

# Better @GameDev Today

**A Practical Guide to level up your  
Game Development skills**

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**By Buvesa Game Development**

# Be Welcome

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## Introduction

Hello and welcome to  
'Better @GameDev Today'

This E-book is addressed to my younger self and might serve as a helpful guide for you as well. As a starting developer, the path to developing games can be quite challenging.

Therefore, this guide can be a useful stepping stone so you can get practical in the future. Without further ado, let's get started!



@BuvesaGameDevelopment

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## Get into the GameDev mindset

Developing games is a dream for many people. So it was for me, too. But make no mistake. It can also be quite a challenge. Many start it, only to realize they had completely misjudged the scope of the process. Even before you start, I want to give you a realistic view and related tips so you don't give up right away. You will have to create a GameDev mindset.

Although it sometimes looks like a challenge, it is definitely worth learning! Game development is a unique way to show your creativity to the world. It contains many aspects and leaves a certain impression.

The game industry is already huge and only promises to grow further. There are tremendous opportunities and satisfaction in this. Choosing game development can guarantee a bright future.

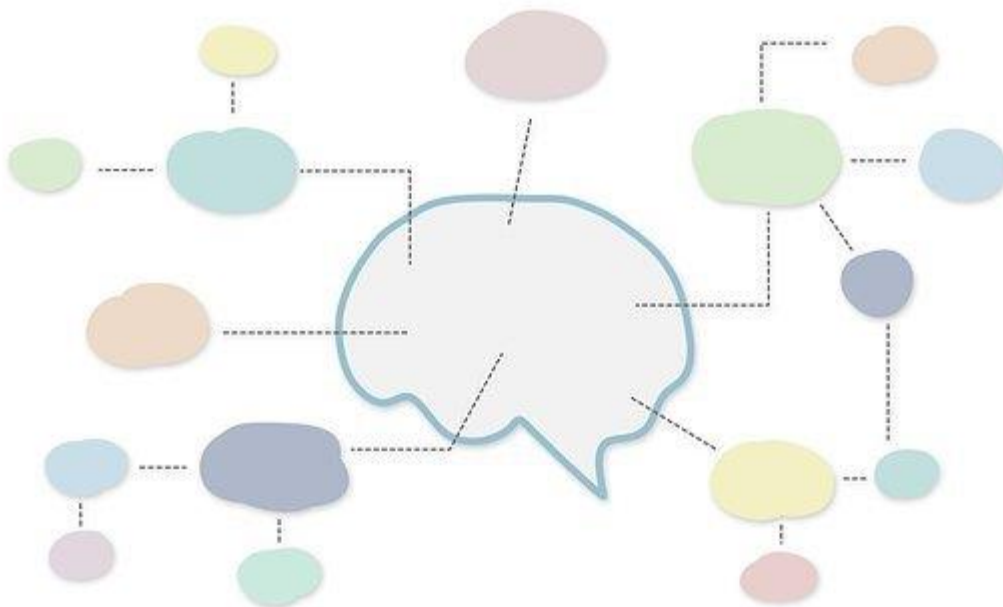
The gamedev mindset, in my opinion, has to do mostly with the points we are going to touch on further in this e-book. First and foremost, you will have to be willing to remain a student. By that I mean that this is a field that is constantly evolving. New technology and updates appear frequently and you will have to keep up with them.

## Get into the GameDev mindset

Also, an indie game developer is someone who must be of many trades. You will be responsible for different roles. In the big game companies, this is already a bit more specialized. But you eventually start learning multiple aspects.

In doing so, you will also need to be flexible. Developing your dream game right away won't be in the cards for many in the beginning. You will have to be patient and persistent.

If you can handle all this, game development is definitely something within your capabilities. With this e-book I also want to give you further insight into how you can get started and get better. The message is to start with the right mindset and most importantly have fun on your journey. Let's get started!



# Spreading attention

## What to focus on

As a starting game developer, and especially as a solo gamedev, you wear many hats. You still have to learn everything from scratch. In the beginning, you don't even know what you don't know yet. There are many different roles involved in making a new game.

