

The Beginner's Guide to Skyrim

Do not use mods in your first playthrough.

Mods modify the game from its original form, which can include certain quests and things that you might personally want to include in your playing experience. I also don't recommend using "survival mode" for those who have the anniversary edition. Get to know the base game first before adding in any alterations or extra difficulty settings.

First: Understand that Skyrim is not a single playthrough game. You are going to play it dozens of times, and it will be just as fun as the first time.

In my experience, you will probably have more fun in your fourth or fifth playthrough. The thing that makes Skyrim so fun is that no matter how many times you play it, you'll have a different story. It gets even more fun later on, because you'll know enough to actually create a story for your character.

The first two playthroughs are basically getting used to the mechanics of the game.

Playthrough #1: Getting used to the game

Playthrough #2: Playing through the opposites of the quest you chose the first time (*ex: playing Stormcloaks instead of Imperials, choosing the Dawnguard over the vampires, etc...*)

Questions About The First Playthrough

Question: What should I do?

Answer: Everything.

That way you know how to play the game in the future where you want to actually roleplay and build a story for your character.

Question: "What should I do first?"

Answer: Make your character.

Making your character can be a long process, so I made a separate document with those details. I added another detail in that document as well, about leveling.

Most of the game is relatively easy to follow, but I found the leveling up mechanics to be confusing as hell. Skill levels are relevant to the different playable races, so I included it in the character building document as well.

Here's the link: [Character Building](#)

You've made your character, and have gone through the tutorial. Hadvar/Ralof is running towards Riverwood, and now you're free to do whatever. What do you do now?

That really depends on you, but here's what I recommend for getting a good footing.

What to do first

Complete the first part of the main quest. You'll go to Riverwood, and then Whiterun.

I won't spoil the story for you, but those are the two places you'll want to go first. Along the way, there are certain things you can do that will increase your amount of gold, and experience level.

From Riverwood to Whiterun

I recommend following after Ralof/Hadvar towards Riverwood instead of splitting up. It just makes the journey easier, and they give little details about the world of Skyrim that are fun and helpful to know.

You'll encounter the first standing stones: thief, mage, and warrior. Activating one of these three stones will allow you to learn each class of skills 20% faster.

Example: If you activate the mage stone, you'll learn skills like enchanting and destruction 20% faster.

Pick the one for the class you want to start with first.

Along the way, pick up every mountain flower that you see. Catch the insects, especially the blue butterfly wings. In the unmodded version of Skyrim, you can rummage through the barrels without getting a bounty. This will be important in a moment.

In Riverwood

Follow the story of the game until you're quested with going to Whiterun. Before you leave, pillage the barrels for wine, mead, and salt piles. Also, go to the mill area to find an ax. There should be one up for grabs by the sawmill area. Once you have this, head to Whiterun.

On The Way to Whiterun

On the way to Whiterun, stop by the Honningbrew Meadery, and collect all of the mead that you can carry. Go to all of the farms, and grab all of the wheat as well.

When you get to Whiterun, you're going to sell the mead off at Belethor's General Goods Store. Hold onto the wheat, mountain flowers, bug parts, and salt piles.

At Whiterun

That stupid Idolaf Battle-Born guy is going to make you choose a side. **Pick Battle-Born.** That way you can raid his house and farm for low level items to sell off, and it will help you in a quest you'll be doing later on in the game.

Okay, why am I lugging around a woodcutting ax?

When you get into Whiterun, there's a wooden stump thingy. You'll be able to chop wood there. Chop some wood, and then sell it to Hulda at Hulda's Inn. She will now consider you a friend, and you can take all of the food and low level items in the inn to sell at Belethor's General Goods - OR the Khajiit caravan camps if they're outside the city.

You don't need the ax anymore at this point, so you can sell it at the blacksmiths for a dismal price.

Why all the insects and mountain flowers?

Your starting skill is alchemy. It's an incredibly easy skill for beginning-level grinding. You can level up really quick, it will save your ass in a battle, AND it's highly lucrative. I easily got \$1k in my pocket on the first day, simply from selling potions.

Once you've befriended Hulda and sold everything else off at Belethor's, head to Arcadia's Cauldron that's literally right next door. Pick all of the nightshade around as well.

In the shop, there's an alchemy lab. There are so many alchemy recipes, but before you begin brewing, check Arcadia's stock for deathbell. Here's where it all comes together.

Brew these recipes:

Damage Magicka Regen - blue mountain flower + blue butterfly wing

Slow - deathbell + salt

Fortify Health - blue mountain flower + wheat

The first two are for selling. The third one is to keep on you to keep yourself from dying. There are more recipes, but it's a lot to put in one document. I made a post on this sub before about good beginning recipes.

You can read it here: [Six Essential Potions For Beginners](#)

There is a more extensive alchemy recipe guide on my Imgur, you can read that here: [How to turn hanging moss into riches](#)

Now that you have a leg up, here's where to go next. It depends on your chosen class:

Thief skills - Riften

Warrior skills - join the Companions in Whiterun

Mage - **DO NOT GO TO WINTERHOLD FIRST.**

Yes, the mage's college is in Winterhold, but that hold capitol is not a city where you can get a carriage out of there. You have to walk back to a main city, and there are ice wolves everywhere. They will kill you.

Practice destruction spells on the local deer in the Whiterun area, and also learn combat with a dagger. When you get to a place where you can take down a sabrecat, you'll be okay with an icewolf.

At this point, the game is yours.

Go wherever you want, and do whatever you want. Just make sure to do everything so that you'll know how to maneuver the game when you're ready to build characters for an actual role-playing experience.

Hope this helps! Happy gaming, everyone! :)

