

MOLE MAIDEN



Mole Maiden Bible

By A.J. Fulco

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Game Title: MOLE MAIDEN

Intended Audience:

Action-adventure gamers ages 14 to 64 who enjoy adventure who enjoy fighting difficult bosses and interacting with unique characters.

Genre: 2D Action-Adventure

High Concept: *Punch-Out meets Ori and the Blind Forest*

Description:

Mole Maiden is a traditional 2D side-scrolling action-adventure game. Players will explore a large interconnected world to collect power-ups that allow them to explore more and fight bosses. Collecting new abilities allows the player to overcome natural barriers in the world, making progression feel natural and organic. Defeating any of the game's six main bosses will unlock different routes through the world.

After acquiring the game's basic abilities, the player's path through the world is dependent on what the player does. I want to make sure that there is more than one way to go through the game, I want each player's adventure to feel like their own. A similar sensation I felt from playing games like Breath of the Wild and Hollow Knight.

The goal with Mole Maiden is to make a game whose character feels as fluid as possible to play, but a world that oozes personality and character.

Story:

Penny is a young girl living in R&D mines, a self-sustaining society founded in the skeleton of an old resource mine for a Trillion-dollar ACME company. Penny has an older sister named Coppra who is about seven years older than her, and whom she looks up to as a role model.

The Burrow League is a WWE-style fighting tournament held exclusively in R&D mine. Now that Penny is 14, she is finally old enough to compete. Partaking in this tournament means everything to Penny, as all her life she has dreamed of being able to fight with her sister in the Championship round. Penny will leave home to explore R&D Mines and defeat the six Burrow League Captains to acquire their medals and qualify for the championship fight. Along the way,

she will meet silly side characters, navigate her way through a large world, and find new powers to make her more able in combat but also gradually open where she can traverse.

Will Penny be able to live her dream, will she maybe take her sister's place as the BML Champion?! (Probably, there is no way to finish the game unless she does).

Settings/Environments:

The game's general direction of progression is down. Mole Maiden is meant to feel like diving into water to grab something at the bottom of the pool, and when you resurface you have the thing you were looking for.

The Surface

- *Iceberg Forest (optional area)*
 - o *The shattered remains of R&D corp. A trillion-dollar ACME-style company whose scientific endeavors eventually helped the founders of R&D mine create their self-sustaining underground society.*
 - o *Ability Get: The Rocket Overcharge. (Optional ability)*
- *R&D division*
 - o *The R&D building for Acrentale Corporation*

Geocross

- *The first area is home to the Boulder Dojo, Checkpoint Cave, and the abandoned Mine base.*
- *This is the place where Penny will start.*
- *Four Key events happen here:*
 - o *The game's beginning.*
 - o *First Gleo encounter and battle.*
 - o *First Captain Battle (King B.)*

Metrovol

Home of the R&D capital Sand Highway City! A huge city full of secrets and acts like a central hub for the player. Coming here earns you the Highway License which lets you unlock and fast travel to areas you have already visited via the Sand Highway. Some secret areas can also be unlocked by saving up and buying tickets.

Eden

Eden is a greenhouse in the R&D mine. Covered from head to toe in lab-made plants that can grow in the conditions of this region. The ground consists largely of soil brought down from the surface. It was built about five years ago by the HIVE as a way of showcasing their planetary restoration technology. Since then, businesses from all over the complex have partnered with the HIVE to use their tech to improve life below the surface. Think of Eden a large cave covered with tons of scaffolding and plants everywhere. That's Eden.

- *Red-Soil Sediments*
 - o *This area is curvier than other parts of the map. There are more than one “one-way paths’ that are triggered by the wet muddy sedimentary soil that collects around the area. This area is part water-level? Or it could be part of a clay extract expedition. (THINK ABOUT WHAT RESOURCES NEED TO BE MINED FROM THIS AREA TO MAKE IT PART OF THE ECOSYSTEM)*
 - o *SanFran Flowstone:*
 - *Houses TT, the Jackhammer Warrior. Watch old Kung Fu movies for inspiration on the level and the captain trial.*
- *Uncharted Ravines:*
 - o *The newest extract project for R&D mines is headed by the CEO of drill tech Allan Hitchcock, and the 5th Burrow League Captain.*
 - o *This place is dark. Really, really, dark. Just the way Allan likes it.*
- *Okimagma*
 - o *R&D Mine’s beautiful tropical resort. Relax inside the 100.c saunas. Bring the kids and play along the molten magma beaches.*
 - o *Home to Bacon, the 6th and final Burrow League Captain. There is no exploration in this part of the map, just a long drill gauntlet to the bottom, a highway station, and the fighting arena.*
- *Quartz Pyramid*
 - o *The final area*
 - o *Boss rush area*

Features/Gameplay:

Mole Maiden’s stars are its bosses and the strange unconventional world they inhabit. Bosses are designed with the puzzle-like tactical strategy of punch out, a game franchise that has been criminally underappreciated in the last decade or so.

Players need to study their opponent to know when the right time is to strike and use their new abilities in a fun and creative ways to figure this out.

USPs:

Mole Maiden’s main focuses are on making a world that is stuffed to the brim with personality and features a character that feels very fluid to control.

To make a world full of personality, the game’s cast is very diverse, with the areas they live in influenced by the boss-fighting theme. I want to focus on showcasing the “melting pot” culture of America and push myself to make characters from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds.

While this is something that might help MM stand out from other metroid-vainia on the market, I don’t want the game to be a statement on racism or push an agenda. MM is a game about enduring challenges and working to accomplish your dreams.

