About this Anchorhead Playthrough

##### I had enjoyed playing Anchorhead so much, that I thought I would give back in some way by putting together a playthrough in such a way that seemed natural in a role-play as the protagonist. For that reason, this is not the fastest way to play through the game, nor are the solutions to the puzzles “optimal.” It is designed to read more like an actual story.

##### I created the playthrough in a spreadsheet format, because I wanted to add comments each step of the way, betraying my Application Development background. What I didn’t want was just a list of commands to play all the way through from beginning to end - that has already been done. I also grouped the steps into “code blocks” to make it easier to follow the general flow of what is happening in the story. There are also spoiler notes, which are hidden and can be easily unhidden, independently of one another.

##### In all honesty, I have not solved all the “alternate” solutions to many of the puzzles listed as having more than one solution in the endgame. Any one of them can potentially cause a significant rewrite, so this will be a work-in-progress for the time being. I am using multiple interpreters across multiple devices to make sure that the playthrough does not depend upon any “bug exploits.” I also did not reverse-engineer the story file or dump the text. Any feedback or suggestions are appreciated.

# What is (or will be) included

* This document
* A Playthrough spreadsheet
* An additional References manual, when too much was happening to document within the Playthrough.
* Maps saved in image format (10 .png, 1 .jpg)
* Glossary

# How to use these documents

##### You are about to have finished reading this document. Near the bottom is a list of the commands you will use throughout the game and what they mean. If you are a veteran Anchorhead player, then you are free to use the Wish List at the bottom and give me the alternate solutions to the remaining puzzles. You can also suggest other things to look at or try doing while playing through the story.

##### The Playthrough is the main document. If you are new to Anchorhead, then you can just follow along by typing the commands as they are laid out in column B. Be aware that there are a few randomized puzzles, where you will have to figure out the numbers to use. Those commands use “[x]” to represent whatever the appropriate number should be. You will also have to know in a couple cases when you have figured out the correct numbers, and when to continue along with the Playthrough. That is the extent to which you will have to think on your own, except for after you’re finished following Michael around at one point.

##### Column A contains names of “blocks” which groups the various things you will do throughout the story, making it easier to know generally what you are doing, and also making it visually easier to follow along.

##### “Command Type” in Column C helps you to know which commands are unnecessary to the completion of the story. Such things as “Backdrop” and “Story-building” are for mere examination of things in the environment, and “Fun” commands are included for a little comic relief. I love scaring Michael by trying to jump off Whateley Bridge.

##### There are multiple columns for my notes, depending on whether they pertain to the reason the command is what it is (Command Notes), what your character is discovering throughout the story’s progression (Story Notes), remarks I decided to make along the way (Personal Notes), and also notes that might diminish your overall enjoyment of the game if you read them too early (Spoiler Notes). If there is a spoiler to be seen, you will see “Yes” in the “Spoiler?” column, H.

##### The last column lists out points that you earn for various actions taken, and the points you earned that day are totaled at the bottom of each day’s worksheet. If for some reason, you are completing the game with less than 100 points, you can see where you had missed something. You should earn a perfect score, but I personally found an issue with one interpreter that caused be to get only 99 points instead.

##### There are maps which you can keep handy, so if you know where you are headed, you don’t necessarily have to consult the Playthrough to get there. Maps have already been made for this story, but they are drawn as no-nonsense diagrams. I preferred to go with something more visual, where it was easier to see, for example, the boundaries of the mansion and a side view of the church.

##### Unless you had a perfect SAT score in high school, chances are you will require a glossary for the many words used that fall outside the scope of the average reading level. There is no shame in keeping it handy. You will enjoy Anchorhead much more if you fully know what is going on in the story, instead of just blazing through another computer game. Just keep in mind, the words are sorted in the order in which you will encounter them, so a sentence containing a nearby word doesn’t spoil anything.

##### Finally, there is the References document. Much of the progress you will make in the game is through researching various documents to unravel the mystery, not merely solving a bunch of puzzles. There are times when you will learn a lot after executing a single command, and so putting it all into one cell of the Playthrough workbook would have make it visually unappealing. As with the Glossary, these are listed in story-chronological order, so you know when to stop reading.

##### At the end of the References document is a list of musings of mine for after the story is completed. This helps to add even more replay value, because it is a source of things you can think about to add to a future discussion online somewhere. It’s time now to open the Playthrough worksheet and start!

# List of commands

* **BRIEF** - Brief Mode - only see descriptions of rooms when you visit them for the first time
* **D** - Down - go down
* **E** - East - go east
* **G** - aGain - repeat the last action
* **I** - Inventory - get a list of what you have
* **IN** - In - go inside
* **N** - North - go north
* **NE** - NorthEast - go northeast
* **NW** - NorthWest - go northwest
* **OOPS** - Oops - correct the spelling of an object (example: “PLAY FLUT” (a misspelling of Flute) “OOPS FLUTE”)
* **OUT** - Out - go outside or get out of something
* **S** - South - go south
* **SCORE** - Score - display your current score
* **SE** - SouthEast - go southeast
* **SUPERBRIEF** - Superbrief Mode - never see descriptions of rooms
* **SW** - SouthWest - go southwest
* **U** - Up - go up
* **UNDO** - Undo - undo the last command
* **VERBOSE** - Verbose Mode - always see descriptions of rooms (this is the default for Anchorhead - the default for most other games is Brief)
* **W** - West - go west
* **X** - eXamine - examine something
* **Z** - wait - do nothing

##### The rest should be self-explanatory. Some of the commands listed above are not used in the playthrough. Be aware of the existence of UNDO and OOPS. You will most likely need them at some point.

# My wish list

* Find out whether it is possible to learn the names of Edward’s daughters before it is too late to look them up in the Courthouse archives.
* Figure out the remainder of the “alternate solutions” to the puzzles listed in the endgame.
  + How to remember the name Verlac without using the answering machine (or using the bug exploit to read the book Michael is reading).
  + How to eavesdrop on Michael.
  + How to open the real estate agent’s drawer.
  + How to turn the valve wheel in the maintenance access tunnel.
  + How to handle the madman in the asylum.
* Find out which puzzles do not have to be solved at all, and which ones can be put off until later in the story.
* Get Michael Gentry, the author of Anchorhead, to finish the Director’s Cut. If it has to wait for the 20th anniversary in November 2017, then I guess I understand.