Game Design Exercise

# STAR WARS PODRACING

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# 1. Game Overview

Provide a general description of the game positioning and its main premises

## 1.1 Genre Choice

**Choose a genre for your game from the list above. Let us know why you have chosen that one.**

I've chosen to design a **racing** game. I believe that combining Gameloft's expertise in the genre with a strong third-party IP could prove very successful.

Additionally, I greatly enjoy racing games myself, and I believe there's a certain lack of AAA Sci-Fi racing games, a genre that has had big hits in the past (such as *WipeOut* and *Star Wars Episode I: Racer*), and one that lends itself very well to certain FTP mechanics that encourage player fidelity.

**Will your game be 2D or 3D? Why?**

3D–it's a better fit for the genre and a much more logical choice for a game in which players are encouraged to unlock and customize new game elements (i.e. vehicles.)

## 1.2 Context and Art Direction

**Briefly describe the game universe and the context in which the game takes place.**

The game takes place in the *Star Wars* universe, specifically in the timeline of the hit TV show *The Mandalorian*. It will make use of the extensive worldbuilding associated with the brand, with callbacks to popular entries such as the current shows and the classic movies.

The game explores a host of different planets, each with its own visual identity, taken from the official *Star Wars* canon.

**Add here the visual references you would provide artists in your team to understand your proposed art direction for that context.**

Art references next page.

**Visual ref.:**



DISNEY INFINITY 3.0 EDITION - TWILIGHT OF THE REPUBLIC PLAY SET
© Disney.

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### 1.3 Player Role

**Briefly describe what role player takes in the universe you have proposed and what is his avatar in the world, if any.**

> The player will take the role of a new racer entering the podracing circuit, where they will compete for podracer parts and cash rewards, and the privilege of competing in increasingly prestigious races. They'll be able to customize their avatar, which will be visible in menus and cutscenes as well as in the pilot seat of their podracer during races.

### 1.4 Target Audience

**What is in your opinion the typical profile of players that will be most interested in your combination of choices?**

> Though the *Star Wars* brand has broad appeal in different age ranges and genders, the core audience for this game could potentially be millennial men, due in part to the nostalgic throwback to the N64 classic *Star Wars Episode 1: Racer*, and the fact that the audience for racing games in general tends to skew male[1].

### 1.5 Key Selling Points

**What distinguishes your proposal from its direct competitors in the genre? What provides it a unique positioning?**

> The main selling points of the game would be:
> - Only *Star Wars* branded racing game on the app store.
> - RPG elements and bigger narrative focus than average racing game.
> - Fitting a not over-saturated niche: futuristic racers[2].
> - Nostalgia for N64 classic *Star Wars Episode 1: Racer*.

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[1]https://newzoo.com/insights/articles/racing-player-consumer-insights-demographics-gaming-preferences-behavior-brand-attitudes-and-more/ (Accessed on: 1/12/2022.)
[2] There's no futuristic racers in the top 50 racing games in iOS.

# 2. Game Systems

Define the game entities and their rules of interaction in order to generate an engaging gameplay.

## 2.1 Game States

**Define the main game states in your proposal.**

- Character Customization
    - Where the player can create and customize a unique avatar.
- Garage Management
    - Where the player can see and manage their acquired vehicles.
- Race selection
    - Where the player can select a race to compete in or unlock special races.
- Racing
    - The main action phase of the game.

