



Level Abstract: Crash

Gears of War
Version 1.0

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Quick Summary

Crash is a single player campaign level for Gears of War that utilizes Unreal Engine 2.5. Set during the events of Chapter 1 (Embry & the House of Sovereigns) Crash follows Delta Squad as they explore a mansion and atrium within the House of Sovereigns. The level focuses on cover-based combat and cinematic story events.

Gameplay Overview

Crash is a medium-sized combat level that mentally and physically prepares the player for a boss encounter. A close quarter's firefight with Nemacyst, a cinematic story event involving a Reaver, and a larger-scale combat encounter with a flank, punctuates Crash's overall linear flow through a ruined interior space.

General Game Flow

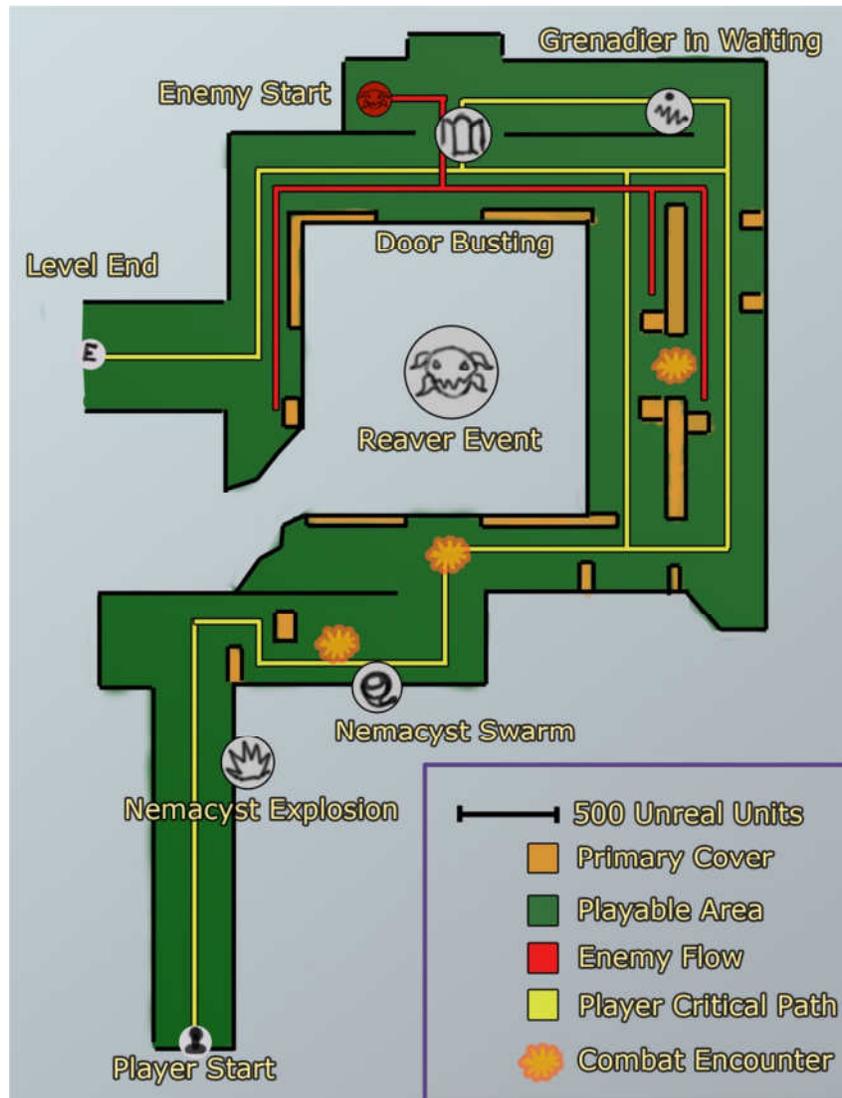


Figure 1: Crash's Layout

- 1) The player starts with the other members of Delta Squad in a second story hallway within the House of Sovereigns. Through windows to the right, the player can view a courtyard and surrounding building and swarms of Nemacyst.
- 2) A wall explodes suddenly in front of the player exposing the hallway to outside light. Teammates comment in surprise.
- 3) Nemacyst begin to pour through a hole in the wall and attack Delta Squad
- 4) Upon entering the second floor of the atrium, a Reaver crashes through the ceiling and barrels through a nearby door and down a hallway into the distance. Just as the Reaver exits, drones and grenadiers bust down doors and assault the atrium.

