

SKYBOUND

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Short Description

The player is immersed in a world where every character lives and dies among the clouds. Scrounge for fuel, ammunition, and spare parts for your airship. Battle pirates, warlords, bounty hunters, scavengers, and cannibals. Search for hidden treasures in crashed zeppelins.

Fight, Evade, Survive. Forever Skybound.

Fluff Text

"Always look down. Down is death. Avoiding that reality won't change one damn thing." - Mason Kemris, Freelance Harvester

Setting

Skybound plays in a dieselpunk world, like an alternate Earth circa 1918-1936. A hundred and fifty years before the birth of the Player Character (hereafter referred to as "Player"), a terrible global war rendered the surface totally uninhabitable, forcing the survivors to the highest mountain peaks.

They built airships, floating cities and industrial platforms, eking out a hardscrabble existence by harvesting a remarkable, cloud-borne crimson algae commonly called "red" for fuel. The main conflict of the world is its inhabitants' constant struggle to acquire enough red to keep their homeships flying and cities floating. Many factions fight over production and refinement of the precious resource, especially once a new discovery threatens to completely disrupt the status quo.

The Player and their allies become embroiled in the intrigue surrounding a new method of artificially cultivating red in large quantities. Naturally, everyone wants the secret, with varied intentions. The Freedom Party wants to reveal it to the people and break the government and corporations' monopoly on the crimson market, while others seek its destruction.

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Character Types (Allies, Neutral/Unaligned)

- Harvesters are broken into two camps: corporate and freelance. The former work for corporations contracted with the largest political faction, the Trust, while the latter are totally independent fortune-seekers, daring the dangerous crimson deposits in electrically-charged thunderclouds.
- Couriers transport important news, information, items, and (occasionally) people...think badass express riders in the sky and you're not far off.
- Traders are just that, normal folk struggling to make ends meet in an unforgiving world.
- Mechanics build and repair airships and aircraft throughout the game world.

Characters Types (Enemies, Chaotic Neutral)

- Pirates and Privateers roam the skies, seeking easy pickings like zeppelin tradeships.
- Scavengers and Eaters (cannibals) are just looking for their next score or meal, and they don't particularly care where they get it, or who they take it from.
- Bounty Hunters and Mercenaries take on various jobs, some neutral, often seeking outlaws or defending platforms and fleets from attack.
- The Skyguard is the formal military arm of the Trust, and can often be a bit trigger-happy, and somewhat loose when it comes to interpretation of even their own laws.

Story Integration

The story is told via in-game NPC interactions and interactive dialogue. The player has great agency when it comes to NPC interaction, though certain points in story progression will require pursuing a particular quest line.

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The goal is to allow the player to wander at will and return to more structured (main) story content at any time, as well as take a creative approach to solving problems and achieving objectives.

Side quests can earn the player money or, more frequently, tradable resources, as currency from one region may be less valuable in another.

Mechanics

The player's airship is their home, their refuge, as well as their vehicle and primary means of defense. Upgrading and repairing the airship, as well as acquiring new airship types, will be a core motivator throughout the story. As the player is called upon for more dangerous missions, better airships and/or aircraft are desirable.

Gameplay

Gameplay is primarily expressed through conventional flight sim mechanics, though immersive (FPS) world exploration and platforming is also critical to realizing the atmosphere of this world and engaging in NPC interaction. Player decisions and actions will trigger world-changing events, such as shifts in factional region control, threats, attitudes (faction relationships), available resources, etc.

Conclusion

The narrative structure of Skybound is designed to draw the player into a careworn world where their choices matter, where decisions carry weight and have the potential to inspire others. This world is dangerous, yes, but also hauntingly beautiful, and a cautionary tale of what humanity can become if left to its worst devices.