THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

The Great Wall of China is the longest structure ever built by humanity. It stretches all the way from the east coast of China to the Jiayu Pass far to the west. No one knew exactly how long it was until it was measured in 2012. You can protect your base's borders with your very own great wall in Minecraft.

BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Stone blocks, long sections of walls, guard towers, gatehouses (see more on p20–21)

Added extras: Stone block variants for extra depth

Don't forget to: Add signal campfires

THE REAL DEAL

1 The wall was built over hundreds of years, with the earliest sections dating as far back as the 7th century BCE.

2 The full length of the wall measures over 13,000 miles (21,000 km). It's the longest structure ever built and was made a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987.

3 Contrary to popular belief, the wall cannot be seen from the moon. This rumor started many years before anyone had even been to the moon!
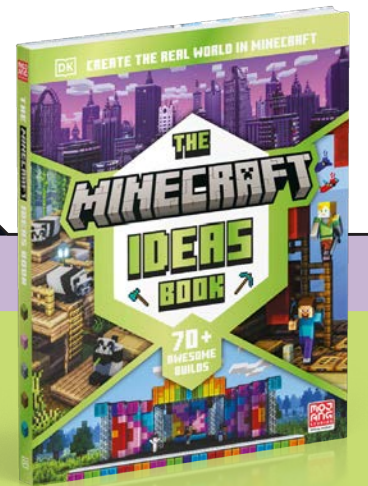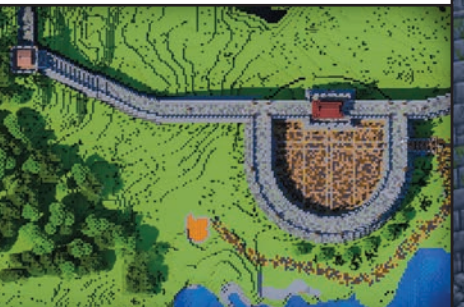
BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

Want to build a great wall of your own? Pick a biome and choose blocks from around you. This wall is built within the plains biome and uses lots of stone and mossy cobblestone. You could build your wall in a badlands biome using terracotta and red sandstone instead.

Watch towers were used to pass messages between other towers.

Build watch towers at high points to make it easier to spot invaders.

Campfire smoke was used to send messages. Place a hay bale beneath a campfire to make the smoke rise higher.

Command outposts on each section of the wall hold food, weapons, and armor.

The wall stretches over all terrain. There's no mountain too high or river too low to stop it.

BARBICAN ENTRANCE

Semicircular or rectangular structures were built along the wall to protect vulnerable entrances from attack.

TOP TIP

Intruders, including Minecraft mobs, will attempt to get past your wall by any means necessary. Avoid building dark spaces, and clear away trees to keep mobs away.

Clear trees from the area around the wall to stop players from sneaking up.

BEST BLOCKS

This plains biome has over a dozen stone variants to choose from, from cobblestone to deepslate, and crafted blocks, too. Use a mix of stone blocks to give your structure character.

COBBLESTONE

MOSSY COBBLESTONE

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THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA: STRUCTURAL PARTS

Barbican gates are one of the oldest fortifications in existence. You can protect your base with one, too. High walls, closed courtyards, command posts—these gates have lots of features you can include to make your defenses the best in the world.

BUILD TIP

Survival mode players: choose your building materials wisely and make sure they're suitable for your goals. Stone is durable, nonflammable, and widely available. Although wood is also widely available, its flammable nature may prove disastrous during thunderstorms.

COMMAND OUTPOST

Every fortification needs a command center. Follow this guide to create your own. The ground floor has benches and chests for refreshments, and the upstairs is a bunkhouse for resting.

ROOF AND BUNKHOUSE

CHANGE IT!

Looking to build your base in the Nether? Watch out for ghast fireballs! Avoid fragile netherrack and use only the most durable blocks, like Nether bricks.

DOUBLE DEFENSE

Before allowing visitors into your base, invite them to your courtyard, where your team can keep a close eye on them from above—just in case they're up to no good!

Use acacia trapdoors for bannerlike decorations.

Within each passage were access ramps for horses and ladders for soldiers.

Stone brick stairs and polished andesite slabs add decorative detail.

Fill barrels with bows and arrows for defeating mobs at a safe distance.

SIDE

BASE

SIDE

STANDARD

Is your wall looking a little plain? Add some customized standards. You can create colorful banners using dye, wool, and sticks.

