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Chapter 1

Entering the Fortnite Universe

Even though it's one of countless online shooting and survival games, Fortnite still manages to distinguish itself with its unique mix of variety and fun. No two matches are ever the same, and it seems like there's always something new to discover. The fact that you can customize your in-game avatar's appearance, weapons, and, yes, dance moves in all kinds of wacky ways explains at least part of the game's charm and why it has such broad appeal. It's no wonder that it's consistently the most watched game, often by a gap of hundreds of thousands of viewers, on live streaming video website, Twitch.tv!

In *Save the World* mode, you and three other players, either humans or computer-generated teammates, work towards a common goal on various missions in a storm-ravaged Earth where 98 percent of the population has vanished. In this mode, you're attacked by a variety of zombie-like monsters referred to as husks, which seem to explain where all those missing humans have gone. Of course, you'll encounter plenty of other monsters along the way, so you'll need to build structures, set traps, and gather loot to help your cause.

Battle Royale is the most popular game mode and the one Fortnite is most closely associated with. You play alone or in groups to compete in 100 player battles to be the last person or team standing. Most of what you need to succeed in *Battle Royale* can be applied to the two other major game modes and vice-versa.

In *Creative* mode, you have access to a private island where you can assemble and upgrade structures and manipulate objects as you see fit. You can invite friends to your island and try different game types, including racing and obstacle courses. Epic Games chooses the best creations to be featured in the *Creative* mode's Hub, but you can also enter your own codes to check out the creations of your choice!

This chapter explains how to get started in Fortnite, how to choose your platform, the basics of the virtual currency known as V-Bucks, what Seasons mean, and how cross-platform play works.

Choosing PC/Mac, Console, or Mobile

Although Fortnite originally started out as a PC exclusive, the game's framework was designed in such a way that it made ports to other platforms practical. These other platforms include Apple Mac computers, iOS and Android mobile devices, and the Sony PlayStation 4, Microsoft Xbox One, and Nintendo Switch consoles.

As of this writing, the PC, Mac, PlayStation 4, and Xbox One platforms support every available game mode. Players on iOS, Android, and Nintendo Switch systems, on the other hand, do not have access to the player-versus-environment game mode, *Save the World*.

There are other differences between the various platforms, as explained in the following subsections.

Considering PC/Mac

A PC or Mac computer is an ideal Fortnite platform. It has every game mode, as shown in Figure 1-1, and you can choose to play either with a traditional keyboard/mouse combination or with a game controller.



FIGURE 1-1: Game mode options on the PC version of Fortnite.

Refer to Table 1-1 for minimum and recommended system requirements. If your computer is closer to the minimum than recommended requirements, check out Chapter 2 for settings you can adjust to tweak performance.

TABLE 1-1 PC and Mac Minimum and Recommended System Requirements

System Component	Minimum	Recommended
Operating System	Windows 7/8/10 64-bit or Mac OSX Sierra	Same
CPU	Processor Core i3 2.4 Ghz	Processor Core i5 2.8 Ghz
Memory	4 GB RAM	8 GB RAM
Video Card	Intel HD 4000	Nvidia GTX 660 or AMD Radeon HD 7870 equivalent DX11 GPU
Video Memory	Shared	2 GB VRAM

Considering iOS/Android

On a mobile device, Fortnite can be a bit more challenging to play than it is on some of the other platforms, but it's still a great way to game on-the-go or when your computer or console is otherwise tied up. Although there's limited support for game controllers, Fortnite on iOS and Android is designed around the touchscreen experience, so you don't need anything other than the smartphone or tablet you already have to enjoy the experience.

For Apple iOS devices, you'll need iOS11 or greater. If you want to play on an iPhone, you'll need an iPhone SE, 6S, 7, 8, or X series device or later. If you want to play on an iPad, you'll need an iPad Mini 4, iPad Air 2, 2017, Pro or later. Naturally, the larger the screen, the better the experience.

