



Gold Belt Ninja Guide

Activity 03: Alpha Phase



Alpha Phase

You've made it to the first Development phase! At this point, you should have a built-out prototype that uses basic shapes to show the structure of your project with a few mechanics added in.

Now that you've received and implemented your first round of playtesting feedback, it's time to build out your project! If you'd like, you can either continue working on the Unity project from the Prototyping Phase, or you can create a new one to start fresh.

During the Alpha Phase, you will replace the basic shapes from your prototype with actual project assets to create the players, characters, enemies, tools, collectables, and other objects in your project, as well as the overall world in which all of these assets will exist. You will also expand on the mechanics you have already begun setting up. Remember to review what you wrote in your planning documents as you are implementing elements and assets in your project.

Extra features, such as music, sound effects, and navigation screens, will be completed in the Beta Phase.

Once you're able to play your project from beginning to end without any bugs, you'll be ready to have your project playtested to move on to the Beta Phase!

In the Alpha Phase, you will:

- Add onto your prototype or create a new project in Unity.
- Build out the bulk of your project: the **theme**, **assets**, and **game mechanics**.
- Play your project from beginning to end without bugs.
- Have a ninja and a Code Sensei **playtest** your project!
- Revise your project based on playtest feedback received.
- Record Dev Diary #3 with a Code Sensei's help!



Alpha Phase – Project Appearance

Now that you have the core elements of your project built out, it's time to consider the appearance of your project! Next to the mechanics, one of the most important aspects of a project is how it looks.

It's important to make sure your project has a well-defined **theme**. Notice the different themes of these Gold Belt projects and how they transport the user instantly into the project.



images used from Gold Belt projects created by ninjas at Code Ninjas centers

You began thinking about a project theme in your brainstorming and storyboarding planning documents. Now, you'll refine your theme and consider the assets you will use to represent it. Use the following questions to guide your thinking:

- What kind of theme matches the user's goal in your project? How will it affect what happens during your project?
- Will the theme stay the same for the entire project or change across levels?
- What types of assets will you need to create your project theme?



You should also think about **visual clarity**. The user should be able to understand what they can interact with, where they can go, and what they should avoid. Notice how the different assets are used in these Gold Belt projects to communicate with the user.



images used from Gold Belt projects created by ninjas at Code Ninjas centers

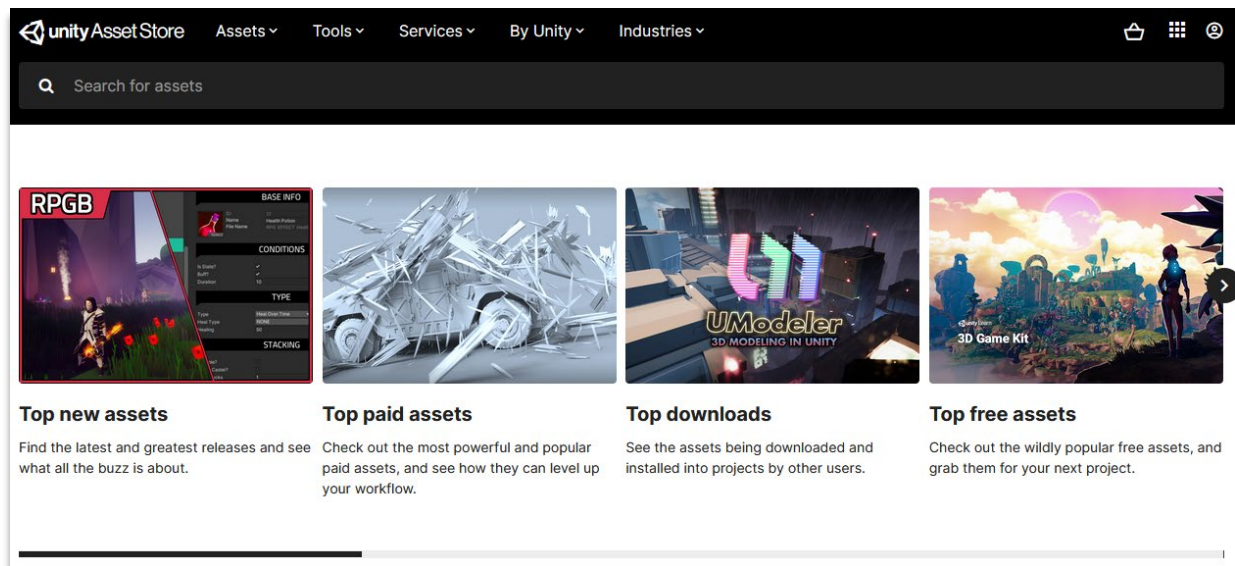
As you think about visual clarity in your project, consider the following questions:

- How will the assets you select help the user understand what they can and cannot interact with?
- What assets will give information to the user? How will this happen?
- What assets will be used to tell the user where they should go and what they should avoid?



Alpha Phase - Assets and Design

As you already know, you can use the Unity Asset Store to find assets to use in your project. Because your Gold Belt project is entirely your own, you should modify assets that you find in the store to make sure your assets match your vision for your project!

