Lecture 16

Perspective in 2D Games
Take Away for Today

• What is the game “camera”?  
  • How does it relate to screen space? Object space?  
  • How does the camera work in a 2D game? 3D?

• How do we give 2D games depth?  
  • Advantages, disadvantages of orthographic view  
  • Advantages, disadvantages of axonometric view

• How does “tileability” affect art in games?
The Game Camera

- What makes a game 3-D?
  - Everything is shown on a 2-D screen (mostly)

- 3D game have a **user controlled** “camera”
  - Position camera to look at art from all sides
  - 3-D art has enough information to allow this

- CS/INFO 3152 limits you to a 2-D game
  - The game camera has a **fixed perspective**
  - You render all art to one visible side
Camera in 2D Games
Specifying the Camera

- Camera is a **coord space**
  - Called “eye space”
  - Eye position at origin

- How to move camera?
  - Transforms again!

- **Inverse** of scrolling
  - **Scrolling**: move obj to eye
  - **Camera**: move eye to obj
  - Two matrices are **inverses**
Camera in XNA

• Purpose of `BasicEffects` class
  • `View` property holds **eye space transform**
  • … also, `Texture` property holds current texture

• Set camera with an **effect pass**
  • `effect.CurrentTechnique.Passes`
  • Call `pass.Apply()` before you draw
  • Works with both sprites and triangles
  • See `GameCanvas.cs` in *Programming Lab 2*
Drawing for a Perspective

- 3D Models make it easy
  - Rotate model to position
  - Flatten to jpeg, tiff, etc…

- But 3D modeling is hard
  - Very technical programs
  - Cannot draw “by hand”

- How to draw perspective?
  - Artist “captures” camera

- **Realism creates problems**
The concept of the picture plane may be better understood by looking through a window or other transparent plane from a fixed viewpoint. Your lines of sight, the multitude of straight lines leading from your eye to the subject, will all intersect this plane. Therefore, if you were to reach out with a grease pencil and draw the image of the subject on this plane you would be “tracing out” the infinite number of points of intersection of sight rays and plane. The result would be that you would have “transferred” a real three-dimensional object to a two-dimensional plane.
Plane Projection in Drawing

**Problem:** Art assets are not invariant under translation.
Vanishing Points are **Not** Our Friend
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Vanishing Points are **Not** Our Friend

Should not be same
Vanishing Points are **Not** Our Friend

2D games rely on *distortional* perspectives
Orthographic Projection

- Project perpendicular to an axis
  - Top-down: perpendicular to z-axis
  - Side scrolling: perpendicular to y-axis

- Very easy to do artistically
  - Art objects are flat tiles
  - Layer tiles via compositing

- But enforces 2-D gameplay
  - 3rd dimension lost; cannot be seen
  - Distorted: All rays to eye are parallel
Orthographic Projection
Parallax Scrolling

- Gives depth to orthographic projection
  - Objects in background have distance
  - Rate of scrolling depends on distance

- Implement with multiple background layers
  - Each layer scrolls at a different rate
  - See course website for sample code

- Often requires some degree of transparency
  - *Composite* front layers with back layers
Parallax Scrolling
Axonometric Projection

- Off axis view of object
  - View along all 3-axes
- Once again: **distorted**
  - Not a true projection
  - No *vanishing point*
  - Axes are “foreshortened”
- Allows 3-D gameplay
  - “Cliffs” are visible
  - May also hide objects!
Axonometric Projection
Axonometric Projection
Projection Types

- **Isometric**
  - All axes are equal
  - If need all dimensions
  - Used in classic RPGs

- **Dimetric**
  - $z$-axis is very short
  - $x$, $y$ axes are equal
  - Orthographic+depth
  - For aesthetic reasons only
Projection Geometry

- Axes relative to screen
  - $z$ goes “into” the screen
  - $x, y$ are in screen plane

- Axonometric coordinates
  - May not be “true” coords
  - “Meaning” of $x, y, z$?

- Orthographic substitutes
  - **Side-scroller**: $y$ is height
  - **Top-down**: $z$ is height
Isometric View

- If need all axes visible
- Used in classic RPGs

\[
\frac{h}{w} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}
\]

Game View

Top View

Side View

\[ w \]

\[ h \]

27°

45°

30°
Isometric View

- $x, y, z = \text{Axonometric Coords}$
- $x', y' = \text{Screen Coordinates}$

$$
x' = x - z
\quad y' = y + \frac{1}{2}(x+z)
$$
Isometric View: Zaxxon
Dimetric View (Side-Depth)

- For horizontal movement
- Gives depth to side
- **Example**: platformer

\[
\frac{h}{w} = \frac{1}{6}
\]

Game View  Top View  Side View

- Top View: 75°
- Side View: 10°
Dimetric View (Side-Depth)

- $x, y, z = \text{Axonometric Coords}$
- $x', y' = \text{Screen Coordinates}$

\[
x' = x + \frac{1}{2}(z)
\]
\[
y' = y + \frac{1}{4}(z)
\]
Dimetric View (Top-Depth)

- For full 2D movement
- $z$ still goes into screen
- **Example**: stealth games

\[ \frac{h}{w} = \frac{2}{5} \]

Game View

Top View

Side View

$w$  

$h$  

$0.25$  

$0.5$  

$78^\circ$  

$\sim24^\circ$
Dimetric View (Top-Depth)

- $x, y, z = \text{Axonometric Coords}$
- $x', y' = \text{Screen Coordinates}$

\[
x' = x + \frac{1}{4}(z)
\]
\[
y' = y + \frac{1}{2}(z)
\]
Dimetric View (Top Down)
Drawing for Axonometric View

- Use boxes shown on slide
  - Tiling boxes is easy
  - Draw shape inside box
- Complex, large shapes?
  - Glue together boxes
  - Draw inside box group
- Objects need many angles
  - Transparency is tricky
  - Standard: 8 compass points
- **Example**: LakeHills.ai
Drawing for Axonometric View

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- Objects need many angles
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  - Standard: 8 compass points

- **Example**: LakeHills.ai
Isometric Walking Animation
Isometric Walking Animation
Which Style to Use?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orthographic</th>
<th>Axonometric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Advantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to make tiles</td>
<td>Sort of easy to tile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to composite</td>
<td>Some 3-D movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disadvantages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement is 2D</td>
<td>Harder to composite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game feels flat</td>
<td>Objects may be hidden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common in this class</td>
<td>Lot of work for artist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Combining the Perspectives
Combining the Perspectives

Dimetric Environment

Orthographic Characters
Summary

- Camera represents “eye space” coordinates
  - 3D games have arbitrary camera movement
  - 2D games are limited to scrolling movement

- 2-D art requires you chose a projection
  - **Orthographic** is easy, but limits gameplay
  - **Axonometric** has better gameplay, but harder to draw

- Axonometric type depends on style of game
  - Isometric common to classic RPGs
  - Dimetric gives depth to traditional orthographic