As of this writing, Fortnite support on Android devices is still limited. In fact, Epic Games has chosen to avoid distributing the game through the Google Play Store, instead making it available only on its own website through a Fortnite Installer program, as well as on Samsung's app store and Game Launcher for owners of Samsung devices.



WARNING

For safety reasons, only download the Android version of the game from the Epic Games website or Samsung's app store. Any other source that claims to have the game is likely to try to install an unrelated program that might compromise the security of your smartphone or tablet.

You will need to request the installer from the Epic Games website, or, if you have a Samsung device, from Samsung's app store, to determine whether your device is compatible. Generally speaking, newer, name brand devices that feature at least 64-bit Android 8.0, 3GB of RAM, and a GPU with Adreno 530, Mali-H71 MP20, or Mali-G72 MP12 have a good chance of being compatible.

Considering PlayStation 4/Xbox One

The only other way to get the full Fortnite experience outside of a PC is on either PlayStation 4 or Xbox One. Fortnite is compatible with all PlayStation 4 and Xbox One consoles, but, as with many games, visual and other performance improvements may exist when played on the PlayStation 4 Pro or Xbox One X. Regardless of the version of console you play it on, all Fortnite features are available and accessible from the standard gamepad. If you want

a more PC-like experience, keyboard and mouse support is also available for both consoles.

For Xbox One owners, you will need to have an Xbox Live account and an active Xbox Live Gold membership to participate in the game. For PlayStation 4 owners, you do not need a PlayStation Plus membership to play the game.

Considering Nintendo Switch

The Nintendo Switch is one of the most popular Fortnite platforms. Thanks to the Switch's unique ability to play on the go as well as on a TV, it combines some of the best features of the more advanced console and portable mobile experiences. The Switch's standard control configuration for its Joy-Cons is available, but you can also use the Pro Controller or Motion Controls should those suit your needs better.

For Nintendo Switch owners, you do not need Nintendo Switch Online to play the game.

Registering a Fortnite Account

Before you can enjoy Fortnite, you should register an Epic Games account. Although you can go straight to downloading the game on your platform of choice and registering an account from there, going through the Epic Games website from a computer's web browser gives you the most options, including the ability to more easily associate additional accounts.



TIP

Epic Games is opening its cross-platform game services that power Fortnite to other developers, so it's likely that your Epic Games account will become even more useful in the future.

Follow these steps to register an account on your computer:

- 1. Go to <https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/>.**
The Epic Games Fortnite home page opens.
- 2. Click the Get Fortnite button or menu option.**
The How Would You Like to Play? screen appears.

3. Click PC/Mac.

The Create Account page appears.

Clicking PlayStation, Xbox, or Switch takes you to the Fortnite information and download page on the respective platform's digital store. Clicking Mobile takes you to Step 4.



TIP

4. Fill out all the information requested in the text boxes. If you have their respective login info handy, you can also save some time by using your PlayStation, Xbox, Switch, Facebook, or Google accounts as your sign-in by clicking on their respective icons above the text boxes.

Although checking off "I would like to receive latest news and information on this product." is optional, it's recommended you do so. The frequency of emails is relatively low, and it's an easy way to stay up-to-date on some of the latest Fortnite-related news.



TIP

5. Click Create Account.

The download now begins. If you do not wish to install the PC/Mac version of Fortnite at this time, cancel the download.

With your Epic Games account created, you are now ready to download and install the game on your platform of choice. Check out the subsection that follows to find out how to associate additional accounts with your Epic Games account, or the next section for information on installing Fortnite.

Associating Additional Accounts

You can link your Github, Twitch, Xbox, PlayStation Network, and Nintendo Switch accounts to your Epic Games account. This can make using those other services and platforms with Fortnite easier since they will already be associated with your Epic Games account. To link additional accounts, do the following:

1. Use your web browser to go to <https://fortnite.com>.

The Fortnite home page opens.

2. Click Sign In on the upper right of the page.

The Do You Already Play Fortnite? prompt appears.

3. Click Yes.

The What Do You Play Fortnite On? page appears.

