

Witching Hour

Game Design Document

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1.0 Table of Contents

Witching Hour	1
Table of Contents	2
Changelog	3
Project Overview	4
Description	4
General Features	4
Custom Content and Multiplayer Features	5
Target Audience and Delivery Platform	6
Project Goals	7
Visual Treatment	7
Gameplay Overview	8
Main Objectives	8
Additional Objectives	8
Game Rules	8
Game Modes	9
First 5 Minutes	10
Control Scheme and UI	11
Keyboard	11
Mouse	12
User Interface	13
UI Breakdown	13
Inventory Mock-Up	14
Crafting Interface Mock-Up	15
Character Advancement Mock-Up	16
Custom Editor Mock-Up	17
Location Descriptions	18
Character Descriptions	20
Items and Resources	22
Items	22
Resources	23
Story and Plot Progression	24

3.0 Project Overview

3.1 Description

Stop the encroaching tide of darkness that seeks to wash over the land. Brave the depths of dungeons, mysterious puzzles, deadly traps and hellish nightmares to save what little is left of the earth. Combine a unique variety of magicks, technologies and weapons to deliver the world from evil.

“Don’t fear the night. Fear what comes with it.”

3.2 Features

3.2.1 General Features

- Streamlined levels
Each level flows into the next, ending with a boss encounter and afterwards leads directly into the next with minimal loading screens
- Plethora of weapon choices to mix and match
Gather a wide variety of melee weapons (swords/axes/hammers), magicks (fire/ice/earth/wind/light/dark) and technologies (guns, cannons, gadgets)
- Randomly generated dungeons in every level
Dungeon entrances can be found at a random location in each map, which can be entered and plundered for loot and experience
- Day/night cycle with dynamic difficulty change
Day/night cycle that progresses on a timer and when night arrives, humans and passive creatures transform and gain buffs to become stronger and provide more of a challenge to the player

- Boss encounters at each levels end
Upon reaching the end of each level, players will be pitted against an extremely tough foe (boss) with many abilities. They must be defeated to carry onto the next level and continue the story
- Character advancement system
Gather experience from slaying monsters, from dungeons and defeating bosses which you can then spend to level up your characters attributes (health, speed, power)
- Equipment crafting system
Bring reagents and materials you find in the wild to the town's (Hub) blacksmith to create equipment, item upgrades, and socket items
- Loot drop system
All monsters have a randomized loot table which can contain various items including; gems, reagents, armor, weapons, as well as currency

3.2.2 Custom Content & Multiplayer Features

- Create your own dungeons in the custom editor
Through the built-in level editor, players can plan out and create their own dungeons, with the ability to place monsters, traps, puzzles and even treasures for others to complete
- Create new game modes to challenge other players
By combining unique dungeon gameplay elements, players can create all-new game modes to play and test others with. Examples include extreme platforming (parkour), survival mode (being pitted against endless waves of monsters), and even Player versus Player combat arenas (PvP)
- Share the unique seed generated with friends and family and play together
Create instanced dungeons to invite your friends and family into so that you can play together

3.3 Target Audience and Delivery Platform

Due to certain themes such as alcohol use, fantasy violence and blood, **Witching Hour** is a game that is targeted mainly towards the **Teen** category, but also young adults as well.

In terms of delivery platform, **Witching Hour** is designed for *PC*. This is because the ease of access regarding the API will let modders be able to easily modify features for the sake of custom texture packs, character models, and much more. As well as this, because of platforms like Steam, players will be able to find and access the game with little to no effort.

3.4 Project Goals

The goal of **Witching Hour** is to provide a fun experience to players through combining a variety of popular and successful gameplay styles and mechanics, to appeal to a wide array of players.

3.4.1 Visual Treatment

Witching Hour is a somber themed, 2D graphic game. The color scheme will slightly change depending on events that occur during the course of the game.

During the **day**, the color palette will be brighter, with warmer tones emphasizing the light of the sun.

