

# Game Design Document (GDD): The Thief of Time

---

## 1. Game Overview

**Title:** The Thief of Time

**Genre:** First-Person Puzzle Platformer / Heist / Time Loop

**Core Concept:** You are a skilled thief trapped in a massive clock tower caught in a 24-hour time loop. Every in-game hour (30 seconds real time), the world changes in dramatic ways. Your mission is to steal valuable relics and climb as high as possible before the loop resets. You can't keep the loot—but you keep the knowledge.

**Platform:** PC

**Perspective:** First-Person

---

## 2. Core Gameplay Mechanics

- **Objective:** Steal loot, navigate shifting environments, and climb the tower before the loop resets.
  - **Controls:**
    - WASD – Move
    - Mouse – Look
    - Space – Jump
    - Shift – Sprint
    - Ctrl – Crouch
    - E – Interact / Grab loot (or just pass through the items if easier)
  - **Movement:** Climb ledges, time jumps, avoid traps, ride moving platforms.
  - **Loop Mechanic:** Every 30 seconds (1 hour), the world changes. After 12 minutes, time resets/ tower collapses.
  - **No Persistent Inventory:** Loot disappears at loop reset; only your experience remains.
- 

## 3. Level Design

- **Structure:** Tall vertical tower divided into themed regions.
- **Traversal:** Platforms, ladders, ropes, rotating gears, shifting bridges.

- **Floor Examples:**

- Base of tower (no punishment when falling )
- 
- Mid tower (the events and falling are punishing and result in failure)
  - Top of tower (Big cogs and gears, final puzzle steal the final item and stop the loop, can't fall it is a separate floor)

#### 4. Loot System

- **Collectibles:**

- Gilded Hourglass
- Ancient Coins
- Golden Gears
- Crystal Time Fragments
- Pocket Watches

- **Scoring:** Each item has a point value based on rarity and risk.
  - **Risk/Reward:** Higher-value loot is placed in dangerous or hard-to-reach zones.
  - **Not sure about this still**
- 

#### 5. Time Loop System

- **Loop Duration:** 12 real-time minutes (24 in-game hours)
- **Hourly Changes:**
  - 1:00 Low Gravity – Player and objects float higher and slower. Great for reaching distant platforms.

- 2:00 Hazards Appear – Spikes and swinging blades activate in specific corridors.
- 3:00 Time Freeze – Moving objects (platforms, Spikes) are frozen. Only the player can move.
- 4:00 Reverse Gravity – Gravity flips upward. Ceiling becomes floor.
- 5:00 Bridge Appears – A shortcut bridge forms in the center of the tower. Only exists during this hour.
- 6:00 Wind Burst – Strong horizontal wind affects jumps and movement, blowing toward one side.
- 7:00 Darkness – Environment dims, only player has a small light radius.
- 8:00 Platform Shift – Moving platforms change paths or locations. New platforming routes open/close.
- 9:00 Water Flood – Lower floors flood; only higher paths are safe. Swim mechanics may be used.
- 10:00 Gear Storm– Massive clock tower gears dislodge and roll or drop into the corridors. Some act as crushing hazards, others rotate in place to create temporary moving platforms or walls that shift the environment.
- 11:00 Sticky Walls – Walls become climbable for limited time, enabling alternate routes.
- 12:00 Time Warp Zone – A shimmering bubble forms in a specific area. Inside this bubble, time slows down significantly for everything except the player.
- 13:00 Speed Boost – Player movement and time sensitive platforms speed up.
- 14:00 Trap Reset – Previously triggered traps reset to default state (may reopen paths).
- 15:00 Spring Platforms – Bouncy pads appear, allowing access to normally unreachable spots.
- 16:00 Hallucination Hour-The tower emits a pulse that causes parts of the world to appear unstable. Platforms, stairs, and objects flicker in and out of reality. Some are real, others are illusions.
- 17:00 Mirror World – Environment layout mirrors left-right; navigation becomes disorienting.
- 18:00 Sound Puzzle Echo – A melodic chime echoes through the tower in a rhythmic sequence. Specific objects like doors, lifts, or bridges are

tuned to this melody players must repeat or trigger the pattern to activate them.

- 19:00 Crumbled Debris – Some old paths collapse, forcing new ones.
- 20:00 Ghost Echoes – Shadow versions of the player appear that repeat your prior runs (can help or hinder).
- 21:00 Doors Open – Locked gates or hidden areas briefly become accessible.
- 22:00 Heavy Gravity – Player jumps are shorter and fall speed increases.
- 23:00 Golden Hour – Rare golden platforms and collectibles appear in hard-to-reach places. They vanish when the hour ends.
- 24:00 Silent Hour – Sound and UI vanish; must rely on memory and instinct to proceed.

## 6. Art Style

- **Visuals:** Stylized and colorful (like Grapples Galore), but with darker tones—blues, purples, glowing gold.
- **Inspirations:** Grapples Galore, Dishonored, Outer Wilds, Mirror's Edge
- **Lighting:** Torches, glowing loot, magical particles, ambient fog.
- **UI:** Minimalist HUD showing loop timer and loot score (number of artifacts stolen).
- **Asset list:**
  - Stone wall segments (plain, cracked, decorative)
  - Archways and support beams
  - Metal/wooden floor panels and tiles
  - Ceiling tiles (some with opening hatches)
  - Spiral staircase parts (broken, intact)
  - Wooden/metal railings and banisters
  - Pillars and columns (stone, brass, mechanical)
  - Window frames (stained glass, open)
  - Gears and cogs (various sizes, mesh only and rigged)

- Pendulums (static and swinging)
- Counterweights / pulleys
- Moving elevator platforms (manual and gear-powered)
- Collapsing/rotating bridge pieces
- Pressure plates and floor switches
- Trap mechanisms (spikes, blades, gear crushers)
- **Loot & Collectibles:**
  - Ornate pocket watches
  - Gilded hourglass
  - Antique coins (single + pile)
  - Silver jewelry box
  - Crystal time fragment
  - Golden gear cog
  - Bell-shaped relic
  - Rusty compass
  - Mechanical figurine
  - Steampunk mask
- **Traversal Props**
  - Wooden/metal ladders
  - Climbable pipes and ledges
  - Rope bundles or cables
  - Wall-mounted handles (for grabs or switches)
  - Hidden footholds / wall grips (for secret routes)
- **Visual Set Dressing / Storytelling Props**

Optional but useful for immersion and world-building:

- Broken statues or mechanical figures
  - Steampunk furniture (old desks, workbenches, gear benches)
  - Blueprints or parchment scrolls
  - Hanging chains, rope, and gear mounts
  - Books, candle holders, hourglass decor
  - Broken clocks
  - Tower banners or cloth with emblems
-



## 7. Audio Design

- **Music:** Rhythmic ticking, ambient steampunk tones, tense build-up before loop resets.
  - **SFX:** Clock chimes, gear grinding, loot pickup jingles, ambient echoes.
  - **Hour Transitions:** Subtle musical cues and ambient changes.
-

## 8. Technical

- **Engine:** unity version 6000.1.13f1
  - **Physics:** Responsive first-person platforming
  - **Loop System:** Manages event triggers per hour, loop resets, and environmental changes.
- 

## 9. MVP Scope / Vertical Slice

- One themed region (e.g., Base of the Clock Tower)
  - 5–6 hour events implemented
  - 3–5 loot types with score system
  - Basic traversal mechanics: jumping, climbing, timed platforms
  - Working loop manager and timer HUD
-