4. Click **PC/Mac**.
5. Enter the email address and password associated with your **Epic Games** account.
6. Click **Sign In**.
You are now signed in.
7. Click your login name in the upper right of the screen and select **Account**, as shown in Figure 1-2.

The Personal Info screen appears.

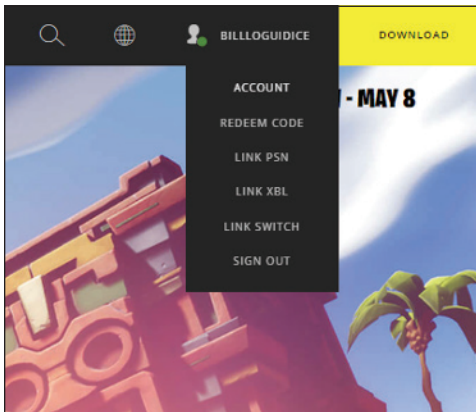


FIGURE 1-2: Selecting the Account option.

8. Click **Connected Accounts** on the left-hand side of the screen.
9. Click **Connect** under any or all of the relevant listed accounts to associate those logins with your Epic Games account.

Installing Fortnite

After you have a registered Epic Games account, you can install Fortnite on the platform of your choice.

Installing on PC/Mac

The process for installing on PC or Mac computers is similar. Follow these steps:

- 1. Use your web browser to go to <https://fortnite.com>.**

The Fortnite home page opens.

- 2. Click the Download button on the upper right of the page, as shown in Figure 1-3.**

The How Would You Like to Play? Screen appears.

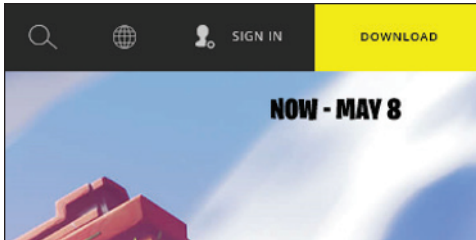


FIGURE 1-3: The Download button on the Fortnite home page.

- 3. Click PC/Mac.**

The Create Account page appears.
- 4. Click Sign In.**
- 5. Enter the email address and password associated with your Epic Games account.**
- 6. Click Sign In.**

The Thank You for Downloading screen appears and your download begins.
- 7. Save the Epic Games Installer to the location of your choice.**
- 8. Go to the Epic Game Installer's save location and run the program.**

Follow the remaining instructions to install the Epic Games Launcher and Fortnite.

Installing on iOS/Android

On your iOS device, visit the App Store and search for Fortnite. Tap on Get to begin the installation process.

As of this writing, Fortnite for Android is still in the invitation-only process. To install this version of the game, go to <https://fortnite.com/android> either on a computer or your Android device and follow the instructions.

Installing on console

PlayStation 4, Xbox One, and Nintendo Switch owners can install Fortnite from the respective online stores directly from those consoles. If you own PlayStation 4, visit the PlayStation Store. If you own Xbox One, visit the Xbox Marketplace. If you own Nintendo Switch, visit the Nintendo eShop.

Regardless of console, Fortnite is only available as a digital download and not as a retail game on disc or cartridge. If you do see a retail version of Fortnite, it will only contain a redemption code for the digital version of the game, as well as any other bonuses, like V-Bucks.

Getting to Know the Game Options and Modes

Save the World, Battle Royale, and Creative are the three main game options. The most popular game option, Battle Royale, has a selection of regular game modes, as well as a selection of limited time modes, or LTMs, which, as the name suggests, appear as an option only for a set period of time before they are replaced by something else.

Regular game modes form the core Battle Royale play experience and feature Solo, Duos, and Squads. LTMs feature different weapons, win conditions, and more, but they are usually a Solo, Duos, or Squads game type. There's also Playground mode under Battle Royale, which is a more limited and restricted form of Creative.

