

# Radical Punching Wizards: Game Design Document



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## Game Overview

### Pitch

Radical Punching Wizards is a turn-based wizard duel for people who like fighting games but are potentially intimidated by learning a whole genre. The premise is simple enough for anyone to pick up, and the depth comes from reading your opponent, not from

memorizing inputs. In the spirit of Divekick and Footsies, every turn is a simultaneous rock-paper-scissors pick, with movement on a single line and a parry that makes even the right move risky.

## At a glance

|               |                                                                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Genre         | Turn-based duel                                                                     |
| Audience      | Players who find fighting games intimidating, casual fighting game enjoyers         |
| Players       | One against the AI, or two on the same screen                                       |
| Platforms     | PC first. An Android port exists but is missing some features                       |
| Input         | Mouse or controller in Adventure Mode and the menus, two controllers for local play |
| Engine        | Godot 4.5                                                                           |
| Match length  | About 5 minutes at most, so games stay quick                                        |
| Status        | Beta. The core game is complete                                                     |
| Not built yet | Online play and multiplayer on mobile                                               |

## Design pillars

1. **Read your opponent.** Both wizards pick at the same time, and a matching pick is a draw that costs nothing. The decision is always what the other person will throw, never a combo to execute.
2. **Position is part of the attack.** Cards have reach 2 and knockback 2 (by default) on an 11-tile line. Moving, dashing or backing away decides whether the right card connects, and how close you stand to the edge.
3. **Even the right move is risky.** A parry beats the same card and loses to the other two, and a winning parry roughly combines the knockback.
4. **Every hit changes the round.** After each hit that does not end the round, both wizards pick from a shared set of three abilities. The picks change which attacks you favour and how you try to catch your opponent out.

## Influences

| Influence                        | What it contributes                                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Street Fighter III: Third Strike | The parry: a defensive read that makes even the correct move risky    |
| Super Smash Bros.                | "Platform" fighting                                                   |
| Divekick and Footsies            | A minimal premise with enough depth that anyone can play              |
| Roguelikes                       | Picking one of three after each hit, so each round builds differently |

It is not a platform fighter: the wizards stand on a single line, not on platforms.

## Modes

| Mode              | How it plays                                                                                                          |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adventure Mode    | One player against five AI wizards in a row. Each wizard has its own stage hazard, and the final boss has all of them |
| Grand Wizard Mode | Unlocked by completing Adventure Mode. Hazards stack as the levels go on                                              |
| Local Multiplayer | Two players on one screen, each with a controller. Cards and moves stay hidden until you peek at your own. No hazards |
| Tutorial          | A guided ten-step lesson on the rules                                                                                 |

The full rules for every mode are in [Round Flow](#).

## Scope

| Status          | Feature                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Built           | Adventure Mode, Local Multiplayer, Tutorial, difficulty levels, save and continue, controller support for local play and Adventure Mode |
| Built, thin     | Grand Wizard Mode: unlockable, with stacking hazards, but not fleshed out                                                               |
| Not built       | Online play, multiplayer on mobile (attempted, then paused)                                                                             |
| Idea, not built | XP and levels to earn more abilities                                                                                                    |

The game was built for PC play first. The Android port was in progress when work paused, and it is not a mobile-first design.

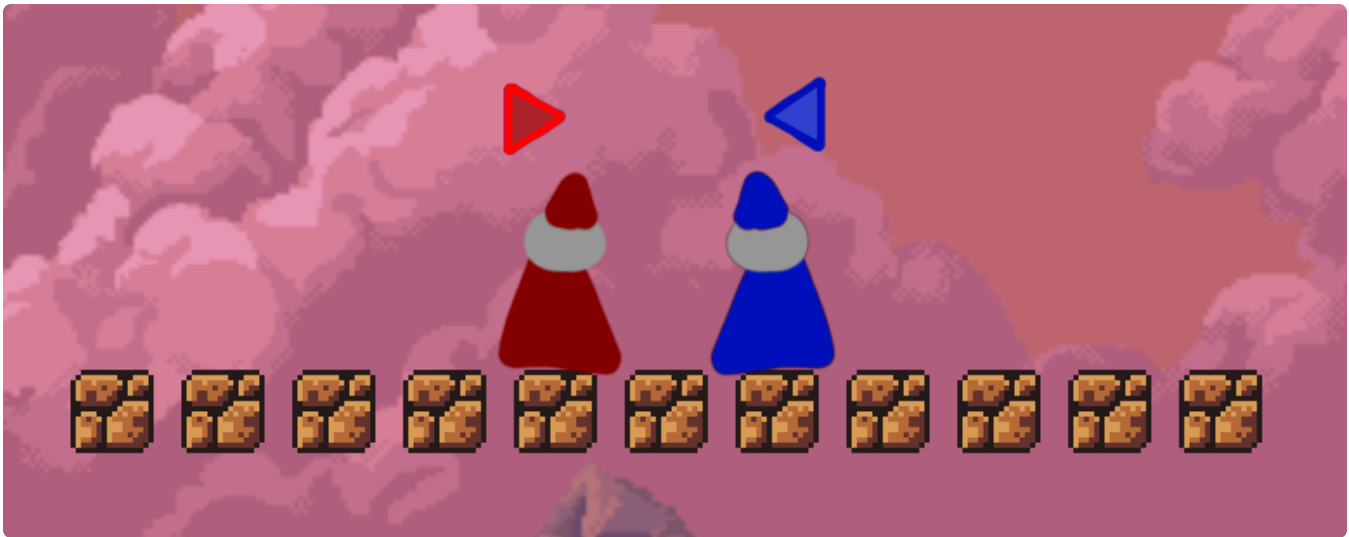
## Round Flow

### Premise and setup

Radical Punching Wizards is a turn-based wizard duel on an 11-tile line. Every turn is a rock-paper-scissors read with two twists: the wizards move on the line, and an attack can be parried. The winner of a turn knocks the loser back, and a wizard knocked off either end of the line loses the round.

