10 steps to Play Counter Strike by Janet Fitch

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As you all know, Counter Strike (shortened to CS) is a tactical first-person shooter video game in which players join either the terrorist team, the counter-terrorist team, or become spectators. The game has evolved into a series of new games since it was launched, such as Counter Strike: Condition Zero, Counter Strike: Source, and Counter Strike: Global Offensive. This article is not for people who don't play video games that often because unless you have a natural gift you won't get good enough just playing once a month.

1. First off all, you need to download Counter Strike. This can be done by downloading Steam (containing the game engine that runs CS and its servers) free from DOWNLOAD CS. Once installed, CS: Source can then be purchased through Steam.

2. Once everything is loaded-up, open Steam and log in. Then click the "Servers" button from the Start menu. Wait a while for the massive list to appear. In Counter Strike, each of those servers has a different game playing. The current map for each game, the number of players and whether the server has a password, are all shown in the servers window. Double click a server to join in.

3. One thing you'll want to look out for is the "Latency" of a particular server, ideally, you want this number to be as low as possible, giving you the best possible experience. You'll also develop favorite maps as you play and develop your style. Along with different maps come different game modes; one example is death match, where the emphasis is on getting many kills in a row, each new kill will raise you up to a better weapon in many cases.

4. Wait for the server to load, some servers take longer than others, depending on how many additional tweaks that server has. You'll know when the loading is nearly done because the screen will say "Sending client info...". Then you'll first have to chose a side (Counter-Terrorist or Terrorist), each have slightly different weapons and spawn at different locations in the map.

5. Chances are you will join a game that's already underway, if so, you'll have to wait until that round finishes, until then you will spectate (i.e. have the point-of-view of another player). Clicking the left mouse button can switch between players to spectate and space-bar allows you different spectating views. These are all default controls.

6. When the round starts, press "B", this will bring up the gun menu. At the start of every round in CS, you'll need to buy your toys to play with :) It may seem long at first but there are a few tricks, you can re-buy what you bought last round automatically (though obviously not if you have just joined a game) and the menu can be navigated and the guns chosen using keypad numbers.

7. A brief note on weapon choices. There's no hard and fast rule here as everyone has a different style of play, but pretty much everyone agrees that on CT, the M4 Carbine is pretty accurate, on T, the AK is powerful but needs control to manage the recoil. Other guns have their own personalities (wow that's sad?) so you'll just have to get in there and find out for yourself!

8. Movement and strafing is what gets most people confused. It needs a quite accurate coordination of the W, A, S, D keys and the mouse. The mouse controls where you look and thus where you shoot and is the most important skill for your hand to master. The mouse sensitivity can be adjusted in the in-game options menu. You want to start off low and increase the sensitivity as you get more comfortable with the CS environment.

9. Ok, shooting, this is what everyone's here for. Basically I'll say this as simply as possible, this goes for all weapons - especially rifles. CS is rather realistic...any more than 2 or 3 shots becomes a spray, a spray is bad because it is not very accurate. Fire a few shots at a time and squeeze the bullets out, don't rap hard on the mouse button. Slow is smooth, smooth is fast, remember? Generally, you should aim for the torso or head.

10. In-game communication takes different forms, some people don't bother with it, but it does come in useful for bragging or complaining, plus it's fun when you're playing with friends. You can chat by voice, by typing, and for tactical comms.

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