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Design Document: Play With Fire

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4. Structure

4.1. Overview

The game is divided into **field lists** or **Quests** which consist (in general) of six fields. (The term Quest is used in game documentation, but in the design document the term Field List is used). The player must play through all six fields to complete a field list. However, they can exit their current set of six fields by pressing start and choosing exit from a pause menu.



The game is made of three paths – *Fun*, *Puzzle* and *Challenge*, which are accessed from a central Hub screen. Each path consists of 10 field lists, for a total of 60 fields each or 180 overall. There may, however, be up to 40% reuse of material between the different paths, meaning the game will actually consist of between 108 and 180 fields.

Medals are earned for hitting certain combo targets in field lists. These unlock the field lists from the Challenge path.

Additionally, every block the player burns earns 1 point of Ash. A running Ash total is used to unlock additional materials in the Fun path.

4.2. Ash

Ash is earned for each block burned. It is used to progress along the Fun path. The target Ash values for the Fun path will rise exponentially.



4.3. Rewards

4.3.1 Medals

Every field list has a target Chain total associated with it. This relates to medals as follows:

- If the sum of all Chains scored for all six fields is equal to or exceeds the target Chain for the field list, a **Gold Medal** is awarded. Whenever the avatar is close enough to the Quest block in the Hub for that field list, a gold medal icon is shown. When a Gold Medal is awarded, a Silver medal is automatically awarded as well.
- If the total Chain scored is between 50 and 99% of the Gold Medal score, a **Silver Medal** is awarded. This is also shown as an icon when the avatar is close to the relevant Quest block in the Hub.

Whenever the player completes a field list, they are shown the amount of Ash earned. Plus:

- If they scored a Silver Medal, this icon is shown, and the Ash total is multiplied by 2 (x2 is shown).
- If they scored a Gold Medal, this icon is shown, and the Ash total is multiplied by 3 (x3 is shown). When a Gold Medal is awarded, a Silver medal is automatically awarded as well.

Medals are used to advance along the Challenge path.

4.3.2 Summary

The following summarises the 'prizes' that can be won:

Medal	Combo Target Percentage?	All Fields Ash Clear?
Silver	50-99%	No
Gold	100%	No

4.4. Front End

4.4.1 Overview

The game front end operates using the main game engine. The player moves around between objects (which are kept well-spaced), and when near an object, text appears indicating what will happen if they burn that object.

This saves developing a separate front end.

4.4.2 Quest Blocks (Hyperobjects)

The Hub field consists of a number of blocks, which are regular game objects – but that cause fields or Quests to be run when they are burned by the player. In effect, each block is a menu option that the player selects by moving to it and burning it.

The blocks displayed in the Hub will be either Leaf, Wood or Stone.

4.4.3 Unlocked Quests

Any Quest that has been unlocked is displayed as a single Leaf Block.

This is exactly as is currently implemented

4.4.4 Completed Quests

Any Quest that has been completed is displayed as a single Wood Block.

This means:

- Players won't trigger these by mistake, as they must Slam to burn a Wood block
- Players can immediately see which Quests they have completed

4.4.5 Next Quests

The next Quest to be unlocked in each Path is displayed as a single Stone Block. Clearly, this cannot be burned, and so the Quest cannot be played.

Above the block is the description of how the Quest is unlocked – see Section 4.8 for details.

4.4.6 Ash Total

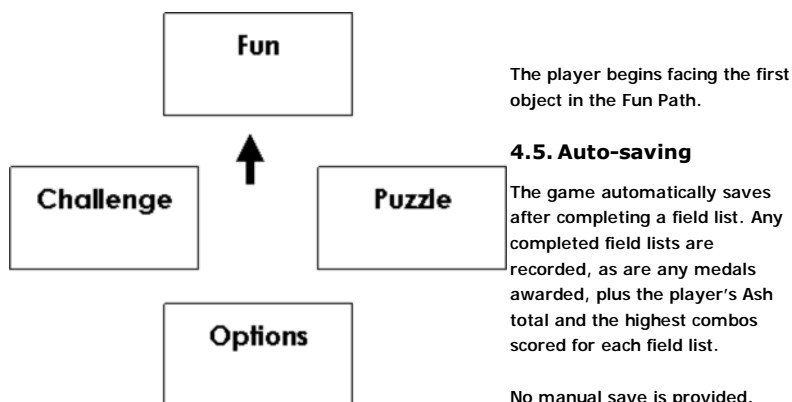
While on the Hub field, a large, graphically pleasing display of the players total Ash should be shown at the bottom of the screen.