**Premise:** It is the centennial Wizard Off. The tournament winner gets any wish granted.

**Starting position:** The wizards begin one tile apart (tile 4 and tile 6 of 0 to 10) facing each other.



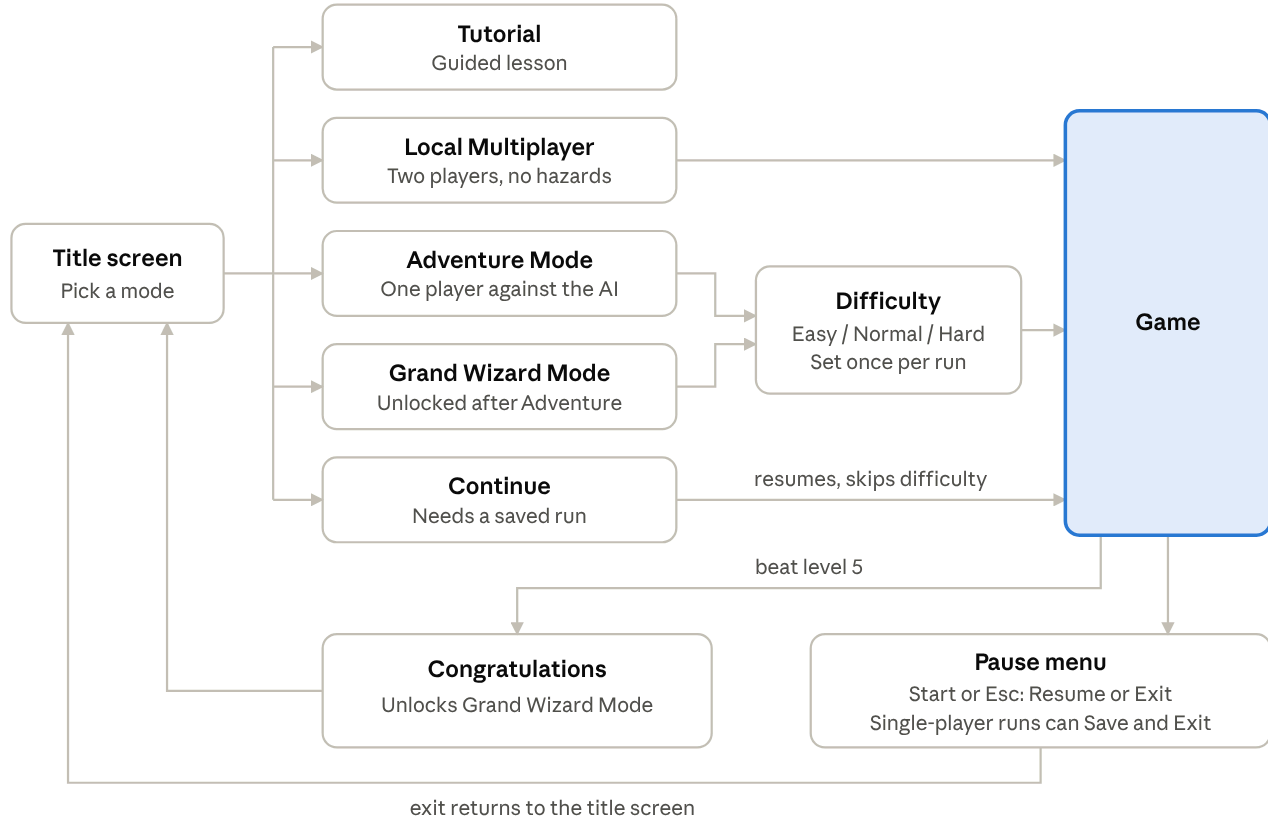
Game modes

| Mode              | Players                                              | Hazards                                   |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Adventure Mode    | One player against five AI wizards in a row          | Each wizard brings its own stage hazard   |
| Grand Wizard Mode | Same as Adventure Mode, unlocked after completing it | Hazards stack as you progress             |
| Local Multiplayer | Two players on one screen, each with a controller    | None; the base game against another human |

The rules below apply to every mode. Hazards only exist in Adventure and Grand Wizard Mode.

## Main menu flow

Every way into the game starts at the title screen



main menu flow

Adventure Mode and Grand Wizard Mode go through difficulty select first. Local Multiplayer and Continue go straight into the game. Finishing the final level shows the congratulations screen and unlocks Grand Wizard Mode; pausing and exiting returns to the title screen.

## Difficulty select

Adventure Mode and Grand Wizard Mode ask for a difficulty once, at the start of a run: Easy, Normal or Hard. It cannot be changed during the run. It only changes how the AI opponent plays; the rules, hazards and abilities are the same on every difficulty. Easy ignores what the player picks, Normal pays attention to the player's recent cards, and Hard reads recent cards and also leans on the card type it has stacked bonuses on. Normal is the level the AI has been balanced around first, so Easy and Hard have had less iteration. The select screen opens with Normal highlighted. Each level is detailed in [AI Behaviour](#).

## Saving and continuing

Adventure and Grand Wizard runs can be saved from the pause menu with Save and Exit, which returns to the title screen. Continue on the title screen resumes the saved run from the same turn, with the level, positions, bonuses, Ki Charge, lightning hits, the AI's recent picks and the difficulty all restored. Continue skips difficulty select. It is only available when a save exists. There is one save, and saving again replaces it. Local Multiplayer and the Tutorial cannot be saved, and the pause menu in Local Multiplayer shows Exit only.

