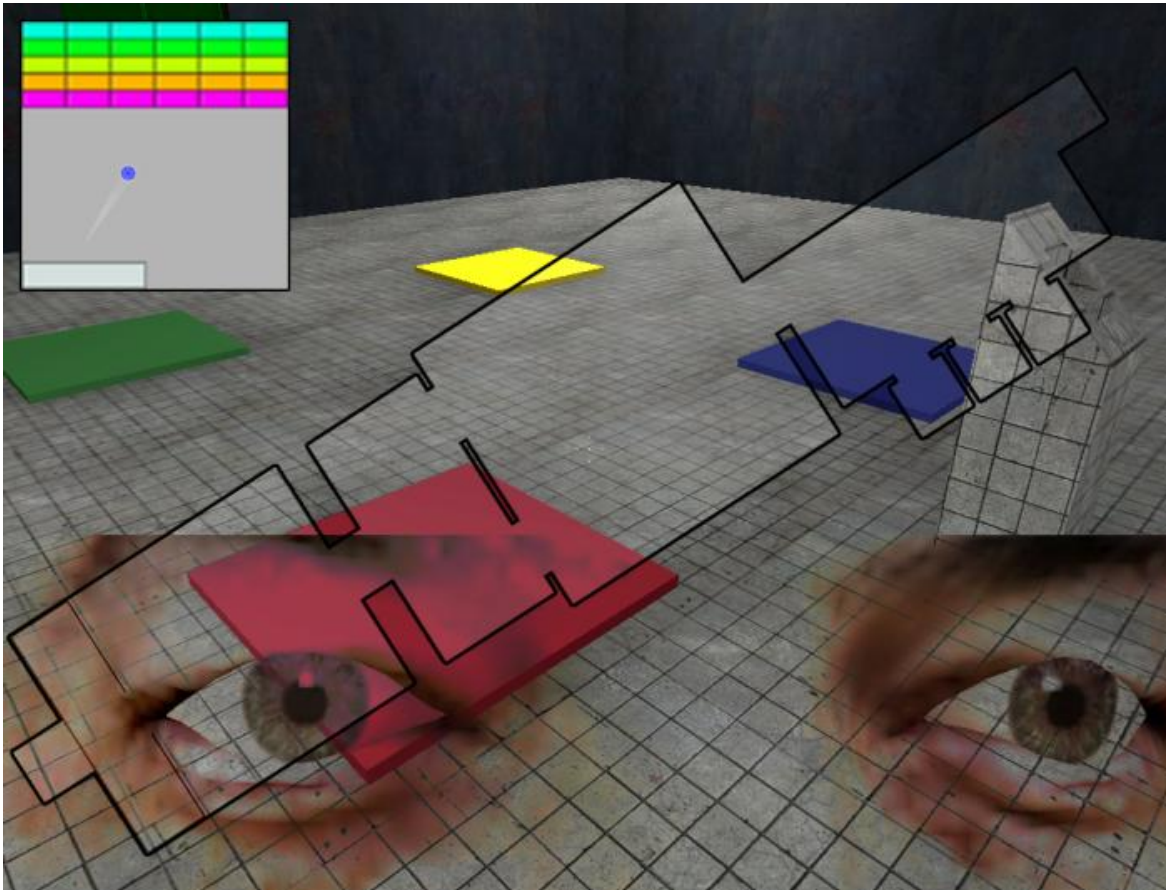


# THE GAME MASTER'S LAIR

*Half-Life 2: Episode 2*



## Single Player Level Design Document

Designer:

Todd Gorang

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6/24/09

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**DOCUMENT REVISIONS TABLE**

VERSION	DESCRIPTION	REQUESTOR	DATE
<b>1</b>	Initial version	Todd Gorang	6/24/09

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## QUICK SUMMARY

The Game Master's Lair challenges the player with three "Classic Game" Puzzles inspired by Milton Bradley's Simon Game, ATARI's Breakout, and the game show "Let's Make a Deal." The Level is intended to fit within the Half-Life universe, but showcase unique gameplay atypical of a combat oriented First Person Shooter. The player is armed with only the basic physics cannon and must solve each puzzle to advance. The Level's difficulty must be accessible to all skills levels.

The Game Master's Lair is a Mini-Level mod for Valve's First Person Shooter, Half-Life 2. The level takes place between "We Don't Go to Ravenholm" and "Highway 17". Gordon Freeman finds an elevator in the underground passage leading to a mad gamester's underground lair. Gordon must solve dangerous puzzles to find his way through the underground lair of the mysterious Game Master to get to the train tracks leading to the "Highway 17" level. This is a single player level with puzzle-based gameplay. The level balances puzzle elements with Zombie and Man-Hack combat. The level takes place inside an underground lair styled similarly to the Citadel level but in a tighter confined space. The player carries only a Physics Cannon.



Figure 1: The Game Master's Lair



## GAMEPLAY

The level takes the player along a linear progression through 3 main rooms. The player must solve each room's puzzle before passage to the next room opens. Exiting the elevator, an extreme close-up of the Mysterious Game Master greets the player via a television monitor offering clues through a heckling rant as to what challenges await. After his rant, the player steps through a doorway into the first room.

The first room challenges memory with a Simon-like puzzle. For every mistake, the player must dodge falling exploding barrels or fight off Man-Hacks with his Physics Cannon. The player interacts with a button in the center of the room to demonstrate the puzzle sequence. After witnessing the sequence, the player walks across the floor panels to mimic the sequence. Stepping on a panel out of sequence initiates a drop of an exploding barrel ready to burst. The player must run for cover and dodge the explosions. Each consecutive error causes more barrels and eventually Man-Hack to fall from the ceiling. After completing the puzzle sequence the player advances to the next room. Again, the Mysterious Game Master heckles the player taunting him as he enters the room.

The second room presents the player with a Large TV monitor showing a very familiar image of a brick-breaker style game. In front of the monitor, interacting with a "Right" and "Left" button control panel moves a platform across the bottom of the screen. A Combine Energy Ball waits for the player just under the screen. As the player uses the Physics cannon and launches the ball, the image on the TV displays the ball bouncing around breaking some of the colored blocks. Catching the ball with the platform keeps the ball in play. When the ball misses the platform, alarms sound as Man-Hacks fall from the ceiling behind the player. The player must then pull the energy ball from the game and dispatch the Man-Hacks before trying again. Clearing a path through the colored blocks with the ball opens the doors into the next room. The player makes his way through the room noticing it is the room containing the colored blocks. Any remaining blocks break away and clear a path to the door on the opposite side of the room.

The Final room is smaller than the others. Three clearly marked doors stand as "Door #1", "Door #2" and "Door #3." On either side of the room, storage units containing wrenches, saw blades and shovels clutter the space unlike the previous rooms. As the player enters the final room, TV monitors burst to life with images of the Game Master. This time the Game Master reveals a bit more frustration for the player's destroying his puzzle room. Now the Game Master presents the player with the option of choosing one of three doors. Like an insane Monty Hall, the Game master challenges the player to make a deal. Unfortunately, each of the three doors contains varied numbers of Zombies. Once the player opens all three doors and defeats the zombies using his Physics Cannon to throw tools, the Game Master breaks down and confesses he is overjoyed to have someone to play with. To congratulate the player, he opens a hidden elevator revealing the level's exit.

The sequential, linear flow leads the player from puzzle to puzzle. Doors seal Gordon into each room eliminating any confusion or misdirection that might inspire the player into looking for an alternate path. Solving each puzzle is the only way to proceed through the level. The heckling Game Master's taunts become an invaluable tool for guiding the player through each step of the puzzle.

**OBJECTIVE SUMMARY**

1. Exit the Elevator into the first room to watch the Game Master introduce the levels.

**Objective 1: Simon Puzzle**

- a. Enter the first Simon Puzzle Room, and start the puzzle by triggering the button in front of the floor panels.
  - b. Watch the sequence of lighted floor panels and then repeat the sequence by stepping on the floor panels in the same order.
  - c. Keep clear of exploding barrels and defeat Man-Hacks that fall from the ceiling upon making an error in the sequence.
  - d. After solving the puzzle, enter through the now open doorway.
2. Watch another video from the Game Master indicating the next puzzle to solve.

**Objective 2: Brick-Break-Out**

- a. See the Combine Energy Ball in a hole in the wall under the TV monitor, and test the buttons controlling the moving platform on the monitor.
  - b. Push the ball into play with the physics cannon, and use the buttons to move the paddle from left to right keeping the ball in play and breaking the colored blocks.
  - c. Defeat manhacks using the energy ball any time the paddle doesn't know the ball back into play.
  - d. Break through the layers of blocks to destroy a block in the deepest layer that unlocks the door into the next area
3. Walk through the room containing the remaining colored blocks and into the next area. (Wow moment walking through the life sized Brick-Break-Out game within the game.)

**Objective 3: Let's Choose a Door**

- a. Watch another video on the large monitor as the Game Master plays host in a demented game show.
  - b. Consecutively open the three doors and defeat the zombies and inside them using the Physics Cannon to throw available room items.
  - c. The Game Master reveals his appreciation for having you as a playmate and reveals a hidden elevator.
4. Enter the Elevator and exit the level.

## OVERVIEW

### CAMPAIGN

- Name: The Game Master's Lair
- Level Position in Campaign:
  - Nearing the end of the "We Don't Go To Ravenholm" level, Gordon enters an elevator. The "The Game Master's Lair" level begins as soon as Gordon exits the elevator.
  - Following the level, Gordon returns to the train tracks leading to the "Highway 17" level

### MISSION LOCATION

- Theme: A haunting twist to *classic game puzzles*.
- Mood: The juxtaposition of children's games and murderous booby-traps.
- Setting: Confined underground metal chambers
- Time: Late afternoon/early evening
- Season: Summer
- Weather: A bit hazy but otherwise clear skies

### MISSION DIFFICULTY (SCALE: 1-5)

- Start: 2-3 (Making mistakes with simple puzzle elements spawn exploding barrels then Man-Hacks)
- Middle: 2 (Making mistakes with simple puzzle elements spawn Man-Hacks)
- End: 3 (Battle multiple zombies with only the Physics Cannon)

---

## MISSION METRICS

- Play Time: 8minutes
- Physical Length: ~ 150 feet through 50 foot wide rooms
- Physical Area: 150 x 50 foot area
- Max New Characters: 1 (The Mysterious Game Master (face and voice only))
- Max Visual Themes: 2-3
  - Area 1: The First two rooms resemble a Citadel styled construction with colorful game piece elements (i.e.: Simon Floor Panels and Colored Bricks in Pong Puzzle)
  - Area 2: Indoor Citadel styled Room slightly less "finished." The 3<sup>rd</sup> room includes shelving units and tools cluttered about. Sections of incomplete wall reveal underground stone wooden beams and rock
  - Area 3: Optional Exterior (Upon Leaving the elevator Gordon catches a glimpse of the outdoor train tracks)

## LEVEL DETAILS

### LEVEL ATMOSPHERE/MOOD

The deep underground lair of the mysterious Game Master holds familiar yet dissonant life-sized interactive children's games. The colorful game pieces contrast the stark cold metal walls in this dark secluded lair. Strange surprises await a hapless playmate. Almost every room displays a flickering monitor waiting to surprise the viewer as the extreme close-up of a strangely excited hermit, pops on to the screen when least expected. The eerie, excited chuckle booms over loud speakers as the player makes any move. Someone is watching.

### STORY

#### INTRODUCTION

- The Preacher in Ravenholm helped Gordon make his way into the caves under the cemetery. Now Gordon rushes to catch up with the rebels near Highway 17. The path through the caves under the cemetery slowed his progress. Gordon notices an elevator hidden in the corner of a cave wall, and decides to see if it's working. In hopes that it's a shortcut to the surface, Gordon steps inside.

