

# Out Of Time

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Honors Option

URL to Pitch: <https://youtu.be/Fa7xt0eTrQk>

**Target Audience:** 13+

**Gamer Type:** Medium-Hardcore

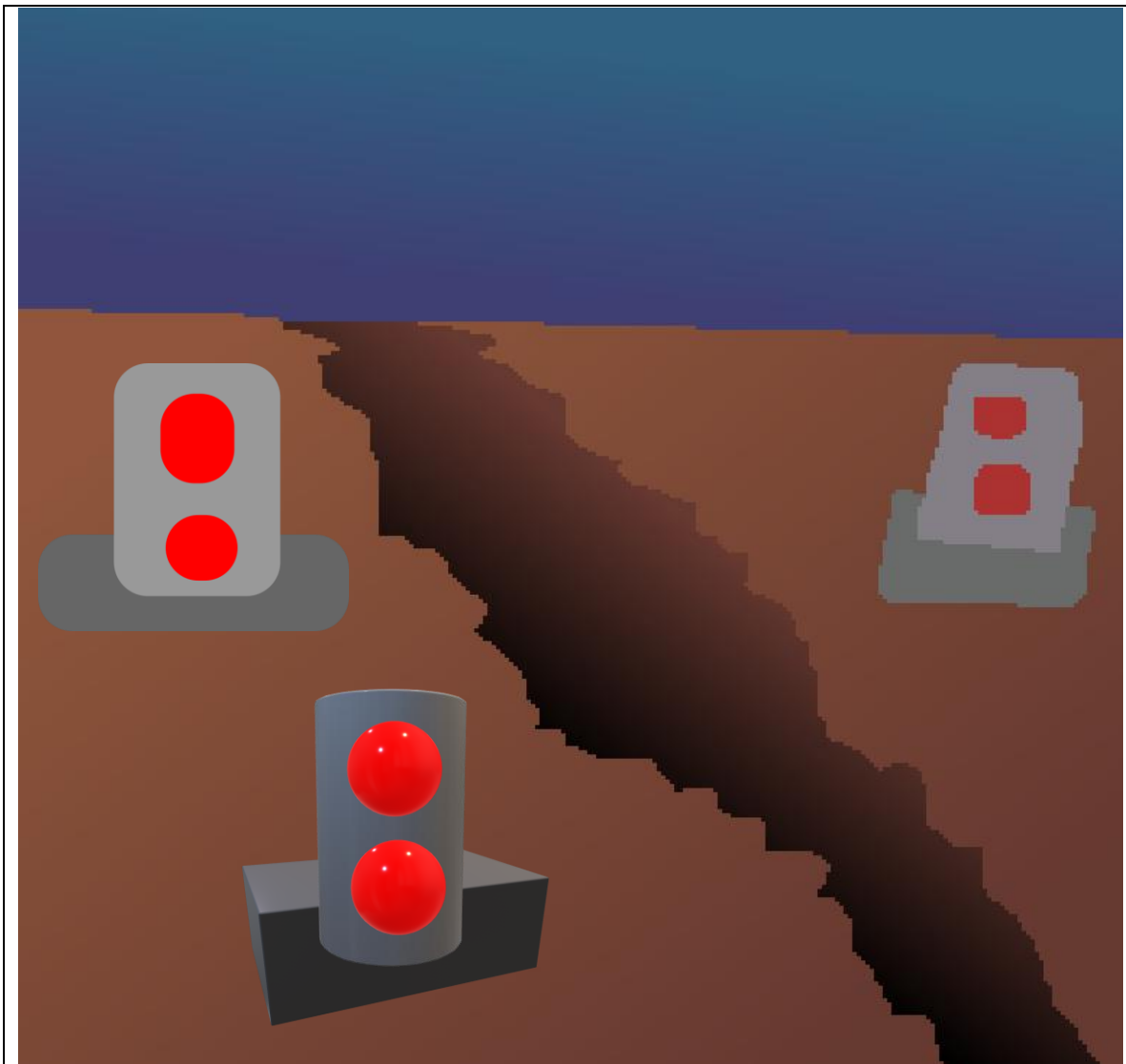
**Target Platforms:** PC (main), Console  
(secondary)

**Genre:** Metroidvania

**Number of Players:** 1

**Projected Release Date:** 2027

## Concept Image(s)



**Elevator Pitch (High Concept Statement)**

Out Of Time is a 2D Metroidvania that rewards precision and efficiency, with skillful use of combat and movement mechanics being a major aspect of the gameplay loop. The main objective of the player character, a sentient robot known as the “Interloper”, is to fulfill their primary directory to save their doomed planet from a robotic hivemind that seeks to rewind time and prevent the big bang from ever occurring. The player aims to achieve this goal by breaching special areas, known as “Time Zones”, that contain a unique material that the hivemind is using to charge a device known as the Achronological Engine. Each “Time Zone” will feature a different art style, such as hand-drawn or 2.5D sprites that contrast with the pixel art sprite of the character, while also being focused on a different period of time in the planet’s past or future.