4.4.7 The Hub

The main game functionality is accessed from a game field which is the hub map. It consists of a set of blocks that fit into three paths:

- **Fun Path:** consisting of easy and entertaining fields. The Fun path advances from the acquisition of Ash.
- **Puzzle Path:** consisting of challenging but cerebral fields, which don't require fast reactions or arcade control skills to master. The Puzzle path advances from the completion of Quests.
- **Challenge Path:** this consists of challenging fields which may require good reactions and arcade control skills to master. The hardest fields are in this path. This path will advance through Medals.

All three paths are arranged to radiate from a central point. The Options area is in the fourth position, as follows:

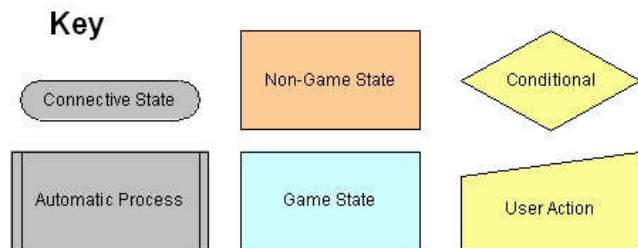


If the player exits a field list, the game still saves – any Ash earned is still 'banked'.

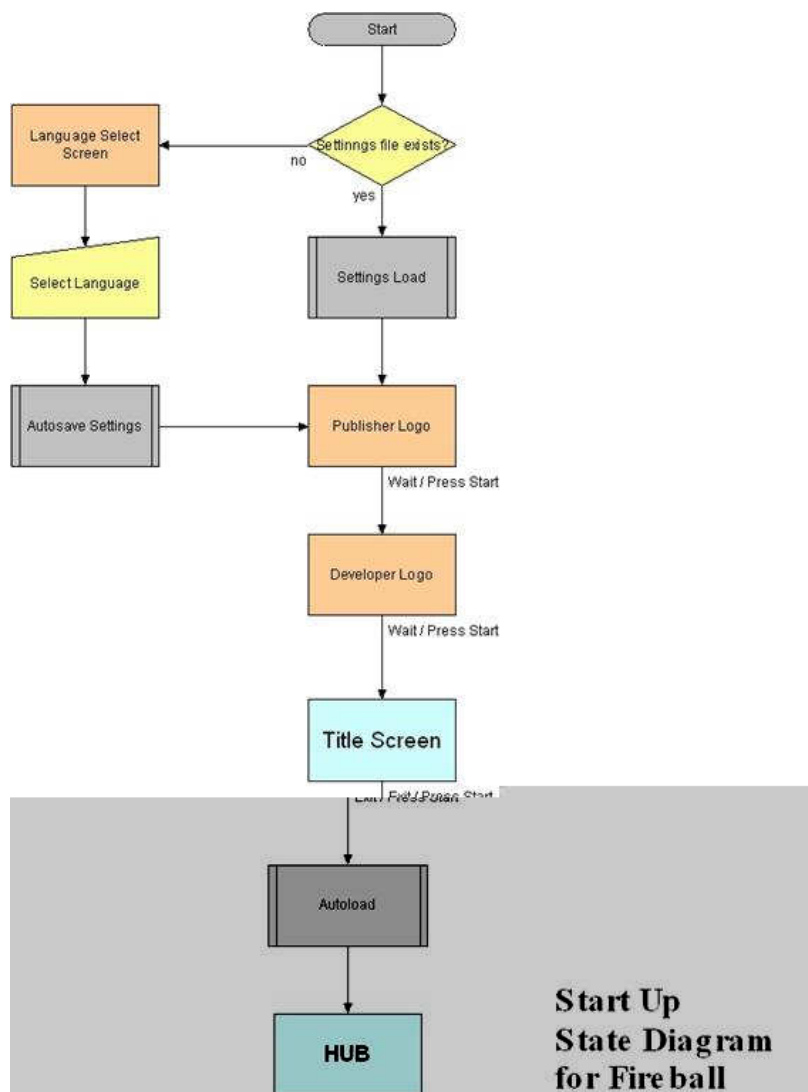
4.6. High Level States

4.6.1 Key

The following is the key to the state diagrams used in this document:



