blocks and grab/throws are balanced by jumps. Each offensive move has a counter.



Ryan's full action card set.

In order to keep gameplay to a reasonable length of time we added damage tokens (in the first iteration of our design we had damage bars), meaning that the more a player is damaged by attacks, the farther they can then be thrown or knocked back. This reinforcing loop would keep players from playing exclusively defensively or offensively on their turns and would also force players to think holistically about piece placement and action choices each round.

Like in *SSB*, the game ends when all, but one, players have been permanently knocked off the board.

Playtests

During our first playtest we decided that the starting player should be chosen through a mini-game. We chose rock paper scissors so that it doesn't become a point of player contention when beginning the game. We also saw that the way we originally explained turns in the rules had been confusing to understand, some players did not understand that they move before playing an action, so we worked to clarify that.

Originally, we did not require players to play an action on their turn; they were allowed to pass if they were not in range of a successful action use, but this often created a cat and mouse situation later in the round. If one player was out of round actions but the other player had an action left, then the first player would constantly use the movement aspect of their turn to keep themselves out of range until they were blocked into a corner and the other player could use their action (usually an attack) against that player. As a result, we changed the game so each player must play an action on their turn, even if it will result in a miss. This also solved the issue of players hoarding cards during the round rather than playing them. Rounds were meant to be resolved fairly quickly and this helped accomplish that.

We also changed the function of our block card, as we found the card to be too overpowered in play. Instead of blocking all damage and knockback from an attack, blocks only stop knockback.

Players also tended to be confused when falling off one platform or jumping up to another platform, where their piece was supposed to land. We clarified this by matching platform locations on the board with the smaller platform above it, and using colored lines to show this match so the player would have a clear view of how they could move across levels.



Our first playtest ft. vegan sliders made by Evan.



A updated mockup of the board post-playtest.

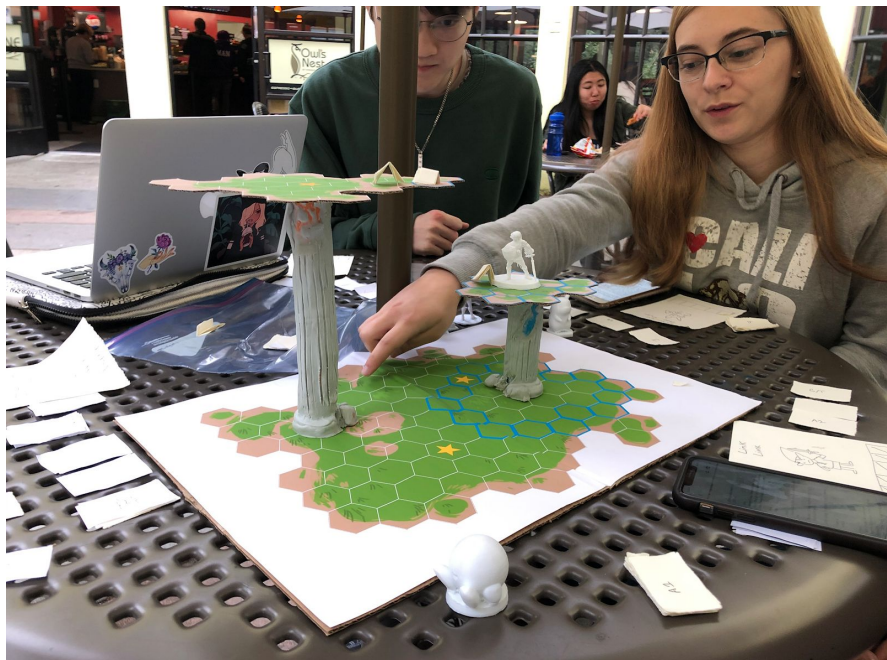
Using a larger board in our second playtest, we saw that player movement ability needed to be increased slightly in order for players to have a meaningful first turn. Noticing some confusion with certain rules, like charging an attack and blocking, we understood that the action cards needed clearer definitions of what each player could do. We also decided that we needed to update the damage bar so that we could increase how much players could gain damage and thus decrease the length of the game when there are more players playing. In addition, we swapped our original random character figures with 3D printed figures of the characters we picked for the game so that the players could feel more in tune with who they were playing.



