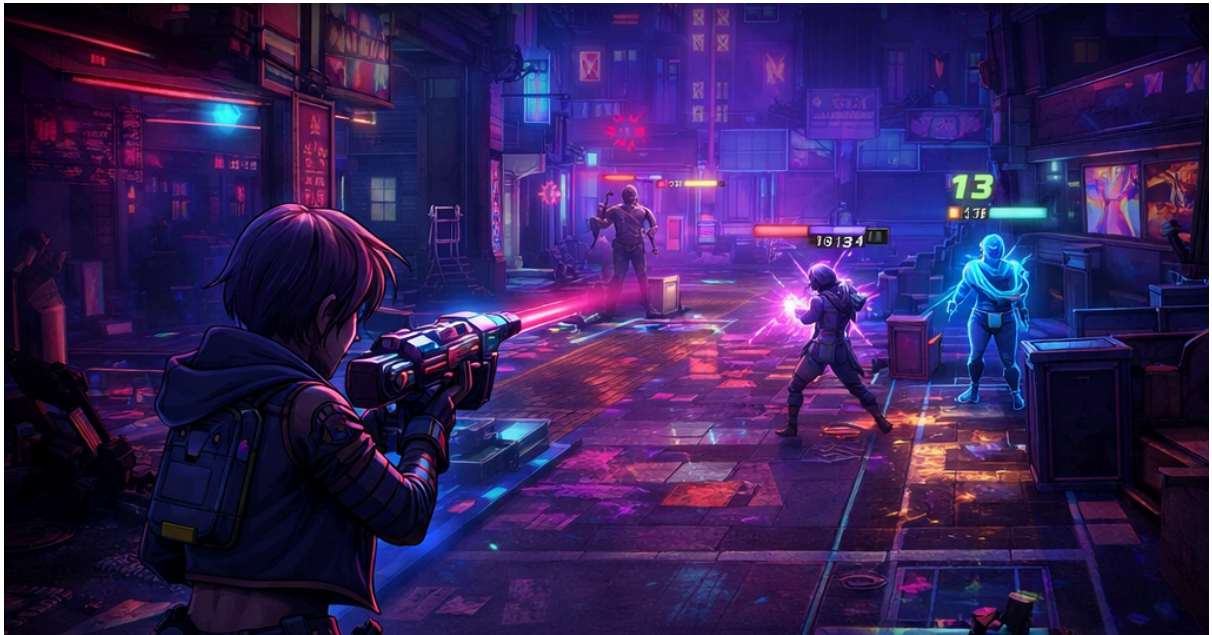


Neon Punk

Game Design Document

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Game Overview

High Concept (Logline)

Neon Punk is a 2.5D roguelike rail shooter with survival elements, where the player takes on the role of Sheena, a rebellious young punk who leads an anarchist gang struggling to survive day by day in a cyberpunk city devastated after the collapse of civilization. Facing rival factions and a rising totalitarian government, every decision can cost lives — or the very identity of the group.

Platform

The target platform is PC, with a planned release on Steam. Depending on the game's success, a mobile port will be considered after launch.

Game Pillars

Punk as Resistance

In Neon Punk, being punk is a constant act of defiance against oppressive power structures. The player is not just a survivor, but an active agent of change in a world controlled by authoritarian forces. Every mission, choice, and confrontation reinforces the idea of resistance — whether through violence, art, or solidarity. The game emphasizes stance and attitude, placing the player in dilemmas that reflect different ways of fighting the system.

Painting the World

Paint is more than a weapon — it is a form of expression and transformation. The player leaves their mark on the world, altering environments, influencing combat, and communicating identity.

Follow the Beat

In Neon Punk, combat pulses to the rhythm of rock — raw, energetic, and untamed. Gameplay is driven by rhythm, creating an experience where action and music are inseparable. Music is not just a soundtrack, but the driving force behind every action, where each shot, reload, and movement connects to the beat. Shooting, reloading, and moving at the right time increases efficiency and unlocks the player's true potential.

The City is Alive

The city is a dynamic organism, shaped by the player's actions and ongoing faction conflicts. Territories shift control, events unfold independently of the player's presence, and different groups influence the environment in unique ways. This structure creates a living world where decisions have real and constant impact, enhancing immersion and the sense of belonging within the game's universe.

Overview

In a world where knowledge has been forgotten and humanity has become dependent on Artificial Intelligence, a war fills the air with a toxic substance and destroys satellites and communication systems, leaving people at the mercy of their own abilities.

Neon Punk centers around Sheena, a young punk who, in order to survive in an unequal and authoritarian city, joins a gang formed by marginalized individuals living outside privileged zones.

During the day, the player must manage the gang, which operates from an improvised headquarters. At night, the player ventures into different areas of the city to gather supplies, rescue people, and acquire new technologies to improve the gang's base, in a roguelike-style experience.

Combat takes the form of a third-person rhythmic rail shooter, inspired by classic arcade games. The gameplay combines tactical combat with musical rhythm, requiring actions such as shooting, reloading, and dodging to be synchronized with the music. Neon Punk explores themes such as the limits of our dependence on technology and artificial intelligence, social inequality, and the importance of knowledge and freedom. Throughout the narrative, the player must choose between serving as a mercenary for the elite in exchange for supplies or seeking independence through the recovery of memory and knowledge.

Unlike games focused on power fantasy, Neon Punk emphasizes moral, emotional, and physical survival rather than domination or conquest—turning survival itself into an act of resistance.

Features

Key Features

Resource Management & Survival

The game incorporates management elements, requiring the player to handle resources such as supplies, energy, and collected items. Scarcity and the need for planning reinforce the feeling of survival in a hostile and unstable environment.

