

Knives Out Style guide

Preamble

This style guide is made to allow model makers, character sculptors and environment artists to fluidly work together and to create a cohesive visually interesting game, this should provide the best advice with visual aid.

The style of this game has been inspired by several different sources, mainly mystery games with very visually different staples but together could make an interesting style for the final project. These games include Professor Layton, We Happy Few, Jazzpunk, Danganronpa, The Stanley Parables. These games combined could create a game that is visually interesting when the best parts are taken from each.

Perspective

The game camera will be first person with a Five Nights at Freddy's move function for the day cycle of the game and for the night cycle it will have free range camera movement.

Items in the first half of the game do not need to have perfect modelling if those items will never be seen from an alternative angle such as the underneath of the object. Environmental designers should keep in mind the directions the props face so that they can be cut and unwrapped in a way that would prevent seam lines from showing.

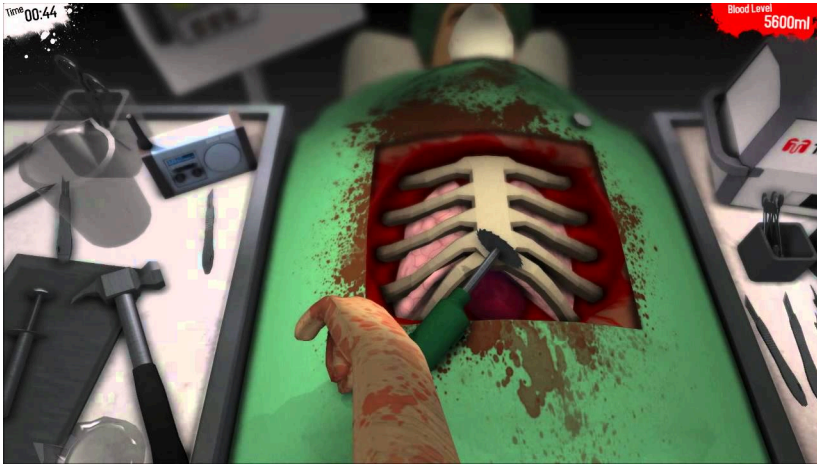
For the first half of the game there is no worry for rendering issues, as you do not move from your seat, however in the night sections, a render distance fog or shadow may have to be added depending on how heavy the props are on the system.

Environment and prop artists should keep in mind the free roam part of the game when setting things up, to ensure texture maps and seam lines appear as little as possible. Objects that are not interactable and cannot be picked up such as the switchboards can be placed in a way to avoid showing seam lines, this may save on time for the artists.

Lighting

Lighting changes during game play, from the day to night cycle. During the day outside lighting and fluorescent lighting should be used with minimal shadows, seen in games like Surgeon Simulator, there are very little shadows and a rough overhead light.

For the day cycle this would be the best approach as it prevents the scene from being too clouded and muddy. Lighting should specifically come from above in this half of the day, making the scene clear.

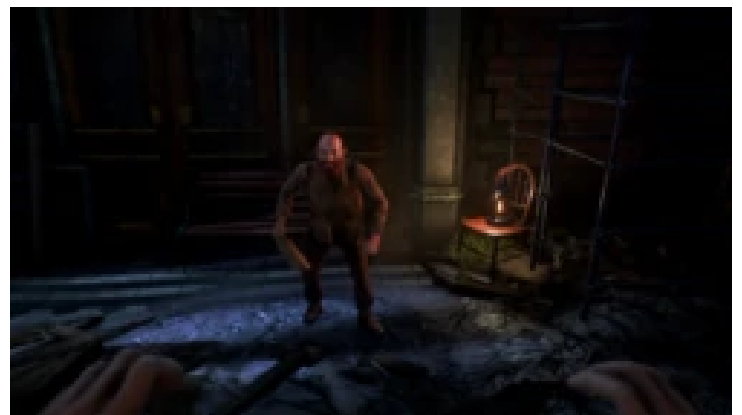


Surgeon simulator



The Stanley Parable

During the night cycle, with the search mechanics, lighting should come from lamps or a lighter that the character has, shadows would be harsher but the screen should still be visible so that the player can navigate even with the minimal lighting, as seen in We Happy Few.