#### IN-GAME

- Gordon steps out of the elevator into a dark doom. A strange face on TV Monitors in the room teases him and boasts of the fun and games he's prepared. The doors to the elevator lock behind him and the door leading to the next room opens.
- Gordon steps into an almost completely bare room, except for four colored panels on the floor in front of him. The bare room is of meticulous construction. Clearly, the man on the screen has too much time on his hands. The dark metallic walls glisten and shine. Gordon notices a large colored security door standing opposite him as the man on the TV indicates that playing his game is the only way to get through them. Gordon quickly notices that this game has real-life consequences and clearly, the man behind the screen vicariously enjoys manipulating Gordon as if he were an avatar in some First-Person-Shooter video game. Stepping across a colored panel ignites an alarm and Exploding barrels and Man-Hacks ambush him from hatches in the ceiling every time he steps on the wrong colored panel. Gordon presses the button in the center of the floor and carefully notes the sequence of lighted panels. He steps across them in order this time to open the doors to the next room.
- In the next room, another TV Monitor stands in front of him. Buttons interact with the "paddle" on the screen. A glowing energy ball floats under the screen. Using his gravity gun, Gordon pushes the ball into the hole and notices it appear on the screen in front of him. The ball slams into the colored blocks on the screen and breaks one as it returns back towards the bottom and past the paddle. Again, alarms sound and 3 Man-hacks dive-bomb him from more ceiling hatches. Gordon quickly dispatches them by using the gravity gun to throw them into each other and the wall. Another ball appears below the screen. This time, Gordon pushes the ball into play and uses the moving "paddle" to keep the ball from hitting the bottom of the screen. After a few tries, the ball breaks through to the deepest row of colored blocks and two doors open to the next room. As Gordon steps inside, he sees that the room is the life-sized version of what he was just playing on the screen. Gordon makes his way to the door at the other end as blocks break apart all around him.

- The man on the monitor yammers away at Gordon as he enters the final room. Three doors stand in front of him, clearly marked as 1, 2, and 3. Gordon notices that this room is not nearly as refined as the previous two rooms. Tools clutter shelving units, and holes in the wall reveal the depths of the underground cave the facility digs into. Gordon opens the doors only to find poor souls driven mad from the Head-Crabs invading the space reserved for their heads. The zombie like creatures careen towards him and Gordon must defend himself by throwing the tools at them. One by one, Gordon opens the doors and puts them out of their misery.

---

## EXTRO

- After dispatching the zombies, the man in the monitor becomes much more subdued. He confesses to Gordon that he once worked on the combine projects until the soldiers took his two daughters from him. He's hidden away here ever since, and admits to going a little mad. Quietly a hidden door panel slides open revealing another elevator. Sadly, the Game Master wishes Gordon farewell and advises him to enter the elevator and continue on. The elevator leads Gordon to a set of train tracks returning him to his path to meet up with the Rebels along Highway 17.

---

## "60 SECONDS OF GAMEPLAY"

- After finishing two familiar puzzles, Gordon enters the final room. The Game Master on screen wastes no time as he taunts Gordon into opening one of three Doors. Upon opening a door, a gaggle of zombies burst to life and stumble towards Gordon intent on tearing him to pieces. Gordon acts quickly using his Physics Cannon to grab a saw-blade from the shelf. He aligns his shot, and launches the blade at the first zombie in his way. The blade slices through the zombie and then through a second zombie stepping through the doorway. The blade lodges itself into the wall behind them for a moment before Gordon yanks it back out with the Gravity Gun just in time to dispatch a third Zombie. The Game Master laughs hysterically teasing Gordon for choosing that door. "Open a different door you fool", the prankster shouts. "It might have a new car in it!" Gordon opens a second door. "I guess not! Hahahahaaa!" shouts the man in the monitor, as four more zombies stumble out.

## SUPPLEMENTAL STORY SAMPLE

As Gordon exits the elevator into a dark room, a flash of light erupts from the corner of his eye. A large eye stares at him from TV Monitors on both sides of the room.

“Oooooohhhh. We have a visitor do we?” a voice booms over the speaker system. “Come to play a game have we? It’s been such a long time. I’ve set up a wonderful playroom now and it’s almost finished. You are the first to visit. I am sure you will be pleased. I am almost completely finished. Well. The first two rooms are finished. If you’re alive by the time you get to the last room, perhaps you can suggest decorations. Go on. Go inside now.” The voice trails off into a grumbling chuckle.

The lights burst on and the door opposite the elevator slides open. Gordon enters a virtually bare room with four colored floor panels spaced evenly across the floor. A single button rests on top of a pedestal in the center of the room. The door slams shut behind him. Again the monitors in the room burst to life as the giant face peers through its electronic peep-hole.

“Are you ready?” the voice says. “I’ve been waiting for some time for a play-mate. See that door on the other side of the room? I think you want to go through it. Yes. Yes, you don’t want to stay in here too long. Go on. Go on. Go through the door.”

After a pause, the voice continues as if he was waiting for Gordon to try.

“Ahh Ahh Ahhh. Tisk tisk. Simon didn’t say.”

Clearly, he’s enjoying himself.

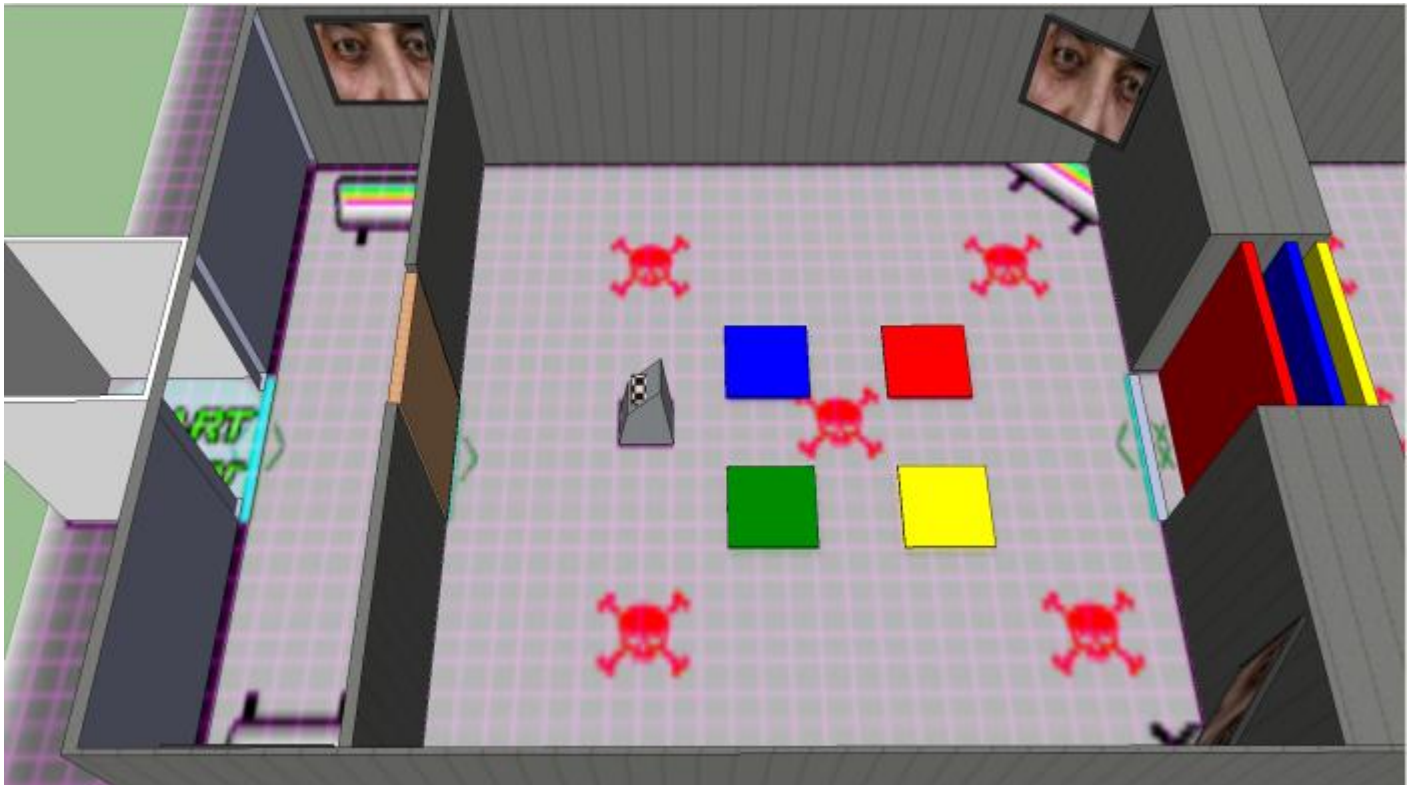
“You’ll have to prove to me that you respect Simon. You remember Simon don’t you? I hope you remember something. You’ll have to remember something if you expect that door to open. Push that button there and prove that you can remember something and maybe that door will open for you.” He doesn’t pause very long this time and finishes with, “Oh alright... Simon says push the button. Repeat the sequence and walk through the door.” He grumbles something incoherent as if that line was less rehearsed, then crams in, “Yes yes, Simon says all of that.”

Gordon presses the button. Suddenly the colored panels on the floor begin to play melodic tones as they illuminate in sequence. He steps across a panel to get a closer look and to his surprise, alarms boom around him. Suddenly panels open above the floor panels and a single barrel drops from the ceiling. It’s on fire! Gordon dives into the corner of the room just as the cylinder explodes.

“Oh didn’t I tell you? You don’t want to step on the pretty colors in the wrong order. We don’t think Simon would like that.” The face behind the TV monitor clearly enjoys Gordon’s misstep.

Gordon presses the button again, remembers the sequence, and this time cuts a very careful path across the floor panels. As he steps across the last panel, colored panels play out the haunting tones in a dance of light, climaxing as the passage to the next room clears.

“Grraagghlsnargle!!!! I made it too easy!! That’s what I get for practicing it on zombies!!”

**MAJOR AREAS/VISUAL THEMES****AREA 1: SIMON PUZZLE****Figure 2: Layout for Area 1****TEXT DESCRIPTION:**

The metallic room carves into the earth sealing away the light of day. Glowing monitors stand as the only source of light. Glossy glass floors reflect some of the light back up along the walls mirroring the all too unlikely setting. Four brightly colored floor panels contrast the cold dark metal walls. The arrangement of the colored panels on the floor seems as if it belongs in a Chuck E Cheese restaurant. Metal slats jut out from the walls, possibly concealing an intricate network of electronics running through them. A metal and glass pedestal stands alone in front of the primary colored floor panels.



## VISUAL REFERENCES



Figure 3: Reflective Floors, Metal Slats jutting out from the walls.

- Terrain/Vegetation: None

- Models/Architecture



Figure 4: Elevator Doors



Figure 5: Pedestal holding button for Simon Puzzle

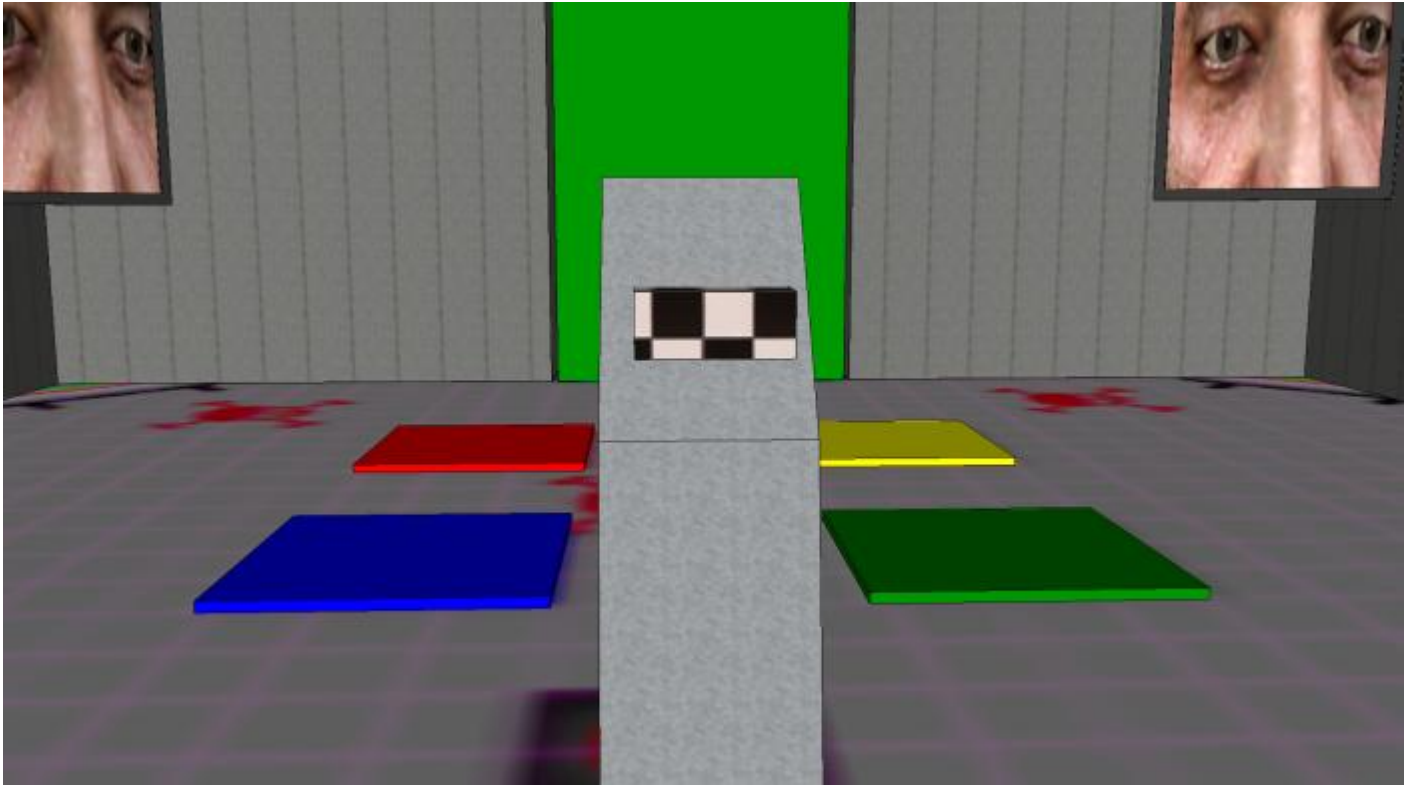


Figure 6: Room Layout from in front of Button Pedestal. Bright Colored Floor Panels



