

BBC



THE ROLEPLAYING GAME
SECOND EDITION



SIXTY YEARS OF ADVENTURE
BOOK ONE



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INTRODUCTION

THE CLASSIC ERA

As it reaches its 60th anniversary, **Doctor Who** is unassailably the world's longest-running science fiction TV series. With an original run between 1963 and 1989, a one-off TV movie in 1996, and the revived series running from 2005 to the present day, the series has been on our screens for 45 of those 60 years and counting. We also have to add a huge amount of other material: books, both factual and fictional, a long-running magazine since 1979, audio plays, animated reconstructions of 1960s episodes absent from the BBC Archives, and several official spin-off series. And that's without mentioning the innumerable amount of toys and merchandise produced over the decades! **Doctor Who** is the teatime serial which became part of British popular culture (as well as making inroads in many other countries such as Australia and the USA). It's the cult series which, at its height, was pulling in well over 10 million viewers a week and is still a significant audience-puller, adapting to the changes which are currently happening to the way we view TV. Put simply, it's a phenomenon which is showing no signs of slowing down as it qualifies for its bus pass!

On TV, thirteen very different lead actors have made the part of the Doctor their own, as have actors portraying the War Doctor and Fugitive Doctor, but the basic premise from 1963 has stayed the same. The Doctor, a mysterious alien, explores time and space with one or more travelling companions, usually human, in the TARDIS, a vast time machine which has the exterior guise of a 1930s police box. This set of books covers all incarnations of the Doctor, including what makes each era distinctive in themes, tone, and storytelling, as well as details about their companions — and an adventure in each chapter which builds into a campaign featuring every incarnation of the Doctor!

📍 In The Beginning

If the question is 'Who created **Doctor Who**?' the answer is by no means obvious. Was it Sydney Newman, the recently appointed Head of Drama at the BBC? Was it C. E. 'Bunny' Webber and Donald Wilson, the experienced writers Newman tasked with developing a new family drama series

for early Saturday evenings? Was it Verity Lambert and her story editor David Whitaker? Anthony Coburn, writer of the first televised story? How about William Hartnell, who defined the character which all other Doctors have followed? In truth, all of these industry professionals contributed to the creation and early success of the series.

The basic setup of the original four main characters was almost there in an early pitch which featured a team of scientific trouble-shooters: a mature hero and heroine, a child or teenage girl, and most importantly for the future, an eccentric older man. Somewhere in the process, with ideas being passed back and forth between Newman, Wilson and Webber, the premise of a time travel show emerged, as well as a name for the older man character — ‘Doctor Who’.

Attention was also paid to the Doctor’s wonderful time-ship, with early concepts for its exterior including a ‘bubble’, invisibility, and changing its shape to fit in with the surroundings of each location the ship landed in. This latter idea was chosen, but with one budget-conscious refinement: the ship, as unreliable and temperamental as its pilot, would become stuck in a single form, something that was incongruous in the past or the far-flung future, but familiar to viewers. Something, perhaps, like a police box...

Things really took off when the series was passed over to producer Verity Lambert, and she set about assembling her main cast and her first batch of stories. Experienced actors William Russell and Jacqueline Hill were cast as schoolteachers Ian Chesterton and Barbara Wright, and Carole Ann Ford as Susan Foreman. In the crucial role of the mysterious Doctor, several actors were considered, but Lambert remembered seeing William Hartnell in *This Sporting Life*, a film released in early 1963 in which he had played a character far removed from his more usual roles. Hartnell eventually accepted the part of the Doctor because of the differences to the hard men he was more usually offered.

Verity Lambert was later to become one of the most respected and influential figures in British TV and cinema via her work with Euston Films and her

own Cinema Verity company. In 1963 she was the only female drama producer at the BBC, as well as the youngest at 28. In conjunction with her story editor, David Whitaker, she developed the format for the show as featuring three different story types — ‘forwards’, ‘backwards’, and ‘sideways in time’, the last being a category to cover more experimental scripts, such as Whitaker’s **The Edge of Destruction** which only featured the regular cast and took place entirely within the confines of the TARDIS. The ‘backwards’ stories would give opportunities for the show to present an educational remit to the viewers, with regular journeys into Earth’s past.

An Unearthly Child became the first transmitted episode of **Doctor Who**, a minute later than scheduled, on 23rd November 1963. 4.4 million people watched that first episode and saw two teachers investigating a mysterious student. Tracking her to a junkyard, they encounter a hostile old man, and find themselves whisked away from the London of 1963 to... where?

Viewing figures would leap to over 10 million by the end of its second story. Landing on a radiation-torn world, the TARDIS crew were about to meet the creatures which would cement the show in the public imagination — the Daleks. With the introduction of the Daleks, **Doctor Who** became a household name, and the series, initially commissioned for a 13-week run, was extended to a full season. **Doctor Who** had arrived.

📦 Evolution of the Doctor

Over **Doctor Who**’s original run, seven very different actors played the title role (plus an eighth in 1996’s TV movie), with the show being made by various production teams, helmed by the duos of producer and story/script editor. This led to the tone of the series and the character of the Doctor changing, sometimes radically, down the years.