Rhythmic Combat

The game features a combat system that integrates actions such as shooting, reloading, and dodging into a rhythm-based structure driven by music. Synchronizing with the beat enhances player performance, increasing efficiency, precision, and action chaining. Player performance is evaluated based on criteria such as accuracy, rhythm, and action flow. Efficient and stylish execution results in additional rewards.

Color & Combo System

The game features a color-based combat system in which each type of paint has unique properties and abilities that directly impact gameplay. The player can switch between colors in real time, using each one strategically to handle different combat situations.

Combining colors enables chained effects, expanding tactical possibilities and encouraging experimentation. This system supports the creation of complex combos, where the choice, order, and rhythm of color usage directly influence player performance and efficiency.

Body Modifications (Mods)

At the end of certain areas or combat sequences, gang members offer three upgrade options, called Mods, from which the player can choose only one. Each gang member has a distinct identity, associated with a musical instrument, which directly influences the type of benefit offered.

Mods provide a variety of enhancements, such as stat increases, ability modifiers, additional effects, or situational advantages. Acquiring these upgrades requires points accumulated during combat, encouraging efficient and strategic performance throughout missions.

This system strengthens the integration between narrative and progression while introducing constant risk-reward decisions, allowing players to adapt their build to their playstyle and create unique combinations each run.

Friendship System

The player can rescue individuals scattered throughout the city, integrating them into the base of operations and expanding their support network. These characters are not merely providers of skills and resources, but living agents within the system, carrying trauma, fears, and addictions that directly influence their decisions and performance. Their emotional and psychological states evolve over time, reacting to events, player choices, and the hostile environment.

Relationships with allies impact combat performance, granting bonuses based on mood or friendship level, or even debuffs that affect action efficiency. During missions, active allies may intervene by offering contextual power-ups (Mods), representing shared knowledge, technical support, or direct intervention on the battlefield.

This system reinforces the human dimension of progression, connecting mechanics and narrative, and encouraging the player not only to recruit allies, but to care for, understand, and engage with them—balancing strategy, empathy, and survival.

Factions & Alliances

The game world is structured around multiple factions with distinct interests and ideologies. The player can form alliances or rivalries, influencing territorial control, resource availability, and access to missions. These relationships are dynamic and continuously react to the player's decisions.

Each faction features unique behavior patterns, combat mechanics, and visual identities, requiring strategic adaptation and increasing gameplay variety.

Procedural Map Generation

Each area in the game is structured through a procedural generation system, composed of different pre-designed sectors such as combat arenas, narrative events, and exploration spaces. These sectors are dynamically arranged in each run, creating variation in flow, challenges, and opportunities.

At the end of each sector, players are presented with different rewards—such as resources, points, rescued characters, or upgrades—encouraging strategic decision-making throughout progression. This system enhances replayability and creates a less predictable experience while maintaining a balance between handcrafted content and structural variation.

Narrative

Core Themes

In Neon Punk, the true conflict is not only between factions, but between the human and the artificial — between real connections and systems of control.

In a world where technology was created to connect people, it has instead been used to control, surveil, and replace genuine relationships. In this context, technology ceases to be merely a tool and becomes a symbol of alienation, raising the dilemma between humanity and artificiality.

The progress of civilization, driven by power and individualism, has led to its own decay — fragmenting society, eroding human connections, and placing individual freedom in direct conflict with systemic control.

The game questions individualism in an environment that encourages isolation and selfish survival, contrasting it with the strength of collectivity as a path to resistance and rebuilding. The player begins as an individualistic figure, driven by survival and personal interests, but throughout the journey is confronted with the importance of the collective in resisting and rebuilding. While the dominant system promotes isolation, control, and competition, marginalized communities survive through cooperation and mutual support. It is through collective action and human connections — imperfect, vulnerable, and built on trust — that the protagonist is able to survive and find meaning in the struggle.

These three axes — **authoritarianism vs freedom, technology vs humanity, and individualism vs collectivity** — intertwine to create an experience where every player choice reflects not only a strategy, but a stance on the future of society.

These themes reinforce the idea that progress without humanity leads to decay — technology should amplify the human, not replace it — and that all true connection originates from people, not systems.

Gameplay

Camera

The game uses two distinct camera systems, adapted to different interaction contexts. In the base of operations, the camera adopts an **isometric perspective**, providing the player with a clear and comprehensive view of the space, facilitating navigation, resource management, and interaction with allies and environmental elements.

During combat, the camera shifts to a **third-person perspective** positioned behind the character, with a slight lateral tilt to reinforce 2.5D readability and maintain focus on combat areas. The framing is dynamic, automatically adjusting during high-intensity moments to keep enemies and relevant elements consistently visible.



Controls

The controls are designed to be responsive and intuitive, allowing the player to execute actions with precision within the game's rhythmic framework. Aiming and shooting are handled with the mouse, while character movement is controlled via the keyboard (WASD). Additional inputs are dedicated to color switching, dodging, and activating special abilities.

Core Loop

The core loop is inspired by management and survival games such as This War of Mine, where the player must maintain the base and character statuses (health, hunger, sanity) through resource gathering across the map.

Daily Structure

Morning (Management):

- Assess resources, injuries, and morale
- Build and upgrade the headquarters
- Assign daily actions

Day (Exploration):

- Select characters and destinations
- Explore locations
- Engage in combat

Night (Consequences):

- Random events
- Attacks on the base
- Emotional and physical impacts

The loop is structured around a day-based system, with each day beginning at the base of operations, where the player manages resources, interacts with allies, and selects the next mission.

Upon entering an area, the player progresses through procedurally generated sectors, engaging in combat, exploring environments, and making narrative decisions. During this process, the player can collect resources, rescue new allies, and accumulate performance-based points in combat. At the end of certain sectors, the player chooses between different power-ups (Mods) offered by allies, shaping progression strategically.

