A beginner's guide to:
MINESWEEPER

1. Learn the Rules

Each tile in minesweeper is adjacent to (or touches) 8 other tiles, including the diagonals. In any tile, the number simply represents how many mines are in the tiles adjacent to it. All revealed tiles are safe. Some squares/tiles are blank because there are no mines around them.

Left clicking on a mine loses the game, while successfully left clicking every safe tile wins the game. You can flag mines by right-clicking, which clearly marks the tile with a red flag.

2. Apply the Rules

The highlighted tile displays "1", meaning there is one mine adjacent to it. The bottom-left tile must be a mine because all of the other tiles are already cleared, so you should flag it.

The highlighted tile tells us there are 2 mines adjacent to it. Suppose we already flagged where some mines are, as shown. Then, the highlighted tile has met its requirement of two mines! There can't be any more mines around it, meaning the bottom three squares are safe to be revealed.

(tiles cropped off edges for clarity)

There are two mines in this image. Can you find where they are?

(Answer: the top two unrevealed tiles must be mines)

3. Learn the Patterns

Now you know the rules. But how do you play faster? By recognizing these common patterns, you will be able to instinctively reveal the safe tiles without reasoning through things. These images display where the mines must be based on each pattern.

Corner 1

Corners with mines have a "1" nearby. These can be flagged, since there is only one unrevealed tile that could be a mine.

1-2-1

 If you moved one of the flags, a "1" clue would have too many mines around it. If you take away a mine, then the "2" clue would be missing a mine!

1-2-2-1

Try any other arrangement of two mines, and you will see each of them fails to satisfy a clue.

Holes

The mine near the highlighted "1" could be either tile marked with a red dot. Either way, the red tiles as a whole contain exactly one mine.

Look at the "1" in between those red tiles. No matter which red tile the mine is in, this "1" will be satisfied; therefore, the leftmost three tiles are guaranteed to be safe.

4. Mitigate Guessing

It may seem like there's not enough information to solve the board sometimes. Most versions of Minesweeper have a mine counter on top that shows how many unflagged mines are left. How is that useful? Let's look at an example.

Notice on the left, two flags were placed. On the right, only one was placed. So...

If the mine counter says

choose the left option

If the mine counter says

choose the right option

Sometimes, you really will have to guess—but more often than not, there's a way to use logic to succeed. Minesweeper has a surprising amount of depth, and this document barely scratches the surface! To learn more, the website minesweeper.online has a great no-guessing mode and an advanced guide with more detail.