4.6.2 Start Up Sequence

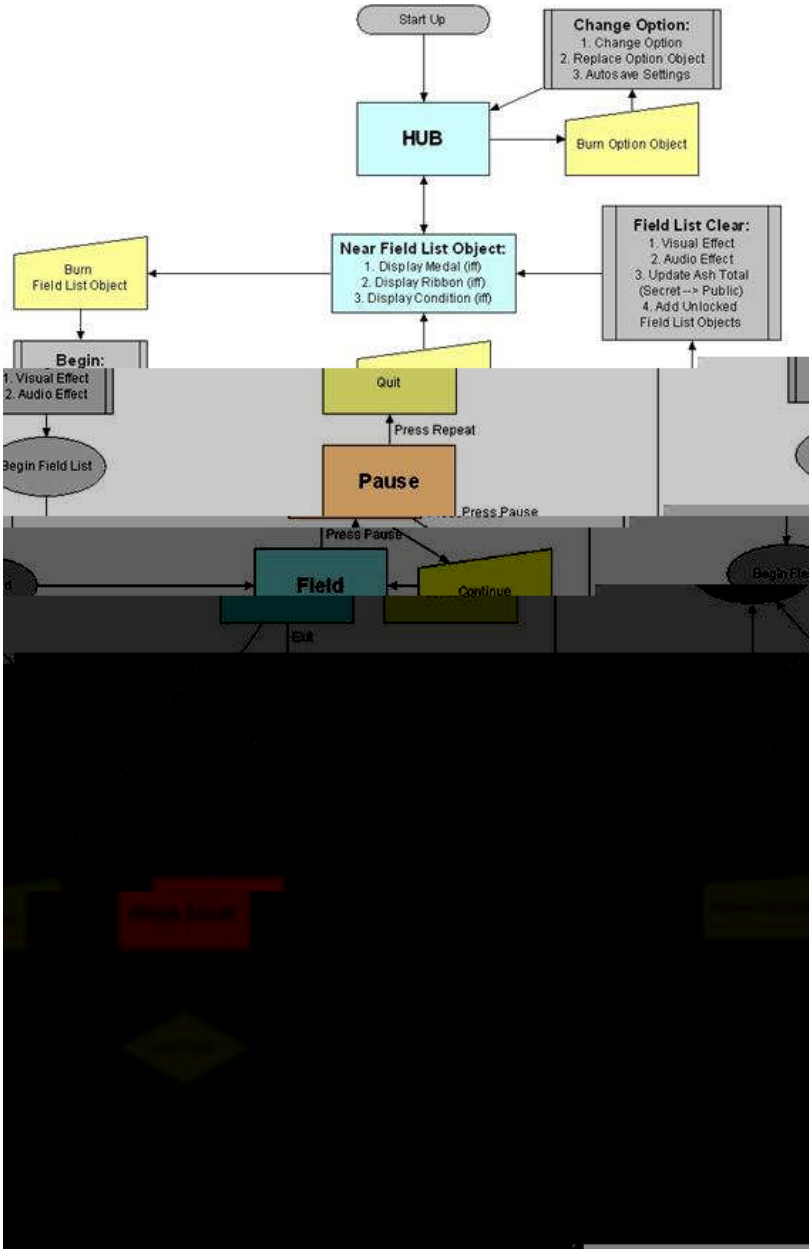


The states in this diagram are as follows:

- **Start:** game begins
- **Settings file exists?** Check for settings file; action varies according to whether this is present.
- **Language Select Screen:** if there is no settings file, a language select screen appears displaying the flags of all the countries whose languages are supported in a vertical column.
- **Select Language:** The player selects their language by selecting a flag and pressing X or Start.
- **Autosave Settings:** saves the language setting to a (new) settings file.
- **Settings Load:** alternatively, if a settings file exists it is loaded.

- **Publisher Logo:** In the best case, it would be nice if this could be “painted” onto a wall of blocks that could then be burned by the player. However, a single static image flash up can be used instead. In *either case*, pressing Start (joypad) or Esc (keyboard) should advance the screen to the next screen.
- **Developer Logo:** International Hobo Ltd will use the Fantasy Labs logo as their developer logo for this game. As above, in the best case, it would be nice if this could be “painted” onto a wall of blocks that could then be burned by the player. However, a single static image flash up can be used instead.
- **Title Screen:** After the publisher logos, the player should be dropped into the Title Screen field (Title.L.easy.spiral.fs). They can either move into the exit, or press Start (joypad) or Esc (keyboard) to move to the Hub.
- **Autoload:** after the Title Screen, the save file is automatically loaded, restoring any game progress, medals and Ash total.