After completing a mission or being defeated, the player returns to the base, where they can invest resources, strengthen relationships, and plan the next run. This cycle reinforces a sense of continuous progression, combining intense action with tactical and narrative decision-making.

Player Objectives

- **Manage Members:** Keep the group alive and mentally stable to avoid internal collapse
- **Manage the Gang:** Conquer territories and expand the gang's influence
- **Manage the Base:** Acquire new technologies and upgrades

Game Progression

Night and Day System

The game uses a day-based progression system, creating a constant layer of urgency and meaningful planning. Each action consumes time, forcing the player to make impactful decisions. Days are divided into two phases (day and night), each lasting 12 hours.

During the day, the player assigns actions to allied characters (crafting, sleeping, eating, using items, etc.) and can interact with them through dialogue. During the night, before heading out to explore, the player must decide which available characters will stay on guard and which will rest. Once the daytime actions are set, they cannot be changed during the night, reinforcing commitment to decisions and strategic planning.

Victory and Defeat Conditions

Victory in Neon Punk is tied to establishing the gang as a dominant force in the city and unlocking the final areas. After completing the last map (the Government Tower), the game reaches its conclusion.

Defeat, on the other hand, can occur in multiple ways:

- Loss of all allies, either through death or leaving the gang
- Gang collapse, caused by the gang's Hope reaching zero
- End of the Line: occurs when resources are depleted, characters are too weakened, and recovery is no longer possible, inevitably leading to death

These conditions reinforce the importance of balancing survival, strategy, and resource management throughout the game.

Characters

In Neon Punk, characters are divided into two distinct roles that shape both gameplay and narrative progression: the playable character, Sheena, and the gang members, who are not directly controlled in combat but are fully manageable within the base.

Sheena represents the player's direct agency in moment-to-moment gameplay, driving combat, exploration, and moment-based decision-making. In contrast, gang members operate within the management layer, where the player must oversee their needs, assign tasks, and maintain their physical and emotional well-being.

Together, these two character types create a dual structure that connects action and strategy, reinforcing the game's core themes of survival, interdependence, and the balance between individual action and collective resilience.

Playable Character

Defense Attributes

HP (Life)

Represents the total amount of damage the character can take before being defeated.

Calculated by:

- **Base HP:** The initial value of the HP before any upgrade
- **Protocol (Flat Bonus):** Protocols are permanent upgrades that can permanently increase maximum HP
- **Rewards (Flat Bonus):** During exploration, finding hearts (sector rewards) temporarily increases maximum HP
- **Mods (Flat Bonus):** Power-ups that can temporarily increase maximum HP
- **Friendship Bonds (Additive Bonus):** A specific ally bond increases maximum HP by a percentage when equipped at the start of exploration

Max HP Formula:

$$\text{Max HP} = (\text{Base} + \text{Protocol} + \text{Sum of Hearts} + \text{Mod Bonuses}) \times (1 + \% \text{ Friendship Bond Bonus})$$

Defense and Armor Penetration

Defense represents the character's ability to reduce damage taken from direct attacks, making it one of the core survival attributes in combat. The Defense value is determined by combining multiple sources, including a base value, permanent upgrades, and power-ups acquired during a run. This allows players to adapt their survivability based on their build and playstyle.

Calculated by:

- **Base Defense Value:** The initial value of defense before any upgrade
- **Protocols:** permanent upgrades that can permanently increase defense
- **Mods:** power-ups acquired during the run

Total Defense Formula:

$$\text{Total Defense} = \text{Base Defense} + \text{Protocol Bonus} + \text{Mod Bonuses}$$

Defense also interacts directly with enemy Armor Penetration, reducing its effectiveness. The higher the penetration, the lower the effective Defense applied.

Armor Penetration Interaction:

$$\text{Effective Defense} = \text{Total Defense} \times (1 - \text{Enemy Penetration})$$

After calculating Effective Defense, incoming damage is reduced proportionally.

Damage Reduction Formula:

$$\text{Damage Taken} = \text{Raw Damage} \times (1 - \text{Effective Defense})$$

Shield

An additional layer of protection that absorbs a fixed amount of damage before HP.

Damage Flow:

$$\text{Damage} \rightarrow \text{Shield} \rightarrow \text{HP}$$

Rules:

- Damage is always applied to the Shield first
- Only excess damage affects HP
- Can regenerate outside of combat or through specific effects

Examples:

- If **Damage Received > Shield**:
 - Damage to HP = Damage Received - Shield (Mitigated Damage)
 - Shield = 0
- If **Damage Received ≤ Shield**:
 - Shield = Shield - Damage Received
 - Damage to HP = 0

Shield Formula:

$$\text{Damage to HP} = \max(0, \text{Damage Received} - \text{Shield})$$

$$\text{Remaining Shield} = \max(0, \text{Shield} - \text{Damage Received})$$

Life Steal

Restores HP based on a percentage of the damage dealt.

Lifesteal Formula:

$$\text{Healing} = \text{Damage Dealt} \times \text{Lifesteal}$$

Damage Absorption

Converts a percentage of the damage received (after defense calculations) into healing.

Damage Absorption Formula:

$$\text{Healing} = \text{Damage Received} \times \text{Absorption}$$

Attack Attributes

Damage per Shot

Represents the base damage dealt by each shot fired by the character. The initial Base Damage can be permanently increased through Protocols (permanent upgrades), while Mods and Friendship Bonds provide additional bonuses during a run.

Additionally, the color system introduces situational advantages: using a color that an enemy is vulnerable to grants an additive damage bonus. Finally, successfully performing combos grants temporary multiplicative bonuses, encouraging precise and rhythmic gameplay.