## 2.2 Game Entities

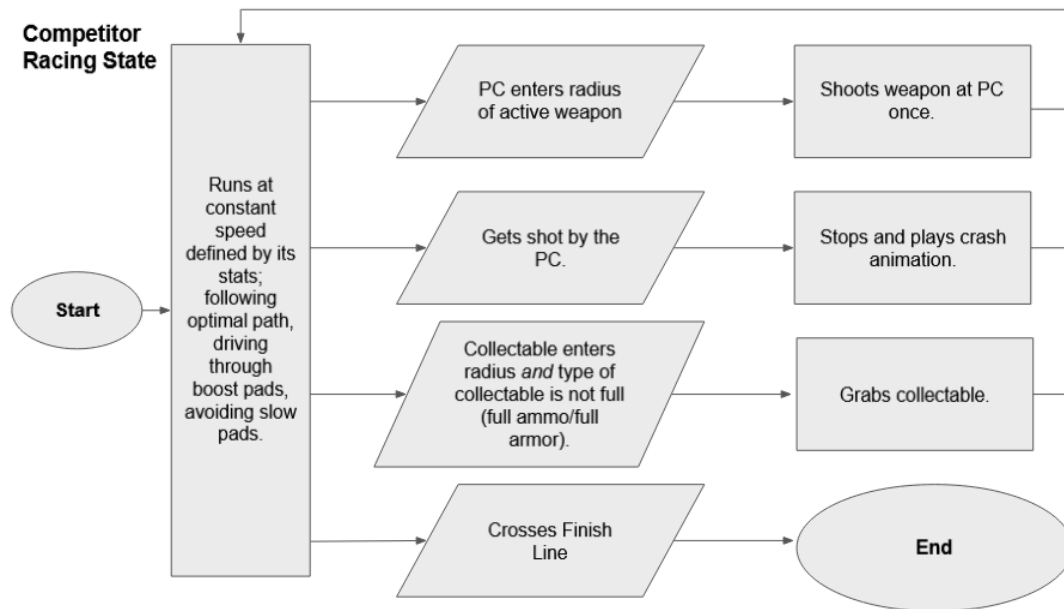**Define up to 5 game entities that will be used during the action phase.**

- Competitor
- Collectable
- Pad
- Hazard

**Define up to 5 game stats per game entity which you will use to add richness to their behaviours.**
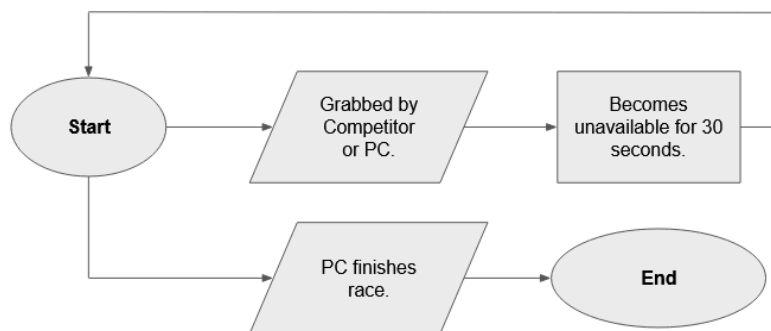
- Competitor
    - Speed
    - Maneuverability
    - Acceleration
    - Hitpoints
    - Aggressiveness
- Collectable
    - Radius
    - Type (Ammo/Armor)
    - Tier (Amount of ammo/armor it restores)
    - Availability
- Pad
    - Length
    - Width
    - Type (Speed boost/decrease)
    - Tier (Degree to which it increases/decreases speed)

- Hazard
  - Effect on speed
  - Effect on armor
  - Permanence
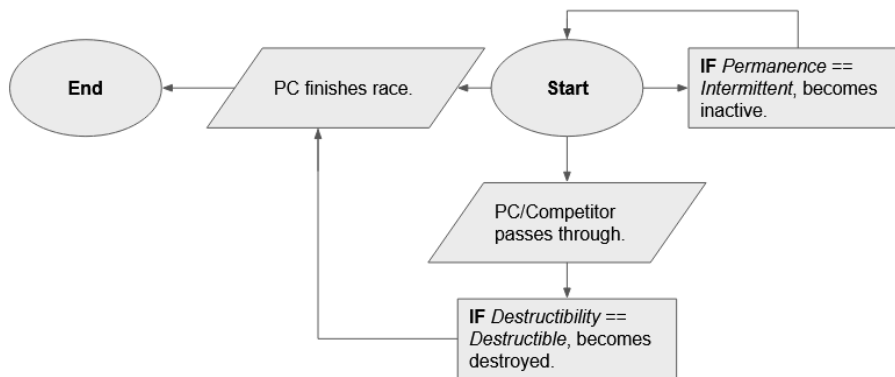  - Destructibility

**Define the behaviour of each entity in the game states it appears on. You can insert state machines graphs or flowcharts to illustrate your descriptions.**

**Competitor Racing State**

Start → Runs at constant speed defined by its stats; following optimal path, driving through boost pads, avoiding slow pads.

