

# Lab 2: Sequence, Flowchart and State Machines

## Lab Solutions

Lab solution(s) are present in `Solution\Lab02` folder.

## Sequences

To create a sequence that asks the user for his first and last name, and his hair color, and then displays his answers, do the following:

1. Create a blank process and, on the **Design** tab, in the **File** group, select **New > Sequence**. The **New Sequence** window is displayed.

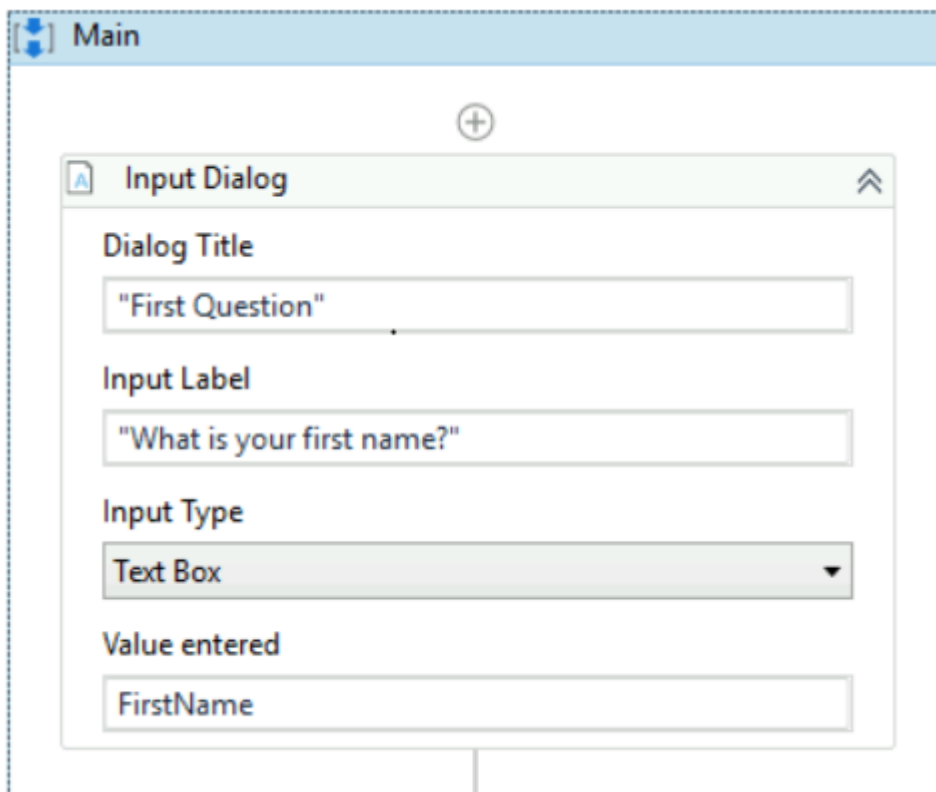
*Note:*

*You can also add a [Sequence] activity to the **Designer** panel to create a new sequence, or simply drag an activity from the **Activities** panel and Studio automatically adds a parent sequence to it.*

2. In the **Name** field type a name for the automation, such as "First Sequence", and leave the default project location or add a subfolder. Click **Create**. The **Designer** panel is updated accordingly.
3. Create three **String** variables such as FirstName, LastName, and HairColor, so that you can store data from the user in them. Leave the **Default** field empty, to indicate that there is no default value.

Name	Variable type	Scope	Default
FirstName	String	Main	
LastName	String	Main	
HairColor	String	Main	

4. Drag three **[Input Dialog]** activities to the **Designer** panel, one under the other.
5. Select the first **Input Dialog** and, in the **Properties** panel, add a **Label** asking for the first name of the user, and a custom **Title**.