Major Elements

WOW Moment / Story Beat – A Reaver crashes through the ceiling and flies away

WOW Moment – A Nemacyst destroys a wall in front of the player

Hook – Fighting a squad of locust in the aftermath of the Reaver's entrance

Cool Moment – Fighting off a swarm of Nemacyst as they pour through a hole in the wall.

Objective Summary

- *Survive Locust Attacks*
- *Kill all locust in the area*
- *Discover the whereabouts of the Geist Reaver*

Technical Overview

Campaign

- Name – Gears of War: The Lightmass Offensive – 14 years after the emergence and subsequent invasion of the Locust, a small surviving military group known as Gears attempts to launch a counter attack on the Locust using a lightmass bomb. In order to launch the attack, they must retrieve and use an underground resonator to determine the ideal detonation point for the bomb.
- Level Position in Campaign – During Chapter 1
 - After entering the House of Sovereigns, Delta Squad pursues a pair of Reavers while searching for the whereabouts of Alpha Squad. The team finds themselves in a remote wing of the building with a squad of locust and a swarm of Nemacyst closing on their location.
 - After the level, players face a Reaver boss encounter in a large domed interior space.

Mission Location

- Theme – Cinematic Combat in Decaying Architecture
- Mood – Desolation filled with explosive tension
- Setting – The decaying capital city of an earth-like planet 14 years after a catastrophic invasion by subterranean creatures
- Time of Day – Midday
- Season – Early Summer
- Weather – Overcast Skies

Mission Difficulty

Scale: 1-10 (1 is Easiest and 10 is Hardest)

- Starting – Difficulty 1 – Simple Exploration with scripted events
- Middle – Difficulty 4 – A combat encounter with a swarm of Nemacyst
- Ending – Difficulty 6 – A cover-based combat encounter with a squad of drones and grenadiers

Mission Metrics

- Play Time – 4 minutes
- Physical Length (units) – Approximately 9,000 Unreal Units (around 562 Feet)
- Physical Area (units) – Approximately 7,000 Unreal Units long and 3,500 Unreal Units wide or 24,500,000 square Unreal Units (around 95,266 sqft)
- New Characters – There are no new characters introduced in Crash
- Visual Themes –
 - Theme 1 – Capital Buildings in Decay – Governmental and sophisticated architectural structures in decay after years of abandonment

Level Details

Level Atmosphere/Mood

Crash focuses on themes of architectural decay and explosive energy. Players fill with tension as waves of enemies and cinematic events buffet their play experience, preparing them for an exciting boss encounter. Textures and meshes are muted and gritty, representing the decay of a once luxurious and well-built space. Dust fills the air and the presence of plants suggests the area has been left to nature for some time.

- Stark lighting and desaturation gives the player a sense of abandonment and decay
- Tall ruined stone architecture and furnishings gives the play space a feeling of grandeur and importance within the overarching theme of decay.
- The presence of plants gives a sense of age to the environment.
- Explosions and other events that destroy the environment conjure feelings of intensity and energy.
- Events and combat with queued battle sound events and triumphant music heighten the player's experience building tension and exhilaration.
- The presence of the large imposing Reaver builds suspense and sparks surprise.