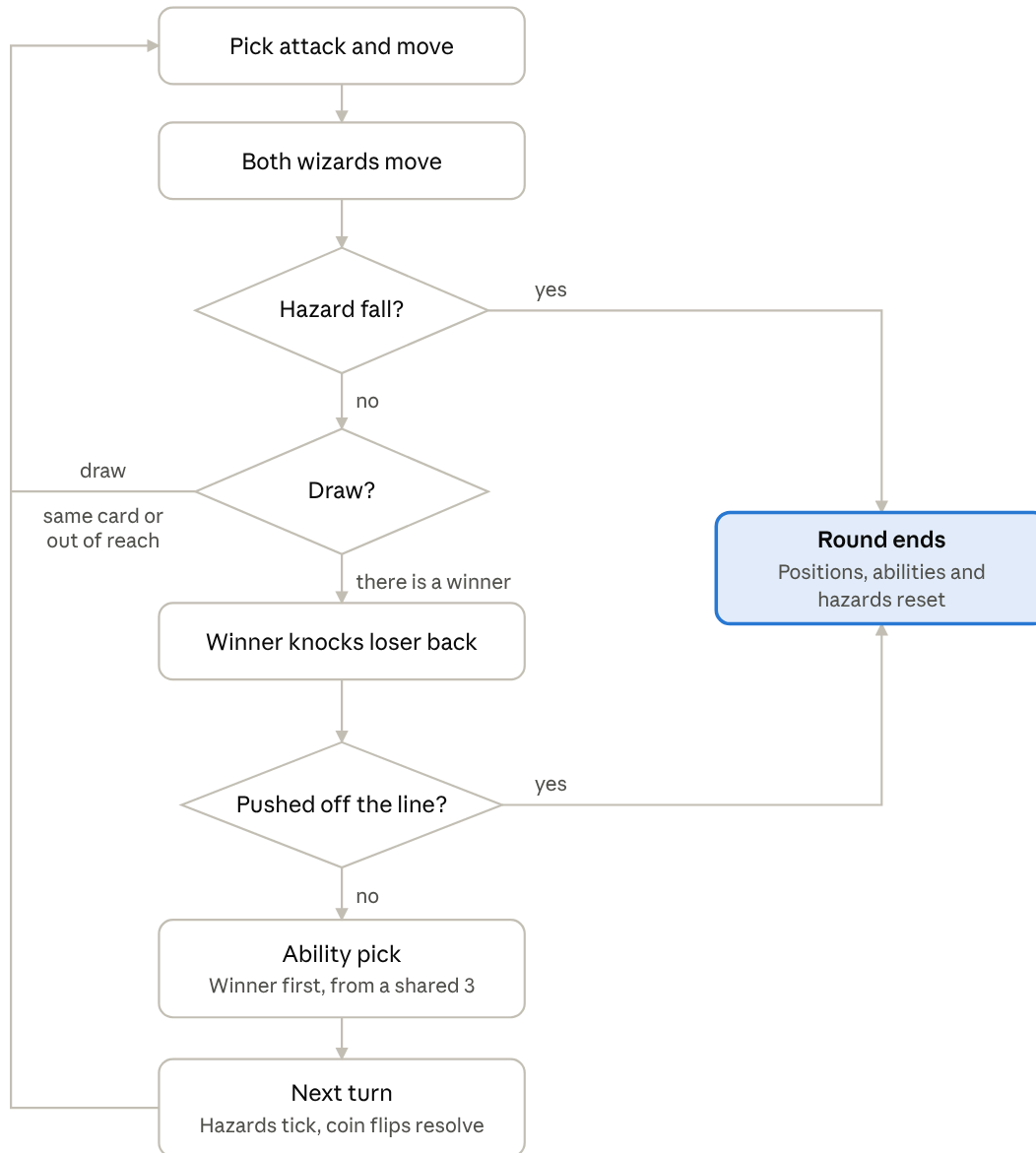
## A turn, step by step

1. **Pick an attack.** Each wizard secretly picks Rock, Paper or Scissors, and may mark it as a parry.
2. **Pick a move.** Each wizard picks forward (1 tile), back (1 tile) or dash (2 tiles toward the opponent). Both moves are locked in before anything resolves.
3. **Move.** Both wizards move at the same time. Collisions are resolved here (see [Movement, reach and knockback](#)).
4. **Hazard check.** On stages with cracked tiles, a wizard standing on a cracked or missing tile falls and loses (see [Stage Hazards](#)).
5. **Resolve the attack.** The two picks are compared (see [Cards and parry](#)).
  - Same card with no parry: a draw. The projectiles clash and nothing else happens.
  - Neither wizard can reach the other: a draw. The projectiles fade and nothing else happens.
  - Otherwise there is a winner, who knocks the loser back.
6. **Ring-out check.** If the knockback carries the loser past tile 0 or tile 10, the round ends.
7. **Ability pick.** If nobody was knocked off, both wizards pick an ability from a shared pool of 3, winner first (see [Cards and Abilities](#)).
8. **New turn.** Stage hazards tick, any coin-flip abilities resolve, and play returns to step 1.

A turn with no hit is simply a draw and the next turn starts fresh; there is no separate combat phase.

## Turn and round flow

A turn repeats until a hit pushes a wizard off the line



turn and round flow

A draw sends the wizards straight to the next turn. A hazard fall or a push off the line ends the round; anything else gives both wizards an ability and the loop starts again.

## Cards and parry

Rock beats Scissors, Scissors beats Paper, Paper beats Rock. A parry is a flag on the chosen card shown by the card being upside down: it beats the same card thrown normally and loses to either of the other two.

| One wizard | The other wizard       | Result                                                   |
|------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Normal     | Normal, different card | Standard rock-paper-scissors                             |
| Normal     | Normal, same card      | Draw (projectile clash, no knockback)                    |
| Parry      | Normal, same card      | The parrying wizard wins                                 |
| Parry      | Normal, different card | The normal wizard wins, whatever the RPS result would be |
| Parry      | Parry, different card  | Standard rock-paper-scissors                             |
| Parry      | Parry, same card       | Draw                                                     |

A winning parry hits harder: the knockback is the winner's knockback value plus the loser's knockback value for the card they threw, so roughly double at minimum.

The parry is meant to feel like the perfect parry in Smash Bros. or Street Fighter III: Third Strike, a high-risk read that pays off when you guess right. The extra knockback is the parry's reward and its advantage; there is no separate advantage state. A parry beats only its own card to keep it from being too strong. The [Decision Log](#) has the reasoning.