Game Design Document Outline, Part 1:

The Basics

Game:

Finally at age 14, Penny Copper can enter the Burrow Miner League to compete for her chance to become the next champion. She will need to leave home and travel the entirety of R&D mines to find the tools she needs to become the very best.

Genre:

Action-Adventure/Boss rush

Audience:

Mole Maiden is a boss rush title like mega-man with a skill-based control scheme that rewards mastery and dexterity.

Unique Selling Point(s):

- Quick fluid gameplay
- Crazy Punch-Out like boss battles
- Fun and diverse characters
-

Story

Plot:

Penny Copper, a young 14-year-old girl dreams of fighting her sister Coppra (the Burrow League Champion). Now at age 14, she is finally old enough to qualify but to do this, she will need to defeat the 6 Burrow League captains and get their medals. Along the way, Penny will meet a cast of colorful characters and earth-shattering enemies as she fights to be the very best.

Penny Copper - The Player Character:



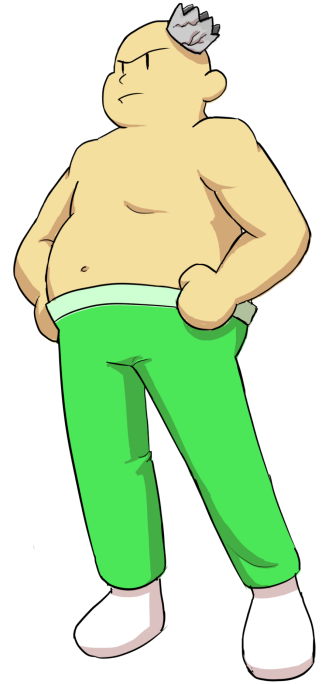
Penny is the playable character and the heroine of Mole Maiden. She is a young girl, age 14. She takes on every new challenge with eager anticipation and isn't afraid to get her hands dirty. Or her face, or her clothes, or anything really. She isn't a tomboy, however. She has a distinct feminine cuteness about her that helps her to take on any challenge with an ambitious eagerness and celebrate every victory with a child-like glee!

Her iconic drill arms and burrow suit are a product of her and her father. Penny knew from a very young age that she wanted to challenge her sister Coppra in the Burrow League Championship. So, to help with this they designed this suit to help her burrow through the ground and attack with a big ol' umph! Her drill hands can be attached together to form a whole drill burrow through soft soil with ease. Her oversized pants help provide a seam for the drills to stay put while she burrows through the ground. They also double as her backpack!

The Burrow League

King Boulder:

One of the Burrow League's six Captains, King B takes pride in the fighter's spirit. Something he may have picked up when studying combat at Yama Yama Mountain. He believes in the power of "Human Strength" and refuses to use any weapons when facing his opponents. His size alone makes him a very difficult opponent, but his attacks are easy to dodge or get around. He is tough but with a generous and kind heart, the ideal couch figure. He also wears a rock that looks like a crown on his head as a type of fashion piece, but he is not regal in any way. He is very humble and stern, but seeing the people he trains exceed expectations brings him incredible joy! When in combat he is known to attack by curling into a ball and charging into the walls of the arena, or by using his signature "Earthquake Stomp" to attack opponents from a faraway distance. He believes in using muscle alone.



Zephra:

Zephra is a career-driven woman who doesn't like to waste time. She runs R&D Mine's largest power plant, a job that she takes very seriously. When she's not working, she is fulfilling her duties as one of the Burrow League Captains. Her weapon of choice is her homemade wrist turbines. Essentially four magnetic bracelets (two for each wrist) spin fast enough to generate electricity. This gives her the ability to smite enemies from afar, and essentially turn her body into a magnet; pushing and pulling enemies away and towards her. She moves by zipping from point to point, but never from point A to B. More of a Point $A > B \frac{1}{2} > B$. And if that wasn't confusing enough, Zephra's fight also serves as an introduction to lingering projectiles being used in battle. Essentially, projectiles spawned by the boss make certain parts of the room hostile. She is about 35, and lives alone. She doesn't like to



make friends, not even with her coworkers. Maybe she is lonely, or maybe she is just scared that if a spark builds between her and someone else, it might stop their heart.

Mizu

Mizu is the youngest of all the Captains (age 13). As a smaller child, she would often be seen playing with the family garden hose, always obsessed with the concept of water pressure.

Sometimes going as far as to modify the family hose to see how strong she could get the stream to go. Eventually, this obsession with water earned her a spot in the Sand Highway City Fire department, and as one of the Burrow League Captains. *Mizu* and Penny grew up together in Check Point Cave until she was about 10 years old when her family moved to Sand Highway City. The two kept in touch, some friendships are just not affected by distance.



Mizu fights by strapping a fire hose to the back of her suite and filling it with water. She can then release the water out of her large sleeves like some kind of large water cannon. Her shots penetrate many surfaces including soft soil. You can't just hide in the ground to avoid taking damage with this fight. She will wash you out. Mizu has two ways of getting around. She will march slowly around the room using the water to hover, she will also use her water to launch herself upward. A special move of hers dubbed "the Faris wheel" see's her jetting water from her arms and legs and spinning clockwise or counterclockwise. Another is her signature "***Bada bada burgage***", zipping from one corner of the arena to the other before releasing her bottled-up water in a big explosion.

Her childish nature makes her extremely playful in nature, and slightly devilish. She gets way too into character sometimes and doesn't really know when to turn it down.

Tue Tu (TT)

A Mother of two in her late 30's early 40's, TT runs the Umai Ramen shop in San Fran



Flowstone with her husband Shigeru while also fulfilling her responsibilities as a Burrow League Captain.