During the **night**, the color palette will be darker, with cooler tones emphasizing the danger of the darkness and what lies within.

Whilst in **dungeons**, the graphical theme will be similar to the night. However, although it will be dark within, there will be torches frequently placed to illuminate different areas of the dungeon for players. There will be grey stone brick, with moss and ivy growing amongst it.

3.5 Gameplay Overview

Witching Hour is a 2D side scroller and primarily a **platforming** and **hack-and-slash** game, with **RPG systems** (loot, character advancement, crafting) and **dungeon crawling**. The story is the driving force of the game, and the objective is to complete each and every level. A boss can be found at the end of each level, and they must all be defeated to win the game.

3.5.1 Main Objective

As the player, your goal is to traverse through each area (level), defeating the dangers that lurk on the way to each level's boss. Upon arriving at the final section of the level, players will be thrust into a boss encounter, in which they must overcome to progress forward.

3.5.2 Additional Objectives

As the player progresses through each level, they will stumble across entrances to various dungeons. These are completely optional features, and can be explored at the player's discretion. While the crafting and character advancement systems are optional as well, players are highly recommended to take full advantage of them to make the gameplay more manageable.

3.5.3 Game Rules

In order to successfully **win** the game, players must finish the single-player campaign, by defeating every boss and finishing every level. Upon defeating the final boss of the game, the player wins and the credits begin to play. Afterwards, they will be returned to the main menu where they can choose to start another game, or delve into the *multiplayer* and/or *custom content editor*.

On the contrary, the player **loses** the game when their health reaches 0. This can occur as the result of various happenings throughout the game;

- Enemy attacks
- Falling into pits
- Environmental damage (fire, poison gas, etc.)
- Damage from traps (spikes, arrows, etc.)

Certain gems that the player collects can provide a bonus resistance to certain damage sources. For example:

Rubies offer fire resistance

Emeralds offer poison resistance

Sapphires offer arcane resistance

Opals offer shadow damage resistance

Diamonds offer blunt damage resistance

Obsidian offers sharp damage resistance

Upon running out of health, the player dies and is returned to the last checkpoint reached. They will also lose a life from their total amount of 4. If the player runs out of lives, then they will be required to start the level over from the beginning. In order to compensate for this, players can craft **Soulstones**, which are items that absorb a fragment of Sol's spirit to grant an additional life.

3.5.4 Game Modes

The *primary* game mode of **Witching Hour** is the single-player campaign, or story mode. In this game mode the player will progress through levels, killing monsters on the way, until eventually they battle the boss at the end of each level. Upon defeating each boss, the campaign is finished and the player completes the game.

The *multiplayer* game mode is accessed through instanced dungeons, created by players and shared with family/friends, to be able to play together. This is directly correlated with the custom content editor, as many new and unique game modes can be created.

The *editor* despite not being an actual game mode itself, can be used to create new and compelling ways to play the game. Players will be able to create dungeon locations, complete with obstacles, traps, puzzles and monsters. Through clever planning and design, entirely custom game modes can be made and shared with friends, family or publicly on the internet.

Examples of these modes include but are not limited to;

Survival (horde-esque game mode where players survive against endless waves of enemies that gets increasingly more difficult as time goes on)

Parkour (extreme platforming with difficult jumps, moving platforms, etc.)

PvP mode (player versus player combat arenas, where together players can battle for potential prizes or merely for recreational purposes)

The only limiting factor for the potential of new game modes is the imagination and creativity of the players.

3.6 First 5 Minutes

Upon starting the game, players will be met with the main menu that contains the following submenus:

- **New Game**
- **Load Game**
- **Options**
- **Editor**

If **New Game** is chosen, the intro cinematic will play describing the backstory leading up to the present point, which will take players directly into the first level of the game. This level serves as a tutorial to teach the mechanics of the game to new players.

If **Load Game** is chosen, a sub menu will appear, showing all of the save points created by the player whilst in the game. Upon selecting one of these save files, the game will start up at that point.