- PC enters radius of active weapon → Shoots weapon at PC once.
- Gets shot by the PC. → Stops and plays crash animation.
- Collectable enters radius *and* type of collectable is not full (full ammo/full armor). → Grabs collectable.
- Crosses Finish Line → End

**Collectable Racing State**

Start →
- Grabbed by Competitor or PC. → Becomes unavailable for 30 seconds.
- PC finishes race. → End

**Hazard**
**Racing State**



**What kind of entity instances (different combination of stats) of these entities would give richness to the game?**

- Competitors:
    - <u>Arch-Rival</u>
        - High Speed, High Maneuverability, High Acceleration, High Hitpoints, High Aggressiveness.
    - <u>Pushover</u>
        - Low Speed, Mid Maneuverability, Mid Acceleration, Mid Hitpoints, Low Aggressiveness.
- Collectables:
    - <u>High-Powered Energy Cell</u>
        - Mid Radius, Type Ammo, Tier 3/3.
    - <u>Minor Shield</u>
        - Large Radius, Type Armor, Tier 1/3.
- Pads:
    - <u>Major Decrease</u>
        - Mid Length/Width, Type Decrease, Tier 3/3.
    - <u>Mid Boost</u>
        - Mid Length/Width, Type Boost, Tier 2/3.
- Hazards
    - <u>Electrical surge</u>
        - Increases speed, Lowers armor, Intermittent, Cannot be destroyed.
    - <u>Rockslide</u>
        - Lowers speed, Lowers armor, Permanent, Is cleared/destroyed after first racer passes through.

## 2.3 Game Resources

**Define up to 5 game resources present in the game.**

- New Republic Credits
- Gems
- Parts
- Gas

**Define how each of those resources will be generated and on what they can be spent.**

- New Republic Credits (NRC)
    - Generation:
        - Completing races.
        - Doing Daily Challenges.
    - Expenditure:
        - Buying new vehicles (Podracers.)
        - Unlocking new game modes (Tournaments, Special Challenges.)
- Gems
    - Generation:
        - Purchased with real money.
        - Successfully competing in extra game modes (Tournaments, Special Challenges…)
    - Expenditure:
        - Buying new vehicles (Podracers)
        - Unlocking new game modes (Tournaments, Special Challenges…)
        - Acquiring skins at the cash shop
        - Refueling Gas.
- Parts
    - Generation:
        - Completing races
        - Doing Daily Challenges.
    - Expenditure:
        - Upgrading vehicles (Podracers.)
- Gas
    - Generation:
        - Real-life time passing
        - Refueling with Gems.
    - Expenditure:
        - Competing in races.

## 2.4 Player Actions

**Define up to 5 actions player can perform in each of the game states and the rules governing them. Define all the rules concerning them: when they're available, when they succeed, what resources they involve, etc.**

- Character Creation
  - Customize appearance.
    - Initial character customization, only starter cosmetic options available. Player can customize gender, face, hair, clothes.
  - Choose starting vehicle.
    - Player can choose from 3 different starting vehicles, each focusing in one of 3 stats (Speed, Acceleration, Maneuverability-)
- Garage Management
  - Inspect available vehicles.
    - Player can cycle through unlocked vehicles, check stats.
  - Purchase new vehicles.
    - Player can choose to purchase available vehicles using New Republic Credits or Gems.
  - Customize PC appearance.
    - Player can customize PC appearance with available customization options.
  - Upgrade vehicle.
    - Player can choose to upgrade any of the vehicle stats using Parts.
  - Choose active skin for a vehicle.
    - If the player has unlocked more than one skin for the current vehicle, they can choose the active skin.
- Race selection
  - Unlock new tournaments.
    - Player can unlock new tournaments using NRC or Gems. Tournaments allow the player to compete in a series of races and reward them with Gems if they win.
  - Unlock special challenges.
    - Player can unlock special challenges using NRC or Gems.
      - *Special Challenges require the player to complete a race with specific rules (time limits, extra hazards, etc.) and rewards them with Gems if completed successfully.*
  - Chose available race.
    - Choose to compete in an available race from story mode races or daily challenges. Requires Gas.

