

Final Environment - Seven Springs

Over the weekend we finished up our last environment, which shows the main resort building for Seven Springs during an autumn sunset. We used warm reds to give variety to the color palette.

While the resulting picture looks fantastic here, our lead artist is concerned about how the trees obscure the building when parallax scrolling during the game itself. So we will most likely revisit this environment after Soft Opening and make some adjustments.



Here's our complete set of environments all together:



User Interface

Here's our user interface. We wanted it to be colorful and inviting, with ice-themed buttons that look rounded and fun to press.

The size and placement of the buttons are meant to direct the player's attention so that on each screen they press the button we hope they will press. For example, the Play Again button on the death screen (bottom right corner) is located near the player's right thumb and is larger and more attention grabbing than the Back to Main Menu button on the left. This, of course, is because we hope they will keep playing!



God is in the Details

Since we are preparing a game for release, rather than just making a proof of concept or prototype, we felt it was really important to leave ourselves enough time to attend to small details that make a game feel rich and engaging.

This includes fine tuning of the controls, great sound effects, and highly polished art. We've used particles such as falling snow, sparkles for when you collect bones, and dust that trails behind the snowball to give the environment more texture and the player's actions more juicy feedback.

The effects that accompany our speed boost mechanic are a great example of this. When the player picks up our boost power-up (made to look like Seven's dog collar), there is a dazzling flash of light, Seven begins cycling through a series of rainbow colors, and the snowball whizzes forward, knocking obstacles out of its path with a satisfying thunk.



Prep for Softs

This coming Monday, the ETC faculty will go around to each project room in a tradition called Soft Opening. This name comes from themed entertainment when an attraction is opened for initial viewing but not yet accessible to the full public. At the ETC, Softs provides the faculty with the chance to see each project's work up close and give feedback based on their hands-on experience of the product.

Around this time, each team also makes a three-minute video and a thirty-second video to give a brief description of the project. These are now viewable from our website.