If **Options** is chosen, a sub menu will appear, showing various categories of settings that may be changed. These menus include *Audio, Video and Gameplay*.

If **Editor** is chosen, the player will be taken to a sub menu where they can start a new project, load a project, or exit back to the main menu. A project is a design layout for dungeons, and players will be greeted with the various tools for making dungeons and their contents.

Within the editor, there are many new tools that are available for use in regards to the creation of custom content.

The following tools are used in the editor:

- **Block Tool** (used to layout the walls, floor, ceilings etc.)
- **Entity Tool** (used to place props such as urns, torches, treasure chests, buttons)
- **Trap Tool** (used to place traps in the dungeon such as spike floors, arrow launchers, falling rocks, etc.)
- **Creature Tool** (used to place NPCs in the dungeon such as skeletons, wisps, wolves, etc.)
- **Mechanical Tool** (used to place different machinery and gizmos to power things like doors, puzzles, devices, etc.)

3.7 Control Scheme and User Interface



3.7.1 Keyboard

The movement will be primarily based around the WASD keys. The common move set will be applied to Witching Hour meaning that:

- W** – Jump
- A** – Move backwards (left)
- S** – Crouch
- D** – Move forwards (right)

The **spacebar** will be used to interact with objects in the world including but not limited to; doors, chests, levers, etc.

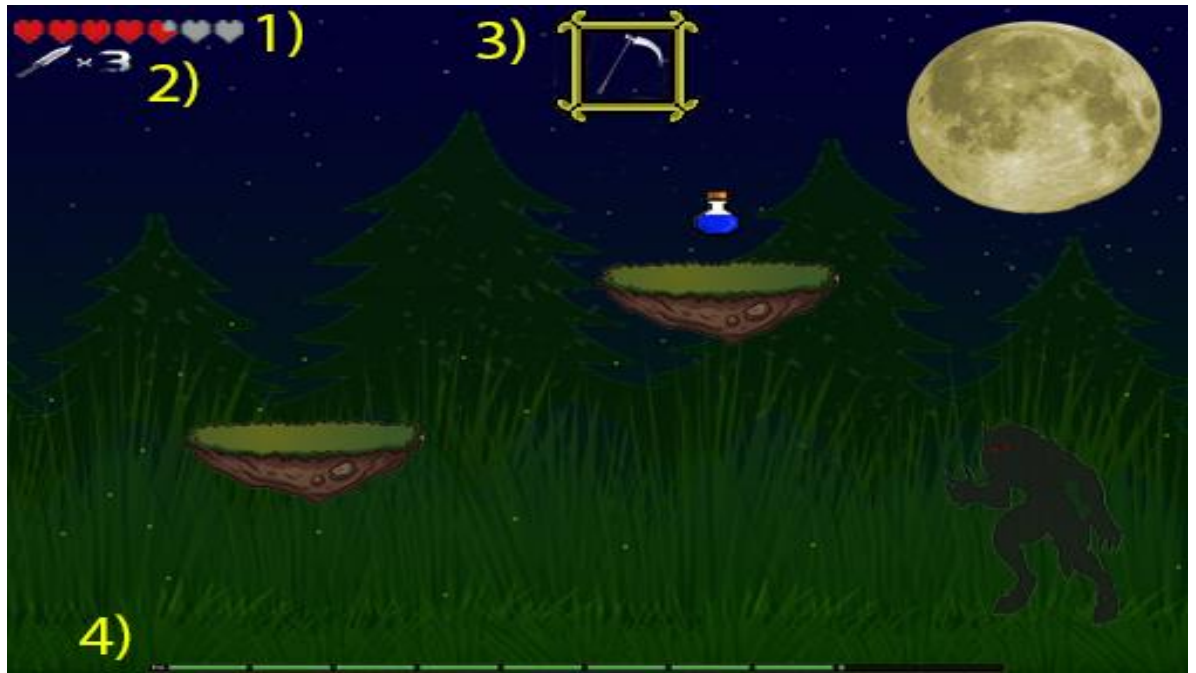
Players can access their inventories with the “I” button, and within the inventory there will be a series of sub-menus that include crafting reagents, consumables and an equipment screen.