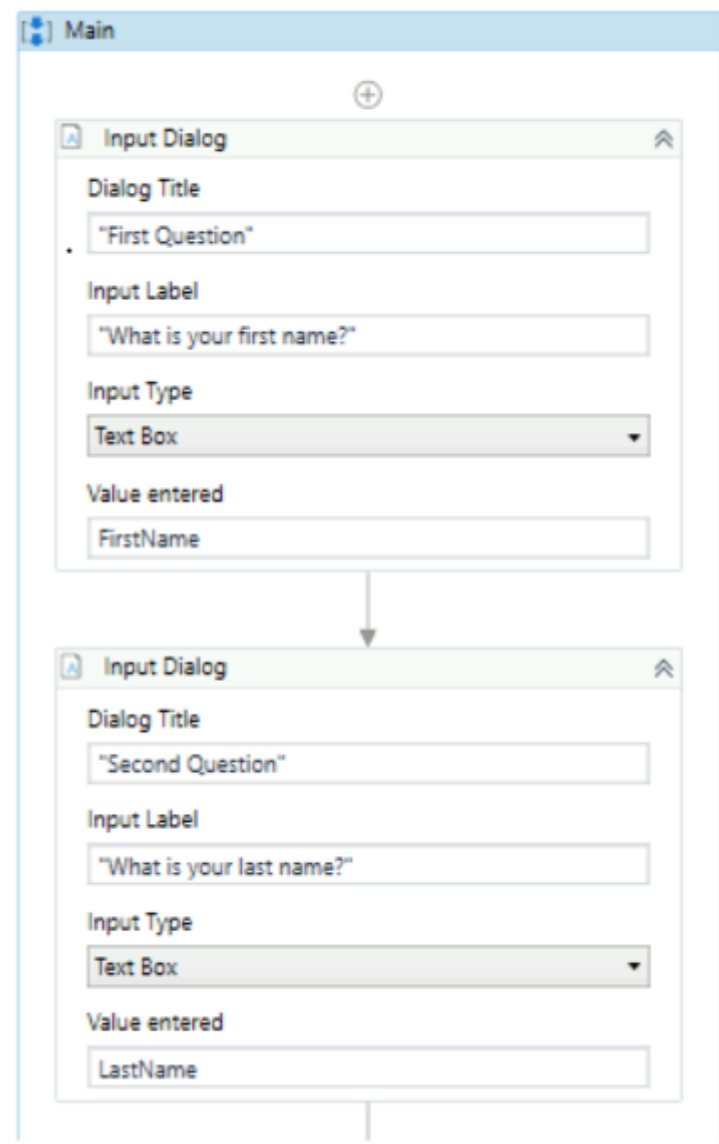
6. In the **Result** field add the FirstName variable. This indicates that this variable is going to be updated with the value added by the user at this point.
7. Repeat steps 6 - 7 for the second and third **Input Dialog** activities to ask the user for his last name and hair color, and store them in the LastName and HairColor variables.
8. Add a **[Message Box]** activity under the third **Input Dialog**.
9. Select the **Message Box** and, in the **Properties** panel, in the **Text** field, add the variables and a string to enable you to display all information gathered from the user, such as:

```
FirstName + " " + LastName + " has " + HairColor + " hair."
```

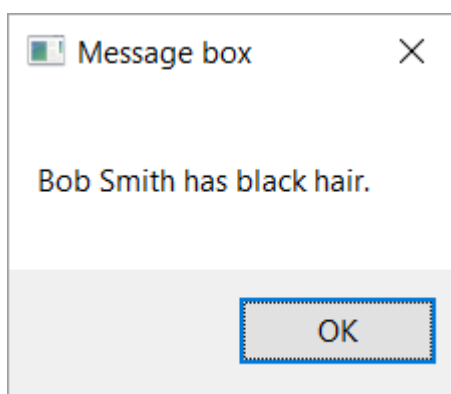
*Note:*

*Remember to add spaces between variables and within strings for an optimal output.*

The final project should look as in the following screenshot.



10. On the **Design** tab, in the **File** group, click **Run**. The automation is executed. The final output message should look as in the following screenshot.



# Flowcharts

To exemplify the properties of a flowchart, we are going to build a guessing game that generates a random number from 1 to 999 that the user must guess. To create such an automation, do the following:

1. Create a blank process and from the **Design** tab, in the **File** group, select **New > Flowchart**. The **New Flowchart** window is displayed.

*Note:*

*You can also add a [Flowchart] activity to the **Designer** panel to create a new flowchart project.*

2. In the **Name** field type a name for the automation, such as "First Flowchart", and leave the default project location or add a subfolder. Click **Create**. The **Designer** panel is updated accordingly.
3. Create two **Int32** variables ( RandomNumber, GuessNumber) and a **String** one ( Message).
4. Set the default value of the Message variable to "Guess a number from 1 to 999." The RandomNumber stores a random number between 1 and 999, GuessNumber stores the user's guess and Message stores the message that is going to be displayed to prompt the user.