You have to be able to deal with your game development software and its various aspects. But it doesn't stop there. If you want to animate characters by yourself, create models, add detailed landscape height maps, create the music and so on, you will have to master several programs.

My advice is instead of trying to learn everything at once, start with the basics and the most important aspects of your game engine. Learn the basics of the software and start with prototypes.

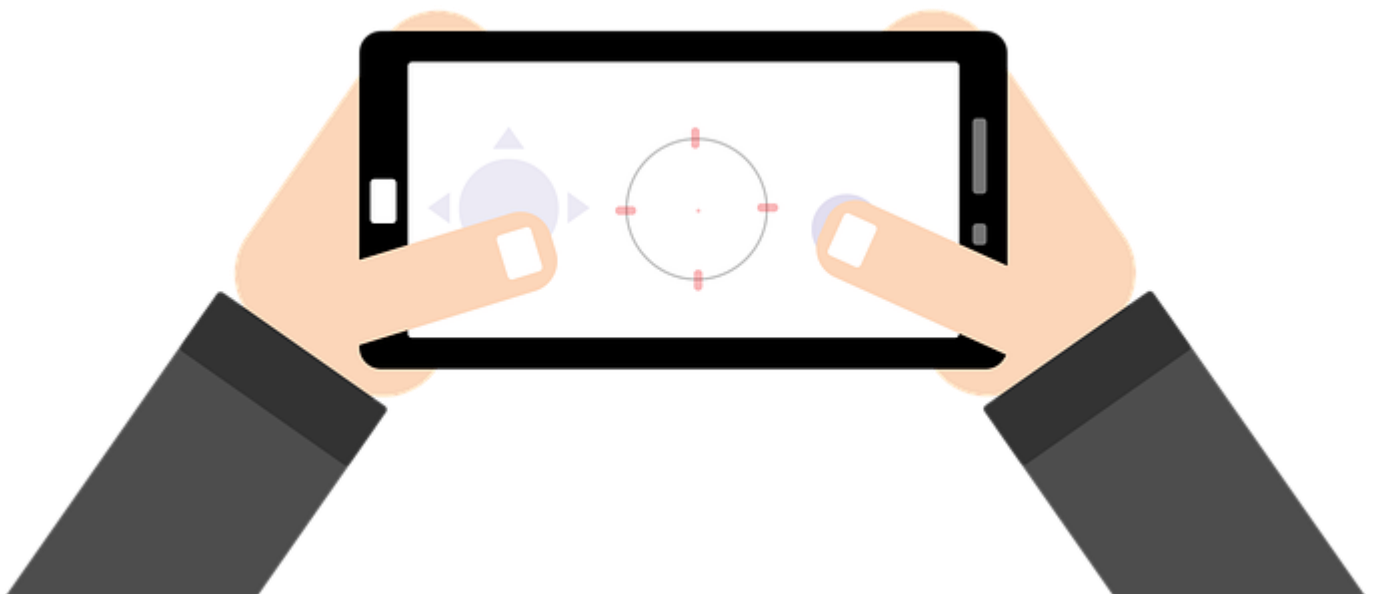
Your first projects should not be beautiful and fully functional finishes. The intention is to try out all kinds of things and dare to fail. The sooner you make small projects, the more you can try out and learn.

# Spreading attention

## What to focus on

If you do want to use models, animations or external tools, you can find free pre-made resources online that you can put into your practice projects. Just be aware that these sometimes come with licensing requirements for commercial use. You should read these carefully first. But for general practice on your own computer, this should not be a problem.

So start with the core components of your game engine. This then covers how to navigate smoothly, use keyboard shortcuts, combine gameplay elements and let them interact with each other, let your character walk around, call up menus and so on. Focus on the basics of one program first. Build on as your skills and ambition grows - over time.





# How to get better at Game Development

## **This is what I'd do if I had to start all over again...**

At first, game development seems overwhelming. Where to start? What programs do you all need? Further research does not always provide much clarification. There are many technical and creative aspects involved.

With the knowledge I have now, I would give the following advice to my former self...

Start with one program. One program you want to become familiar with. That is in most cases your game engine. Later you can learn other programs. But if you want to learn many different programs at once in the beginning, you will eventually master none of them.