Major Characters/Vehicles

- **Marcus Fenix** – A newly recruited member of Delta Squad who takes point on the search for Alpha Squad.
- **Dominic Santiago (Dom)** – Marcus' friend and fellow soldier who provides backup for Marcus in most firefights.
- **Augustus Cole** – A fellow soldier and member of Alpha Squad who was rescued by Delta Squad during their exploration of Embry Square.
- **Minh Young Kim** – A straight-laced soldier and leader of Delta Squad who remains commands the squad's efforts to save Alpha team and recover the resonator.
- **Locust Drones & Grenadiers** – The frontline soldiers of the Locust who are eager to kill any humans they get their hands on.
- **Nemacyst** – Dark creatures issued from the belly of Locust Seeders. The Nemacyst chase and suicide attack any enemies they recognize.
- **Geist Reaver** – A giant flying tentacle beast tamed by the locust. Delta Squad caught a glance of two Reavers patrolling outside the House of Sovereigns, now they return for a dramatic encounter.

Gameplay Mechanics

- Prerequisite Skills –
 - Basic use of weapons and movement
 - Understanding of cover
 - Knowledge of grenadier behavior
- Skills Learned –
 - The powers and abilities of the Nemacyst

Story

Intro

- There is no intro cinematic, just a brief display of the chapter title as the scene fades in.

In-Game

- The player begins in a large windowed hallway inside a remote wing of the House of Sovereigns. Outside the windows, swarms of Nemacyst are visible, and the city of Ephyra stretches into the distance. Walking forward, the player hears a sudden squeal then an explosion and the outward facing wall just ahead explodes. The player continues down the hall and turns a corner. As the player rounds the corner, swarms of Nemacyst flood into the hallway through a hole up ahead. Defeating the Nemacyst, the player turns left and discovers a large atrium. As the player steps into the Atrium, a Reaver comes crashing through the ceiling sending debris and dust everywhere. The Reaver looks around the room then blasts through a doorway and flies deeper into the building. As the Reaver departs, a squad of drones and grenadiers blast through a door of the opposite side of the atrium and come after the player from multiple directions. Defeating the squad, the player follows the path of the Reaver down a hallway and comes face to face with a giant metal door.

Extro

- There is no extro-cinematic, after defeating the locust in the area, the player approaches a large doorway and the scene fades out, preparing the game to transition to the Reaver Boss encounter.

“60 seconds of gameplay”

- “Through the grim coated windows on the second floor Marcus saw nearly a dozen Nemacyst wavering back and forth in the wind, their black fume riddled bodies painting dark specks across a hazy orange sky. Having wound through a myriad of rooms and outstretched corridors, the squad had found itself deep in a remote wing of the House of Sovereigns. Aside from the Nemacyst outside, Marcus could not detect any signs of locust activity this deep in the building, and the hallway ahead seemed to be just another lavish walkway rotted away after 14 years of abandonment.

With a sudden crushing noise, a section of the outward facing wall buckled and exploded in a hail of tiny stone lumps. Just as the sound of the explosion rippled through the hallway, Marcus and the others readied their lancers and ducked into cover. For a moment, they held a close eye on the newly shattered hole, but nothing happened, and a wary silence filled the hallway.

“What the hell...” Marcus uttered, signaling quickly to his other squad mates to move forward. The group pushed forward at a heightened pace, taking each step a bit quicker to get out of the area.

Passing the hole and reaching a bend in the hallway, the group picked up their pace even more, trying to get some distance between them and whatever tore that wall apart. Just as Marcus scanned the hallway ahead, he heard Cole exhale in surprise.

“Nemacyst!” Kim yelled. Swinging his head to the right, Marcus found himself face to face with a flood of Nemacyst pouring through a hole in the wall. Black fumes and the blaze of weapon fire created a storm within that tiny space. The walls ruptured and gave way as more Nemacyst poured in, only to be caught in a hail of lancer bullets as thick as a lead blanket. A moment later the corridor was clear, as if nothing had even happened 20 seconds prior. Marcus could smell the stink of overheated lancers and freshly fired casings.

“Oh yeah! That’s how I like it!” Cole belted out, cocking his shotgun for good measure. Marcus caught a glimpse of Kim rolling his eyes with a small grin on his face.”

