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

Offline copy from ModDocs. Source links remain clickable.

Oblivion modding

Oblivion's **Construction Set** edits game records and world cells, then saves those changes in a plugin. Begin with a small, reversible record edit before building a quest or new worldspace. The Construction Set beginner series is the principal reference for this route.

> **Quick start:** create a plugin that changes one existing object, load that plugin alone, and confirm the change in a disposable save. Keep a copy of the original save and plugin before expanding the project.

Choose the kind of mod

Goal	Main work	Read next
Change an existing item or NPC	Edit a record in the Construction Set	Object Window
Make an interior or dungeon	Create a cell, place references, connect doors and paths	Beginner lessons
Add quests or dialogue	Records, conditions, scripts, stages and testing	Quest tutorials

Goal	Main work	Read next
Add art	Models, textures and paths alongside the plugin	NIF model and texture paths

These branches share an editor but have different failure modes. A placed object can be invisible because an asset path is wrong; a quest can appear to work but fail when its stage conditions are reached later.

Prepare a clean working copy

Install the Construction Set version appropriate to the **original Oblivion** installation you are modding. The primer introduces the editor windows and the difference between master data and your plugin. Record your game edition and installed patches before following an old tutorial: a guide written for a different executable or expansion can refer to data your installation does not contain.

Start the editor, load `Oblivion.esm` as a master, and save your work under a unique plugin name. Do not edit the master itself. Keep unrelated mods disabled for the first test so any effect has one likely cause. Make a new in-game test save rather than relying on a long-running playthrough.

Make and verify a small change

Choose a harmless object that you can find quickly in a test cell. Open its record, change one visible property, then save the plugin. The Object Window reference explains how records are organized. If you need a separate new object instead of replacing an existing one, duplicate the base record and assign a unique editor ID; then place a reference in a known cell. This avoids changing every occurrence of the original object.

Enable the plugin in your mod manager or game's data-file selection, start Oblivion with only this test mod, and inspect the intended location. Verify both the positive case (your change appears) and the negative case (an unrelated copy of the original object still looks normal if you intended a new record). Close the game, reopen the Construction Set, load the plugin as the active file, and check that it saved the record you expected.

For an interior, add one room and a working entry/exit before decoration. The beginner lessons cover cell creation and placement. Objects alone do not guarantee that NPCs can move: the path-grid documentation covers navigation. Test doors from both sides, collision, lighting, and travel on a fresh save.

Package and troubleshoot

Distribute the plugin together with only assets the plugin actually references, preserving their relative paths. State which Oblivion edition, expansions, and other plugins are required. If the mod fails to appear, inspect whether the plugin is enabled and whether it was saved under the intended name. If a model or texture is missing, check the path in the record against the packaged file. If a quest fails, inspect its stage, dialogue and condition logic rather than changing unrelated records.

Do not ship game files copied from the base installation. A plugin that edits existing records can usually reference the player's installed game data. The Construction Set wiki has detailed pages for individual record types and editor operations.

What remains unfinished

This guide covers a first plugin and the main content routes. It does not yet provide a fully tested quest, custom mesh pipeline, conflict-resolution walkthrough, or edition-by-edition setup. Consult the linked Construction Set pages for those advanced steps and verify them against the game version you intend to support.

Sources / References

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

- Construction Set beginner series
- Object Window
- Quest tutorials
- NIF model and texture paths

- primer
- path-grid documentation
- Construction Set wiki