Name	Variable type	Scope	Default
RandomNumber	Int32	Main	<i>Enter a VB expression</i>
GuessNumber	Int32	Main	<i>Enter a VB expression</i>
Message	String	Main	"Guess a number from 1 to 999."

5. Add an **[Assign]** activity to the **Designer** panel, and connect it to the **Start** node.
6. In the **Properties** panel, in the **To** field add the RandomNumber variable.
7. In the **Value** field, type new Random().Next(1,999).

*Note:*

*This field uses the Random() function to generate a random number between 1 and 999. For more information on variables, see [Variables](#).*

8. Add an **[Input Dialog]** activity to the **Designer** panel and connect it to the **Assign** one.
9. In the **Properties** panel, in the **Label** field, add the Message variable.
10. In the **Result** field, add the GuessNumber variable. This activity asks and stores the user's guesses in the GuessNumber variable.

**Input Dialog**

Dialog Title  
"FirstFlowChart"

Input Label  
Message

Input Type  
Text Box

Value entered  
GuessNumber

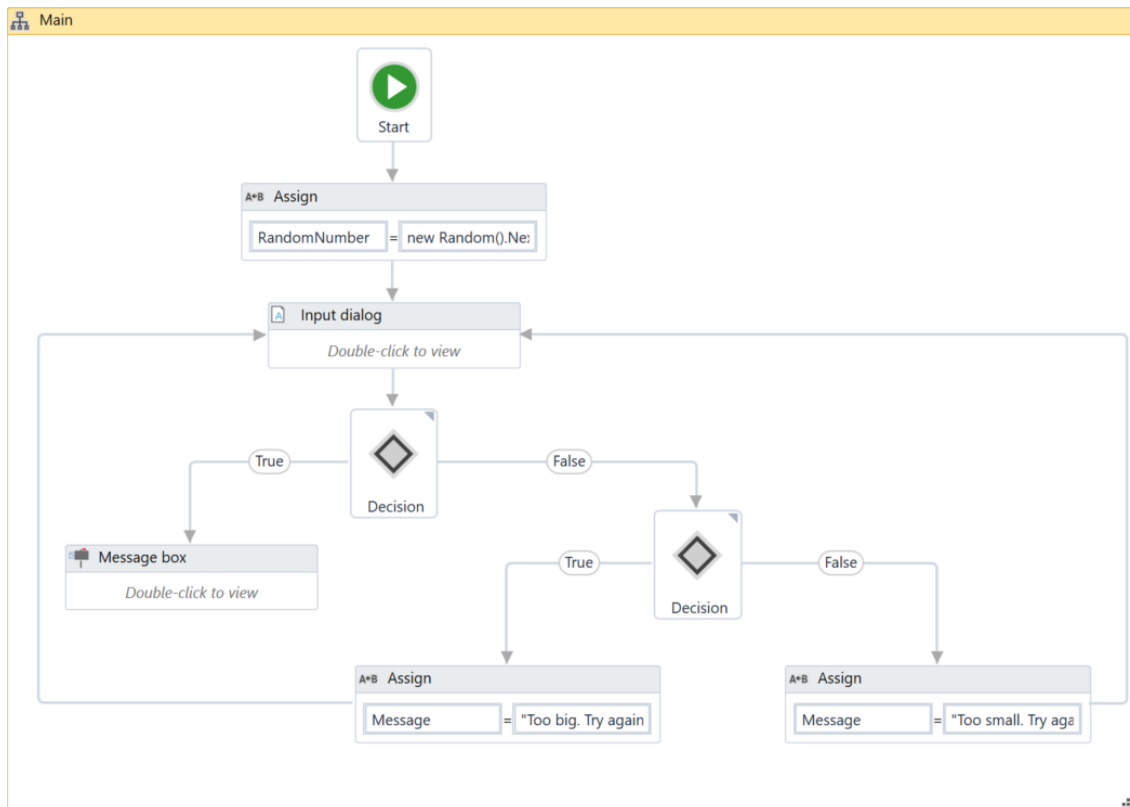
11. Add a **[Flow Decision]** activity and connect it to the **Input Dialog**. This activity enables you to tell the user if he correctly guessed the number or not.
12. In the **Properties** panel, in the **Condition** field, type
 

```
GuessNumber = RandomNumber
```