She lost her legs when she was 16 trying to save one of the younger students at the temple she was training at. Later, she learned to use her iconic Jack-hammer shoes and change her combat focus from Kung-Fu to kickboxing. Along that journey, she met her husband who was a strange man with a dream to make the best bowl of noodles in the world.

She fights by luring her opponents into the air, where she juggles them with hundreds of perfectly executed kicks. When air isn't an option, however, she will resort to her blinding speed and deal damage by smashing into them.

Alan Hitchcock:

The CEO of Hitchcock Excavations, Alan is the biggest tycoon in R&D Mines. He lives in the second deepest part of the complex (Deep Dark Ravine) living comfortably in his penthouse at the top of Tycoon Tower. Alan and his staff don't spend a lot of time in lit areas for some reason. They almost seem to have a violent reaction against it. We have no idea if he is a vampire or not.

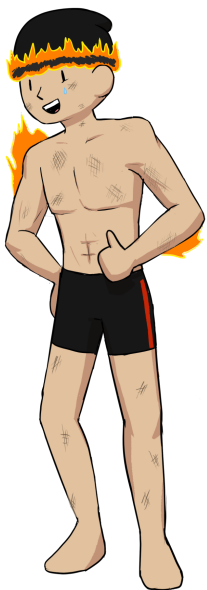
When Alan fights, he uses the area's lighting system, an army of

remote-controlled mining robots, and some killer smooth dance moves, to swoon the competition and cha-cha-chop them down.



Bacon:

The final Burrow League Captain, Bacon lives in the deepest part of the complex. The tropical hell-scape paradise; Okimagma! He is relatively young, in about his early 30's, and loves to swim through the Magma beneath the earth's crust. No one knows how the hell he learned to do this, but supposedly, his skin has been burned so much that it formed a protective armor around him so that he can swim in the Magma. He spends every waking moment of his life in excruciating pain.... But takes on each day with a big smile and unmatched enthusiasm.



The Diamond Trio

The Diamond trios are the three former champions of the Burrow League and your final challenge before facing the current champion. Each time a champion falls the oldest member of the group leaves for the former champion to fill the empty place.

Peekoro:

Peekoro is the oldest member of the Diamond Trio both in placement and age. He is an extra-talented tinkerer who loves to build mech robots to fight in.

Larenza:

Will:

Coppra - The Burrow League Champion



The most powerful champion the Burrow League has ever known, she is 23 years old and can punch through any surface with ease. She has only one weakness however, she

cannot break diamonds. Coppra became the Burrow League champion at age 14 and has held that title ever since.

In the ring, she exhibits unbridled speed and hits like a goddamn truck. Her defense is rock solid (pun intended) and more often than not, the best time to go in for an attack is when she is about to attack herself. She will make quick work of you, and will not show mercy. Just don't get her too angry, rumor has it she might have some anger management issues.

The Villains

The HIVE



Created by scientist Mal Be-OI, the HIVE is a scientific organization that serves R&D's public with various inventions and tools that people now use in their everyday lives. Using this propaganda story they lure unsuspecting civilians from around R&D mines who are inspired by the will to do good and perform acts of terror to "motivate" other parties. They have built their base of operation in an area called Eden. A utopian greenhouse is full of plants created and grown in the HIVE labs. They use their technology all around R&D Mines to help improve living and earn the trust of the public.

They are NOT bees but rather supposed to be Hornets. Very aggressive and invasive.

Over the course of Penny's adventure, their evil plan of domination causes the two to clash heads multiple times, eventually ending in Penny defeating Mal and disbanding the group.



Mal Be-oi:

The "queen" of the HIVE, Mal is a power-hungry sociopath with radical ideologies and a silver tongue. When doing PR work, she wears a mask of compassion and world-changing ambition to make people question their morals and recruit more commoners.



Despite this, she started the HIVE with the intention of making Earth inhabitable, but she believes that only she has the self-control to make sure the same mistakes happen again. To accomplish her goal of domination she has been testing and developing a serum that makes people more complacent to her bidding. The hornet theme comes from the hive mind-like properties of the serum mixed with its chemical diagram resembling a honeycomb.

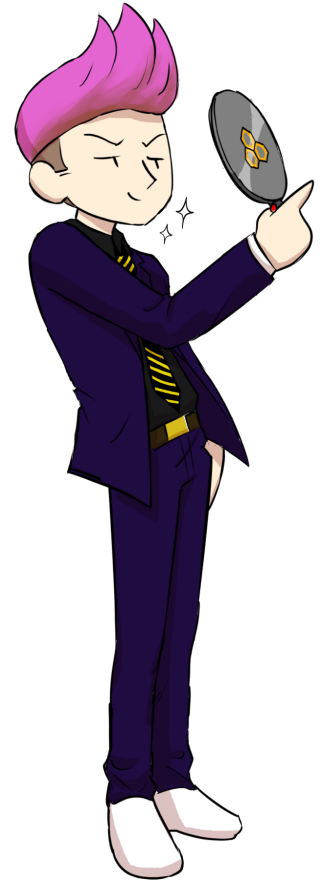
Charles:

Charles is the HIVE's co-founder and its lead engineer. All of the HIVE's technology is a product of him in some way.

Charles is a very self-centered and narcissistic character. Rarely does he show any kind of sympathy or interest for others, he is always fixing his hair and admiring his looks in his multitool mirror. A mirror of his own design that doubles as both a sword and projectile shooter.

From a very young age, Charles was a power-hungry individual, using his cunning mind and smooth charm to get his way and climb the social ladder. However, he seems to not know his own limits, and his quest for power never really stopped. How Charles and Mal teamed up is still not known, but supposedly Charles joined the HIVE because he sees Mal as a means to an end.