Calculated by:

- **Base Damage:** The initial value of the attack before any upgrade
- **Protocol (Flat Bonus):** Some upgrades can permanently increase damage
- **Mods (Additive Bonus):** Power-ups that can increase damage during the run
- **Friendship Bonds (Additive Bonus):** A specific bond increases damage by a percentage when equipped at the start of exploration
- **Enemy Weakness (Additive Bonus):** Hitting an enemy with the color they are vulnerable to adds an additive bonus
- **Combos (Multiplicative Bonus):** Temporary damage multiplier after performing a combo

Types of Attack Bonuses (Flat, Additive, and Multiplicative)

In *Neon Punk*, attack bonuses are divided into three categories — Flat, Additive, and Multiplicative — which combine in stages to determine the final damage. This structure ensures clarity, simplifies balancing, and enables diverse builds.

Flat Bonus (Fixed Value)

Adds a direct value to base damage, representing the simplest and most consistent form of damage increase.

Flat Bonus Formula:

$$\text{Flat Damage} = \text{Base Damage} + \text{Sum of Flat Bonuses}$$

Additive Bonus (Stacked Percentage)

Represents percentage increases that are summed together before being applied to damage. Includes bonuses from Mods, enemy weaknesses, and passive effects.

Additive Bonus Formulas:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Total Additive Bonus} &= \text{Sum of Additive Bonuses} \\ \text{Additive Damage} &= \text{Flat Damage} \times (1 + \text{Total Additive Bonus})\end{aligned}$$

Multiplicative Bonus

Modifiers applied at the end of the calculation, multiplying total damage after flat and additive bonuses. Typically come from specific conditions such as combos, critical effects, or special abilities.

Multiplicative Bonus Formula:

$$\text{Final Damage} = \text{Additive Damage} \times \text{Product of Multipliers}$$

Final Damage Formula

$$\text{Final Damage} = (\text{Base Damage} + \text{Flat Bonuses}) \times (1 + \text{Sum of Additive Bonuses}) \times \text{Multiplicative Bonus}$$

Critical Chance & Critical Damage

Critical Chance represents the probability of dealing increased damage, while Critical Damage is the multiplier applied when a critical hit occurs.

Formula:

$$\text{Critical Damage} = \text{Final Damage} \times \text{Critical Multiplier}$$

Damage Type (Color System)

The color system is one of the core pillars of combat, where each type of paint has unique properties (e.g., slow, burn, mark) that directly influence enemy behavior and the flow of battle.

Examples of colors and functions:

Pink (Impact)

Focused on direct, high-impact damage. Can apply burn effects (damage over time) and mark enemies, increasing damage taken or enabling critical hits more easily. Ideal for quickly eliminating enemies.

Purple (Sustain, Debuff)

Can apply lifesteal, healing, or shield effects, favoring survivability. It can also apply poison that ignores armor and prevents healing, as well as defense reduction and shield break effects, making it effective against tank enemies.

Blue (Control, Disruption)

Can apply area-of-effect (AoE) damage through explosions and multi-shot attacks, as well as slow effects (reducing enemy speed) and instability effects that interrupt enemy actions, such as shock, glitch/confusion, and stun. Useful for crowd control and space management.

Enemy Weakness:

Colors not only differentiate playstyles but also create strategic opportunities by exploiting **enemy weaknesses**. Some enemies are vulnerable to specific colors, and when hit with the corresponding color, they receive an additive **damage bonus of 50%**, encouraging players to switch strategically between paint types.

Attack Speed (Fire Rate)

A general metric for sustained damage. RPM defines how many shots are fired per minute, while DPS defines damage per second.

Shots per Second Formula:

$$\text{Shots per Second} = \text{Shots per Minute (RPM)} / 60$$

$$\text{Time Between Shots (seconds)} = 1 / \text{Shots per Second}$$

Damage per Second Formula:

$$\text{DPS} = \text{Damage per Shot} \times \text{Shots per Second}$$

Max Ammo & Reload Speed

Ammo represents the number of shots available at a given moment, while max ammo defines the number of shots available immediately after reloading, before the player fires. Reload speed represents the time required to reload the weapon.

Reload Time Formula:

$$\text{Final Reload Time} = \text{Base Reload Time} \times (1 - \text{Reload Bonus})$$

Actions

Sheena has a set of core actions that structure combat and movement in Neon Punk. These actions are designed to work in integration with the rhythm system and color mechanics, encouraging precision, strategy, and fluidity during encounters.

Move (WASD)

Outside of combat, movement is free, using the WASD keys to navigate the environment. During combat, movement is adapted to a 2.5D system, with lateral focus (A and D) to switch between paths and reposition during battles.

Interact (E)

Allows interaction with objects, structures, and characters outside of combat. This action is used for exploration, resource gathering, triggering events, and narrative progression.

Shoot (Left Mouse Button)

The primary combat action. Sheena uses a modified paint weapon to fire projectiles at enemies. Damage, applied effects, and shot behavior vary depending on the active color and Mods.

Reload (R)

When ammo is depleted, the weapon must be reloaded. Reloading can be performed manually and, if executed in sync with the beat, can be faster or grant temporary bonuses.

Switch Color (1, 2, 3 / Q and E)

Allows switching between different paint types, each with unique properties. This action is instant and essential for exploiting enemy weaknesses, applying debuffs, and creating combo chains. Efficient color switching is a key mastery element of the game.

Use Special (Right Mouse Button)

Activates an ability that consumes energy and produces high-impact effects, such as area damage, crowd control, or temporary buffs. Specials vary depending on the selected color and Mods, making them crucial in critical moments.

Block / Parry (Shift)

Allows the player to block enemy attacks at the exact moment of impact. When timed correctly, it can grant temporary invulnerability or additional effects such as counterattacks, increased speed, or partial reload. It is essential for survival and repositioning.

Take Cover (Space)

Allows Sheena to take cover behind environmental objects to reduce or avoid damage. Cover acts as a tactical tool for recovery, planning, and controlling the flow of combat, especially in high-pressure situations.