## Movement, reach and knockback

| Rule           | Value                                                 |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Board          | 11 tiles, numbered 0 to 10                            |
| Start tiles    | Wizard 1 on tile 4, wizard 2 on tile 6                |
| Forward / back | 1 tile                                                |
| Dash           | 2 tiles, always toward the opponent                   |
| Base reach     | 2 tiles, plus the card's reach bonus                  |
| Base knockback | 2 tiles, plus the card's knockback bonus and any wind |

**Facing.** Each wizard faces the other, and an attack only reaches in the direction the wizard faces. Wizards always face each other, so a wizard that dashes past the opponent turns around to keep facing them. If a dash and the opponent's move would leave both on the same tile, the wizards are pushed one tile apart and each stays on the side it started the turn on.

**Collisions.** Wizards never end a turn on the same tile. If both would, they are pushed one tile apart in opposite directions. Dash is the only move that can carry a wizard past the opponent, so a dash can end with the wizards on swapped sides. If they start adjacent and both pick forward (and neither dashes), neither moves.

**Reach.** An attack connects if the target is in front of the attacker and within that card's reach. If neither wizard can reach the other, the turn is a draw even when one card beat the other.

**Knockback.** The winner pushes the loser away from them. A push past tile 0 or tile 10 is a ring-out and ends the round.

**Round reset.** A new round resets positions, ability bonuses, coin-flip effects and stage hazards.

## Cards and Abilities

### Cards

Every wizard has the same three attack cards. Each turn both wizards pick one, in secret and at the same time, and may mark it as a parry.

| Card     | Beats    | Loses to | Base reach | Base knockback |
|----------|----------|----------|------------|----------------|
| Rock     | Scissors | Paper    | 2 tiles    | 2 tiles        |
| Paper    | Rock     | Scissors | 2 tiles    | 2 tiles        |
| Scissors | Paper    | Rock     | 2 tiles    | 2 tiles        |

A parry beats the same card thrown normally and loses to the other two. A winning parry adds the loser's knockback for their card to the winner's own, so it hits roughly twice as hard. The full win table is in [Cards and parry](#).

Reach and knockback are tracked per card type for each wizard. That is what abilities change: a bonus on Rock does nothing for Paper.

### Abilities

After every turn that does not end the round, 3 abilities are drawn at random from a pool of 8. The winner of the turn picks first, then the loser picks from the remaining two. Both picks apply at once and last until the round ends.

| Ability               | Type | Effect                                     |
|-----------------------|------|--------------------------------------------|
| Rock Knockback +1     | Stat | Rock attacks knock back 1 tile further     |
| Paper Knockback +1    | Stat | Paper attacks knock back 1 tile further    |
| Scissors Knockback +1 | Stat | Scissors attacks knock back 1 tile further |
| Rock Reach +1         | Stat | Rock attacks reach 1 tile further          |
| Paper Reach +1        | Stat | Paper attacks reach 1 tile further         |
| Scissors Reach +1     | Stat | Scissors attacks reach 1 tile further      |

| Ability              | Type      | Effect                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Instant Transmission | Coin flip | At the start of the next turn, flip a coin. Heads: choose the tile left or right of the opponent to teleport to. Tails: flip again and land on a random side |
| Ki Charge            | Coin flip | At the start of the next turn, flip a coin. Heads: win draws until a player gets hit                                                                         |

Six of the eight abilities are stat picks that favour one card type. Two change the turn in a single moment: one repositions the wizard, and one turns draws into wins.

## Stacking and balance

**Bonuses have no cap.** Picking the same ability again stacks it, and that is intended: the round gets crazier and crazier until someone wins. Three Rock Knockback picks make Rock knock back 5 tiles, nearly half of the 11-tile line.

**Ki Charge is not a guarantee.** Winning on a draw is very strong, so picking Ki Charge only gives a chance at it. The wizard has to flip heads at the start of the next turn.

A few details keep Ki Charge in check:

- It only counts while the wizards are within reach of each other.
- It lasts until a player gets hit.
- If both wizards are charged, neither wins draws.

**Instant Transmission has a coin flip too.** Heads lets the wizard choose which side of the opponent to land on. Tails gives a second flip that picks the side at random.

## Stage Hazards

### Hazard overview

Stage hazards give single player some variety compared to two-player matches, which have none. Each Adventure Mode wizard brings one hazard, and the hazard changes where it is safe to stand and how far a hit sends someone. Hazards do not stack between wizards, except for the final boss, who uses all of them. Grand Wizard Mode stacks them.

| Level | Hazard       | Fires          | Effect                                             |
|-------|--------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 2     | Wind         | Every 3rd turn | Changes knockback by direction                     |
| 3     | Lightning    | Every 2nd turn | Marks tiles, then strikes them on the next turn    |
| 4     | Ground pound | Every 3rd turn | Cracks a tile; cracked tiles are deadly to land on |
| 5     | Final boss   | Every 2nd turn | Alternates the earlier hazards with stat chaos     |

Level 1 has no hazard. The timings above are tuned for the current build and can change. The wizards who bring each hazard are in [Single-Player Wizards](#).

### Wind (level 2)

Every 3rd turn a wind blows for that turn only. Its strength is random from 1 to 3 and its direction is left or right.

Wind changes knockback relative to the direction of the hit. A hit pushing with the wind knocks back further by the wind's strength, and a hit pushing against it knocks back less by the same amount. Because the same wind helps one wizard and hurts the other, direction and position both matter: standing near an edge the wind blows toward is dangerous, because any hit in that direction knocks back further.

### Lightning (level 3)

Every 2nd turn, tiles on the line are marked and flash. The marked tiles are struck at the start of the following turn. Early on one tile is marked, and one more tile is marked for every 3 strikes that have landed.

A wizard standing on a struck tile is hit and pushed 2 tiles, left or right at random. A push that carries a wizard off the line is a ring-out. A wizard who is hit 3 times in a round dies.

### Ground pound (level 4)

Every 3rd turn the opposing wizard jumps, slams down and cracks a random tile. Cracked tiles make positioning something to watch.

- **Cracked tile:** A wizard who lands on a cracked tile falls and loses the round.
- **Hole:** A wizard knocked across a cracked tile breaks it, leaving a hole. A wizard who ends a move or a hit on a hole loses the round. Passing over a hole is safe; only landing on it counts.

