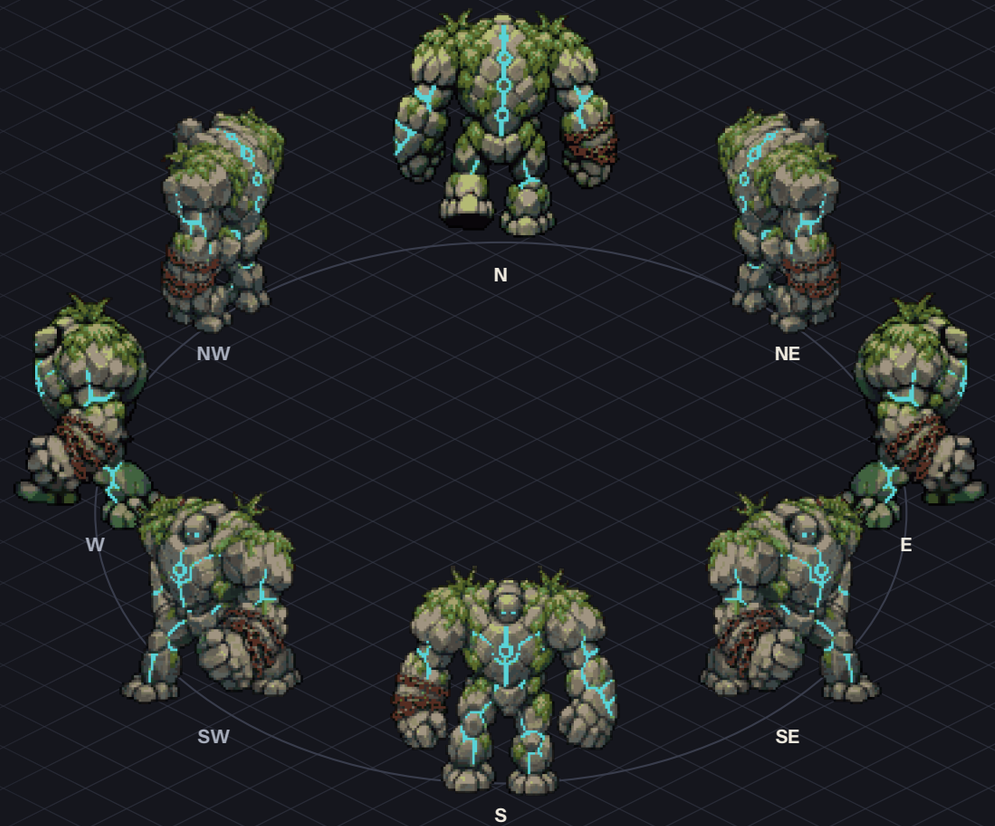
FIVE HEROES, EIGHT DIRECTIONS / MAKING OF

Iso Cycles

Engine-ready pixel-art sprite sheets for five fantasy heroes: walk, run, idle and attack, eight frames each, in all eight isometric directions. Claude Code drove Scenario MCP: GPT Image 2.5 drew five facings per hero, Kling V3 animated every one, and local scripts cut the loops, matched size and speed, pixelated the frames and mirrored the other three.



Drawn SE NE E S N **Mirrored** SW NW W Stone golem, walk frame 1

8	20	1,280	4,193.75
directions, 5 drawn	sprite sheets, 8 rows	frames	credits (CU)

Two drawings, four directions.

The first round remade an isometric walk-cycle post with a new cast and three more cycles. Each hero was drawn twice, facing south-east and north-east; every facing and cycle became a Kling clip; and a local script turned the clips into pixel-art loops, with SW and NW as mirrors.



GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst: SE and NE in one still.



Kling V3 I2V: SE run, frame 30, keyed.



Shipped run, frame 1: SW and NW are mirrors.

A video model as the animator

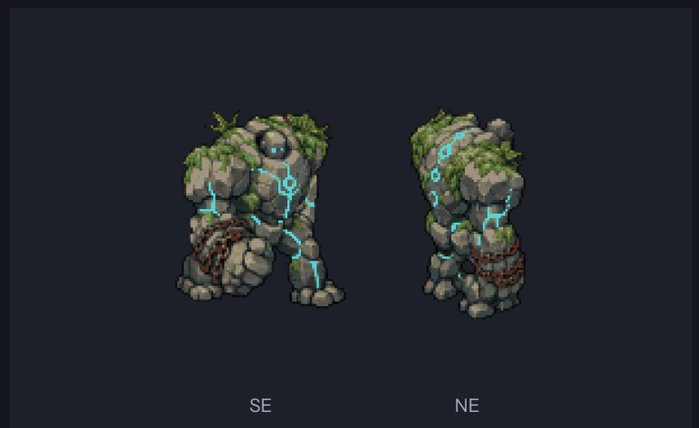
Retro Diffusion Animation was tried first: its walking style drew the four cardinal directions at 48 × 48, four frames a cycle. A route test on the knight's SE run settled the method. A GPT Image sheet shuffled, Seedance 2.5 jogged, and Kling V3 from the first frame, told to run like a treadmill and face the bottom-right corner, held the facing with a real stride.