3.7.2 Mouse

The mouse will be used for attacking and blocking, via the **left and right mouse buttons**, respectively. Alternatively, if the player is using magic or firearms alongside their weapon, then the right mouse button will become an alternate fire button.

Lastly, the **Escape** key will bring the game into an Options menu, which simultaneously pauses the game.

3.8 User Interface



3.8.1 UI Breakdown

Informational Elements

- 1) **Health meter**; each heart is segmented into 4 pieces, and for every 1 damage an enemy does to the player, it is equal to 1 heart segment.
- 2) **Ammo for ranged weapons**; current ammo count for firearms, MP (magick power), throwing weapons.
- 3) **Currently wielded melee/magic weapon**; the weapon that the player is equipping at any given moment.
- 4) **Experience bar**; shows the amount of experience that a player has obtained thus far in their level. When the bar is filled, the player gains a level that they can then spend into their character advancement system.

3.8.2 Inventory Mock-Up



1) **Item List**; displays gathered items, sorted by the order in which they were obtained

2) **Equipment Loadout**; shows the currently worn equipment including:

- Helmet
- Chest
- Spaulders
- Gloves
- Rings
- Legs
- Boots

3) **Weapon Loadout**; shows the currently equipped weapons, which can be either Two-handed or Dual-wielded.

4) **Gold**; displays the amount of currency held by the player

3.8.3 Crafting Interface Mock-Up



- 1) **Available Crafting Recipes**; shows a list of items the player can possibly craft at any given time.
- 2) **Required Materials**; displays a menu that contains a list of items needed for a chosen craftable item.
- 3) **Item Frames**; shows the materials required for crafting an item, and how many of each are needed. *White* font means the player has enough of a resource, whilst *red* font means they do not have a sufficient amount.

3.8.4 Character Advancement Interface Mock-Up



- 1) **Player Level**; displays the current level of the player. Each level is one full bar of experience gained.
- 2) **Skill Points**; displays the amount of skill points available to spend to level up further. Each bar of experience filled gives the player a skill point that they can spend to increase their level.

3) **Attribute Names**; displays the name of attributes the player can raise:

-*Power* refers to physical damage dealt

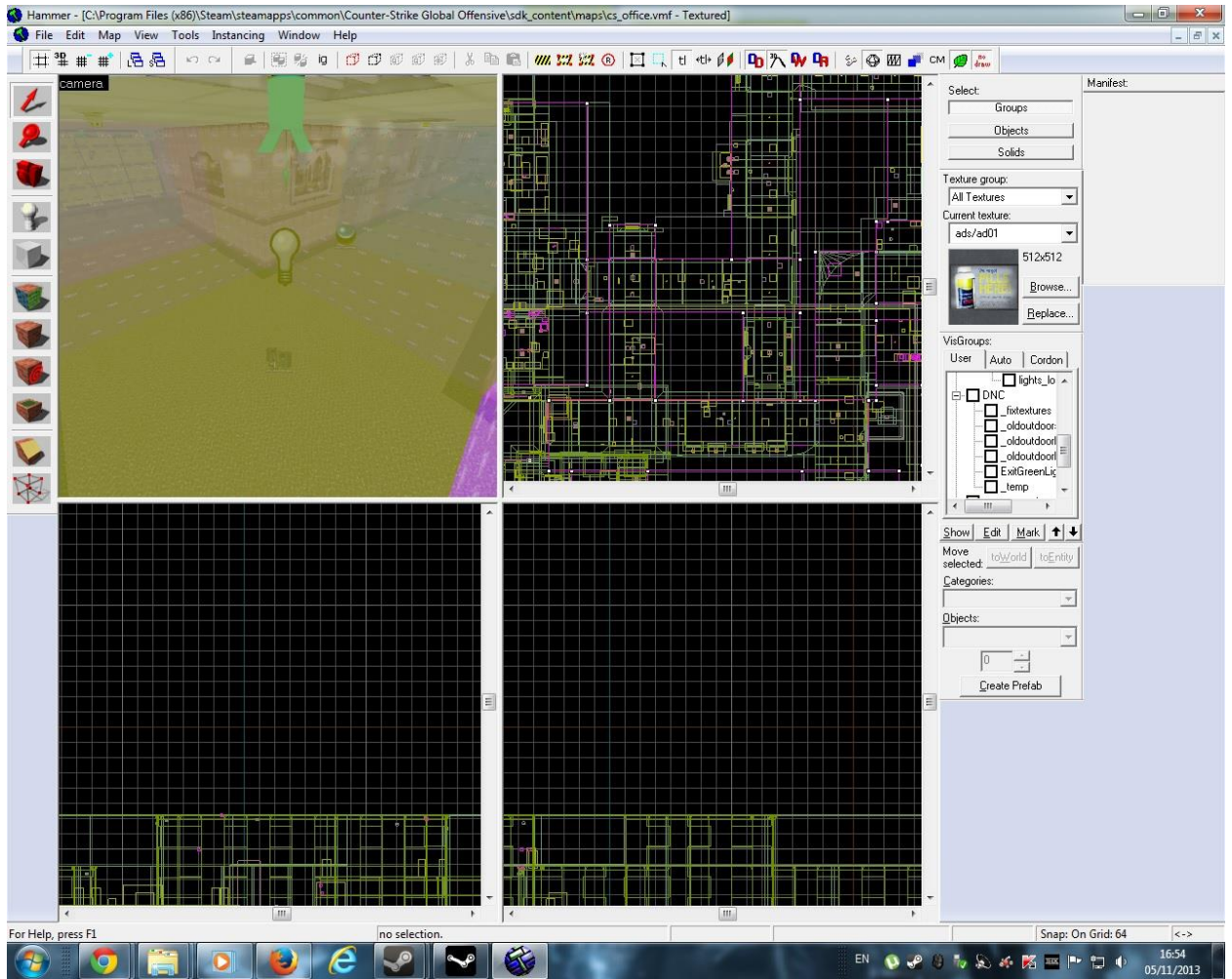
-*Vitality* refers to the amount of health a player has

-*Dexterity* refers to speed, jump height, and damage resistance

-*Intellect* refers to spell damage dealt

4) **Attribute Progress**; displays the amount of a certain attribute that a player has increased. The more of an attribute the player has, the more of a weight that specific trait has on their character's performance.

3.8.5 Custom Editor Interface Mock-Up



Example of the custom editor interface

The editor interface will display the various tools required for creation;

-Block Tool

-Entity Tool

-Trap Tool

-Creature Tool

-Mechanical Tool

As well as a display window to show the player how the layout of their project looks, and menus with assets to be dragged and dropped into the level.

3. 9 Location Descriptions

Hub Town (Ravenswald)

A small hamlet where the player starts, which serves as a main base of operations whilst playing throughout the story. It contains a storage, save point, and the **Blacksmith** NPC, who serves as the crafting system. He can create weapons, equipment and upgrades for the player.

1) Black Woods

A dark forest that surrounds the town of Ravenswald, occupied by carnivorous creatures and filled with thick gnarled tree roots. There is a recurring sense of claustrophobia in this area, because it is so densely wooded. Since this is the first level for players, there will be minimal obstacles. These are primarily pitfalls and tree root barriers. Enemies found here include wolves, forest spiders, crows, wisps, and ents.

Boss: Sangwing (giant vampire bat)

2) Bloodbriar Cemetery

A dangerous graveyard with a choking thicket that poses as passive obstacles throughout the course of the level. This level is platform-heavy due to all of the bramble, as well as open-grave holes. Enemies found here include skeletons, zombies, death cultists, and specters.