This enables you to verify if the number added by the user is the same as the randomly-generated one.
13. Add a **[Message Box]** activity and connect it to the **True** branch of the **Flow Decision**.
14. In the **Properties** panel, in the **Text** field, type `"Congratulations! You guessed correctly! The number was " + RandomNumber.ToString + "."` This is the message that is going to be displayed if the user correctly guessed the number.
15. Add a new **Flow Decision** activity and connect it to the **False** branch of the previously added **Flow Decision**.
16. In the **Properties** panel, in the **Condition** field, type `GuessNumber > RandomNumber`

This activity enables you to check if the number the user added is bigger than the randomly-generated one.
17. In the **DisplayName** field, type **Comparison**. This enables you to easily tell the difference between the two **Flow Decisions** used.
18. Add an **Assign** activity and connect it to the **True** branch of the **Comparison** activity.
19. In the **To** field, type the Message variable, and in the **Value** field, type a message indicating that the guess was too high, such as: `"Too big. Try again."`
20. Select the **Assign** activity and press Ctrl+C. The entire activity and its properties are copied to the Clipboard.
21. Press Ctrl + V. A duplicate of the previous **Assign** activity is displayed.
22. Connect it to the **False** branch of the **Comparison** activity and, in the **Properties** panel, in the **Value** field, type: `"Too small. Try again."`

23. Connect the **Assign** activities created at steps 18-22 to the **Input Dialog**. A loop is created, asking the user to type a smaller or bigger number, until he guesses correctly. The final project should look as in the screenshot below.



## State Machines

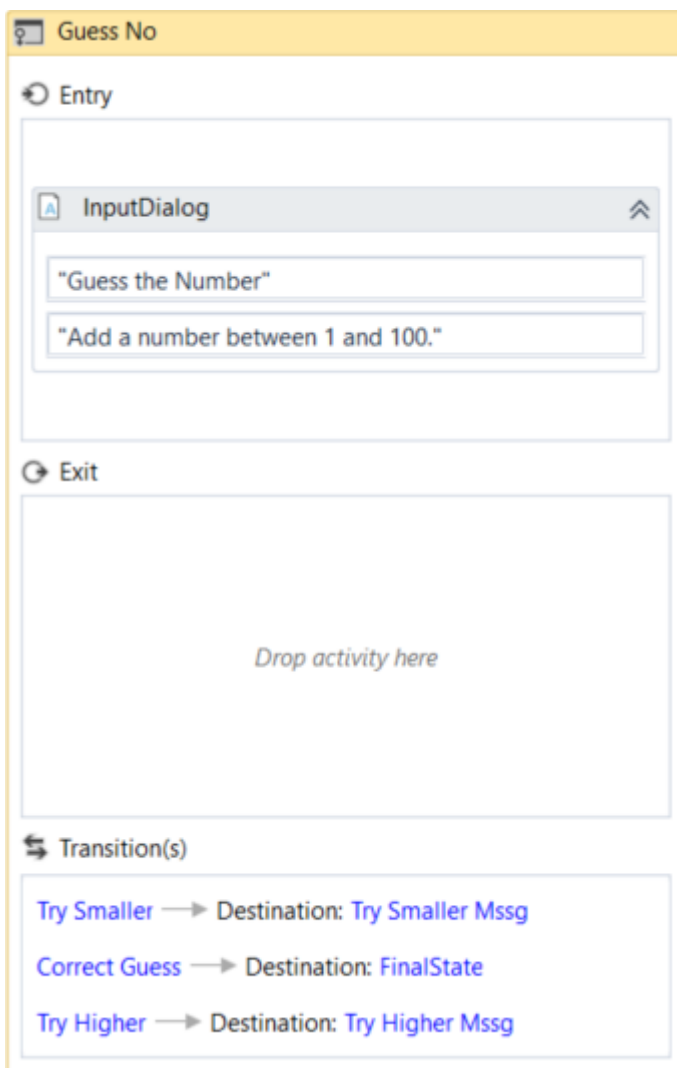
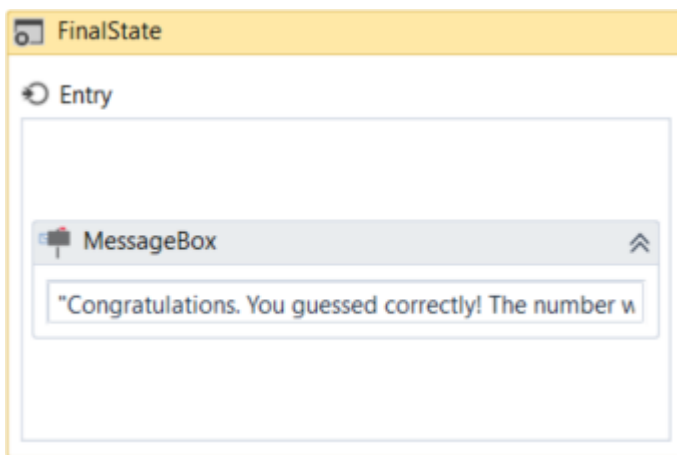
There are two activities that are specific to state machines, namely **[State]** and **[Final State]**, found under **Workflow > State Machine**.