TUNNELS

Filling the walls with blocks will be a huge use of resources. Put the walls to good use instead and create tunnels within them. You won't want to leave them dark for mobs—torches are an effective way to light them up.

Intruders will struggle to climb over these tall walls!

Using mossy blocks, like mossy stone brick and mossy cobblestone, will make the build look aged and timeless.

WALL SECTION

Crenellations (toothlike raised sections with gaps in between) are a key feature of defensive architecture. Combine stone bricks, chiseled stone bricks, polished andesite stairs, and polished andesite slabs to create the walls.
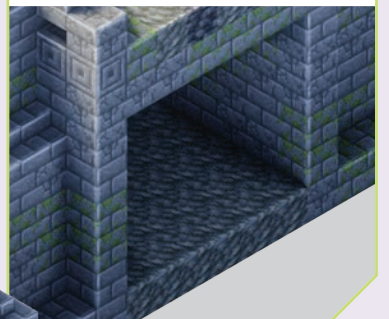
DK

THE HANGING GARDENS OF BABYLON

The spectacular Hanging Gardens of Babylon are thought to have existed more than 2,600 years ago, in present-day Iraq. According to legend, the gardens were a masterpiece, full of lush trees and waterways. But no remains have ever been found, so nobody knows what they really looked like. This means you can be as imaginative as you like with your Minecraft version. Which plants will you include in yours?

BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Hanging vines, waterways, tiered terraces

Added extras: Colorful trees and vegetation

Don't forget to: Add a variety of animals and plants

LOOK CLOSER

The walls are filled with creative designs that let in lots of natural light. Using a mix of stairs, slabs, and blocks with different textures you can create lots of fun and unique designs for your walls.

BEST BLOCKS

This version of the gardens uses the earthy colors of granite and ancient debris to capture the natural world setting. It's overflowing with ferns, moss, leaves, and vines.
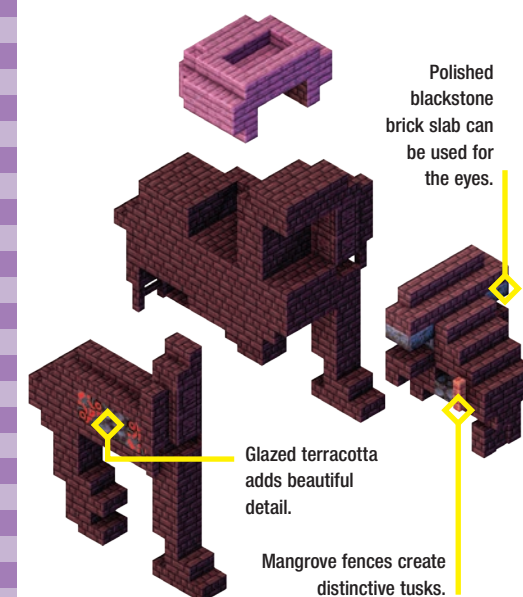
GRANITE

ANCIENT DEBRIS

MOSS

Canals and waterways look beautiful but also provide the plants with all they need to flourish.

Decorate the gardens with ornate statues of animals.

Glazed terracotta is perfect for bursts of color. Use orange, pink, yellow, cyan, and red glazed terracotta to create colorful trees.

Add campfires to fill your gardens with light.

Glazed terracotta blocks have unique textures on each side. Play around with them to create your own tree designs.
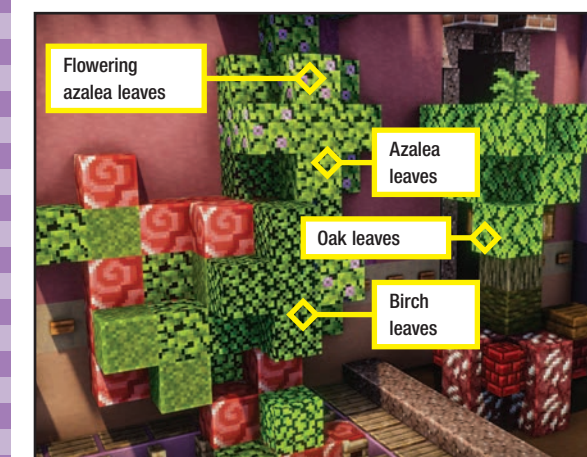
THE REAL DEAL

1 The gardens were named one of the Seven Wonders of the World, a list of the most amazing human-made structures that was compiled by ancient Greek travelers.

2 Ancient legend says that the gardens were built by King Nebuchadnezzar II as a gift to his queen, Amytis. They imitated the mountains of her homeland in Persia.

