THE MONTHLY CODEX

YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO XBOX GAMING

OCTOBER 2026

FREE / INDEPENDENT

BLIZZCON RETURNS

Diablo V, Warcraft and the return of StarCraft

MINECRAFT'S NEW DIMENSION

Inside the Sift and Dungeons II's larger world

CONTINUING OUR RESET

XBOX'S SEPTEMBER RESET

268 roles cut. A new Halo team. The studio changes and the questions still open.

PROJECT FOUNDRY (2024) / IMAGE: MICROSOFT AND HALO STUDIOS

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OPENING NOTE / DRAFT FOR EDITOR APPROVAL

September brought a crowded calendar, but the story on our cover concerns the people and studios behind the games. Xbox's latest restructuring deserves space, clear sourcing and careful language about decisions that are still in consultation. This issue also follows the games themselves: Blizzard's long-range plans, Tokyo's smaller surprises, Minecraft's new dimension and the releases preparing to fill October. The Monthly Codex is intended to make a month easier to understand. Read the features at your own pace, use the Game Pass Ledger to check what changed, and follow the links at the end of every article when you want the original reporting. This opening note is an editorial draft for B.K. Snow's review; it is not presented as an approved personal statement.

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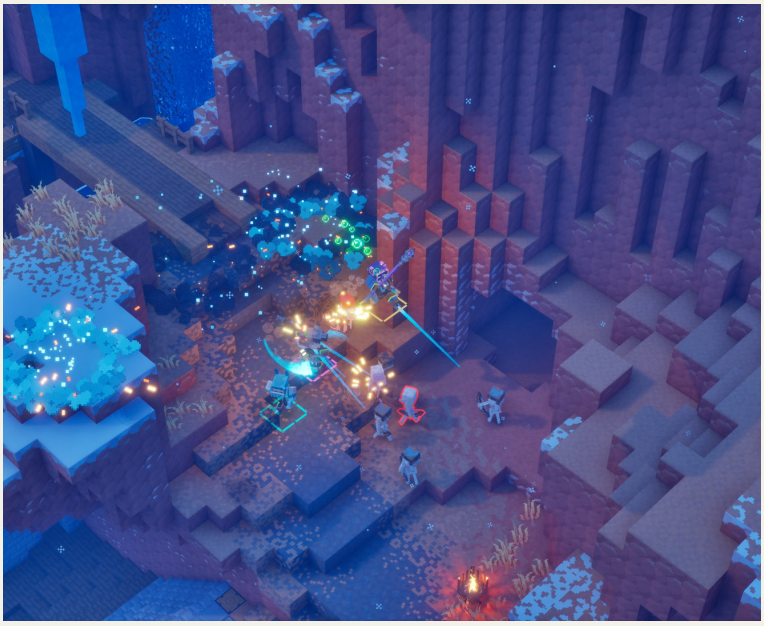
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The Sift opens through Dungeons II; Warcraft III gets another campaign. Official promotional images.

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Every article ends with clickable sources. Contents and month-in-review page references link directly to features.

SEPTEMBER IN SEVEN BEATS

A quick route through the month. Follow each page reference for the full story.

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Cloud limits announced

November will bring monthly allowances and purchasable additional streaming hours.
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Xbox adds PHYSINT

Kojima Productions expands its publishing relationship with Xbox.
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SEP 12-13

BlizzCon returns

Warcraft developments arrive sooner than the newly announced Diablo V and StarCraft projects.
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Tokyo fills the calendar

New gameplay and smaller reveals accompany Shape of Dreams' surprise Xbox arrival.
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THE MONTH CONTINUES



Official Minecraft Dungeons II image. The main Minecraft editions receive the Sift in 2027.

SEP 22

Xbox changes its studio map

268 role cuts accompany studio moves, a completed divestiture and proposed closure consultation.

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SEP 26-29

A new Minecraft dimension

The Sift is introduced through Dungeons II before reaching Java and Bedrock in 2027.

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SEP 29

Discs gain digital benefits

Disc-to-digital begins its wider public rollout; retaining the qualifying disc remains important.

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INSIDE XBOX'S SEPTEMBER RESET

268 roles cut. Halo moves to a new Activision team. Studios change hands and consultations continue. What September 22 actually confirmed.

SEPTEMBER 22, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



Master Chief in Halo: Campaign Evolved promotional art, released in June. Image: Microsoft / Halo Studios.

Xbox announced another 268 role cuts on September 22, alongside a reorganization that moves the next Halo game to a new Activision team, brings Obsidian under Bethesda, and combines Playground Games with Turn 10. The announcement also confirmed Undead Labs' departure from Microsoft and a proposed closure consultation at Ninja Theory after two sale agreements failed.

The changes were set out in a message from Matt Booty to Xbox employees, published on Xbox Wire under the title Continuing Our Reset. It is a consequential announcement for the people making Microsoft's games and for players following their work. It also needs to be read carefully. A change of management, a completed studio sale and a proposed closure describe very different situations.

The immediate cost

Booty's total covers Halo Studios, other first-party developers, and Xbox Game Studios management and central functions. Microsoft did not publish a complete studio-by-studio breakdown in the memo. The company described the actions completed since July, including divestitures, as taking it approximately three-quarters through its previously announced restructuring.

That wording does not support calculating an exact number of remaining redundancies. Studio sales can move employees outside Microsoft without eliminating all of their jobs, and the September announcement combines several kinds of organizational change. A neat subtraction would suggest a precision the announcement does not supply.

INSIDE THE SEPTEMBER XBOX RESET



Master Chief and Sergeant Johnson in Halo: Campaign Evolved promotional imagery. Image: Microsoft / Halo Studios.

Windows Central's Jez Corden reported that the eventual workforce reduction could fall below the earlier estimate of about 3,200 as Microsoft relocates employees and pursues divestitures. That is independent reporting attributed to sources, rather than a revised official total. The distinction matters when assessing how much of the restructuring remains.

The September figure is nevertheless unambiguous: Microsoft announced the elimination of 268 roles. It should not disappear behind a discussion of which corporate label now sits above a familiar game. The smaller organization Xbox describes will begin with fewer colleagues working inside it.

A different home for Halo

The next Halo title will be developed at Activision by a team assembled specifically for the project. Microsoft's announcement separates that work from Activision's continuing Call of Duty development. A smaller Halo Studios team will support existing games and their community.

This changes who will build the series' next game, but it does not identify an established Call of Duty studio as its developer. Describing the announcement as confirmation of an Infinity Ward Halo, for example, would go beyond the memo. Nor does it reveal the game's title, release date, business model or structure.

In a statement reported by several outlets, Activision president Rob Kostich framed the assignment around honoring Halo's universe and the qualities that originally attracted players. The statement says a purpose-built team is being assembled. It is a statement of intention; the result remains something the new team will have to demonstrate.

PC Gamer's Morgan Park, writing about the handover, argued that changing Halo's direction still leaves Activision with a difficult task: retaining the series' particular feel and attention to detail. That is a useful question to carry forward without adopting a prediction about success or failure. Experience running a large shooter franchise does not, by itself, tell us how this Halo will play.

There is also an immediate continuity question. Existing Halo players need to know what support the smaller team can sustain while the new project takes shape. September's announcement identifies that support role, but does not provide a detailed staffing plan or a new schedule of updates. Those answers should come from the teams responsible, rather than being inferred from the reorganization.

The rest of the map changes too

Rare and World's Edge also move under Activision. Obsidian moves into Bethesda's organization, while continuing its current projects, including Grounded and its previously announced Fallout collaboration

THE CONFIRMED STUDIO MOVES

ACTIVISION
Next Halo title, Rare and World's Edge

BETHESDA
Obsidian and its continuing projects

KING
Microsoft Casual Games

PLAYGROUND + TURN 10
One studio focused on Forza and Fable

A change of reporting structure is distinct from a sale. Undead Labs is now independent; Ninja Theory faces a proposed closure consultation.

with Bethesda Game Studios. Microsoft Casual Games comes under King. Playground and Turn 10 become one studio focused on Forza and Fable.

The organizing principle Microsoft offers is a reduction in separate business units, closer alignment of teams already working together, and more focused publishing expertise. These are management changes inside the wider Xbox business. They are not sales of Rare, Obsidian or the Forza studios to an outside company.

