

ANNA-X65

Redux



ANNA-X66

OUR FATHERS ARE DEAD OUR MOTHERS ARE MACHINES

ANNA-X66 is an RPG for 2 to 6 players, aged 18 and up. It takes Chris McDowall's *Electric Bastionland* and places it in a sci-fi wasteland of scattered communities. It expands on the character creation found in *EB* and uses hex-based maps for exploring the world and helping the people around you.

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This game bears the Mark of the Odd: it is based upon the rules of *Into the Odd*, an original creation of Chris McDowall (www.bastionland.com).



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PRINCIPLES

Everything is breaking down.

Past societies are always present, somehow.

People have strange ways, rituals, words.

Humanity wants alternately to cling together and to fall apart.

The metropole is safer physically, but not socially.

ANNA loves you.

We operate the outpost at the edge of the city. The nearby buildings are all reduced to tangled steel, shattered glass, and powdered concrete, but ours stands tall and shining and whole—a blade of grass that was somehow missed in the great mowing. Looking Eastward, we will see the sun rise over red-brown hills, dotted with burnt-out towns here and patches of burnt stumps there. Few people come to us from that direction, but we must still pay attention and be ready to go down and help them come in. Looking Westward, we will see the sun set over the city that we have rebuilt. It is occupied, but only partially, and only at the very centre, heart, and focus.

And reclamation goes on, of course. New homes are always being carved out from the ruins at the ring, stocked with a mix of scavenged and newly-made materials. Human society moves onward, but it stays rooted in the same places, too.

And why bother writing this kind of overwrought nonsense?

I think it's because sitting and watching this road gives me too much time with my little stories. These novels, movies, and comics are overwrought too. (And equally full of nonsense!) We thought we knew what the future could be. The sheer arrogance in them is baffling—the pessimism too. We aren't robots or animals. Although, sometimes, we're both of those things.

And when we are at our most vulnerable, traveling over stretches of wasteland, beset by monsters, we need to see the beacon--the light that's still on in the window. We need people to come to the door to welcome us in. And so, we operate the outpost at the edge of the city.

HOW TO PLAY

First, talk as a group about the kinds of sci-fi you like and don't like.

Gather your roleplaying dice (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some pencils, and paper. Gather your players.

One player is the **Facilitator**. They describe the world, help interpret the rules, and embody most of the characters and creatures that populate the world. If you're the Facilitator, think about what themes, interesting locations, and potential problems exist in the world.

Each of the other players creates a single **Player Character** (a character that will explore, map, engage with, and help improve the world) following the rules in the Character Creation chapter. If you're embodying a player character, think about how you'll portray them, what their goals are, and what their attitudes are to the other player characters and about the world at large.

Roll an ANNA. The ANNA is an Advanced Neural Network Algorithm, a kind of thinking software/hardware entity that will be a powerful NPC in your game.

Listen to the setting descriptions of the Facilitator. Your characters are in a specific hex. Look around the map to get your bearings. Ask questions.

Have your characters talk to the people around them. Do your characters need some items? Does someone nearby need help? **Decide** which problem to solve (and who you'll ask and where you'll go to look for solutions).

Go out into the irradiated ruins to solve those problems. Encounter weird environments and dangerous enemies. **Seek** opportunities to unearth valuable tools.

SAFETY TOOLS

To protect players from harm and create a comfortable gaming experience, this game uses a variant of Beau Jágr Sheldon's Script Change – a content, consent, and safety toolbox (briebeau.com/scriptchange), which is released under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. The modified version contained in these pages does not have the approval or acceptance of Beau Jágr Sheldon.

Discuss the use of Script Change at the start of the first session. Pick a film rating (for example, "PG-13" or "R", or those used in your country) for the game. Bring up any content that you do not want to see at all and have the Facilitator write it down for all to reference during play (clowns, children in peril, alcoholism, aliens, etc.). These form the "No-go Zone" – there is no need to note down who dislikes the content: all players should work to avoid it.