The game will include platforming sections that reward precise movement and timing, while also including dense combat environments to provide an opposing force to the protagonist’s goal. Frequent player death is expected, and in some instances even encouraged. The player will need to decide if they are willing to risk their resources in order to learn a new enemy/boss’s attacks or attempt a difficult platforming section to progress. Certain challenging sections will be optional in the progression of the main story, allowing the player to wait until they have obtained more abilities before attempting challenging areas. Similarly, some sections may only be traversable if you are in the “asynchronous” state, which occurs after the player dies in their default “synchronized” state. The “asynchronous” state alters the players movement and makes them much faster while limiting their defensive and offensive abilities, giving them a last chance to run back to where they died to “resynchronize” and recover their resources.

The story of the game is also very rich and will deal with the weight of player choice and asks the question if small interactions are still significant when the fate of the universe itself is on the line. The theme of the overworld is stagnant, there is no life on the planet other than the robotic hivemind and the protagonist, as all remaining life has been trapped into the “time zones”. Inside each zone, the theme will differ, for example, a zone that takes place during the near past of the planet may be more hopeful while a zone that takes place right before the hivemind was created may have a more dreadful theme. The goal of Out Of Time is to give meaning behind all of the player’s actions. Combat should feel precise, platforming should feel responsive, and every dialogue choice should feel deliberate.

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**Feature Set (Pillars of the Game)**

## Dialogue Features

- Branching storylines
- Multiple endings to the same questline depending on the actions the player took
- Unique responses unlocked after defeating bosses or collecting abilities
- Multiple dialogue choices that influence the outcome of a conversation

## Combat Features

- Parrying
- Healing in combat puts you at a disadvantage (takes time)
- Short dashes with invulnerability frames
- Movement abilities will have uses in combat (using a grappling hook to pull enemies or climbing claws to shred armor)

## Exploration Features

- Multiple movement abilities that are unique from each other
- Hidden areas that can only be accessed after obtaining certain abilities from later in the story
- Puzzles that provide more resources or items to the player when solved
- Optional “challenge” areas that pose a high risk but high reward

**Design Influences / Competitive Analysis**

## Gameplay Design Influences:

- Hollow Knight + Hollow Knight: Silksong
  - o Platforming, metroidvania aspects, combat
- Dead Cells
  - o Combat, unlockable weaponry, puzzles
- Sekiro: Shadows Die Twice
  - o Combat, timing and difficulty
- Risk of Rain Returns
  - o Artstyle, unlockable content, enemy variety
- Valheim
  - o “Death Run” mechanic where the player is put in a weakened but more mobile state after dying to recover their lost resources

## Story Design Influences:

- Armored Core VI: Fires of Rubicon
  - o New Game Plus including additional content, decisions influencing the game
- OneShot
  - o Feeling of urgency, strong emotional connection to characters, weight of decisions
- Cassette Beasts

- Gameplay elements with a different artstyle than the main game
- Steam World Dig 1 + 2
  - Aesthetic, NPC designs and theming
- Tunic
  - Storytelling, mystery, hiding mechanics from the player to encourage experimentation

#### Competitive Analysis

Out Of Time draws many inspirations from big genre defining titles like Hollow Knight, Sekiro, and Dead Cells. However, Out Of Time makes sure to focus on its unique features instead of simply copying the gameplay of its inspirations. The unique stylized art styles for each area of the game provide a distinctive visual experience that cannot be replicated by other games in the genre. Alongside this, Out Of Time will be designed to lean heavily into its more experimental and esoteric design elements in order to differentiate itself from its peers. Narrative elements and the emphasis on player decisions will play a much larger role in Out Of Time, with emphasis on dialogue choices and small moments that hold much more significance than it may seem at first. The player's actions should have weight behind them, and that should apply to more than just dialogue choices. Combat, exploration, and any other actions the player does will feel like there are stakes at risk, and the player should feel connected to the ludonarrative.

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#### Scope Management

- Green Light Features (High Priority)
    - Base game map featuring five distinct areas ("Time Zones") each with a unique art style that contrasts with the player.
    - Five unlockable abilities for the player that can be used to access additional content in other "Time Zones", such as a grappling ability from Zone 2 that can be used to access a new area in Zone 1.
    - A final confrontation that wraps up the story while still leaving room for additional content to be added post launch.
  - Yellow Light Features (Medium Priority)
    - Two additional "Time Zones" featuring new enemies and content.
    - Two new abilities to go with the newly added "Time Zones".
    - Boss rush/Challenge Mode to expand postgame content.
  - Red Light Features (Low Priority)
    - Three additional "Time Zones" that lead to an alternate final ending, including an alternate final confrontation.
    - Three additional abilities to go with the three new "Time Zones".
    - New Game Plus feature with additional content on subsequent playthroughs depending on the ending that was achieved in the prior run.
    - A third "True Ending" obtainable after completing both endings via New Game Plus.
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