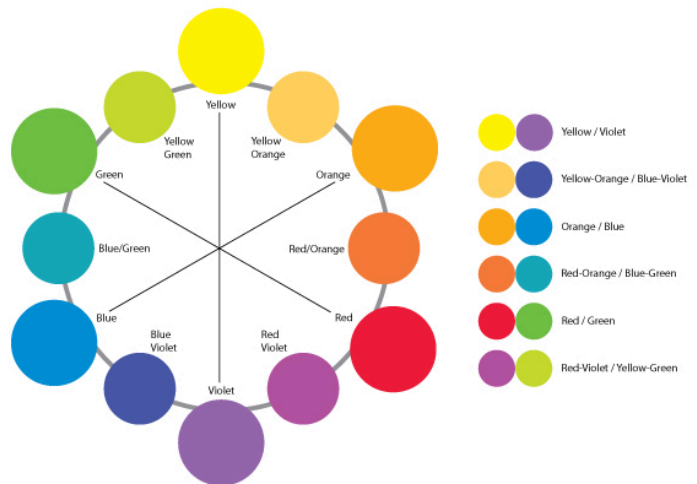
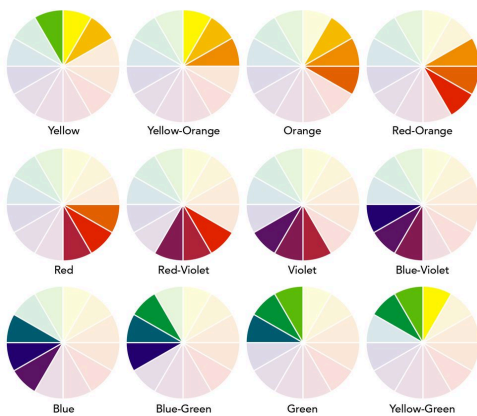


We Happy Few Gameplay

Colours

The game takes place in the 1970s, mid to late, the colours and styles of furniture should reflect this, oranges, blues and yellows are most important, saturated colours as they won't be too garish and painful to look at, colours would flow as well, for furniture design the office spaces should either be analogous such as three orange tones, mid light and dark or complementary such as orange and blue.

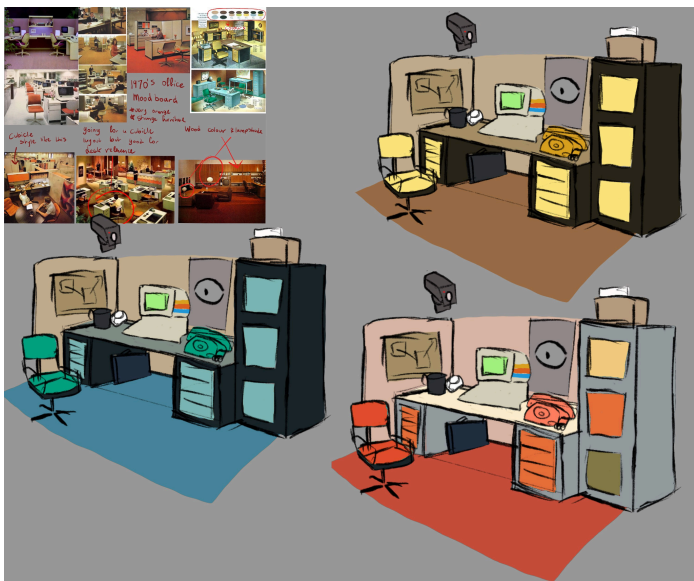
ANALOGOUS COLORS



The colours should be flat and toonlike, seen in games like professor layton and Jazzpunk. While flat and toonlike they still have an amount of detail that makes them visually interesting but that wouldn't be too complicated or overly detailed, this allows artists to cut back a little and produce more quality work in a shorter time.

