

# Is our prototype enabling cooperative gameplay? And is the game enjoyable by players of different skill levels?

## ▼ When do we playtest?

- March 6th
- Week 11: March 10th to March 16th

## ▼ Where do we playtest?

- At ITU/DR
- In one of the smaller rooms, except for the 6th when we playtest with everyone else

## ▼ What do we need to playtest?

- A build
- Snacks and water
- A computer
- Two controllers
- Two external playtesters, while the recommended number is 20 total playtesters (Huguenin, 2018), we are unlikely to have that many so let's aim for as many as we can
- One team member
- Something to record the screen

## ▼ Who are the external playtesters?

- Since it's a local co-op game: players who would seek out co-op games with someone they know (friends, family, partners, etc.)

## ▼ What are the objectives of this set of playtests?

- Verify if our prototype is enabling cooperative gameplay
  - Use Aghabeigi (2006)'s cooperative performance metrics to verify how well our game enables cooperative gameplay → Identify areas of improvement and make suggestions to iterate on our prototype's design.

## ▼ What methods are we using for these playtests?

Make a summary of

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Our observation notes will be taken here, with a list of events to take notes on:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jR7CwrvFUB1eL8KfkEb27G3-FCCJshvZVvsJ9sAwPVk/preview?usp=sharing>

Make a summary of [go read the stuff on interviews lol]

After the playtest, ask the following questions to the playtesters:

- Where there any specific moments where you remember working together to get past an obstacle?
- Where there any specific moments where you could have overcome an obstacle just as easily on your own?

- Where there any specific moments where it felt like playing with someone else was in the way of getting past an obstacle?
- [Also ask any follow up question you might have to what you observed]
- Is there any particular part of the game that you liked?
- Is there any particular part of the game that you disliked?
- Do you have any feedback about how you think the game could be improved to be more fun to play together with another player (for you)?

## ▼ How to run a playtest

1. Setup the prototype, water and snacks in one of the smaller meeting rooms at DR if possible (or go to the March 6th playtest).
2. Get two external playtesters and one team member.
3. Note down the skill level of the playtesters here  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jR7CwrvFUB1eL8KfkEb27G3-FCCJshvZVvsJ9sAwPVk/edit?usp=sharing>
4. Have the playtesters play while a team member takes observation notes the metrics listed here  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jR7CwrvFUB1eL8KfkEb27G3-FCCJshvZVvsJ9sAwPVk/edit?usp=sharing>. If possible also have a recording of the screen, so if bugs or issues are being recorded is easier to reference them.
5. After the playtest, ask both playtesters the questions listed here

## ▼ Description of the findings (what did you find out, analysis, if you have suggestions for changing, adding, removing, or fixing something make them and explain why)

### ▼ 25/03/2025 - Tiago & Shrimp

**Experience level:** both playtesters play cooperative games and 3D platformers less frequently than once per year

- Enjoyment while playing in cooperative mode: the playtesters did not express verbally or with non-verbal behaviors that they enjoyed the game while they were playing, and they laughed together only in response to a bug. So **there is improvement to be made with regards to making the gameplay enjoyable.**
- Worked out strategies: the playtesters talked about how to solve the shared challenges, consulted each other while navigating the world and pre-planned what to do. This means that **our gameplay does afford for cooperative play with regards to planning and working together.**
- Helping each other: one playtester had to explain the controls to the other and discussed how to overcome a shared obstacle. **We need to have a clearer image for the controls schemes.**
- Player roles: Shrimp and Tiago felt that pulling felt better than pushing, as it has more control over the object. In some challenges one of the players was waiting for the other to complete the challenge alone. → **We should think of a way that would give a greater sense of control over the pushing.**
- Shrimp did not look at the line to know what is being targeted, she looked at the targeted object which means that **we need to color code them as well as having the line connecting it.**

Other stuff

- When the targeted object is out of frame it looks like the player is tied to it. → **stop targeting an object that is out of frame.**
- **Laura needs to fix the walls in the levels before playtesting on thu**
- **We need to polish the camera and wall collisions**
- **We cannot have diagonal sliding doors**

- A pointer to point stuff at the other player would be nice, but super low priority (even to do after the thesis hand-in)

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jR7CwrvFUB1eL8KfkEb27G3-FCCJshvZVvsJ9sAwPVk/preview?usp=sharing>

## ▼ 27/03/2025 - Jake & Enrico, Emma B.P. & Mustafa, Emma K. & Charlotte

### Experience level and CPM:

	Enrico	Jake	Emma B.P.	Mustafa	Charlotte	Emma K.
Cooperative games	Weekly	Yearly	Less than yearly	Yearly	Weekly	Weekly
3D platformers	Yearly	Monthly	Less than yearly	Never	Yearly	Yearly
Puzzle games	Monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Yearly	Weekly	Monthly
Enjoying the game together	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Worked out strategies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Helping each other out	No	No	No	No	No	No
Waited for each other	No	No	Not for the CPM, but the pusher felt useless in some puzzles	Not for the CPM, but the pusher felt useless in some puzzles	No	No
Got in each other's way	No	No	No	No	No	No

### Does the game perform well with regards to enabling cooperative play? Yes.

- The experience of the three pairs of playtesters were similar, regardless of the frequency by which they play similar game or of difference in frequency
- All three pairs of playtesters expressed that they enjoyed playing the game together while they were playing. → The game succeeds in being an enabling enjoying playing together.
- All three pairs of playtesters communicated with each other about how to coordinate/work together to overcome obstacles. → The game succeeds in giving a reason for cooperative play.
- There isn't much need for playtesters to help each other in our game, since there isn't a lot of danger etc.
- With regards to the metrics in CPM they were not waiting for each other, however, it has been noted by two pairs that push sometimes feels less useful than pull.
- They do not get into each other way

### Level design improvement notes:

- The game is longer than it should be: playtester generally take 20-25min to go through the game with the help of the hand of god.
  - Considering where to cut here are my (Laura)'s suggestions:
    - Make the first puzzle shorter
    - Condense even more the "creating a platforming path with the moving platforms" area, have only one pillar there and give players elevator platforms to get up instead (horizontal platforms and vertical platforms will have to be visually distinct)
    - Remove the level where players split up, the sliding door does not help to keep them separated anyway and they don't really use the elevator platform

→ This should reduce playtime while also leaving space for the AOE puzzle

- At least two pairs of playtesters carried movable object with them from one puzzle to the other. I have no issue with that let them have their fun
- Of the puzzles tested (all except the aoe one) the one on rails and the maze were the ones where the playtesters were actually actively playing together. (Note to self: design more puzzles on paper while sleep-deprived and coughing)
- In some puzzles the pusher felt useless. Combined with the fact that push is also less controllable than pull we should try to improve the experience of the push player.
- To Charlotte and Emma K. some puzzles were very clear and linear, while others felt more like a fuck around and find out experience (both cases were fun)
- Players really enjoyed launching themselves with the objects xD (I don't mind, I've just put a ceiling on so that they don't yeet themselves or objects out of the map)

**Quality of life stuff:**

- Players who tend to not stay close to each other would like to be able to tell to cinemachine which player to prioritize (since after a some distance cinemachine always chooses one player over the other)
- We can remove the HUD showing the abilities strength level now, we don't need it anymore so now it's just noise
- The fact that the targeting line stays even when the player is no longer thinking about targeting an object was confusing. → Suggestion, we can give a control to un-target it: if we put the targeting on the dpad we can do left-right target, down untarget

**Games that they were reminded of while playing:**

- Portal
- The maze puzzle reminded them of a puzzle in Zelda Breath of the Wild