

Entering Minecraft

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In the sandbox-survival game of Minecraft, you build structures, fight monsters, collect items, mine minerals, and work toward your own goals. This 3-D, grid-based game features naturally generated landscapes and challenges.

In *Survival mode*, you must manage your resources and acquire increasingly useful items to advance through the game. In *Creative mode*, you can build or design whatever structure, setup, or invention you want in your personal universe. However, most of the information you need is found in Survival mode. This chapter explains how to obtain Minecraft, start on a Survival world, and familiarize yourself with the basic game controls.

Registering a Minecraft Account

To jump into the action, you first have to register a Minecraft account. Then you can play in Demo mode or upgrade to a Premium account, which you need for the full version. Follow these steps to register an account:

1. **Go to** <http://minecraft.net>.

The Minecraft home page opens.

2. Click the Register link in the upper-right corner of the page.

The Register New Mojang Account page appears.

3. Fill out all the information requested in the text boxes, specify your date of birth, and answer the security questions.
4. Click the Register button to finish.
5. Check the e-mail account you entered for a verification message from Minecraft.
6. Click the link provided in the e-mail to complete your registration.

Check out the next section to find out how to purchase the game.

Purchasing and Installing Minecraft

To buy and install the game, log in to your account at <http://minecraft.net>. (See the preceding section for details on registering.) Then follow these steps:

1. Click the large Buy Now button on the home page.

The Minecraft Store page opens.

2. Click the Buy Minecraft for This Account option in the upper-left corner of the store, as shown in Figure 1-1.

At the time of this writing, the cost of the game is \$26.95.

If you can't click the button, you may not be logged in (or you may have already bought the game).

3. Fill out your payment information and then click the Proceed to Checkout button.





Figure 1-1: Buying the game

4. Follow the necessary steps to complete your purchase.
5. Return to the Minecraft home page. On the right side of the screen, the large Buy Now button should now be labeled Download Now. Click this button to open the Download page.
6. If you're using Windows, click the download and save the file anywhere on your computer.

To view instructions for other operating systems, click the Show All Platforms button.
7. Double-click the file to install the game.



Your payment is immediately attributed to your account, so, if necessary, you can download the file again for free. The Minecraft home page also gives you the option to play from your browser — click the link under the Download Now button.

Playing the Game

After you install Minecraft, you're ready to start playing the game. To start, run the launcher you downloaded.

Logging in and operating the main menu

The launcher opens the news screen, which displays game updates and links. Enter your username and password in the lower-right corner and click Log In to continue to the main menu, as shown in Figure 1-2.



Figure 1-2: Main menu

This list describes what you can do after you click the buttons on the main menu:

- ✔ **SinglePlayer:** Start or continue a basic game. This chapter covers the options for starting a game in SinglePlayer mode.
- ✔ **MultiPlayer:** Join other players online. You can find more information about MultiPlayer mode in Chapter 9.
- ✔ **Texture Packs:** Customize your graphics. This topic is covered briefly in Chapter 10.
- ✔ **Languages:** Change the language of the text in Minecraft. This tiny button next to Options holds a speech bubble containing a globe.
- ✔ **Options:** Manage game options such as sound, graphics, mouse controls, difficulty levels, and general settings.
- ✔ **Quit Game:** Close the window, unless you're in In-Browser mode.



Starting your first game in SinglePlayer mode

To start your first game in SinglePlayer mode, follow these steps:

1. **Click the Singleplayer button to view a list of all your worlds.**

If you're just starting out in Minecraft, this list should be empty.

2. **Click the Create New World button to start a new game.**

The world-creation page appears, as shown in Figure 1-3.



Figure 1-3: Creating a new world

3. **In the World Name text box, type whatever name you want and click the Create New World button at the bottom.**

The Game Mode and More World Options buttons are covered in Chapter 10.



To turn on game *cheats*, special powers that provide a more casual experience, click the More World Options button, and then click the Allow Cheats button to turn cheats on or off. Cheats make the game stress-free when you're getting started by giving you more control over the world. Chapter 2 explains how to use a basic cheat for surviving your first game.

When you finish creating your world, the game automatically starts by generating the world and placing your *avatar* (character) in it.

Understanding basic controls

The world of Minecraft, shown in Figure 1-4, is made of cubic *blocks*, materials such as dirt or stone that you can break down and rebuild into houses or craft into useful items. A block made of a material such as sand is referred to as a *sand block*. Because the side length of every block measures 1 meter, most distances are measured in blocks as well: If you read about an object that's located "three blocks up," it's the distance from the ground to the top of a stack of three blocks.

In addition to building and crafting, you have to defend against monsters and eventually face them head-on. As the game progresses, your goal becomes less about surviving and more about building structures, gathering resources, and facing challenges to gain access to more blocks and items.



