Intro to Game Design

Computer Programming and Game Design with Unity

Unity®
What is Computer Programming?

Computer programming is the process of creating instructions in code for a computer to follow. Code at its core is a set of instructions and tasks meant for a computer to perform, written in a language that computers can understand. Code can be created in many different languages for a variety of purposes including app, game, and website development.

The process of computer programming involves many steps, including planning, prototyping, development, and testing. For many developers, testing is done in all stages, including after a product release, as many will push updates to their project after publishing. At the end of a project, one could expect to have gone through several iterations or versions of the project, depending on its scope.
What is Unity?

There are several game design engines used by developers to create their games. Unity is one of these engines.

Unity supports both 2D and Real Time 3D game design and is used in a whole variety of industries beyond gaming such as automotive design, architectural design and engineering, cinema, and more.

With its host of tools and learner support, Unity allows users to explore coding and game design, asset creation and integration, collaboration, and publishing of single and multiplayer games.
The Unity Editor

The Unity Editor is where most of your work on your game will take place. It has a variety of windows, each allowing you to do different things. These windows can be moved around, added to, or removed to fully customize your Unity experience. Let's take a look at the most commonly used windows and what they allow you to do.
A: The Unity Toolbar

The Toolbar is home to most of the key tools you will be using while working with Unity. To the left, you will find basic tools for working in the Scene and manipulating GameObjects. To the center of the Toolbar, you can find controls to play and pause your game window. To the far right are buttons that connect you to Unity Collaborate, Unity Cloud Service, and buttons that allow for other editor layouts.
B: The Hierarchy Window

The Hierarchy window is a text record of every GameObject in your scene from directional lighting and cameras to your game character and environmental objects. The hierarchy shows how game objects are related to one another, allowing developers to adjust these relationships and access more information about each object.
C: The Game View

The Game View simulates what your game will look like (through the lens of your Scene Cameras) when played. When you tap the Play Button gameplay will begin. Using the Game View is a great way to check how your game is playing while in development.
D: The Scene View

The Scene View allows you to visualize and edit your game and GameObjects while it is in development. From here you can move and adjust GameObjects including lighting and cameras as well as select them for future editing. It supports both 2D and 3D perspectives.
E: The Inspector Window

The Inspector Window is where all the properties and components of a selected GameObject can be seen and edited. This will include information on things like the object's general appearance, location in the scene, and physics. Because each GameObject object will have its own set of properties the inspector window will look a little different for each one.
F: The Project Window

The Project Window is where you can find all the Assets that are connected to your game. When you import Assets, they will also be found here. In addition to the Project Window, you can also find the Console Window here, which is where you will find information about any errors, warnings, or log messages that pop up when you run your game.
Coding in Unity

Unity allows developers to create their own code to run for their projects. This is referred to as scripting. A file of code is called a script. Developers can create a script in the project tab or the component section. The latter will add the script to the corresponding GameObject as a component. Scripts are used for all manner of purposes, including gameplay management, GameObject behaviors and functionality, graphics, and more.

Scripts are written in the programming language C#. C# is an object-oriented language that utilizes functions, variables, loops, and other common programming language features. In object-oriented languages, code revolves around an “object”; an entity that contains data and behaviors. For example, the player GameObject in a Unity game can be an object whose data, often called attributes, may include a set movement speed. Its behavior or function can be movement. When creating a new script, it will by default have a class derived from Unity’s built-in class: Monobehaviour. A class is a blueprint for an object and can be used for making objects with the same or similar attributes and behaviors.

Some key programming definitions:

- Variables: a container to a value. Variables can be changed and used to set and get data for a script or function to use. For example, to store a player’s health a developer could create a variable called playerHealth and set it to a value, such as 10. The developer could then reference this value and make changes to it using playerHealth.

