

Minecraft review

8 January



I'm assuming most readers have heard of Minecraft, because there's already a huge buzz about it. So my aim here is to explain briefly how it works and why so many people are ¹urging us to get involved.

At its most basic level, Minecraft is about building things with cubes; it's a kind of computerized Lego. But it's also a game about survival, discovery, creativity and community. The starting place for your building adventures is a deserted place with a beach, a few rocks and some trees. But very soon you realize that you are not alone. At night, monsters can appear from dark caves and it's up to you to build structures in the day to protect yourself from them. As you become more adept at building, your world opens out, ²encouraging you to experiment and become master of your environment. Where initially you were ³discouraged from entering a cave for fear of encountering a monster, you can now use your ingenuity to explore and keep the monsters at bay.

Minecraft also has a multi-player capability, so that players can collaborate on building designs and ⁴offer to help each other if they get stuck. Actually, if you're someone who gets easily frightened, I'd ⁵advise you to use this facility: the Minecraft world can be a lonely and slightly eerie place. The graphics, incidentally, are quite basic and retro. It is the formula of the game itself – survive, collect, create – that makes it so addictive to children and adults alike.

The makers of Minecraft should be ⁶congratulated on producing a truly fascinating game. They should also be ⁷praised for the open manner in which they developed it, ⁸inviting users to collaborate in its creation. I ⁹recommend trying it out, but just make sure you have built your first hut before sunset!