Distributors BlinkM **BlinkM MinM**
BlinkM MaxM **LinkM** **CtrlM**
FreeM **WireM** **TweetM** **WineM**
Project Gallery
Quick Start Guide

BLINKM QUICK START GUIDE

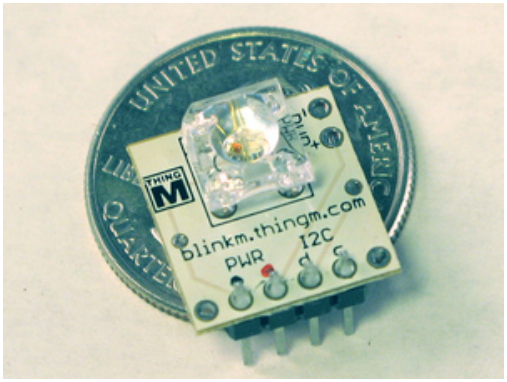
DESCRIPTION

While BlinkM is primarily a tool for hardware experimenters, anyone can have fun with BlinkM. This is a quick-start guide to create your own custom light patterns with a BlinkM. No previous programming or hardware skills are required. However, to get the full use out of a BlinkM, you will want to learn a bit more about Arduino or similar microcontroller and download the BlinkM datasheet.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

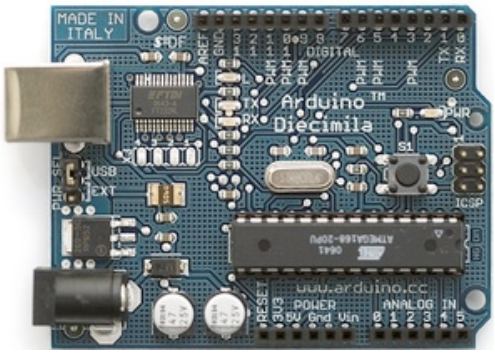
STEP 1: PREPARE (WHAT TO BUY, WHAT TO DOWNLOAD)

1a. Get a BlinkM



BlinkMs are available at Sparkfun. They come fully assembled.

1b. Get an Arduino board



Arduino USB boards are also available at Sparkfun and Adafruit. The Arduino Diecimila USB board is the recommended board to get. It costs about $35.

1c. Download BlinkM Documentation and Software

- Data Sheet
- BlinkM Communicator
- BlinkM Sequencer for Mac OS X or BlinkM Sequencer for Windows

STEP 2: CONFIGURE THE ARDUINO

2a. Set up your Arduino

Once you have an Arduino board, you can install the Arduino software on your computer to talk to it.
Follow the normal Arduino setup guide for Windows or Arduino

DOWNLOADS

VIEW DATASHEET

DOWNLOAD DATASHEET (2MB PDF)

COMMUNICATOR (6KB ZIP)

SEQUENCER FOR MAC OS X (416KB ZIP)

SEQUENCER FOR WINDOWS (15MB ZIP)

SEQUENCER SOURCE (86KB ZIP)

EXAMPLE CODE (15KB ZIP)

(for Arduino, Processing, Basic Stamp, Max/MSP)

SEQUENCER LICENSE (4KB TEXT)

FIRMWARE LICENSE (4KB TEXT)

SUPPORT

Active customer service discussions in ThingM about

- BlinkMs loose unit addresses at random!5 days
- Minimum Current?5 days ago
- BlinkM, MaxM, Arduino Uno and Max/msp 6.16

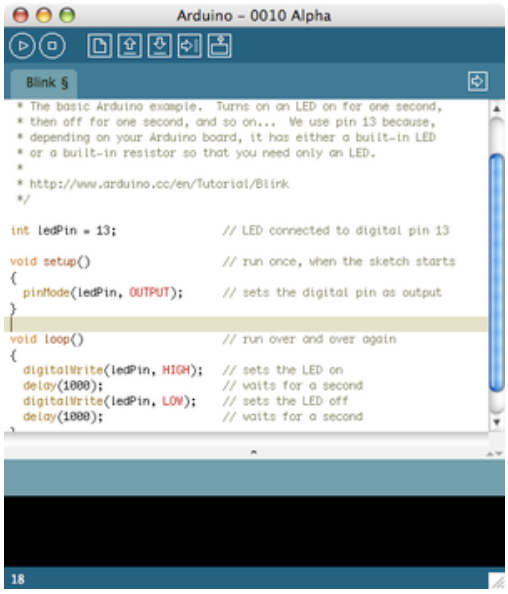
Service and support by Satisfaction

setup guide for Mac OS X.
If you already have an Arduino, be sure to have the latest Arduino software (Arduino-0010 currently).

