

IBM Family Science Saturdays

Introduction to Programming with Scratch (Official Scratch Web Site: scratch.mit.edu)

Scratch is a free, kid-friendly programming platform that makes learning the basics of programming easy and fun. We think Scratch is pretty cool and we hope you do too.

From the Scratch web site: “**With Scratch, you can program your own interactive stories, games, and animations — and share your creations with others in the online community.**”

Special thanks goes to the MIT Media Lab, specifically Professor Mitchel Resnick and his students, for developing Scratch and giving IBM special permission to use Scratch in our Family Science Saturdays program.

To facilitate your use of Scratch, we want to share some tips and information with you.

- Scratch can be accessed directly online. Just search for “**Scratch**” with your favorite web browser. Or use the web address: scratch.mit.edu.
- Scratch can now be run directly from the web site (select “**Try It Out**”), or you can choose to download the program to your computer.
- In today’s session, we gave you an overview of the program, but you can get a more complete view from the getting started guides. To access, select the **Help** tab from the topmost bar. There, you will find several demos and tutorials on getting started with Scratch. Be sure to check out the “**Getting Started Guide**” and “**Scratch Cards**”. The Scratch cards have exercises that you can use to try out new programming concepts. If your teacher is interested in trying Scratch, these might be good tools.
- There are lots of examples to help you get inspired and learn from what others have done. To find them, select “**See Examples**” from the main page. Selecting an example you would like to see will take you to another page, where you can try out the program. More importantly, you can see how the author programmed it by selecting “**See inside**” on the top right corner. Learning from examples is a great way to increase your own programming skills and is a strategy that even professional programmers use.
- If you make a cool program, you can even share it with others (but only with your parent’s permission) through the Scratch web site.

We hope you enjoy learning the basics of programming and that you continue to try out your new skills by explore the world of Scratch and beyond.

P.S. When you are ready to move beyond Scratch, check out **CMU’s Alice environment**, built by the late, Randy Pausch, who also wrote *The Last Lecture*. This is also a free download and is appropriate for older students, starting in middle school.