

# VRChat, or “the con that never ends”

## Starting the Rabbit Hole

1. First, glimpses both broad and deep from [the PMG video](#), much love
2. This [beginner UI guide](#), still the only newcomer intro I’ve seen explain the cache; there was also [this video](#) whose *first* half provided the best primer I found re: tech differences (the *latter* half shows a few users being degenerate trolls at points, just as a heads up).
3. Finally, it’s been helping me to bounce between trying my luck in worlds firsthand and stepping back out to view players’ perspectives (e.g. shoutouts to [Straszfilms](#) from PMG’s video, but *also* really loved how [this video](#) captures a coder’s angle)

## Choosing the First Avatar

First-timers will enter a tutorial map where you pick from a small selection of premade avatars. You can use the same interactions in worlds located under the menu’s “Avatar Worlds” tab to find something a little more distinct. Uploading your own is restricted by [account trust rank](#). *For my part, I had more luck searching for a few keywords (e.g. “lowpoly avatars” which helped me find @MarinoDev’s world, exactly what I had hoped for!) than relying on what other users were recommending for avatar worlds.*

- Have a good-perf model on-reserve for event areas and if a world gets crowded
- Pick a good [fallback \(docs\)](#), e.g. avatars that can draw [may be unseen](#) simply because Quest users won’t see an avatar’s VFX! (or PC users with safety settings up!)
- Take advantage of the 25 slots to favorite avatars if you’re stuck between liking several!\*

## Facing the Core Problem: Top-down

At this point I had toured around a few different kinds of public worlds, but couldn’t help feel a sharp disconnect between loving portrayals of long-time players like PMG interviewed and the first-time user experience. (Particularly if you went in wanting to make friends, didn’t have your expectations in check, and had zero luck talking to anyone—or worse, ended up with someone else having fun at your expense.) [It’s hardly a new observation](#), but generally seems to result in a paradigm that reminds me of how old-age forums would always splinter and grow – leaving people to inquire regarding:

## VRChat’s Giant Events

- “VKET” ([EN/JP](#) Twitter; [ELI5](#)) – creators submit to join in it, like a CES x Comiket
  - Their main site links [music](#), [comics](#), [games](#) + the [primary](#) showcases
  - Noticed the big vtuber talent agencies there, but also Coca-Cola etc.
  - Worlds often seem to be removed after they end, likely due to licensing

- Environments often modeled as optimistic, futurist [concept art showcases](#)
- “VRCon” ([Twitter](#), [site](#)) – like VKET, but less corporate, more community festival-y
  - [2021's](#) had a hub area → community booth alley or DJ/panel stage areas
- A messy historical list: <https://vrchat-legends.fandom.com/wiki/Category:Events>

## VRChat's Regular Events

- <https://hello.vrchat.com/events> – a few regular weekend activities, types vary
- <https://vrchatevents.com/> ([Twitter](#), Discord) – not just weekend, types vary
- <https://vrcc.events/> – primarily weekends, for DJs/music
- [https://reddit.com/r/VRchat/?f=flair\\_name%3A%22Events%22](https://reddit.com/r/VRchat/?f=flair_name%3A%22Events%22) – random grab bag
- <https://en.vrcw.net/event> – JP-community calendar

## VRChat's Player Communities

*Disclaimer: these aren't vetted for quality, would fully encourage doing individual research first. Just either names that came up semi-regularly, or, had personal interest to me.*