In my case, that was Unreal Engine. I switched too often between different game engines, 3D programs and other applications. If I had stayed with the same Game Engine from the beginning, I would have immediately had a stronger foundation to build on.

Online you can find a lot of interesting tutorials to start with. Start with the absolute basics: how to navigate in the program, how to make simple edits, add and so on.

# How to get better at Game Development

Also for Unreal Engine, as an example, you can find great beginner tutorials, where you quickly get a good result. Also on my YouTube channel 'Buvesa Game Development' you can find a lot of beginner tutorials to get you started.

Then it is up to you to choose which direction you want to take and gradually build up your skills. It would be a mistake to follow similar beginner tutorials over and over again. Expand little by little and build on what you have already learned.

The next step is to work on small projects. There are many people who quit because they want to develop their dream game right away and overestimate the complexity and scope of such a project. Start small and complete these small projects. Then make other small projects and so on until eventually you can develop 'bigger games' and even your dream game.

By working on small projects, you will be able to show things and stay motivated. And also try to make different projects. So don't always make the same thing because then you won't learn anything new. Always try to make at least something 1% better than last time.

# How to get better at Game Development

For technical knowledge, you will have to break everything down into small pieces. Find those pieces on YouTube, Google, acquaintances, forums or in the official documentation of your software. The more you work on it, the more problems you will encounter and solve. And that way your knowledge will broaden and you will surprise yourself with what you can eventually achieve.

Start small, simple and gradually build up your knowledge. Break down more difficult parts into smaller achievable pieces and that way you will learn faster, with less chance of giving up.

That's the advice I would give my younger self.



# My indie GameDev workflow

As a sole game creator (indie dev), you will be responsible for the entire game development process. This means you have many different roles and some organization is required.

The advantage is that a particular project does not become fragmented over several people. The disadvantage is that you have to estimate your time and skills very well in advance.

In this chapter I would like to give you my process for getting a finished game. First, you should decide whether you want to develop a single-player or a multiplayer game. Single player games are the most accessible for solo developers. Multiplayer games are much more elaborate and complex.

Still, it is not impossible to develop a multiplayer game. As a piece of advice, however, I would suggest that your first game should be a single player game.

# My indie GameDev workflow

Then determine the genre of your game and try to get to a first playable prototype as soon as possible. We want to avoid getting a completely finished product that ultimately has no interest or is full of errors. With a prototype, people can already test your first version and give immediate feedback. Based on that, you can adjust a game.

The layout and appearance of the game only come at the end. Certain large game development companies start with the visuals first because then they can do marketing very early. Still, this is far from optimal. Especially as an indie game developer, this is not the best strategy. As an indie creator, feel free to share a prototype and make devlogs. Many people find this interesting to follow and it is also readily shared on social media. Which then creates additional interest and followers.

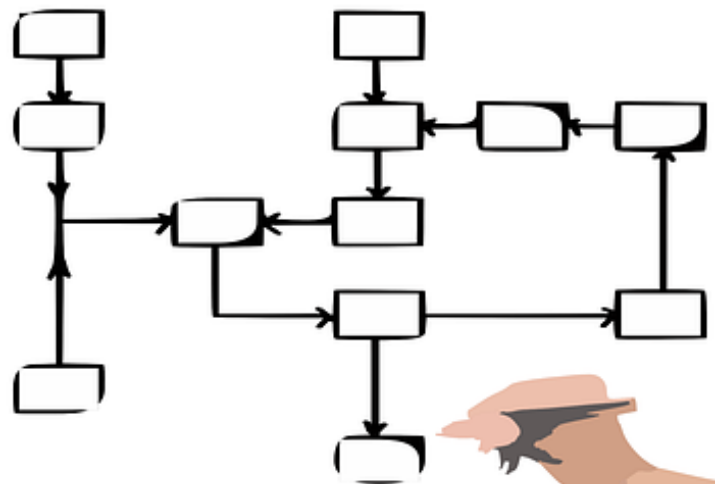
So obtain a simple working game as soon as possible. Then if the concept catches on, only then build on it. Based on feedback, your own tests and wishes, you then work on your project step by step. Only at the end do you process the finishing touches.