Loop, pixels, mirror

The magenta field was keyed to alpha, a search kept the loop window whose seam was smallest against the motion inside it, and eight frames were sampled across it. Each hero was averaged down to its height (orc and golem 96 px, necromancer and elf 80, knight 64), given one palette of 24 to 28 colours and a 1 px inner outline. The round made 45 production clips and cost 1,513.75 credits, film score included.

Five drawings, eight directions.

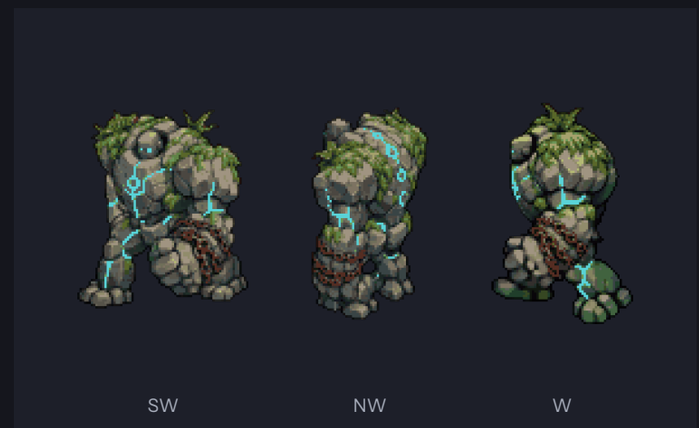
With four diagonals, a hero sent straight up or across the screen can only show the nearest diagonal. Round two draws the three facings a mirror cannot make, east, south and north, and flips three more, so every 45° step has its own sprite. The SE and NE clips from round one were reused as they were.



Drawn in round one: SE and NE.



Drawn in round two: E, S and N.



Mirrored: SW, NW and W.

What a mirror can and cannot make

A horizontal flip turns SE into SW, NE into NW and E into W. South and north face along the camera axis, so a flip gives back the same facing: those two had to be drawn, and east with them. Every sheet now has eight rows, in the order SE, SW, NE, NW, E, W, S, N.

Only the new facings cost credits

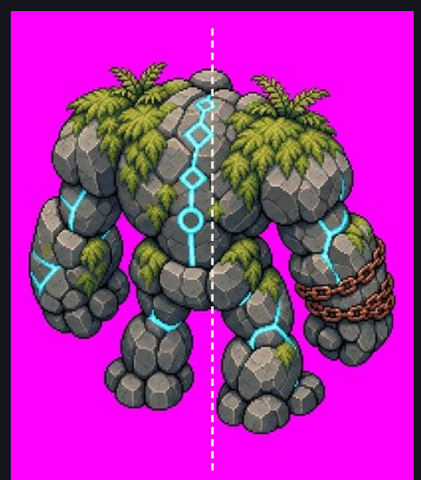
Per hero, round two needed three turnaround stills and twelve clips: three facings by four cycles. At 24 credits a still or a 3-second clip, and 40 for a 5-second clip, that is about 456 credits a hero on top of SE and NE. The fixes found along the way brought the five heroes to 2,680.

The back view, drawn straight.

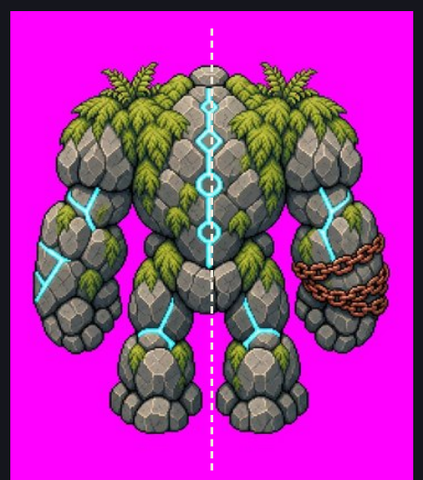
GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst drew each new facing with both round-one first frames as references, so every new angle keeps one identity. The golem came first, with east, south and north side by side in one image. Testing the page later showed its back and front views turned a few degrees.



Turnaround, take A: E, S and N in one call.



N, first draw: the spine left of centre.



N, single-pose redraw: spine centred.

One image, three facings

Two outputs for 24 credits, a third of the price of three requests. Take B's east pose drifted back toward south-east, so take A was kept. Splitting the image into equal thirds sliced the south golem's wide arm into the east frame; the split now cuts at the emptiest column near each third.

Symmetric by request

The model had drawn facing away as a slight three-quarter: the spine sat left of the body's centre and the chained arm showed more. The pinned idle inherited it and the walk exaggerated it. A single-pose redraw asked for a perfectly symmetrical back view, shoulders level and both arms equally visible (24 credits), and the front view got the same fix. The other heroes started from one symmetric request per facing.