3 Experts have questioned whether the gardens existed because no remains have been found. Recent research suggests they did exist, but north of Babylon.

Polished blackstone brick slab can be used for the eyes.

Glazed terracotta adds beautiful detail.

Mangrove fences create distinctive tusks.

STUNNING STATUES

Majestic statues will draw in visitors to your gardens. Create elephant statues like these using crimson wood and Nether brick variants. This one is 10 blocks long, 6 blocks wide, and 8 blocks tall. Don't forget to recreate the large feet that help keep the elephant stable.
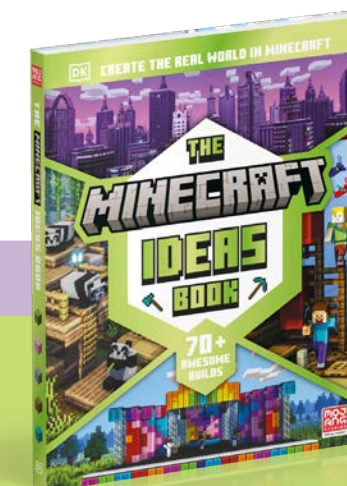
Flowering azalea leaves

Azalea leaves

Oak leaves

Birch leaves

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STONEHENGE

Built over 5,000 years ago in Wiltshire, England, this prehistoric marvel of epic proportions is Europe's most famous Stone Age monument. Stonehenge is still standing today and provides a meeting place for celebrations on special days of the year. Be inspired to create your own awe-inspiring monument as a place to gather with your friends.

BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Circle of standing stones in a grassy field

Added extras: Fallen stones

Don't forget to: Use easily available resources

THE REAL DEAL

1 Stonehenge's stones align with sunrise on the longest day and sunset on the shortest days of the year (known as the summer solstice and the winter solstice).

2 Nobody knows exactly why Stonehenge was created, but historians believe it was likely used for ritual purposes linked to the changing seasons, the sun, and the sky.

3 Today, thousands still gather at Stonehenge for ceremonies to celebrate the summer and winter solstices.

A trilithon is a structure of two large vertical stones supporting a third stone set horizontally across the top.

Without wheels, Stone Age builders used ingenious ways to place the rocks, such as pulley and rope systems.

HERE COMES THE SUN

Ancient builders carefully placed the stones to align with the point on the horizon where the sun rose on the summer solstice, the longest day of the year. In its own way, Stonehenge is an ancient calendar. Why not build your monument to frame the sunrise or moonrise?

Experts believe Stonehenge once had two more trilithons standing. Some have suggested that these supported a roof.

Since Stonehenge has fallen to ruin, some blocks should look broken and scattered.

Visitors may mistake this for abandoned ruins. In fact, many of Stonehenge's blocks were taken to build nearby churches. Place a sign to keep your build safe, using a glow ink sac to make it visible at night.
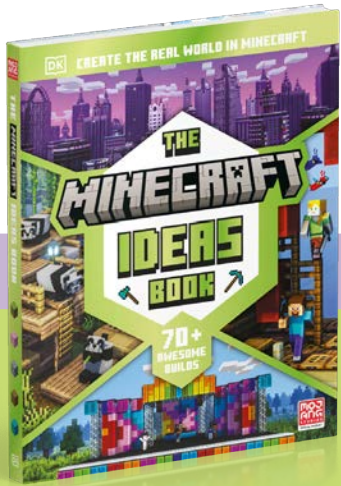
TOP TIP

BEST BLOCKS

This is a Stone Age structure, so it's unsurprising that the building block used is stone. However, the original build may have used all sorts of available materials, such as wood and straw, so you can experiment with different blocks, too.

STONE

MARBLE CAVES

Along the border of Argentina and Chile, there is a natural geological wonder unlike any other—a set of stunning and intricate marble caves that glow a glistening blue. The Marble Caves were formed by the waves of General Carrera Lake, which slowly wore away and sculpted the marble. Their brilliant blue color is actually the water reflecting on the rock. Thrill your friends by creating a unique cave for them to find in Minecraft. While there are no marble blocks in Minecraft, you can use a variety of other blocks to achieve the beautiful blue glow.
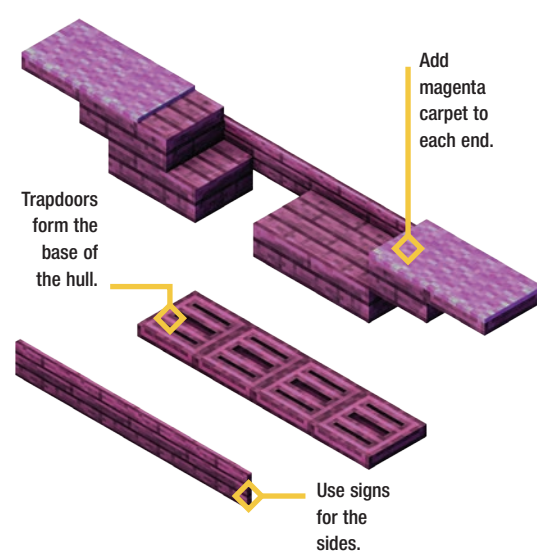
BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Large blue caverns