Other Characters

General Attributes

In addition to Sheena, Neon Punk features a cast of secondary characters who, although they do not participate directly in combat, play a fundamental role in progression and the overall functioning of the game.

Gang members in Neon Punk are not merely functional or narrative resources, but individuals with physical and emotional needs that directly impact their performance and the group's stability.

Each character has a set of statuses (mood, hunger, sleep, and health) that must be monitored and managed by the player, creating a strategic layer that connects survival, narrative, and gameplay.

Hunger

Hunger represents the basic need for food and ranges from 0 (well-fed) to 100 (starving). Each day, characters gain +15 hunger. Being hungry can lead to mood deterioration, reduced performance in tasks, or even abandonment of the group. In critical states, extreme hunger can lead to death. Managing food resources becomes essential to keep the group functional.

Hunger States			
Status	Effect	Cause	Duration
Well-fed (0–15)	Gains +15 mood	Eating while in “Normal” state	1 day
Normal (16–30)	x	x	1 day
Hungry (31–60)	Complains about hunger	Not eating for 1 day	2 days
Very Hungry (61–80)	Complains about hunger; other characters lose -20 mood; loses -25 mood	Not eating for 2days	2 days
Severely Hungry (81–99)	Chance to abandon the group	Not eating for 5 days	2 days
Starving (100+)	Character will die if not fed after the 7th day	Not eating for 7 days	1 days

Sleep

The sleep level represents accumulated fatigue, ranging from 0 (rested) to 100 (exhausted). Characters gain between 14 and 16 sleep points per day, which decrease when sleeping. Sleeping consumes 1 turn (day or night) and reduces 50 sleep points.

Tired characters have slower movement, lower efficiency in tasks, and a higher likelihood of making mistakes. Prolonged sleep deprivation can lead to severe penalties, such as failure in critical actions or temporary breakdowns, reinforcing the importance of rest within the base.

Sleep States			
Status	Effects	Cause	Duration
Rested (0–15)	Gains +15 mood	Eating while in “Normal” state	1 day
Tired (16–30)	—	—	1 day
Sleepy (31–60)	Complains about sleep; slower movement; slight increase in disease chance	Not sleeping for 1 day	2 days
Very Tired (61–80)	Complains about sleep; slower movement; high chance of failure in crafting or guard duty; worsens existing illnesses; significantly increases disease chance; loses -20 mood	Not sleeping for 2 days	2 days
Exhausted (81–100)	Cannot stand guard; does not respond to player commands; automatically goes to sleep (even if assigned to guard)	Not sleeping for 5 days	2 days

Mental State

Mood reflects the character’s emotional condition, ranging from 100 (Happy) to 0 (Depressed). Characters with low mood may exhibit negative behaviors such as reduced efficiency, internal conflicts, or refusal to participate in activities.

Below is an overview of mental states, their duration, and character reactions:

Mental States	
Mental State	Effects
Happy (81–100)	Makes positive comments
Normal (61–80)	—
Sad (41–60)	Makes negative comments
Very Sad (21–40)	Chance of negative events and reactions (insomnia, crying, fights); chance of failure in crafting or guard duty
Depressed (0–20)	Same reactions as Very Sad, but cannot perform actions (does not respond to player commands); cannot stand guard; chance to abandon the gang or commit suicide

Mood is affected by various events experienced by characters, as well as other status conditions, as shown below:

Event	Mood Change
Death of companions	-50
Killing civilians or knowing others did	-40
Severe or worsening illness	-35
Severe or worsening injuries	-35
Mission failure	-30
Base being frequently attacked	-30
Members leaving the group	-30
Stealing from other survivors	-25
Very hungry or worse	-25
Very tired or worse	-20
Seeing other members starving, injured, or sick	-20

Refusing to help survivors	-15
Helping people and performing acts of kindness	+40
Engaging in leisure or social activities	+35
Mission success	+30
Drinking alcohol	+25
Talking to Sheena (player)	+25
Being well-rested	+15
Eating well	+15
Seeing others happy and well-fed	+10

Disease

Diseases are more complex conditions that can arise due to exposure to cold, lack of care, or specific events.

Status	Cause	Effects	Treatment
Under Treatment	Used medication	Lasts 1 day, then reduces disease level by 1	—
Normal	Normal state	—	—
Stomach Ache	Eating raw food	Negative comments; reduces hunger restored by food	Can improve naturally depending on other statuses (hunger, sleep); worsens after 2 days if “Very Hungry,” “Very Tired,” or worse
Mild Cold	Cold exposure	Negative comments; slight chance of failure during guard duty	Can improve naturally; worsens after 2 days if still exposed to cold or in poor condition
Sick	Progression from mild conditions while hungry or	Negative comments; cannot stand guard; automatically sleeps when assigned tasks; slow	Use basic medicine

	tired for more than 2 days	movement; small chance to infect others	
Severe Illness	Sick for more than 2 days without treatment	High chance to infect others; loses -35 mood; others lose -20 mood	Use advanced medicine or heal at hospital (2 days)
Terminal Illness	Severe Illness for more than 2 days without treatment	Dies in 1 day if untreated	Use medicine or hospital treatment

Injury

Injuries represent physical damage suffered during raids, exploration, or guard duty. Injured characters operate with reduced efficiency and a high chance of failure. More severe injuries require recovery time, and neglecting them can lead to worsening conditions or death.