- **New cracks:** Cracks never appear on a tile that is already cracked or a hole.

Everything resets when the round ends.

## Final boss (level 5)

The final boss has a buffed version of every earlier wizard's power. Every 2nd turn it alternates between two moves:

1. **Earlier hazard:** It fires one of the earlier hazards at random: a strong wind (strength 3) for that turn, 3 instant lightning strikes, or 2 cracked tiles at once.
2. **Stat chaos:** It shuffles the player's card bonuses among the six stats and nudges each by -1, 0 or +1, so ability picks the player has built up are scrambled.

## Single-Player Wizards

### The opponents

Adventure Mode is five duels in a row. Level 1 is a plain duel. Levels 2 to 4 each add one stage hazard tied to the wizard's element, and level 5 is the King Dark Wizard, who uses all of them. Every opponent plays by the same rules as the player. None of the wizards has a name yet, so each goes by its element.

| Level | Wizard                             | Hazard                        | Timing         |
|-------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| 1     | Level 1 opponent (the blue wizard) | None                          |                |
| 2     | Wind Wizard                        | Wind                          | Every 3rd turn |
| 3     | Electric Wizard                    | Lightning                     | Every 2nd turn |
| 4     | Earth Wizard                       | Ground pound                  | Every 3rd turn |
| 5     | King Dark Wizard                   | Every hazard, plus stat chaos | Every 2nd turn |

In the base game each wizard has only its own hazard. Grand Wizard Mode, unlocked after the base game, stacks hazards as the levels go on, so level 5 also has wind, lightning and ground pound. Beating a level moves the player to the next one. Beating level 5 ends the run with the congratulations screen. Abilities and position reset between levels.

## Level 1: the opening duel



A plain duel with no stage hazard. The opponent uses the blue wizard's look, the same as the opponent in Local Multiplayer.

## Level 2: Wind Wizard



Every 3rd turn a gust blows with a strength of 1 to 3, in a random direction. The gust changes knockback depending on which way it blows, so both direction and position matter. The Wind Wizard enters with a tornado animation. The full rules are in [Wind \(level 2\)](#).

## Level 3: Electric Wizard



Every 2nd turn lightning marks tiles, and the strike lands on the next turn. The number of marked tiles grows as the round goes on. A strike pushes a wizard 2 tiles left or right at random, and three strikes in one round is death. The Electric Wizard has its own intro animation. The full rules are in [Lightning \(level 3\)](#).

## Level 4: Earth Wizard



Every 3rd turn a random tile cracks. Ending a move on a cracked tile means falling and losing the round. Knockback that carries a wizard across a cracked tile breaks it into a hole, and landing on a hole loses. Holes stay until the round ends. The intro animation is still to be made. The full rules are in [Ground pound \(level 4\)](#).

## Level 5: King Dark Wizard



The King Dark Wizard has every wizard's power. Every 2nd turn it alternates between a random earlier hazard (a strong wind, three instant lightning strikes, or two cracked tiles) and stat chaos, which shuffles the player's six bonuses up or down by one. The intro animation is still to be made. The full rules are in [Final boss \(level 5\)](#).

## How the AI plays

All wizards share one AI. The difficulty chosen at the start applies to every opponent in the run. [AI Behaviour](#) describes each difficulty.

## AI Behaviour

### What the AI does

The AI plays the second wizard in Adventure Mode and in the Tutorial. It makes the same choices a human does: a move, a card, whether to parry, and an ability after each hit. The player picks one of three difficulties (Easy, Normal, Hard) before the run starts, and Normal is pre-selected. In the Tutorial, scripted lessons can force the AI's next move or card.

## Difficulty levels

Easy plays at random. Normal reads the player's recent cards and manages distance. Hard adds a Ki Charge combo and builds around its strongest card.

|              | Easy                          | Normal                                                                                       | Hard                                                                                              |
|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Movement     | Random: forward, back or dash | Distance over 3 tiles: forward. Distance 1 or less: back. Otherwise random                   | Distance over 2: forward. Distance 1 or less: dash (past the opponent). Otherwise forward or dash |
| Card         | Random                        | Counters the player's most common card from their last 3 picks. 30% of the time plays random | Same counter-pick, but only 15% random. Also Ki Charge play and stat leaning (see below)          |
| Parry chance | 30%                           | 25%                                                                                          | 20%                                                                                               |
| Ability pick | Random                        | Random                                                                                       | Builds toward its strongest card type, then Ki Charge                                             |

## Card and parry choice

Normal and Hard keep a short memory of the player's last three cards and assume the most common one comes next. They play the card that beats it. If the player's habits are mixed, the prediction is weak, which is why a pattern-free player is hard to read. The random share on top (30% Normal, 15% Hard) keeps the AI beatable.

Parrying is decided separately from the card, at a flat rate per difficulty, and does not depend on the read. Easy parries most often and Hard least.

Hard checks three things in this order:

1. **Ki Charge draw play.** If Hard has Ki Charge active, it matches the player's predicted card 75% of the time, without parrying. A draw is a win under Ki Charge, so matching beats countering.
2. **Stat leaning.** If Hard has stacked bonuses on one card type, it plays that card 50% of the time. Reach and knockback bonuses both count toward which card is strongest.
3. **Counter-pick.** Otherwise it counters the predicted card as above.

## Movement choice

Movement is based only on the distance between the two wizards. Easy ignores it. Normal closes in when far and backs off when too close. Hard closes in harder, and when crowded it dashes. A dash always goes toward the opponent, so from one tile away it carries Hard past them to the other side. Reach is 2 by default, so Hard's "in range" band is a distance of exactly 2.

## Ability picks

Easy and Normal take a random ability from the choices offered. Hard has a plan:

- **No strongest card yet:** take Ki Charge if offered, otherwise any reach or knockback bonus.
- **Has a strongest card:** take an ability that boosts that card type. If none is offered, take Ki Charge, otherwise random.

Because abilities reset every round, Hard rebuilds this plan from scratch each round.

