

The title "OUTER WILDS" is displayed in a stylized, orange, distressed font against a dark space background. The letter 'O' in "OUTER" contains a crescent moon. The letter 'I' in "WILDS" contains a silhouette of a tree. In the background, a large orange sun is on the left, and several other planets and moons of various colors (blue, green, purple, red) are scattered across the field of stars.

# OUTER WILDS

## Overview

Outer Wilds is a game centered on **exploration and discovery**. The player is tasked with journeying out into the galaxy and uncovering the many mysteries found there. Exactly 22 minutes into exploring, however, the sun goes supernova and explodes. You and all other life in the galaxy is ended abruptly and without warning. All is dark, until- You wake up on your home planet 22 minutes in the past, and the hook of the game is revealed: The player is stuck in a **time-loop**. The rest of the game is played in these 22 minute increments, wherein you must find answers about what is happening and try to prevent the destruction of everything and everyone you know.

## "Truth in Simulation"

The developers of Outer Wilds talk a lot about the idea of "truth in simulation," which creative lead Alex Beachum explains as "**having a world that feels like things are happening even when you are not there.**" The world doesn't revolve around the central character, as it does in so many stories. You are, rather, just an observant of it. Every 22 minutes the loop resets and you wake up ready to blast off again filled with a new sense of purpose. Everything the player finds throughout their adventure builds upon everything else, resulting in an **interconnected narrative web spanning the entire solar system**. This complete interconnectedness stands out as the game's strongest element.

## Lessons

- Narrative should be designed to work **in tandem with gameplay**, not around it.
- **Well-crafted writing** can be enough to engage a player on its own.
- Freedom and nonlinearity in story are **tools** that designers can make effective use of.