*Note:*

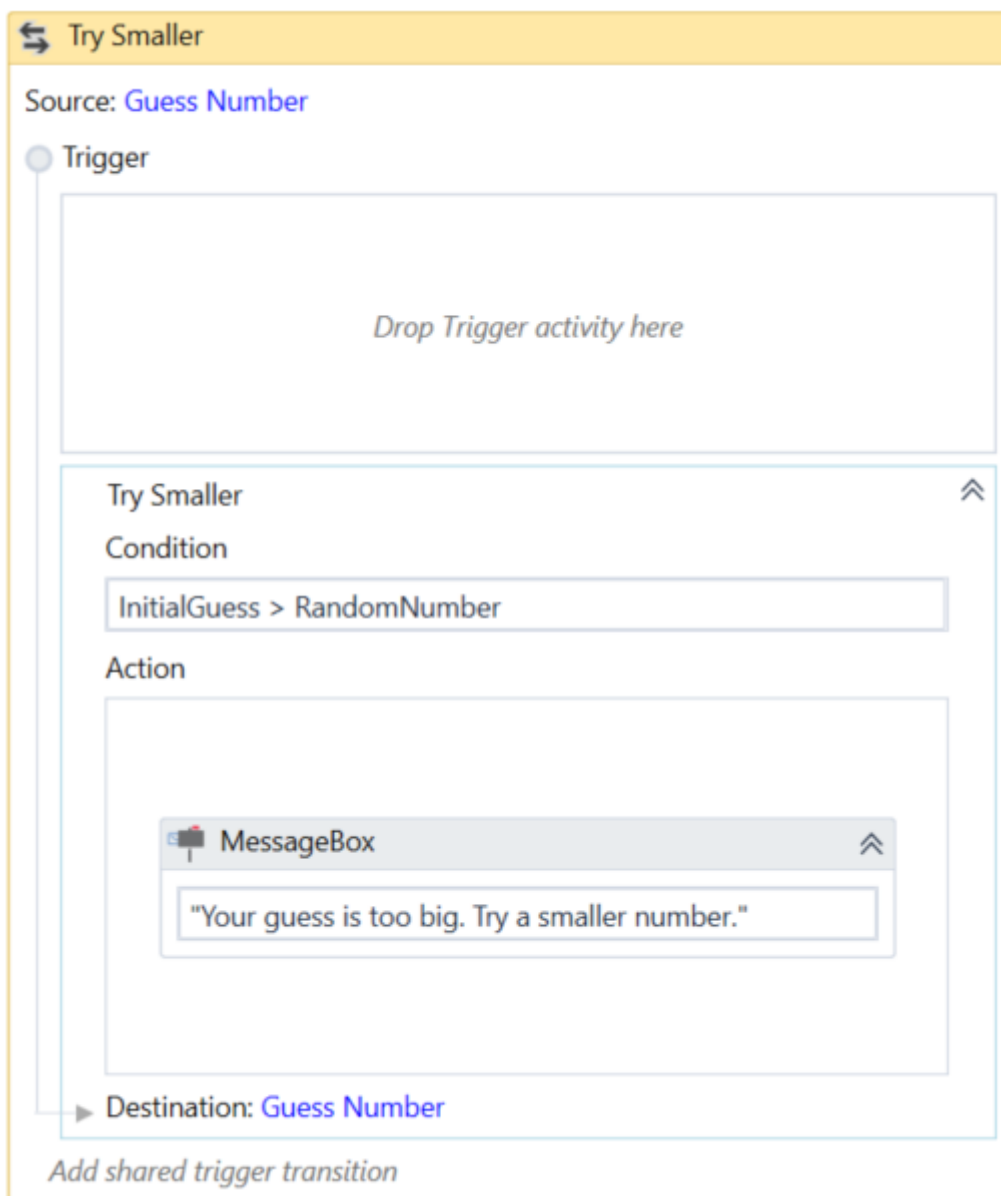
*You can only create one initial state, yet it is possible to have more than one **Final State**.*

