

You want to use gamification as part of a solution you are building, but resources are limited and you can't take a fully gamified approach. What is the one gamification element that you would insist was included, no matter what?

For me, it would be progress.

Start with Goals

This is not a single element, so this may be a bit of a cheat. Progress is linked to two main concepts. [Goals and Feedback](#), something I spoke about at length in Part 5 of my Introduction to Gamification (which I will return to writing very soon!). So to include progress in a design, I need to be able to create goals for the user. As I mention in the linked article, these can be large goals that are then broken down into smaller goals:

Quest -> Levels -> Missions -> Task

But you can't have goals without feedback - otherwise, how do you know how close you are to completing goals. Again, as I say in the article, feedback comes in many shapes and forms, from progress bars to full virtual currencies!

Now Feedback

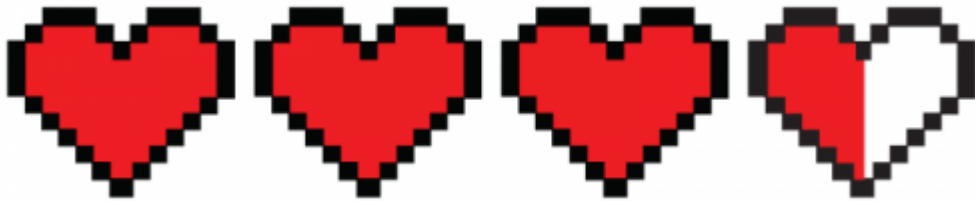
So that I don't cheat too much, I will limit myself here to one simple feedback mechanic, a [progress bar](#).



The Humble Progress Bar

It isn't glamorous or exciting, but it works a treat! It is a simple way to tell users how close they are to achieving their goals.

The nice thing about a progress bar is that it can be presented in so many different ways. From dials to pie charts to simple bars. But they don't always have to be positive. Think about lives in a video game. They give you inverse progress. The further from your goal you are, the fewer hearts you have!



How Many Lives Left?

The only limit is your imagination really.

What would your one gamification element be - your desert island element if you will?

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