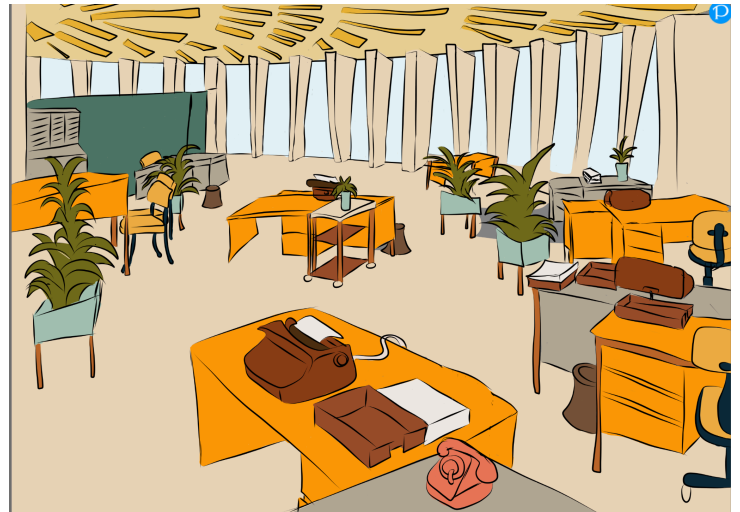


Professor layton and Jazzpunk screenshots



Concept by Ciara

Office Concepts by Jasmine



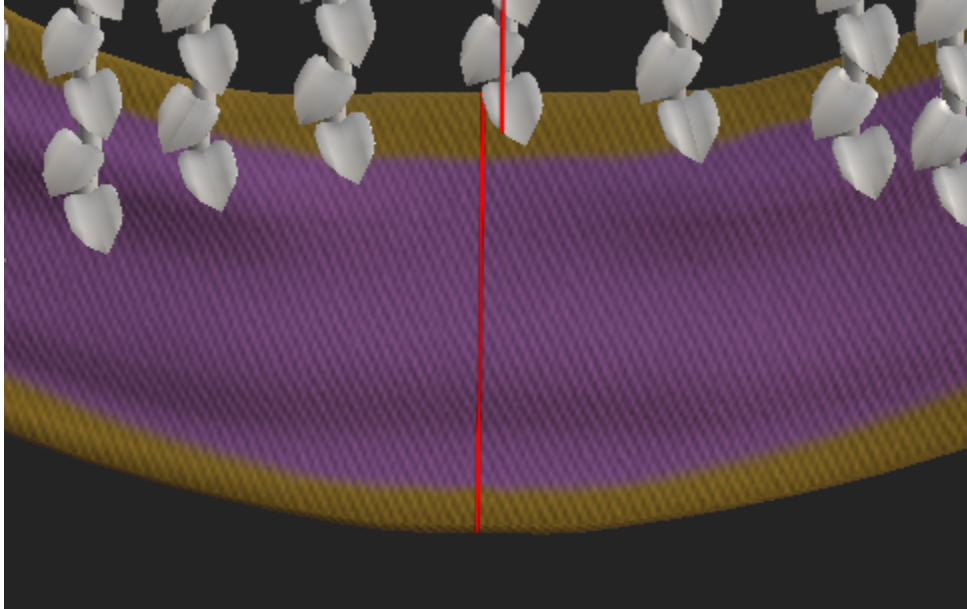
A dust or dirt layer should be applied on top of the texture to give it more depth and bring the scene more to life, other details such as coffee stains in paper or on desks should also be applied to make the space more alive and give more environmental storytelling, though the dust and dirt layers should not overpower the colouring or texturing in any way.



- DUST AND DIRT NOT OVERPOWERING
- SIMPLE DETAILS ON PROPS TO BRING THEM TO LIFE e.g, COFFEE STAINS
- BRINGS BACKSTORY TO THE PROPS

Concept by jasmine

Mild, very fine textures can be added to models, such as a fine fabric texture may be added to an object such as a hat in order to give it a little more depth, but objects such as the switchboard or any smoother props shouldn't need a lot of texture, it should be plain and smooth aside from dirt or dust application



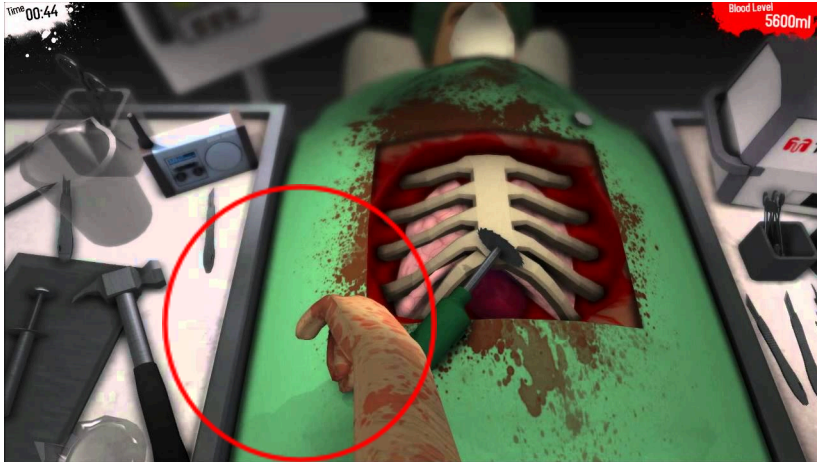
Maybe smaller than this, just for an example

Shading

As mentioned before, during the day cycles the shading should be minimal, top down and not alter the world too aggressively, so that the world is smooth and not muddy. There should be a slight blur effect on the shadows so that they are not harsh and create hard shadow lines within the world, shadows should also not be a harsh black, if this can be altered then it should, while it may take longer, the end result will be more visually pleasing.



