# How to play Minesweeper

Minesweeper is a logic puzzle on a grid of closed squares. Open every square that has no mine without opening a mine. Each number shows how many mines touch that square, corners included. Use the numbers to work out where the mines are, flag them, and you win when only the mines stay closed.

## Goal

Open every square that does not hide a mine. You win when only the mines are left closed, and you lose if you open a mine.

## Setup

- You start with a grid of closed squares. Some of them hide mines, and the mine counter tells you how many.
- Your first tap is always safe and usually opens a whole empty area at once.
- Opened squares show a number, or nothing if no mine is near.
- A toggle at the bottom switches between Reveal and Flag. A long press also flags a square.

## How to play

**1.** Tap any square to start. In Minetide the first tap is always safe.

**2.** Read the numbers on the edge of the opened area. A number counts the mines in the eight squares around it.

**3.** If a number has exactly as many closed squares around it as its value, all of those squares are mines. Flag them.

**4.** If a number already has all its mines flagged, every other closed square around it is safe. Open them.

**5.** Tap a number whose flags are all placed to open its other neighbours in one move. This is called a chord.

**6.** Compare two neighbouring numbers. Their shared squares often show which square is safe and which is a mine.

**7.** Repeat: open the safe squares, flag the mines and read the new numbers.

**8.** Stop when every square without a mine is open. Check the mine counter to see how many are left.

## Key rules

**What do the numbers mean in Minesweeper?**
A number tells you how many mines touch that square. Touching means the eight squares around it: up, down, left, right and the four corners. A 1 means exactly one mine is next to it. A square with no number has no mine around it, so its neighbours open automatically.

**How do you win Minesweeper?**
You win by opening every square that has no mine. You do not need to flag all the mines, although flags help you keep track. When only mine squares are left closed, the board is complete. In Minetide your time is saved, and you can try to beat it.

**What happens when you open a mine?**
If you open a mine, the board ends and you lose. In Minetide you can then cover the mine with a flag and play on, once per game, using the Second chance offer. Boards never need a guess, so you can always avoid a mine by logic.

**How do you flag a mine in Minesweeper?**
You flag a square to mark it as a mine you know about. In Minetide, long-press the square, or switch the toggle at the bottom from Reveal to Flag and tap. The counter at the top shows the mines left. Flags are only for you and do not change the rules.

**What is chording in Minesweeper?**
Chording means tapping an opened number that already has all its mines flagged, so its other closed neighbours open at once. It saves many taps. Be careful: if one of your flags is wrong, the chord opens a real mine. In Minetide a long press on the number always does it.

**Is the first click in Minesweeper always safe?**
Yes in Minetide: your first tap is always safe and opens an area. Some other versions do not protect the first click, which can make the opening move a matter of luck. A safe start means every game begins with real information to work with.

**Do you ever need to guess in Minesweeper?**
In some versions you do, but not in Minetide. Every Minetide board is checked by a solver before you get it, so it can always be finished by logic alone. If you feel you have to guess, look again at the numbers next to the closed squares.

## Winning and scoring

There are no points in Minetide. You win a board by opening every safe square, and your time is saved as a best time for each size. In the Journey you can earn up to three stars on a level: one for clearing it, one for beating the target time, and one for clearing it with no hint and no second chance.

## Tips

- Start by looking for a 1 with only one closed square next to it. That square is a mine.
- When a number already has all its flags, open every other square around it.
- Check a square from two sides. A square that touches two numbers must satisfy both, which often leaves only one possible answer.
- Compare two neighbouring numbers. If one needs the same mines as the other, the squares they do not share are safe.
- Work along the edge of the open area instead of jumping to a far corner.
- Count the mines left. When the number of closed squares equals the mines left, they are all mines.
- Start on Beginner, then move to Intermediate and Expert once the basic patterns feel easy.
- If you are stuck, use a hint. In Minetide it shows a sure move and the numbers that prove it.

## Avoid these mistakes

- Guessing when a safe move exists. Look at the numbers around the opened area again before you tap an unknown square.
- Placing a flag without proof. A wrong flag misleads you later, and it can set off a mine when you chord.
- Forgetting that corners count. A number counts all eight squares around it.
- Ignoring the borders. Squares on the edge and in corners have fewer neighbours, so they give the easiest clues.
- Tapping a number to chord before all of its flags are in place.


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