## Controls and Input

### Input overview

A controller works throughout: Adventure Mode, Local Multiplayer and the title, difficulty and pause menus can all be played with one. The mouse also works in Adventure Mode and the menus. Local Multiplayer needs two controllers, so each player can pick a card without the other seeing it. Adventure Mode uses the same layout for its one human player. Keyboard is used only for pausing and for the turn history.

### Controller layout

Both players use the same layout on their own controller. Player 1 is the first controller and Player 2 is the second. Xbox names are in brackets.

| Action     | Input        | Notes                                    |
|------------|--------------|------------------------------------------|
| Pick Rock  | Square (X)   | Can be changed until a move is committed |
| Pick Paper | Triangle (Y) |                                          |

| Action              | Input                               | Notes                                                                           |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pick Scissors       | Circle (B)                          |                                                                                 |
| Parry               | Hold L2 (LT) while picking the card | Parry is decided at the moment the card is picked                               |
| Move forward / back | D-pad left or right                 | Relative to the way the wizard is facing, so toward the opponent is forward     |
| Dash                | D-pad down                          | Moves 2 tiles toward the opponent                                               |
| Commit the turn     | Choosing a move                     | Choosing the move locks the player in, and their card can no longer be changed  |
| Peek at your cards  | Hold R2 (RT)                        | Local Multiplayer only. Cards stay hidden unless held                           |
| Pick an ability     | Square, Triangle or Circle          | Picks the first, second or third ability shown, left to right                   |
| Confirm in menus    | Cross (A)                           | Confirms the highlighted button on the title, difficulty and pause screens      |
| Pause               | Start (Options)                     | First controller only. Not available in the Tutorial or during the ability pick |

## Adventure Mode and menus

In Adventure Mode the player can click everything: the three cards, the movement buttons, the ability cards, and the tile when Instant Transmission asks for one. A controller on the first slot also works, with the layout above. Only the first controller is read, since there is one human player.

Menus are navigated with the D-pad and confirmed with Cross (A), or with the mouse. Escape pauses the game on keyboard. There are no keyboard controls for cards or movement. Holding Tab, or R2 on a controller, shows the turn history: previous turns, the AI's moves, and the ability the AI picked. It is the only way to see what ability the AI chose.

## Known input gaps

A controller-only player can get stuck on Instant Transmission. The other gaps are smaller. Open questions about them are listed in the Backlog.

| Gap                                            | Affects            | Impact                                                                                     | Proposed fix                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Instant Transmission tile choice is mouse-only | Controller players | The game waits for a tile click that a controller cannot make, so the turn cannot continue | D-pad moves between the highlighted tiles and Cross confirms |
| Attack reach preview only shows on mouse hover | Controller players | No preview of what a card will hit                                                         | Show the preview for the card currently selected             |
| Only the first controller can pause            | Player 2           | Player 2 cannot pause the match                                                            | Let either controller pause                                  |
| Tutorial has no controller input               | Controller players | Tutorial may not be playable without a mouse. Untested                                     | Test it, then add the layout above                           |
| R2 means different things by mode              | All                | Peek in Local Multiplayer, turn history in Adventure Mode                                  | Give turn history its own button so R2 keeps one meaning     |

## Tutorial Design

### Tutorial overview

The tutorial is ten screens played over a live match against the first Adventure opponent. Steps 1 to 7 explain the game, step 8 has the player play one scripted turn, step 9 has them pick an ability, and step 10 sends them off.

Each screen dims the game and spotlights the part being explained, with a text panel at the bottom right. The player moves through with Back and Next, sees a step counter at the top right, and can leave at any time with Back to Menu. The game is paused while a screen is read. The pause menu is not available during the tutorial.