Understanding Save the World

Save the World, which is available to PC/Mac, PlayStation 4, and Xbox One players, is what is known as a Player versus Environment, or PvE, game. Unlike its more popular offshoot, Battle Royale, which is a Player versus Player, or PvP, game, Save the World is a cooperative, mission-based game of survival in a destructible world. You play with up to three other people on a randomly generated map to fight against a storm, rescue survivors, build structures, craft weapons, find loot, and upgrade and expand a shield device to protect your base of operations.



WARNING

As of this writing, Save the World is still in early access and requires a payment of \$39.99 for the Standard Edition of the game mode, and \$59.99 for the Deluxe Edition. Epic Games has stated that they intend to make this mode free to play some time in 2019.

The skills you learn from playing Save the World can be applied to the rest of the Fortnite experience and vice-versa. For instance, in all game modes you use a pickaxe to knock down existing structures and collect resources like wood or metal. Similarly, you use those harvested materials in all game modes to build and repair structures like walls, floors, and stairs, although only in Save the World can you upgrade structures.

As of this writing, Save the World costs money to play, but, like Battle Royale and Creative, is expected to go free some time in 2019 once Epic Games feels the game mode is more developed.

Understanding Battle Royale

Battle Royale is the Player versus Player, or PvP, game mode that put Fortnite on the map. You and 99 other players start off in a flying battle bus, find a landing spot, then race to collect materials, weapons, and other loot to defeat the other players.

For the Solo game modes, it's you against 99 other players. (See Figure 1-4.) For Duos, you can team up with a friend (or friendly stranger) against 49 other teams of two. In Duos, your partner can revive you if you're wounded. For Squads, you join a team of three other players and try and be the last of 25 four-player teams standing. Squads is usually Fortnite's most popular mode.



FIGURE 1-4: The beginning of a Solo game on Nintendo Switch, shortly after landing.

Playground, which was formerly an LTE, or Limited Time Event, but is now a permanent addition, lets you play solo or with up to three other players for a more restriction-free play experience. You get a much longer time limit than with other modes, allowing you to more freely explore the map, harvest materials, build things, search for chests, and more. You can still fight, but only against your other three friends.

With Duos, Squads, and Playground, you need to decide between Fill or Don't Fill. With Fill, if you have less than the number of players needed to form the required team size in a particular mode, the game will automatically match you up with other players. If you choose Don't Fill and don't have a full team, you will be going up against other, properly sized groups, at a disadvantage. Don't Fill is an unusual option to say the least, but it is an excellent example of how incredibly customizable the Fortnite experience really is.

Understanding Creative

In Creative mode, you gain access to your own private island, where you can pretty much design or do whatever you want, including inviting your friends over for some playtesting. You'll have all kinds of materials at your disposal, so you can do more than just build structures. In fact, this mode is designed around the concept of creating new game types with the Fortnite engine, including deathmatches, races, soccer matches, skate parks, arenas, and more, as in the example in Figure 1-5.

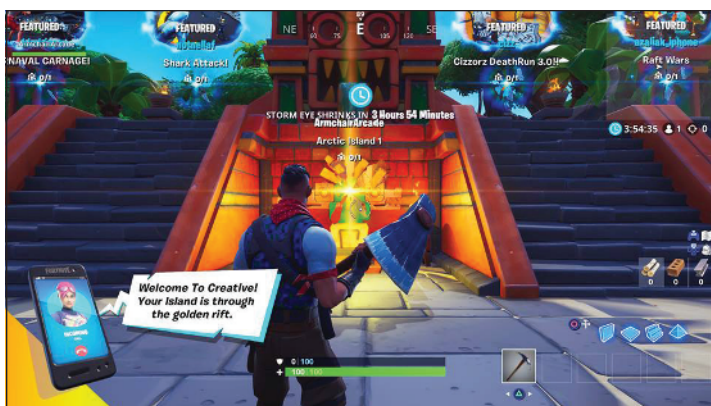


FIGURE 1-5: The beginning of Creative mode on PlayStation 4.

You can save and load your creations, so you're free to be as creative, or destructive, as you like. You can even enter special codes to load the amazing creations of others, which range from elaborately designed adventure mazes to playable mini golf courses and everything in-between. The possibilities really are staggering with the versatile Fortnite game engine.

