

**PLAY YOUR PLACE**

# **A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**

**Welcome to Play Your Place, where you will play and make platform games about your own community.**

**Join thousands of people who are imagining the future of their local neighbourhood, drawing, scanning, uploading, and setting up rules for their own homemade games for the health and prosperity of all – or for total disaster.**

**Learn how to play games made by other people and to make your own game levels and share them with others.**

## **Play Games Made by Other People!**

1. Go to <http://playsouthend.co.uk/>
2. Click on the left-hand Menu, and click “Arcade.” Select and play a game from the arcade! You will find a variety of games that are made by people all across the community.
3. After you have played the game rank it for local flavour, artistry, fun and the quality of it’s idea for change. The most highly ranked games are seen by more people. Every time you rank a game you gain top player points for your service to the game.
4. If you see a game you like but think it could be better, edit it yourself and it will be added to your own games collection. (See below for more about editing).

You can watch a video tutorial about how to play games here  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFgnnwNAAuE>



# Build Your Own Game Level

You have played other people's games and now you have lots of ideas about the game level you want to create.

## Experiment with other people's levels

You can edit other people's existing levels to learn how they constructed them. Looking at how other people have made things will give you ideas. Just click a game in the arcade and then click the edit icon (the pencil) in the hidden menu bar that appears when you hover over the left hand side of the game screen.

## Think about what might happen in the future in your town!

What would be the best thing that could happen? What things annoy you? What change would make the most difference to most people. You might want to use one our Gamestory Guide to help you to develop a more appealing game. <http://localplay.org.uk/tutorials/>

## Draw your own background and components

Now, Make a game level about the change you want to see in your town! To do that, you first need to do some drawing and planning. First, draw the rewards, the obstacles, the objects in the scene, platforms to jump on, and the character or player "avatar" that might be in your game. Second, draw separately some pages of game backgrounds to "stitch" together. If you are worried about the drawing bit, you can ask someone else you know to draw things for you or you can search the game database for the thing you are looking for. Someone may have already created a drawing that you can use.



*An example of 4 drawings designed to be stitched together in the game*

## Scan or photograph your images

Use a scanner or a digital camera or mobile phone to create digital images of the drawings. Save the files to your computer or a memory stick.

## Log in to the game on the website

Click on the left-hand Menu, and click "Login." If you are a first time player, click "Join." On this screen you will be able to enter your email and password. A link will be sent to your email and you need to click on it to verify that it's really you!

## Make New Level

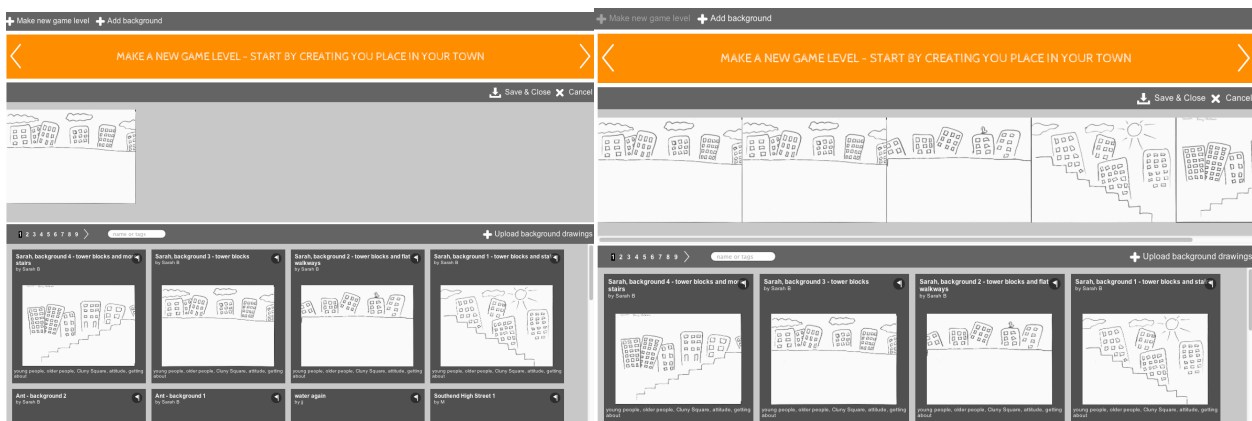
Again, Click on the left-hand Menu and this time select “Make a New Level”. You’ll be instructed to “Make the game of your future town for the health and prosperity of all... or for total disaster!” Use the arrows on either side of these screens to build your game step by step.