# My indie GameDev workflow

Something I like to do early on is making a 3D model for my character and accompanying animations. These are not yet the final animations but this already gives more life to the prototype and eventually gives you better ideas for the final model and the finished animations. It also just works more 'fun'.

For the story, it is best to start with the broad outlines first and after the prototype phase you can expand on this. Thanks to your prototype and feedback you will also create more ideas and a better workflow.

A Game Design Document (GDD) can also be crucial in the process of your project. More on this later in this e-book.



# Tutorial Hell

By Tutorial hell we mean aimlessly repeating and going over tutorials. This causes premature termination of your learning and frustration. Learning Game Development should be fun and challenging. By proceeding systematically, you will be able to see more satisfaction and results.

In the beginning, of course, you need a basic understanding of your software. At that point, a beginner tutorial is an absolute necessity. Perhaps a second beginner tutorial can then work additionally.

After this stage, the goal is to practice the material learned and not end up aimlessly in a tutorial loop. Also known as tutorial hell. Try to recreate the tutorial from your own. Then try out variations of this tutorial. Make changes, expand the exercise.

Then find the things you need to finish a project further. Break everything down into small pieces and that's how you come to a whole. At the end of any given tutorial, you should eventually be able to present something on your own. That should be the mindset behind following tutorials.

Tutorials are a tool, not a goal in itself. Always keep your goals at the forefront and use tutorials functionally from now on. For every hour you spend following a tutorial, you should also put at least that hour (and preferably more) into practice before moving on to the next topic.

## No 0% Days

I've learned this lesson from David W. (indie game developer, The First Tree). He worked on his game daily. That is not to say that he puts in big mountains of work every day. His rule is simple. Not a day goes by without adding something small to his project. No matter how small or insignificant it may seem. For him, there are no 0% days.

I want to invite you to adopt this mindset. The minimum you can do is open your software, review or test your project and then close it. But chances are, when you open your project, you will want to continue working on it. That's the power of doing at least something daily.

Break it down. Stop thinking about the whole big hurdle you have to overcome and start breaking down each small part of the task. Try to think of it as one task at a time. A small task is easier to get started on.

The reason for procrastination has a lot to do with fear of failure. And fear of failure arises because a project seems too ambitious or big. As a result, we sometimes put it off for weeks, months or even longer.



# No 0% Days

Doing at least one tiny task daily will keep you working on your project. That's how you avoid procrastination. And an important advantage is that this way you will also start learning and making progress faster.

For me, it also allows me to work on my project unplanned for longer hours. Just opening my project and making small adjustments can make me want to keep working and get new inspiration.

Hence the invitation to no longer have 0% days whenever possible.



# Troubleshooting

An important job of a game developer is to solve and prevent problems. This aspect of the process is often underestimated. It is also a wall that many beginners bump into. You have to assume that a new project can contain many errors. Therefore, this is quite normal.

Debugging, bug fixing and solution-oriented thinking are all part of the process. Still, for many people this is a hurdle to quit. That would be a shame and that is why I want to give you this lesson. Embrace the aspect of troubleshooting.

Test often and regularly. If you work for many hours without testing, you're going to encounter many surprises afterwards, guaranteed. If you regularly test out new changes, you will also be able to solve problems faster. That will also ensure faster progress on your project.

Countless projects have already been scrapped due to the sloppiness (spaghetti code) of disorganized teams or individuals. Troubleshooting is a mindset! Work orderly and apply the discipline to follow up on your work with proper regularity.

# Troubleshooting

The answer to a problem is often a few clicks away. Nowadays you have a lot of search engines, videos and forums on which you can find a lot of information. Chances are slim that you will be the very first person who wishes to solve a particular problem. This is just part of the game.

Another good tip I can give you for good practice: Package your games at least weekly (or more often). When packaging a game, you often end up with unexpected errors. If you only package a game by the release, you will encounter an endless list of errors, which may prevent the finished game from being published. That would be a shame. But the biggest tip I can give is to take responsibility for your own work and be persistent in finding the solution to a difficult problem yourself.