Figure 7: Flat Monitors of varied sizes mounted on the walls and corners

- Textures/Lighting

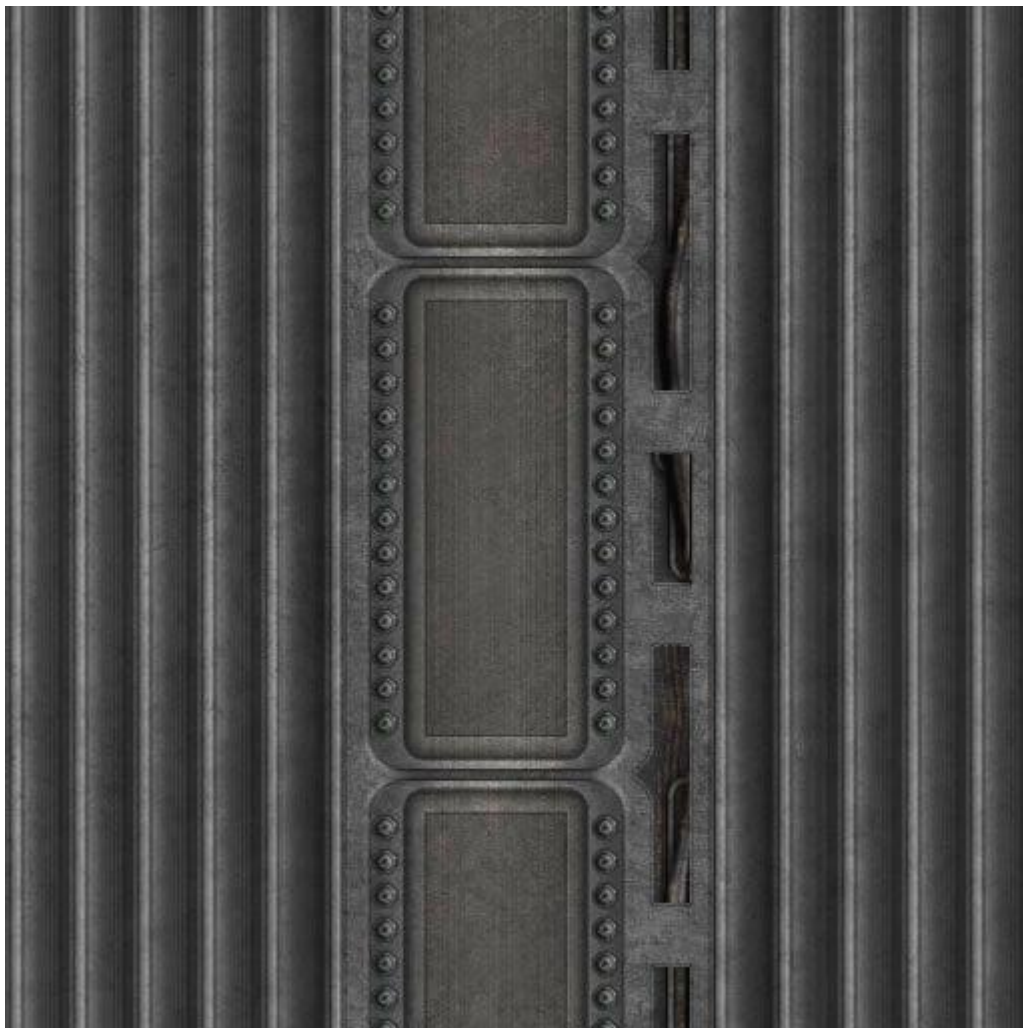


Figure 8: Metal Textures have some intricacy, indicating the meticulous construction.

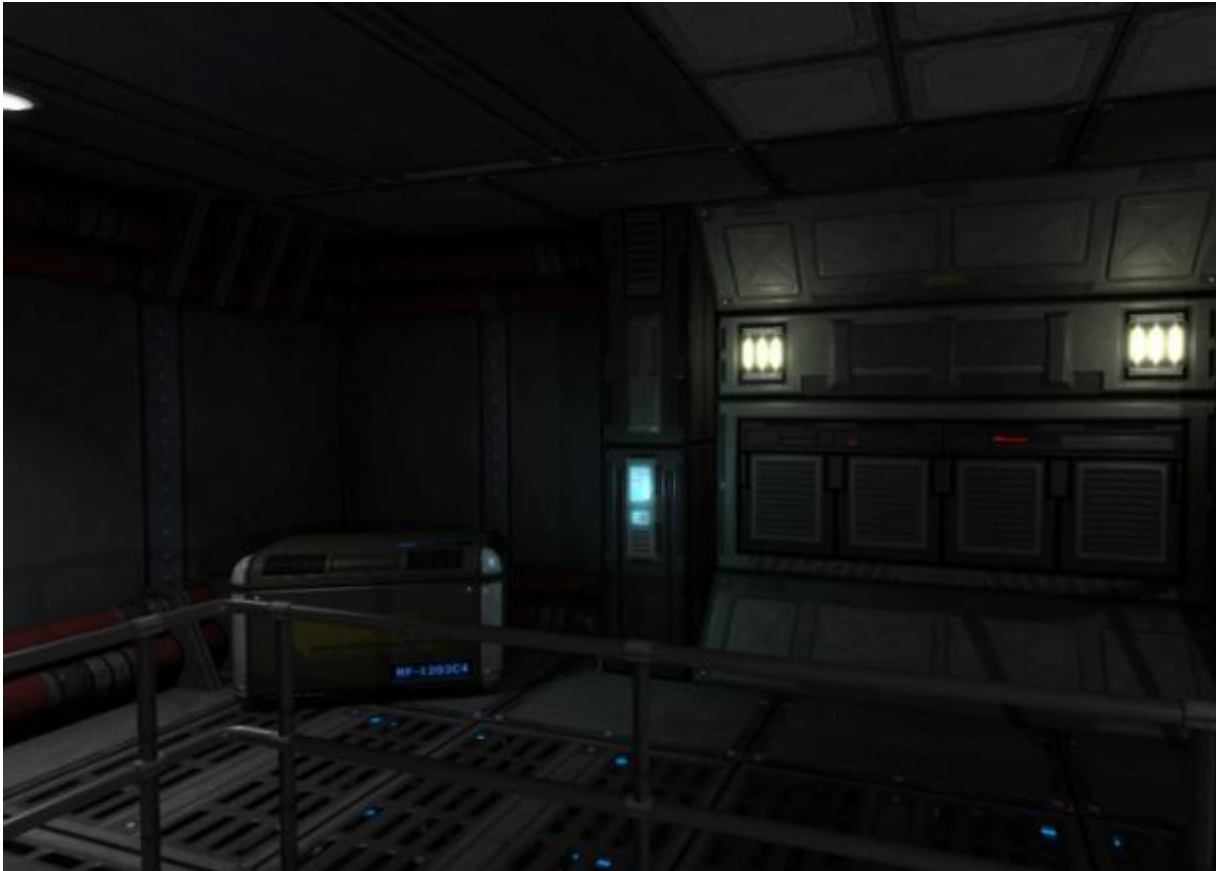


Figure 9: Light illuminating in dark metallic room

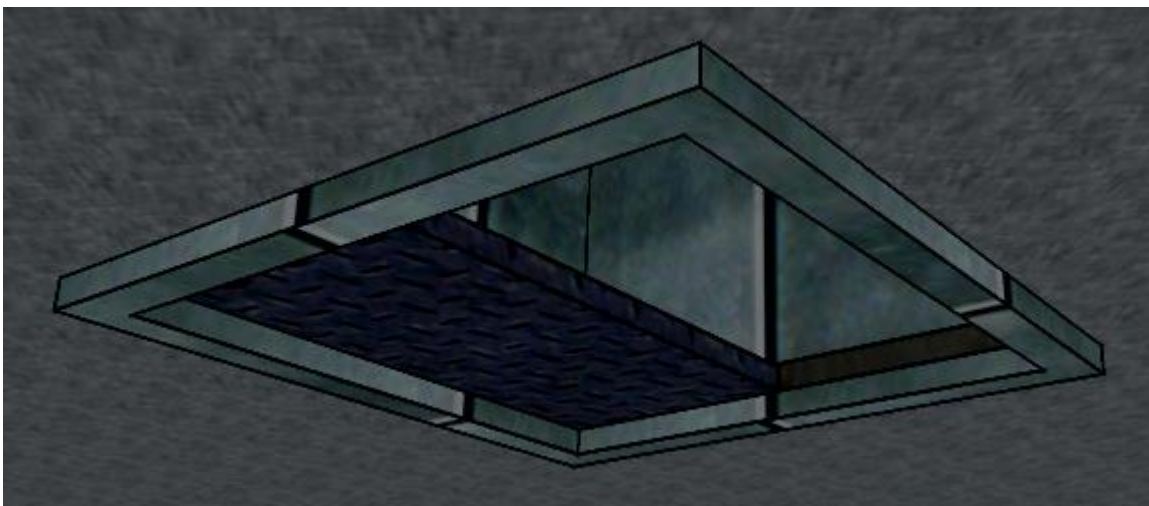


Figure 10: Ceiling Hatch sliding open



Figure 11: Exploding Barrel

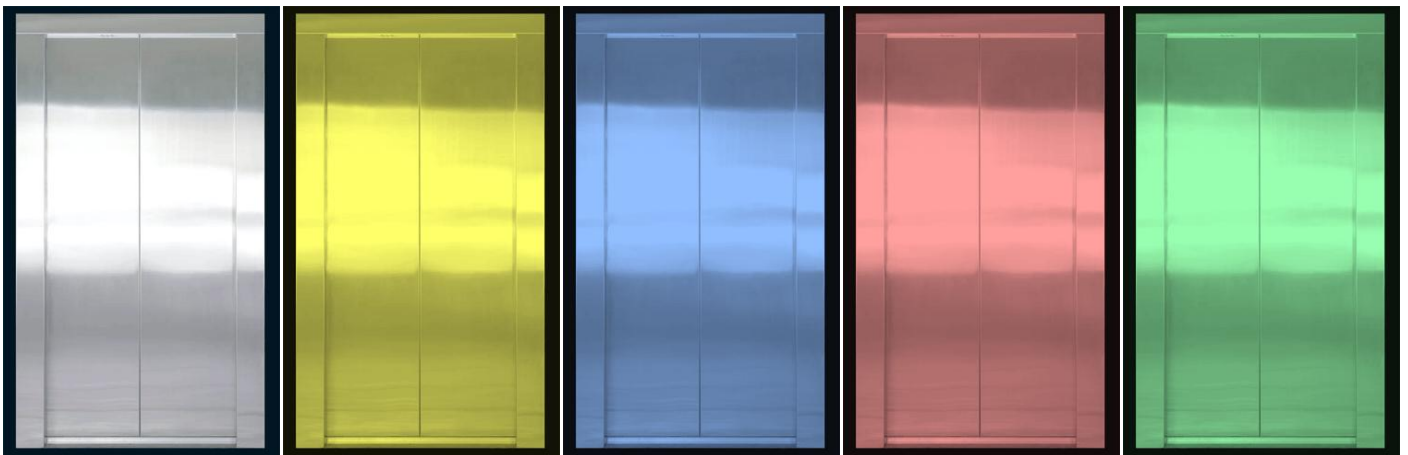


Figure 12: Sliding Steel Doors. (Doors vary in color for Simon doors)

- Characters/Vehicles



Figure 13: Face on screen uses Preacher model at extreme close-up to conceal identity, and the illusion of a unique character.