The **State** activity contains three sections, **Entry**, **Exit** and **Transition(s)**, while the **Final State** only contains one section, **Entry**. Both of these activities can be expanded by double-clicking them, to view more information and edit them.

The **Entry** and **Exit** sections enable you to add entry and exit triggers for the selected state, while the **Transition(s)** section displays all the transitions linked to the selected state.



Transitions are expanded when you double-click them, just like the **State** activity. They contain three sections, **Trigger**, **Condition** and **Action**, that enable you to add a trigger for the next state, or add a condition under which an activity or sequence is to be executed.



### Example of How to Use a State Machine

To exemplify how to use a state machine, we are going to build the guessing game we did in the previous chapter, the only difference being that we will try to guess a number between 1 and 100.

1. Create a blank process and, on the **Design** tab, in the **File** group, select **New > State Machine**. The **New State Machine** window is displayed.

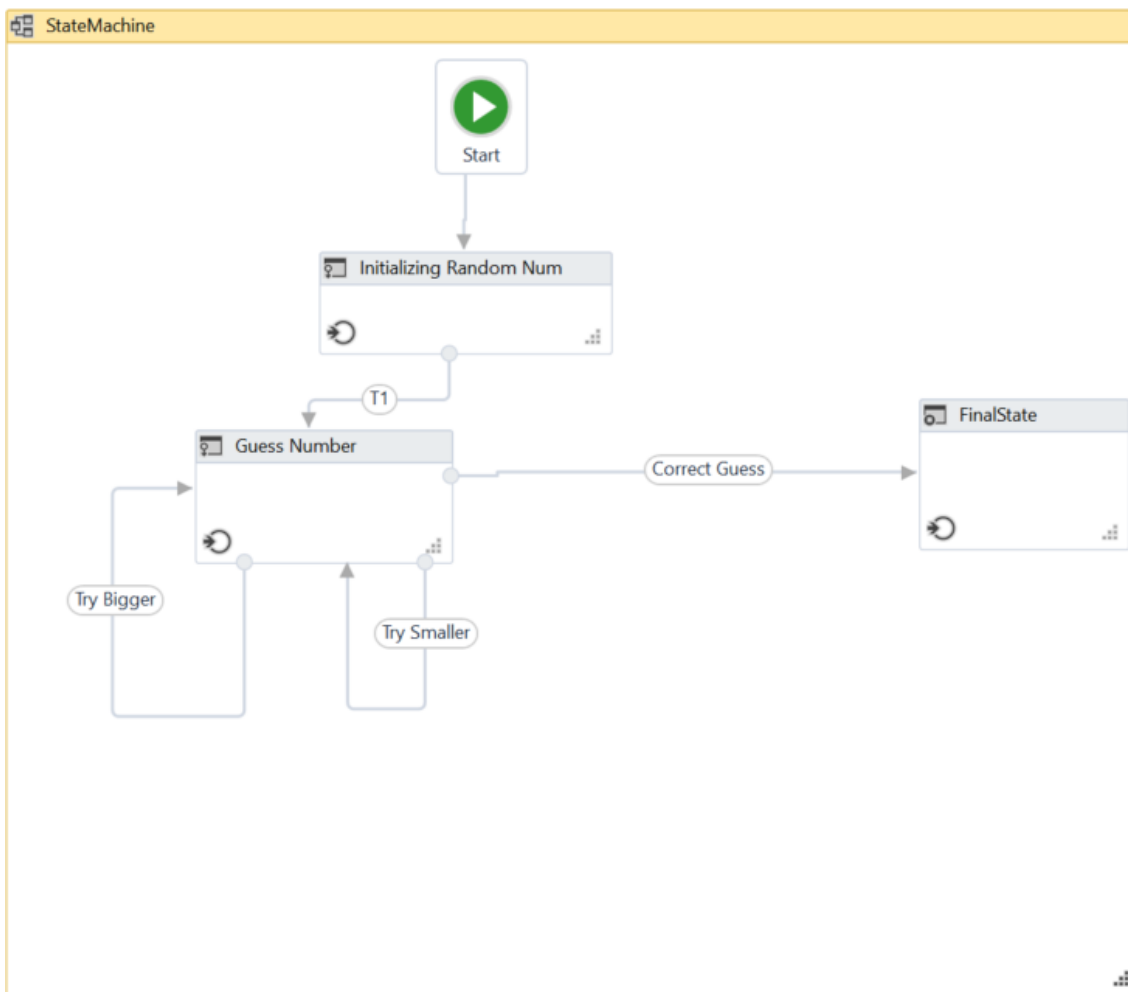
*Note:*

You can also add a **[State Machine]** activity to the **Designer** panel to create a new state machine automation.

2. In the **Name** field type a name for the automation, such as "First State Machine", and leave the default project location or add a subfolder. Click **Create**. The **Designer** panel is updated accordingly.
3. Create two integer variables, InitialGuess and RandomNumber. The first variable stores your guess, while the second stores the random number.



4. Add a **State** activity to the **Designer** panel and connect it to the **Start** node. This is the initial state, and it is used to generate a random number.
  5. Double-click the activity. This **State** activity is displayed expanded in the **Designer** panel.
  6. In the **Properties** panel, in the **DisplayName** field, type Initializing Random Number. This enables you to easily tell states apart.
  7. In the **Entry** section, add an **[Assign]** activity.
  8. In the **To** field, add the RandomNumber variable.
  9. In the **Value** field, type `new Random().Next(1,100)`. This expression generates a random number.
  10. Return to the main project view and add a new **State** activity.
  11. Connect it to the previously added activity.
  12. Double-click the last added **State** activity. This activity is displayed expanded in the **Designer** panel.
  13. In the **Properties** panel, in the **DisplayName** field, type Guess Number. This state is used to prompt the user to guess a number.
  14. In the **Entry** section, add an **[Input Dialog]** activity.