Our second playtest.



Ted, our game moderator.



Barbara shaming the pillar that kept falling over.

In our third and final playtest, we decided to nix the damage bars on player's character cards. We instead opted to only use tokens, in the form of black beads, where one token represents 5 points of damage. We also changed the decision method for the starting player from a game of rock, paper, scissors to a best impersonation contest, which we felt was more in character with the game. We also changed the design of the board from having

colored lines bordering the platform locations to the locations simply being shaded where the platform above it corresponds. Then we added weights to the insides of the pillars so that they would be more sturdy when player pieces were on the taller platforms.



Our third playtest with close-to-final pieces and cards.



Hao deeply considering his character action choices while Grace deeply considers her brownie.



Our emotional support Ted.



The final game.

Hyper Hit Dudes

(2-6 Players)

A game by Evan Blank, Grace Walker, Barbara Haggerty, Thovatey Tep, and Hao Tian

Game Components

- 6 character pieces, each with a player card (1) and action card set (15)
- Damage tokens (150)
- The game board, 2 pillars, and 2 platforms

Setup

Connect the longer pillar with the larger platform and place it where there is an 'x' marked in a large shaded area on the main board. Rotate it so that the shade matches the shape of the platform. Do the same for the smaller pillar and platform where the second 'x' is located. The two platforms will overlap if correctly positioned, which is shown on the shading of the smaller platform.

Each player then chooses 1 character and takes that character's set of cards and game piece. Each player then places their character piece on one of the board's starting hexes, which are marked with stars. Each player must start on a different hex. Starting positions and starting player are decided by each player giving an impersonation of their character, with the best impersonation starting first and then going clockwise from that person.

Play

At the start of the first round each player chooses any 3 action cards (Attack 1, Attack 2, Block, Jump, or Grab/Throw) and places them face down in front of themselves in a row, separate from the rest of their action cards. Other players should not see the cards another player puts down. The same type of card can be placed down for all 3 actions if the player wishes (certain player actions can be boosted in this manner). These 3 cards are the player's round set and are their only playable actions during the current round.

Once every player has chosen their cards, the starting player, decided by the earlier impersonation contest, moves their piece according to their movement ability located on their player card. (EX. Ryan has a movement ability of 4, meaning he can move 4 hexes in any direction, excluding up, which requires a Jump action.) After moving, or choosing not to move, the player places their first action from any of their 3 chosen cards face-up. A player must play an action card on their turn even if their action is out of range of play (this is considered a miss). The action is then resolved and the action card is placed back in that player's action set.

Resolving Actions

Actions are done within a certain range, which is located on the action card. This means that any other player piece within that action's range is affected by the action. Unless specified on the card, the player may assume that their action only affects players on the same level as their character piece. If a player affected by the action has a counter card in their round set, they may play it at this time. The played card cannot be used again in the round and must be left alone in the player's action set until the round is over.

Examples of Counters

- If a player is hit with an attack but that same player has a Block card in their round set they may play the card, blocking any knockback from attacks.
- If a player is grabbed and thrown off of the board that same player can play a Jump card if it is in their round set, putting their character back on the board if their jump distance is high enough. Players may play as many Jump cards as they have in their round set if knocked off the board.

As a player takes damage from attacks and throws they gain damage tokens. A damage token is gained for every 5 points of damage taken. For every two damage tokens, knockback and throw distance done against the damaged character is added by 1.

Also, when a character plays a Jump card to go up levels they must keep into account how far they can move. The shorter pillar represents 3 moves upward, while the taller pillar represents 6 moves upward from the bottom platform and 3 from the shorter pillar. A player does not need to play a Jump card to jump down levels.

Once the first player's action has been resolved, the player to the left plays their movement and/or action and so on until all round set cards have been played. A new round is started and the starting player shifts to the player on the left.

Game End

The game ends when all players but 1 have been permanently knocked off of the board. The last player standing wins.