- Functions: can also be referred to as methods. Functions are a piece of code that can be referenced and repeated. The content of a function will vary. For example, a developer could have the function Move(), which would execute the code that makes the player character move. The developer might call this function by an input event (like a button press) or another function, such as the Update function, which is a built-in Unity function that is run every frame.
• **Parameters**: a special kind of variable used to pass data between functions. Parameters are local to their function, meaning they cannot be used outside of the function. Parameters are called when the function is called. For example, a developer may write the following code: `IncreasePlayerHealth(playerHealth)`. In this example, the developer is passing in the value of `playerHealth` to be used in the function `IncreasePlayerHealth`.

• **Loops**: a piece of code that is repeated a defined number of times. There are a few types of loops including: while, do-while, for, and foreach. Each loop works in a slightly different way with different forms of declaration.

Here is an example of a default script in Visual Studio:
Publishing refers to when developers are releasing a runnable version, called a build, of their project to their target audience. It differs from other builds, such as alpha and beta versions, because it is expected to be fully available for its intended use. That being said, no project is ever fully complete or perfect, and developers often publish updates to their already-released builds.

The Unity engine allows developers to publish projects on many different platforms. By default, Unity will offer a few options, but developers can add more options by downloading the necessary modules in the Unity Hub. Different platforms will have different requirements and settings, although Unity will adjust accordingly based on the selected platform. Developers can select the target platform in Build Settings.
From the Build Settings, developers can also go to Player Settings, where they will need to set some information about their project. The required settings and information will vary depending on the platform and use of the project, but some common fields to adjust or supply are:

- project and company name and build version
- application icon
- resolution and other graphical settings
Collaborating in Unity

Collaboration between members of a team is a vital aspect of project development. There are several ways to go about this, and different teams will have different ways to go about it. Unity offers some solutions in this regard. Unity works with Plastic SCM to assist developers in collaboration by providing features such as version control, cloud saving, and more.

While using Plastic SCM, developers will be able to create repositories and branches in order to push and pull their work to the cloud storage and other team members. Developers may do this using Plastic SCM’s downloadable software and interface, within Unity in a Plastic SCM tab or a combination of both.

Example of the interface for Plastic SCM in Plastic SCM app:
Example of interface of Plastic in Unity:

For more information on Plastic SCM including pricing tiers and downloads, visit Unity's page for collaboration: Plastic SCM Cloud Edition | Unity Version Control.

For lessons in using Plastic SCM, visit Unity Learn for assistance: Getting started with Plastic SCM - Unity Learn.
Explore the Unity Editor

Summary
In this tutorial, you will explore the Unity Editor. You will build an understanding of the role of the scene in organizing your Unity projects. You will gain experience navigating the scene and will learn how to add packages to your project using the Package Manager.

Steps
Before you Begin: Download the materials needed for this tutorial - Lego Microgame. Sections of this tutorial will have you exploring areas of the Unity Editor for this Microgame.
**Begin the Unity Tutorial**

You will start by watching a short video on First Impressions. Unity understands that its platform can be intimidating at first, and this video allows users to see that most new users will be a little overwhelmed at the start but will gain confidence as they learn to navigate the editor.

Next, you will explore the Unity Editor interface. This activity allows learners to get to know the function and use of the various windows in the Unity Editor. As you progress, you will also explore how to navigate and shift your view in the Scene View. You will need access to the Microgame for this section.

You will learn about packages, including how to access and navigate the package manager to see what packages are in your current project (you will use the Microgame for this).

Lastly, you will watch a video featuring tips and tricks on using the Unity Editor.

**Learning Outcomes**
- Learners can identify and use the basic features of the Unity Editor.
- Learners can create and manage scenes, including accessing the package manager.
- Learners can navigate 3D space in the scene view.

**Discussion Questions**
- What are some ways you approach learning a new tool?
- What are some tips you might be inclined to follow when growing accustomed to Unity?
- If you got stuck in your learning, what are some places you could go for help moving forward?
Possible Sticking Points

The windows in the Unity Editor can be moved and rearranged as desired. Some learners may discover this and rearrange their Editor layout. If this becomes an issue, the Editor can be reset by going to Window > Layouts > Reset all Layouts.