  15. Select the **Input Dialog**, and in the **Properties** panel, add an appropriate **Label** and **Title** to prompt the user to guess a number between 1 and 100.
  16. In the **Result** field, add the InitialGuess variable. This variable stores the user's guess.
  17. Return to the main project view and create a transition that points from the Guess Number state to itself.
  18. Double-click the transition. The transition is displayed expanded in the **Designer** panel.
  19. In the **Properties** panel, in the **DisplayName** field, type Try Smaller. This message is displayed on the arrow, enabling you to run through your automation easier.
  20. In the **Condition** section, type `InitialGuess > RandomNumber`. This verifies if the user's guess is bigger than the random number.
  21. In the **Action** section, add a **[Message Box]** activity.
  22. In the **Text** field, type something similar to "Your guess is too big. Try a smaller number." This message is displayed when the user's guess is bigger than the random number.
  23. Return to the main project view and create a new transition that points from the **Guess Number** state to itself.
  24. Double-click the transition. The transition is displayed expanded in the **Designer** panel.
  25. In the **Properties** panel, in the **DisplayName** field, type "Try Bigger". This message is displayed on the arrow, enabling you to run through your automation easier.
  26. In the **Condition** section, type `InitialGuess < RandomNumber`. This verifies if the guess is smaller than the random number.
  27. In the **Action** section, add a **Message Box** activity.
  28. In the **Text** field, type something similar to "Your guess is too small. Try a bigger number." This message is displayed when the users guess is smaller than the random number.
  29. Return to main project view and add a **Final State** activity to the **Designer** panel.
  30. Connect a transition from the **Guess Number** activity to the **Final State**.
  31. In the **Properties** panel, in the **DisplayName** field, type "Correct Guess".
  32. In the **Condition** field, type `InitialGuess = RandomNumber`. This is the condition on which this automation steps to the final state and end.
  33. Double-click the **Final State** activity. It is displayed expanded in the **Designer** panel.
  34. In the **Entry** section, add a **Message Box** activity.
  35. In the **Text** field, type something similar to "Congratulations. You guessed correctly! The number was " + `RandomNumber.ToString` + "." This is the final message that is to be displayed, when the user correctly guesses the number.
- The final project should look as in the following screenshot.



36. Press F5. The automation is executed correctly.