Added extras: Canoes in a range of different colors

Don't forget to: Add End rods to your cave to give the water a shimmering glow

THE REAL DEAL

1 The pristine General Carrera Lake is one of the largest lakes by area in South America, at 710 sq miles (1,850 km²).

2 The Marble Caves took a very long time to form—experts estimate as many as 6,000 years.

3 The blue color of the caves is at its brightest in the summer, when the ice melts and the lake's water level rises.

Add magenta carpet to each end.

Trapdoors form the base of the hull.

Use signs for the sides.

CANOES

To preserve this natural wonder, tourists visit the caves in canoes and boats. Create some colorful canoes to add to your build. This one is made using crimson pieces, but you can make yours any color you like.
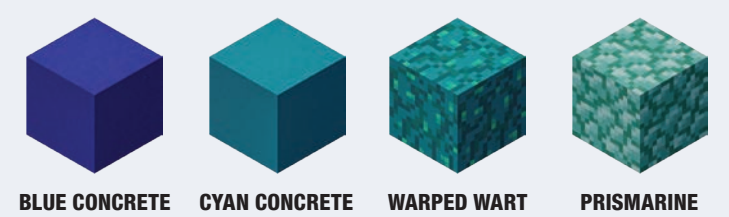
LOOK CLOSER

The magic of this cave is that wherever you look, there's something going on. Almost every block adds a different blue or white shade, from glazed terracotta variants, to diorite walls, and even candles. The candles also light up every corner to stop mobs from spawning.

Make unique stalactites from an End rod and iron bar.

Place glow lichen on the sides of other blocks to emit light.

End rods cast a pearlescent light.

Players can admire the beautiful caves from a canoe.

Create light-blue water by building your cave in a warm ocean biome and filling the sea floor with blue blocks.

BEST BLOCKS

To build glistening blue caves of your own, use blue and blue-green blocks such as blue, light blue, and cyan concrete; warped wart; and prismarine.
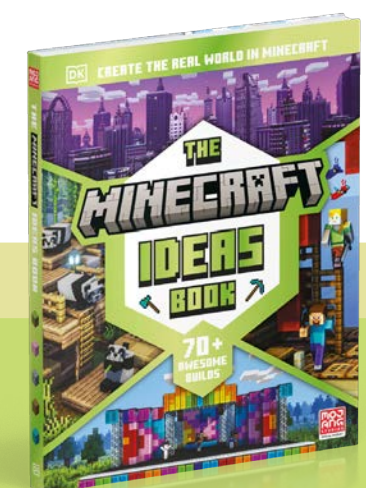
BLUE CONCRETE   **CYAN CONCRETE**   **WARPED WART**   **PRISMARINE**

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PLITVICE LAKES

Located by the Dinaric Alps mountains in Croatia, the landscape of the Plitvice Lakes National Park has formed gradually over thousands of years. Water from rain and rivers has shaped the limestone and chalk rocks into amazing lakes, caves, and waterfalls. There are 16 lakes in the national park, connected by walkways to allow visitors to explore, so this would be a major natural project to embark on in Minecraft. Search for a jungle biome with lakes and waterfalls and use a lake you find there to get started on your own national park.

BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Colorful lakes and waterfalls connected by wooden walkways

Added extras: Mobs such as wolves, axolotls, and frogs

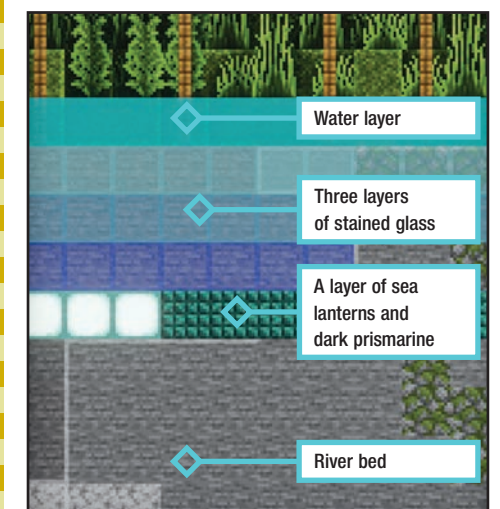**Don't forget to:** Add white water to your waterfalls

THE REAL DEAL

1 Plitvice Lakes change color from blue to green depending on the levels of minerals and algae in them and the angle of the sun.

2 The national park is home to a diverse range of mammals, including bears, lynxes, otters, wild boars, deer, wolves, foxes, badgers, and bats.

3 The park is also home to more than 160 species of birds, such as owls, hawks, woodpeckers, and cuckoos.

WHITE WATER

When water flows quickly over rocks and cliffs, it becomes rough and splashy and appears white and frothy. This turbulent water effect is recreated in this build with cyan and blue stained glass blocks and panes. The addition of cobwebs creates an even splashier effect!

Add oak wood and oak leaves to create tall trees.

Add to the wild landscape by using oak wood and fences to make a dead tree in the middle of the waterfall.

Surround your waterfalls with lush forests and grasslands. In the real national park, the lakes make up only 1 percent of the area!

BUILD TIP

Build wooden paths so your visitors can travel around the lakes and enjoy the scenery. The walkways are made from jungle slabs and loop their way between and around the trees. Spruce fences lift the walkways above the water to keep the water and wildlife undisturbed.

Make white water rapids from white stained glass and cobwebs.

In winter, the waterfalls at the real Plitvice lakes can freeze over. Why not make a frozen version of your Minecraft national park?

Water layer

Three layers of stained glass

A layer of sea lanterns and dark prismarine

River bed

Add animals, such as axolotls and frogs, to the build.

Add vegetation with blocks like kelp and seagrass.

BEST BLOCKS

To create your lake bed in Survival mode, you'll need a beach or desert for sand to craft glass blocks and an ocean monument for dark prismarine. The rest of the build uses all the blocks you would find in a jungle biome.

DARK PRISMARINE

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CHENGDU PANDA BASE

Our planet is full of wildlife. Unfortunately, some of this wildlife is endangered. Around the world, centers have opened in an effort to preserve and support endangered animals. China's Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding has made great strides in renewing populations of giant pandas. There are representations of many endangered animals in Minecraft. How will you help preserve them?

BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Platforms, fences, vines, and ladders

Added extras: Platforms at different heights

Don't forget to: Include enough bamboo for the pandas to eat

THE REAL DEAL

1 The giant panda is China's national animal. China dedicates a lot of resources to ensure that its numbers increase.

2 Chengdu is the ancestral home of pandas. Preserved remains show that they have lived in this part of the world for more than 4,000 years.

3 Chengdu Research Base was founded with six rescue pandas in the 1980s. With breeding efforts, that number had grown to 237 by 2023.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Research your chosen animal or animals to provide the best environment for them. Pandas are very rare in Minecraft—they can only be found in jungle biomes. They love bamboo, which grows on grass, dirt, mycelium, podzol, sand, and mud. Although podzol is common in jungle biomes, pandas cannot spawn on it, so avoid using too much if you want to encourage breeding.

Pandas have poor eyesight. Light your Minecraft base with dim soul lanterns so they don't strain their eyes.

Stone stairs recreate Chinese garden decor.

Feeding two pandas bamboo in Minecraft will encourage them to breed.

To breed pandas, there must be at least one bamboo that is 8 blocks tall within 5 blocks of two pandas.

There's a small chance that a baby panda in Minecraft will drop a slimeball when it sneezes!

Add ladders to your structure. Minecraft pandas climb ladders when they push up against them.

Use jungle trapdoors to add interesting textures to your platforms.

In Minecraft, pandas have secret "genes." They can be normal, lazy, worried, playful, weak, or aggressive.
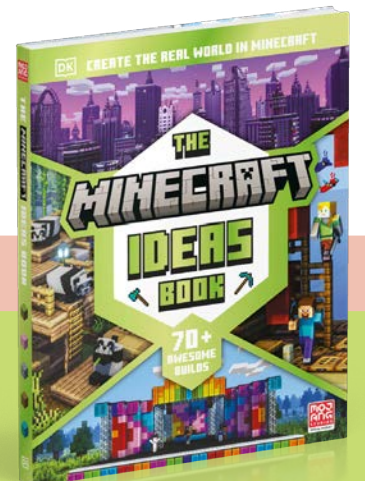
BEST BLOCKS

Building a wildlife research center is all about catering to the animals that live there. This panda base is built using mostly jungle slabs, trapdoors, stripped logs, and lots of bamboo of course!