4.6.3 Main High Level States



The states in this diagram are as follows:

- **Start up:**

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[illegible]

Slam	Orange Hot	Sound effect for when a Yellow Hot Fireball slams – a conflagration
Slam	Red Hot	Sound effect for when a Yellow Hot Fireball slams – a loud fireburst
Slam	Blue Hot	Sound effect for when a Yellow Hot Fireball slams – a huge explosion
Slam	White Hot	Sound effect for when a Yellow Hot Fireball slams – a “nuclear explosion”
Begin Fanfare	Start of Level	Short fanfare, rising scale or audio effect
Restart Noise	Restart level	A swishing noise; just to underline the level has been reset
Ash Clear	Ash Target Hit	Short rising scale or audio effect
End Fanfare	Reach Exit	Very short victory fanfare or rising scale
Complete Fanfare	End of Field List	Short reward fanfare (no medal)
Bronze Fanfare	Earn Bronze Medal	Short reward fanfare (variant of above)
Silver Fanfare	Earn Silver Medal	Short reward fanfare (variant of above)
Gold Fanfare	Earn Gold Medal	Short reward fanfare (variant of above)

6. Templates

6.1. Overview

This section provides advice to field designers for *Fireball*. Note that field designers are encouraged to go beyond the templates described here. The templates define how one should start thinking about the fields, but the actual fields can be built any way the field designer chooses.

6.2. Stages

In order to ensure the player has time to learn how the game works without recourse to an explicit tutorial, there is a strict order to the stages of the game. The following table provides a summary:

Code	Stage #	Blocks that will Burn	Blocks that will Melt	Blocks that are Inert
L	0	Leaf	-	Stone
W	1	Wood	-	Stone
LW	2	Leaf, Wood	-	Stone
C	3	Leaf, Wood, Coal	-	Stone
P	4	Leaf, Wood	Plastic	Stone
CP	5	Leaf, Wood, Coal	Plastic	Stone
F	6	Leaf, Wood, Coal	Plastic	Fire
M	7	Leaf, Wood	Metal	Fire
PM	8	Leaf, Wood, Coal	Plastic, Metal	Fire
S	9	Leaf, Wood, Coal	Plastic, Metal, Stone	Fire

6.3. Fuses

An important concept in *Fireball* field design is that of *fuses*. A fuse is a set of objects which are designed to be automatically ignited by the player, thus causing remote effects. Fuses can be used to:

- Create easy Chains
- Set fire to distant points in the landscape

- Give the player a time limit – i.e. a fuse may set fire to a bridge, which the player must then cross before it burns out.

A fuse which begins with Leaf blocks will always be lit by the player. (The field may begin with the player on such a fuse). Other types of fuses may require the player to become hotter before they can be lit.

6.4. Fields

6.4.1 Field Types

The following are the broad different types of field:

- **Burn It Down:** fields in which the goal is high above the player, supported by a framework of objects which can be burned down. The player's goal, therefore, is to burn down the framework in order to reach the goal.

This style of field is likely to be Easy, with a few of Mid difficulty.

- **Sprint:** fields in which the goal is at the end of an "assault course". The player naturally gets hotter as progressing, and so damages the terrain that will get them to the goal.

This style of field is likely to be Hard, except when there are no fuses, when it might become Easy.

- **Hunt:** fields in which the goal is hidden by some means, and the player must find it.

This style of field is likely to be Easy, as the player will eventually succeed.

- **Maze:** fields in which the goal can be seen, but a maze of some kind blocks progress.

This style of field is likely to be Easy, unless fuses are used to create time limitations in which case it could become Hard.

6.4.2 Field Filenames

The following filename format is used for fields:

XXXXXXXXXX.XX.XXXX.fsf

The first ten characters are an informal description of the level.

The next two characters represent the Stage (see below).

The next four characters represent the difficulty, either:

- Easy
- Mid
- Hard
- Hell

So an example field filename might be:

Smallhouse.LW.easy.fsf

This allows anyone building field lists to know that the field designer intends this particular field to be easy to complete.

6.5. Field List Template

Each field list can follow the following broad pattern *in terms of the difficulty of levels included*. As ever, however, field designers are encouraged to extemporise!

In the early game:

- Field 1 = Easy and very simplistic
- Field 2 = Easy
- Field 3 = Mid with a trick that makes it Easy
- Field 4 = Easy
- Field 5 = Mid

- Field 6 = Easy and rewarding

This pattern is designed to contain a range of different difficulties, arranged so that the feel of the field list is that of a 'journey'.

In the later game:

- Field 1 = Mid
- Field 2 = Easy
- Field 3 = Hard with a trick that makes it Easy
- Field 4 = Mid
- Field 5 = Hard
- Field 6 = Easy and rewarding

Try not to make the last field of a field list be Hard, unless it has a trick that makes it Easy.

Fields in the Challenge path may be harder than this pattern suggests, while fields in the Fun path should all be Easy.