## 2.5 Game Loop

**Illustrate in one or more flowcharts the relation between game entities, game resources and player actions.**
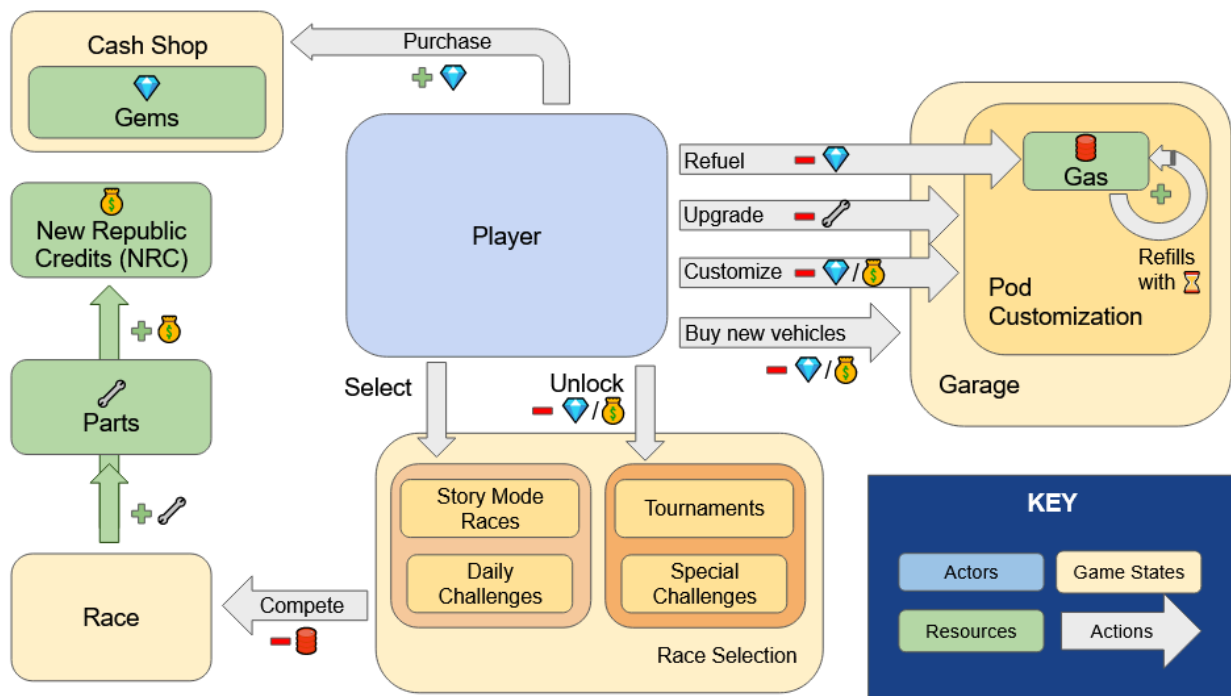
# 3. Level Design

Provide schematic of a typical level design in your game, understanding level as the environment where most of player's interactions happen.
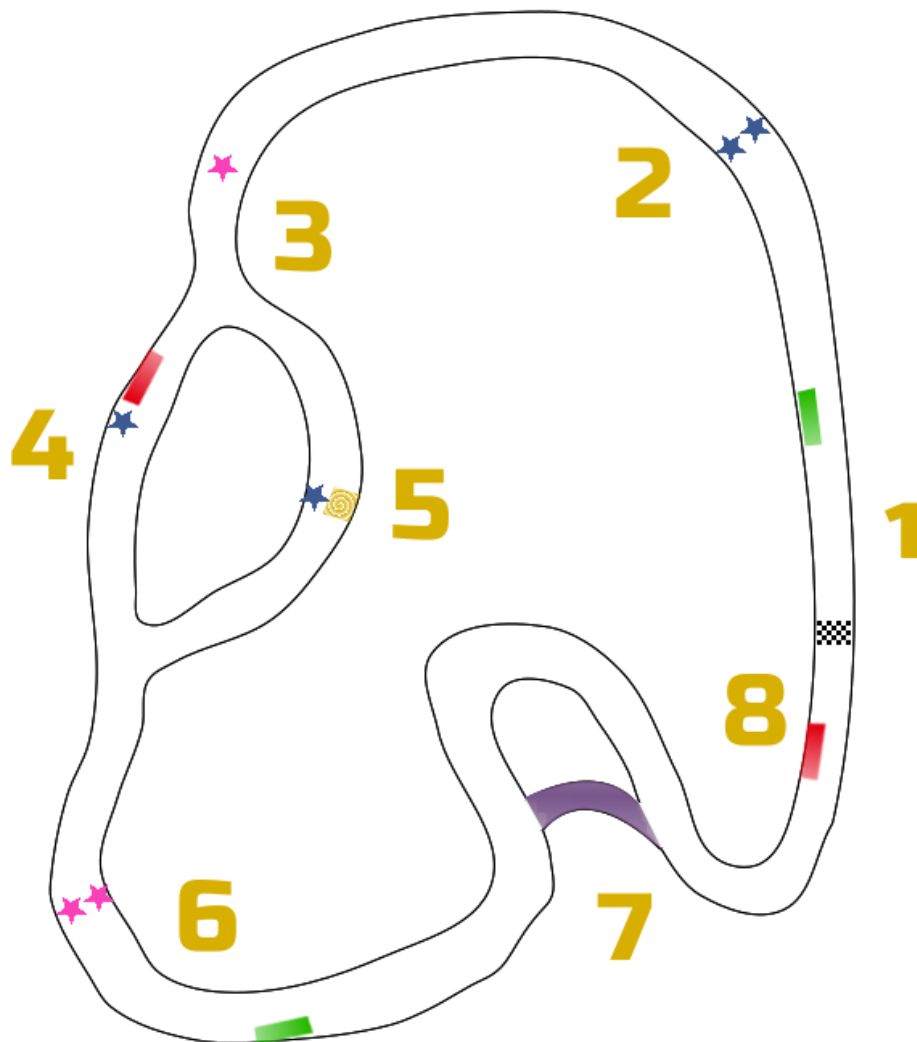
## 3.1 Key