The Lego Microgame requires age verification and an agreement to terms and conditions. If necessary use a different Microgame for this tutorial.

Explore The Unity Editor
Summary
In this tutorial, you will use the Unity Lego Micogame again. Using the game’s in-Editor tutorial, you will create a simple game experience without having to code. You will learn about customizing your game design, as well as explore playtesting your game and refining aspects of your game as you go along.

Steps
Before you Begin: the Lego Microgame should be installed.

Begin the Unity Tutorial
You will start by accessing or re-opening the Microgames tutorial window. From here, you will be able to work on each of the game's short tutorial sections as you desire.

- Get started: playtest the game and make adjustments to the speed of your Minifigure.
- Add a platform: shows you how to add a new platform to your game.
- Activate the elevator: has learners create an elevator to allow your character to access the next level.
- Change win conditions: guides learners through changing the game's win condition.
- Add an enemy: instructs learners on how to increase the difficulty by adding enemies to the game.
- Customize your game: takes learners through even more ways that they can make the game their own through basic customizations.
- Import assets: teaches learners how to access, use and import items from the Unity Asset Store.
- Supercharge your game: links learners to a section in the Asset Store that is dedicated to lego assets.
- Microgame mods: links learners to the Unity Lego Microgame page where they can access a variety of mods available for the game.

- Build, publish and bonus: walks learned through the process of publishing a sharable version of their game so that you can share it with family and friends.

Learning Outcomes

- Learners will be able to create a new game object in their game.
- Learners will be able to manipulate game objects in the scene view.
- Learners will understand the various features of the Unity Editor and know how to use them.
- Learners will understand the basics of game publishing and will be able to create and share a basic game build.
Discussion Questions
- What are some ways you customized your Microgame?
- If you were to design your own mod, what might it be and why?
- How can your game assets help set the tone and feel of your game?

Possible Sticking Points
This tutorial uses a Lego product and will collect age information to get started and require an agreement to terms and conditions. If this is an issue we recommend using the Karting Microgame.

Some of these tutorials will have learners accessing the Unity Asset Store. If this is an issue, select assets can be downloaded by an educator and shared another way.

In the Unity Asset Store, learners may be able to access assets that mimic weapons.

Explore A Microgame
Getting Started with Scripts

Summary
In this tutorial, you will identify the role of code in creating experiences in Unity. You will create a new script component. You will learn how to edit a script component in your integrated Development environment. You will display a message from a script in the Unity Editor’s Console Window.

Steps
Before you Begin:
You will need to have a new blank project open in Unity.
Have access to an IDE (Integrated Development Environment) such as Visual Studio.

Begin the Unity Tutorial
You will begin by learning about what an IDE (Integrated Development Environment) is and how they are used.
Next, you will be asked to install an IDE such as Visual Studio. If you already have an IDE installed, you can skip step 3 and move to step 4 of the tutorial.

In step four, you will be guided through adding a new GameObject as well as adding a script component to this object. The tutorial expects you to be using an existing project, but you can use a new project for this, as recommended in the Before you Begin section.

You are now ready to move on to the next tutorial in the series.
In Code in Default Script you will continue the journey you were on in the last section. You begin by learning about the importance of naming in your scripts as well as what your Start and Update functions do.
In step 3, you will learn how to edit the start function of your script and test it using the Editors Console window.

In step 4, you will learn how to edit the Update function and test this one as well using the Editors Console window.

Next, you will explore adding a property with a variable to your script. In this example, it will be a custom message that you will add. Once this step is complete, you will be with this series of tutorials.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Learners will know what an IDE is and how it is used in script creation.
- Learners will understand what a Start and Update function are and will be able to create a simple function for each.
- Learners will understand the impact of naming in scripting.

**Discussion Questions**

- What are some best practices regarding naming and code styles?
- What are some ways a developer can check for problems or functionality in their code?
Sticking Points
If this is a learner's first time dealing with code, they will likely create some syntax errors inadvertently. Make sure learners are keeping an eye on any error indicators or warnings to make sure they catch things before trying to run.