Visual References

Terrain/Vegetation References



Exterior Architecture References



Interior Architecture References



Textures/Lighting References



Characters/Vehicles



Marcus



Dom



Cole



Kim



Locust Brute



Locust Grenadier

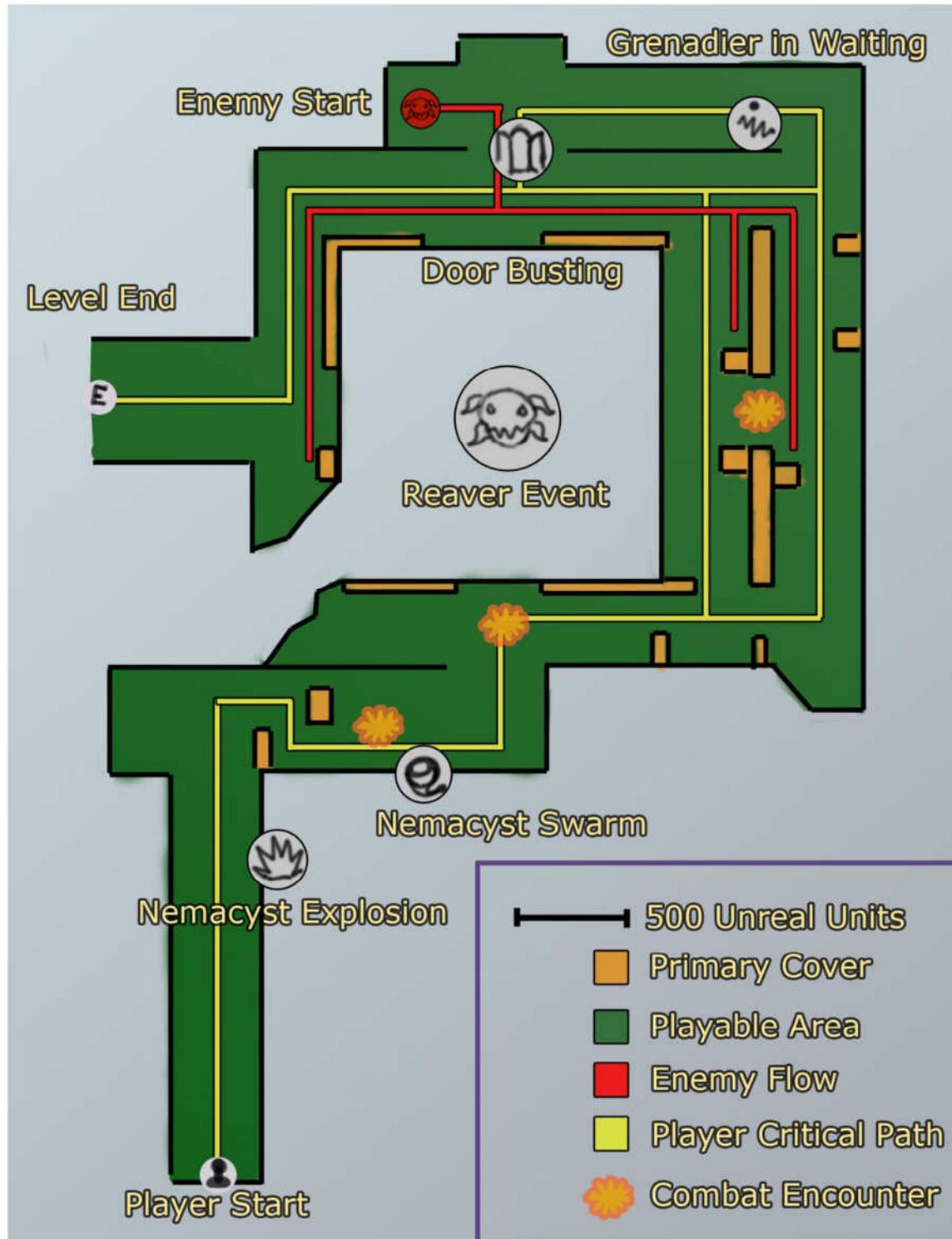


Hemocyte



Boomer

Map



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