NO (The Stanley Parable)



YES (Surgeon Simulator)

(THESE IMAGES ARE REVERSED FOR THE NIGHT CYCLE!!)

For shadows the colour should be a darkish purple as it feeds nicer into the world.

During the night cycle the shadows should be a little more harsh and will reflect wherever the lamps are shining from, the shadows shouldn't completely turn the world black however and it should be dark but the player should still be able to see in the environment and should be able to navigate without any additional lighting. The shading in the scene should have blue tones and could be a little harsher on the shadow shapes as it gives more to the searching aspect of the game, as some items could be obscured by shadows. There should be a bit of a fade on the shadow too so that it blends well with the environment while also being a little harsh.

Characters

The characters of the game should be a little more solid in colour with their outfits, so they are able to stand out and not blend in with the background of the game.

Characters should have semi realistic models but they should also have some exaggerated features, such as bigger hands or thinner legs, inspired by the style of professor layton and the characters that they have.

We have a turn around and colour references for the characters, the final models should not stray further than this, colours and patterns can be altered however they must remain realistic for the 1970s, fashion magazine mood boards and photos will be provided for reference.

A few alt colours should be made for the models as it would make the environment feel more alive if there are more people in the world rather than just two alt colour models.

The body models of the characters should be the same with minor gender related differences, and mild changes to the clothes, having a base model would be helpful with removable clothes, for the supervisor, a unique colourset of the male model could be made just to differentiate between all of the other models within the area.

Characters should produce a shadow with the same requirements as earlier, if this is possible.

Character colouring should be flat with minimal texturing, for example no skin maps on the models as this would make it feel eerie and a little too realistic on cartoony models, the clothed may have a fine fabric texture if it isn't too distracting but if it is too much then it is better to avoid that.

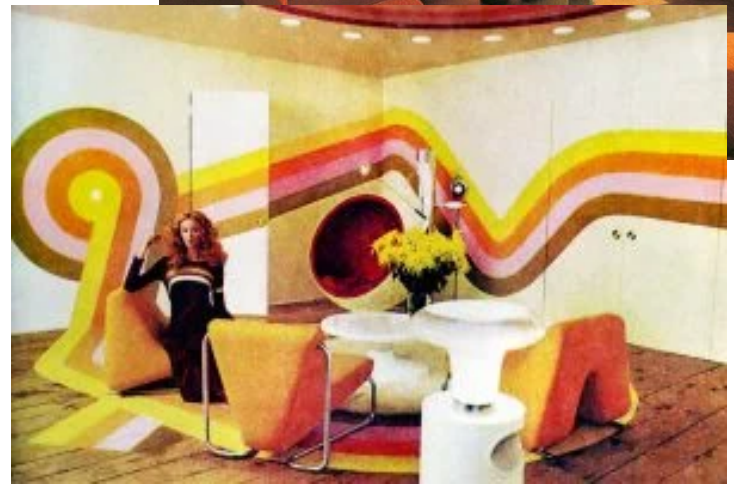
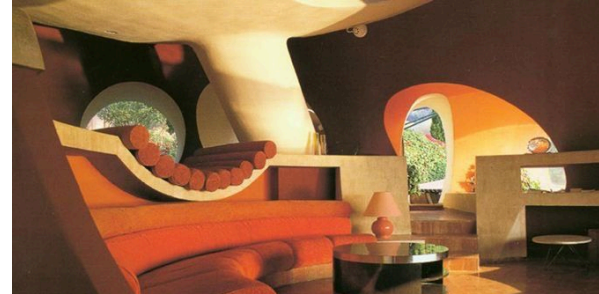
Character colours should be at least a little bright while also being a little saturated, and should remain realistic to fashion within the 1970s, which means patterns if possible and saturated somewhat bright colours.