Boss: Phantasm Agoria (master of illusions, one of the Stygian Coven)

3) **Bonerest Canyon**

Rocky gorge full of the skeletal remains of giant creatures, this level combines environmental challenges and dangerous foes to further test the player's abilities. Giant rolling boulders, rock falls and huge crevasses will stand in the way of the player as the zones obstacles. Enemies found here include bone vultures, rock golems, bone constructs and scorpions.

Boss: Bones of Surazal (giant bone construct of an ancient titanic horror, reanimated through the power of the dark relic)

4) **Sablemurk Lagoon**

Lake full of horrifying aquatic life that pulls unwary passersby into the black depths. This area adds a new threat in the form of creatures attempting to grab the player and strangle them or drag them underwater. Standard obstacles will be commonplace, such as whirlpools, thistles, and of course pitfalls. Enemies found here include brine walkers, sea serpents, sirens, and tentacles that try to grab the player from below the water.

Boss: Vann der Slecht (master of water, one of the Stygian Coven)

5) **Miasmarsh**

Mysterious bog that's full of noxious gas, grotesque plants and voracious insect life. This area is chalk full of hazards including poison pools, toxic gas clouds and quicksand. Enemies found here are mandrakes, will-o-wisps, giant mosquitos, bloodworms, and crawling torsos.

Boss: Corpse Gorger (giant corpse worm that lives below the marsh, feasting on corpses of fallen heroes until it grew to an unnatural size)

6) **Ashmount Castle**

Ancient keep that resides on the jagged cliff edge that overlooks the marsh, and lies above an ancient labyrinth. This level will provide a great deal of difficulty to the players, as it combines vicious enemies, many obstacles and now also traps. Trapdoors, spike floors, and tripwires lurk in the darkest

recesses of the castle and any careless adventurer will meet their end in no time at all. Enemies found here are suits of armor, noble phantoms, gargoyles and high death cultists.

Boss: Mara (blood ministrix, one of the Stygian Coven)

7) **Sacrosanct**

Final resting place of a timeless eldritch monstrosity, and the source of the evil that taints the land. This area will be the most dangerous of all, providing players with the challenge of avoiding the most fatal of traps, enemies, and requiring quick thinking to solve puzzles. Claustrophobia is a prevalent theme in this level once again, as well as scotophobia. Enemies found here are transformed death cultists, shades, and eldritch interlopers.

Boss: Eidolos (former leader of the Night's Vigil, now corrupted by his lust for power. He is responsible for raising the Stygian Coven from the dead.

4.0 Character Descriptions

1) **Sol**

Brave young adventurer, and the last descendant of the Night's Vigil. Sol is a man with a passion to keep his town and family safe, and will risk his own life to ensure that a relative peace is maintained. He wears navy blue robes, with golden blonde hair and amber eyes. His personality is stalwart and he prides himself on his selflessness. Sol was raised on a farm, and so naturally keeps his trusty sickle on his side at all times.

2) **Blacksmith**

The town Blacksmith is a mysterious and yet welcoming man. Now one of the only survivors of Ravenswald, the Blacksmith braves the horrors that lurk all around the land so that he may help others with their quest. His appearance is big and burly, with a bushy beard and an overall grizzled look. He wears welding goggles, a brown apron, and carries his smithing hammer with him. The Blacksmith's personality is very mysterious. He has a strangely calm demeanor about him and doesn't seem to be phased by the events occurring nor the monstrosities that wander about.

3) **Eidolos**

Once a man of justice, Eidolos was a testament to the willpower of the Night's Vigil. Following the great battle against the Stygian Coven, he went into hiding, and everyone assumed him to be dead. However, it is revealed that Eidolos is still alive, in fact, and he has been corrupted by his lust for power. Once he had the dark relic in his hands, he broke his vows with the Vigil and became the new leader of the Coven. Eidolos has a haggard appearance, and because of his age, looks very weak and frail. He has long white hair, and wears white robes with pitch black chain mail. His personality is stubborn, and he is highly narcissistic. He views Sol's efforts as futile and foolish, and refuses to acknowledge his own flaws and mistakes.