STRIPPED JUNGLE LOG

JUNGLE SLAB

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ROVOS RAIL

Sometimes you don't want to get where you're going fast—you want to journey in style. Rail travel doesn't get any more stylish than an old-fashioned steam train. On Rovos Rail, passengers can travel through some of southern Africa's most stunning landscapes in luxurious carriages pulled by a locomotive. Recreate an elegant Rovos Rail train in Minecraft, or maybe research and build a classic steam train from the past instead.

BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Steam locomotive, carriages (see more on p120–121)

Added extras: Passengers, wildlife

Don't forget to: Build in a scenic biome

THE REAL DEAL

1 Rovos Rail's steam engines used to be powered by coal. They now run on oil, which is more efficient and less harmful to the environment.

2 Passengers can eat their meals in the luxury dining cars and spend the night on the train in suites with comfortable beds.

3 There is no Wi-Fi or television on Rovos Rail, so passengers can have an authentically old-fashioned travel experience.
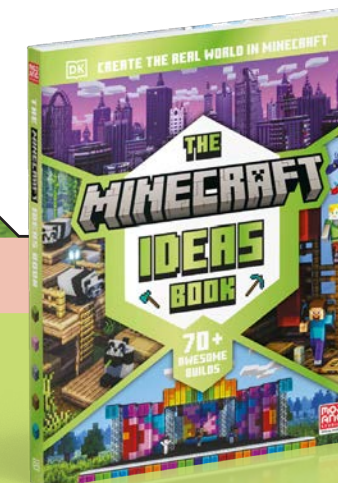
BUILD HIGHLIGHTS

This Rovos Rail replica has been built in a savanna biome to match the wondrous landscapes seen in southern Africa. The flat, open area delivers spectacular views and the train is the perfect place to watch the glorious sunset.

Recreate the green color of the carriages with green terracotta.

Use a campfire to create the smoke effect.

Add scaffolding windows to provide passengers with great views of the scenery.

The cowcatcher helps to clear obstacles from the track. This replica is made using levers and mangrove slabs.

COUPLINGS

Train carriages are joined together by mechanisms known as couplings. These Minecraft carriages are coupled with two grindstones and iron trapdoors. For safety, two chain handrails also link the carriages.

TOP TIP

A working train is challenging to build in Minecraft. However, if you build your train in a scenic area, passengers can visit, enjoy the experience, and stay the night. You can build a minecart rail to bring them to the model.

BEST BLOCKS

This locomotive has 36 carriages behind it. You'll need lots of green terracotta and diorite for the carriages and plenty of grindstones and iron trapdoors for the couplings.

GREEN TERRACOTTA

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WATER PARK OBSTACLE COURSE

People have been enjoying wet, wild, and wonderful water park rides since the world's first water park opened in Orlando, Florida, in the 1970s. They are a great place to have fun with your friends and an awesome project to build in Minecraft. Let your imagination flow and create an obstacle course for your park. You can build your own features using water, honey, and slime.

BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Stepping stones, platforms, steps