Figure 1-4: The look and feel of Minecraft

To survive, you have to know how to move around, attack enemies, and manipulate the blocks that comprise the world. Table 1-1 lists the default key assignments for each control.



If you reassign any major keys, you may cause confusion later in the game.

Table 1-1 Default Controls in Minecraft

<i>Action</i>	<i>Control</i>	<i>What Happens When You Use It</i>
Pause	Esc	The game pauses (only in SinglePlayer mode), and the Game menu opens. Click Options⇨Controls to change the controls for certain actions. You can also close menus and other in-game screens.
Forward	W	Your avatar moves forward when this key is held down. Double-tapping the W key makes the character sprint — and makes the avatar hungry, as explained in Chapter 3.
Back	S	Your avatar backs up.
Left	A	Your avatar moves to the left.
Right	D	Your avatar moves to the right.
Look	Mouse movement	Your avatar looks around. The Forward control always makes the avatar move in the direction you're looking.
Jump	Space	Your avatar jumps over one block at a time. Use this control while moving to make your way around rough terrain or jump over gaps. Jump while sprinting to leap over a great distance! Hold down this button while swimming to swim upward or keep your avatar's head above water.
Attack	Left mouse button	Your character attacks in the direction of the crosshair in the middle of the screen. Tap the button to punch nearby entities, or hold down the button to break nearby blocks.
Drop	Q	Your character drops the selected item, as explained in Chapter 2.

(continued)

Table 1-1 (continued)

Action	Control	What Happens When You Use It
Sneak	Left Shift	Your character moves slower, but cannot walk off edges (useful for avoiding falling hazards).
Inventory	E	Your avatar's inventory is shown, as described in Chapter 2, and any open menus except the Pause menu are closed.
Chat	T	The Chat menu opens. Type a message, and then press Enter to talk to friends in multiplayer worlds or implement cheat commands. MultiPlayer mode is described in Chapter 9.
List Players	L	A list of all players in the world is shown. (This control is disabled in single-player worlds.)
Pick Block	Middle mouse button	This control works only in Creative mode, as explained in Chapter 6. If your mouse has no middle button, you can reassign this key on the Pause menu.
Command	/	The Chat menu opens and shows a slash mark (/), used for cheat commands.
Hide GUI	F1	All visual images are turned off, except for the player's view of the world (used for capturing imagery).
Screenshot	F2	A screen shot of the current view is taken. (Chapter 10 explains how to view screen shots.)
View Performance	Shift+F3	(Rarely used.) You can view the game performance, as well as everything on the F3 menu.
View Statistics	F3	Your character's coordinates, current biome, and other information are shown. The y-axis points upward.
Change View	F5	The camera view changes between first-person view (recommended), third-person view, and in front of the player looking back at the player.
Smooth Movement	F8	This makes the mouse cursor move more smoothly (used for recording).

Walk around and explore the world. After you get the hang of using the controls and you're prepared to immerse yourself in the fun and challenge of the real game, it's time to figure out how to survive. Chapter 2 gives you the lowdown on surviving your first night.

Watching the Heads-Up Display (HUD)

The little arrangement at the bottom of the screen, including the hearts and squares monitoring your health and the accessible inventory, is known as the Heads-Up Display, or HUD. To show the important details of your character, the HUD features these four sections, as shown in Figure 1-5:



Figure 1-5: Heads-Up Display

- ✔ **Health bar:** These ten hearts monitor the health of your avatar. As your avatar incurs damage, the hearts disappear. After all ten are depleted, your avatar dies and reappears at its *spawn point*, a position that can be changed by sleeping in a bed.

Your avatar can take damage by falling from ledges four blocks tall, colliding with harmful blocks or entities, or succumbing to other dangers such as drowning. When you equip yourself with armor (see Chapter 4), the Armor bar appears over the Health bar, indicating the protective value of your armor.

- ✔ **Inventory:** These nine squares contain items you've collected, and they're the only squares in the inventory that you can access without pressing E. You can use the 1–9 keys or the scroll wheel to select items, and right-click to use them. If you're using a sword or a tool for breaking blocks faster (such as an axe), the item will automatically function when you left-click. (I discuss the inventory in more detail in Chapter 2.)

- ✔ **Experience:** The green Experience bar fills up when you collect *experience orbs*. These orbs appear naturally whenever you defeat monsters, smelt items in a furnace, breed animals, or mine any ore except iron or gold. When the bar is full, a number appears or increases over it, indicating your experience level. You can spend levels with anvils (detailed in the bonus chapter, available for download at www.dummies.com/go/minecraftfd) or enchantment tables (detailed in Chapter 6), but you will lose them if you die.
- ✔ **Hunger bar:** This bar represents your food supply. The emptier the bar, the hungrier you are. Hunger is an important concept to understand, so it's covered in Chapter 3.



Carefully monitor the Health and Hunger bars, and organize your inventory slots for easy access.