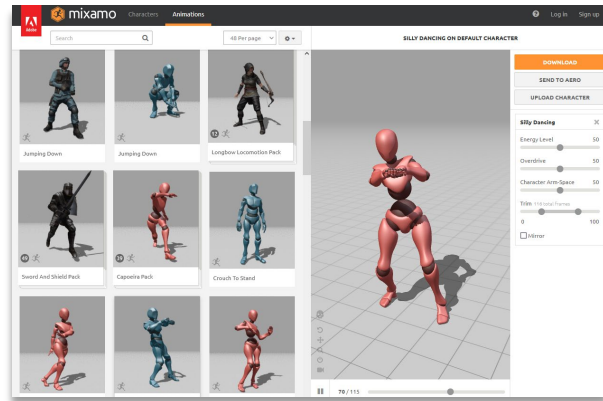
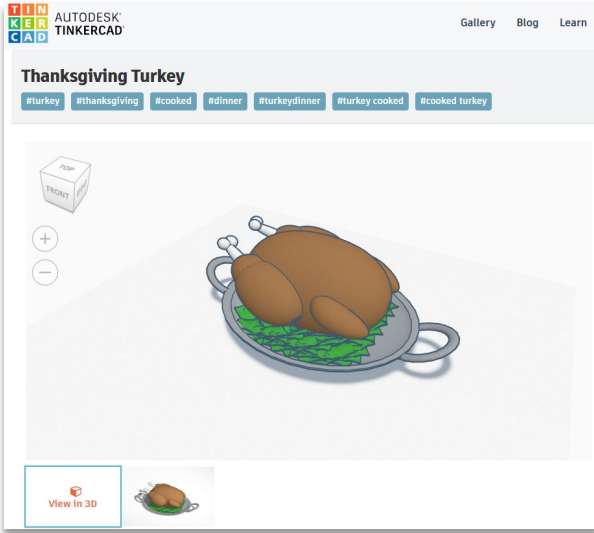


Ninja Planning Document

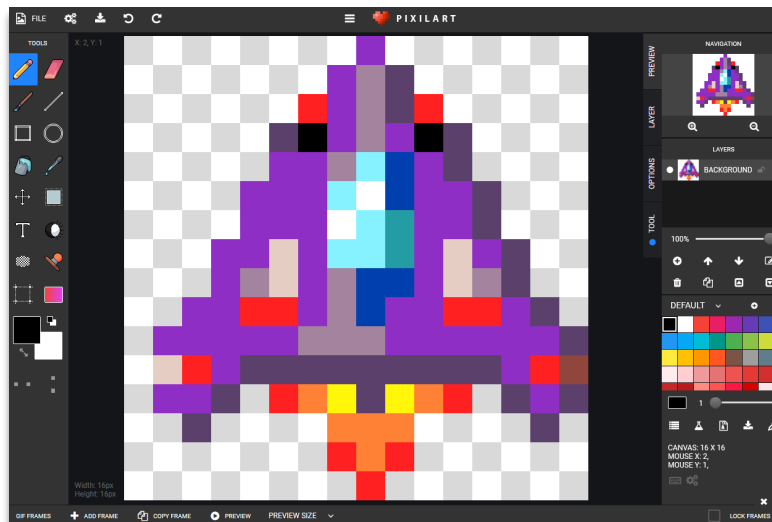
Complete the **Alpha Phase - Assets and Design** portion of your Gold Belt Ninja Planning Document by finding at least three different assets and modifying them to use in your project.



You can also create your very own assets for your project. If your project is in 3D, you can use Tinkercad to make models and Mixamo to find free animations for your characters.



If your project is 2D, then you can use Pixilart to create your very own pixel art characters, objects, and environments.





Alpha Phase - Playtesting

As you reach the end of the Alpha Phase of your project, have your Code Sensei and at least one other ninja **playtest** your project. Use the questions in your Gold Belt Planning Document to collect playtest feedback, then use their feedback to update your project before moving on to the next phase.

Playtesting Questions

- What did you like about my project?
- What could be improved in my project?

Then, create 2 of your own questions to ask your playtesters!

Ninja Planning Document

Complete the **Alpha Phase - Playtesting** portion of your Gold Belt Ninja Planning Document by asking at least 1 other Ninja and your Code Sensei to playtest and provide feedback on your project.



Finishing the Alpha Phase

As you wrap up the Alpha Phase of your project, work with a Code Sensei to record a Dev Diary video, then review this checklist to demonstrate that you are ready to move on to the next phase of your Gold Belt project!

Dev Diary #3 - Alpha

Work with a Code Sensei to record a video in which you:

- Demo your project! Describe how a user interacts with the project and how you built on your work from the Prototyping phase.
- Share an example of how you have used feedback to develop your project so far.
- Share something that you're excited about adding to your project in the Beta phase!

Alpha Phase Checklist

- ✓ I built out the bulk of my project, so that it is almost fully functional at this point in the process.
- ✓ I used a variety of assets that fit the theme of my project.
- ✓ My project was playtested by at least 1 other ninja.
- ✓ My project was playtested by at least 1 Code Sensei.
- ✓ I revised my project based on feedback I received.
- ✓ My project is bug-free and can be played from start to finish.
- ✓ I recorded Dev Diary #3 with my Code Sensei.