**Define the key to read your level design and any other general guideline on how to read the level.**

| | |
|---|---|
| ▩ | Starting position / Finish Line |
| ▌ | Boos pad |
| ▌ | Speed decrease pad |
| ★ | Ammo |
| ★ | Armor |
| ◎ | Hazard |
| ▰ | Concealed shortcut |

## 3.2 Level Schematic

**Provide a schematic of your level design.**

## 3.3 Interest Points

**Briefly describe the experiences you aimed to achieve on each level section and how they contribute to the overall experience**

1. <u>Start of the race</u>: The track starts with a long straightaway to allow the players to get their bearings. A boost pad on the left lane of the first straightaway provides the first *sub-goal* of the track.

2. <u>First turn</u>: The first turn appears. Players that have run over the boost in the previous section will find it more difficult to maneuver the turn, providing an opportunity for players that have *not* been boosted to catch up. We also find here the first ammo collectables, starting the *fighting* part of the race.

3. <u>First armor and fork</u>: Players can acquire armor, continuing the fighting theme of the previous section. A fork presents two possible routes ahead–on the first lap, there's no way to know which path is better. Players that want to get better at the track can explore both paths and find which one is more rewarding.

4. <u>Left path–Slowing pad</u>: A slowing pad can punish players that fail to avoid it to the left, but the ammo package just after it can only be acquired when running over it. Can present interesting decision for the player.

5. <u>Right path–Hazard</u>: The only hazard in the track is present in this path. An electrical surge is intermittently emitting shocking pulses. Players that run through it loose armor but gain a short boost to speed. Can be optimal way to complete the race if players take care of armor.

6. <u>Fork ending and turn </u>: The path unites again, and the armor packages on the turn offer a reward for the players ahead.

7. <u>Hairpin turn/Shortcut</u>: A hairpin turn to end the track. Requires mastering, rewards replayability. A concealed shortcut is also available, rewarding astute players.

8. <u>Finish line</u>: A final slowing pad can provide a last-minute surprise to the race.

# 4. Game Navigation Structure

Represent through symbolic layouts the visuals of the game, their UI, the systems feedback and the buttons or any other mean allowing user to perform the actions you previously described.

## 4.1 Game Screens

**Define up to 5 screens in the game, and what game states they're linked to.**

- Vehicle Selection Screen, part of the *Garage Management* state:
    - Players can see their available vehicles, select an active vehicle, and move to the Vehicle Customization screen for any specific vehicle.
- Vehicle Customization Screen, part of the *Garage Management* state:
    - Players can spend parts to upgrade the stats of their vehicle, choose an active skin, and use gems to refuel the vehicle.
- Mode Selection Screen, part of *Race Selection*.
    - Player can choose which race mode to engage in: Story mode, Tournament, or Special Challenges. Player is informed of the Daily Challenge and their progress in it.
- Tournament Screen, part of *Race Selection*.
    - Player can unlock tournaments, and choose which one to participate in.
- Score Screen, part of *Racing*
    - Player is informed of their time and position in the race. Player is notified of any completed challenges, and any rewards they might have obtained.

