

# Session 2 — Building Game Components

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## Building Reusable UI Elements

You're about to build your first custom React component and unlock the power of reusable UI building blocks — the secret to fast, scalable development in React. This guide walks you through creating a `GameButton` component, understanding props, and using professional developer tools. Ready to build like a pro? Let's go!

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## Access Your Codespace

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Visit [github.com/codespaces](https://github.com/codespaces) to relaunch your Codespace from Session 1.

## Create Your First Component

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Let's build a `GameButton` component for starting your trivia game. Components are like digital LEGO blocks — custom, reusable UI elements.

When you create a component, export it with `export default` so it can be shared across your project. Then bring it into other files with `import`.

1. **Create the file:** Right-click `src/components` → New File → name it `GameButton.jsx`

2. **Type the component structure:**

```
export default function GameButton() {  
  return <button>Start Adventure</button>;  
}
```

3. **Import into SplashScreen:** Add `import GameButton from "../GameButton"` at the top

4. **Add your button:** Place your button within `div.splash-buttons`:

```
<GameButton />
```

5. **Test it:** Run `npm run dev` and you should see your custom button!

## Why This Matters

**Components** are the heart of React — reusable UI elements that combine markup, styling, and logic. Think of them as your own custom HTML tags. The `.jsx` file extension means you're writing **JSX**, a special syntax that looks like HTML but is actually JavaScript. JSX lets you describe what the UI should look like using readable, expressive code.

## Bonus Challenge

Try changing the button text in `GameButton.jsx` and watch it update instantly thanks to Hot Module Replacement!

## Understanding Props

Props are how you pass data from parent components to child components. They're like function parameters but for React components.

1. **Add text prop to GameButton:**

```
export default function GameButton({ text }) {  
  return <button>{text}</button>;  
}
```

2. **Update SplashScreen to pass text:**

```
<GameButton text="Start Adventure" />
```

3. **Watch the magic:** Your button now shows custom text!

## 💡 Why This Matters

**Props** let parent components pass data to child components — just like function parameters. This makes your components flexible and reusable. The `{ text }` syntax is called **destructuring** — it pulls out just the values you need from the props object, keeping your code clean and readable.

## 🖱️ Adding Click Functionality

Let's make your buttons actually do something when clicked. In React, you can pass functions as props just like any other data.

1. **Add `onClick` prop to `GameButton`:**

```
export default function GameButton({ text, onClick }) {  
  return <button onClick={onClick}>{text}</button>;  
}
```

2. **Update `SplashScreen` with click handler:**

```
<GameButton  
  text="Start Adventure"  
  onClick={() => alert('Start Game!')}  
>
```

3. **Test it:** Click your button and see the alert!

## 💡 Why This Matters

**Functions as props** are like giving your components different personalities. Your `GameButton` can do different things depending on where you use it — same button, different actions. It's a key pattern in React for building interactive apps.

## 🎨 Styling with Variants

Let's add visual variety to your buttons using CSS classes, default parameters, and a clean variable approach.

### 1. Add variant prop with default value and create buttonClass variable:

```
export default function GameButton({ text, onClick, variant = "primary" }) {  
  const buttonClass = `game-button ${variant}`;  
  
  return (  
    <button className={buttonClass} onClick={onClick}>  
      {text}  
    </button>  
  );  
}
```

### 2. Update SplashScreen with variant:

```
<GameButton  
  text="Start Adventure"  
  onClick={() => alert('Start Game!')}  
  variant="primary"  
>
```

### 3. Admire your styled button: Your button now has the primary styling!

## Why This Matters

**className** is React's version of the HTML **class** attribute. We use a **template literal** to build a dynamic class name like `game-button primary`. This matches the styles already defined in your project. The **variant** prop lets you switch between styles like `primary` and `secondary`, and **default parameters** like `variant = "primary"` ensure your component still works even if no variant is passed.