Figure 14: Man Hacks Drop from Ceiling hatches



## AREA 2: BRICK-BREAK-OUT

### TEXT DESCRIPTION:

The next metallic room is slightly more ornate than the first. The metal wall panels jut out stronger and more frequently than the first. A single giant monitor stands over a small "Combine Ball Spawner" carved into a hole in the wall underneath it. A metal pedestal stands in front of the giant monitor with two buttons pointing right and left. The giant monitor displays an image of the next room from above to make it appear as if it were a brick breaker video game. The walls in the room with the giant man-made blocks contrast the first two rooms with metal panels riveted together in a disorderly, yet completely functional pattern.

### VISUAL REFERENCES

- Terrain/Vegetation: None
- Models/Architecture



Figure 15: Right and Left Arrow Button Style.



Figure 16: Pedestal holding Right/Left Buttons



Figure 17: Combine Energy Ball



Figure 18: Giant Colored blocks in Brick-Breaker room. Corners and edges slightly distorted to seem manufactured.



Figure 19: Combine Energy Ball and Ball Spawner.

- Textures/Lighting



Figure 20: Metallic wall structures in "Paddle Control Room". Metal Slats jut out more frequently than the first room



Figure 21: Metal walls in room with colored Break-Out Blocks. Panels riveted together in a disorderly, yet functional pattern

- Characters/Vehicles: None

## AREA 3: LET'S CHOOSE A DOOR

## TEXT DESCRIPTION:

The final room stands unfinished as if the Game Master never expected anyone to make it this far through his puzzle rooms. Some of the walls look like the same metallic construction of the previous rooms, however other sections of the walls reveal the stone cave walls behind them. Wooden Support Beams intersect revealing the hidden layers behind the previous rooms' architecture. The largest of all the monitors covers the wall opposite the 3 doors almost entirely. Wooden shelves in each corner of the room hold various tools used in the construction process. Shovels, wrenches and circular saw blades clutter the shelves. Along one wall, three colorful doors stand indicate the Game Master's attempt to make this room resemble a game show.

## VISUAL REFERENCES

- Terrain/Vegetation: None
- Models/Architecture

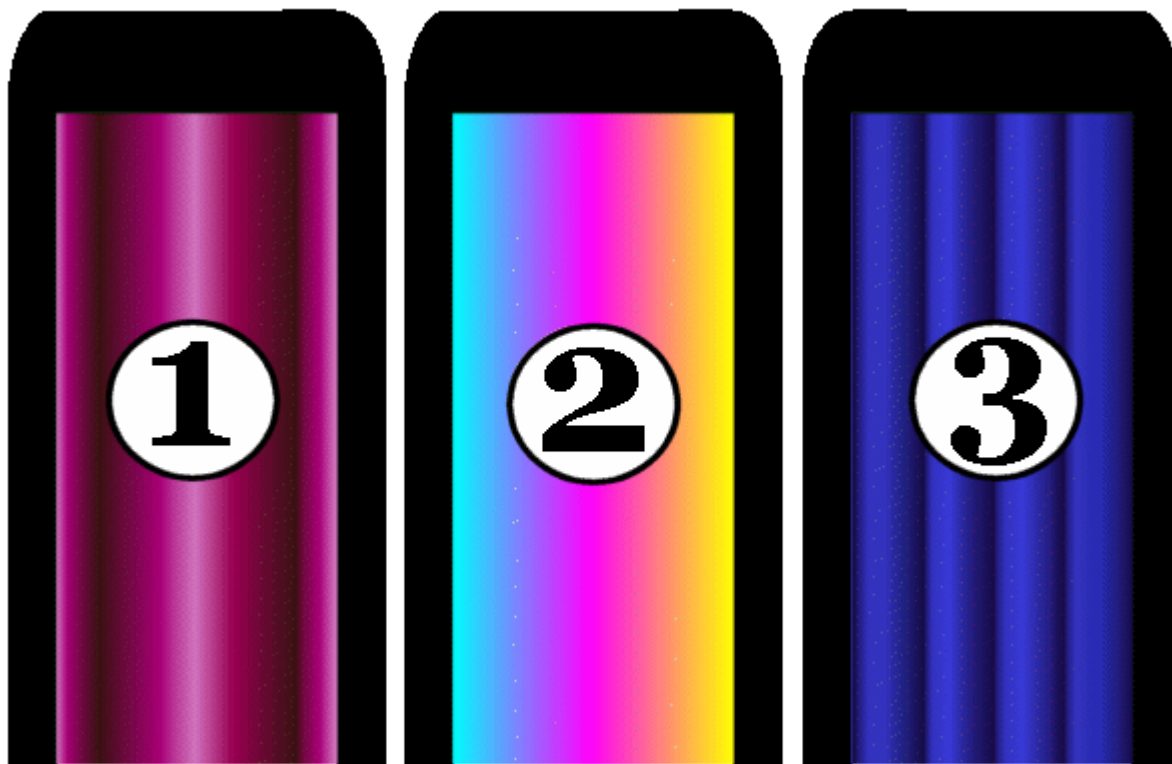


Figure 22: Numbered Doors Styled like a game show



Figure 23: Wooden Shelving Units



Figure 24: Pliers on shelf



Figure 25: Wrench on shelf





Figure 26: Shovel leaning against shelf



Figure 27: Circular Saw Blade on shelf



Figure 28: Wooden support beams against rock wall represent the unfinished sections of wall in the 3 Door Room

---

## LEVEL OBJECTIVES

- Primary:
  - Complete the Simon Puzzle by stepping on the floor panels in the correct order to unlock the door to the next room.
  - Use the Gravity Gun to launch a combine energy ball at colored blocks using the moving platform controls to limit the number of enemy encounters.
  - Open 3 doors and defeat the zombies within them by throwing tools with the Gravity Gun
- Secondary: Defeat enemies that drop from the ceiling hatches.
- Bonus: None
- Hidden: None

## CHALLENGE HIGHLIGHTS

---

### COMBAT

- Use the Gravity Gun to throw Man-Hacks when making an error in the puzzles.
- Use Tools cluttered about the final room to defeat zombies.

---

### STEALTH

- None

---

### PUZZLES

- Step on the colored floor panels in the correct order to unlock passage.
- Use the Gravity Gun to launch a combine energy ball at colored blocks using the moving platform controls

---

### CONVERSATION

- The Game Master introduces his lair of game challenges.
- The Game Master hints towards the objective of the Simon Puzzle.
- The Game Master heckles Gordon upon making mistakes in puzzles and steers him towards the correct course of action
- The Game Master plays game show host daring Gordon to open the three doors.
- The Game Master explains to Gordon the story behind his insanity and allows Gordon to leave through the hidden elevator.

## BOSS BATTLES

---

- None

## WOW MOMENTS

- Moment 1 (Area 1.2): Playing the unique Simon Puzzle
- Moment 2 (Area 2.2): Stepping through the giant room of bricks as the colored bricks explode.
- Moment 3 (Area 3): The Giant Monitor dwarfs Gordon in the final unfinished game show room.

## ACTORS

---

### PLAYER

- Model: None (First Person Perspective reveals only the hands and weapon carried)
- Inventory: Gordon carries only the base Physics Cannon
- Start Location: Inside the elevator
- Motives/Objectives: Escape. Survive the Game Master's deadly games.

---

## KEY ACTORS

---

### MAN-HACKS

---

- Model: npc\_manhack
- Inventory: none
- Motives/Objectives: hack the player into tiny little pieces
- Starting Location: concealed ceiling hatches in Area 1.2 and 2.1

---

### HEAD-CRAB ZOMBIES

---

- Model: npc\_zombie
- Inventory: attached headcrab
- Motives/Objectives: Devour the player's brains
- Starting Location: Behind doors #1, #2, and door #3

---

### THE MYSTERIOUS GAME MASTER

---

- Model:npc\_monk (only extreme close-up in monitor)
- Inventory: none
- Motives/Objectives: taunt the player over speakers and monitor system dropping clues to the critical path objectives
- Uses Within Level: Verbally defines player objective

---

## SUPPORTING ACTORS

None

## USER INTERFACE

### PRE-GAME INFORMATION

- Text on Screen
  - You discover an elevator in the caves under Ravenholm. Perhaps it's a shortcut to the surface.

### IN-GAME INFORMATION

- Introduction:
  - Voice speaks in game as a TV Monitor bursts to life. The extreme close-up of a strange man speaks.
- Conclusion:
  - Upon leaving the exit elevator, the screen fades black except for text that reads, "GAME OVER"
- Objectives: (see detailed game walkthrough for dialogue)
  - Game Master describes first Puzzle.
  - Game Master speaks when player makes errors in puzzles.
  - Game Master hosts a gameshow telling the player to open the three doors.

### POST GAME INFORMATION

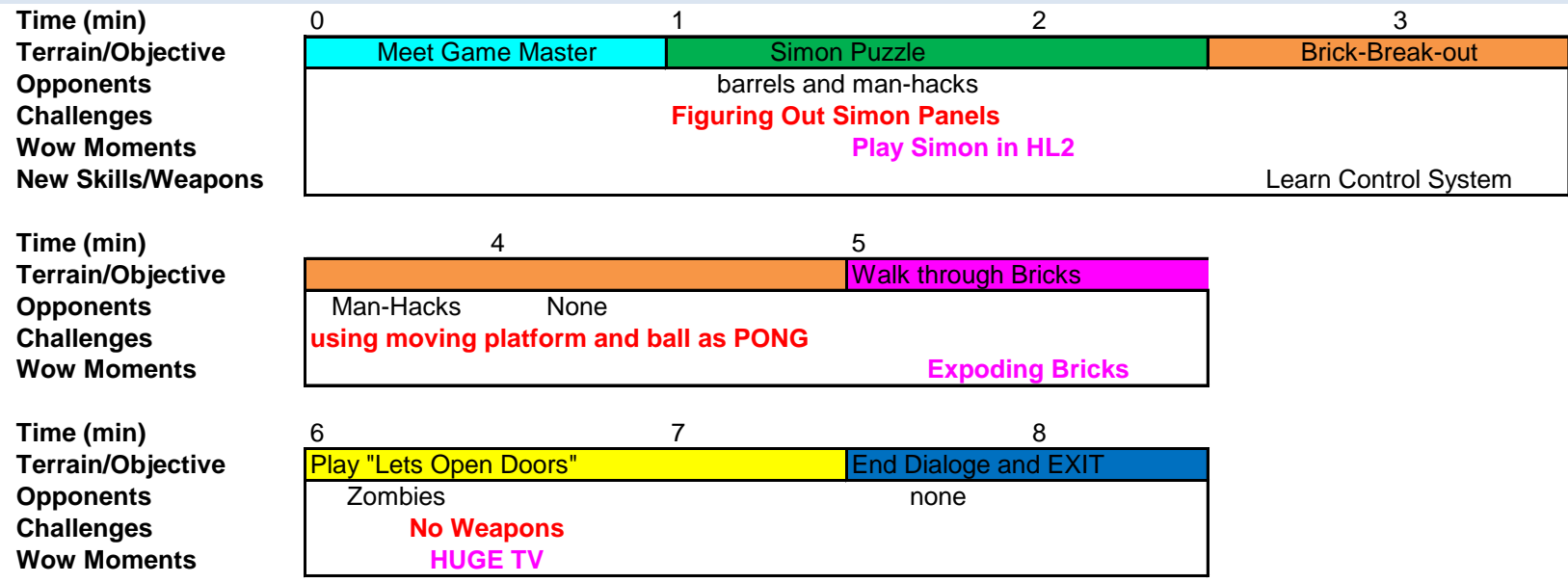
- Debriefing:
  - None
- Stats:
  - None

### HUD ELEMENTS

- Normal Elements Used
  - Health
  - Shield
  - Ammo (none. only gravity gun that holds no ammo)
  - Text
- Special Elements Required
  - None