## 4.2 Screen Fakes and UI

**Provide a schematic representation of each screen, highlighting the possible interactions on it and its UI elements. The screen ratio must be 16:9, either landscape or portrait mode.**

### S-013 - Vehicle Selection Screen
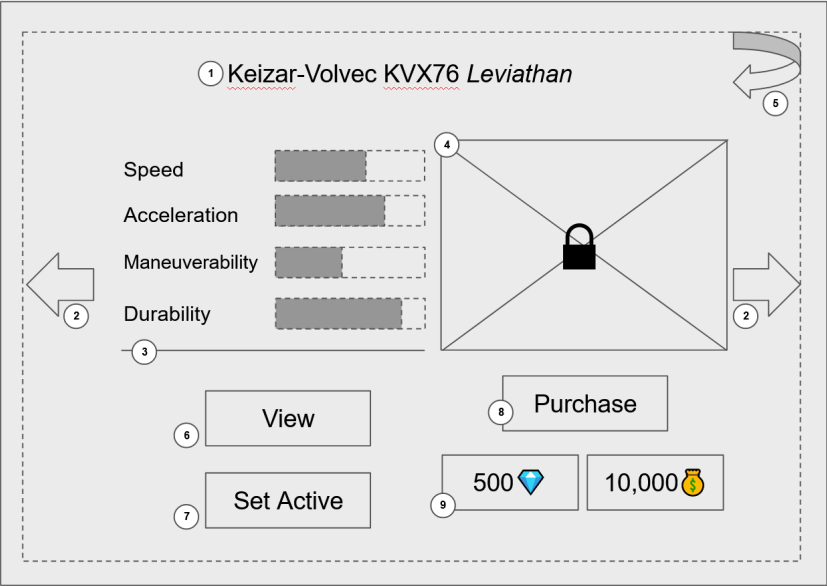


Screen safe area

1. Name of the current vehicle.
2. Navigation arrows, to view previous/next vehicle.
3. Stats of the current vehicle.
4. 3D render of current vehicle.
5. Back button, takes player to Main Menu.

*Only visible if player has acquired vehicle.*

6. View button, to enter Vehicle Customization Screen.
7. Set Active button, selects current vehicle as the one to be used in races.

