

BBC



THE ROLEPLAYING GAME
SECOND EDITION



SIXTY YEARS OF ADVENTURE
BOOK TWO



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INTRODUCTION

THE REVIVAL ERA

Doctor Who's revival in the 21st century has been one of the great success stories of modern British television, proving to be a popular and critical success in a way not seen since the 'Dalekmania' of the 1960s and the Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker eras of the 1970s — possibly exceeding them in terms of public awareness and appreciation, and in the huge amount of merchandise and memorabilia. There have been complementary 'making of' shows such as **Doctor Who Confidential**, shown on the BBC's digital channels. There have even been spin-off series. **The Sarah Jane Adventures** featured 1970s companion Sarah Jane Smith in a series aimed at younger viewers; **Torchwood** offered the more adult investigations of its namesake organisation; and **Class**, set in the same school seen in the first episode in 1963, had teenage protagonists.

Since its return, the series has been creatively shaped by three showrunners: Russell T. Davies, Steven Moffat, and Chris Chibnall, each with their own ideas about developing the ongoing series. In some ways they fulfil the producer's creative role on the original series, but also have chief writer status. Between them, the three showrunners have cast five actors as their Doctors, along with two other incarnations of the character — John Hurt's battle-weary War Doctor, and Jo Martin's mysterious Fugitive Doctor. Old enemies have been retooled for modern TV, and new adversaries and friends for the Doctor have been introduced. There have been innovations such as the Time War, the first presenting female Doctor, the Timeless Child, and Division. In this book you will find coverage of all the Doctors of the revived series, in the same format as the companion 'classic era' book, continuing the campaign of adventures featuring all of the Doctors to date! With many surprises due during the 60th anniversary year, the story of **Doctor Who** continues...

📍 Beginning Again

Doctor Who never really disappeared from the public eye. Original novels and licensed audio plays based on the series were ongoing, and then in 1996, a TV movie featuring Paul McGann as the Eighth Doctor aired. A glossy British-US co-production, it did well and McGann was well-liked as the Doctor, but the idea of a TV series wouldn't resurface until 2003. As the 40th anniversary

approached, writer and showrunner Russell T. Davies and BBC Cymru Wales Head of Drama Julie Gardner officially announced the revival of **Doctor Who**.

If the new **Doctor Who** was to be taken seriously, an established actor was essential as the lead. Christopher Eccleston, who had previously worked with Davies, was announced as the Ninth Doctor. Billie Piper was cast as the Doctor's companion Rose Tyler. With other recurring cast and production team members in place, filming on the first new series of **Doctor Who** for over 15 years began in July 2004.

The nature of TV drama had changed, and though it still contained many links with the original series, the new **Doctor Who** reflected those changes. Gone were the days of studio-made stories shot with multiple cameras on videotape. The new series would be shot single camera, like a movie, using a large number of locations. The TARDIS interior was now a permanent standing set at the BBC's Cardiff studios. The biggest change, though, was an increase in pace. Whereas the original series had allowed its stories to unfold over several weeks, now most stories were self-contained within one episode, with the occasional two-part story.

Changes had also been made in the area of special effects. The original series had often achieved remarkable results on a very tight budget, but the new series would showcase imagery that the production teams of 1963, or even 1989, could only dream of.

The first episode of the new series was shown on BBC1 on 26th March 2005. Over 10.8 million viewers tuned in, and audience appreciation figures were similarly impressive. Four days after transmission, the BBC announced that a second series had been commissioned, as well as a Christmas special. On the same day, it was also announced that Christopher Eccleston would be leaving the show, and the hunt for a new Doctor began again. The Tenth Doctor, David Tennant, made his full debut in the Christmas special, fitting in seamlessly with the tone and feel of the new series.

When Tennant, and also Russell T Davies, left the show in 2010, their successors were Matt Smith, at 26 by far the youngest actor to play the Doctor, and Steven Moffat, another successful TV writer who had grown up as a fan of the original show.

The Eleventh Doctor's combination of youthful verve and ancient wisdom would maintain the show's high profile, and the show became more popular in the USA. Smith continued in the role for three years which culminated in a set of specials, and the Doctor regenerated again.

Peter Capaldi, like Tennant, was a fan of the series, and in many ways a contrast to the Eleventh Doctor, being a lot less childlike in their demeanour than their predecessor, though still having moments of charm and wit. Like Smith, Capaldi would play the Doctor for three years, leaving at the same time as Steven Moffat handed over showrunner duties to Chris Chibnall.

One of the biggest changes to the format since 1970, casting Jodie Whittaker as the first female Doctor. She brought a breezy energy and friendliness to her portrayal, ironically as the storylines revealed that the Doctor was more alien than previously thought. Chibnall and Whittaker left on a high note in 2022. With the return of Russell T Davies and David Tennant as the Fourteenth Doctor, followed by Ncuti Gatwa's debut as the Fifteenth, the Doctor's story is far from over...