**GAMEPLAY DETAILS**

**LEVEL PROGRESSION CHART**



Legend
1 square = 30 seconds
Exiting Elevator
Area 1.2
Area 2.1
Area 2.2
Area 3
End Dialoge and EXIT
Challenge Highlight
Wow Moment
New Weapon/Skill

## GAMEPLAY MECHANICS

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### PREREQUISITE SKILLS:

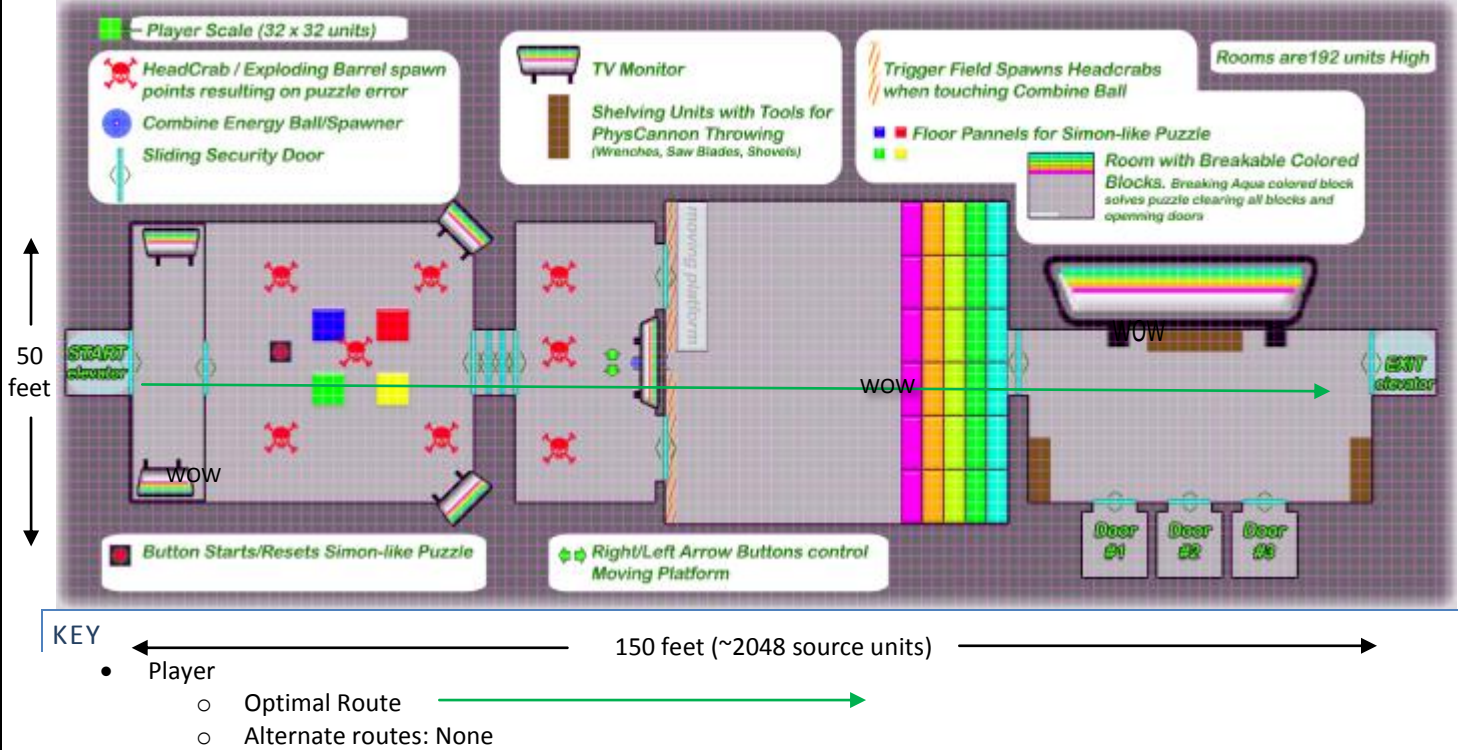
- Familiarity with the Physics Cannon, including pull and push
- Run
- Jump
- Dodge
- Use Button/Open Door

### SKILLS LEARNED

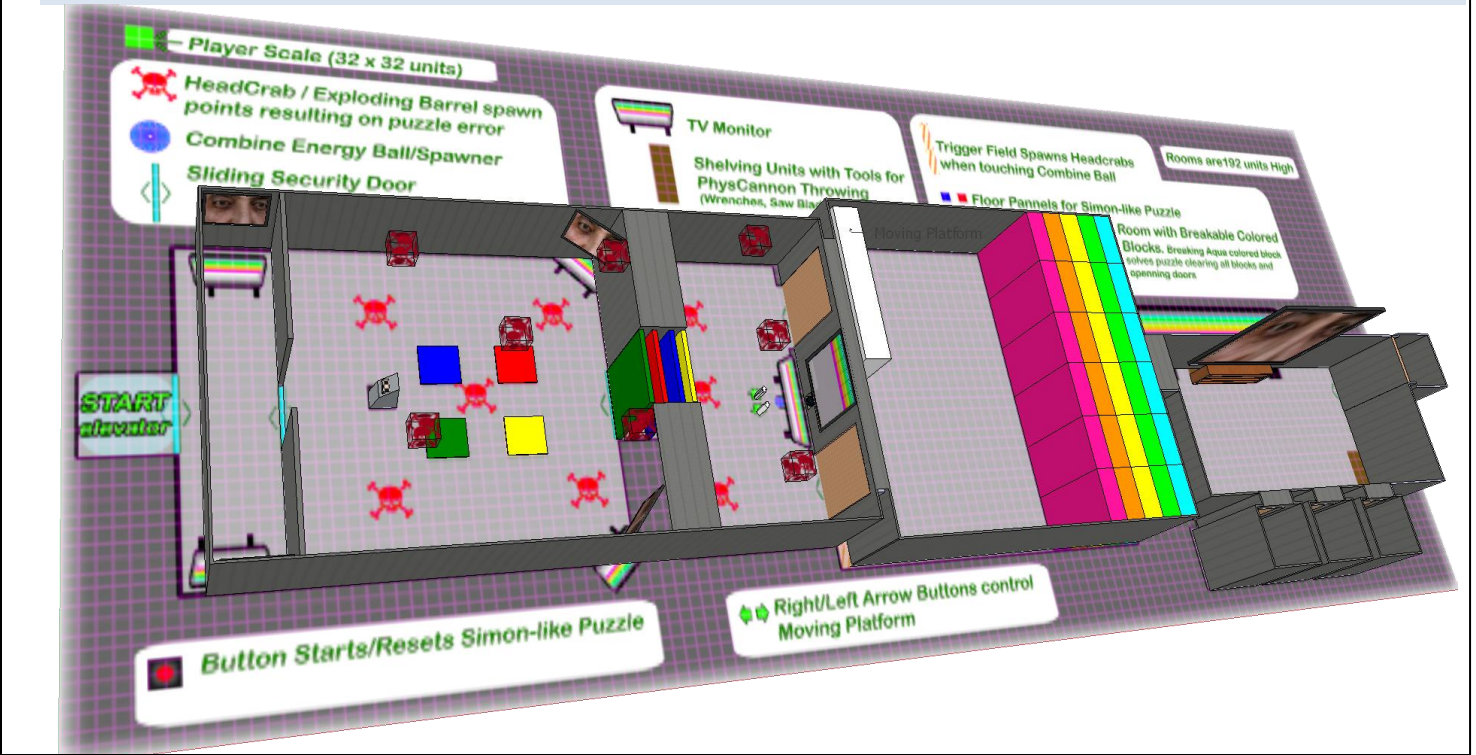
- Activating floor panels by walking over them
- Pushing the energy ball with physics cannon
- Using a moving platform to reflect an energy ball over an in-game TV Monitor



### OVERHEAD LEVEL MAP WITH KEY



### 3D LEVEL MAP SKETCH



## AREA 1.1

## MAP

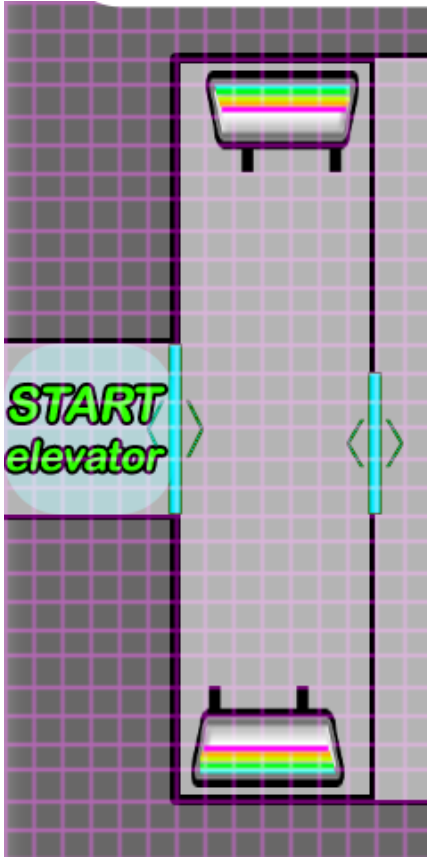


Figure 29: Area 1.1 (2D Top view)

## GAMEPLAY

- Walk out of the elevator and the Game Master invites you into his Puzzle Lair
- Encounters
  - Game Master Speaks on Screen
- Challenges
  - None

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## DIALOG

- The Game Master speaks all dialogue
  - "Oooooohhhh. We have a visitor do we?"
  - "Come to play a game have we? It's been such a long time. I've set up a wonderful playroom now and it's almost finished. You are the first to visit. I am sure you will be pleased. I am almost completely finished. Well. The first two rooms are finished. If you're alive by the time you get to the last room, perhaps you can suggest decorations. Go on. Go inside now."

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## VISUAL REFERENCES



Figure 30: Game Master Make his appearance on the monitor

## AREA 1.2

## MAP

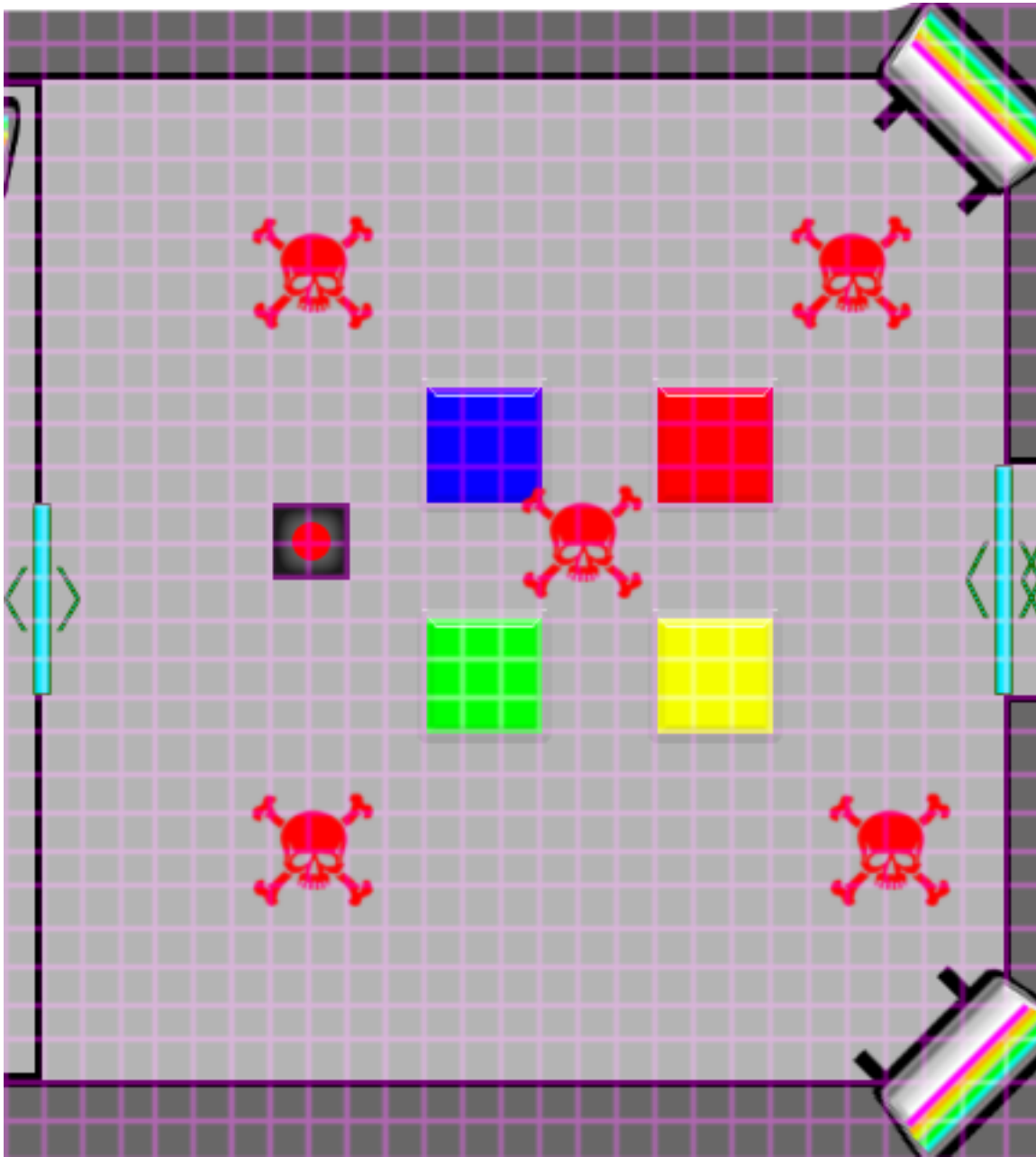


Figure 31: Top view section 1.2 (Simon Puzzle and hatch spawn points)

## GAMEPLAY

- Press the button then repeat the pattern by stepping on the colored panels in the same order.
- Dodge Exploding Barrels and throw man-hack as they fall from hatches if Gordon steps on the panels out of sequence.