- **Still need to go sleuthing through [this thread](#), and [these threads](#)**
- *Personal goals: tracking down world creation community and creator community*
- [VRCon](#): check out the Community Festival area to find communities' booths → Discords
- VRC Legend of Zelda Network – **find the invite in Hyrule Castle Town by lmdy**
- RP: “search for the vrcon world and check the community dome. There were quite a few rp communities that had booths in there and all of them had their contact info.” + Iceberg video elsewhere in this doc shows three different flavors ([informal](#), [formal](#), [combat](#)).
- Language Learning: e.g. [EN-JP Language Exchange by BocuD](#)
- “Devs to world creators, to business people, artists, dancers, roleplayers, photographers, coders, shaderManiacs, Rpers, [filmmakers], [partiers]. The list goes on and on. [Korean and Japanese players] will also have their OWN equivalent of those communities.”
- Furry groups: main 3 areas seem to be the chill FurLounge, small Furry Talk and Chill, and rowdy FurHub. Would be curious to visit and see whether a new user could tell the difference! No-mic users generally claimed to interact easier in these groups as well.
- Drinking groups: at least some alleged to be deliberately drinking in excess
- Discords: [Official](#) (which *also* has a #community-servers channel updated now and then)
  - [VRChat Community](#) (+[twitter](#))
  - [Helping Hands](#) (VR American Sign Language, [lesson site](#), [lesson VODs](#))
    - Noted it's not 1:1 ASL, but close—minor tweaks for non-full finger tracking
    - Daily classes for free
  - [Ancients of VR](#)
  - [StemVR](#)
  - [VRC Kmart](#)
  - [VRC Speech to Text](#)
- [Official Forums](#): mostly boards about content creation, but has a hub for the rest

## VRChat's Clubbing Scene

- Clubbing: *indulge the isakuga side I'm about*
  - Public: Club Orion 
  - Public: "Lit" – **need to check out next, d'oh, it was empty Thursday night**
  - Strasz's [primer](#): LONER ([Twitch](#)), [SHELTER](#), GHOSTCLUB ([Twitch](#), [Discord](#))
    - Also made a follow-up **guide** for [joining the rave scene in general](#)
  - D[ance]D[ance]VR: an og center for rave-oriented dance community
  - [SlyFest](#) (event), TubeVRClub ([Twitter](#)), Rizumu ([Discord](#)), Poseidon ([Discord](#))

## VRChat's Exploring Scene

- [Pinned Weekly Subreddit Post](#) (but mostly avatar questions)
- [Another thread](#) to check out, [another video](#) to check out (both 2021)
- [VRChat Worlds Safari](#) Discord
- <https://en.vrcw.net/> – world menu, but outside the game! Made by a JP player.
- Enable **Community Labs** in search under the settings for constant new worlds
- Also consider its "**Random**" tab, maybe getting a new world once per day or so
- NerdKoopa, MarinoDev – low-poly pixel worlds
- Worlds mentioned: Infinite Library, GeoLocation, Japanese After School
- Worlds mentioned: Just Find Banana, Comfy Cat Haven, Debrief Discussion
- Creators: Blue-kun/Lycon (clubs), Lvaj15/Sovren/Genesis/Epic\_Monkey (hangouts), Owlboy (bars), Shadue (avatars), Fins (aquarium), Zappaku (beach)
- [BetterTogetherVR](#): good for camera views to click through, for areas to check out

## VRChat's Creating Scene

*Because if you can't find the world you want, why not make one, right?*

- VRCLibrary ([reddit](#), [site FAQ](#))
- [Community Resource List](#) – CNLoehr vid: UdonSharp, VRWorld Toolkit, CyanEmu
- 2022's [VRChat World Jam](#)
- [Community thread](#) on appealing worlds
  - Also, it seems like adding a mirror communicates "I want people gathering here!"
- "[Weekly 80+ person meetup where veteran/amateur world creators show off their work.](#)"
- [YouTube tutorial series](#) others point at for those interested by world creating
- Personal Goal: **starting with arcade-tier VRC game worlds like Super VR Ball**

## Facing the Core Problem: Bottom-up

If instead of the above paradigm you prefer to stick *solely* in-game, what follows are different forms of advice I found from VRChat players when it comes to socializing.

# VRChat's Socializing Diaspora

First, a grab bag of various user approaches ([example source](#)), focusing on VRChat-distinct ideas, since naturally a lot of offline advice for socializing also helps but can be found elsewhere:

- Find a group in front of a mirror, sit and listen. Can chime in when a topic interests you, or see if someone notices you and brings you into the chat.
  - Someone said they just walk up to a mirror group with “Hello everybody, what’s up” and it works fine “30%” of the time.
  - Just sitting with a *group* and listening generally seems to not be a problem (and if it *is* to them, probably wouldn’t get along anyway).
- “I introduce myself as a boomer to not catch anyone off-guard”
- Sanity-check via in-game mirror that your avatar’s mouth does move when talking, else it might be a sign that your microphone is muted!
- “I kinda just stealth my way in tbh, just lurk in the background, laugh at jokes and somebody will eventually turn to you and say, ‘you get what I’m talking about, right?’”
- Some walk up to another player, say “Hello!” and proceed to chit-chat. Had a reply that agreed: others quite possibly more socially awkward than you are, “also because of the nature of the game, gotta change attitude from ‘awkward pause’ to just a ‘pause,’ nothing really that awkward about silence.” – It does also seem a lot of people who voice “Hey, I have a hard time talking” on forums get the reply “Me too! Maybe add me?”
- Going to a gameworld and being able to just talk about the game itself.
  - Then asking someone you hit it off with if they want to follow you to another world, or join them if they say they’re going elsewhere.
- Playing pool (etc.) solo, others may approach you and ask if they can join.
  - Being the one inviting someone circling around shyly to play pool.
- Joining a VRChat streamer’s Discord, or one who you know does them. Allows you to text chat over Discord to know others, then meet in VRC. At minimum you know you can talk about the streamer you both watch.
- Sounds like some people who hang out on their own in front of mirrors actually *want* to be approached by someone looking to chit-cat.
- Find worlds that match your personality, e.g. chill vs. rowdy. If you can find a world premised on something you like, e.g. anime/game, you can open with “How’d you get into <insert IP here>?”
- “Literally asking people ‘can I join in on this conversation’ has worked wonders for me.”
- “I try to find small and chill lobbies with one or just a few people. It’s still difficult, but it has made it a bit easier for me at least, as someone who is very awkward and anxious around new people, especially groups.”
- Particularly good for groups:
  - “Listen to what they’re talking about and try to build a bridge to hook yourself into the group or make yourself more relatable. For instance, if they are talking about how it’s been snowing a lot, say something ‘Oh that’s really cool, it doesn’t snow much where I live, what’s it like?’”

- “Some groups are a little difficult to crack [when] there’s only 1-2 people talking over everyone else so instead of approaching the dominant person in the conversation, approach someone who looks like they’re losing interest.”
  - **“Probably the most important thing**, if you don’t feel chemistry after ~5 mins, don’t be afraid to move to another world/instance.”
- Conversation idea: “What’s 1 place you’d recommend a new user go to?”

## VRChat’s Icebreaking Hacks ([credit](#))

Second, adapted from a [video](#) with some VRChat-oriented ways of breaking the ice:

- Complimenting an avatar: acknowledges their taste/effort finding/making it
  - Don’t give the compliment insincerely, though! Pick out something about their avatar that genuinely sets it apart for you, say that. You can then tag on a “how long did it take you to find or make it?”
- If idle chit-chat isn’t your forte, seek out **activities giving you a shared goal with others** in the world, where talk can follow: e.g. games, clubs, or learning communities (e.g. for languages) – also attending events!
- Your Special Traits: likewise consider if there are situations you can set up for yourself to showcase e.g. how \$ your avatar tech is, or your ability to play an instrument well, sing, or draw.
- A trick some set up to chat: using an area to roleplay, e.g. the Kmart community’s staff from the PMG video, or even just someone “working the counter” at a hangout area’s kitchen sort of like that game *Coffee Talk*.
- Food for thought: avatar aesthetic vs. the group you’d want to hang out with – I think personality can make this a non-issue, but it’d make sense that a quiet faceless avatar may not group up as easily vs. how groups of anime, furry, realistic or lewd avatars can tend to cluster together.
  - Another post I read I think maybe phrased it more accurately: “try not to make your avatar too obnoxious, unless it’s an ice breaker.”
  - Having different avatars under Favorites can come in handy here!\*
- Faking/Performing as a confident person/character to gain it. Pretend to be warm and outgoing, someone invested in making another person’s day brighter, and you’ll end up integrating that persona over time! Don’t see it as opening yourself to feeling anxiety, instead focus/prioritize how it’s just as much a chance to brighten someone else’s day who may feel likewise! On average, you always have the option of just trying on a different world.