Added extras: Concrete blocks to add lots of color

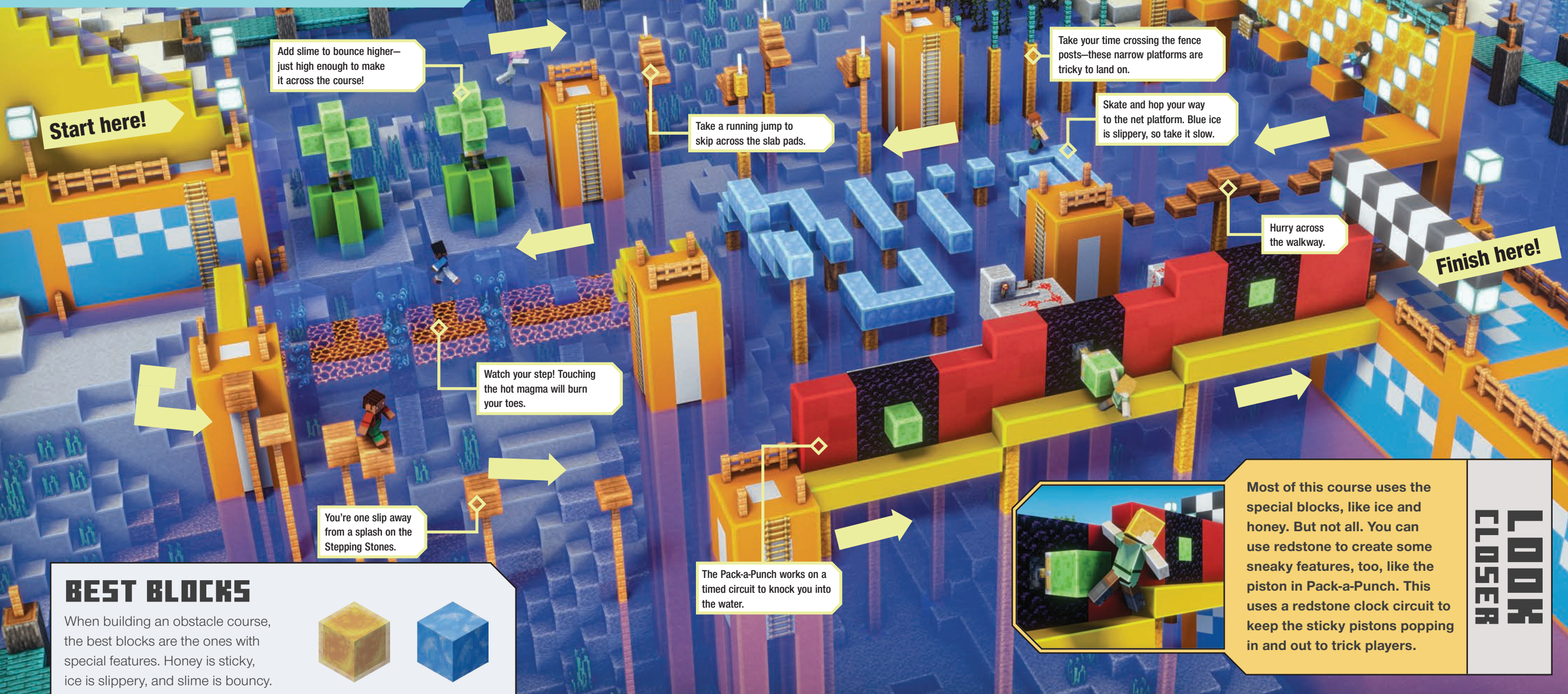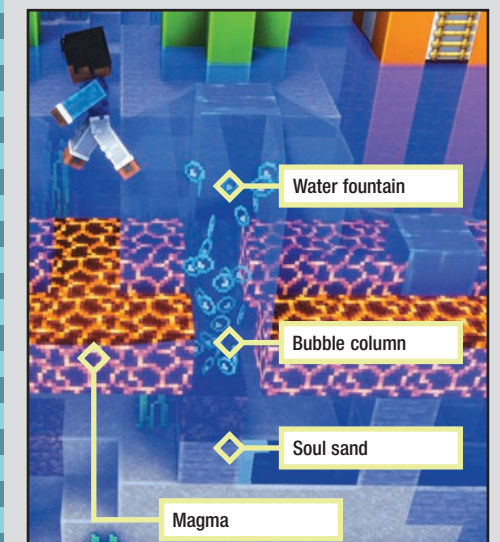**Don't forget to:** Place ladders for getting out of the water!

THE REAL DEAL

Water parks use a lot of water. Hundreds of thousands of gallons of it! This may sound a bit wasteful, but modern water parks are capable of reusing as much as 97 percent of the water. The remaining 3 percent is lost to evaporation.

Start

Finish

MAP

This obstacle course features nine unique features to test the mettle of any Minecrafter. You'll bounce, skip, jump, slide, run, and (if you're unlucky) swim before you reach the finish line. Place a map by the starting line for players to prepare themselves for the challenge ahead.

Cling to the sticky wall as you make your way across.

The Stick-and-Slide uses the stickiest block in Minecraft—honey!

Add slime to bounce higher— just high enough to make it across the course!

Take your time crossing the fence posts—these narrow platforms are tricky to land on.

Start here!

Take a running jump to skip across the slab pads.

Skate and hop your way to the net platform. Blue ice is slippery, so take it slow.

Hurry across the walkway.

Finish here!

Watch your step! Touching the hot magma will burn your toes.

Water fountain

Bubble column

Soul sand

Magma

You're one slip away from a splash on the Stepping Stones.