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## DIALOG

- “Are you ready?”
- “I’ve been waiting for some time for a play-mate. See that door on the other side of the room? I think you want to go through it. Yes. Yes, you don’t want to stay in here too long. Go on. Go on. Go through the door.”
- “Ahh Ahh Ahhh. Tisk tisk. Simon didn’t say.”
- “You’ll have to prove to me that you respect Simon. You remember Simon don’t you? I hope you remember something. You’ll have to remember something if you expect that door to open. Step on that Colorful Panel there and prove that you can remember something and maybe that door will open for you.”
- “Oh alright... Simon says push the button. Repeat the sequence and walk through the door.”
- “Yes yes, Simon says all of that.”
- “Oh didn’t I tell you? You don’t want to step on the pretty colors in the wrong order. We don’t think Simon would like that.”
- “Grraagghlsnargle!!!! I made it too easy!! That’s what I get for practicing it on zombies!!”

VISUAL REFERENCES

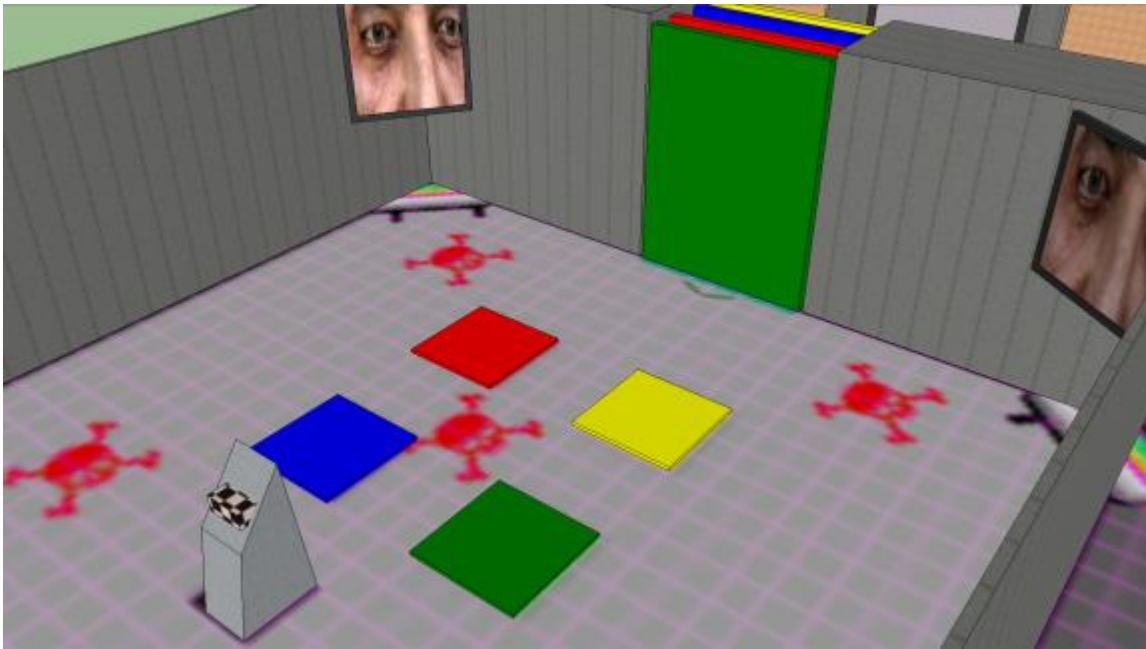


Figure 32: Colored Floor panels open the colored doors

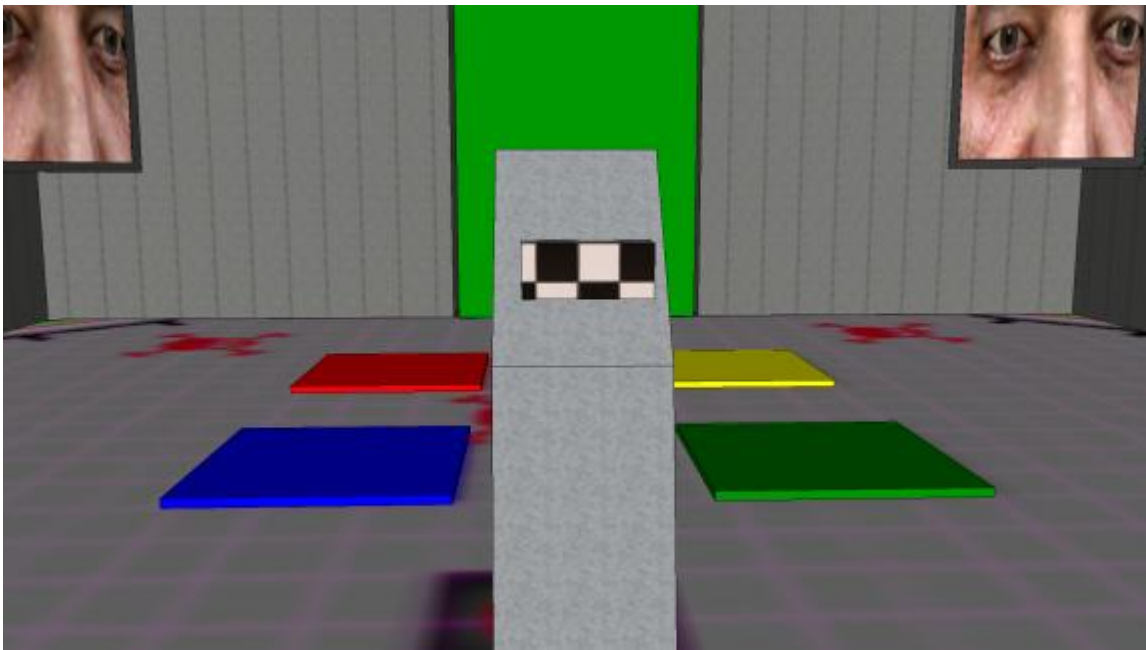


Figure 33: Button to start sequence

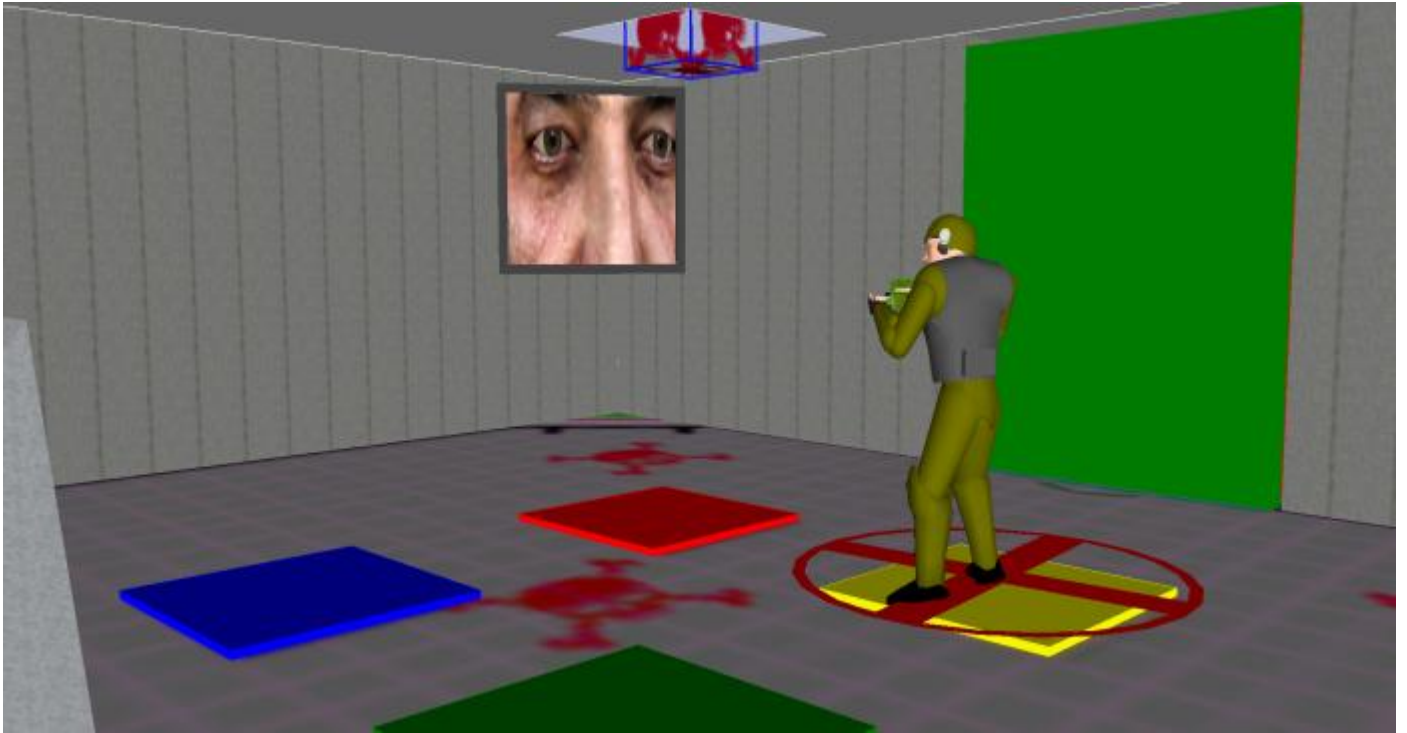


Figure 34: Step on a panel out of order and Barrels or Man-Hacks fall from above.

## AREA 2.1

## MAP

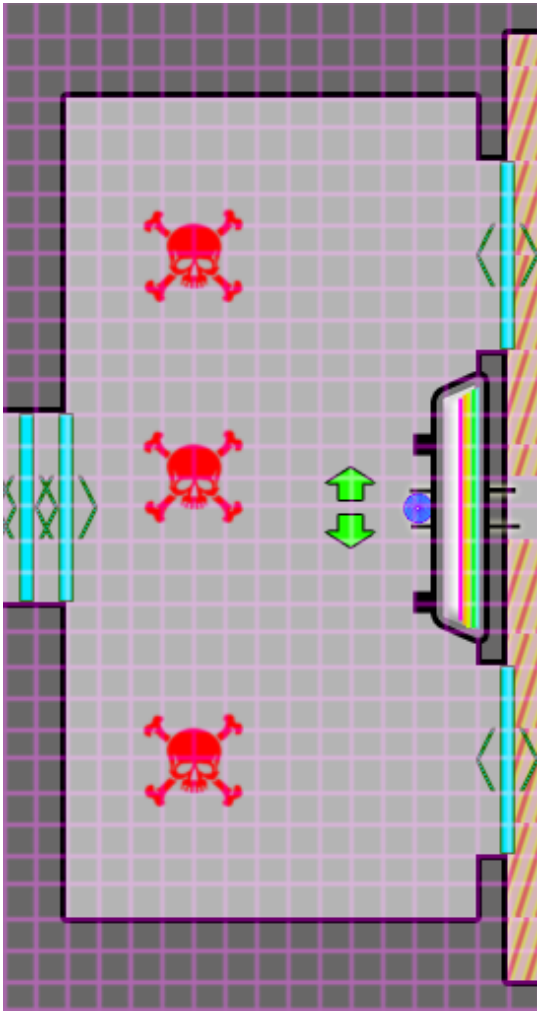


Figure 35: Area 2.1

## GAMEPLAY

- Use gravity Gun to push the energy ball through the hole.
- Press right and left buttons to keep ball in play.