Concepts by Ciara

Props

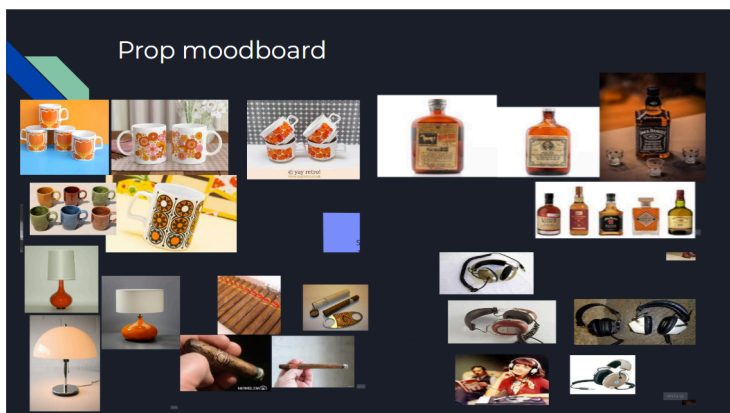
Props should not be Detailed! They should be uneven and uniquely styled, they should have a unique take on the original shape, for example the desk could be curved or could have a uniquely shaped back instead of just being plain. The furniture should reflect 70s futurism mixed with professor layton, fallout 4 and we happy few, these items are styled specifically to look unique and interesting while also remaining obvious to what they are, props could be uneven and have strange proportions as long as they can still be recognizable as the source material.



1970s futurism design

Important props, such as the murder weapons and the clue props should have an outline so that the player knows what object is interactable, this can be achieved with filters in unreal.

Props should have fun colours, this is based in the 1970s, most furniture was a light vibrant orange, red, yellow or blue, this should be reflected in props, there are a lot of furniture catalogues available from the time that can give inspiration if you are lost for shape and colour references.



ffd or lattice maya free form deformer for making things fucked up

strick with proportions but like more specific like more rounded ands such
set the global illumination TO AVOID HARSH SHADOWS

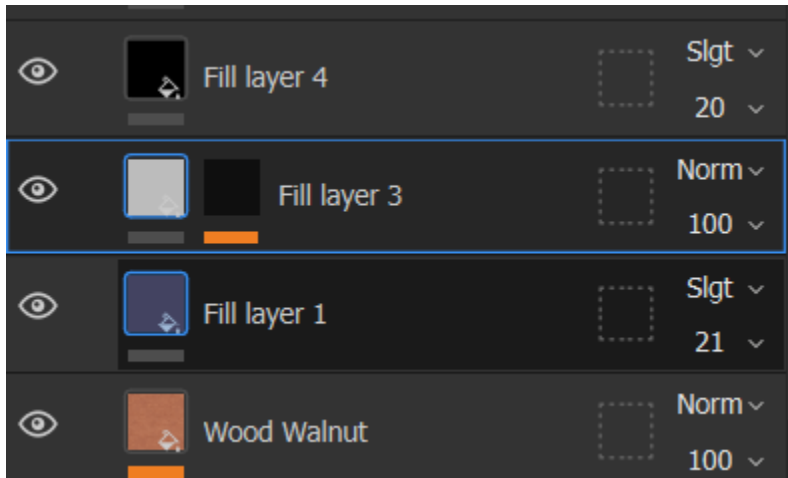
POST PROCESS VOLUME AOS GRADIENTS

COLOUR GRADING

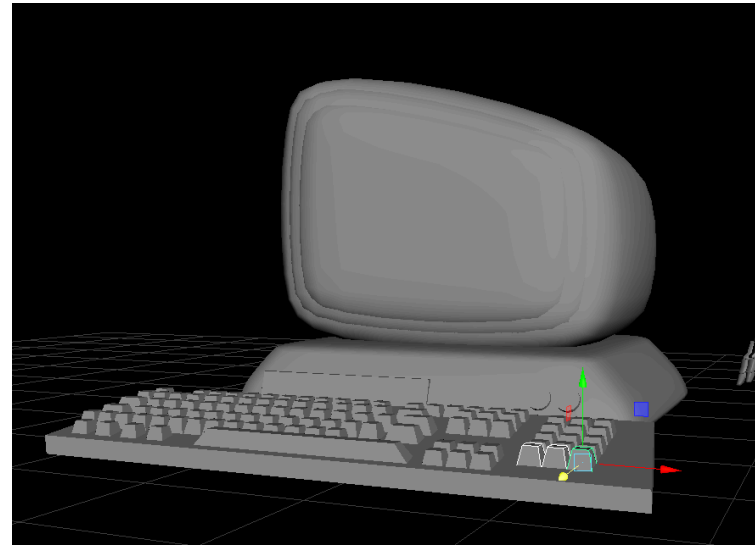
POST PROCESS VOLUME TINTS EVERYTHING

FILSTER SUBSTANCE LIGHTING BAKE LIGHTING FAKE LIGHTING |

USE ALL OF
THESE!