Status	Cause	Effects	Treatment
Bandaged	Used bandage	Lasts 1 day, then reduces injury level by 1	—
Normal	Normal state	—	—
Lightly Injured	Hurt during invasion or guard duty	Negative comments	Use bandages; rest and proper nutrition; may improve naturally; worsens after 2 days if in poor condition
Injured	Hurt during invasion/guard; or untreated light injury with hunger/fatigue	Negative comments; slow movement; high chance of failure in actions (crafting/guard)	Use bandages or hospital (1 day recovery)
Severely Injured	Injured for more than 2 days without treatment	Loses -35 mood; others lose -20 mood; cannot stand guard; automatically sleeps when assigned tasks	Use bandages or hospital (2 days recovery)
Terminal Injury	Severely Injured for more than 2 days without treatment	— (implied fatal outcome if untreated)	Use bandages or hospital treatment

General Actions

Gang survivors can perform specific actions within the base of operations, contributing to the group's maintenance and progression. These actions consume time within the day system, requiring careful planning when assigning tasks.

Consume Items

Survivors can use items such as medicine and food to restore status and mitigate negative conditions. Food reduces hunger and may improve mood, while medicine treats injuries and illnesses. Efficient use of these resources is essential to keep the group functional.

Sleep

Sleeping restores sleep levels and, in some cases, helps recover from minor injuries or stabilize negative conditions. Rested characters perform better in both combat and tasks, while sleep deprivation leads to progressive penalties.

Leisure

Leisure activities improve character mood and help reduce the impact of accumulated trauma. This action is important to prevent internal conflicts, addictions, or emotional breakdowns, strengthening group cohesion.

Cooking

Cooking allows survivors to prepare meals at the base, converting ingredients gathered during exploration into food that restores hunger. This action is essential for maintaining the group, directly impacting mood, efficiency, and overall performance.

Crafting

Survivors can be assigned to crafting tasks, using collected materials to produce items, equipment, or base upgrades. Depending on complexity, crafting may take more than one turn and may require characters with specific skills.

Resource Management

Resource management in Neon Punk is one of the core strategic pillars of the experience, directly connecting combat, exploration, and survival. The player must constantly balance the acquisition and investment of resources to keep the gang functional, expand its influence, and ensure consistent progression. Scarcity is intentional, forcing meaningful decisions and reinforcing the risk-and-reward system.

Internal Economy & Resources

Temporary Resources

Neon Bits

A currency found during exploration, used to purchase Mods, health, or items during a run. Neon Bits are limited to the current run, reinforcing short-term decision-making and encouraging players to balance immediate survival with strategic investment.

Hearts

Increase maximum HP for the duration of the current run. Hearts function as temporary survivability upgrades, allowing players to extend their endurance during exploration and adapt to increasing difficulty.

Permanent Resources

Data Fragments

Used to unlock new permanent Protocols that enhance Sheena's core attributes, such as health, damage, and survivability. These represent long-term progression and allow players to gradually strengthen their baseline capabilities across runs.

Insight

The most common persistent resource, used to upgrade already unlocked Protocols. Insight enables incremental progression, allowing players to refine and specialize their builds over time.

Friendship Bond

Special resources tied to specific allies, representing trust and connection. They can be equipped before a run to grant passive bonuses or influence gameplay, reinforcing the relationship between narrative and progression systems.

Crafting Materials

Collected during exploration and used within the base to craft items, equipment, and structural upgrades. These materials are essential for maintaining the gang's functionality and expanding its capabilities.

Consumables

Single-use items that provide immediate effects, such as healing, buffs, or status recovery. Consumables can be used both during exploration and within the base, offering tactical flexibility in critical situations.

Combat

Combos

The combo system in Neon Punk functions as a dynamic, rhythm-driven sequence system, inspired by QTEs but fully integrated into core gameplay. Instead of isolated prompts, combos emerge naturally during combat through timed inputs, color switching, and defensive actions.

During encounters, the player is presented with moments of opportunity where executing the correct action at the right time—such as shooting with a specific color, reloading on beat, performing a precise parry, or taking cover—extends a combo chain.



Successfully chaining actions builds a **Combo Streak**, which progressively increases a damage multiplier bonus. The longer the player maintains the streak through accurate, rhythmic execution and strategic color usage, the greater the damage output and efficiency in combat.



These moments are communicated through visual and rhythmic cues, encouraging the player to stay in sync with both the music and the flow of combat.

Unlike traditional rhythm games, failure is not heavily punished. Missing an input or mistiming an action does not interrupt gameplay flow, but instead breaks the combo streak or results in less optimal outcomes—such as taking damage when failing a parry. This approach maintains accessibility while still rewarding mastery.

This system reinforces the core pillars of rhythm, expression, and flow, transforming combat into a performance where precision and timing directly translate into power.

Protocols & Mods

In Neon Punk, progression is divided between **Protocols** (permanent upgrades) and **Mods** (temporary enhancements acquired during a run). Together, these systems create a layered progression structure that balances long-term growth with moment-to-moment decision-making.

Protocols

Protocols represent Sheena's persistent progression across runs. Unlocked using permanent resources such as Data Fragments and upgraded with Insight, talents provide consistent improvements to core attributes like health, damage, defense, and utility. This system allows players to gradually strengthen their baseline capabilities and shape their preferred playstyle over time. Protocols ensure that each run contributes to long-term progress, even in failure, reinforcing a sense of continuity and mastery.

Mods

Mods, on the other hand, are temporary upgrades obtained during exploration, typically at the end of combat sectors. At these moments, the player is presented with a choice between three options, each associated with a gang member. These power-ups reflect the knowledge, skills, and technologies shared by allies, tying progression directly to the game's narrative and relationship systems.

Unlike Protocols, Mods only last for the duration of a run, encouraging experimentation and build diversity. Each playthrough becomes a unique combination of abilities, synergies, and tactical choices shaped by the player's decisions and performance.

Bufs & Debufs

Bufs and debufs are core systems in Neon Punk, shaping both offensive and defensive strategies while reinforcing the game's emphasis on rhythm, timing, and color-based mechanics. These effects dynamically modify the state of characters and enemies, influencing combat flow, decision-making, and build diversity.