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**DIALOG**

- “Push some buttons.. see the paddle move?”
- “You’ve got a fancy gun don’t you? I bet you can push that ball with it”
- “Stop Breaking my BLOCKS!!!. Ha ha ha (grumblemumble)”

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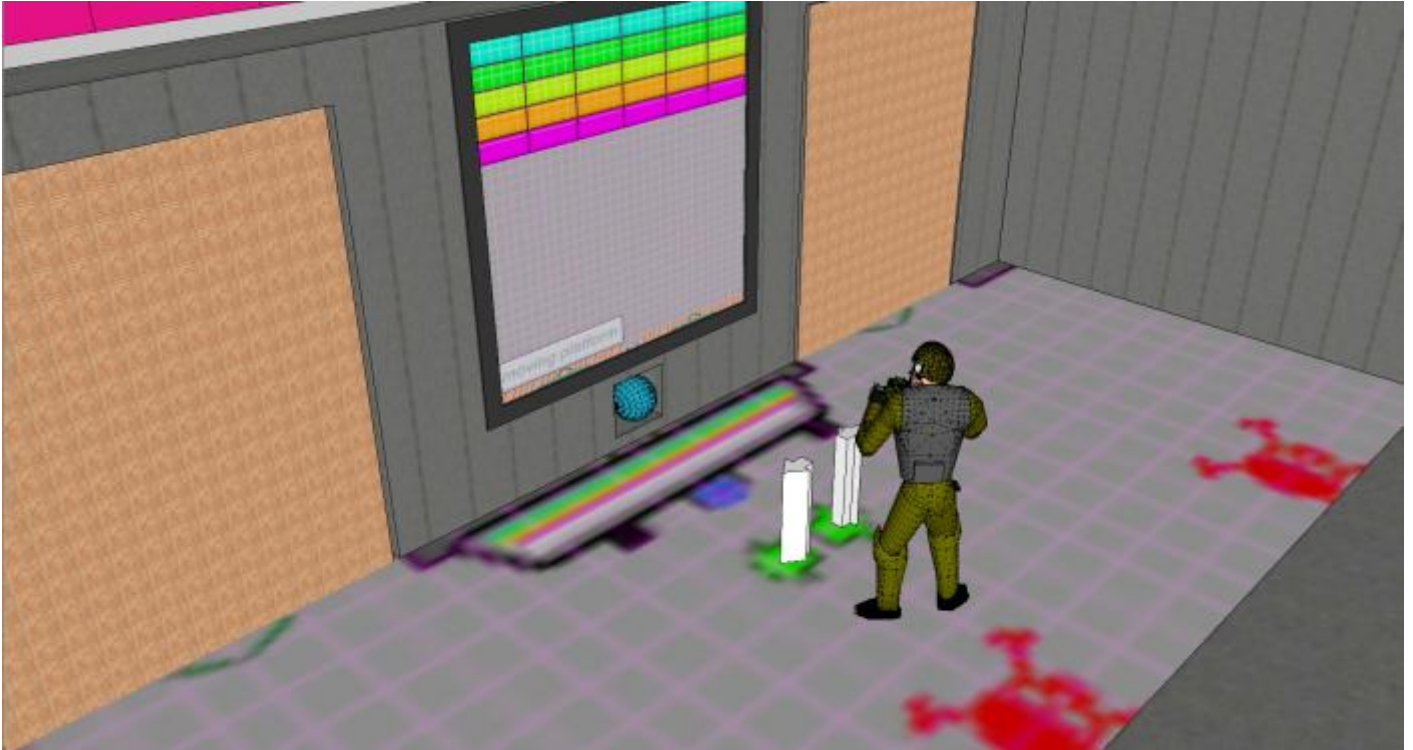
**VISUAL REFERENCES**

Figure 36: Use buttons in front of monitor to move platform keeping ball in play

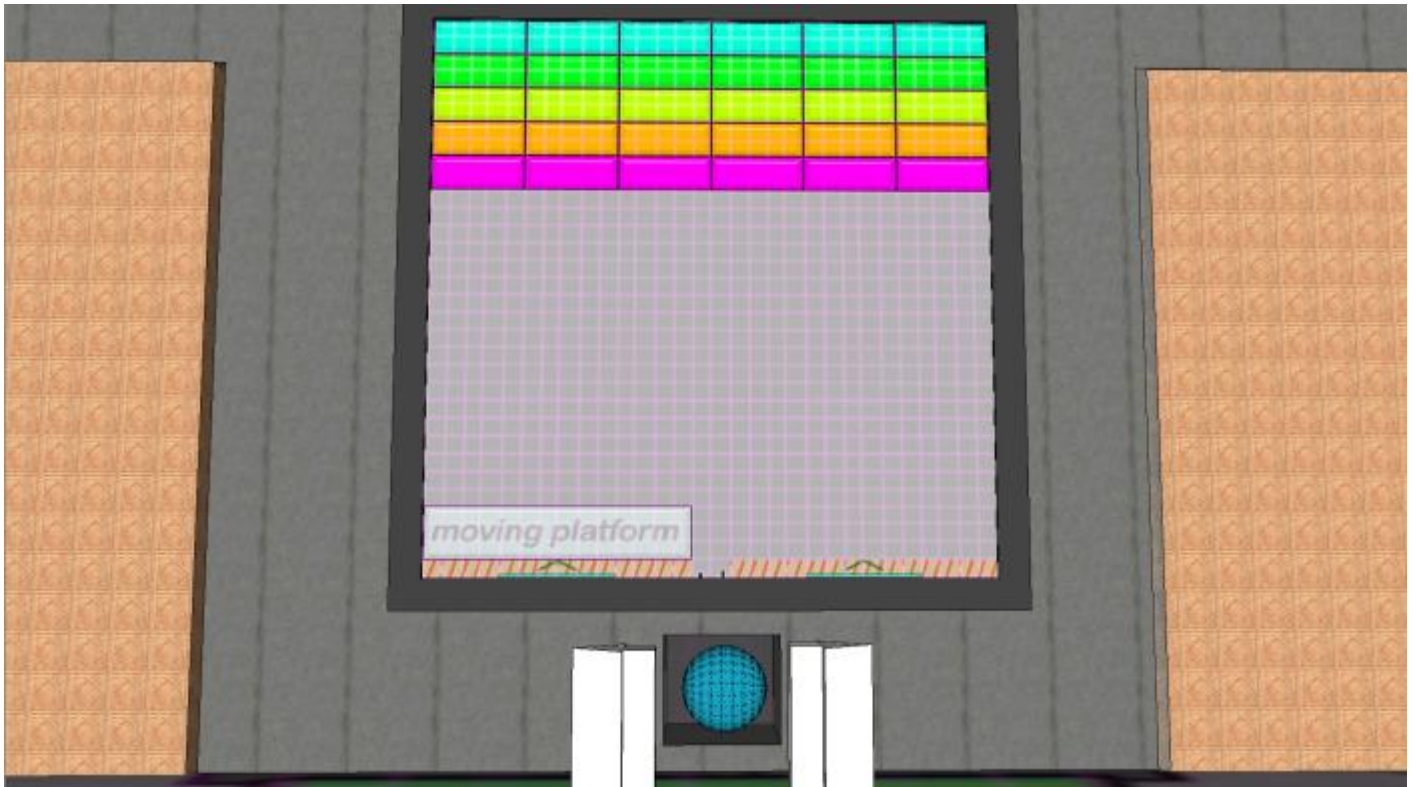


Figure 37: Push Ball under monitor into play to break the bricks

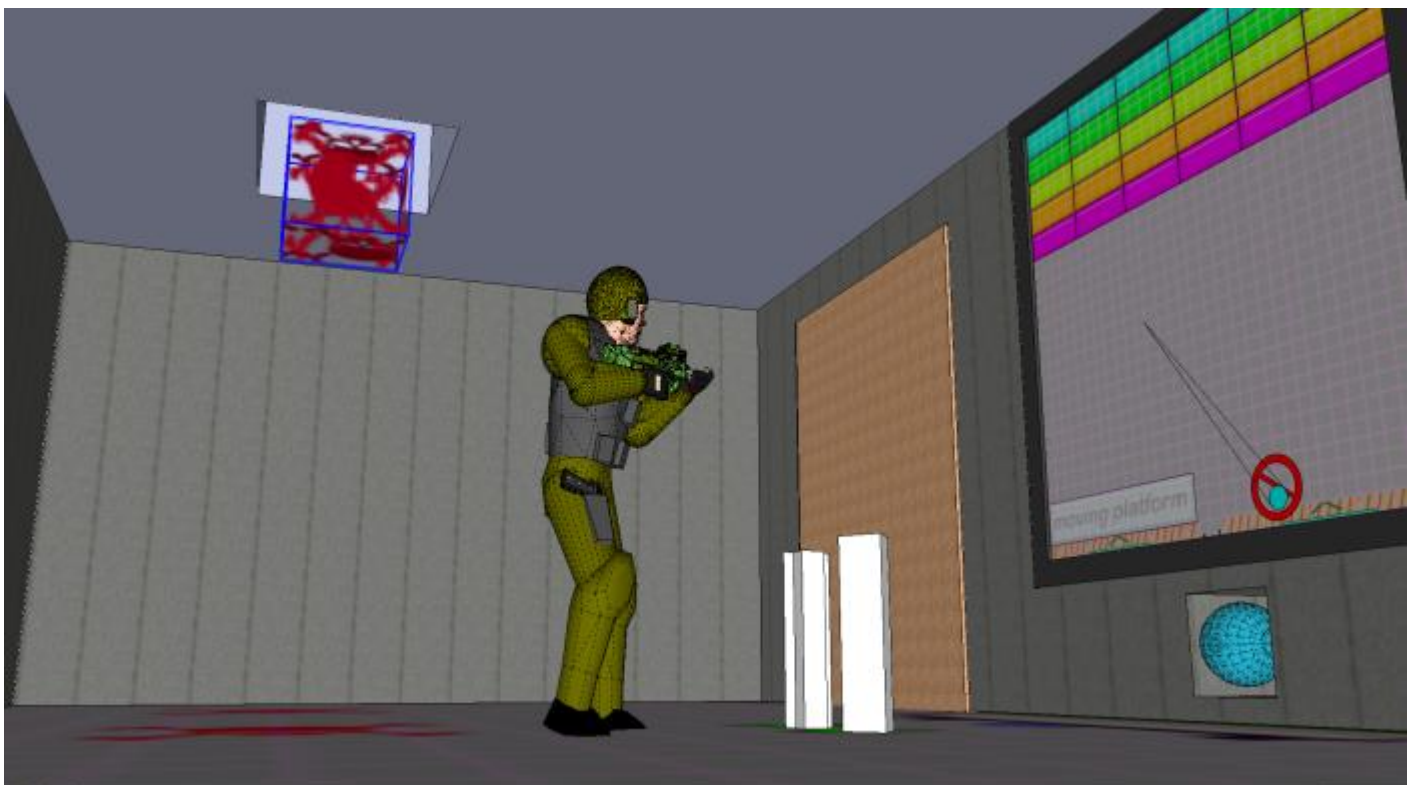


Figure 38: If the paddle does not reflect the ball, Man-Hacks dive out of ceiling hatches.

