



Introduction to Second Life

What is Second Life

Second Life is a 3D world launched in 2003 by Linden Lab. Second Life is similar to online games (multi-player, immersive, 3D), however there are differences (no clear objective, no points). Second Life is one of several virtual worlds inspired by the cyberpunk literary movement, particularly by Neal Stephenson's novel Snow Crash.

Educational uses

Immersive learning, synchronous discussion, role playing, exploration, gaming, applied learning, interactivity, distance learning and simulations

Signing up

If you would like to experience Second Life, here are some tips to get started:

1. Sign up for an account and download the software here: <http://sl.nmc.org/create.php>
2. Log in Second Life with your avatar name
3. You'll be placed at NMC's orientation island. Follow the signs to learn the basics.
4. Visit <http://sl.kent.edu> to request access to the Kent State island
5. Using the map, search for Kent State and teleport to our island

Hardware Requirements

To run Second Life, you need a high-speed internet connection, 512MB of RAM or more and a powerful video card. This page has more details:
<http://secondlife.com/corporate/sysreqs.php>

Headsets

To use the voice chat feature, you need at least a microphone and speakers. A better option is to use a headset. We recommend the **Logitech Premium USB Headset 350**. It costs roughly \$35 and works well enough for Second Life, Voice-over-IP (Skype), recording occasional podcasts and online games.

Communicating

Chat: public conversations with many avatars within 20m, you can shout 96m
Voice Chat: use your own voice to talk in public
IM: private conversations (any distance, any location)

Money

SL has its own economy and its own currency, the Linden Dollar (L\$). Residents sell goods (clothes, land, objects) and services (construction, rent, scripting) to other residents. The exchange rate for Linden Dollars is roughly L\$260 = \$1 USD. Uploading images, animations and sounds cost L\$10. You can add L\$ using a credit card.

Vocabulary

Avatar: Your persona in SL, computer designed representation of yourself in SL

Grid: SL is run on around thousand computers, collectively called

Region: an area in SL, usually an island land masses 256m by 256m

Rezzing: an object in the process of appearing

Prim: primitives, (cubes, spheres, cylinders) linked together to create complex objects

Lag: delays in-world caused by slow connections or too many objects in the same place

Landmarks: it records a location for later return (similar to bookmarks)

Gestures: scripts for making your avatar wave, dance, shrug, clap, etc...

Slurl: a direct teleport link to a location in Second Life.

Teleport: a form of transportation in Second Life

Inventory

Your inventory is your personal bag, with an infinite size where everything you collect (or buy) is stored. You start with two folders, Library and My Inventory. Library has some common objects, default gestures, default animations, and even some default avatars. My Inventory is everything that you add.

Movement

Walking: Using the arrow you can move your avatar up, down left and right

Flying: In most areas of Second Life you will be able to fly. In some areas the land owner may have chosen not to allow flight. You will see a symbol at the top of your screen that looks like a white down arrow on a red circle if you are in a no fly zone.

Teleporting

Not only can you soar like a bird, you can also teleport around the world using the map. Open the map by clicking the map button at the bottom of the screen. You can zoom in and out and drag the map around to see the world. To teleport somewhere, you can either double click on the map at the point you want to go to, or type in the name of the place you want to go and click search.

Teleport Invites

If you wish to invite someone to join you, you can send them a teleport invite. This is done through their profile screen. If they accept your invite they will be teleported to wherever you are. Similarly other residents can teleport invite you to join them.

Mini-Map

The mini-map button at the bottom of the screen toggles the mini-map on and off. The mini-map shows the people and environment around you. Other avatars will be shown as green symbols on the mini-map. If it is shaped as a green dot, then the person is the same height as you are. If instead, the symbol appears as a T shape, they are above your height, whereas if the symbol is an upside down T, then they are below you.

Search

The Search button at the bottom of your screen is your shortcut to everything that is going on in-world, from land sales, finding other residents and products. It includes classified ads, event listings, places to visit and much more.

Camera Control

Everything you see in Second Life is through a camera. Normally this camera is pointed at your avatar's back. However, you can move the camera.

1. Press and hold the Alt key: your cursor will change to a magnifying glass
2. Click and hold on an object you want to look at: the camera will center on the object
3. Move the mouse (or the mouse wheel) forward and back to zoom in and out
4. Move the mouse to the right and left to rotate the camera
5. To go back to the regular view at any time, just press the Esc key

Interaction

Many objects in SL are designed to interact with you. For example, many signs and boxes are designed to give you things if you touch them. Most chairs are designed for you to sit on them. Touching is the most common way to interact with an object. Just click on any object you see in SL to touch it. Some may teleport you to a different location. You can sit on just about any object in SL. But chairs and poseballs are specifically designed for sitting. To sit on something, right-click on it to bring up the pie menu and select "sit".

Note Cards

Note cards are a form of communication in Second Life. In SL you will be learning and absorbing a lot of information and you will need a way to have it on record for later retrieval. Note cards are at times going to be your best friend. In SL note cards can store plain text, but also can hold other information such as landmarks and textures. This greatly reduces the amount of items you have to send to residents.

Gestures

A gesture is a complex action, a combination of animation, pose, text and sound. Once assembled, you can use a gesture by triggering it via text or shortcut key. You can assemble an automatic sequence to impress, amuse, and dazzle. It need not even be that sophisticated; gestures can be used in a subtler manner as well.

Landmarks

A landmark is like a bookmark; an easy way to save your position in SL so you can teleport back later. In most places in SL, you can create your own landmarks to save your position. Click on the world option from the top menu bar, and select "Create Landmark Here".