Understanding V-Bucks

Although Fortnite is free to play, it's more accurately described as *freemium*, a portmanteau of "free" and "premium." What this means is that the base product is provided free of charge, but money, in the form of in-game currency known as V-Bucks, is required for additional features.

Fortunately, in Fortnite's case, most of what costs V-Bucks are cosmetic items like character skins, pickaxes, gliders, emotes (gestures or dance moves), contrails (skydiving trails), emoticons (in-game emojis), backpacks, and sprays.



TIP

Cosmetics offer no in-game advantages, but they're still a big part of Fortnite. The more cosmetics you have available, the more personalized you can make your character and overall in-game experience. It's all part of the fun and a great way to support continued development of the game.

Although you can unlock V-Bucks and quite a few cosmetics free-of-charge through dedicated play, you'll likely still need

to make a direct V-Bucks purchase on occasion to acquire some of the more interesting items, or to acquire a popular season-specific rewards bundle known as a *Battle Pass*.

Purchasing V-Bucks

All V-Bucks purchases take place through the in-game Store tab, as shown in the example in Figure 1-6, or the respective PlayStation 4 or Xbox One digital marketplaces. As of this writing, a minimum 1,000 V-Bucks purchase costs \$9.99. You can also buy larger bundles of V-Bucks, which come with bonus V-Bucks. For instance, 2,500 V-Bucks plus a 300 V-Buck bonus for \$24.99 or 10,000 V-Bucks plus a 3,500 V-Buck bonus for \$99.99.

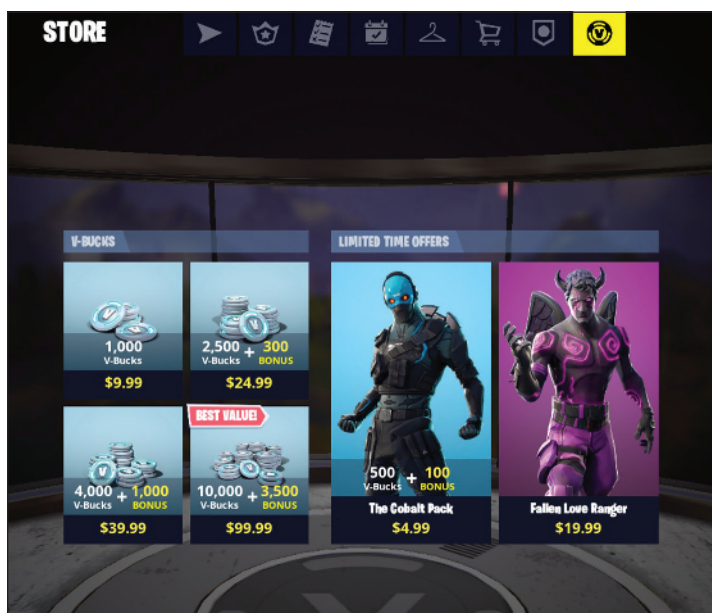


FIGURE 1-6: V-Bucks options in-game on an Apple iPad.



WARNING

If you see offers online for free V-Bucks, it's probably a scam. Visiting websites or clicking links that claim to offer free V-Bucks or V-Buck generating tools is unsafe. It's best to purchase V-Bucks directly from the in-game store, or, if you're playing on a PlayStation 4 or an Xbox One, their official digital stores.

It's important to keep in mind that V-Bucks purchased on one platform may not be redeemable on other platforms. Purchase V-Bucks on the platform you plan to spend it on. Fortunately,

after spending your V-Bucks on that specific platform for cosmetics or a Battle Pass, those items will then be available to you on any other platform you play Fortnite on as long as use the same login.

Spending V-Bucks

V-Bucks can be spent in Save the World, Battle Royale, or Creative. Keep in mind, however, that items bought in Save the World don't transfer to Battle Royale/Creative, and vice-versa.