He is a classically trained fencer and moves with the skill of an acrobat as he floats through the air with his anti-gravity technology.



Other Characters:

N.U.R.S.E.:

N.U.R.S.E. is a brand of steampunk AI automatons who reside in the various break rooms littered throughout the map. They are designed to be cutesy, energetic, and spunky (not as sexy though). They speak with this personality as well.

They move with the stiffness and jerkiness of a Chuck-E-Cheese animatronic, with exception of the few pre-made emotes given to them by the corporation.

Martha and Jerome:

Martha and Emanuel are Penny and Coppra's, parents.

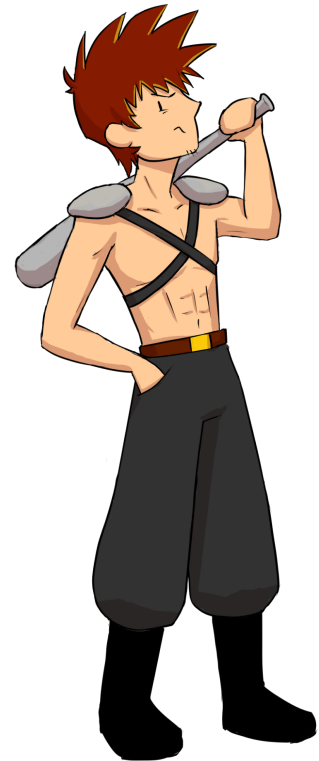
Martha lives and works in Check-point Caves as the checkpoint security guard. She has a confident and empathetic person who always tells her kids to “go for broke!” She believes in hard work and giving 120% at the things you love. Before she was married, she lived in Sand Highway city as the chief of police. But opted to retire to a quieter position and location to raise her family.

Emanuel lives at home with Martha. He is a tall and weathered man, who enjoys sitting in the kitchen and reading.

Gleo:

Gleo is a mysterious individual and Penny's Rival. His motives are not quite clear. We know that he shares the same goal as Penny, but unlike her wants to take Coppra's title of champion.

He is from the capital Sand Highway City where he had a troubled upbringing. After the circus shut down, Gleo and his older brother Charles were forced to fend for themselves in the streets. Charles was the brain and Gleo was the brawn, often relying on aggression to survive. This has unfortunately become part of his personality. If things don't go his way, we will probably just beat the snot out of you and move on. He doesn't take no for an answer when he doesn't want to and goes where he wants to go. He will pick on kids, old people, young people, middle-aged, and even babies! This man knows no bounds. His weapon of choice is his trusty burrow bat, which can shapeshift into a drill to help him burrow into the ground.



Nester Ulcher:

Nester enforces all Burrow League regulations. He is a stingy pencil pusher who “always does his job honestly.” He has no friends and lost all his hair at age 27. There is no hope for this man. His whole life revolves around his job. You can punch him as many times as you want, but he will never yield.

The Legendary Creatures (Densetsu Ikimono)

In R&D Mine there are three “*legendary creatures*” hidden in the map. These three creatures are optional bosses that can be fought for an extra challenge. Each boss drops diamond ore and money.

The EarthWorm:

Location: Geocress

The earthworm is a giant worm that evolved to have dinosaur-like qualities. It towers over Penny and has a long reach. Access to this fight can be earned after you get the ID badge from captain Zephra in Tinn.

The Gravel Guardian:

Location: Tinn

The Gravel Guardian is a hidden boss found in Tinn. He is a poor soul who slipped on gravel and fell into a deep dark hole. He swims through the gravel and attacks by popping out where you least expect it. He also eats whatever falls into the pit he lives in, doesn't matter if it's human or not.

Gear Head:

Location: Iceberg Forest

Gearhead is an old factor robot that was initially off line in the R&D Labs. While exploring the site, it's possible to find the rooms that it is in and activate it for a big boss battle.

Gearhead is a boss I came up with seven years ago and want to reincorporate into Mole Maiden.

NPCs:

It's important to note that the culture in R&D Mine is heavily influenced by the environment they live in. The constant danger and unpredictability of life underground have created a sense of camaraderie and toughness among the people. They have developed a unique sense of humor and a no-nonsense attitude toward life.

Despite the harsh environment, the people of R&D Mine are surprisingly supportive of each other. They believe in lifting each other up and allowing everyone to be who they want to be. This attitude is reflected in the way they work together, often sharing resources and knowledge to ensure everyone's safety and success.

The love of fighting and competition is also deeply ingrained in the R&D culture. The burrow league fights mentioned earlier are a prime example of this. These fights are not necessarily

violent in nature, but rather a way for people to blow off steam and compete against each other in a safe and controlled environment.

In terms of traditions and customs, the people of R&D Mine have developed their own unique way of life. They have their own slang and dialect, as well as a love of music and storytelling. They also have a strong connection to the land and the resources it provides, often using them in creative ways to make their lives easier.

Overall, the culture of R&D Mine is one of resilience, camaraderie, and individuality. Despite the challenges they face living in such a harsh environment, the people of R&D Mine have created a close-knit community that values and supports each other.

It's this combination of ambition, encouragement, and bombastic over-the-top violence that lead to the creation of the Burrow Miner League. To them, it's their pastime and their greatest treasure.

Story Vehicles:

The story progresses based on the number of medals you have and what abilities you have acquired. For the most part, the game is very open, allowing the player to go to certain points of the map in any order that they want to go. However, in areas where the game needs to be a bit more story-focused, organic points of no return will be used to lock the player in a certain part of the map until a story beat has been completed. A bit like Metroid Fusion.