The First Doctor was presented as a mysterious, sometimes even malicious unknown quantity, with Ian and Barbara, the two teachers, providing audience identification. Gradually, over the first two years, the character mellowed, with Hartnell adding little moments of humour.

Verity Lambert departed after two years as producer, and her successors, John Wiles and Innes Lloyd, had different approaches. Wiles' stories had a darker tone, whilst Lloyd took the series down a more science fiction-based route, with the historical stories phased out.

Lloyd and script editor Gerry Davis also take the credit for possibly the one element which ensured **Doctor Who's** survival. When Hartnell became too ill to continue in the role, he was replaced, not by a lookalike actor, but by a completely new Doctor with a different appearance and personality. Now established as regeneration, the explanation was that the Doctor had 'renewed' himself, aided by the TARDIS.

The new Doctor was played by Patrick Troughton as a younger, more whimsical character, though he showed a keen ruthlessness which he hid from his adversaries beneath a clownish guise. This era saw the refining of a formula: a small group of humans besieged by monsters. With appearances from the Cybermen, Yeti, Ice Warriors, and more, this period is known as the 'monster era' with good reason!

In 1970, colour came to **Doctor Who**, along with a new Doctor, and the biggest change to the show's format since it began. The final Second Doctor story introduced his own people, the Time Lords, who had changed the Doctor's appearance and exiled him to Earth in the late 20th century. With the TARDIS disabled, the Doctor was forced into an uneasy partnership with the military UNIT organisation. The new Doctor was Jon Pertwee, who played the part as a flamboyant man of action with charm but also prone to rudeness and arrogance.

Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks took Pertwee through five years, with many of producer Letts' real-world concerns being addressed. These included commentary on racism, xenophobia, colonialism, big business, and pollution, with the Doctor siding with the oppressed.

Letts' successor, Philip Hinchcliffe, partnered with script editor Robert Holmes, oversaw the first three years of the Fourth Doctor, Tom Baker. This

era saw the horror content increase, and though very popular, proved controversial, attracting criticism from some. Nevertheless, Baker became the most popular Doctor yet, with his eccentric character and long scarf still the definitive Doctor for many. Incoming producer Graham Williams was given the task of reducing the horror content and chose to replace it with humour. One of Williams' script editors was Douglas Adams, who added his trademark wit to the series, helping maintain its popularity.

After three years, John Nathan-Turner became producer for the remaining nine seasons of the original run, and Peter Davison would take the show into the 1980s as the Fifth Doctor, and into twice-weekly episodes for the next three years, which included **Doctor Who's** twentieth anniversary celebrations.

As the Sixth Doctor, Colin Baker's take on the Doctor was a deliberate contrast to the Fifth. Loud, brash, and clad in a lurid costume, his era also saw a grittier feel, as led by script editor Eric Saward. Both Baker and Saward would depart after the Doctor was put on trial by the Time Lords. Their replacements were Sylvester McCoy and Andrew Cartmel. Initially taking a humorous approach, Cartmel sought to add some of the mystery back to the series, whilst McCoy's Doctor was a master manipulator from the sidelines of enemies and friends alike.

📍 A Journey Through Time

These two volumes attempt to do the impossible — collect all of the Doctor's many, many adventures together into a celebration of sixty years' worth of amazing adventures. Hundreds of episodes, hundreds of stories, and thousands of years of travels through time and space, from the dawn of time and the birth of our planet to the very end of the Universe as the last star fades.

This book looks at what is often called the 'classic era' of **Doctor Who**, from its humble beginnings up until its hiatus at the end of 1989. Each chapter details a different Doctor, exploring the recurring themes of that Doctor's era — whether that is the classic 'base under siege' story of the Second

Doctor, or a reinterpretation of a classic of gothic literature from the Fourth Doctor stories. This gives Gamemasters an idea of how to style their games to make the adventures suit the tone of each respective Doctor. It doesn't mean you have to keep to a certain style for a certain Doctor in your games, but it'll certainly help you capture the feel of one of their stories.

Each chapter also provides stats for each Doctor's most iconic and recognisable companions, updated to Second Edition. In some cases, that Doctor had so many great companions, and there just isn't enough room to detail them all.

These chapters also provide a brief summary of the Doctor's adventures. If you'd like to know more about each individual story or the many villains and aliens the Doctor has encountered on these adventures, we'd recommend looking at the individual Doctor Sourcebooks. While these are only available for First Edition rules, you can use the conversion guidelines in the Second Edition core rulebook.

THE LUSTRE OF STARLIGHT

Each chapter also contains a brief adventure themed for that individual Doctor. Each adventure can be played in any order as they are self-contained, but they are linked by a mysterious diamond, the Taaron Ka. These adventures are guidelines and outlines to inspire Gamemasters, allowing them to expand and develop the story as they wish, leading to the most epic multi-Doctor story that spans thousands of years!

A final chapter in the story can be found in Book Two, which should be played last, finishing off the epic story of the Taaron Ka diamond, celebrating sixty years of adventure through time and space.





CHAPTER ONE

THE FIRST DOCTOR