4) **Phantasm Agoria**

Agoria is a master illusionist and one of the shadier members of the Coven. He is adorned in green robes and has extremely pale skin. He is highly arrogant and thinks himself smarter than everyone else. Agoria weaves in and out of the physical realm and in doing so, creates mirror images of himself that can use all of the same abilities as he can.

5) **Vann der Slecht**

Before his undertaking of magicks, Vann der Slecht was a sailor who loved to travel across the sea and visit new places. He found comfort on the water and thus, it was only natural that he dabbled in aquamancy once he became a mage. Early on in his days of the Coven, Vann der Slecht adopted a grace as fluid as the waters he once sailed on. Through patience and clarity, Vann der Slecht mastered the art of manipulating water in all of its forms. He wears blue robes and wields a scepter that holds the purest water in all of the land.

6) **Mara**

Dubbed the blood ministrix, Mara is enthralled with blood and revels in the idea of draining the life force out of every living thing. She surrounds herself with leeches and maggots, bending them to her will and using them as a tool to weaken her prey. Mara is dressed in blood red robes and uses a trocar as her primary weapon. Her personality is smug yet seductive, and she believes that her beauty can charm anyone that gets in her way.

4.1 Items and Resources

There are a wide variety of resources and items in Witching Hour. Ranging from bullets for your firearms, to health potions, these resources are necessary to survive the journey from start to finish.

4.1.1 Items

Melee Weapons

Sickle (Left click: Quick swipe, Right click: Wide swipe)

Steel Sword (Left click: Light slash, Right click: Heavy slash*)

*Unless the player is equipping a shield with the sword, then right click becomes a block button

Greathammer (Left click: Fast swing, Right click: Charged slam)

Spear (Left click: Horizontal swipe, Right click: Jab)

Axe (Left click: Light swing, Right click: Overhead swipe)

Ranged Weapons

Pistol (Left click: Fire single shot, uses 1 *Bullet*)

Blunderbuss (Left click: Fire multi-shot, uses 3 *Bullets*)

Crossbow (Left click: Fire bolt, uses 1 *Bolt*)

Throwing Knives (Left click: Throw knife, uses 1 *Knife*)

Magic Weapons

Wand (Left click: Quick burst of magick, Right click: Charged elemental attack, uses 10 *Magick Power*)

Staff (Left click: Medium blast of magick, Right click: Heavy blast of magick, uses 20 *Magick Power*)

Orb (Left click: Small blast of magick, Right click: Channeled beam of magick, uses 5 *Magick Power* per second channeled)

Consumables

Elixir of Life (Restores 15 Health)

Elixir of Magick (Restores 10 Magick Power)

Potion of Speed (Increases movement speed for 10 seconds)

Potion of Strength (Increases damage done for 7 seconds)

4.1.2 Resources

Regular Resources

Health (life essence of Sol, restored via using Elixirs of Life. Dropped by monsters, crafted, and found throughout levels)

Magick Power (energy used to power magick based attacks, restored via using Elixirs of Magick. Dropped by monsters, crafted, and found throughout levels)

Bullets (ammunition for the Pistol and Blunderbuss. Dropped by monsters, or crafted)

Bolts (ammunition for the Crossbow. Dropped by monsters, or crafted)

Knives (ammunition for Throwing Knives. Dropped by monsters, or crafted)

Crafting Resources

Metal Shards (scraps of jagged metal used primarily in weapon/ammo crafting)

Wooden Rods (pieces of wood used primarily in weapon/ammo crafting)

Gunpowder (explosive powder used in bullet crafting)

Aqua Vita (vials of enchanted water used primarily in elixir/potion crafting)

Aloe (medicinal plant used as the primary ingredient for Elixirs of Life)

Glowthistle (medicinal plant used as the primary ingredient for Elixirs of Magick)

Swiftroot (herb used as the primary ingredient for Potions of Speed)

Goldenmoss (herb used as the primary ingredient for Potions of Strength)

All of these resources are found as drops from monsters, or can be looted in dungeons and treasure chests.