## Reusing Your Component

Now that you've built a complete, fully-featured GameButton component, let's experience the power of reusability by adding a second button for the game's credits.

### 1. Add a second button: Below your existing GameButton in SplashScreen, add one that will show credits when clicked:

```
<GameButton
  text="Credits"
  onClick={() => alert('Show Credits')}
  variant="secondary"
/>
```

2. **Admire your work:** You now have two different buttons using the same component!

## Why This Matters

**Component reusability** is React's superpower. You wrote the GameButton code once, but now you can use it anywhere in your app with different props. Thanks to your stylesheet, each variant ( `primary` , `secondary` ) automatically applies the right look — no extra styling needed.

## Bonus Challenge

Try adding a third GameButton with `variant="primary"` and `text="Instructions"` to see how easy it is to scale your UI!

## Install React DevTools

React DevTools is like X-ray vision for your React app — see component structure, props, and state in real-time.

## Browser Installation

Browser	Installation Link	Notes
Chrome	<a href="#">Chrome Web Store</a>	Most popular choice
Firefox	<a href="#">Firefox Add-ons</a>	Great alternative
Edge	<a href="#">Edge Add-ons</a>	Windows default
Safari	Manual installation required	Advanced users only

## Using DevTools

1. **Open DevTools:** Press F12 or right-click → Inspect

2. **Find Components tab:** Look for “Components” next to Console, Network, etc.
3. **Explore your app:** Click on components in the tree to see their props
4. **Inspect GameButton:** Find your GameButton component and see the text, onClick, and variant props!





## Why This Matters





**React DevTools** gives you X-ray vision into your app. You can inspect components, props, and state in real time — just like a pro. It’s one of the most important tools for debugging and understanding how your app works under the hood.

## Essential Terms

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*Quick reference for all the React concepts you just learned:*

Term	Definition	Why it matters
 component	A reusable piece of UI that can include markup, styles, and logic (example: <code>&lt;SplashScreen /&gt;</code> ).	You’ll build your entire app by composing components together — they’re React’s building blocks.
 props	Data passed from parent to child components.	Props let you customize components and pass data around your app — essential for reusable components.
 JSX	JavaScript syntax that looks like HTML — used to describe UI in React components ( <code>.jsx</code> ).	You’ll write JSX in your GameButton component to describe what the button should look like.
 className	React’s version of the HTML <code>class</code> attribute for applying CSS styles.	Use className instead of class because class is a reserved word in JavaScript.

 destructuring	Extracting values from objects/arrays into variables, like <code>{ text, onClick }</code> from props.	Makes your code cleaner by avoiding repetitive <code>props.text</code> , <code>props.onClick</code> syntax.
 template literals	String interpolation using backticks and <code>\${}</code> for dynamic strings.	Perfect for creating dynamic CSS classes like <code>`game-button \${variant}`</code> .
 default parameters	Fallback values for function parameters, like <code>variant = "primary"</code> .	Ensures your components work even when some props aren't provided.
 React DevTools	Browser extension for inspecting React component trees, props, and state.	Essential debugging tool — like X-ray vision for your React app.

## Ask the AI — Component Mastery

You just created your first reusable React component with props, styling, and click handlers — excellent work!

Now let's deepen your understanding of components, props, and the React development workflow. Here are the most impactful questions to ask your AI assistant about today's session:

- What makes React components reusable and why is that important?
- How do props work in React and why are they read-only?
- Why do we use `className` instead of `class` in React?
- How do template literals work and why are they perfect for dynamic CSS classes?
- What is interpolation in JSX and can you show me examples?
- How does JSX let me write HTML-like code inside JavaScript?
- Can I pass functions as props? How does that work and why is it powerful?
- What can I do with React DevTools that I can't do with regular browser DevTools?

### **Pro Tip:**

Components are everywhere in React — every piece of UI you see is a component. Start thinking in components: “What reusable pieces could I break this UI into?” This mindset will make you a better React developer.