## Or Rework an Existing Game Level

The instructions below also apply if you are editing someone else’s game level. Select a level from the arcades. Click on the edit icon (the pencil) in the left hand menu and then edit and recreate the level using the “Edit Game Level” menu.

## Add a Background

- First you can upload new background drawings from your computer just as though you were uploading pictures to Facebook or Flickr. Just click on “ + Upload background drawings”
- Click on “Choose File” and select a drawing to upload. Beware! If you upload an image that is not a drawing it will be removed from the game (if not straight away then soon). The games look good because they are all hand drawn, so we are very strict about this! Backgrounds are also always saved as black and white.
- Click “Save” and repeat the process until you have added all the drawing background drawings that you want to use in your game level.
- You can then assemble the drawings from the drawing library by clicking on them or dragging them to the game level viewer (above the image library). You can remove them by clicking on the trash icon that appears when you hover over it. You can arrange them by dragging. That’s how you get panoramic, scrolling backgrounds in your game!



*Click on background images in the library or drag them into the game level viewer to create your panoramic scrolling background.*

## Choose Your Avatar

The next screen allows you to choose your game character or avatar.

You can choose someone else's drawing or add your own avatar drawing to the game in exactly the same way as you can with backgrounds.

However avatars are treated a bit differently to backgrounds as you can crop the area around the image and it will act as though it is a cut out in the game, with an erased background. This is true of any thing that is not a background drawing.

## Things

On the next screen you can add things to your game level.

- A. We recommend you upload all of the drawings of obstacles, pickups, platforms and props that you want to use in your game by clicking on "+ Upload drawings of things"
- B. Again you can crop the area around the image and it will act as though it is a cut out in the game, with an invisible background.
- C. Then you can drag things to the place where you want them to appear in your game.

## Make things do stuff

The next screen is the "edit thing properties" window. And this is where the real fun starts as you can start to make your things move and change the way they will sound when the player collides with them

- A. Position them exactly where you want them to appear by clicking on them so that they display the edit square. Then you can click on the move icon (the arrow cross in the middle) and drag it to where you want it.
- B. Change their size and rotation by clicking on the Scale and Rotate icons that surround them
- C. Click on the "thing editor" icon (the pencil) to change the way it acts, moves, and sounds.
- D. At this point we recommend you preview your game to see how it plays.
- E. Note: you can duplicate things (and any properties that you have added to it) by pressing the alt key (next to the command/apple key on your keyboard) and then clicking and dragging. This is a quick way to build up action in your game level.

## Add gameplay rules

- A. This part of the game building is really quite advanced. It allows you to build stories and consequences into your game using the things that you have added to it. We suggest you experiment with this to start to build really strong stories.
- B. A simple first step though, is to say how someone wins or loses and what level they should go to in each case.

## Save & Close

At any time in this process you can Click Save & Close.

Here, you will:

- Name the game level

- Identify the place the game is happening
- Choose your idea for change and describe it
- Describe your mission (how to win the game level)

Titles are *super important* as they help people find your level in order to play it, and help other players understand the point of your level.

## **Add Sounds and Music**

For a really appealing and powerful game you need to get the sound right. At the “Save & Close” screen, you may select a number of music tracks that will create the right atmosphere for your game level. You can also select the sounds that players will hear when they win and lose (you can add these under “More Options” when you save too). When combined with the collision and pick up sounds that you add to things in your game the background music creates a whole sound world.

## **Test your game**

You will need to play your game and re-edit it a lot before your game is really good. A fun game is difficult but not impossible to win. It is challenging and contains lots of surprises. It is more difficult than you might think to create a great game. But as we have seen, it’s fun trying and when it works the results can be stunning.

Visit our youtube channel to see videos of some sample games  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/LocalPlayNet>

## **Tell your friends!**

Players find game levels by their rankings. Be an active member of the game making and playing community. Play and rank games and others will rank yours!

