Create an Animation with Scratch

What is Scratch?
Scratch is a super simple online animation/video game creation tool. It is a very simple visual element programming language that allows beginners to see how to think about software creation and game design.

Before You Begin: Find the Online Tutorials

Go to Scratch.MIT.edu

Once you are on the website, click on the image of the Scratch Cat with the green circle behind him. This will take you to the scratch interface, but you will see a tips menu on the right side of the screen. Follow along with the online tutorial to learn the basics of using Scratch.

Vocab You Need to Know Before You Start

Sprite The character you are animating. You can import in pictures, use Scratch’s sprites, or even draw your own!
Costumes The different looks of a single sprite in your animation.
Scripts The directions you give your sprites for the actions they are going to perform.

Project Ideas:
- Dinosaurs in Space
- Dig a hole to China
- Create a crime
- First Love
- Recreate Harry Potter
- Surprise in a Box

Develop Your Project Idea

First come up with a theme: What do you want to animate?
Be as crazy as you’ve always wanted to be! Come up with an idea of what you want to animate. Tell a little story. It doesn’t have to be detailed, maybe just a singing bat!

Step One: Find or Create a Sprite for Your Animation

Once you know what you want to animate, find the right sprites to represent your characters.
You can select a sprite from the sprite library, but remember you can draw your own sprite (or even upload an image of yourself!), so don’t limit yourself!
Step Two: Find a Background

*Use the background library or create your own*

You want to set the stage for your story. Not everything can take place in the Matrix!

Step Three: ANIMATE!

*Now it's time to play!*

Use the menu to access animation features. Start with adding motions to bring your sprite to life.

REMEMBER, the blocks need to be snapped together to create the action sequence for your sprite. Try using the Motion scripts to make your sprite move from one corner to another. Then see if you can use Looks to make your sprite ask “has anyone seen my contact?”

*When in doubt, add a “wait” between steps. This gives Scratch a chance to show the changes you want to display!*

Don’t forget to play with sounds, controls and events as well!

If you want to find more sounds, check out the sound library.

Step Four: Experiment

*Try out a few new things.*

Play with Scratch. See if you can figure out how to do any of these:

- Animate 2 sprites to interact with each other
- Add a new costume to sprite you already have
- Make your animation interactive
  - Ask for a user’s name
  - Allow a user to move the sprite around

To Create an Account or No?

You don’t need to create an account to use Scratch, but you do need an account to save or share your creation. If you’re feeling unsure today, don’t worry about it. You can always create an account in the future; you just won’t have access to what you already made.

YOU’RE DONE! HERE’S SOME NEXT STEPS YOU COULD TAKE:

- **Look at Other Scratch Projects:** Get inspired! Looking at other people’s work can help you learn what else is possible.
- **Share Your Projects:** Scratch is a community, and communities need contributions from all their members. Let other people see your creations so they can get inspired by what you create too!