The distinction is particularly useful for Obsidian. Joining Bethesda's organization does not establish a newly announced Fallout game, because the collaboration already existed. Likewise, combining the Forza studios is not evidence that Fable has been cancelled or that a particular Forza project has acquired a new release date. The memo confirms organizational responsibility and continuing franchise work.

Our reading is that Xbox wants clearer responsibility for a smaller set of operations. Whether this produces quicker decisions or better games is an outcome to assess later. The announcement contains no development performance measures that would let readers judge those promised benefits now.

Undead Labs has left Microsoft

Undead Labs supplied a separate, unusually important clarification on September 22: its separation is complete and the studio is now independent and employee-owned. The developer says State of Decay 3 remains in active development, is in alpha, and is targeting a closed beta before the end of 2026.

The game remains targeted for 2027 on Xbox, PC and PlayStation. Microsoft's memo says it will launch into Game Pass under a new publisher. These statements establish an ongoing Xbox connection even though the developer is no longer a Microsoft-owned studio. They do not name the publisher or supply a precise release day.

A free magazine covering the Xbox ecosystem should continue following that work. Ownership is one way to establish relevance; a game coming to the platform is another. Treating every departure from Microsoft's corporate structure as a departure from Xbox gaming would mislead readers about what they can actually play.

Booty also says Compulsion and Double Fine returned to management in August with their intellectual property, back catalogs and runway funding. Their completed transitions provide context for the approach Microsoft hoped to take with other studios. They should not be folded into September's announced job cuts as if every employee at every divested company had been dismissed.

INSIDE THE SEPTEMBER XBOX RESET



Space combat in a Halo: Campaign Evolved screenshot. Image: Microsoft / Halo Studios.

Ninja Theory faces a proposed closure

Two separate agreements for Ninja Theory fell through, according to Microsoft. The company will now consult employees on a proposed closure while continuing to explore alternatives. Consultation at Arkane remains underway and is expected to continue through the end of the year.

Neither statement should be rewritten as a completed closure. Ninja Theory's situation is serious: an attempted sale has failed twice, and closure is now formally proposed. Yet the same announcement leaves other paths under consideration. Reporting the uncertainty accurately is more informative than choosing the most final-sounding headline.

The same care applies to Arkane. September's memo does not settle the outcome of its consultation. It would be premature to invent a buyer, a final shutdown date or the fate of an unmentioned project. These are matters for follow-up reporting as the process develops.

What readers should watch next

The next useful information will be specific: a named Halo development team and a clear account of its remit; an identified publisher and firmer milestones for State of Decay 3; and decisions following the consultations at Ninja Theory and Arkane. Each would tell players more than a general assurance that the lineup remains strong.

There are two stories here that deserve to remain visible together. Xbox is changing the organization behind several of its best-known games, and people are losing jobs as it does so. The promised benefits of the new structure are still prospective. The disruption announced on September 22 is already real.

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PC Gamer | Xbox cuts 268 roles and reorganizes studios (2026-09-22)

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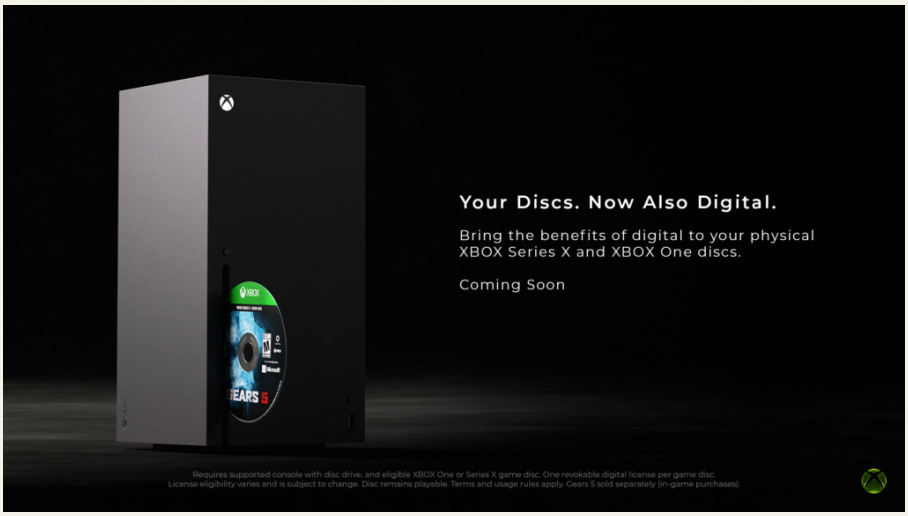
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YOUR DISCS GO FURTHER

The public rollout gives supported physical games digital benefits. Keeping the disc still matters.

SEPTEMBER 29-30, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



Xbox's announcement illustrates supported disc-linked digital benefits. Image: Microsoft.

Xbox's disc-to-digital feature reached its public rollout on September 29, after testing with Xbox Insiders. It gives supported physical games an associated digital entitlement, allowing players to use some of the conveniences normally attached to a digital purchase. The qualifying disc remains important to the arrangement.

Microsoft introduced the feature in August and began Insider testing on August 31. September therefore brought a progression from preview to wider availability, rather than the first announcement of the idea. Game Informer, VGC and Windows Central reported the public rollout at the end of the month, following Xbox's September 29 announcement.

Start with a supported disc

Microsoft's instructions describe inserting a supported Xbox One or Xbox Series X game disc into a console with a disc drive and launching the game. Once the entitlement is claimed, the supported digital benefits become available on the player's account. The physical copy continues to function as a disc.

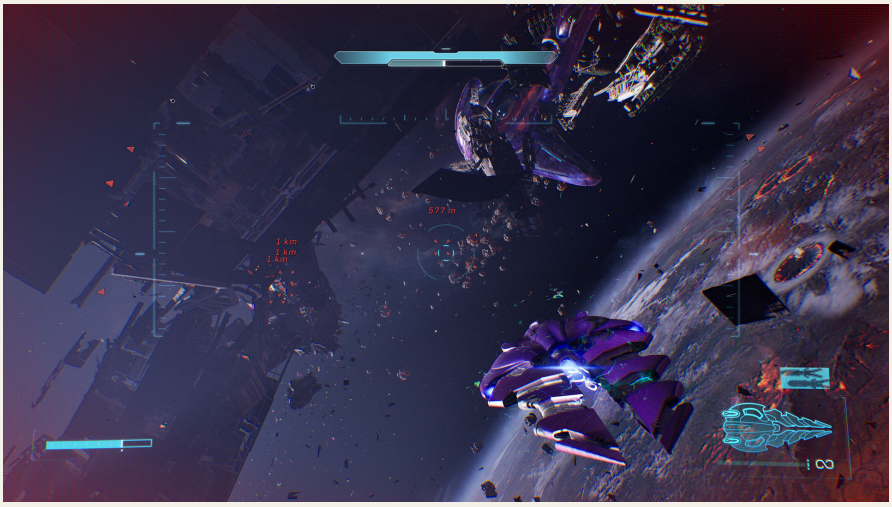
That can make an older Xbox One useful to someone who now plays on a Series S. The older machine has the drive needed to recognize the disc; the newer machine can use the resulting supported entitlement. It is a practical example of access moving across a household's hardware without requiring the Series S itself to read a disc.

There are qualifications. Play Anywhere applies where the individual game supports it. Cloud streaming requires cloud eligibility and an appropriate route into the streaming service. The feature does not turn every disc into a universal PC release, and it does not make every supported game streamable on every device.

Keep the physical copy

Xbox's support guidance, quoted in Game Informer's September 30 report, says that access to a disc-to-digital license may be limited or revoked if

YOUR DISCS GO FURTHER



Space combat in a Halo: Campaign Evolved screenshot. Image: Microsoft / Halo Studios.

the player no longer possesses the qualifying disc. Selling, giving away or losing it can affect the associated entitlement.

The useful way to understand the feature is as an additional way to use a supported physical copy. Keeping the disc preserves its role in that relationship. A player planning to sell a collection should not assume the digital versions will remain permanently available afterward.

This is also why the distinction between a purchased digital license and a disc-linked entitlement deserves attention. They may look similar when selecting a game from a library, but their conditions are different. A clear account of those conditions is more helpful than simply calling the feature a free conversion.

A growing list

September's testing period included fixes and additions. Pure Xbox reported the inclusion of Split Fiction, A Way Out and It Takes Two on September 11. At the end of the month, Windows Central reported Sega's participation as the supported publisher list expanded.

Those developments are useful evidence that availability was still evolving. They are not a reason to publish an unofficial list as a complete guarantee. Check the particular title and edition before relying on it for a purchase or a change of hardware.

The service's reach also intersects with another September announcement. From November, Xbox plans monthly cloud allowances and paid additional streaming time. A disc-derived entitlement can establish access to an eligible game, while streaming that game remains subject to the cloud service's separate conditions.

The rollout gives physical collections more flexibility across supported Xbox devices. Its long-term usefulness will depend on continued title support and on how clearly Xbox explains the relationship between the disc, account and digital benefits. For now, the practical advice is straightforward: try supported games with the discs you own, retain those discs, and verify each extra platform benefit rather than assuming it.

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Xbox Wire | Your Discs. Now Also Digital. (2026-08-26)

Game Informer | Disc-to-digital rolls out to all players (2026-09-30)

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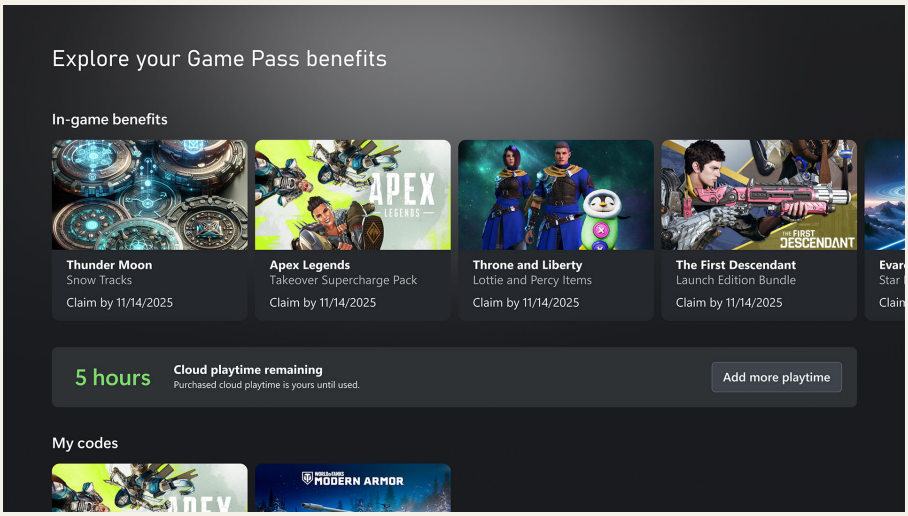
Pure Xbox | Disc-to-digital testing updates and three added games (2026-09-11)

Windows Central | Sega support expands disc-to-digital (2026-09-29)

CLOUD GAMING GETS A CLOCK

The limits announced in September take effect in November. The extra-hour price remains a crucial missing detail.

SEPTEMBER 3, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



An official mock-up shows a cloud playtime allowance and an option to add hours. Image: Microsoft.

Xbox announced on September 3 that Game Pass cloud streaming will receive monthly hour allowances beginning in November. Ultimate will include 15 hours, Premium 10 hours and Essential five hours. Eligible subscribers can currently stream without those monthly caps.

Players who exhaust their included time will be able to buy additional cloud hours through the Xbox Store. Microsoft also plans to let people buy cloud playtime without a Game Pass subscription and stream eligible games they own. Prices and fuller operating details had not been supplied in the September announcement.

Different effects for different players

The change matters most to people who use streaming as a regular way to play. Someone who occasionally tests a game before downloading it may stay within an allowance. Someone using a television, an older console or a modest computer as their main route into Xbox could reach it much sooner.

To put the allowances in context, consider a hypothetical schedule of one hour every evening in a 30-day month. That produces 30 hours of streaming. It would exceed Ultimate's included time by 15 hours, Premium's by 20 and Essential's by 25. These are illustrative calculations, not estimates of how subscribers actually play.

Microsoft expects the change to affect four percent of Game Pass subscribers. That is the company's estimate, and its denominator is all Game Pass subscribers. It should not be presented as evidence that only four percent of people who regularly use cloud gaming would exceed the limits. Those are different populations.

Why Xbox says it is changing

The company attributes the new model to the cost of providing streaming as usage and session lengths increase. It says the limits are intended to support investment in reliability and performance, while acknowledging that some players will face a higher practical cost.

THE NOVEMBER ALLOWANCES



Announced September 3. Additional paid hours are planned; their prices were not supplied in the announcement.

Windows Central's September 3 coverage adds independently reported detail: Jez Corden says purchased cloud-hour bundles are not expected to expire. Microsoft had not set that out in the announcement itself, so it remains an attributed report rather than a term to assume when buying a future bundle.

For a player comparing options, the missing price is essential. An included allowance establishes the threshold; the cost of going beyond it determines the bill. Until the extra-hour pricing is known, an accurate worked example can calculate time required but cannot calculate the resulting expense.

Buying time without a subscription

The proposed purchase-only route could serve someone who already owns eligible games and wants occasional streaming without a recurring Game Pass plan. It does not make the entire Game Pass catalog available simply because a player has bought hours. Game ownership, game eligibility and streaming access remain separate requirements.

September also brought an announcement that the Xbox app was coming to supported TCL televisions. More compatible screens can widen access, but a screen's availability does not remove the service's time conditions. The convenience of starting a game on a television and the price of playing it for a month need to be assessed together.

What remains unanswered

The September statement leaves the prices of extra time, market-specific purchasing options, eligible games and the way remaining time will be displayed for later clarification. The magazine therefore records the announced November change without filling those gaps with invented rates or a universal set of terms.

For regular cloud users, the next step is to compare actual monthly streaming time with the proposed allowance, then check the full local terms when Xbox publishes them. The key change is already clear: streaming beyond the included time will become a separate purchase. Whether that remains worthwhile will depend on both the price and the way each player uses the service.

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BLIZZCON LOOKS AHEAD

New Warcraft adventures, another Diablo, and a different direction for StarCraft. A guide to what is playable now and what remains years away.

SEPTEMBER 12-19, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



Characters from across Blizzard's games in the official BlizzCon 2026 artwork. Image: Blizzard Entertainment.

BlizzCon returned to Anaheim on September 12 and 13 with announcements stretching from immediately playable updates to games planned several years away. Diablo V and a new StarCraft shooter supplied the longest horizons. Warcraft III gained a new campaign, while World of Warcraft: Forever offered a different direction for the familiar lands of original Azeroth.

For an Xbox magazine, the range requires some care. Blizzard is part of Microsoft's gaming business, but a Blizzard announcement is not automatically an Xbox console announcement. Some of the month's most substantial news concerns PC games, and that platform distinction belongs beside the excitement.

Diablo plans beyond the anniversary

Blizzard announced Diablo V for spring 2029. Its premise begins after Diablo has prevailed and Sanctuary has fallen. The reveal establishes the next game and its broad creative starting point; it does not give players a near-term release to plan around. A project several years away will need further reporting as its details become concrete.

The closer addition is the Amazon class for Diablo IV, planned for the first half of 2027. Blizzard describes bow and javelin play across four archetypes: Champion, Skirmisher, Ranger and Commander. The javelin is being introduced as a new Diablo IV weapon type. Class-pack details beyond that initial outline are due later.

Diablo IV's Season of Hell's Legacy began in September, bringing anniversary material built

BLIZZCON RETURNS WITH A LONG VIEW



World of Warcraft: Forever promotional artwork for a return to original Azeroth. Image: Blizzard Entertainment.

around familiar characters and the Prime Evils. Blizzard also announced a Diablo animated series in development with Netflix. The latter is a separate screen project, with further details still to come; it should not be mistaken for a new game expansion or a confirmed broadcast date.

These announcements put several different forms of continuation side by side: support for the current game, a new playable class, a future numbered sequel and a television adaptation. That breadth is meaningful, but it is more useful to keep the individual schedules visible than to compress them into a promise that everything is arriving soon.

StarCraft returns in another form

The opening ceremony announced an original open-world StarCraft shooter for 2030. That is a return for the setting through a different genre, rather than confirmation of a new real-time strategy sequel. September's announcement is the foundation for coverage; expectations carried over from earlier StarCraft games cannot fill in its unrevealed systems.

For readers, the most important facts are therefore unusually simple: the project exists, its announced form is an open-world shooter, and the stated horizon is 2030. A detailed account of progression, multiplayer or final platform support would require information beyond the ceremony recap.

Warcraft III opens a new chapter

Warcraft III: Reforged received Forsaken Kingdom, a new campaign exploring the period between Arthas's return to Lordaeron and the emergence of the Undercity. Blizzard's panel recap describes a four-mission prologue followed by a campaign built around exploration, items and hero development.

The main campaign follows Garek Bandarion and Dark Ranger Anya, with established Warcraft characters appearing around their story. The structure draws on the exploration and hero progression associated with The Frozen Throne's Rexxar campaign, while telling a different story. For players who value Warcraft's characters as much as its competitive strategy, that is a more informative description than simply calling it new RTS content.

Patch 3.0 also introduces a Definitive Edition graphics option. The campaign and the update are related announcements with different access conditions: the new campaign is a purchase, while the graphics work belongs to the base game's update. Xbox Wire noted that Reforged is available through Game Pass on PC; that does not automatically include the paid campaign.

BLIZZCON RETURNS WITH A LONG VIEW

A longer life for original Azeroth

World of Warcraft: Forever is scheduled for November 4, with beta testing beginning September 17. Blizzard presents it as an ongoing way to develop original Azeroth alongside Modern and Classic, rather than a temporary season that moves players through a familiar sequence of expansions.

The team's panel describes a level 1-60 journey with new quests and regions, additional dungeons and raids, and the Skyborne race. Its principles retain preparation and cooperation: there are no flying mounts or level scaling. Those choices help explain the particular audience it is addressing, even before the new content is counted.

There are also modern options, including gamepad support, visual presets and choices between character models. In Windows Central's interviews at the event, developers discussing possible console versions were cautious rather than announcing ports. Native controller support on PC is a feature a player can evaluate; an Xbox console release remains unconfirmed.

Blizzard says access to Forever will be included with a World of Warcraft subscription or game time. Optional upgrade packs provide additional benefits, including beta access in qualifying editions. The distinction matters for returning players: the game has a subscription requirement, while the optional upgrade is a separate purchase.

Overwatch and the wider calendar

Overwatch's presentation introduced Doctrine, a vampire-inspired support hero using life-draining abilities and bat-like drones, alongside reworks for Sombra and Roadhog and the Watchpoint: Grimsvotn map. The following official Xbox podcast provides the developers' discussion of those changes, giving readers a direct route to the design explanation beyond the announcement trailer.

Hearthstone's Reign of the Black Empire expansion is scheduled for October 20, with Assemble introduced as a mechanic that combines two cards into a stronger one. Its new Journal brings quests, achievements and events together. Further out, the Monk class is planned for March 2027. Heroes of the Storm also received a September 28 date for Xal'atath's arrival.

These PC developments remain relevant to readers following Microsoft's studios, but they should keep their own platform labels. Blizzard's ownership gives the magazine a reason to follow the work; it does not erase the difference between a game playable on an Xbox console and one played on a Windows PC.

The useful takeaway

BlizzCon's most immediate story was the renewed development of games and worlds that already have long histories. Its largest future projects sit much farther away. Readers can return to a new Warcraft campaign now, consider Forever for November, and follow Diablo V or StarCraft over the years ahead without treating those decisions as one commitment.

The announcement list is extensive enough on its own. The test for the coming months will be what the teams reveal about their games, the conditions under which players can access them, and how their plans develop. September supplied the starting points and several dates worth keeping.

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TOKYO OFFERS A WIDER WORLD

Kojima's expanded Xbox partnership, a home on the move, a family rewritten with cards, and a surprise release.

SEPTEMBER 9-17, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



Bloomwalker's travelling home in official announcement artwork. Image: Netmarble.

Xbox's September 17 Tokyo Game Show broadcast mixed major publishing news with smaller projects, new gameplay and an immediate release. The most consequential development had begun a week earlier: Xbox and Kojima Productions announced that their partnership would expand to include publishing PHYSINT, alongside OD and collaboration across film and television.

The showcase then gave that agreement a more tangible face. Hideo Kojima appeared to announce Bill Skarsgard as PHYSINT's lead, accompanied by a new poster. It was one part of a presentation that also included Japanese role-playing games, Chinese action games, Indian mythology and a co-operative roguelite arriving on Xbox that day.

Kojima's expanded partnership

The September 9 announcement establishes Xbox's publishing involvement in PHYSINT. Kojima described the project as an effort to develop the action-espionage genre, while Xbox CEO Asha Sharma spoke about supporting his creative ambitions. Neither statement supplied a release date.

At Tokyo Game Show, the casting announcement added Skarsgard to a project whose public material also features Charlee Fraser. The poster is promotional artwork for a game in development, rather than footage demonstrating how it will play. It is worth keeping that distinction visible when the discussion around a high-profile creator moves quickly from revealed material to imagined possibilities.

TOKYO OFFERS A WIDER WORLD



The PHYSINT publicity poster featuring Bill Skarsgard and Charlee Fraser. Image: Kojima Productions.

The practical story for Xbox readers is a new publishing relationship around a named game. More detail about its design and production remains for later announcements. September does not support a verdict on the finished game or a prediction about when it will arrive.

A moving home in Bloomwalker

Netmarble's Bloomwalker received a new look at its Pocket Dimension, a customizable area reached through the player's moving house. The game's official description places restoration at its center: the traveler cleans pollution from Luminoa's sanctuaries and helps its guardians recover.

The moving house functions as a base that travels through the world, while the Pocket Dimension provides space for building and decoration. Familiar Ni no Kuni elements, including Higgledies, help establish the setting's connection to that universe. The announced Xbox Series X|S and Xbox PC versions support Play Anywhere.

The appeal of the premise is easy to identify without claiming to have played it. A portable home can give a crafting adventure continuity between destinations, letting the player's base develop alongside the journey. How much freedom the building systems offer, and how varied the restoration work becomes, are questions the finished game will need to answer.

Faraday Blues rewrites a family

Serenity Forge used the broadcast to reveal Faraday Blues, a science-fiction adventure built around changing the lives of people represented by cards. Lina, a girl searching for parents who do not know her, can alter the circumstances of their history and experience the consequences across three interconnected visual novels.

Director Zhenghua Yang's accompanying article explains that cards can represent characters, memories and items. Moving a person into one interaction can make them unavailable for another. Changes then carry forward between eras, giving the premise an understandable constraint: intervening in one relationship may affect another.

The studio describes 64 endings and a 2027 release window for Xbox Series X|S and PC, with cloud support. Those are announced specifications, not a measure of how different each ending will feel. The stronger reason to follow the project is the relationship between its family story and a system that lets players rearrange the people involved.

A surprise arrival with a year behind it

Shape of Dreams launched on Xbox on September 17 alongside The Starless Path, its first-anniversary update. It is a co-operative action roguelite playable

solo or with up to four people, with cross-play supported at launch. Its Xbox release entered Game Pass immediately.

This is a useful example of why platform dates need context. The game had already launched on Steam in September 2025. The surprise concerned its Xbox arrival and the accompanying update, rather than the first release of the game anywhere.

The developer describes abilities called Memories and modifiers called Essences that can be combined across repeated runs. The update adds the frost-wielding Traveler Cetus, a new final boss and another ending. Xbox players therefore begin with the benefit of a year's development, while existing PC players receive reasons to revisit the same game.

Dates and gameplay across the show

Several other announcements gave the broadcast a wider reach. Sega showed Japan as a location for Crazy Taxi: World Tour, planned for 2027. Bloodstained: The Scarlet Engagement demonstrated more of its 2.5D action with Leo and Alex, with its release also set for 2027. Raji: Kaliyuga showed its move into a third-person action-adventure structure.

Persona 4 Revival's trailer introduced Naoto Shirogane, while the remake retained its February 18, 2027 date and announced Game Pass inclusion. Wo Long 2: Wings of Ember showed a boss encounter and retained a March 4, 2027 launch date. Its limited alpha demo was listed as running through September 30.

For the nearer calendar, Edge of Memories received a November 5 date and Hope in the City a November 10 date. Once Human's Isles of Abyss expansion was announced for October 22 on Xbox. These are different kinds of release: two new games and an expansion for an existing free-to-play title.

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 4's campaign trailer pointed toward October 23, with qualifying digital preorders receiving campaign early access from October 16. Fallout 76 also showed an animated trailer for The Slasher, its ongoing September storyline. Their presence gave the broadcast a bridge between new announcements and games people were already playing or preparing to install.

Read the labels beside the trailers

The showcase's breadth is a reason to pay attention to its smaller announcements as well as its final celebrity appearance. A card-driven family story, a restoration game and a co-operative roguelite offer very different experiences within the same Xbox lineup.

It also rewards precise language. Play Anywhere confirms a supported connection between console and Xbox PC purchases. Game Pass inclusion must be checked separately. A date for an alpha demo is not a launch date, and a new trailer is not an independent review. Keeping those labels beside the games turns a busy broadcast into something readers can use.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Xbox Wire | XBOX @ Tokyo Game Show 2026: All the Announcements, Including an Appearance by Hideo Kojima (2026-09-17)

Xbox Wire | XBOX and KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS Expand Partnership to Publish PHYSINT (2026-09-09)

Xbox Wire | Tokyo Game Show 2026: Bill Skarsgård Cast as Lead Role in PHYSINT (2026-09-17)

Xbox Wire | Bloomwalker: Healing a Broken World, One Bloom at a Time (2026-09-17)

Xbox Wire | Faraday Blues: Rewrite Your Family’s Fate Across Three Shattered Realities (2026-09-17)

Xbox Wire | Action Roguelite Shape of Dreams Launches on XBOX Today With its Biggest Update Yet (2026-09-17)

INTO THE SIFT

Dungeons II introduces a new dimension in September. Java and Bedrock follow in 2027. Minecraft Live connects the two.

SEPTEMBER 26-29, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



Minecraft Dungeons II heroes face the new dimension in promotional imagery. Image: Mojang / Microsoft.

Minecraft Live on September 26 linked two releases on very different schedules. Minecraft Dungeons II would introduce the Sift when it launched on September 29. The new dimension would then come to Minecraft Java and Bedrock Edition in 2027. September's show also previewed ice caves and a freezing zombie variant for a future game drop.

That makes the Sift more than a setting confined to one spin-off, while leaving important details about its main-game implementation unrevealed. The announcement gave players an early look, rather than a complete guide to how to reach or survive the dimension in Minecraft itself.

A fourth destination

Mojang describes the Sift as Minecraft's first new dimension in more than 14 years, joining the Overworld, Nether and End. In Dungeons II, strange events disturb the Overworld and lead players into a reality with its own biomes, creatures and environmental rules.

The announced areas include Meadows and Carapace. Shifting tides can affect creatures, and unfamiliar blocks introduce new hazards. Those descriptions establish the dimension's role in the action RPG. They should not all be transferred automatically into a list of confirmed mechanics for Java or Bedrock in 2027.

Mojang had not explained how players would access the Sift in those editions, or exactly how that version would differ from the Dungeons II interpretation. The shared setting is confirmed; identical implementations are not. For a player returning to Minecraft specifically for the new dimension, the useful date remains the broader 2027 window.

MINECRAFT CROSSES INTO THE SIFT



Combat in an official Minecraft Dungeons II screenshot. Image: Mojang / Microsoft.

Dungeons II opens its world

The sequel also changes the shape of the journey. Microsoft's September 28 preview describes an interconnected world in place of the original game's more strictly mission-based structure. Players explore the Overworld and Sift, encounter dungeons and develop their equipment as they find new routes.

The preview highlights navigation features including Minecart Stations, Teleport Statues and a temporary Guidance Trail. These details explain how the game intends to make a larger world manageable. They are Microsoft's account of its preview experience, rather than observations from The Monthly Codex playing the game.

Mojang's September 26 developer conversation provides another route into the design, discussing the Sift, exploration and the new mechanics. For readers comparing the sequel with the first game, the move toward an interconnected world is the central development to investigate. It changes what happens between combat encounters as well as where those encounters take place.

Our interpretation is that navigation will be a significant part of the sequel's identity. A larger map can encourage detours and discovery, but it also asks more of the player's ability to find a route. The described travel and guidance systems show the team addressing that problem. Their effectiveness across a full adventure remains a matter for a properly played review.

Frozen caves in the main game

The Live recap also introduced underground ice caves, with icicles on ceilings and ice crystals growing from the ground. The crystals emit light, giving the new building material a functional role alongside its appearance.

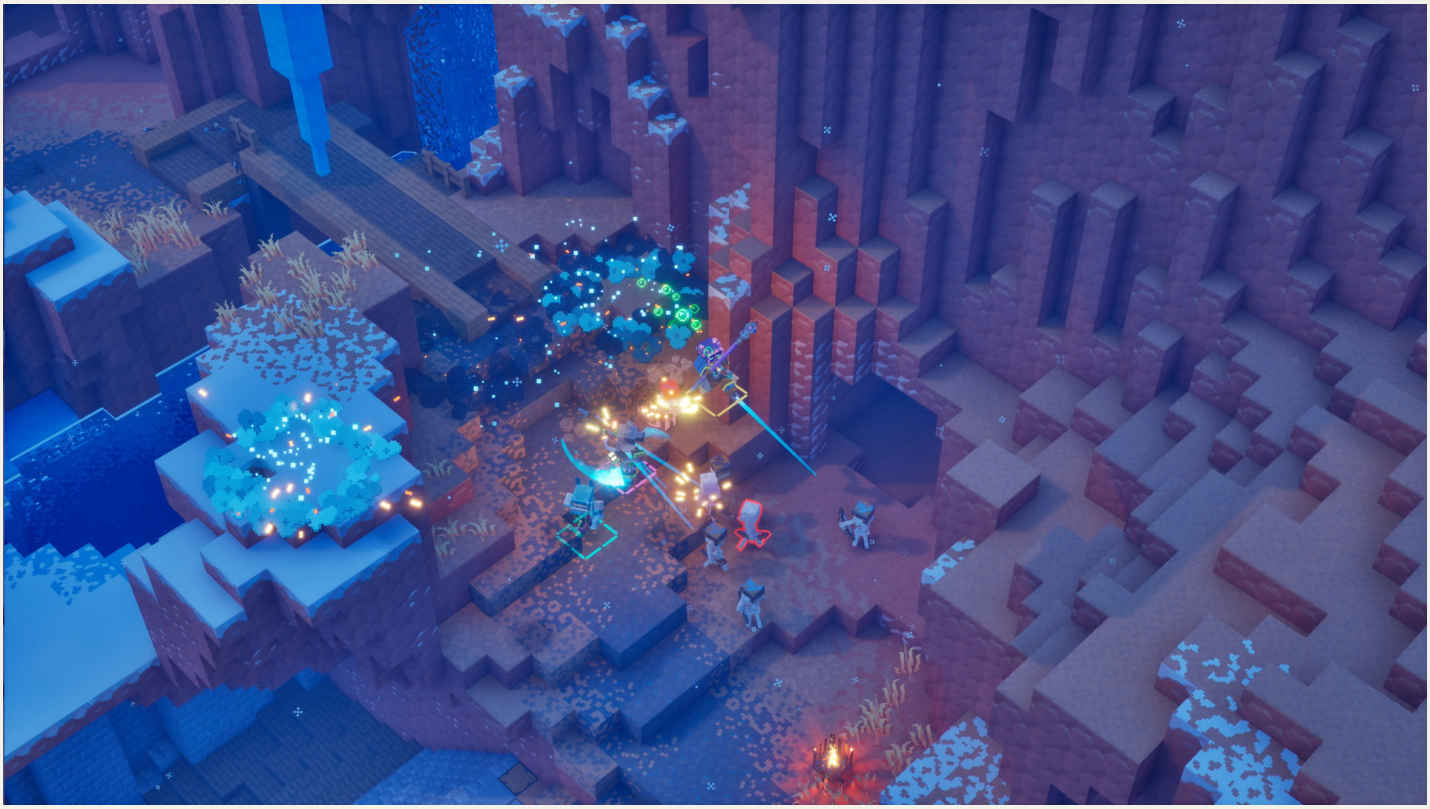
A new frozen zombie variant can inflict a freezing effect, and some variants throw ice balls. Mojang had not given the creature a final name in the recap. A nickname used jokingly by the article's writer should therefore not be presented as the official mob name.

The announced content fits the show's stated emphasis on adventure. A cave biome changes what players can discover below ground; a creature that adds freezing changes how that discovery can become dangerous. The show offered a first look, so the magazine does not attach an invented release day to the drop.

More ways to build and share

Sound Effects Packs were also announced for Minecraft Marketplace. The recap pointed creators toward the updated feedback site and highlighted a community building challenge involving straw beds

MINECRAFT CROSSES INTO THE SIFT



A new environment in Minecraft Dungeons II's interconnected world. Image: Mojang / Microsoft.

and cushions. These are official community initiatives, rather than evidence that every player is requesting the same features.

Minecraft Education's tenth anniversary and Minecraft's October 27 Nintendo Switch 2 release were additional parts of the show. They help explain the breadth of Minecraft Live, though the new dimension and Xbox-connected Dungeons launch are the focus of this issue's coverage.

Two games and two dates

Minecraft Dungeons II launched on September 29 for Xbox Series X|S and PC, with cloud availability, Play Anywhere and day-one access through Game Pass Ultimate and PC Game Pass. Other platforms were also announced. The specific September feature article and developer discussion identify Series X|S for the console version; this magazine does not infer an Xbox One edition from a broader catalog label.

The main Minecraft editions receive the Sift in 2027. Keeping those two schedules separate avoids the most obvious misunderstanding of the presentation. September offered the dimension first through an action RPG, while giving Minecraft's builders and explorers a larger destination to anticipate next year.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Mojang Studios | Minecraft Live September 2026 recap (2026-09-26)

Xbox Wire | Minecraft Dungeons II’s New Dimension Coming to Minecraft Java & Bedrock Edition (2026-09-26)

Xbox Wire | How Minecraft Dungeons II’s Interconnected World Makes Every Journey an Adventure (2026-09-28)

Xbox Wire | Minecraft Dungeons II: The Sift, New Mechanics, Better Exploration, and More | Official XBOX Podcast (2026-09-26)

Xbox Wire | Coming to XBOX Game Pass: Gears of War: E-Day, Minecraft Dungeons II, Dune: Awakening, and More (2026-09-15)

READY FOR EMERGENCE DAY

The Coalition reaches gold. Here are the dates that separate preinstallation, Premium early access and the Game Pass launch.

SEPTEMBER 17-29, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



Gears of War: E-Day key art. General release is scheduled for October 6. Image: Microsoft / The Coalition.

The Coalition announced on September 17 that Gears of War: E-Day had gone gold. Preinstallation began September 29, with the worldwide release scheduled for October 6 at 8am Pacific, or 11am Eastern. Premium Edition early access begins October 1 at the same time.

For Game Pass players, the important date is October 6. Ultimate and PC Game Pass include the game on its general release date. The early-access window belongs to the qualifying Premium Edition offer, rather than every subscriber automatically entering five days early.

Before the original war story

E-Day takes place 14 years before the first Gears of War, following Marcus Fenix and Dominic Santiago as the Locust emerge. September's official developer podcast focused on brotherhood and hope within the campaign's disaster setting, offering the team an opportunity to explain the relationship at the center of the prequel.

That conversation is useful companion material for readers interested in how an established series approaches an earlier period. It is a published developer interview, not an interview conducted by this magazine. Readers can follow the source link to hear the discussion in full.

The next step is the game itself. A familiar cast and a known historical event provide context, but they do not establish the campaign's quality before release. This issue records the announced setup and launch arrangements without assigning a review score.

GEARS REACHES THE LAUNCH LINE



A quieter moment for Marcus in The Coalition's Gears of War: E-Day imagery. Image: Microsoft / The Coalition.

Prepare the download

The preinstall covers Xbox Series X|S, Xbox PC and Steam. Microsoft also published the PC specifications, then replaced the specification image on September 28. That revision was public before this issue's cutoff, so the revised image is the appropriate one to consult.

Use the source link to compare the complete requirements against your hardware, including the target associated with each configuration. A GPU name alone cannot tell you which resolution or performance expectation a published specification describes. The magazine avoids transcribing an image into a shortened table that could lose those qualifications.

The game also appears in September's Game Pass announcement, which confirms its October 6 subscription arrival. It is one of the upcoming month's releases that could be included in this issue because both the release date and service access were public before September ended.

The practical checklist is short: choose the correct edition, distinguish early access from the subscription launch, and use the current PC specifications if playing on a computer. The Coalition has reached its announced production milestone. Players will be able to judge the finished result in October.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Xbox Wire | Gears of War: E-Day Has Gone Gold, Pre-Install Begins September 29, Full PC Specifications Revealed (2026-09-17)

Xbox Wire | Gears of War: E-Day Campaign – Brotherhood and Hope in a Hopeless World | Official XBOX Podcast (2026-09-04)

Xbox Wire | Coming to XBOX Game Pass: Gears of War: E-Day, Minecraft Dungeons II, Dune: Awakening, and More (2026-09-15)

BEYOND FIRST PARTY

Dawnwalker, Onimusha, CONTROL Resonant and Dune bring very different adventures to Xbox.

SEPTEMBER 3-24, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



The Blood of Dawnwalker. Image: Rebel Wolves / Bandai Namco.



Onimusha: Way of the Sword. Image: Capcom.

September's Xbox lineup extended well beyond Microsoft's studios. Three releases illustrate the range: The Blood of Dawnwalker's dark fantasy, Onimusha's sword combat and CONTROL Resonant's move toward melee action. Dune: Awakening also arrived on Xbox with substantial changes to the survival game already available on PC.

The Blood of Dawnwalker

Rebel Wolves' RPG arrived on Xbox Series X|S and Xbox PC on September 3, according to its launch announcement. Its protagonist Coen exists between human and vampire states, with the day-and-night structure tied to his changing capabilities and the threat facing his family.

The launch article presents the game's powerful vampires as opponents whose influence extends through its world. That is a useful premise for readers who prefer a dark fantasy setting to a sequence of disconnected monster fights. The meaningful question for a later review is how the setting, time pressures and player choices work together across the complete story.

Xbox's earlier world feature and July preview provide further background. Play Anywhere is confirmed for the Xbox versions; Game Pass inclusion is a separate matter.

Onimusha returns to the sword

Onimusha: Way of the Sword launched September 4. Xbox Wire's September 3 combat article describes a game that gives Miyamoto Musashi several responses to incoming attacks, including blocking, parrying, deflecting and precise Issen counters.

The distinctions matter more than the number of moves. A block consumes stamina. A deflection attacks an enemy's stamina, while Issen asks the player to commit an attack in a much narrower moment. These are descriptions of the published combat systems, rather than instructions independently tested by this magazine.

The enthusiastic assessment belongs to the article's author, Joe Skrebels. Readers interested in the controls can follow his feature. Xbox Series X|S, Xbox PC and Play Anywhere support are confirmed.

A MONTH BEYOND MICROSOFT STUDIOS



CONTROL Resonant. Image: Remedy Entertainment.



Dune: Awakening. Image: Funcom / Dune rights holders.

CONTROL Resonant changes the distance

Remedy's sequel arrived September 24 on Xbox Series X|S and Xbox PC. Its September 23 feature describes Dylan Faden's melee combat, multiple weapon forms and skill development within distorted zones of Manhattan. Play Anywhere is supported.

The account also emphasizes movement: jumping, gliding and changing the relationship to gravity as the game develops. For players familiar with the original CONTROL's supernatural abilities, the notable development is the way the sequel applies that physical freedom to closer combat and a broader world.

The preview also describes upgrade paths and changes in an area's challenge as the player progresses. These systems expand the sequel's structure; their pacing and balance remain questions for a full review.

Dune reaches Xbox with new options

Dune: Awakening launched on Xbox Series X|S and Xbox PC on September 22, with Game Pass access. Funcom's accompanying article describes a single-player mode, extensive settings customization and a completed Book One storyline among the changes accompanying the release.

The developer also says players can choose PvE throughout the experience without losing access to gameplay systems or rewards. That is a substantial change to communicate to readers who followed the earlier PC launch and decided its survival structure was not for them.

There are practical details still worth separating. Play Anywhere and shared progression are confirmed, while full cross-play is described as coming after the console launch. The first does not imply the second is already available. The Polar Cap is planned as a later free update, rather than content to assume was present on September 22.

Funcom's update overview is the appropriate starting point for checking the cumulative changes since PC launch. The September Xbox release is a new platform arrival for an existing game, with a substantially revised set of options; it is not the original worldwide release of Dune: Awakening.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Xbox Wire | The Blood of Dawnwalker: Feed Your Hunger Today! (2026-09-03)

Xbox Wire | The Blood of Dawnwalker world overview (2026-04-30)

Xbox Wire | The Blood of Dawnwalker preview (2026-07-07)

Xbox Wire | Onimusha: Way of the Sword – The Many Means of Mastery (2026-09-03)

Xbox Wire | CONTROL Resonant Is an Action Game... and an RPG, and a Superhero Game, and More Besides (2026-09-23)

Xbox Wire | Dune: Awakening Arrives on XBOX With New Ways to Play (2026-09-22)

TAKE ANOTHER PATH

Restoring a planet, surviving Ashenfall, and following two strange new worlds through credited previews.

SEPTEMBER 2-15, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



BioEden's restoration premise in official key art. Image: Broken Arms Games / Focus Entertainment.

Large franchise announcements can crowd a monthly calendar, but September also brought useful reasons to look at smaller projects. A restoration game, a survival RPG's console debut and two unusual previews approach familiar genres from different angles.

BioEden builds toward restoration

BioEden launched on Xbox Series X|S on September 3. Broken Arms Games' management game asks players to restore damaged environments, with Focus Entertainment describing its approach through restoration, relaxation, revival and recycling.

The underlying design problem is more interesting than a reassuring adjective. Buildings have environmental costs, yet the player needs infrastructure to restore the planet. Recycling returns resources and removes the building's pollution, making it possible to undo a choice and reorganize the system.

That provides a concrete way to understand the game's relaxed premise. The challenge comes from arranging a working restoration process, with the official article describing no fail states or countdown pressure. It offers a different prospect for an evening than the month's more demanding combat releases. This is an announced design description, rather than a recommendation based on a complete playthrough.

RuneScape arrives through Dragonwilds

RuneScape: Dragonwilds brought the series to Xbox on September 15 with its 1.0 release. It is a survival RPG for one to four players, set on Ashenfall, with

DIFFERENT WAYS TO SPEND AN EVENING



RuneScape: Dragonwilds gameplay from the official Xbox launch announcement. Image: Jagex.

building, skill progression and magical abilities that can change ordinary gathering tasks.

Jagex's September 2 announcement describes skills developing from level 1 to 99, a larger map following its earlier development period, and an ongoing roadmap. The console arrival is therefore part of the game's continuing development rather than the debut of the RuneScape franchise itself.

The distinction also helps set expectations. This is a survival adventure in RuneScape's world, not a direct announcement that the longstanding RuneScape MMO has been converted into the same console game. Game Pass Ultimate, Premium and PC Game Pass access are listed in the September service announcements.

ONTOS asks what a puzzle can contain

Xbox Wire's September 2 ONTOS preview describes Frictional Games' thriller through its unsettling ideas and room for different approaches to problems. The article is a credited firsthand preview by Joe Skrebels; this magazine has not independently played the demonstration.

For readers following the developer, the useful lead is the relationship between horror and problem solving. A disturbing premise can make a decision uncomfortable even before the player tests a mechanical solution. The original preview is linked for its specific examples. This issue does not turn those examples into a verdict on the complete game.

Exodus makes space for strangeness

Skrebels' September 4 Exodus preview includes a large talking frog engineer among its encounters. The detail offers a more particular impression of the game's science-fiction world than the broad label space RPG can provide.

The account belongs to Microsoft's published hands-on coverage, so it should be read alongside further independent reporting as the game approaches release. For this issue, Exodus earns a place as a substantial September preview worth reading, with the source credited and no invented release day attached.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Xbox Wire | From 4X to 4R: BioEden Trades Domination for Restoration (2026-09-03)

Xbox Wire | RuneScape Arrives on XBOX for the First Time in 25 Years with Survival Adventure RuneScape: Dragonwilds! (2026-09-02)

Xbox Wire | ONTOS: This Horrifying, Tantalizing Thriller Feels Like an Immersive Sim for Puzzle Gaming (2026-09-02)

Xbox Wire | Exodus: Going Hands-on With This Wild Interactive Space Opera (2026-09-04)

Xbox Wire | Coming to XBOX Game Pass: RuneScape: Dragonwilds, SpeedRunners 2: King of Speed, The Royal Writ, and More (2026-09-01)

PROGRESS WORTH FOLLOWING

An achievement preview, an arcade collection and a small studio's account of finding its game's identity.

SEPTEMBER 11-30, 2026 / REPORTED FEATURE



An official Mythic Achievement mock-up uses Gears of War: E-Day to demonstrate the Insider feature. Image: Microsoft.

Completion earns a new frame

Xbox introduced Mythic Achievements to Insiders on September 29. The preview recognizes completion of a game's original achievements; achievements added later through DLC or updates are not required. Once Mythic status is earned, the announcement says it is retained.

The feature also recognizes eligible historical completions, including Xbox 360 games. A new Gaming tab and progress display are intended to show both completed games and the original achievements still required. This is an Insider preview at the September cutoff, rather than a confirmed general release to every account.

Metal Slug collects its history

SNK announced Metal Slug Ultimate Collection for Xbox on September 11, marking the series' thirtieth anniversary. The collection brings together ten titles and includes a location-test build that did not receive a regular release. Its announced window is 2027.

That is a useful development for readers interested in preservation and series history, with the exact contents and version details deserving attention as the collection approaches release. The official announcement is linked below; this issue does not attach a date the publisher has not supplied.

A sequel beneath the surface

End of Abyss's September 30 developer article looks ahead to its October 1 Xbox Series X|S launch. Section 9 Interactive describes a top-down action adventure that developed toward exploration and atmospheric horror during production.

The team explains how creature concepts were tested through animation and gameplay prototypes. It is a useful small studio account of how a game's identity can change as its designers discover what interests them. The October release belongs in this issue because the article and date were public before the reporting cutoff.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Xbox Wire | Available for XBOX Insiders: Mythic Achievements, One of our Most Player-Requested Features (2026-09-29)

Xbox Wire | 30 Years of History Come Together in the METAL SLUG Ultimate Collection (2026-09-11)

Xbox Wire | End of Abyss: Explore and Fight Through the Abyss' Horror (2026-09-30)

THE GAME PASS LEDGER

September arrivals, platform expansions and tier changes. Dates describe service or platform availability, rather than a game's original release unless noted.





FIRST WAVE

Date	Game	Platforms	Tiers	What changed
Sep 1	Shelldiver	Console / PC / Cloud	U P PC	Catalog addition
Sep 2	Moonlighter 2: The Endless Vault	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Xbox/cloud expansion; Premium
Sep 3	SpeedRunners 2: King of Speed	Series / PC / Cloud	U PC	Day one
Sep 4	Dice a Million	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Xbox/cloud expansion; Premium
Sep 8	Call of Duty: Black Ops Cold War	Console / PC / Cloud	U P PC	Catalog addition
Sep 10	The Royal Writ	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Catalog addition
Sep 10	Virtua Fighter 5 R.E.V.O. World Stage	Series / PC / Cloud	U P PC	Catalog addition
Sep 15	RuneScape: Dragonwilds	Series / PC / Cloud	U P PC	Xbox launch and 1.0

U = Ultimate | P = Premium | PC = PC Game Pass | E = Essential
Series = Xbox Series X|S. Console preserves the broader wording used by Xbox. HH = explicitly labelled handheld optimized.

THE SECOND HALF OF SEPTEMBER

Premium and Essential expansions are marked separately from new catalog arrivals.

Date	Game	Platforms	Tiers	What changed
Sep 16	Marvel Cosmic Invasion	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Premium expansion
Sep 16	Planet of Lana II	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Premium expansion
Sep 16	Routine	Console / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Premium expansion
Sep 16	Ultimate Sheep Raccoon	Console / PC / Cloud	U P PC	Premium expansion
Sep 17	Kernel Hearts	Series / PC / Cloud	U PC	Day one
Sep 17	Ninja Gaiden 4	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Premium expansion
Sep 17	Shape of Dreams	Series / PC / Cloud	See note	Xbox launch; Game Pass confirmed
Sep 22	Dune: Awakening	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Xbox launch; catalog arrival
Sep 22	Well Dweller	Console / PC / Cloud / HH	U PC	Day one
Sep 23	Mad King Redemption	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Catalog addition
Sep 25	Call of Duty: Black Ops 6	Console / PC / Cloud / HH	U P PC	Premium expansion
Sep 25	Rematch	Series / PC / Cloud	E U P PC	Essential expansion
Sep 29	Minecraft Dungeons II	Series / PC / Cloud / HH	U PC	Day one

Shape of Dreams: the official September 17 report confirms Game Pass and Xbox launch, but does not enumerate eligible tiers. The tier detail needs editorial verification before public release.

For entries marked Premium expansion, Ultimate and PC access already existed. Day one can describe the new Xbox release of a game previously released elsewhere.

THE DEPARTURES

Games announced as leaving during September. Departures do not remove a separately purchased copy from your library.

SEPTEMBER 6

NBA 2K26
Console / PC / Cloud

SEPTEMBER 15

Commandos: Origins
Console / PC / Cloud

Cricket 24
Console / PC / Cloud

Dead Cells
Console / PC / Cloud

Deep Rock Galactic Survivor
Console / PC / Cloud

Mullet Madjack
Console / PC / Cloud

Spiritfarer
Console / PC / Cloud

Superliminal
Console / PC / Cloud

Train Sim World 5
Console / PC / Cloud

Cyberpunk 2077
Console / Cloud

Frostpunk 2
PC

SEPTEMBER 30

Atomfall
Console / PC / Cloud

Lara Croft and the Guardian of Light
Console / PC / Cloud

Little Nightmares 2 Enhanced Edition
Console / PC / Cloud

Little Rocket Lab
Console / PC / Cloud

Sifu
Console / PC / Cloud

SOPA: Tale of the Stolen Potato
Console / PC / Cloud

Sworn
Console / PC / Cloud

Terminull Brigade
Console / PC / Cloud

NBA 2K26's September 6 departure was announced in the August 18 update. Cyberpunk 2077's English announcement lists console and cloud; Frostpunk 2 is PC-only in the departure notice.

ALREADY ON OCTOBER'S BOOKS



Date	Game	Confirmed access
Oct 2	Keeper	Premium expansion; Ultimate and PC already included
Oct 6	Gears of War: E-Day	Day one with Ultimate and PC Game Pass

Updates and trials. TCG Card Shop Simulator reached 1.0 on September 15. NHL 27's ten-hour EA Play trial began September 4; FC 27's trial began September 18. Trials and free-to-play member benefit packs are not full paid-game catalog additions.

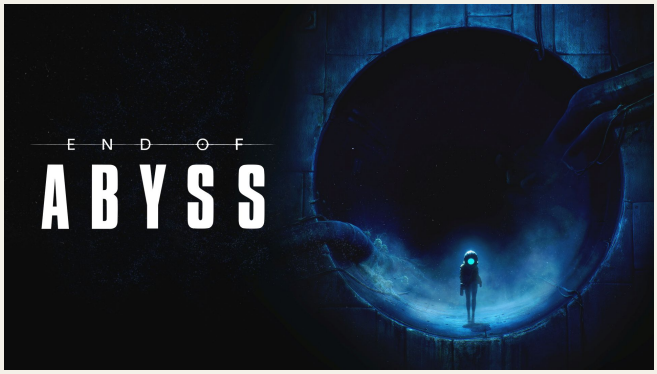
Service change. November's cloud allowances were announced September 3. See the cloud feature for included hours and the details still outstanding. This ledger excludes October announcements first made after September 30.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Xbox Wire | September 1 lineup (2026-09-01)
Xbox Wire | September 15 lineup (2026-09-15)
Xbox Wire | August 18 lineup and September 6 departure (2026-08-18)
Xbox Wire | Shape of Dreams launch (2026-09-17)
Xbox Wire | FC 27 trial (2026-09-18)
Xbox Wire | November cloud changes (2026-09-03)

RELEASE RADAR

The October calendar and selected later dates, all public by September 30.



End of Abyss. Image: Section 9 Interactive / Epic Games Publishing.

OCTOBER 1

End of Abyss / Xbox Series X|S
Section 9 Interactive's top-down action adventure follows a combat technician into a decaying underground facility.
Not confirmed in cited September announcement | Xbox Wire | Original announcement (2026-09-30)

OCTOBER 2

Ace Combat 8: Wings of Theve / Xbox Series X|S and PC
Bandai Namco's aerial combat sequel reaches general release after its announced Deluxe early-access period.
Not confirmed in cited announcement | Bandai Namco | Original announcement (2026-06-02)

OCTOBER 6

Gears of War: E-Day / Xbox Series X|S and PC
Marcus and Dom face the first Locust emergence, fourteen years before the original Gears.
Premium early access starts October 1.
Day one with Ultimate and PC Game Pass | Xbox Wire | Original announcement (2026-09-17)

OCTOBER 6

Star Wars: Galactic Racer / Xbox Series X|S and PC
Race the Galactic League with landspeeders, speeder bikes, skim speeders and podracers.
Not confirmed in cited September article | StarWars.com | Original announcement (2026-09-29)

OCTOBER 13

Valor Mortis / Xbox Series X|S and PC
One More Level's first-person action RPG follows a revived soldier through an altered nineteenth-century Europe.
No pre-cutoff confirmation used | RPGamer | Original announcement (2026-06-11)

LATER IN OCTOBER AND BEYOND



World of Warcraft: Forever. Image: Blizzard Entertainment.

OCTOBER 15

Castlevania: Belmont's Curse / Xbox Series X|S and PC
Rose Belmont explores a monster-struck Paris and Dracula's castle in Konami and Evil Empires 2D action game.
Not confirmed in cited announcement | Konami | Original announcement (2026-06-08)

OCTOBER 23

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 4 / Xbox consoles and PC
The Tokyo Game Show campaign trailer points to the October release. Qualifying digital preorders receive campaign access from October 16.
No confirmation in cited September material | Xbox Wire | Original announcement (2026-09-17)

NOVEMBER 4

World of Warcraft: Forever / PC; Xbox console version unconfirmed
A new ongoing direction for original Azeroth, alongside Modern and Classic.
Requires WoW subscription or game time | Blizzard Entertainment | Original announcement (2026-09-12)

NOVEMBER 5

Edge of Memories / Xbox Series X|S
An action JRPG following Eline and companions as a corrupting disease changes their world.
Not confirmed in cited announcement | Xbox Wire | Original announcement (2026-09-17)

NOVEMBER 19

Grand Theft Auto VI / Xbox Series X|S; no PC launch confirmed here
Rockstar's next Grand Theft Auto is set in Leonida. The stated date predates this reporting cutoff.
Not confirmed | Rockstar Games | Original announcement (2025-11-06)

SOURCES & FURTHER READING: Click each original announcement above. Game Pass labels record only the cited pre-cutoff confirmation; a missing confirmation is not a claim that a game can never join.

THE COLOPHON

THE MONTHLY CODEX
October 2026
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REPORTING POLICY

This issue records information public by September 30, 2026, at 11:59 PM Eastern Time. Later developments and live related-story widgets have been excluded. Published reporting is credited at the end of each article. Analysis is identified in the prose.

ARTWORK AND CREDITS

All game imagery comes from authentic official publisher or developer material. It illustrates the games, rather than documenting the layoffs or other real-world events. The accompanying artwork register records each source, file, placement and rights question. Public distribution requires the editor to clear the flagged artwork uses.

EDITORIAL STATUS

This is a preliminary editorial draft. The opening note, article selection, cover and public release await human approval. No interviews, personal play experiences, review scores, reader letters or sponsors have been invented.

INDEPENDENCE

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THE NEXT CHAPTER BEGINS OCTOBER 6

Gears of War: E-Day
General release and Game Pass launch. See the feature inside.

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