Debuffs

Debuffs are negative status effects applied to enemies, primarily through color-based attacks and abilities. They are designed to control the battlefield, weaken targets, and create strategic openings. Some debuffs deal damage over time (such as burn, bleed, or poison), while others manipulate enemy behavior or capabilities—reducing defense, slowing movement, interrupting actions, or even causing confusion.

Many debuffs interact with stacking systems, where repeated application enhances their effectiveness or triggers advanced effects (e.g., poison leading to decay, or slow leading to freeze). This layered design encourages players to experiment with combinations and optimize their approach depending on enemy types and combat scenarios.

Debuffs					
Debuff	Damage	Stacks	Best Against	Effects	Color
Burn	High	Few (max 3)	Standard enemies	Damage over time	Pink
Mark	High	—	Strong single targets	Increases damage taken or critical chance; enemy receives more damage while affected	Pink
Bleed	Medium	Medium	Highly mobile enemies	Deals damage when the target moves	Pink
Poison	Low	High (many stacks, no limit)	Bosses	Prevents health regeneration and ignores armor	Purple
Decay	—	Triggered after X poison stacks	Healing enemies	Converts healing into damage (advanced effect)	Purple
Vulnerability	—	—	High-defense enemies (tanks)	Reduces target defense	Purple
Shield Break	—	Triggered after X vulnerability stacks	Shielded targets	Breaks shield temporarily and immobilizes for 2 seconds	Purple

Shock	Low/Medium	—	Multiple targets	Area-of-effect (AoE) damage	Blue
Overload	Medium	Triggered after X stacks	Multiple targets	Causes an area explosion (AoE)	Blue
Glitch	Low/Medium	—	Groups	Causes erratic behavior; enemies may attack allies or miss attacks	Blue
Slow	Low	Up to 3 stacks (no additional effects beyond cap)	Fast enemies / movement control	Reduces movement and/or attack speed	Blue
Freeze	Medium/High	Triggered after 3 Slow stacks	Strong control / fast enemies	Temporarily immobilizes the enemy; breaks on damage, dealing high burst damage	Blue

Death during Combat

Death in Neon Punk represents the end of a run and serves as a critical point in the game's risk-and-reward structure. When Sheena's HP reaches zero during combat, the current exploration is immediately interrupted, and the player loses all temporary progress accumulated during that run, including Neon Bits, Hearts, and acquired Mods (power-ups). This reinforces the high-stakes nature of each encounter and encourages careful resource management and strategic decision-making.

Despite the loss of temporary resources, death is not purely punitive. The player **partially retains collected permanent resources** like Data Fragments and Insight, ensuring that each attempt contributes to long-term growth. Upon defeat, the player returns to the base of operations, where they can regroup, manage the gang, invest in Protocols, and prepare for the next run.

Additionally, death can have indirect consequences on the gang. Depending on the context of the run, failure may **impact group morale, resource availability, or narrative progression**, reinforcing the connection between combat performance and the broader survival system.

Finishing the exploration of an area

Successfully finishing the exploration of an area represents a major progression milestone within a run. Upon completing the final sector by **defeating the boss in the 10th**

sector, the player exits the area and returns to the base with all collected resources, rescued survivors, preserving the gains made during the expedition.

At the end of an area, the player is typically rewarded based on performance, including accumulated points, efficiency in combat, and decisions made throughout the exploration. These rewards may include additional resources, rare items, or opportunities to strengthen relationships with allies.

Completing an area also contributes to the broader progression of the game world. It may **unlock new regions**, **advance faction dynamics**, or **trigger narrative events**, reinforcing the sense of impact and continuity between runs.

This structure creates a satisfying contrast with death: while failure results in loss and retreat, successful completion enables growth, expansion, and consolidation—rewarding both skillful play and strategic planning.

Level Design

Overall Structure

The level design of Neon Punk is structured into three main layers — **District, Point of Interest, and Sector** — organizing player progression in a modular, dynamic, and highly replayable way. This structure balances authored content with procedural variation, ensuring thematic consistency while keeping each run unique.



The game is composed of **seven regions (Districts)**, each representing a distinct neighborhood of the city with its own visual identity, challenges, and factions. Within each district, there are **4 to 5 visitable locations (Points of Interest)**, which function as exploration and combat spaces. These areas are not all available from the start, being **progressively unlocked** as the player advances through the narrative, strengthens the gang, and expands their influence.

The only space that operates differently is the main hub, known as the **Gang Hideout**, which has its own unique functionality. In this environment, the player manages resources, interacts with characters, builds upgrades, and prepares for expeditions, serving as the strategic core of the game.

To complete a Point of Interest, the player must progress through a sequence of **10 sectors**, culminating in a **boss fight in the final sector**. Each sector represents a short, focused gameplay segment, which can take the form of either **combat, utility, or narrative events**.

Combat sectors are divided into three levels:

- **Normal**, featuring standard challenges and common enemies;
- **Elite**, with increased difficulty, stronger enemies, or special modifiers; Generally between the 4th and 6th room. There is never more than one per run.
- **Boss**, representing the climax of the area, requiring mastery of mechanics and strategic preparation. It's always the 10th and final room. There is never more than one per run.

Narrative sectors, on the other hand, function as structural pauses and contextual decision points, and can be:

- **Fixed encounters**, specific to a given area and tied to its narrative or worldbuilding;
- **Random events**, introducing variation, dilemmas, and emergent opportunities during the run.

Finally, **utility sectors** can be divided into:

- **Rest Site (Campfire)**: A safe space where the player can recover HP and prepare for the next encounters.
- **Black Market**: A trading space where the player can spend Neon Bits to acquire useful items, healing, or Mods (power-ups).
- **Treasure Room**: A high-reward sector focused on granting valuable items or upgrades without the need for combat.