## VRChat’s Bonding Worlds

- Gameworlds: [various threads over time asking about them here](#)
  - Favorites so far: Super Ball VR  , “mini-golf” / “putt putt”
  - One YT video had: racing, aim trainers, minesweeper
  - Another had: platformer levels, mazes, shooters, robot arm thing
  - TK Dungeon by Blonix

- Rest & Sleep, Cozy Apartment/Boat/Cabin, Club Orion, Winter Company  *mixed bag*
- [No Time Two Talk](#) – someone realized VRChat minimizes Omegle’s horror stories
- [Experimental Sign Language World by Bob64](#) – ASL community
- Search for art/draw worlds... writer-minded users = RP community?

## VRChat’s Wordless Players

Finally, I dove a little into users who forego their microphones, mostly out of a fascination with how it presents a half-sociological and half-creative-tech/design problem space:

- Disclaimer: “mute” is the jargon here, but at least “selective mute” (i.e. “I talk but only in particular groups”) can be “frowned upon” by deaf/mute players, [allegedly](#).
- Check out the Helping Hands community, easy to meet no-mic users in lessons
- [“Mute” by Kegan](#) avatar – noted that they are both PC and Quest compatible, but WIP?
  - It’s effectively a set of Unity pen/text assets you can add to your custom avatars.
  - The different text strings appearing overhead [seem](#) AKA “mute board(s)”
  - When a user’s settings limit what it shows, an “Show my avatar!” overlay shows.
- Might try searching “Mute Chat” worlds – not many were in them during the week 
- Some just won’t vibe with it outright (probably exhausting for some extroverts).
- Presentation matters a lot more, because coming off as distant might lead others to assume you don’t want to be approached.
- For hangouts, sticking to worlds that have pens you can write in the air with
- Ultimately down to what you expect out of VRChat, e.g. someone after the club and dance scene will experience it distinctly from someone only in talk-hangouts. Some advise a no-mic user to steer clear of wilder public chat areas altogether.
  - Seems to be a premium put on “worlds with older demographics” or less fairly the “I don’t even bother with Quest-compatible worlds” attitude.
- “Best thing is to just wave hi to people. It’s the universal greeting and is usually my first indicator someone’s mute. It’s kind of on the talkers or the person your communicating with to figure it out. But once I see someone just wave hi, I’ll say hi, then basically confirm they’re mute, then I know how to communicate if I want to, no pens around, their avatar doesn’t have one? Ok, I’m asking Yes/No’s for the most part. If there’s a pen available I may point it out to them, if they have one on their avatar, cool.”
  - Noting for those on desktop there’s usually a Wave gesture/expression, as well as Yes/No thumb-emoji you can have your model emit.
- [Example thread](#) of a muting player who ended up finding friend groups by thread’s end.
- There are speech-to-text-[to-speech] options [out there](#), but [appears subscription-driven](#) and *may* hit limits vs. the default user safety settings if using them beyond friend group?

## Misc.

- CEO/Creator: [Grow VR the way a proper eSports scene grows unforced](#)
- Some plausible insight on [the popularity of “mirror dwelling”](#)

- “The Great Pug” world’s [basement unlocking conditions](#)
- One-off [iceberg](#) video: a bit hit and miss esp. later on, but these were informative:
  - Brushy/Brushes: like the “Ugandan Knuckles” fad model, annoyed users circa 2020-2021 since it was largely loud kids imitating a big(?) YouTuber
  - VRMods: helped explain some of the bad blood VRChat has for client mods
  - VRChat cinema worlds: most use them privately to duck the trolls/DMCA
  - VR troupes: improv, acting, e.g. “Welcome to Respite” where you play as a silent participant/protagonist as scenes + other actors interact with you
  - RP worlds: like MMOs’ RP servers, some more formally scheduled than others
    - Callous Row: cyberpunk underground magic, [2 seasons on YT](#)
    - Purple Lotus: a casino, accessible for newcomers (no applying)
      - Seems they instead just “vet you” at an [area’s entrance](#)
      - But crazier things can end up happening too, [I guess?](#)
    - Star Wars Combat: regimented [functioning-blaster LARP events](#)
  - VRCPrefabs – resources for world/avatar creation, amusingly a thread called them *“the most influential group in VRChat right now, just not directly. It’s a private community of basically all the big western world creators on the platform, so if you enjoy world content then you can bet Prefabs had a hand in it one way or another. But I wouldn’t say they’re influential to the general trends of the community.”*
  - DND VRC groups: think Tabletop Simulator in a thematic environment.