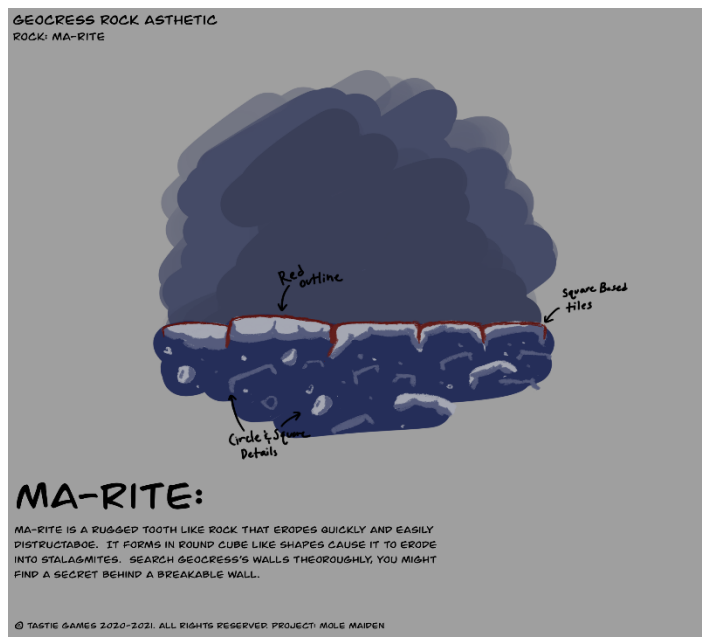
The Game World

Environments:

Regions in R&D mines are divided by the type of rock that makes up that area. Geocress is a fictional rock called Marite. Which is a rock that takes the form of square-like teeth on the surface of it.

Each region will likely consist of an imaginary rock that will serve to color code the map, give each region a certain type of aesthetic, and provide a mechanic like breakable walls or slippery surfaces. Sometimes there can be pockets of a different type of rock between scenes.

Key Locations:



Geocress is the place where you start the game. It is also the only way to get to the surface and see the lore heavy Iceberg Forest.

The Quartz period is where the final battle for the game will take place and all the other locations are home to one of the Burrow League Captains.

Game Flow:

How does the player character experience your game world? How do the world's locations connect? Include the order in which the player encounters the sections of your game world. Note: Make sure the connections between areas are either logical or make sense within the context of your story!

Interactivity:

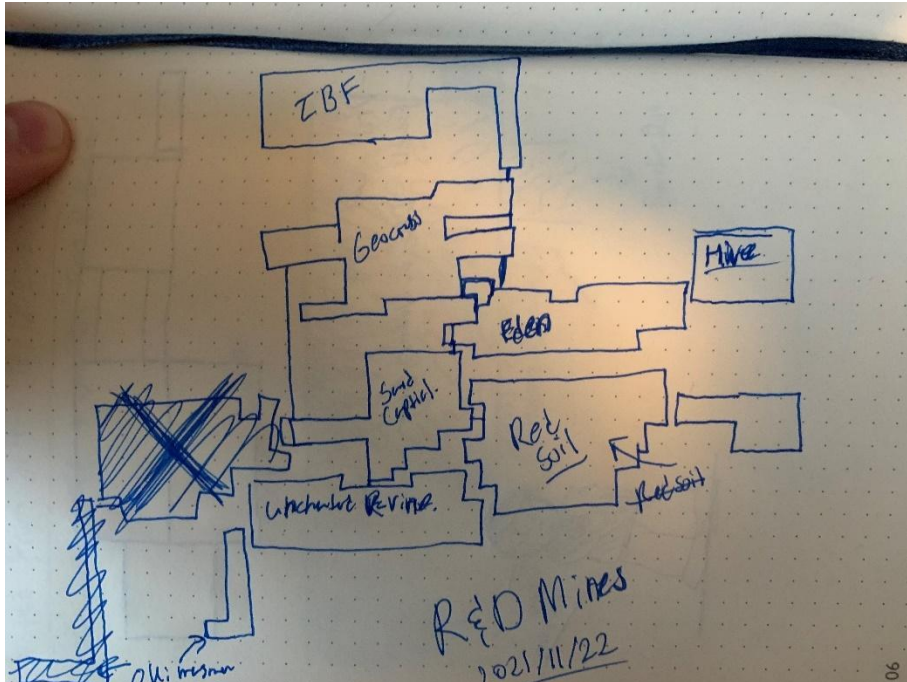
- *Burrowing: Soft soil is littered all over the map, and the only way for the player to get through it is to burrow into it.*
- *Punching: This is the main way to damage your enemies. Standard punch is the game's equivalent of a light attack.*
- *Coil Launch: a mechanic tied to navigation and also attacking. The coil launch lets you launch yourself 360 degrees. Launching into soft soil is how you start to burrow and launching into an enemy will give you slightly more damage than a normal punch attack.*
- *Talking: There are various NPCs to talk to in the game. Talk up and say hello.*

Training:

The game opens with Penny waking up on the day of the opening ceremony. During this time, the player gets an opportunity to explore the town and talk to people without worrying about combat or dying. After talking to Penny's mom, she goes back home to get her burrow gear and then her room is filled with soft soil. You must use the drill to get out, and that's how you learn to play the game.

Map/Layout:

Mole Maiden map takes inspiration from the more linear entries in the Metroid franchise like Metroid 2 and Metroid fusion. Exploration isn't exactly the name of the game, but the game can be opened, and sequence breaks for the experienced player.



Game Design Document Outline, Part 2:

MOLE MAIDEN

Gameplay

Player Experience:

Mole Maiden is an athlete fantasy about pursuing your dreams while overcoming obstacles that stand between you.