Naming is important in scripting, but so is spelling. Misspelling in code will often cause errors, but there will be a few that aren't caught (because they do work in the script... just not as intended). If learners are running a program and the results aren't what they should be, make sure their spelling is consistent and matches the tutorial.

Getting Started With Scripts
Principles of Object-Oriented Programming

Summary
In this tutorial you will learn about the basics of object-oriented programming and its four associated principles: abstraction, encapsulation, inheritance, and polymorphism.

Begin the Unity Tutorial
You will begin with a brief overview of what object-oriented programming is before moving on to step 3, which is a deeper dive into the four main pillars.

Learning Outcomes
- Learners will be able to define encapsulation, inheritance, polymorphism, and abstraction.
- Learners will be able to explain how the pillars of object-oriented programming work together to create organized and efficient code.
Discussion Questions
- What are some benefits of using object-oriented programming?
- How does object-oriented programming look in Unity? Give examples based on the four pillars.
- Why is code organization and efficiency important?

Sticking Points
This tutorial is text based, some learners may benefit from classroom conversations to help them gain a deeper understanding of the material.

Principles of object-oriented programming - Unity Learn
Roles and Careers for Real-Time Creators

Summary
This tutorial explores the many job opportunities for those with real-time production skills, from entry-level positions to director-level jobs. It covers both jobs in the art and design side of production as well as programming and gives you a glimpse into what a typical workday may look like for each of these career paths.

Steps
Before you Begin: You may choose to download and review the materials featured in the Unity tutorial summary.

Begin the Unity Tutorial
The tutorial begins with a general overview of the realtime career space, focusing on two main categories, art/design, and programming.

Step 2 gives a detailed walkthrough of the various roles that you can find in the art and design side of real-time creation. It also outlines what a typical day may look like for someone in this path. In addition, it lays out what a possible career path may look like for someone getting started in realtime art and design and what other skills may be useful to learn.
Step 2 activity has learners find at least two top-level art and design professionals on a platform like LinkedIn so that they can look back at their job titles and see how they progressed to their current position.

Step 3 showcases the various career paths one may enter if they chose to focus on programming. As in the previous step, it looks at a normal work day, career path, and beneficial skills to pick up along the way. It closes with the same activity as step 2, but this time learners will be looking at the career path of two individuals in top programming positions.

In step 4, learners look at Unity generalists – those that work with both art and design as well as programming. They look at where generalists may work and what sort of skills are useful for them to acquire. For the last activity in this tutorial, learners will be tasked with watching a short video, then looking up the bios of a few of the developers on the teams that were featured to see if they can identify any Unity generalists on the teams.
The final step of the tutorial has learners watching several videos and thinking about their own possible pathway as a Unity creator.

**Learning Outcomes**
- Learners will understand the landscape of Unity development and how art and design and programming fit into it.
- Learners will know what an average work day looks like for someone in both the art and design and programming creators.
- Learners understand that those working in the realtime industry will likely work their way up a career path to higher level jobs. They will be able to identify what these pathways look like and will be able to evaluate a professional’s path to their current position.

**Discussion Questions**
- What are some important skill sets you would like to develop for a career you are interested in?
- How might you go about developing these skills?
- What are some common skills shared by artists, programmers and generalists?
- What are some similarities shared between each role in a typical day?
- What are the key differences between each role in a typical day?

**Sticking Points**
This tutorial will have learners access sites like LinkedIn. If this is an issue, educators may want to print out a few industry bios to share with the group.

Some learners may believe that they can start at the top of a career pathway, and be ready to highlight how most professionals will have to work their way up to higher-level positions.

*Roles And Careers For Realtime Creators*
Introduction to User Feedback and Testing

Summary
This tutorial explores the purpose of user feedback and how you can integrate user testing into your design and development process. It also gives tips for running feedback sessions and how to get actionable feedback from target users.

Steps
You will begin by looking at the importance of testing and user feedback as well as why it is available to set up structured testing for your games.

