

GAME DESIGN, ART, RESOURCES, RESEARCH,
CRITICISM, TUTORIALS & STUFF BY ANJIN ANHUT.



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experiments, my art, photoshop, tutorials [<http://howtonotsuckatgamedesign.com/?p=8568>], February 10,
2013 [<http://howtonotsuckatgamedesign.com/?p=8568>] by Anjin Anhut.

This article is filed under [digital creation](#).



Yesterday I tried little experiment. I created graphics in Photoshop and instead of using the mouse or a tablet... I was using a game pad. The results were quite pleasing and it is fun to do. So here is how it's done (works for any drawing software actually):

Setup And Gear

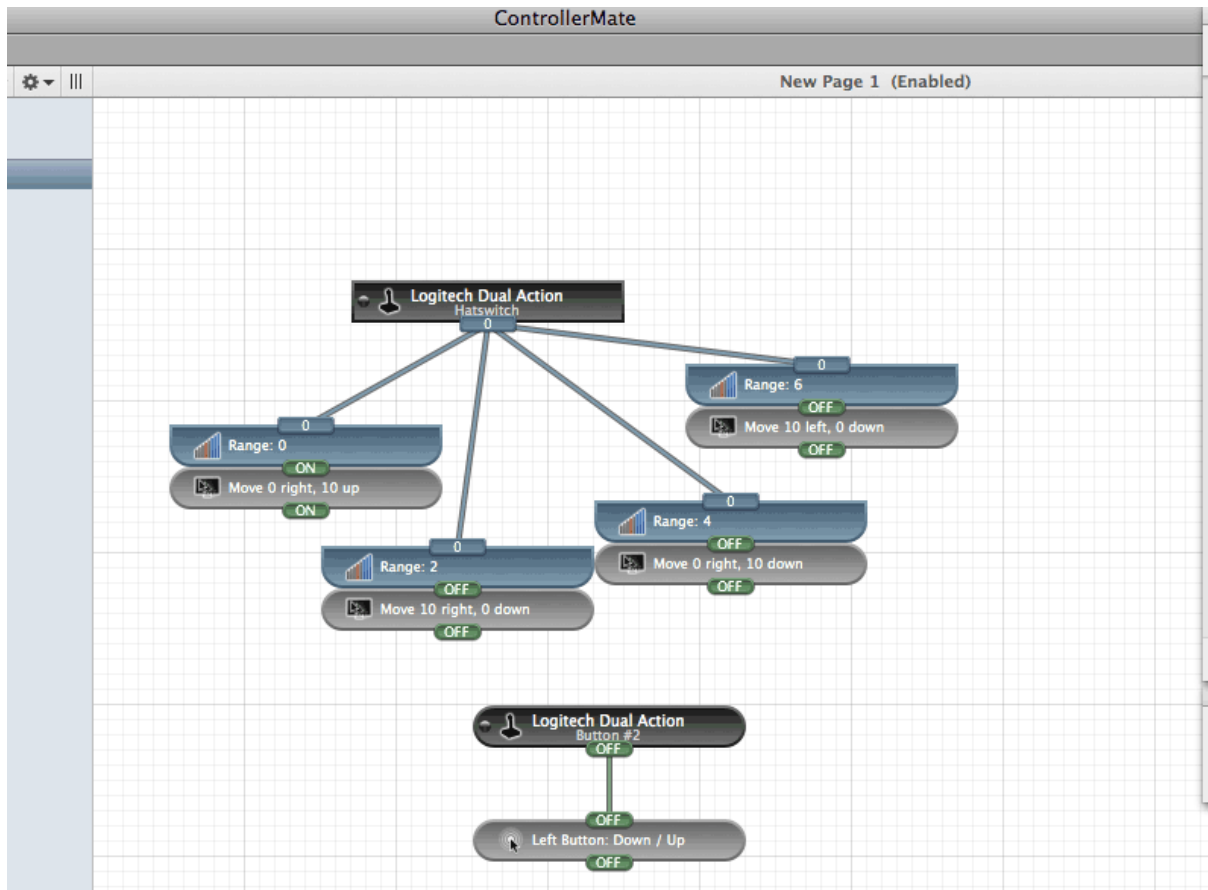
For this tasty dish, you need to get the following ingredients:

- a drawing software (I used Photoshop)
- Controller Mate (or similar software, get it [here](#))
- a game pad (I used a Logitech F310, which works with macOS even though it's not advertised that way)

Controller Mate allows you to map game pad input events to almost any function that gets triggered by other controller inputs. You could map buttons on the pad to keys or even key combinations on your key board. You can replace mouse input with pad input and that's exactly what I did.

Controller Mate uses nodes and editable parameters to allow you to program your pad as you wish. It's easy enough to jump right in and deep enough to allow for complex commands. I mapped mouse cursor movement to the d-pad and mapped the left click to one of the face buttons. The cursor now moved 10 pixels in the respective direction with each pressing of the d-pads directional inputs.

Here is the setup in Controller Mate:



Draw, Stranger!

The d-pad is a digital input, every directional input is either on or off, meaning that you can only go straight up, down, left, right and only in fixed increments of 10 pixels. You basically move on an invisible grid.