The adventure will be a wired wind of emotions of every kind while encouraging interesting experimentation, playing the game better, and beating it faster.

Replaying the game is the goal, to encourage the longevity of the product.

Player Character Actions:

Penny's main ability (and the one that earned her the nickname "Mole Maiden") is that she can Burrow into the ground using her Drill Arms. If she burrows for too long, however, she will stop dead in her tracks and must wait as she recovers from being dizzy (this also shaves off 1 whole block of health).

While Burrowing Penny Can:

- Forward dash to attack enemies.
- Drop up to three bombs that can be used to break borders or attack chasing enemies.
- Dashing before surfacing will preserve her momentum and give her some extra air.

Player Character End Goal:

Penny's main goal is to qualify for the Burrow Miner League's championship round and fight her sister Coppra for the title of champion. Since Penny was a child, this has been her dream, and (eventually) when the player overcomes the final challenge, they are rewarded with an emotional and triumphant award sequence/credit role.

Afterward, the player will unlock different things. First, they will unlock a Boss Rush mode where they can refight all the game's bosses one after another or individually. Then they unlock One-Life Mode, which is a special game mode where if you die you must start the game from the beginning.

Enemies:

The HIVE is a group of radicalistic science folk operating as a non-profit global restoration project. The group is run by its creator Mal Be-ol, a scientist developing a submissive serum called HIVE MIND. Her ambitions are to enslave the people or R&D mind to form an army of expendable laborers to restore the planet earth to its former glory.

Her philosophies can be labeled as some sort of extreme communism, believing that the greed of capitalism and individualist philosophies for the west is what killed the planet in the first place. Assisting in this operation is her chief engineer Charles, a mid-20-something-year-old with an eye for style and himself. Like Mal, he too strives for world domination and sees her plan as a means to an end. Charles is never too far from his Queen and is a trained fencer. He uses a multi-tool mirror to fight.

Combat:

Combat functions differently depending on the enemy that you are fighting.

Surface Combat:

- **Standard punches:** *Standard 123 punch combo, achieved by pressing the attack button in constant succession.*
- **Slide:** *Dash forward for a short amount of time. Jumping cancels your dash to help you stop on a dime. Cannot be used while airborne.*
- **Counter:** *Landing a critical hit stuns the enemy letting you attack them for a while or take a second to heal yourself.*
- **Coil Launch:** *This can be used on some airborne enemies to stun and damage them. Attacking enemies this way does not you the energy to heal yourself.*

- **Rocket Thrust Flame:** Using the double jump like Rocket Thrusters above an enemy will damage them. This is not required to beat any boss but is a fun ability that can be used in platforming puzzles.
- **Speed Rooster:** Run at small enemies at high speeds to defeat them instantly.
- **Rocked Overcharge:** Ram into an enemy using the RO for various types of results. Skip boss phases, defeat instantly, or shave off a big chunk of health.

Burrow Combat:

- **Dash Attack:** While burrowing press the A button to perform a small dash. Dashing into an enemy will damage them.
- **Bomb Attack:** Some enemies might chase Penny. If this happens, pressing the square button while burrowing will drop a bomb where Penny is.

Boss Fights:

Some bosses can be attacked whenever, and others have weaknesses that need to be discovered to fight more effectively, but every boss should strike a balance of puzzle-solving and engaging skills. Each boss is different from the other, none are copied and pasted. Bosses will use both their arenas and unique weapons to fight the player. Sometimes these tools are their greatest ally but also their greatest weakness.

Puzzle Bosses are very defensive, here and there you can chip off some health but most of the time you need to use either your environment or your abilities in interesting ways to break their defense and allow you to do serious damage.

Combat Bosses are bosses that are not as defensive as Puzzle Bosses and are usually more about attacking them in fun and creative ways. Their defense is usually about keeping their distance from the player, or constantly attacking the player, making it hard to heal or use some of the beefier moves that take time to execute.

Wild Card bosses are bosses that possess both the above-mentioned characteristics. Yes, each boss may have some elements from the other category here and there, but for the most, they can fit into one category. There are only two bosses in MM that are Wild Cards: Coppra (the champion) and Gleo (depending on the fight).

Obstacles:

There are many cracks Penny cannot squeeze through, jumps Penny cannot make, or walls Penny cannot break without first acquiring a new ability. Items and medals are the names of the game when it comes to progressing through the world.

Objects, Items, Weapons, etc.:

- **Jet Boots:** Press A while airborne to perform a second jump and a dash while on the ground
 - o **Sticky Palms:** Jump into a wall and stick to it for a short amount of time. During this time if the player pushes the jump button, they can perform a wall jump using the thrusters of the rocket boots.
- **Slide:** Press LT while grounded to perform a slide. This helps you squeeze through extra small gaps that might be preventing progression. You might even be able to slide between some enemy's legs.
- **Bombs:** While burrowing, press X to drop a bomb. Helps to break certain walls or attack a pursuing enemy. Holding the X button and releasing drops a snap bomb. This bomb detonates immediately and makes a small bubble for the player to sit in while their dizzy meter refills.
- **Head Lamp:** This is a light attached to Penny's helmet that allows her to see in the dark. Using the right stick, you can look up and down in 180 degrees.
- **Burrow Suite:** Games main mechanic. Pressing and releasing RB makes the player coil and launch in 360 degrees. Contacting soft soil makes the player burrow into the ground.
- **Reserve Tank Part:** Collecting 3 of these earns lets you upgrade how many times you can restore your health. Kinda like flasks in Dark Souls. You can have a total of 5 reserve tanks.
- **Bronze Ore:** This is a raw material that can be used to upgrade your drill hands into something more durable.
- **Titanium Ore:** This raw material can be used to upgrade your drill hands.
- **Diamond Ore:** a finite resource that can be used to upgrade your drills. Very rare.
- **Scuba Mask:** Breath underwater.
- **Jet Motors:** Water effects nullified. Move, and jump the same as on land.
- **Gin:** Underground's main currency. Can be used to buy upgrades, pay the tolls at toll booths, or open save points.
- **Highway License:** Allows use of the Sand Highway to travel to any previously visited toll booth.
- **Health Cell:** Collecting 4 earns you another hit point. You can have a total of 9 hit points.
- **Rocket Overcharge:** Please see the Speedrooster design document for further details.
- **ID Badge:** The ID badge grants the player access to doors that there previously closed.

