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Documentation: In progress **Quick start: In progress**

Offline copy from ModDocs. Source links remain clickable.

Fallout 3 and Fallout: New Vegas modding

Both games use the **Garden of Eden Creation Kit (GECK)** to edit records, cells, quests and placed objects. They are related tools, but their data, executable versions and extension ecosystems are different. Keep separate projects and test copies for each game. The community GECK wiki covers both and retains Bethesda's My First Vault tutorial.

> **Quick start:** load the correct game's master files, create a tiny plugin, change or place one visible object, then test that plugin alone on a new save. Do not begin by overwriting a base master.

Pick a route and the right game

Project	GECK area	First milestone
Item or NPC adjustment	Object records	One changed record visible in game
New room or vault	Interior cell, references, doors, lighting	Enter, leave and save in the room

Project	GECK area	First milestone
Quest	Stages, conditions, dialogue, scripts	Complete one simple stage transition
World placement	Exterior cell and references	Reach the object without broken collision

Fallout 3 and New Vegas should not be treated as one interchangeable data set. Check the game's own GECK setup instructions and required masters before opening a tutorial. The GECK setup lesson shows how a plugin is created and loaded and notes game-specific configuration.

Set up a controlled test

Make a copy of important saves. Install the GECK for the target game and launch it against that game's installation. Load the appropriate master data, save a new plugin with a distinctive name, close the editor, and reopen it with your plugin set active. This round trip catches a surprising number of setup errors before you build content.

For New Vegas, the setup tutorial discusses `GECKCustom.ini` and its location; follow the current page rather than guessing a path. Work with one test plugin and a minimal mod list. Record which masters your plugin depends on so another player can load it.

Make a first playable change

A safe first task is a new interior with one object and a door to a reachable place. The My First Vault series was written as an editor tour and exercises cells, placement and linked gameplay. Start smaller than the complete tutorial: save after the empty room, then after the door, then after the first object. Run the game at each checkpoint. That separates editor mistakes from later quest or AI work.

If you modify an existing item, decide whether the change should affect **every** instance. Editing the original record does; duplicating the record and placing the new version limits the change. Give new records unique editor IDs. Inspect the object in game, then reload the save and confirm the result persists. For a level, check

entrances, collision, lighting, enemy pathing and whether players can exit. A room that merely renders is not yet a usable level.

Keep advanced systems separate

Scripts and engine extensions are later steps. The GECK's built-in scripting surface is not identical to community extension APIs. If a tutorial names an extension function, list that extension as a dependency and test with its intended version. The GECK wiki has separate references for script functions, records, quests and cells; use the page for the specific game and feature.

Quests need stage transitions and conditions to work across saves. AI encounters need navigation and spawn behavior, not just placed actors. Assets need correct relative paths and suitable formats. Add one of these layers at a time, then test entering, leaving, saving and reloading.

Ship a clean plugin

Package the plugin and any original supporting assets, preserving their folder structure. State whether the package targets Fallout 3 or New Vegas, and name required DLC, script extensions and other mods. Test the package from a clean mod profile, with your loose working copy disabled. If it fails to load, check the master list and file placement first; if only an asset is missing, inspect its path in the relevant record.

The GECK wiki is the reference for deeper record and function details. This page is **unfinished**: it does not yet include a game-tested complete quest, extension setup, conflict-resolution procedure or asset export pipeline for both games.

Sources / References

External project and documentation links cited in this guide. Check the upstream release and version before following version-sensitive steps.

- GECK wiki

- My First Vault tutorial
- GECK setup lesson