# Planning with a GDD

A Game Design Document (GDD) is a tool for organizing your project. Even if you are working alone, it is worthwhile to organize your project. This is going to save you a lot of time in the end and give you a brainstorm of different ideas.

Without a GDD, you may also forget about different parts of your project. By orderly listing everything, you will remember what you need to put in order. This also gives you great mental freedom.

In my free course, you can also download the GDD that I'm using (same as where you downloaded this ebook). There is an editable version and a PDF. If you like to work on paper, it is best to print the PDF. But if possible, it is best to work digitally. That way you can expand the GDD yourself, insert images or share it with other people.

Feel free to customize a GDD entirely to your own preferences. Therefore, what works best for you is the best GDD for your project.

Since the early days, experts have been working with game design documents to develop a beautiful game from start to finish. This is well thought out in advance.

# Planning with a GDD

I would also like to add that a game design document is allowed to be changeable. Don't let this working tool be a brake on your creativity. Throughout the development of your project, you will still come up with ideas or want to change things. Be sure to do that.

In case you are not yet convinced to start working with a GDD, I would like to invite you to try it at least once. Even if it is for a prototype. Once you get the hang of this process, you probably won't want to go back to the old way of doing things.

Download the free GDD and start building your new projects with peace of mind.



# Free vs Paid Learning resources

Game Development has become tremendously accessible in recent years. Anyone who wants to can use it for free. There used to be a lot of paid software and the free versions were sometimes limited. Nowadays, a lot of Game Engines and other software give you the full version for free.

The licensing terms have also become very flexible with that. Nowadays, you already have to make a lot of money from a project before you have to pay royalties. There are also more and better open source programs.

Especially for total beginners, it is interesting to get started completely for free at first. Online (and in this course) you will find numerous free tools and tutorials to learn the basics. Almost all the information is online for free. More and more resources are made available daily.

Still, the challenge is to separate the wheat from the chaff. There is a large supply of free resources but it is not always of the same quality. Many tutorials are outdated, dry or sometimes even wrong. In addition, a particular solution may not be compatible with your version or project.

# Free vs Paid Learning resources

Through a lot of searching, you can often still end up with good channels that make structured videos and coursework. I myself make game development tutorials (mainly for Unreal Engine). You can check it out on YouTube: @BuvesaGameDevelopment .

Of course, there are several other channels you can check out. It's good to watch different ones and then see which style you like best. For a good free beginners course, I can recommend both my free YouTube videos as well as my free platformer game development course.

Surely my greatest progression has come through paid and premium courses. These are structured and they follow the same version and order. Often these digital courses are created by people with more experience.

In the beginning, I mainly wanted to know if game development was for me. When I discovered the world of game engines and game development, I wanted to learn a lot. So after a few beginner tutorials, it was time for the real thing. As a result, I bought some premium programs and followed them completely. I learned a lot and would do it all over again. This may be different for you but it's something worth considering.

# Free vs Paid Learning resources

My advice to you is to test different things and possibly take a premium course. You don't have to go to a university to do this. There are great digital courses online. If you like to work with my material, I would like to invite you to become a member of The Unreal Vault. In it I teach you many aspects of the game development process.

You will learn about beginner setup, materials, level design, landscaping, blueprints, full game creation process, making boss fights and more. There will be a 30-day money-back policy if needed, so feel free to try it out. Price includes lifetime access and future updates are included for free. Certainly don't feel obligated but be sure to check out the overview of learning materials for the course. As for the rest, I would say just start, learn a lot and make cool projects.





# Your Journey Starts Now

Hopefully this e-book has given you the tips you need to get started with game development. This approach has allowed me to learn a lot about game development and associated programs in a short period of time.

But this is not the end, this is just the beginning. It will be an exciting journey but I am sure that with the right mindset and resources you can eventually create the project of your dreams.

I would like to invite you to download the game design document and take the free platformer course. Possibly I will see you further in the premium section of 'The Unreal Vault' where you will master the fundamentals from start to finished game.

Put on your best GameDev hat, shout it from the rooftops and call your mom because it's going to be fabulous. Good luck and see you soon!



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