*Only visible if player has **NOT** acquired vehicle.*

8. Purchase button. Allows player to add vehicle to available vehicles.
9. Price of vehicle, in gems and in NRC.

### S-014 - Vehicle Customization Screen
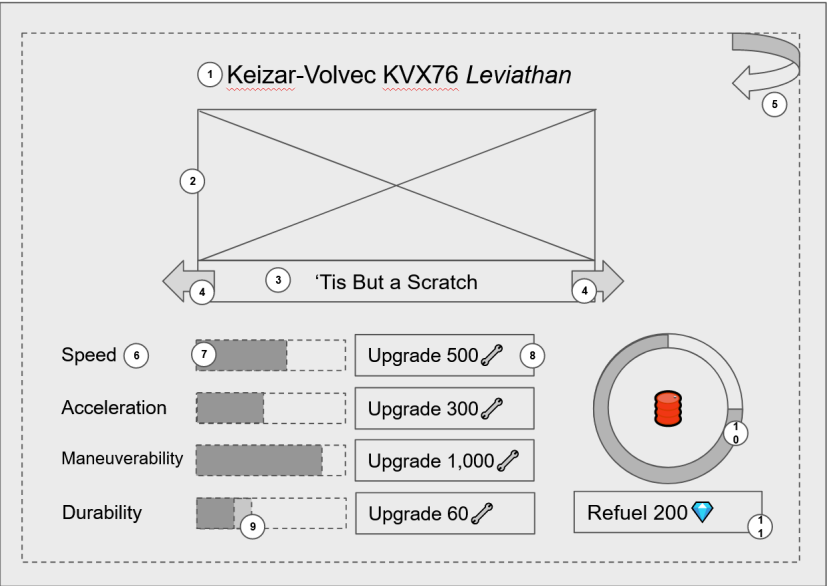


Screen safe area

1. Name of the current vehicle.
2. 3D view of the vehicle with current equipped skin.
3. Name of equipped skin.
4. Navigation arrows, to view previous/next skin.
5. Back button, takes player to Vehicle Selection Screen.
6. Name of stat.
7. Current value of stat.
8. Upgrade button to improve stat, with cost in Parts 🔧.
9. Value to gain after upgrading stat.
10. Current amount of Gas 🔋 in the vehicle.
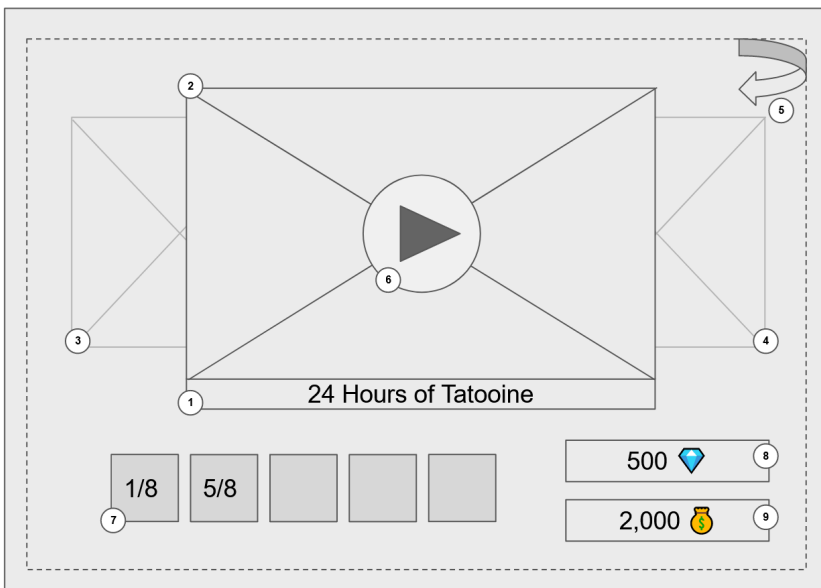11. Refuel button to reset Gas 🔋 to 100% for the cost in Gems 💎.

## S-015 - Mode Selection Screen
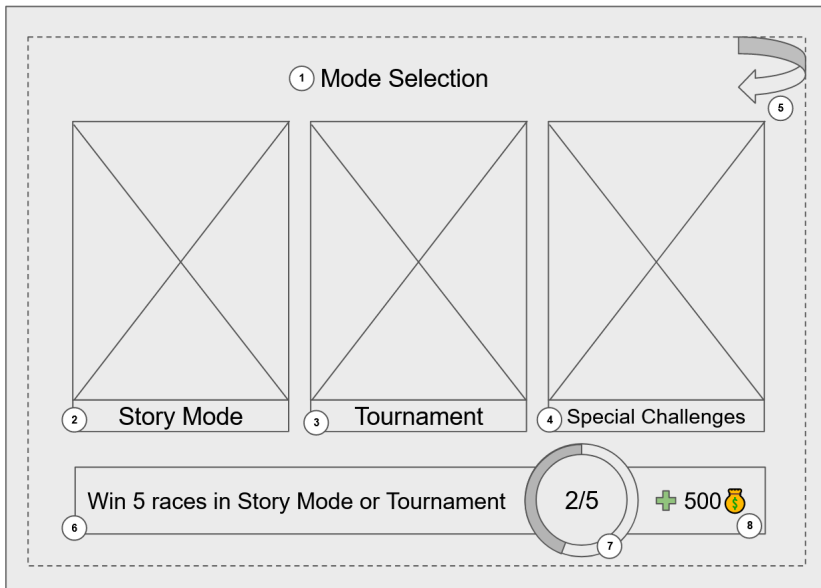


① Mode Selection

② Story Mode ③ Tournament ④ Special Challenges

⑤

Win 5 races in Story Mode or Tournament ⑥    2/5 ⑦    ➕ 500 💰 ⑧

---------- Screen safe area

## S-017 - Tournament Screen



② ⑤

③ ⑥ ▶ ④

① 24 Hours of Tatooine

⑦ 1/8  5/8

500 💎 ⑧

2,000 💰 ⑨

---------- Screen safe area

**S-020** - Score Screen



| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | View of the Player's vehicle at the finish line. |
| 2 | Placement of the racers in the race, with the Player highlighted. |
| 3 | Active Daily Challenge condition. |
| 4 | Active Daily Challenge progress. |
| 5 | Active Daily Challenge reward. |
| 6 | Back button, takes player to Main Menu. |