In Save the World, you can purchase Llama Pinata card packs that contain weapon and trap schematics, as well as new Heroes and more. In Battle Royale and Creative you can purchase new customization items for your Hero, glider, or pickaxe.

Fortnite works on the concept of themed seasons, like Season 8's pirate-related theme. Buying a Battle Pass for the current season, which costs 950 V-Bucks as of this writing, allows you to unlock season-specific rewards the more you play. You can also level up faster with a Battle Pass by completing Weekly Challenges to unlock additional rewards like outfits, wraps, emotes, pets, and other exclusive cosmetics.

If you're in a particular rush to get an initial set of season-specific cosmetics, you can purchase what is called a Battle Bundle, which costs 2,800 V-Bucks as of this writing, and includes the Battle Pass and an instant unlock for the next 25 tiers of experience points, cosmetics, and V-Bucks. You can also buy up to 100 tiers, each for 150 V-Bucks. Otherwise, to unlock over 100 rewards worth over 25,000 V-Bucks, you'll need to play a particular season for at least 75 to 150 total hours.

Getting to Know Seasons

Seasons are Fortnite's way of introducing new features and cosmetics, the latter of which is typically tied to a larger theme, on a regular schedule. Because each season lasts only around 10 weeks, it's a great way to keep the game fresh and encourage its players to play as much as possible to unlock all the cosmetics they can before they're no longer available.

Fortnite's Battle Royale reward system, the Battle Pass, is closely associated with its seasons. However, the Battle Pass itself wasn't even introduced until Season 2, based as it was on the progression

system introduced in Season 1. And although the Battle Pass costs V-Bucks, you can still unlock a subset of items for no cost with the Free Pass. Nevertheless, many players and references often conflate both the Battle Pass and Free Pass under “Battle Pass.”



TIP

Seasons can sometimes bring big changes to the map. Keep an eye out for unusual happenings in a particular season. For instance, in Season 3, a mysterious meteor appeared in the sky. This meteor destroyed the map area known as Dusty Depot, turning it into Dusty Divot for Season 4, as well as creating smaller craters throughout other areas.

Although it’s not necessarily critical to know when past seasons ran, what their themes were, or what they introduced, it’s still interesting to see how the game has progressed, giving some sense of where future seasons may be headed. Check out Table 1-2 for the highlights of Seasons 1–8.

TABLE 1-2 Highlights for Seasons 1–8

Season	Schedule	Theme	Key Additions
1	October 25, 2017–December 13, 2017	None	Leaderboard, toggle targeting
2	December 14, 2017–February 21, 2018	Medieval	The Battle Pass, Map additions, emotes, emoticons
3	February 22, 2018–April 30, 2018	Outer Space	Loading screens, weekly challenges, contrails
4	May 1, 2018–July 12, 2018	Urban Super Heroes	Jet packs, hop rocks, shopping carts, sprays, weekly loading screens, progressive outfits
5	July 12, 2018–September 27, 2018	Worlds Collide	Toys, desert biome, rifts for teleportation
6	September 27, 2018–December 6, 2018	Darkness Rises	Pets, music
7	December 6, 2018–February 28, 2019	Winter Wonderland	Creative mode, wraps, animated loading screens, X-4 Stormwing plane
8	February 28, 2019–May 8, 2019	Pirates	Jungle biome, volcano, lava, pirate cannons, pirate campsites, buried treasure

Understanding Cross-Platform Play

A typical problem with online videogames is the issue of bridging platforms. Your friends or family members may own the same game as you, but if they own a different system, you're unlikely to be able to play with or against each other. Fortnite is the very first game that solves this problem by allowing cross-platform between today's computers, consoles, and mobile devices, with the last holdout, Sony, finally getting with the program and allowing an exception for Fortnite on PlayStation 4.

Regardless of the platform you're playing on, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, you need an Epic Games account for cross-platform play, as well as to synchronize your progress between systems. If you or your friends and family are signed up only on a specific platform's account, then that account will need to be linked to an Epic Games account to join in on the cross-platform fun. All but Solo mode games, which, by definition, exclude teams, are available for cross-platform play.