Each facing gets its own stride.

The round-one prompt, a treadmill plus a facing named in screen terms, did not hold on the new facings: the model drifts toward the angle it knows best. Each new facing got its own locomotion recipe, all with the round-one back-view fix of an end frame pinned to the first on a 5-second clip.



Golem E walk, first take: turns to us.



Side-view recipe: the profile holds.



Knight S run, first take: turns sideways.



Front recipe: straight at the camera.

The side and the back

The golem's first east walk and run turned toward the camera for about 3 of every 8 frames. The side-view recipe says “we never see its chest or its back”, and the head stayed in profile for the whole loop. Its north walk read as walking backwards; playing the loop in reverse was not enough, so a back-walk recipe adds “the back foot lifts its heel toward us, swings forward and plants farther from the camera”.

The front, three times

The necromancer's south walk turned to a three-quarter view, so a front recipe mirrored the back walk. The knight's south run still turned sideways, so the recipe was extended from the walk to the run. The elf's south run went side-on even then: the recipe now says the hero “runs straight at the camera” and “never turns sideways”, with “running sideways” in the negative prompt.

Same height, same pace, every way.

Played side by side on the page, some new facings looked smaller or slower than SE. Both had measurable causes: a figure walking away from the camera recedes inside its own clip, and every direction's loop has its own length.



Golem walk, frame 1, after the size match.



Golem run: each direction plays its own rate.

Scaled about the feet

Measured on the 960 px frames, the north walk loop stood 480 px tall against 542 for SE, and the east run 507 against 551. Each walk, run and idle loop is now scaled about the feet to the reference facing's median height: N walk × 1.13, E run × 1.09, NE idle × 0.955. Slim profiles and front views still read small, so a per-facing bias nudges them: golem E × 1.05, S and N × 1.06 for the other four heroes.

Each direction at its own rate

The golem's north run looked slow because the player used the SE rate for every direction: its loop is 17 source frames against 28 for SE, so it played about 1.6 times too slow. Each direction now plays its own rate. Front and back runs with short, foreshortened strides also get a speed factor: 1.3 for the orc (S 10.4 and N 15.6 fps), the necromancer and the knight, and 1.15 for the elf, whose short loops reached the 16 fps cap at 1.3.

Name what the body hides.

A prop that the body covers, or that could change sides as the hero turns, comes out wrong unless the prompt says where it is. The turnarounds gained a note per facing for each hero, and the elf gained an attack description per facing.



Orc N, first draw: a blade at each end.



Redraw: one haft, one head by the hip.



Elf S attack, first take: aims sideways.



Attack per facing: aims at the camera.

Where every prop sits

From behind, the orc's axe is hidden, and a double-bladed axe held in front of the body became a barbell in both north options. The redraw named one haft and one double-bladed head, showing past his left hip (24 credits). The per-facing notes keep the necromancer's staff and the elf's bow on the right of the image, and the knight's scabbard on the left with his shield centred on his back. The elf's north take A still put the bow on the left, so take B was kept.

Aim and light per facing

One bow-shot description served every facing, and the model animated archery side-on, so the elf's south and north attacks shot sideways. An attack text per facing fixed both for 48 credits: south says “we see the arrow tip head-on, not from the side”, and north draws with the elbow raised behind her head. The necromancer's green flame lit the backdrop of one north walk, so every negative prompt now lists “glowing halo around the character, light spill on the background”.

Twenty sheets, eight rows each.

One PNG per hero and cycle: eight frames across and eight rows, SE, SW, NE, NW, E, W, S, N. A metadata file records each sheet's cell, feet pivot and palette and, per direction, the frame indices, loop score and playback rate. The 34.5-second build film was re-cut for eight directions on the round-one soundtrack.



elf_attack.png: 8 frames by 8 rows.



knight_run.png, rows S and N: the front and back runs.

Where round two's credits went

The stone golem took 704 credits as the first hero through every fix: one turnaround image, two redraws and 23 clips. Then the orc berserker 448, the necromancer 504, the knight 480 and the elf ranger 496, plus 48 for the elf's per-facing attacks. Round two made 16 turnaround requests and 77 Kling clips for 2,680 credits, and the film needed no new music.

The receipt

Round one: four directions, tests and film score	57	1,513.75 CU
Three new angles per hero, GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst	13	312 CU
Symmetric redraws and the orc's axe, GPT Image 2.5	3	72 CU
New-facing clips, 5 × 3 × 4, Kling V3 I2V Standard	60	1,760 CU
Re-runs: side, back, front, glow, elf attacks, Kling V3	17	536 CU
Total	150	4,193.75 CU

From the Scenario job records and build notes of both rounds; round one as in its page's cost table, including a 16.75-credit Retro Diffusion test.