Minecraft Overview

Image shows how to punch trees to get wood.

As Minecraft is a sandbox game, there is no defined or proper way and style to play the game. However, in Survival mode one common theme found for all players is the need to feed yourself, and to avoid (and later, fight) hostile mobs that spawn either in dark places (e.g. caves) or when night falls.

Before your first night, you will need to collect Wood, make your first tools from that, then collect Cobblestone for a full set of better tools. Getting Coal or Charcoal, to cook food and make torches, is also very important, but missing that is not necessarily lethal. Wool for a bed is optional, but *very* helpful -- it lets you skip the night and avoid the monsters that appear then. While you're working on the basics, collect any stray items you come across, as many of them will be useful later. (Notably eggs, seeds, and anything dropped by monsters e.g Rotten Flesh, Bones and Arrows.)

You need to get these resources and find or make either a bed or a shelter before nightfall, because that's when the monsters come out. It is best to work quickly, as a *Minecraft* day is approximately ten minutes and night (including dawn and dusk) is another ten minutes, .

For nighttime, the primary danger will be monsters. It is a good idea to start gathering resources and construct a lit shelter immediately after you begin on the first day. As a beginning player, *do not* try to fight monsters your first night, because you have poor weapons (or none at all), and no armor.

The Golden Rule of Minecraft

The golden rule of Minecraft is:

> *Never dig straight down or up.*

It is possible to stand on a block while destroying it. Once it's destroyed you will fall down one block to whatever is beneath it. The problem is, once you get below the surface (sometimes even on the surface) there is a significant chance that "what's beneath it" is a cave -- then you'll fall into it (taking damage) and likely be surrounded by monsters. Worse, you might even fall into lava -- usually that's well underground, but there are a few pools of it near the surface too. Lava will damage you grievously, and also set you afire (which will do more damage). If you do land in lava try to get out immediately, and if possible jump into water to put out the flames. (Even if you can't save your life, try to get away from the lava before you die, so it won't destroy your possessions.) If you survive falling into a cavern, you will then have to mine your way back to the surface (try to make a staircase), hopefully before the monsters get you.

Digging straight up is less obviously dangerous, but you can dig out a block holding back water or lava (which will pour out onto you) or sand/gravel (which can fall on you and suffocate you). Even water could kill you, by washing you into a dangerous area. Note that lava or water will "drip" through the block immediately beneath them, but that's not much warning.