

WORDS

- **appearance** = the way you look
- **attend** = go to
- **avatar** = a picture of a person, animal or other object that represents you on a computer screen
- **constantly** = always
- **create** = make, start
- **free account** = a membership that you don't have to pay for
- **inventory** = a list of objects you can choose from
- **landscape** = the countryside, mountains or lakes
- **let** = to give a person something to use for a certain time
- **mainland** = the main or most important area of land
- **membership fee** = money that you must pay every week or month to be a member
- **own** = belong to
- **real** = something that exists
- **resident** = someone who lives in a place
- **sign up** = to become a member
- **viewer** = program with which you can see something
- **virtual** = not real ; something that is on the Internet and not in real life

Second Life is a **virtual** world in three dimensions that you can enter through the Internet. Users can travel around, talk or communicate with others, buy land and houses, build cars, parks or any other object you can think of. You can go shopping, **attend** colleges and universities or go to concerts and other events. You can do almost anything you can do in the **real** world. *Second Life* was **created** in 2003 by a San Francisco company called Linden Lab.

THE WORLD OF SECOND LIFE

When you **sign up** for a **free account** you become a **resident**. It gives you the right to **create** an **avatar** and travel around in *Second Life*. In order to view this **virtual** world you must download a special **viewer** and install it on your computer.

The *Second Life* world is made up of different regions. The **mainland** is the biggest region. It is **owned** by Linden Lab itself. There are also other areas, owned by private people or other companies.

A **membership fee** of ten dollars a month lets you to buy your own land. By becoming a paying member you also get some **virtual** money that you can spend. You also get help if you have problems or run into trouble.

New **residents** who enter *Second Life* for the first time start on "*Orientation Island*". Users learn the rules of the online world, how to navigate from one place to another and how to communicate with others. They are also given a tour of interesting places to visit.

If you have your own land in *Second Life* you can use it in any way you want. You can build houses or other objects on it, **let** it to others or even design your own **landscape**.

AVATARS

Every **resident** in *Second Life* has their own **avatar**. They can choose ready made ones or design **avatars** of their own.

You can choose hair and skin colour, body parts or clothing from an **inventory**. An **avatar** does not have to be human. It can also be an animal, plant or even a robot, like in Star Wars.

An **avatar** can be changed at any time and many people really have fun **constantly** changing their **appearance**.



WORDS

- **according to** = as said by someone
- **attach to** = connect to
- **bad language** = to swear
- **bird's eye view** = you can see something from high above
- **building block** = objects that you can put together to make more complicated ones
- **complicated** = not easy
- **design** = make, create, draw
- **discriminate against** = to treat a person in an unfair way
- **forbid-forbade-forbidden** = not allowed
- **however** = but
- **in mind** = remember
- **landscape** = the countryside, mountains or lakes
- **log on** = here: to get into
- **mark as** = to show something as
- **method** = way
- **off limits** = forbidden; you are not allowed to go there
- **owner** = a person who something belongs to
- **race** = group of people who have another skin colour
- **regularly** = very often
- **resident** = someone who lives in a place
- **reveal** = to make known, show
- **rule** = a law that tells you how you must play a game
- **sandbox** = a place where you can practice things
- **shape** = form
- **society** = people in general
- **take part** = become an active member of
- **user accounts** = people who have registered
- **violence** = if you hurt, hit or attack other people
- **virtual** = not real ; something that is on the Internet and not in real life

TRAVEL AND COMMUNICATION IN SECOND LIFE

Avatars can move around in *Second Life* in three ways. The easiest way is walking. Clicking a button lets you fly over **landscapes** like Superman and gives you a **bird's eye view** of the online world .

The fastest **method** of travelling over long distances is teleporting. You open up a map and click on the place you want to go to. **However**, you can't go everywhere you want. Some places are **off limits**, and sometimes you must ask **owners** for permission to travel across their land.

Communication in *Second Life* is easy. **Residents** can talk to each other with microphones **attached** to their computers. Or they may write messages in specially **designed** chat boxes.

CREATING OBJECTS

Everything that you see in *Second Life* was created by one of its members. New **residents** can practice making objects in the so-called **sandbox**. You can **design** your own buildings, houses, cars or other objects by using **building blocks** that come in all **shapes**. **Complicated** or even animated objects can be made by using a special programming language in *Second Life*.



POPULATION

According to Linden Lab there are about 10 million **user accounts** in *Second Life*. This number, **however**, does not show the real number of people who **take part** because a user may have more than one account. Most of them do not **log on** to the **virtual world** **regularly** and only 10% of all registered users come back after their first visit.

Residents of *Second Life* come from all areas of **society**. Doctors, students and big company bosses take part, as well as factory workers or housewives. About 60% of all **residents** are men.

When you live in *Second Life* you must keep some **rules in mind**:

- It is **forbidden** to **discriminate** against other **races**, cultures or religions.
- **Violence**, using **bad language** or running around naked is not allowed in areas that are **marked** as safe.
- You are not allowed to **reveal** personal information about someone else.

WORDS

- **additional** = extra
- **although** = while
- **area** = section, region
- **campaign** = actions that you do if you want to get elected
- **confuse** = mix up
- **convert** = exchange
- **fee** = money you must pay to be a member of or use something
- **freedom** = liberty, being free
- **improve** = to make better
- **log on** = here: to get into
- **point out** = to show important facts
- **politician** = someone who works in politics or in the government or someone who is a member of parliament
- **popularity** = when something is liked by many people
- **presence** = to be active in a place
- **public event** = an event which everyone can go to, not private
- **real** = things or people that exist
- **real life** = something that exists in the real world
- **resident** = someone who lives in a place
- **separate** = your own
- **staff** = all the people who work for a company or organization
- **take part** = become an active member of
- **virtual** = not real ; something that is on the Internet and not in real life
- **youngster** = a teenager or a young adult

Young people are not allowed into *Second Life*. **Youngsters** between 13 and 17 must **log on** to their own **virtual** world called *Teen Second Life*. It is a **separate** 3D world which works in much the same way as *Second Life* for adults. **Additional** helpers show **youngsters** around and help them navigate.

ECONOMY

Second Life has its own money called the Linden dollar. **Residents** can go to a bank and **convert** real money into Linden dollars. One US dollar buys you about 267 dollars in the **virtual** world. Members who pay a monthly **fee** get about 300 Linden dollars a week to spend.

Not everything in *Second Life* can be bought with Linden dollars. Sometimes you will have to pay with real money, for example, if you buy a larger **area** of land.

SECOND LIFE AND THE REAL WORLD

More and more people and even companies around the world are finding out that they can **improve** their **popularity** by **taking part** in *Second Life*. Some companies organize **staff** meetings, others organize **public events** for **virtual** users.

Real life colleges and universities have started to use *Second Life* to hold classes. **Politicians** are using *Second Life* for their **campaigns** and to become popular. Even TV stations have their own **presence** in *Second Life*.

DANGERS

Although some Internet experts say that *Second Life* gives people **freedom** and lets them do things that they can't do in real life they do **point out** some dangers.

- *Second Life* is not that easy to learn. A new member may spend a lot of time in front of their computer.
- The **virtual** world might make you forget your **real** friends.
- Some experts say that players sometimes get **confused** between *Second Life* and the real world.