- - - - - - - - - -  Screen safe area

## 4.3 Navigation Flow

**Illustrate in a closed flowchart how the user navigates between all the different screens.**
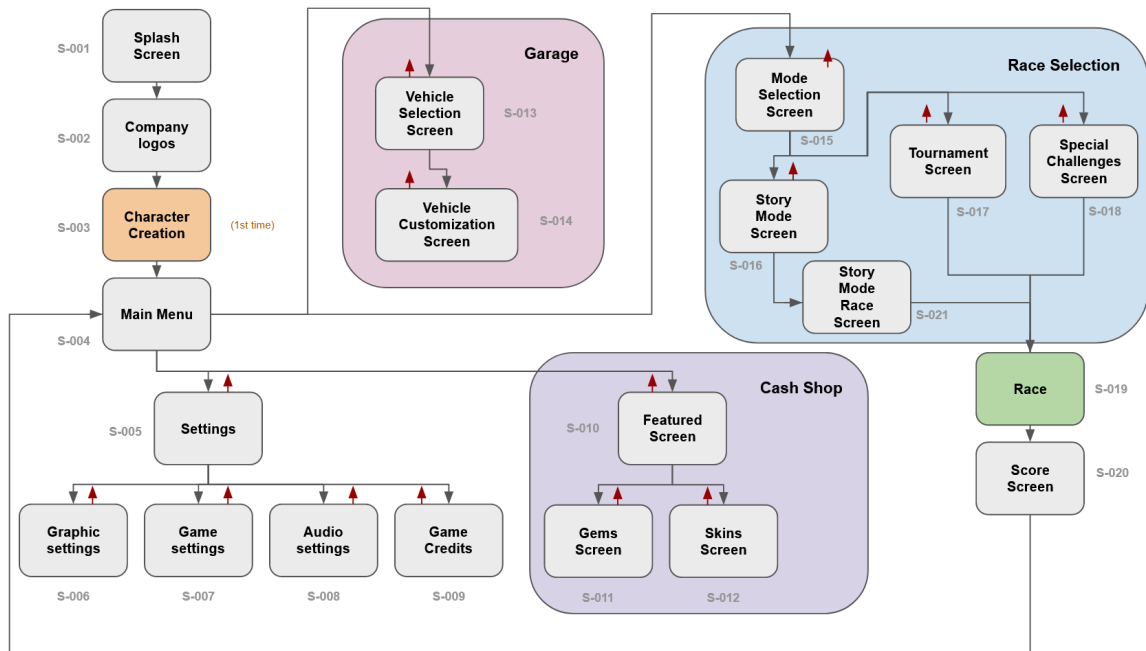
# 5. Game Goals

Articulate the reasons why a player will feel compelled to progress in the game.

## 5.1 Progression Tools

**Define up to 3 means to articulate progression in the game.**

- Race unlock in Story Mode races:
  - Progressing through Story Mode will unlock successive races.
- Player level/exp:
  - Player levels up through completing races and challenges. Some mechanics are level-gated (vehicle upgrades, tournaments.)
- Vehicle upgrading:
  - Player's vehicle can be upgrades, allowing them to compete in increasingly difficult races.

## 5.2 Short Term Goals

**Enumerate the goals player has during a game session.**

- Unlock new levels in Stor Mode.
- Upgrade current vehicle.
- Acquire new vehicles.

## 5.3 Mid Term Goals

**Enumerate the goals player has at any time between launching the game and having reached the endgame (all content played, all items owned).**

- Complete Story Mode
- Acquire all vehicles

## 5.4 Endgame Goals

**Enumerate the goals player has once he is in the endgame.**

- Compete in Special Challenges.
- Top leaderboards.
- Acquire new vehicles as they become available.

## 6. Freemium Features

Financial success of a freemium game greatly depends on its ability to bring more users into it, keep them in the game and eventually using compelling reasons for them to spend money in it.

### 6.1 Virality

**Define 3 or more tools to motivate a player bring new players into the game.**

- Direct Challenge
    - When challenging a player for a Special Challenge for the first time, unlock cost is waived.
- Custom leagues
    - Tournaments where all the players are friends competing through a series of levels for the first place.
- Twitch drops
    - Free skins for players watching streamers play the game.

### 6.2 Retention

**Define 3 or more tools to keep players coming back to the game.**

- Daily challenges
    - Perform a series of tasks (usually winning races) in ordrer to get resources. New challenge each day, can accumulate up to three.
- New vehicles
    - New vehicles get introduced periodically that can be unlocked through grinding.
- Weekly rewards
    - Players get extra resources if they play every day for a week.

### 6.3 Monetization

**Define 3 or more means through which the game would aim at triggering micro transactions.**

- Refueling vehicles
    - Skipping waiting times on using vehicles that have run out of gas.
- Unlocking Game Modes
    - Game Modes besides Story Mode have a resource cost to be unlocked.
- Customization
    - Skins can be bought for cash to customize the player's vehicles.

## 7. Bonus Deliveries

**This part is not mandatory for this test submission. However, it will only score positively to your application if you deliver a mock-up of the game you're proposing.**

I created an interactive mockup with Figma to represent my vision of the game. Link to the prototype can be found [here](#) (images may take a bit to load.)

- Sample screenshots of the prototype: