

The end of days could happen in lots of different ways...
 Humanity faces an uncertain future from a number of potentially devastating threats — from space, from disease, and perhaps most of all, from ourselves.



Asteroid Strike
 Hurling through space at 17 kilometres a second, an unlucky asteroid strike could result in the end of not just our species, but all life on earth.



Disruptive Technologies
 Technology has changed our lives beyond recognition. But a darker future may lie ahead, featuring destructive nanotechnology and malicious artificial intelligence.



Climate Change
 Our changing climate could spell disaster, through consequences like rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and an increase in weather related diseases.



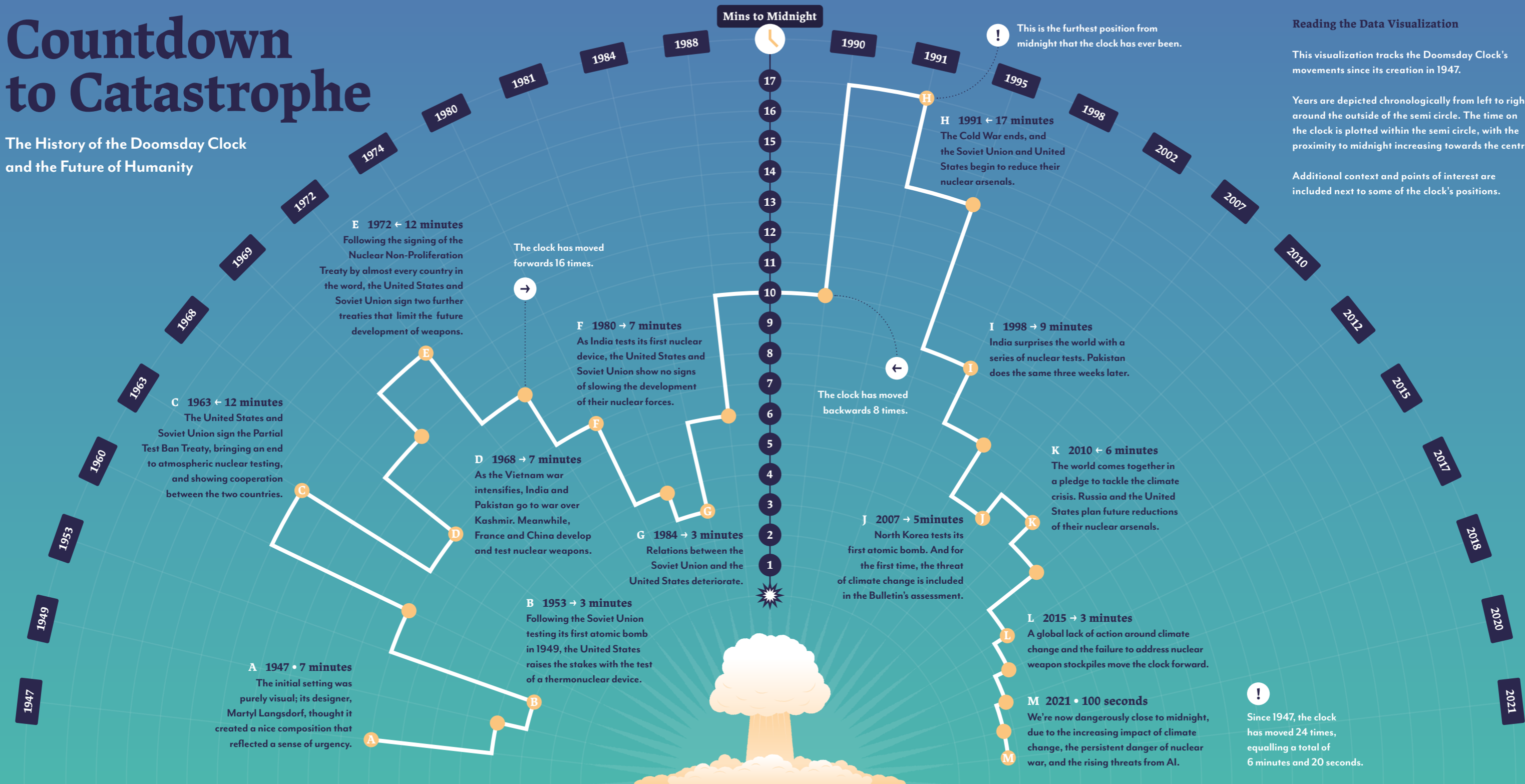
Global Pandemic
 We are all too aware of the impacts of a pandemic. However, in different circumstances it could lead to more than tragedy — it could be the end of humanity as we know it.



Nuclear War
 A nuclear explosion today could lead to unimaginable devastation, but it could also start a chain reaction that results in an extinction level event.

Countdown to Catastrophe

The History of the Doomsday Clock and the Future of Humanity



Reading the Data Visualization

This visualization tracks the Doomsday Clock's movements since its creation in 1947.

Years are depicted chronologically from left to right around the outside of the semi circle. The time on the clock is plotted within the semi circle, with the proximity to midnight increasing towards the centre.

Additional context and points of interest are included next to some of the clock's positions.

“It is time for all to take the actions needed to—quite literally—save the world.”

↑ From the 2021 Doomsday Clock statement

Anervous energy began to build in the aftermath of World War II, as the United States and Russia set their ambitions on nuclear dominance. A number of scientists, many of whom worked on the Manhattan project which created the world's first nuclear bomb, became unnerved by the large, dark shadow that these weapons cast over humanity's future. Our species had reached a

dangerous moment — for the first time in history we had created the means to destroy ourselves. In response to this grim realization, the scientists formed the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and started a newsletter, later developed into a magazine, to confront the issue.

In 1947, the organisation commissioned artist Martyl Langsdorf to create a design for the magazine's cover,

and the Doomsday Clock was born; a boldy simple depiction where the closer the clock's second hand is to 'midnight', the nearer humanity is to catastrophe. The visual has been used ever since, becoming a powerful symbol that quickly and clearly visualizes the level of risk we currently face. Since its inception, the clock has been updated 24 times, each time accompanied by a detailed statement from the Bulletin of the Atomic

Scientists that further explains the reasons for the clock's position, alongside practical steps to avert disaster.

Today, the clock is more relevant than ever. The issues that first provoked its creation persist, while newer dangers like climate change and the risks from emerging technologies like artificial intelligence inch us ever closer to extinction. Over the last decade the clock has

only moved in one direction, now leaving seconds, not minutes, to avert potential disaster.

However the clock isn't just meant to provoke fear, but rather inspire action; it's a catalyst for us to seek out a safer future, and while we can't change the mistakes of the past, at least through this metaphor we can turn back the clock. ■