



Blockchain: A Clear-Eyed Start

A practical first look at ledgers, digital assets, and safer decisions

Understand the technology before you trust the promise.

SHAD EDDIE MONGRUE

Free preview edition · pages 1–2
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01

Why Blockchain Matters Now

Blockchain can sound like a shortcut to wealth or a puzzle for experts. You deserve a clear starting point: learn how it works, understand the risks, and decide what deserves your attention.

- ◆ In 2024, IC3 recorded \$9,322,335,911 in reported losses under its cryptocurrency descriptor¹.
- ◆ Victims reported more than \$6.5 billion in losses from cryptocurrency-related investment fraud in 2024².
- ◆ Through Operation Level Up, the FBI notified 4,323 cryptocurrency investment fraud victims¹.
- ◆ Blockchain is a shared digital ledger designed to be tamper-evident and tamper-resistant³.
- ◆ Knowing how a ledger works helps you separate its design from claims made about it.

Those numbers make basic understanding worth your time. Blockchain is a shared digital ledger, but the technology alone does not prove that a project is useful or trustworthy. This book is educational, not financial advice. You'll learn how records connect and how to examine a claim before deciding what deserves more attention.

INSIDE THIS BOOK

Start with a simple ledger exercise, then explore core ideas, a starter plan, and practical skills. Each step gives you a clearer way to understand blockchain without confusing technology with a promise.

02

Make Your First Claim Map

Your first step takes no account, investment, or special software. In under thirty minutes, you can make a simple map to help you inspect a blockchain claim instead of reacting to its pitch.

- ◆ Choose a blockchain or digital-asset claim you have seen in a message, advertisement, or conversation.
- ◆ Rewrite the claim in plain words, focusing on what the technology is supposed to do.
- ◆ Separate details you can verify from statements you are simply being asked to believe.
- ◆ List what you would need to know before deciding whether to take any action.
- ◆ Write one clear question you would ask the person making the claim.

Keep your map on paper or in a note you control. Use headings such as “claim,” “evidence I have,” and “questions.” You are practicing a useful habit: slow down, name the claim, and notice what is missing. If you cannot explain it in everyday language, learn more before you act. Next, you’ll see the simple parts behind the ledger.

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You've read the free pages. Here's what the rest of this book covers:

- 3 How The Ledger Works
- 4 Build A Seven-Day Foundation
- 5 Turn Knowledge Into Skill
- 6 Carry The Basics Forward

BY THE END OF THIS SHELF, YOU WILL

- ◆ Explain a blockchain ledger in plain language.
- ◆ Understand how linked blocks help reveal changes.
- ◆ Ask sharper questions about blockchain claims.
- ◆ Separate technical features from promises.
- ◆ Build a foundation for crypto safety and smart contracts.

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Sources for the free pages

Every statistic in this book is numbered and links to the page it came from. Each one was checked word for word against its source in October 2026. Figures can change as sources update. This book is for education and is not personal financial, legal, medical or professional advice.

- 1 **Federal Bureau of Investigation**, 2024 IC3 Annual Report (2024). https://www.ic3.gov/AnnualReport/Reports/2024_ic3report.pdf
- 2 **Federal Bureau of Investigation**, FBI Releases Annual Internet Crime Report (2024). <https://www.fbi.gov/news/press-releases/fbi-releases-annual-internet-crime-report>
- 3 **NIST**, Blockchain | NIST. <https://www.nist.gov/blockchain>