Replay-ability:

Mole Maiden will be a very replayable game. There are three pillars of replayability I want to focus on.

- **Speed Running:** There will be secret paths and ways to interact with the environment that will let people speed run the game. Short cuts, different ways to beat bosses quicker, etc.
- **Completionism:** Hidden puzzles, optional abilities, hidden side quests. I am being ambitious with this one and want to make the most complete and rich world I can possibly make. Multiple difficulties can be unlocked after beating the game once. A hard mode and a One life mode. Not to mention an awesome concept art gallery that unlocks the more you complete an area.

Post-game:

After becoming the champion, players who reboot their save file can rechallenge all the burrow league captains with their entire arsenal. The player can also rechallenge The Diamond Trio and Coppra at the quartz pyramid. Completing these hidden challenges is how the player can get a 110% completion rate on their profile.

Side Quests:

- **Time Trials:** Throughout the map you will meet this athletic runner character, who you can challenge to a race. If you reach the finish line before he does you will get a prize. This serves two purposes: First, it so not all upgrades and optional pickups are just sitting in the overworld. Second, it provides fun micro-speedrunning challenges that test the players ability to play the game smoothly and fluidly.
- **Drill Upgrades:** Upgrade how much damage you can deal with three possible upgrades. The more powerful the attack power the more Ore is required to be able to upgrade.
- **Max Health:** You can have a max total of 9 hit points. So there are a grand total of 20 energy shards to be collected throughout the entire game.
- **Gallery Collection:** In each area there are four hidden sketchbooks to find. Collecting all four of these will unlock a collection of concept art and behind the scenes goodies in the games gallery for that region.

DLC Expansion: THE CHAMPIONS REIGN

The Champions Rain is a grad boss rush DLC for the game with different types of modes to pick from.

- **Rematches:** Challenge any boss from the game you want at any time with different levels of difficulty.
 - Normal
 - Hard: all hits do 3 damage.
 - One Shot: Die in one hit.

- **Title Defense:** Fight your way to the end of a bracket and defend your title as Burrow League Champion.
- **Boss Rush:** Fight all the bosses in one go. No chances to recover heals.

Art Style / Aesthetics



Mole Maiden should feel like an old-school manga or comic book made into a 16-bit game. All the art will be drawn with this in mind, using big comic book pop art when landing a hit or a sudden action takes place.

All characters that are not background characters must have an interesting weapon that they use in combat. If they don't use a weapon (which right now is only two characters) then their design needs to show how they use their body to attack.

Mole Maiden at the end of day will take a lot of inspiration from manga and other comic books in terms of its art direction.

In this sketch of Penny and Gleo, we can see Mole Maidens shading rules for when drawing promotional or concept art. To help keep Mole Maiden art looking like a comic book all outlines for characters are drawn with a black pencil. When coloring in characters, use a standard fill brush while shading and details are done with the pencil as well. For large areas of nothing where details should be there the pencil is also used. All this helps give Mole Maiden a kind of rough sketch/ homemade whimsical aesthetic, like looking through someone's sketchbook.

Game Art Pillars

1. Perspective

Mole Maiden is a 2.5 game. Tunnels and caves should stretch forward and back to give the rooms a sense of scope.

The foreground and background must be used together to help rooms have a dollhouse effect.

2. Dramatic

Characters need to be expressive and boastful with their animations. People do not have mouths so they need to use eyes and body language to communicate their personality.

Visual effects and lines are used constantly to make every punch, jump, and step release that sweet sweet dopamine.

3. Non-Static

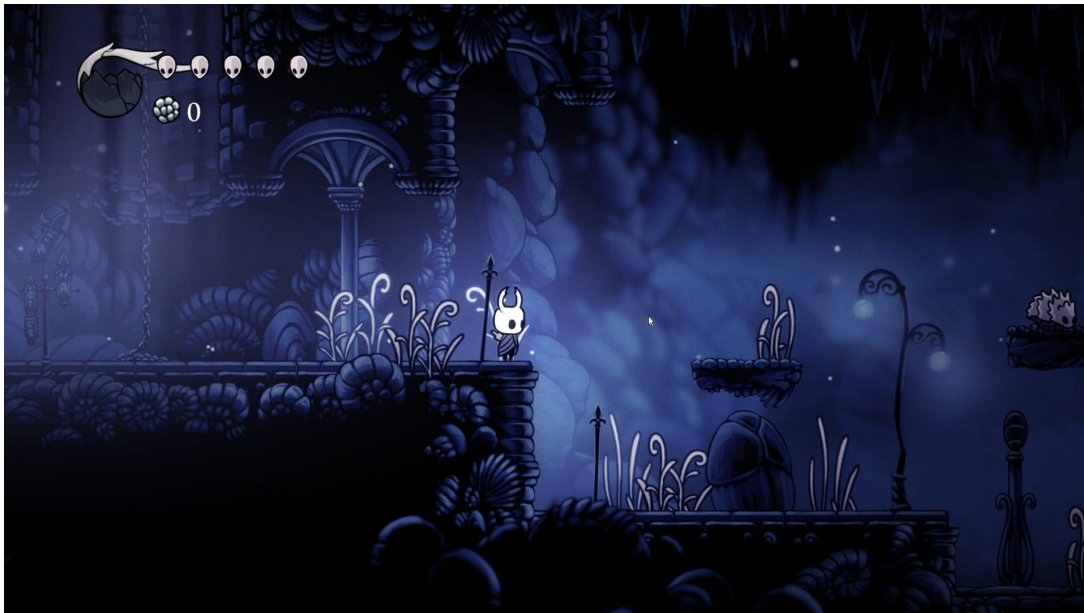
No room in Mole Maiden should stop moving when you stop moving. Particles should be floating around, mist should be rolling in the background, and water falling from the ceiling. Chains and ropes should sway from side to side.