## Walkthrough

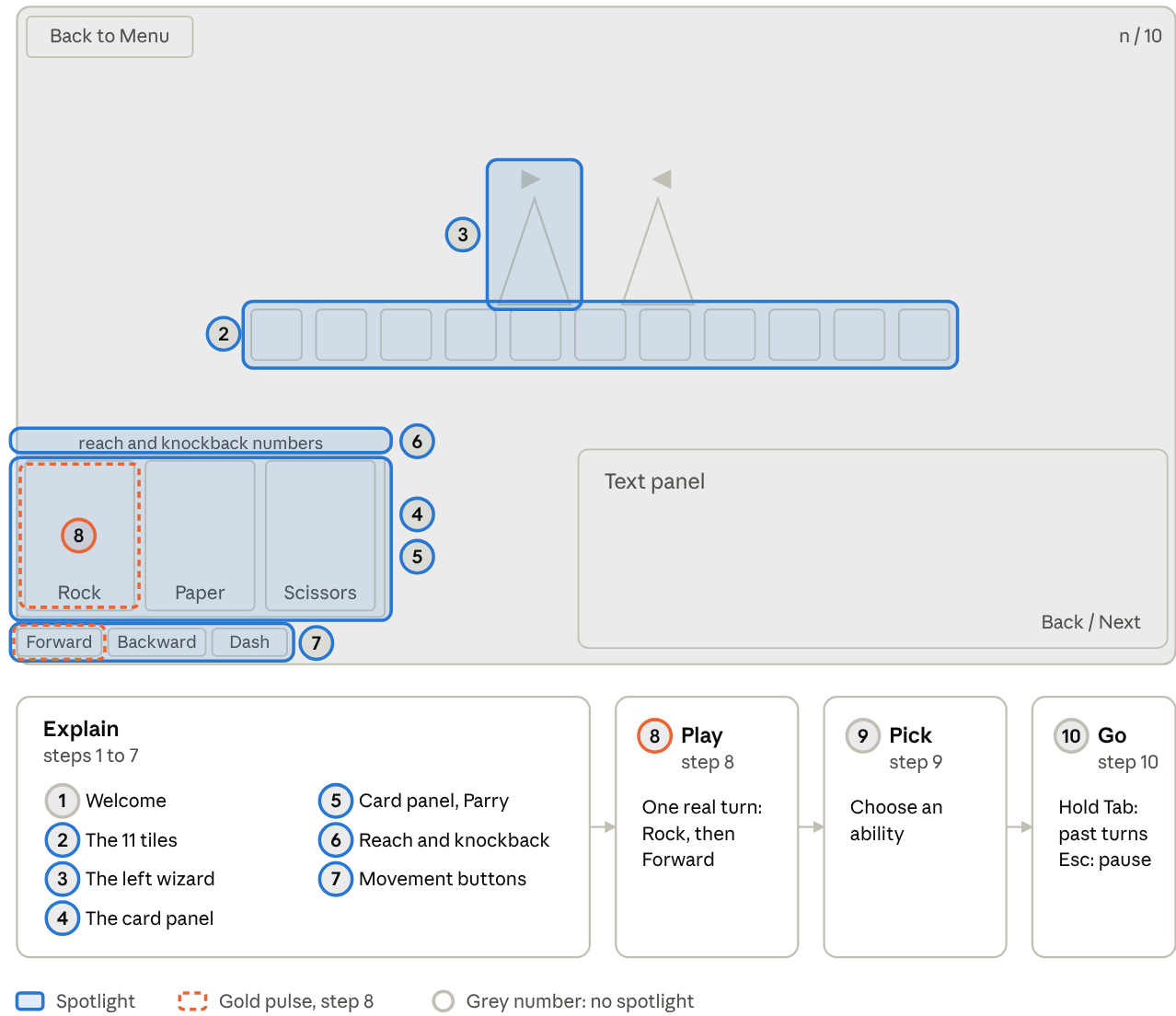
| Step | Title                       | Spotlight                                             | What the player learns                                                                                                                           |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Welcome Warrior!            | None                                                  | Win by knocking the opponent off the platform. Rock, Paper, Scissors decides each clash                                                          |
| 2    | The Platform                | The 11 tiles                                          | Both wizards stand on an 11-tile platform. Falling off either end loses                                                                          |
| 3    | Your Wizard                 | The left wizard                                       | You are the wizard on the left. The arrow shows which way you face, and you always face the opponent                                             |
| 4    | Rock, Paper, Scissors       | The card panel                                        | Pick a card. It attacks forward, and hits if the opponent is within reach. Left-click selects, right-click sets Parry                            |
| 5    | Parrying                    | The card panel                                        | A Parry beats the normal version of the same card, and a successful parry adds knockback. Parry is the call when you predict the opponent's card |
| 6    | Attack, Reach and Knockback | The numbers above the cards                           | Reach is 2 tiles by default. Out of reach, the strike misses. Each card has its own reach and knockback                                          |
| 7    | Movement                    | The movement buttons                                  | Forward moves 1 tile, Backward moves 1 tile away, Dash moves 2 tiles forward                                                                     |
| 8    | Try It!                     | None. Gold pulses on the Rock card and Forward button | Play one real turn: Rock, then Forward                                                                                                           |

| Step | Title             | Spotlight | What the player learns                                                                                                             |
|------|-------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9    | Special Abilities | None      | After a hit, both players pick an ability and the winner picks first. Abilities add reach, add knockback, or have a special effect |
| 10   | You're Ready!     | None      | Hold Tab to see previous turns. Escape opens the pause menu                                                                        |

# Tutorial spotlights

## Steps 2 to 7 walk the spotlight across the screen, then step 8 hands over control

The tutorial screen, with the part each step spotlights outlined and numbered



tutorial spotlights · 10 steps on one screen

Each step dims the game and outlines one part of the screen. The full text of every step is in the walkthrough above.

## Rock, paper, scissors and parry

The tutorial teaches the card rules with hand-drawn diagrams. Step 4 shows the normal cycle. Step 5 shows the same cycle with the cards flipped upside down, which stands for parry, plus one diagram per parry card. The rules themselves are in Cards and parry, above.





In each parry diagram, the cards across the top beat the card in the middle, and the middle card beats the cards across the bottom. Flipped cards are parries.

| Card           | Beaten by                      | Beats                 |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Paper Parry    | Rock, Scissors, Scissors Parry | Paper, Rock Parry     |
| Rock Parry     | Paper, Scissors, Paper Parry   | Rock, Scissors Parry  |
| Scissors Parry | Rock, Paper, Rock Parry        | Scissors, Paper Parry |

So a parry beats its own normal card, loses to the other two normal cards, and plays as ordinary rock, paper, scissors against another parry.













The practice turn

Step 8 is the only scripted turn. The opponent is set to play Scissors and move forward, with no parry. The player is told to pick Rock and click Forward. Rock beats Scissors, so the player wins the clash cleanly.

When the player presses Let's Go, the overlay lifts and the text panel hides so both cards stay visible. Gold pulses mark the Rock card and the Forward button. When the turn resolves, the overlay returns and step 9 opens. Pressing Let's Go on step 9 hands the player the real ability pick, and step 10 opens when they have chosen.

Tutorial content to fix

| Step    | Issue                                                         | Fix                                                                    |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5       | "adds both attacks knockback in to the move" is hard to parse | Reword to match the rule: the winning parry adds the loser's knockback |
| 4, 5, 8 | Instructions say left-click and right-click only              | Add the controller buttons, or a version for controllers               |

Backlog and Known Issues

Bugs and gaps

One item blocks play for controller-only players: the Instant Transmission tile choice. The rest are smaller.

| Item                                                                             | Area     | Effect                                                                                                                                                      | Part                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Instant Transmission tile choice is mouse-only                                   | Controls | A controller-only player cannot finish the turn                                                                                                             | Known input gaps       |
| Attack reach preview shows only on mouse hover                                   | Controls | Controller players get no preview                                                                                                                           | Known input gaps       |
| Only the first controller can pause                                              | Controls | Player 2 cannot pause Local Multiplayer                                                                                                                     | Known input gaps       |
| Tutorial has not been tested with a controller                                   | Tutorial | May need a mouse to finish                                                                                                                                  | Known input gaps       |
| R2 shows the turn history in Adventure Mode but peeks cards in Local Multiplayer | Controls | Inconsistent meaning for one button                                                                                                                         | Known input gaps       |
| Level 4 hazard tile not disappearing when pushed over it                         | Hazards  | From the original notes. Needs a retest against the current build                                                                                           | Ground pound (level 4) |
| Hard AI dashes when crowded, as if a dash were a retreat                         | AI       | A dash always goes toward the opponent, so from one tile away Hard swaps sides and stays at distance 1. Code fix needed: Hard should step back when crowded | Movement choice        |