5.0 Game Progression

The main objective of *Witching Hour* is to track down the Stygian Coven, and defeat each member on your quest to find out what the source of this evil is and put an end to it.

The game starts off in *Ravenswald*, where players are introduced to a short tutorial to teach them the basics of the game. They learn about the movement scheme, information about the HUD and their objective.

They then proceed into the Black Woods, where they fight their way through until the end where they battle **Sangwing**, the guardian of the forest, and ultimately the obstacle preventing them from moving onwards.

Upon defeating the first boss, players will move onto the next area of the game, the *Bloodbriar Cemetery*. It is here that they will stumble upon the first member of the **Stygian Coven**, who serves as the boss of this level. Once defeated, he will give the player a hint about where to go next, as he explains that **Vann der Slecht** is turning the elements against them and that they'll never make it through the *Lagoon*.

Unfortunately, there's a dangerous canyon in the way between the cemetery and the lagoon, so players will need to traverse this wasteland before they can reach the next Coven member.

Once they reach the end of the canyon, a giant bone amalgamation comes to life and breaks free from the rock wall. This creature serves as the boss for the level, and only after defeating it can players proceed on their way to Vann der Slecht.

Players will trudge through the lagoon braving the creatures of the depths, until they intrude on Vann der Slecht's ritual. He curses the player for their ignorance, and initiates battle with them. Whilst much harder than Agoria, Vann der Slecht falls and it is revealed through a dropped letter that **Mara** was assigned to keep guard over the *Ashmount Castle*. This is due to **Eidolos** preparing his ascension via the dark relic to godhood and the process cannot be interrupted.

This then leads the players through the *Miasmarsh*, where pestilent creatures feast on rotting corpses and spread their vile diseases. Players will need to survive these horrors before they can pass into the Castle. Just before the castle walls, however, a giant corpse gorgon bursts forth from the ground, blocking the way for players. It is then necessary for players to defeat this behemoth, which bursts into a shower of acid that melts the gate of castle and lets the players through.

Upon entering the castle grounds, an alarm will sound, warning all enemies in the vicinity that an intruder has arrived, and to stop them at all costs. Players will need to fight through terrifying creatures across the ramparts, through the castle, and eventually into the prison cellar, where they discover Mara.

Mara is found in a chamber below Ashmount Castle, in a room containing pools of putrid filth, swarming with maggots and leeches. She remarks about how the player has come so far only to be stopped here, and begins to attack. Though Mara proves strong, her untimely death cannot be avoided, and she falls as well. She mutters a spell under her breath, and a hidden passageway reveals itself, heading down into a catacomb.

Heading down the staircase, players will find themselves in an enormous labyrinth, full of mutated cultists and warped aberrations. Occasionally, the player will experience psychological trauma, illusions, and such. These occurrences happen more and more frequently, the further the player reaches in this tomb. Eventually, the player discovers a giant burial chamber with the corpse of a dead eldritch god. Its beating heart lie suspended above a plinth, and its power is being funneled into a single being. Eidolos. The former master of the Night's Vigil is revealed to be the true villain. He plans on draining the heart of the god to gain unlimited power, and take over the world with his legion of darkness and chaos.

Players must then face him head-to-head in order to save the world. During the fight, Eidolos will mock you and laugh at your attempts to stop him. Eventually, in the middle of the fight, he will completely consume the heart, transforming himself into a grotesque, formless creature. He gains intense magickal power and abilities, and his damage output is doubled.

If players manage to defeat him, then he collapses into a pile of blood that bubbles and boils away. Now, with the corpse of the god and its heart completely destroyed, the darkness fades and the world is restored to its former state. The game then cuts back to Ravenswald, where all remaining survivors welcome Sol

and sing praise in his name for everything he's done. The credits will then roll, players will be thanked for playing the game, and then returned to the main menu.