ENSURE THESE FOUR ARE IN ALL OF
YOU MODELS! BUT I HAVE CREATED A
TEXTURE PACK, JUST OPEN ONE OF MY
MODELS, RIGHT CLCLICK ON TEXTURE
PACK FOLDER AND THEN CREATE
SMART MATERIAL AND YOU CAN APPLY
THIS TO ALL OF YOUR MODELS



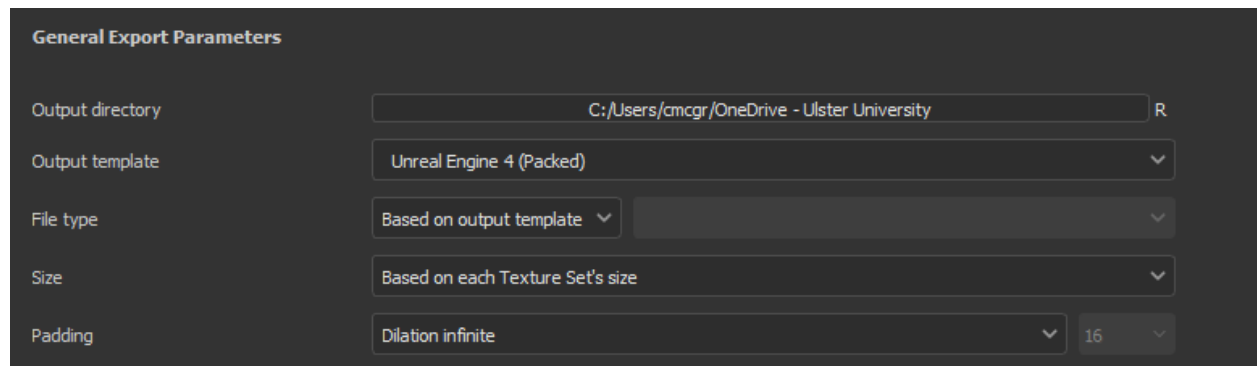
If the prop is being used for game mechanics, such as drawers or phone rotaries, do not animate them! Leave them separate from the model, do not attach them and let the game students run scripts on them to make them interactable!

Concept and model by ciara

Please make sure the model is scaled with the scalar prop that has been uploaded into the chat!!! This is so important so all of the props will be the right size and will not need rescaling when it is added to the unreal world!!! They are pinned in the models section of the discord!!!



EXPORT YOUR TEXTURE MAPS AS THE UNREAL OPTION!!!!!! IN SUBSTANCE PAINTER!!!!



Things to reinforce




- No realism! Make things stylised with the inspiration provided
- No heavy texture maps on any models! It takes away from the colours and adds unwanted realism
- USE THE SCALING PROP
- EXPORT TEXTURE MAP WITH THE UNREAL OPTION
- When you have completed a model run the model by Jasmine or Ciara, we can help and guide you into making it look right
- No pure colours!

Inspiration and resources




Gameplay of games mentioned

- [▶ Professor Layton and Pandora's Box All Cutscenes](#)
- [▶ Professor Layton and the Miracle Mask All Cutscenes](#)
- [▶ Jazzpunk Full Walkthrough Gameplay No Commentary \(Longplay\)](#)
- [▶ FALLOUT 4 All Cutscenes \(Game Movie\) 4k Ultra HD](#)
- [▶ Surgeon Simulator: The complete Speedrun](#)
- [▶ We Happy Few All Cutscenes With All DLC'S \(Game Movie\) 4k UHD 60FPS](#)
- [▶ Danganronpa 1•2 Reload - DR1 Playthrough: Chapter 1 Class Trial \[PS4\]](#)
- [▶ The Stanley Parable - Full Game \(All Endings\) \(No Commentary\)](#)
- [▶ Five Nights at Freddy's - Full Game Walkthrough Gameplay & Ending \(No Comme...](#)

Tips for style of game

- <https://forums.unrealengine.com/t/hi-how-can-i-change-the-colour-of-the-shadows/441869>
-  How To Highlight An Object With An Outline In Unreal Engine 5 (Tutorial)
-  How to Make Toon Outlines in UE5
-  Stylized lines and outlines - Unreal Material

Inspiration for modellers

-  Design of the Space Age
-  Furniture From The 70s | Vintage Photograph
-  The Most Iconic Furniture Designs Of The 70s | Design By Decade | Abode
- <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/michaeldaugette/futuristic-designs-from-the-60s-and-70s/>
- <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/hillarymbg/70s-office-wear/>