After completing each sector, the player receives a reward and must choose their next path, evaluating risks, benefits, and immediate needs. When choosing, the player knows the room and reward type that await them, allowing strategic decision-making.

Rewards vary depending on the sector type and may include:

- **Heart** (Increase max HP)
- **Health restoration**
- **Neon bits** (Temporary Currency)
- **Data fragments** (Permanent Currency)
- **Insight** (Permanent Currency)
- **Survival resources**: consumables and crafting materials
- **Mods** (temporary power-ups)

The layout of each area, as well as sector distribution and rewards, is **procedurally generated** through combinations of **predefined segments**. This ensures varied paths, challenges, and decision-making opportunities in every run, keeping the experience fresh and unpredictable.

An area is only considered complete when the player defeats the boss in the tenth sector, consolidating progress in that location and unlocking new possibilities within the overall game map.

Sectors and Rewards							
Sector	Combat			Narrative		Utility	
Subtype	Normal	Elite	Boss	Fixed	Random	Rest Site	Treasure Room
Design Intent	Basic encounter, pacing	High risk, high reward	Area climax	Story-driven progression	Dynamic risk/reward events	Respite. Restore HP and plan	Respite. No fight, only rewards
Notes	Mods and one other reward type	Multiple rewards (Mods, Neon Bits, and another reward type)	Major and multiple rewards	Narrative progression, unlocks, characters, decisions with lasting impact	Risk-based outcomes with positive or negative consequences	No rewards, only HP restoration	Up to 3 reward types. Chance of rare rewards
Neon Bits	Small amount	High amount (Always)	—	—	Possible	—	High amount
Mods (Power-ups)	Common (Always)	Higher rarity (Always)	—	Possible	—	—	—
Hearts (HP)	Common	Rare	—	Rare or Common	Rare or Common	—	—
Crafting Materials / Consumables	Common	Chance of rare or higher quantity	High amount - Chance of high rarity	—	Possible (Common or Rare)	—	Possible (Common or Rare)
Insight	Small amount	High amount	High amount	—	Small or High amount	—	High amount
Data Fragments	Small amount	High amount	High amount	—	Small or High amount	—	High amount
Restore HP	—	—	—	Possible	Possible	Always	—

Rescued characters	—	—	—	Possible	—	—	—
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Districts and Points of Interest

District 1 – Underworld (Outer Slums)

The starting area where the protagonist lives. Chaotic, dense, and improvised, it serves as the cultural heart of resistance and punk identity.

Tone: survival, community, resistance

Gameplay: introduction to core mechanics, simpler combat encounters

Points of Interest:

- **Gang Hideout:** Improvised shelter inside an abandoned building. Main hub for upgrades and narrative.
- **Neon Alley:** Narrow streets filled with graffiti and flickering lights. Residential ruins with empty buildings and improvised shelters.
- **Vertical Slums:** Stacked, improvised structures where the poorest population lives.
- **Abandoned Garage**
- **Graffiti Tunnels**

District 2 – Underground Market

An abandoned industrial port transformed into a smuggling hub, with stacked containers and partially functioning cranes.

Controlled by: smugglers and mercenary gangs

Points of Interest:

- **Abandoned Dock:** Rusted structures and cargo containers.
- **Black Market:** A lively area with NPCs, side missions, and rare items. Underground weapons trade hub.
- **Illegal Combat Arena**
- **Fortified Warehouses:** Highly protected weapon storage areas. Containers form narrow corridors.
- **Body Modification Workshop**

District 3 – Synthetic Paradise

An underground district dominated by hedonism, parties, and drugs.

Points of Interest:

- **Neon Avenue:** A large avenue with massive buildings connected by walkways. Neon lights reflecting on wet streets, filled with glitching billboards and screens.

- **Underground Club**
- **Lonely Overpass:** An abandoned overpass with improvised shelters where people use drugs.
- **Pleasure Houses:** A prostitution district with holograms and projections.
- **Abandoned Subway Station:** Smuggling tunnels used for drug distribution

District 4 – Old District

A decaying district controlled by a religious group that rejects technological advancement and believes the city must be “purified.”

Controlled by: religious extremists

Points of Interest:

- **Blackout Zone:** Area without electricity, lit by candles and firelight.
- **Abandoned Church**
- **Destroyed Square**
- **Clandestine Clinic:** Improvised surgical rooms inside an abandoned hospital

District 5 – Ruined Industrial Complex

Forgotten regions of the city dominated by technological ruins and obsolete systems. A mysterious area filled with abandoned factories, labs, and machines.

Controlled by: Scrappers — a faction of scavenger robots that repurpose old technology and despise humans

Points of Interest:

- **Industrial Ruins:** Factories and smokestacks
- **Abandoned Factory:** Still-active assembly lines
- **Dead Railway:** Elevated tracks and abandoned trains
- **Tech Junkyard:** Massive scrap deposits
- **Research Complex:** Former laboratory with test chambers (malfunctioning experiments), testing arenas (robots experimenting on humans), and abandoned data centers filled with corrupted data

District 6 – The Frontier

The boundary between poor and wealthy districts. A heavily policed and highly volatile area.

Controlled by: Police

Points of Interest:

- **Burning Avenue:** A chaotic avenue filled with tall buildings, barricades, fire, explosions, and low visibility
- **City Rooftops:** Antennas and sniper observation points

- **Radio Transmission Tower**
- **Military Outpost**
- **Energy Complex:** Power plant and generators supplying energy to the upper districts

District 7 – The Dome

The center of corporate control. A wealthy, technologically advanced, and heavily surveilled area.

Tone: oppression, surveillance, control

Points of Interest:

- **Surveillance Control Center**
- **Maximum Security Prison**
- **Data Library:** Data centers and archives of old technology
- **Government Tower (Final):** Administrative center and final area of the game