DC COMICS GEM LOOT DROP

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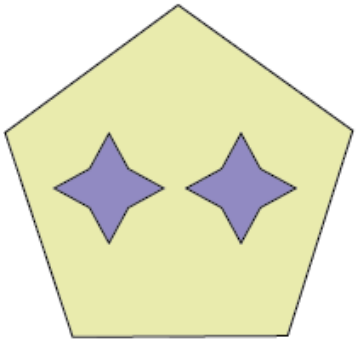
OVERVIEW

The Gem Loot System is a proposed new system that allows players to add additional statistics to their player character using a combination of gems in PVE mode. Players will be granted a base Shield for their Lair or Hideout upon first introduction of the new system in which looted gems can be socketed to the item to create statistical enhancements. As the player progresses through leveling and gameplay, new Shields with larger slot quantities can either be awarded or purchased using in game currency.

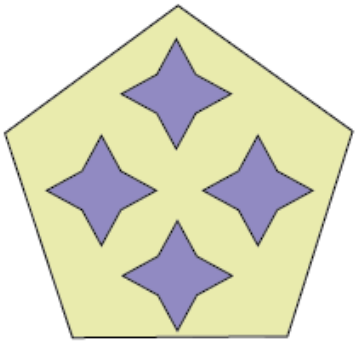
INTRODUCTION

The addition of a socketed gem system can add a bit more customization and granularity to the overall gameplay experience for new and current players. All players will be granted a 2 slot shield to place within their hideout/lair once they reach level 10. Once placed, the player will then be able to interact with the shield and place any looted gems into the sockets. Through loot drops, awards, achievements, or within the marketplace, shields with more gem slots can be acquired. Ideally by default, if the player has multiple shields within their hideout/lair the shield with the most slots will be the default shield the system will use to increase player stats.

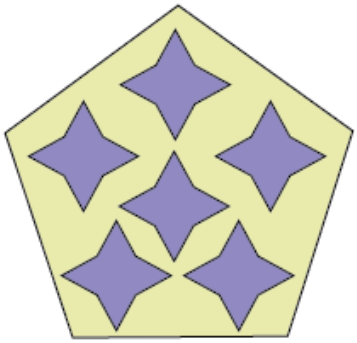
Figure 1 - Shield Slots



Basic 2 Slot Shield



4 Slot Shield

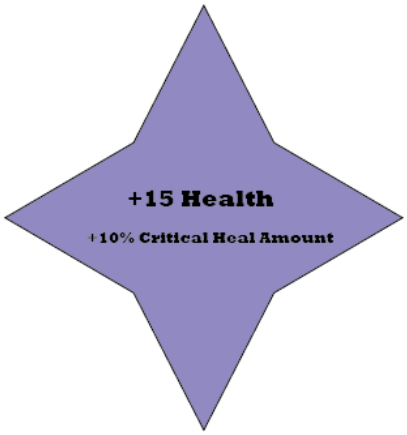


6 Slot Shield

Socketable gems will contain at least one primary statistic attribute with at least one substat attribute. Gems are rated on a typical generic rarity scale that starts with Common as the lowest rated, Rare as the mid-range, and Legendary as the ultimate type of gem. Dropped gems start at Level One and can be powered up using in game currency to Level Five allowing potential expansion of gem levels in the future.

GEMS

Figure 2 - Gem Example



Once a gem is collected and placed in the player's inventory the base statistics are displayed through a tooltip. Gems should function as other items that appear in the player inventory – they can be sold and destroyed, but can only be equipped when the player is in their lair/hideout and interacting with a shield.

Gems should also increase their primary statistics by using currency to power up the gem. The highest amount a gem can be powered up should not exceed a 75% increase (if percentage stats are chosen) or a maximum flat increase of 8-10 points. Secondary statistics do not power up. A more in-depth description of gem powering will be touched upon later in this document under "Monetization and Gem Costs".

GEM BALANCING

Gems should offer a wide array of statistics the player can utilize during PVE play. Within the DCUO Gem Stats.xls file are a few options for these statistics: the first is based solely on flat rate increases, the second is based on percentage rates, and the third is a hybrid of the previous options.

All statistical options for gems have their pros and cons. With a flat rate system it is easier for the player to understand the stat increase at a glance, but it does not have the appeal of a percentage amount. Percentage amounts can be slightly tricky to balance but within this document the percentages are ideally an amount that should not be balance breaking. A hybrid system has many options available for gem generation but may offer too much of a granular and overwhelming system.

All options provide the ability for player customization of skills often utilized in and out of combat. Ideally, the option chosen will boost the player's statistics in a minimal but ideal capacity that won't hinder current system balance and gameplay.

RARITY AND POWER UPS

Gems should have a rarity assigned to them based on a category of Common, Rare, and Legendary. This system offers the ability to have multiple values based on the balance option selected. Within this system a designer can easily import a wide array of gems into loot tables while also offering the option to expand on the system in the future.

Ideally, Common Gem items should have a drop rate of 25%-40%, Rare Gem drop rate should be within 5%-10%, and Legendary Gems at an extremely low amount of 1%-3%. During initial release, gems should only drop from boss mobs.

Below is the ideal rate at which a gem can be powered up with the intention of being a minor but tantalizing increase to the player.

Stat Increases based on Rarity		
	Flat Rate	Percentage
Common	4	25%
Rare	6	50%
Legendary	8	75%

MONETIZATION AND GEM COSTS

The cost of powering up a gem should be relatively attainable but also at an exponential rate. The cost of the power up should be in relation to the rarity of the gem itself. Below are a few tables with examples of how to price out power up costs.