Next, you will do a deep dive into the phases of user testing, such as defining your objective, planning, facilitating your test, and evaluating the results.

You will close by doing an exercise that lets learners explore what it is like to be a tester by conducting a mini product evaluation.
Learning Outcomes
- Learners will understand what user testing and feedback are and why they are important in development.
- Learners will have the skills needed to set up a basic user test.
- Learners will have participated in and understand what it's like to perform a basic product test.

Discussion Questions
- How would understanding the difference between needs versus desires help in the evaluation and testing process?
- Have you seen user feedback on social media? What kinds of feedback do you see? Is this feedback valuable and actionable for developers?
- How can developers set testers up to provide better, more actionable feedback for their games?
- What should testers keep in mind if they want to provide feedback in a way that is truly helpful to developers?

Sticking Points
Some learners may struggle to select a product to run their mini product evolution on. Educators may want to have a short list of products or applications ready for learners to choose from.

Some learners may need guidance to explore the idea of wants versus needs and how this impacts feedback.

Some learners may need help exploring and identifying what things that trigger strong opinions they may have about a product.

Introduction to user feedback and testing - Unity Learn
Publishing for iOS

Summary
In this tutorial, learners will be introduced to Unity's built-in publishing feature for iOS development.

Steps
Before you Begin: This tutorial operates assuming you already have an Apple iOS developer account. If you do not yet have one, you will need to set one up on Apple’s developer website. You will also be expected to have Unity Hub and XCode installed and ready.

Begin the Unity Tutorial
The first step to this tutorial is installing the iOS module in Unity Hub to your target Unity version.
The next steps take place while you are logged into your Apple iOS developer account on Apple's developer website. Here you will be guided through creating a certificate, identifier, and profile that you will need for publishing your iOS application.

Once you have finished, the next step will bring you back to your Unity project, where you will be walked through some required and basic settings to configure for preparing a build for an iOS device. Note that there may be some differences between the tutorial and your project as some options will be left up to your discretion.

You will need XCode open for the next step of this tutorial. Here you will again find differences between your project and the tutorial, as your project and the tutorial will have different information generated for it. Following this tutorial will guide you through an upload onto the Apple developer site.
Learning Outcomes

- Learners will know the basics needed to prepare a build for iOS devices in Unity.
- Learners will be introduced to some of the requirements for uploading a project for the Apple store.

Discussion Questions
- Why is naming your versions important?
- What may be the next steps we will need to take to publish our game on the Apple Store? (this could be turned into a short research activity and class conversation).
- If you plan to publish your game on Friday, why would you need to start your publishing process much earlier than that day?

Sticking Points

The tutorial requires an Apple developer account. If this is not something that can be obtained for learners, this tutorial cannot be completed.

This tutorial does not cover all the necessary steps for publishing on the Apple App Store. Learners will need to do their own research for navigating Apple's requirements.

It is up to learners to make sure their Apple account details (certificates, identifiers, and profiles) are all correct and functioning.

Publishing for iOS
Publishing for Android

Summary
In this tutorial, learners will be introduced to Unity's built-in publishing feature for Android development.

Steps
Before you Begin:
For this tutorial, you will need an updated Java SDK and an Android NDK and SDK installed. This can be done via Unity by adding a module in the Unity Hub or through the necessary official sites, Oracle and developer.android.

This tutorial is done with a pro Unity license. If you are not using a pro license, you may still follow along, but some things may differ.

This tutorial also asks you to download the Reflect Package from the Package Manager. This is optional depending on the type of project you are creating (Reflect Package is typically used in the AEC industry for engineers and architects).
Begin the Unity Tutorial

First, you will need to set up your environment. The tutorial will suggest two different ways to get an updated Java SDK and an Android NDK and SDK. You may choose how you obtain them. It is highly recommended that you get the latest version. The recommended way is to install them along with the Android build support to your target Unity version through the Unity Hub modules.

Once installed, you can go to your preferences of external tools to check if your settings are correct.