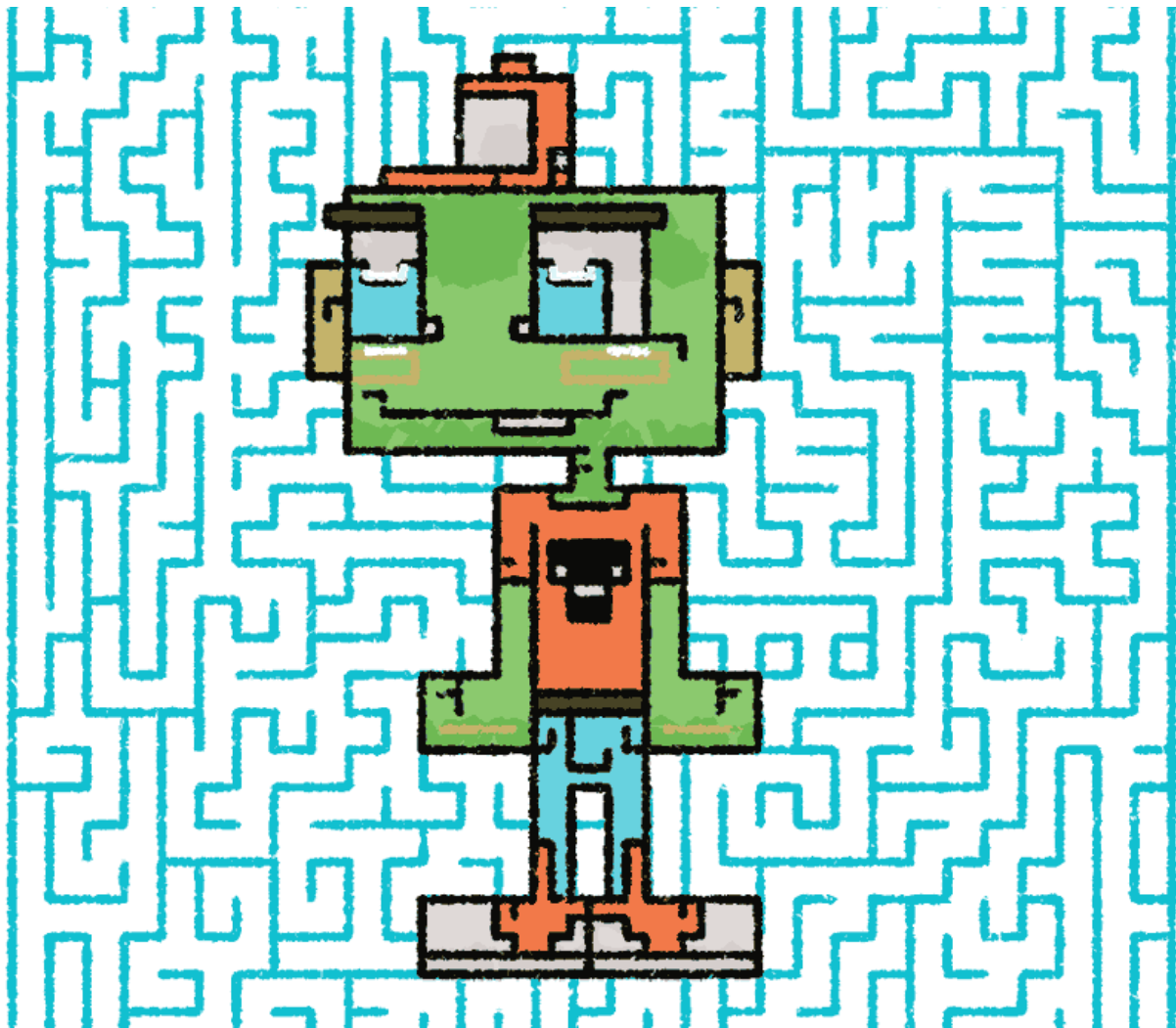
Now putting a Photoshop brush and an empty canvas into the mix, everything feels very similar to drawing with an Etch A Sketch or doodling away on your math paper back when you were a kid at school.

The first thing I did, like back in school, was writing my own name. The limitations of the game pad as an input device bind the brush on an invisible grid and the randomized features of the Photoshop brush give each line and corner an individual texture.



Next level: Character drawing. The grid of course forces a certain form language to each drawing you make. A good thing and helpful limitation if you dig it as a stylistic choice. A nice effect is, that since the 10 pixel movement increments are mapped to the screen pixels, not the Photoshop canvas pixels, you can work in different screen resolutions depending on how much you zoom in or out.

The more you zoom in, the more delicate the grid becomes and vice versa. This drawing was outlined in 50% and 25% zooms, so we get two different grid sizes in one drawing. After I drew the character, the colors were applied more traditionally using the wand and fill functions.



In Photoshop you could get similar effects using the grid function. But this has a completely different feel to it. The grid function requires a visible grid on screen and is magnetic, so occasionally you could slip off. Also drawing something with a game pad is simply fun to do and opens up a lot of possibilities for experimentation.

Anyway, have fun. Cheers.

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