4. Read ability

Where you can and cannot jump, what objects you can interact with, and where everything is in space should all be communicated clearly in set dressing. The player should always see their character on screen and know where the ground is.

Influences and Inspiration:

Source: Hollow Knight



Hollow Knight is the gold standard of what we hope to achieve with Mole Maiden's art on a fundamental level. Rooms are full of moving foliage, dripping water, howling wind, and floating particles. The game uses black to hide details that don't need to be drawn in and the backgrounds communicate what type of area you are supposed to be in while providing a good sense of scope.

Source: Iconoclast



Iconoclast is the biggest influence for Mole Maiden's art direction. Characters have butter-smooth animations with clean poses that communicate actions and personality using body language. Ground titles are unique for each area, and have a high level of detail. Ground is also smooth and wavy despite it all being mapped to a grid. UI elements are industrial and flashy, with visual effects to communicate when inputs are registered and

Notes About Perspective:

Avoid forward-facing portraits as best you can. I almost never draw those and haven't had time to figure them out. But the rule of thumb is: **I should only be able to see one ear at a time.**

When drawing Penny her ponytail is almost always drawn on the left side (or her right shoulder). The general rule is that whatever direction she is facing the puff goes on the opposite side.

What do the buildings look like in R&D Mine?

Mining equipment such as old carts or drills as the foundation for their homes. They could be reinforced with metal and wood to make them livable. Old mine carts could be cleaned up, refurbished, and converted into mobile living units. These carts could be fitted with a small living area, a bed, and storage space for personal belongings. They could be connected to a train system or pulled by animals to create a mobile community that travels throughout the mine.

Another option is to repurpose old mining containers, such as shipping containers or portable offices, into living spaces. These containers could be stacked on top of each other, creating multi-level living spaces. They could be fitted with windows, doors, insulation, and heating and cooling systems to create comfortable living quarters.

In addition, abandoned mine shafts could be cleaned up and converted into living spaces. These spaces could be carved out of the rock and fitted with the necessary infrastructure, such as electricity and plumbing, to create modern living quarters. The natural rock formations could be incorporated into the design to create unique living spaces with a natural feel.



Some Notes Abt. Hair & Silhouettes.

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Certain characters have specific traits like the number of curls at the front of the hair style.

UI ART:

Pause Menu: When pausing the game, a collection of comic frames fills the screen. Each one is a button of functionality and is colored in when you select it.

Inventory and Map Screen: The complete opposite, full of color and moving parts. See Drill Dozer for reference.

Players will interact with an NPC or other interactives by walking up to something. When something can be interacted with, they get a button prompt that says they can do so. Most character interaction happens in dialogue or a cutscene, but mostly dialogue.

Interface:

Menus:

What menus and capabilities do you provide the player (for example, Inventory, Journal, Equipping/Loadout, etc.)? These should all be functions that enhance the player's experience. Include a sketch or image of each menu you plan.

Main Menu

- File Select
- Quit Button
- Settings Button

Messaging:

How does the game world convey information to the player? Is it via dialogue, text messages, verbal notifications, images, and effects splashed onto the screen, etc.?

(work in progress)

Music and Sound Effects

Tell us about the audio component of your game design. Keep in mind that audio works with the visuals, story, and gameplay to help create a unified theme for the player experience.

Music:

The general vibe I want to create with Mole Maiden is a feeling of personality in every corner of the world. The game is supposed to be funny so when things get serious it makes the player alert.

Geogress is the cave equivalent of Ohio. Small towns spread between miles of cornfields. There isn't much to do here unless you are going to school. Despite its blandness, however, Geogress is a magical playground to the eyes of Penny. Moments after starting her journey she feels nostalgic for the beginning that happened two minutes ago. The music should make you excited with a kind of relaxation, let's keep a moving kind of tempo that is easy to get stuck in your head. However, the other half of Geogress has abandoned mines that by now are a thousand years old. In the transitioning rooms, there is no music, just the echoing ambiance of caves. The second half is probably going to be a slowed-down remix of Tunnel A-1.

Sound Effects:

Penny makes cute little boop sounds when she takes a step-in game while when she's running there are loud hard stomps. Double jumping should make a type of jet propulsion sound. Bumping into an un-drillable surface makes a hard and noisy clank as you bound off the wall to really tell yourself "Hey, this is no good buddy."

Enemies and bosses are always grunting and spouting gibberish to announce their attacks or communicate a person's tone for line delivery.

Miscellaneous

Anything else you'd like to tell us about your game? Add any information or thoughts that don't fit in the other sections of this document.