During play, if you find that you're uncomfortable with the content of the game, say "Pause," "Fast-forward," "Rewind," or "Frame-by-frame." These help you and the rest of the group control the flow of the game and avoid, adjust, or speed through content that would make the game less enjoyable. Once you're comfortable again, you can then say "Resume" to get the game moving at its regular pace.

Some play examples:

*"I want to **pause** here: this is feeling too intense." Play can then resume when the player is ready.*

*"Let's **pause**. Can we quickly have a meta talk about where the story is headed?" Pauses can also be used to have wider discussions about the direction the story is headed, in terms of content, themes, and tone.*

*"This injury sounds too gross. Let's **fast-forward** to when it's all bandaged up." In this case, the players skip any gory descriptions.*

*"It sounds like these two characters are about to get **down** to business. If that's where this is going, I want to **fast-forward** past the sex scene."*

*"Yeah. I feel like saying that really doesn't make sense. Let's **rewind** to before I said that." Rewinds can be used to make minor corrections to content or tone, or avoid storylines that might be uncomfortable. If it's a larger issue, use rewind and then pause to refresh your memories about the film rating or No-go Zone or other safety tools. It's important to remember that although the **rewound content** is no longer part of the narrative, it did still happen at the table—harm might still have been caused.*

*"I want to take this scene **frame-by-frame**." Use this tool to slow down the pace of the game. When using this tool, the group takes things slowly and carefully. Check with the player that applied this tool as the scene progresses, applying any of the other tools whenever needed.*

With any of these tools, you can discuss the aspect of the content that is making you feel uncomfortable, but it's not required, nor should you require an explanation when another player uses one of these tools.

You can also use these tools on behalf of another player if you think they are uncomfortable. There's no need to single the other player out, just use the tools as if you were the one uncomfortable.

If Script Change doesn't feel like the correct safety tool for your table, feel free to select another set of tools. Any game should be "Open Table", where players are free to leave at any time.

RULES OVERVIEW

Exploration of the world is a core component of the game.

The Player Characters decide upon a destination hex on the map. The Facilitator will roll any necessary **encounters** and describe what you see on the journey.

Your movement speed is determined by how dangerous the area is. If the area is very dangerous, move at one hex per day (8 hours of travel). If it is very safe, move at one hex per hour.

You can **move stealthily at normal speed** to a destination. The Facilitator will tell you what you encounter, and you can avoid a given encounter on a passed DEX check (made by whichever character is scouting ahead).

You can **move quickly at double speed**, but you'll stumble into any encounters that exist.

Map hexes can be **certified safe at quarter speed**. Have two sequential encounters in a hex. If you resolve them both, the hex is cleared of hazards and will no longer trigger encounters. Roll once on the relevant **scavenging table**. Any future travel through these hexes is at double speed.

Providing aid to people and settlements is also core to the game. Successfully providing aid (roughly 1 or 2 sessions, with a significant goal completed) lets you improve your character (see page 43). Providing aid five to seven times should draw a complete campaign arc; find a way to reach a satisfactory conclusion (but feel free to use the characters again later).

Ask around the settlement to determine what needs to be done.

SIMPLE TASKS:

You can **escort someone somewhere** they need to go (or away from something dangerous).

You can **retrieve a valuable item** lost or abandoned in a known location.

You can **provide the basics** to someone.

You can **bring some justice** to a settlement by resolving a conflict.

COMPLEX TASKS:

You can **restore a food/power system** with local or nearby machinery, tools, or resources.

You can **lead an exodus** by establishing a safe road between two settlements and guiding the refugees.

You can **found a new settlement** by establishing a safe road to a new, certified-safe hex, finding a food source, and bringing in disgruntled (or hungry or adventurous) settlers.

You can **overthrow a tyrant**, either locally or at a nearby settlement.

Most of the minute-to-minute rules are presented in the “Being in the World” section on page 16.

CHARACTER CREATION

Generating a character in ANNA-X66: REDUX is a five-step process:

STEP 1: Roll your **Ability Scores**: 3d6 each for Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX), and Willpower (WIL). Optionally, swap any two scores. These are the maximum values for your ability scores—certain kinds of injury can temporarily decrease them.