🔄 ReEvolution of the Doctor

The 1963 model of **Doctor Who** is a very different beast to the modern version. However, there is a lot more in common than might seem obvious. For much of Russell T. Davies' time as showrunner, the emphasis is firmly on the companion. In the opening episode, **Rose**, we stay with the titular character as she becomes involved in danger. The Doctor doesn't make an appearance until some way into the episode, and the audience doesn't learn that much about him. It was a canny move as established fans would pick up on the occasional hints to past stories, and new viewers wouldn't have to worry about references to past stories. By making the companion the focus, Davies was both hearkening back to the past, and returning some of the enigma to the Doctor.

The Ninth Doctor is scarred by the memory of the Time War, and needs Rose to help him reconnect with life. Throughout the first season, Rose's influence on the Doctor is seen to be beneficial, and when he gives up his life, it's not to save the Universe, but simply to save her, his reconnection complete.

The Tenth Doctor has a more energetic and friendly persona. However, he is also prone to brooding as well as moments of ruthlessness, such as the various cruel punishments he deals out to the Family of Blood. He can be flirtatious at times, and during their travels, Rose falls in love with him, and possibly he with her. He takes it very badly when she is seemingly lost to him forever.

The Eleventh Doctor's adventures took on a 'dark fairy tale' feel, with complex plot arcs involving the destruction of the Universe by the exploding TARDIS, the death of the Doctor at the hands of a mysterious space-suited figure, and the 'impossible girl' Clara. The Doctor retained a youthful energy set against more introspective moments. He could be quite naïve about human life, switching from frivolous behaviour to brooding intensity.

It was during the Eleventh Doctor's time that the War Doctor was revealed as a previously unknown incarnation, falling between the Eighth and Ninth Doctors — shunned as being unworthy of the title of Doctor, due to being the one who destroyed

the Daleks and the Time Lords to end the Time War. With the help of the Tenth and Eleventh Doctors, the War Doctor is relieved of his burden.

Ironically, the youngest-looking Doctor ages over hundreds of years protecting the planet Trenzalore from alien invaders wishing to stop the re-emergence of the Time Lords. At the time, he considers himself the final incarnation but is granted a new regeneration cycle by the Time Lords.

The Twelfth Doctor is far less affable, and even has to refer to cards to guide how he behaves towards others. When Clara is killed and he is imprisoned by the Time Lords in a temporal trap, he wastes little time after escaping in deposing the Time Lord President and bringing Clara to Gallifrey in an attempt to restore her to full life.

The Thirteenth Doctor returned to a more empathic persona, calling her companions her 'fam', and given to sudden manic outbursts of enthusiasm and frantic activity. She enjoys meeting various historical figures, especially inspirational ones such as Mary Seacole, Rosa Parks, and Nikola Tesla. She also has to deal with the Master's destruction of Gallifrey, and a devastating revelation that the Doctor was not, as thought, a Time Lord, but was the Timeless Child, an alien from another dimension. With the introduction of the Fugitive



Doctor, it is revealed that there had been many other incarnations, the Doctor's memory having been wiped by Division.

When the Doctor regenerates after being caught in a laser blast from the Master's latest scheme, many of the implications of the Timeless Child remain unresolved. The Fourteenth Doctor appears as an older Tenth Doctor, a fact which seems to surprise him. Time will tell...

📍 A Journey Further Through Time

One of the key reasons why **Doctor Who** has survived is its adaptability, as seen in the way it has changed over the last six decades. As a gamechanging revelation, the Timeless Child is in good company alongside the idea that the Doctor was by no means the only time traveller with a TARDIS (**The Time Meddler**) or that the Doctor was a member of the Time Lords, beings with incomprehensible power over time and space (**The War Games**).

Even regeneration, the backbone of the show's longevity, has been interpreted in different ways by different production teams. As said above, initially the idea was that the Doctor had been renewed by the TARDIS. Three years later, it was described more matter-of-fact as a 'change of appearance'. Five years after that, the term 'regeneration' was heard for the first time. Another couple of years later, **The Brain of Morbius** showed, in a mental battle scene, what appeared to be images of seven Doctors preceding the one we know as the First.

With the return of David Tennant as the Fourteenth Doctor, the reason for the familiar face will undoubtedly have some significance. Waiting in the wings, we also have Ncuti Gatwa ready to make his debut as the Fifteenth Doctor, and already, there is a buzz and enthusiasm about the possibilities of this latest incarnation.

The nature of television viewing has changed over the last few years, with the streaming age now upon us. Whatever the fate of broadcast TV, it seems very likely that **Doctor Who** will still be with us for some time!

THE DOCTOR SOURCEBOOKS

Further information and an in-depth deep dive into every episode and story of **Doctor Who**'s previous sixty years can be found in the individual Doctor Sourcebooks. While the stats and rules are designed for the First Edition of **Doctor Who: The Roleplaying Game**, converting to Second Edition is quick and simple, using the guidance in the Second Edition core rulebook.





CHAPTER ONE

**THE WAR
DOCTOR**