HOPSCOTCH

DEAR EDUCATOR,

You may have noticed that Hopscotch looks a little different. We've recently changed Hopscotch to enable a better user experience and to help kids learn how to code more quickly. It may seem like a big change, but the basic functionality within Hopscotch is actually the same!

We recommend just diving right in and taking our new version for a test spin before reading this transition guide. Happy coding!

WHAT'S THE SAME:

- **Objects:** You still get to use the same awesome characters in your projects.

- **The Block Interface:** You still write your code by dragging and dropping blocks into the editor.

- **Blocks:** All of the code blocks from the last version are still available.

- **Events:** You still associate your blocks of code with an event (e.g. "when iPad is shaken"). This tells your code when to run.

WHAT'S NEW:

- **Abilities:** You can now build your own blocks and save them for later use, or use them with other objects in your project. When you save a set of blocks, it's called an ability. We have some pre-made abilities for you to use when you first open the new Hopscotch, including "Dance", "Draw a Triangle", and "Go For a Walk". What we call abilities in Hopscotch are known as functions or subroutines in other programming languages. Easily replicable routines are a key concept in computer programming, and allow you to scale your code and create complex programs.

- **Rules:** Rules tell your object what to do and when to do it. When you make an ability and pair it with an event, you create a rule. For example, if you choose the event "When stage is tapped" you can then pair it with the "Jump" ability. This creates a new rule: every time you tap the stage, your object will jump.

- **Preview:** You can now preview an ability as you're editing it to see how each code block affects your object in real time. This helps you see if your code works the way you intended.

GETTING TO THE BLOCKS INTERFACE AND EDITING / CREATING ABILITIES:
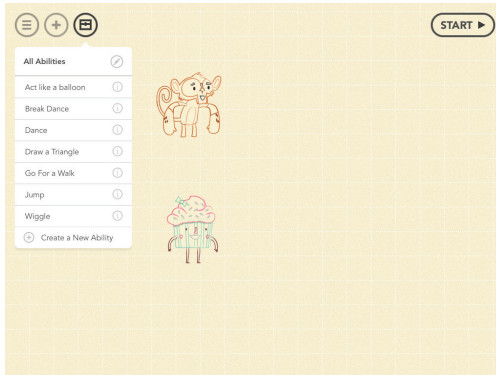
In the top-left corner of the screen, you've got a toolbox ⊞ that contains all of your abilities. This menu lets you choose to edit an existing ability (or simply view the blocks that were used to create it) as well as create a new ability.
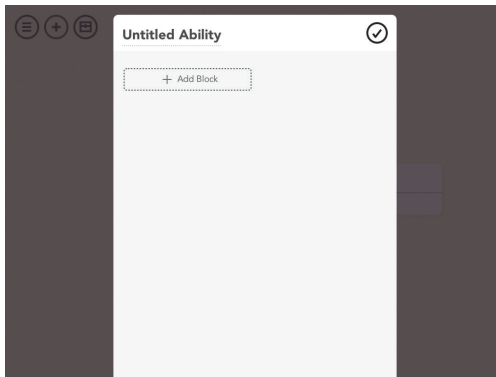
Let's create a brand new ability. You'll be taken to the editor where you can tap "+ Add Block" to explore the menu of available code blocks.
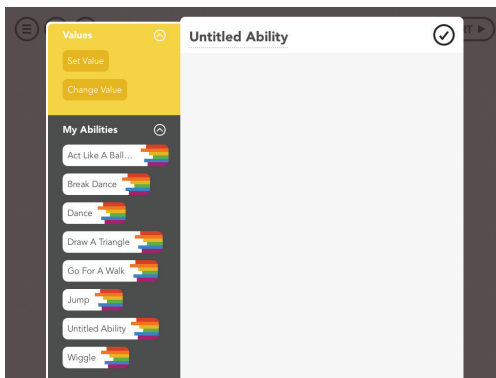
All of the code blocks you're already familiar with are still here, with the addition of the My Abilities menu at the bottom. This section contains a block for every ability that exists in your project. This exciting new feature allows you to use an ability inside another ability!

FAQ:

1. **I love the pre-made abilities. Can I use them in future projects?**
   The pre-made abilities are only available in the demo project that you see when you start Hopscotch for the first time. These are meant to help you get started with the new design and give you ideas to create your own abilities. When you create a new project, the creativity is up to you! You can always download projects from the community to remix and save other users' abilities.

2. **What happened to the x,y grid, and how do I set the initial position of an object?**
   The x,y grid is visible on the stage behind the objects in edit mode. Dragging an object around the stage shows the x,y coordinates of that object.

   To place an object in a specific location when your project starts:
   - Make an ability that has Set Position as the first block. Enter the x and y position where you want to place your object.
   - Give your object a rule that tells this ability to run when the project starts.

3. **Can you add single blocks without creating an ability?**
   No. All of the code blocks you use in a project are now saved within an ability. We did not want to confuse users with a more complicated interface. You can use abilities inside other abilities or with another object in the same project. Having all of your code inside abilities allows you to organize and easily access it later.

4. **When will Hopscotch have conditionals, math operators, accounts, a search in the community, new characters, the ability to use custom art, etc.?**
   Rest assured that we've heard your requests loud and clear! We're working on adding a ton of new features to Hopscotch over the next few months, but this redesign took top priority to ensure that beginners have an easy and fun experience learning to code.

5. **Ghaaa! My lesson plans are based on the old version of Hopscotch, and I don't have time to change them. Can I still use the old Hopscotch?**
   We hope you love the new look and feel of Hopscotch, but we understand that you may be using lesson plans that relied on the old design. If you need to stick with existing lesson plans for a little while longer, don't worry: we can send you a link to download the old version of Hopscotch. Send us an email at support@gethopscotch.com.