## Content to finish

| Item                                                                                                                                                                    | Area                  | Part                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Names, personalities and signature skills for the five Adventure wizards (currently called Wind, Electric and Earth Wizard, King Dark Wizard, and the level 1 opponent) | Single-player wizards | Single-Player Wizards |
| Per-wizard stats and starting abilities, if any                                                                                                                         | Single-player wizards | Single-Player Wizards |
| A name and a look for the level 1 opponent, which reuses the blue wizard                                                                                                | Art                   | Single-Player Wizards |

| Item                                                        | Area  | Part                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| Intro animations for opponents 4 and 5                      | Art   | Single-Player Wizards |
| Confirm what Grand Wizard Mode does beyond stacking hazards | Modes | Game Overview         |

## Open design questions

- How should a controller player choose the Instant Transmission tile? (Controls and Input)
- Should the game have keyboard controls for cards and movement, given PC is the main platform? (Controls and Input)
- Should either player be able to pause in Local Multiplayer? (Controls and Input)
- How should the turn history (Tab or R2) be refined? It is the only way to see the AI's ability picks. (Controls and Input)
- Should the AI account for stage hazards when it moves? (AI Behaviour)
- Should each Adventure wizard have its own AI personality? (AI Behaviour)
- Does the AI's memory of the player's cards carry across rounds? (AI Behaviour)
- What happens to the winner's knockback when only the loser is in reach? Playtested, still fuzzy. (Round Flow)
- XP and levels: unsolved and unlooked at. (Round Flow)
- If the player picks something other than Rock and Forward on step 8, does the tutorial still move on? (Tutorial Design)
- Should the player practice a parry in the tutorial, since parry is the game's central risk? (Tutorial Design)
- Should the tutorial cover the Instant Transmission and Ki Charge coin flips, or leave them to the ability cards? (Tutorial Design)
- Should the tutorial mention stage hazards, or leave them to each opponent's introduction? (Tutorial Design)
- Should the tutorial work with a controller? Right now every instruction assumes a mouse. (Tutorial Design)

## Future scope

| Idea                                                           | Status                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Online play                                                    | Not built. Intended eventually                                                |
| Multiplayer on mobile                                          | Attempted, then stopped. The mobile port is paused                            |
| Touch layout for mobile                                        | Not designed                                                                  |
| Artifacts picked up between rounds that make a wizard stronger | Idea only. Abilities reset each round, so it conflicts with the current rules |
| New abilities                                                  | Attempted. The single line limits what an ability can do                      |

## Decision Log

A record of rules that were chosen on purpose, with the reason for each. Add a row when a rule changes.

| Decision                                                                   | Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Applies to    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| The extra knockback is the advantage. There is no separate advantage state | Reading your opponent pays off. If their Scissors is +5, a well-read parry can probably finish them. Other advantage states were tried and none felt as right                                                                                                                                                                                   | Round Flow    |
| The battlefield is a single line                                           | A wider arena brings to mind Mega Man Battle Network or One Step From Eden, and leans toward an arena fighter with more zoning. On a single line with rails, players are forced to engage. Platforms and ledges were considered, and they lean toward a different type of game. A side effect is that the line limits what new abilities can do | Game Overview |

| Decision                                                                                                  | Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Applies to          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| The line is 11 tiles, with wizards starting on tiles 4 and 6                                              | The middle tile is neutral at round start, and the wizards have movement options instead of being forced straight into the first round of Rock, Paper, Scissors                                                                  | Round Flow          |
| Throwing the same card is a draw                                                                          | That is how Rock, Paper, Scissors goes: throw the same thing and you go again. A draw also lets you change position                                                                                                              | Round Flow          |
| Parry beats only its own normal card and loses to the other two                                           | Balance. Counting how many outcomes each card wins showed parry was too strong otherwise. Winning fewer matchups ties into the advantage of getting the right read, so the advantage state is built into parry's risk and reward | Cards and Abilities |
| After a hit, the winner sees three abilities and picks first, then the loser picks from the remaining two | Rewards the player who is engaging, without power scaling too fast. An ability every turn would get too crazy too quickly. The winner gets a small incentive                                                                     | Cards and Abilities |
| Bonuses stack with no cap and reset every round                                                           | The round gets crazier and crazier until someone wins                                                                                                                                                                            | Cards and Abilities |
| Ki Charge is not a guaranteed win on a draw                                                               | Winning on a draw is very strong, so picking Ki Charge should not guarantee it                                                                                                                                                   | Cards and Abilities |
| Parry is modelled on Street Fighter III: Third Strike                                                     | It makes even the right move risky                                                                                                                                                                                               | Game Overview       |
| Local Multiplayer uses two controllers                                                                    | Each player can pick a card without the other seeing it                                                                                                                                                                          | Controls and Input  |
| Stage hazards belong to one wizard each and do not stack, except for the final boss                       | Gives Adventure Mode variety compared to 2P. The final boss has every wizard's power                                                                                                                                             | Stage Hazards       |

| Decision                                                                                                                 | Reason                                                                         | Applies to               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Grand Wizard Mode stacks hazards as the player advances                                                                  | A harder mode that unlocks after Adventure Mode                                | Game Overview            |
| A match should last about 5 minutes at most                                                                              | Allows quick games                                                             | Game Overview            |
| Hazard values follow the build: lightning pushes 2 tiles and kills on the third hit, and holes last until the round ends | The build is the reference for hazard rules                                    | Stage Hazards            |
| Artifacts between rounds are not part of the game                                                                        | Abilities reset between rounds, which works against getting stronger as you go | Backlog and Known Issues |
| Online play and mobile multiplayer were stopped                                                                          | The game is built for PC, and the mobile port is paused                        | Backlog and Known Issues |