The next few steps will take you through the build settings/player settings to configure your project for an Android build. Please note that there will be differences between your project and the tutorial depending on license version and your project details. You will also be guided through generating a key to be used for publishing on an app store.
Learning Outcomes

- Learners will know the basics for preparing a build for Android devices in Unity.
- Learners will learn some basic requirements for preparing an Android app for an app store.

Discussion Questions

- What may be the next steps we will need to take to publish our game on the Google Play store? (this could be turned into a short research activity and class conversation).
- There are a lot of Android phones out there, which means your game may look different on each one. Why do you have to keep this in mind when publishing?

Sticking Points

This tutorial does not cover all the necessary steps for publishing on the Google app store.

Learners will need to do their own research for navigating Google's requirements.

Learners will need to make sure they have the correct version downloaded for each required module.

If not using the Unity Hub to gather the external tools, make sure the correct path has been given to Unity for it to locate the downloaded tools.

Publishing for Android
Publishing for PC/Mac

Summary
In this tutorial, learners will learn the basics of publishing for PC and Mac computers.

Begin the Unity Tutorial
For this tutorial, you will need to watch the video guide on creating a build for PC/Mac with a custom application icon. The rest of the tutorial is a written version of the video guide for quick reference and clarification.

Learning Outcomes
- Learners will be able to create a build for a PC or Mac.
- Learners will learn how to change the appearance of the default application icon for their build.

Discussion Questions
- What may be the next steps we will need to take to make our game available to play? (this could be turned into a short research activity and class conversation)
-What are some platforms you can publish your game to? (this could be turned into a short research activity)
-Once a game is published, will developers still need to work on the game?

**Sticking Points**

Make sure that learners do not rename or remove any files in the data folder of a build as this will prevent the application from running.
Learners should always save their files to an easy-to-find and safe location so that they may locate their project and the build files easily.

[Publishing for PC/Mac]
Getting Started with Plastic SCM

Summary
In this tutorial, you will begin with the basics of using Plastic SCM, a source control application used for version control (storing versions of your project) and collaboration (sharing your project amongst your team members). You will be using Plastic SCM Cloud Edition and the Plastic SCM interface within Unity.

Steps
Before you Begin: Plastic SCM is already installed in the Unity Editor, but you should make sure it is up to date. It can be located in the Version Control package of the Package Manager. For this tutorial, it should be version 1.17.2 or higher. Update as needed.

Begin the Unity Tutorial
First, you will learn more about what Plastic SCM is, including the uses of version control software in general, as well as how it works with Unity.

The next step will guide you through installing the external client application for Plastic SCM Cloud Edition. You will be downloading from
Plastic SCM's download page. You will also be able to find more information about Plastic’s pricing tiers on the Plastic SCM page on the Unity website.

Once installed, you will be walked through creating an account and organization. You will then login into your new account within the Unity editor and be able to create a new cloud organization for your projects.

You are now ready for the next steps of this tutorial series, where you will learn about creating a new workspace and repository, saving your project to the cloud, collaborating with team members, and creating branches and workstreams.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Learners will understand what Plastic SCM is and how it can be used in Unity.
- Learners will learn how to set up Plastic SCM Cloud Edition with their Unity projects.
- Learners will know some of the basics of using version control applications, such as collaborating, cloud saving, and workflow management.

**Discussion Questions**

- What are some benefits of using version control in your project?
- What are some reasons for branching workstreams?
- What are some tips to avoid merge conflicts?

**Sticking Points**

Make sure learners have Plastic SCM above or at the specified version. Also keep track of what edition learners are using, the size of the project team, and scope of the project to avoid generating unnecessary fees.

*Getting Started with Plastic SCM*
Teacher Resources
Unity Materials

➢ What is Unity
➢ Explore the Unity Editor
➢ Hour of Code, Creator Kit: Beginner Coding
➢ Publishing for IOS
➢ Publishing for Android
➢ Publishing for PC/Mac
➢ Plastic SCM Cloud Edition | Unity Version Control
➢ Getting started with Plastic SCM - Unity Learn
➢ Unity Manual 2019.2