The Pack-a-Punch works on a timed circuit to knock you into the water.

BEST BLOCKS

When building an obstacle course, the best blocks are the ones with special features. Honey is sticky, ice is slippery, and slime is bouncy. What else could you use?

HONEY

BLUE ICE

LOOK CLOSER

Most of this course uses the special blocks, like ice and honey. But not all. You can use redstone to create some sneaky features, too, like the piston in Pack-a-Punch. This uses a redstone clock circuit to keep the sticky pistons popping in and out to trick players.

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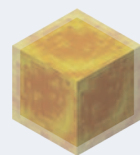
FOREST FIRE LOOKOUT

Look out—there's a thunderstorm coming. A forest biome is a dangerous place when thunder strikes. One small spark is all it takes to set it ablaze. This forest fire lookout, with its high vantage point, is ideal for keeping an eye out for forest fires and also for pillager patrols searching for villages to raid.

BUILDING BRIEF

Key features: Forest fire lookout tower, trees

Added extras: Firefighting equipment, a warning bell

Don't forget to: Include an infinite water supply

LOOK CLOSER

In real life, shoveling dirt over your campfire will help put it out. Minecraft campfires don't need to be put out, but you can add a shovel to your build, along with a flint and steel ready for when you want to light it again. Then relax by taking a seat on some chairs made of wooden stairs and trapdoors and enjoy the view.

This roof is made with blackstone block variants.

Add a lightning rod at the top of the tower to protect against lightning strikes.

Create a platform using trapdoors.

Build extra-tall trees, but make sure that the tower is even taller to give players a vantage point.

This narrow build only has room for spiral steps made using stair blocks.

THE REAL DEAL

Forest fires are a real danger. Ground temperatures can reach over 1,832°F (1,000°C)! There are thousands of watchtowers around the world staffed day and night as part of fire prevention programmes. Although very dangerous, wildfires can sometimes be beneficial. Burned vegetation returns nutrients to the soil, making it more fertile for future plants.

Noise travels far in open spaces. Add a bell near your tower to sound the alarm when you see smoke or when pillagers come raiding.

Fires will spread quickly in Minecraft. Areas with flammable blocks, such as forests, will always be at risk.

Water is perfect for extinguishing fires. Place three water sources next to each other to always have an infinite water supply at hand.

FIREBREAKS

Forest fires can spread wildly and rapidly. In the real world, firefighters use a special trick to stop the fire from spreading: a firebreak. Firefighters rapidly knock down trees to create a gap in the forest so the fire cannot spread any farther. To create an emergency firebreak in Survival mode, make sure you have Efficiency V enchanted axes or even TNT handy to remove trees and make a gap.

Dark oak trapdoor

Stone brick stairs
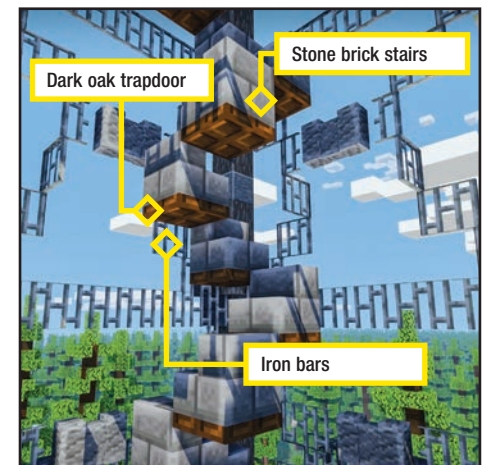
Iron bars

BEST BLOCKS

When you're building a forest fire lookout, it is important to include nonflammable materials. Use blocks like iron bars, polished andesite, and stone bricks to make your structure.
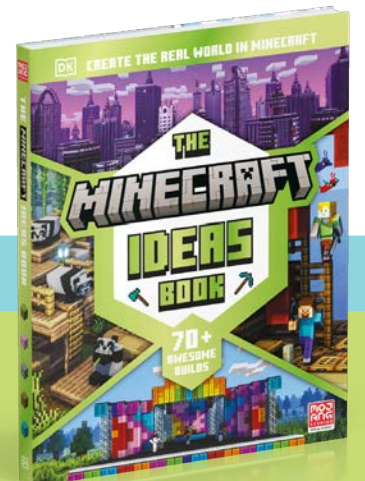
STONE BRICKS

IRON BARS

POLISHED ANDESITE

THE MINECRAFT IDEAS BOOK

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AVAILABLE NOW