STEP 2: If your highest stat is 14 or greater, you get one **Complication**. If your lowest stat is 8 or lower, you get a **Gift**. Roll 1d6 and consult the Complication or Gift tables below, as needed, to determine the specifics.

STEP 3: Roll 1d6 to determine your maximum **Hit Points** (HP).

STEP 4: Roll 1d6 to determine your **Pattern**, and consult the chart on the following page. Your Pattern will narrow down your **Type** and **Background**. Roll on the Type table and pick one of the three Tendencies (these are small roleplaying suggestions or special rules). Roll on the Background table to determine your starting equipment or special ability.

STEP 5: Pick a **Name** and a **Look**.

Complication: Roll 1d6 if your highest stat is 14 or greater.

- 1 **Familiarity (Outward):** You are famous for something; random people are always staring or trying to talk to you. It will be difficult to be discreet.
- 2 **Familiarity (Inward):** You have a group of family or friends who look to you for advice and frequently need your help.
- 3 **Debt (Gentle):** You owe a sizeable debt to someone kind and hard-working.
- 4 **Debt (Harsh):** You owe a sizeable debt to someone lazy who would gladly do you violence.
- 5 **Rival (Similar):** Your rival has your Pattern and Type (fill in the details later, as needed); this character will find ways to make your life more difficult.
- 6 **Rival (Dissimilar):** Roll up a Pattern and Type (fill in the details later, as needed); this character will pop up to hinder you at some point.

Gift: Roll 1d6 if your lowest stat is 8 or lower.

- 1 Mythic (Creative):** Choose either a bio-reactor or a remote projector (a combined loudspeaker and comm).
- 2 Mythic (Destructive):** Choose either a weapon (d6) secretly built into your body or an annihilation sphere (d10 Blast, single use).
- 3 Surplus (Accidental):** Randomly choose one of your items, you have a dozen or so more of them stashed away somewhere.
- 4 Surplus (Intentional):** Pick your favourite item, you have enough to outfit your group with one per character.
- 5 Ally (Similar):** Your ally has your Pattern and Type (fill in the details later, as needed); this character will find ways to make your life easier.
- 6 Ally (Dissimilar):** Roll up a Pattern and Type (fill in the details later, as needed); this character will pop up to help you at some point.

Determine your **Pattern:** Roll 1d6

- 1** A Alpha Pattern
- 2** B Beta Pattern
- 3** Γ Gamma Pattern
- 4** Δ Delta Pattern
- 5** Z Zeta Pattern
- 6** Σ Sigma Pattern

ALPHA PATTERN: TYPICAL EARTHLINGS

You are a descendant of humanity. Your needs are simple.
Your communities are complex.

Determine your **Type**: Roll 1d4

- 1 Slick – pick: sociable, knows symbols, or always looking to trade
- 2 Toober – pick: posh accent, odd manners, or only recently learned what happens above ground
- 3 Survivor – pick: grimy, magnetic, or knows best when to leave
- 4 Meteorite – pick: direct, clinical, or driven to find the seven other Meteorites

Determine your **Background**: Roll 1d8

- 1 **Cook** – take: bio-reactor, tinned meats, seedlings
- 2 **Soldier** – take: X7 Carbine (as Noble Weapon), comms, extra socks, granola
- 3 **Teacher** – take: InDex, solar lantern, candy
- 4 **Water-gatherer** – take: dozens of maps, brewer's kit, flasks
- 5 **Technician** – take: tool roll, well-sorted junk, flashlight
- 6 **Merchant** – take: bags of salt, bottles of gin, piles of leather
- 7 **Clerk** – take: list of contacts, pen and paper, chocolate
- 8 **Healer** – take: MediSpray (5 uses), cinnamon dental floss, mirror

Pick a **Name** and **Look** and you're done.

When you die: **Simple Inheritance** - You are a family member, colleague, or very close friend of the deceased. When you die, roll new Ability Scores and HP, retain Pattern and Type, but roll a new Background, and choose a new Name and Look. Additionally, take one item from your previous character, and tell the group the sentimental value you place upon it and/or where you retrieved it. Alternatively, roll a completely new character.