## AREA 2.2

## MAP

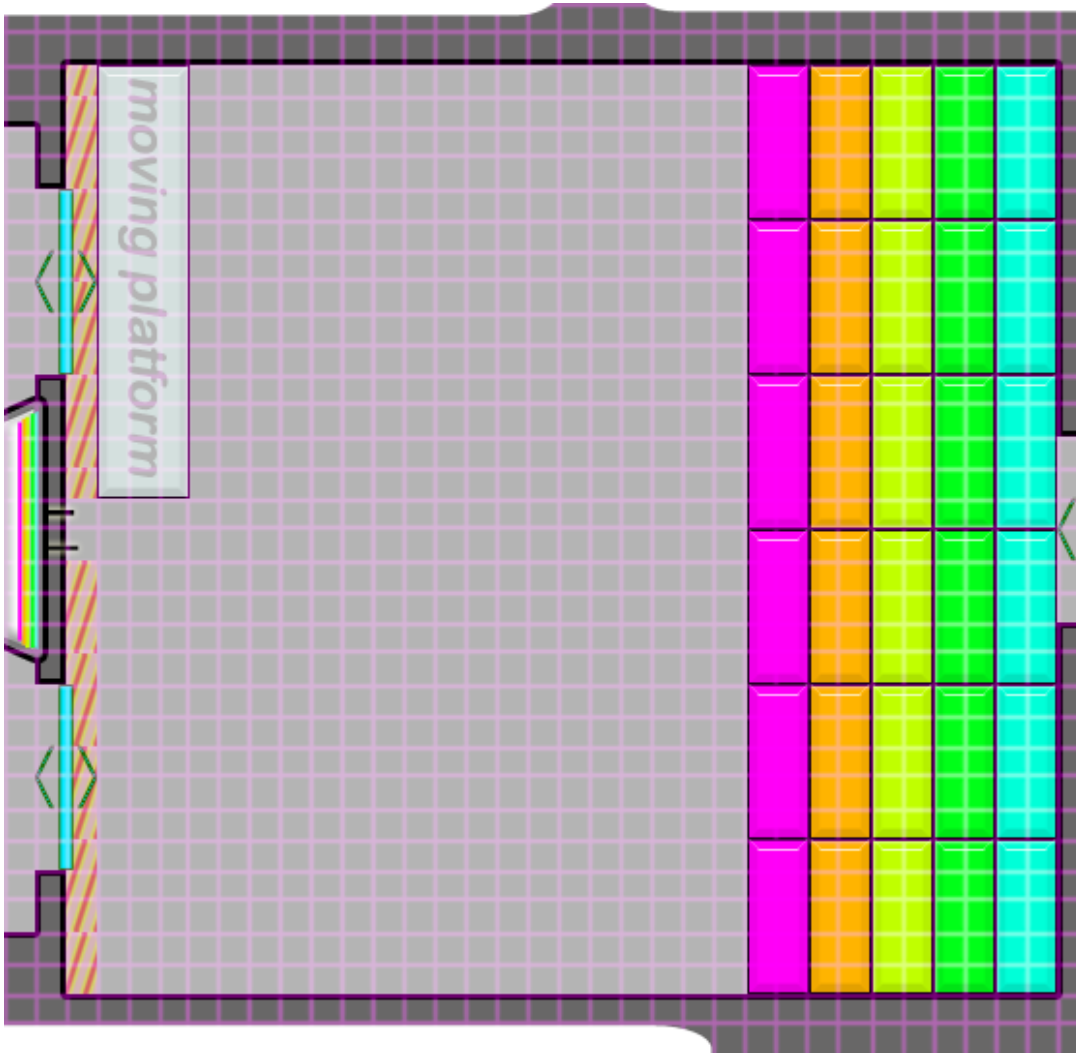


Figure 39: Area 2.2

## GAMEPLAY

- After breaking through to the Blue Blocks, this area opens.
- Walk through to the opposite door as blocks explode all around.

## DIALOG

- “How Dare You Destroy my pretty BLOCKS!!!”

VISUAL REFERENCES

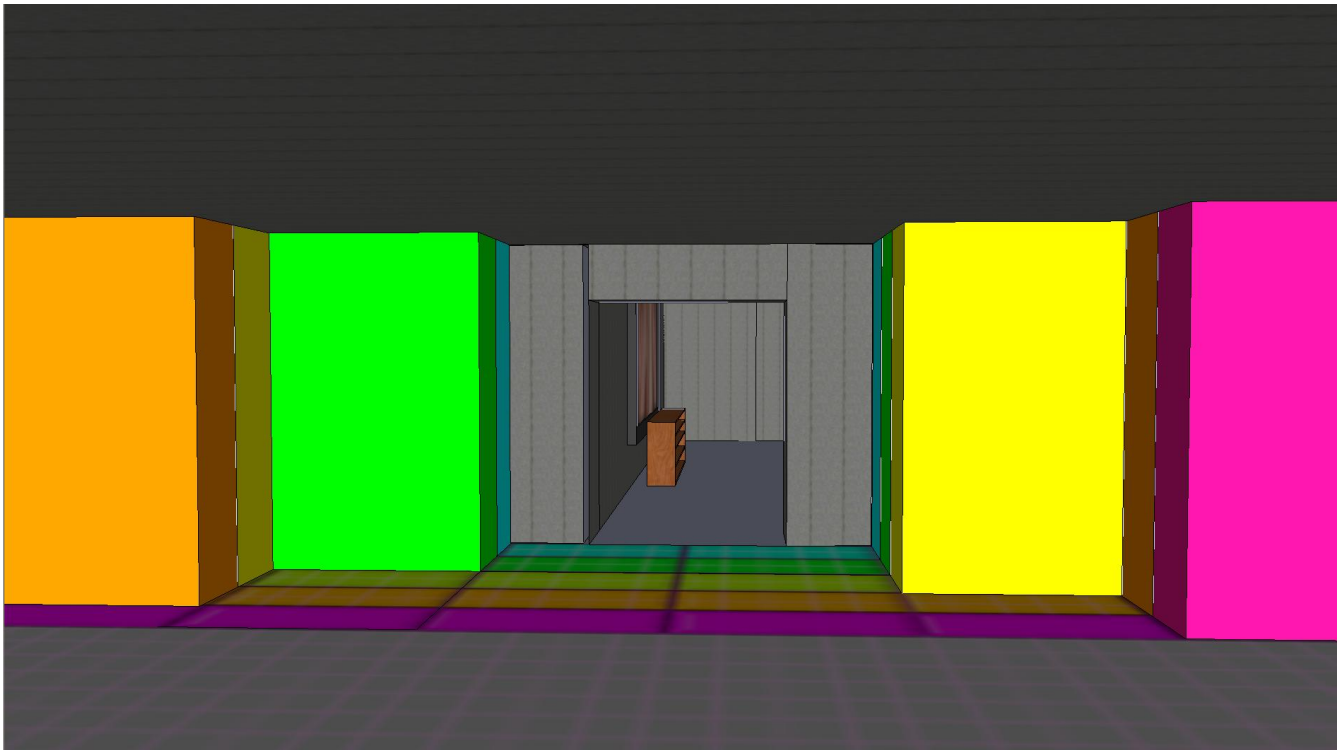


Figure 40: View of colored blocks walking through to final room



Figure 41: Area 2.1 and 2.2

## AREA 3

## MAP



Figure 42: Area 3

## GAMEPLAY

- Open Doors one at a time and defeat the zombies inside using the gravity gun to throw items off wooden shelving units.
- After Defeating all zombies and head-crabs that fall from them, the Game Master opens the elevator allowing exit.

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## DIALOG

Game Master voice:

- “Pick a Door, Any Door, Go ahead.” Maybe there’s a car inside. Who knows?”
- “Oh not that door... hahahah. Try another.”
- “Well well well. I’m impressed. Thanks for playing. I needed that. Sorry, ever since the combine took my beautiful daughters from me I’ve gone a bit mad in here all alone. Maybe I’ve taken this game too far.”
- “oh alright Mr Feeman. Yes. Yes. I know who you are. Go ahead. Be on your way then. Say Hi to Dog for me next time you see him. Yes Yes. I know about him too. Be on your way now. Game over. Be gone with you”

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## VISUAL REFERENCES



Figure 43: # Doors with Big Numbers on them

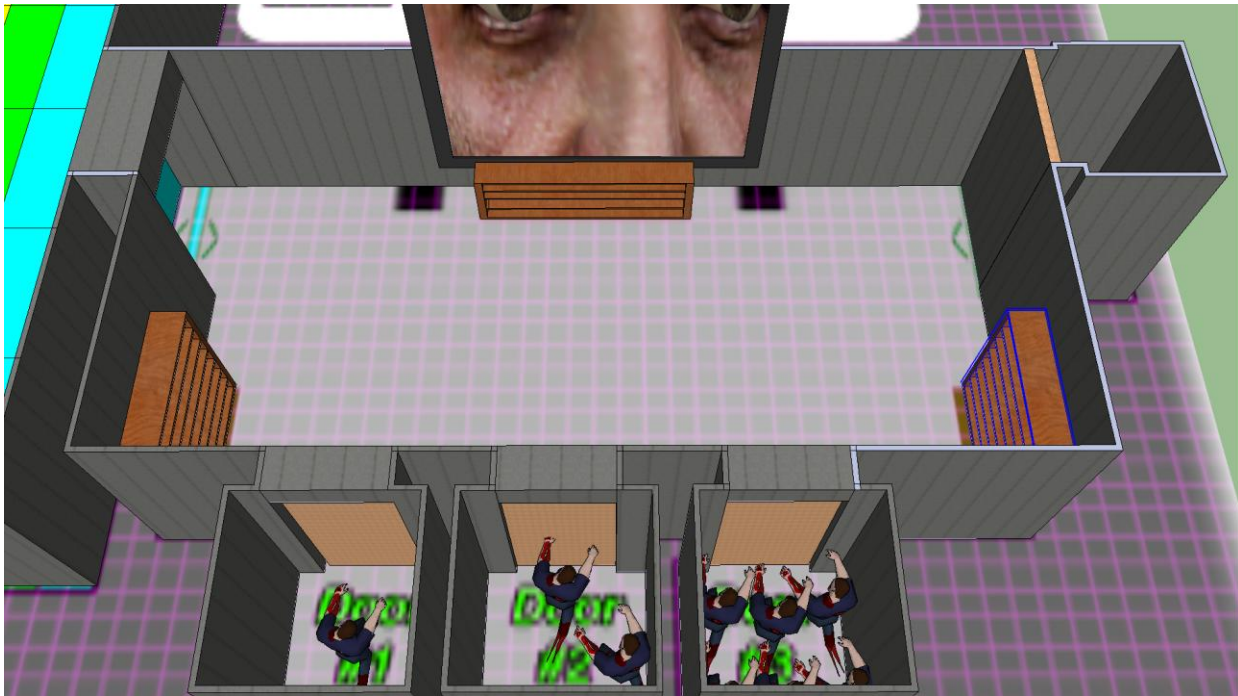


Figure 44: Zombies wait behind every door



Figure 45: Use gravity Gun and throw tools from shelves at zombies as they pour out of doorways

## 4 QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### WHY IS IT FUN?

Getting to play Simon and Pong inside of Half-Life 2 is a rewarding experience. Half-Life 2's strengths revolve around its great use of physics. Throwing the gravity ball is fun. Interacting with the way it bounces having some control over that in a nostalgic gameplay style adds to the already fun and engaging element.

### WHY IS IT MEMORABLE OR INTERESTING?

The Game Master's Lair plays off the nostalgia from classic memorable games and packages them together in one mini-level revolved around integrating them into a modern three-dimensional game realm. The child-like puzzle games carry a dissonant value into the gameplay experience. The level tightrope walks the line between emersion and blatantly pointing out the fact that the player is "playing a game".

### HOW DOES THE LEVEL COMMUNICATE GAMEPLAY TO THE PLAYER?

The Mysterious Game Master character acts as the primary guide to the level's objectives. Additionally, the layout and linear flow play an equally important role communicating this to the player. For every room the player walks into, The Game Master's voice drops clues through his taunting over the speaker systems and monitors. The rooms lock the player inside and prevent access to the next room until he completes the puzzle; there is no area for the player to get lost. The puzzles are familiar to most, and the design expects that some players will figure the puzzles out with no need of instruction.

### HOW CAN IT BE BROKEN?

The player may never figure it out from the clues, hints and may not know the games the level replicates. The player may notice that stepping on different panels drop different kinds of enemies in the Simon room and assume the different enemies dropping are part of the solution. The Game Master's indirect clues need to help the player while taunting him. The longer the player stays in one room before moving to the next, the Game Master clues become increasingly instructive and less taunting. The "reset" button for the Simon puzzle plays the correct sequence of panels to step across. It is the biggest clue to solving the puzzle and the only button in the room.

During the pong puzzle room, it may be difficult to figure out how the paddle interaction and launching the ball into play work together. It is possible for the player to launch the ball, step back, and defeat the Man-Hacks that spawn repeatedly until eventually breaking through to the deepest level of blocks. This is not the intended experience; however, it still unlocks passage to the next room.