The things you'll do:

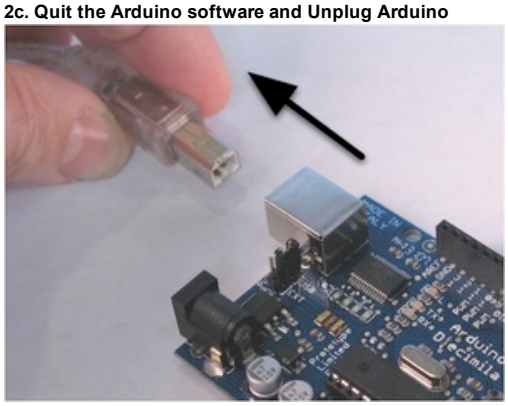
- Download the Arduino software
- Install serial driver
- Plug in the Arduino board
- Launch the Arduino software

At the end of the Arduino setup, you'll be running the Arduino software environment and be able to blink the Arduino's on-board LED.



2b. Program Arduino with BlinkM Communicator
BlinkM Communicator is an Arduino "sketch" ('sketch' = 'program' in Arduino terminology). It enables the Arduino to be an interface between you computer and the BlinkM.
Unzip the download (BlinkMCommunicator.zip). Open the sketch (called BlinkMCommunicator.pde) in the Arduino programming environment. Then press the "Upload to I/O Board" button in the top row of buttons.

2c. Quit the Arduino software and Unplug Arduino

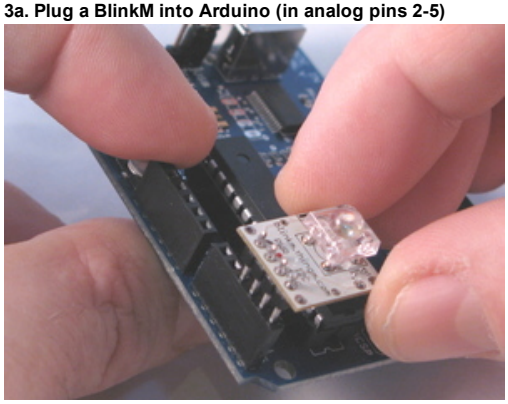


You're done with the Arduino programming software for now, but feel free to use it later to play. Arduino boards can do much more than just interface with BlinkM!

Unplug the Arduino from the computer. ALWAYS unplug Arduino before plugging in a BlinkM.

STEP 3: PROGRAM BLINKM

3a. Plug a BlinkM into Arduino (in analog pins 2-5)

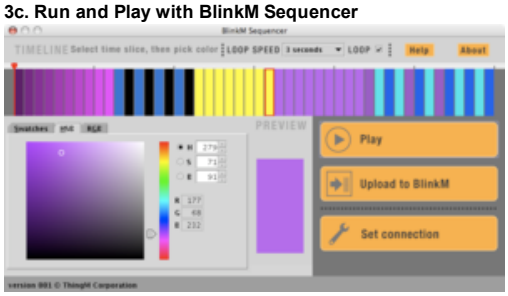


The BlinkM's PWR (power) pins should line up with pins 2 and 3 of the connector, while the I2C (communications) pins should line up with pins 4 and 5.

3b. Plug Arduino back in to USB

When first powered up, the BlinkM will blink like this:

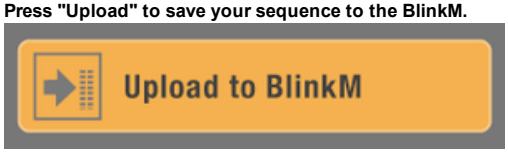
3c. Run and Play with BlinkM Sequencer



3d. Connect and Program your BlinkM!

Press "Set connection" and choose your Arduino's port, as selected in Step 2a. It should be listed first, though it may not be.

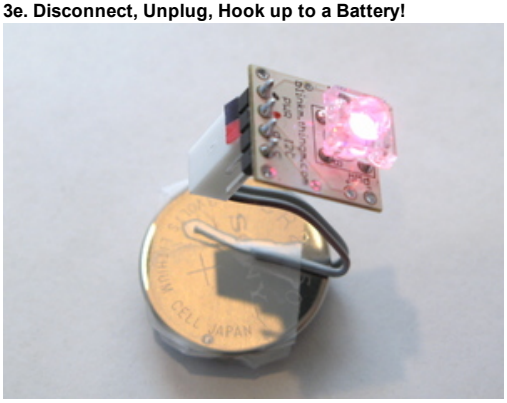
Press "Upload" to save your sequence to the BlinkM.



Now your BlinkM will play back your programmed

sequence whenever power is applied to the BlinkM.

3e. Disconnect, Unplug, Hook up to a Battery!



Attach a power source to pins 2 and 3, with + to pin 3 ("+" on some BlinkMs, a red dot on others) and - to pin 2 ("-" on some BlinkMs, a black dot on others).
Use only 3v-5v power sources such as coin batteries or power supplies to power BlinkMs. DO NOT use 9v batteries or any power supply that puts out more than 5.5v, YOU WILL DESTROY THE BLINKM.

If you have any questions or problems
please contact us at blinkm@thingm.com.