Common	Power Up Cost
Level 2	$100
Level 3	$250
Level 4	$500
Level 5	$800

Rare	Power Up Cost
Level 2	$250
Level 3	$500
Level 4	$800
Level 5	$1,050

Legendary	Power Up Cost
Level 2	$500
Level 3	$800
Level 4	$1,050
Level 5	$1,300

Players should also be able to sell gems within their inventory for a 1/8th of the calculated gem value. The gem value is based on its current power level should ideally relate to the above tables.

FEATS (ACHIEVEMENT SUPPORT)

The introduction of the Gem Socket System should also allow for an expansion of the current Feats and Achievements players can attain. The basic types of Feats that should be supported should include the player's first successful socket of a Gem, successfully powering up a Gem from Level 1 to Level 2, and successfully powering up a Gem to its highest level, and socketing a new shield other than the base shield granted on initial release of the system.

Using the above-mentioned milestones for the system, a more broad and detailed list of Feats can be generated and will also allow for expansion of additional Feats post release.

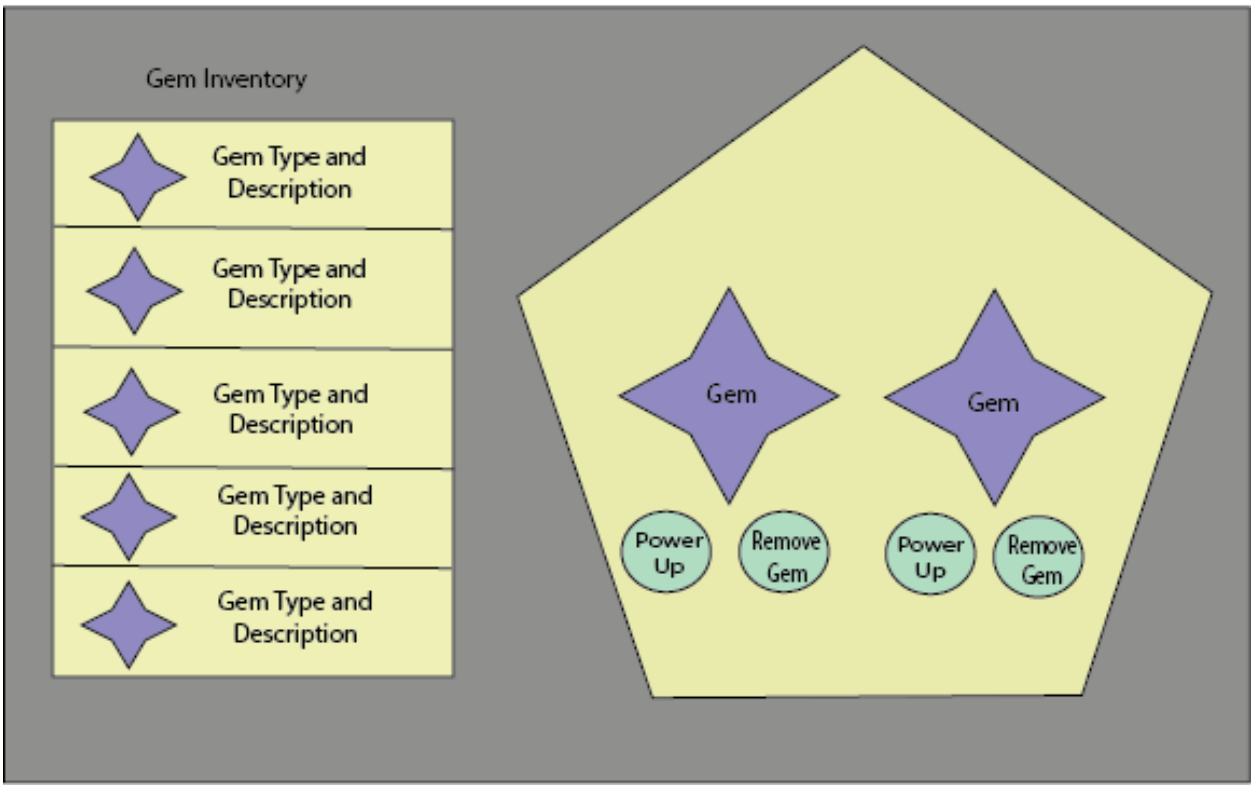
DEVELOPMENT DEPENDENCIES

Like all new proposed systems, the Gem Socket System will need extended support across multiple disciplines for a successful implementation.

First, an elaboration on the current statistical tech system will need to be adjusted by programming as well as creation of an importer support for the design team to utilize. A Technical Design Document will need to be generated through collaboration between Design and Programming.

Once the technical design is complete UI and 2D Art support will be needed in order to implement the visuals for the player inventory along with the support of player interaction through a User Interface menu. Below is a mockup of an interaction menu that should appear once the player interacts with their shield in their hideout/lair.

Figure 3 - Shield Interface



Once the initial creation of the User Interface and 2D art is completed, and the support of a data importer is developed, the remaining task will be to generate the necessary data. Once the data is generated the new drop items should be placed within a new or current loot table for Boss Mobs.

An ideal support mechanism for post launch should be some way to analyze any data pertaining to the new system in order to better balance it if necessary. This data should include but not limited to: the number of successfully socketed gems, the number of sold or destroyed gems, successful drop rates in relation to boss mobs, and the overall value increases supplied by the socketed gems.

POTENTIAL EXPANSION ON SYSTEM

The initial system should be a relatively easy system to expand upon in the future. It is suggested that the current system should only function in PVE play with the potential to expand it to PVP after a few months of analyzing player data.