



Getting started with Mountaineer

.NET Gadgeteer compatible platform

Welcome to the Mountaineer Platform!

You've made a good choice! The Mountaineer mainboard you just received is a great way of quickly and efficiently building small intelligent devices using .NET Gadgeteer, the .NET Micro Framework (NETMF), and the Visual Studio development environment.

The Mountaineer mainboards are designed to work with a minimal number of components. While other systems need separate modules such as power supply modules, both Mountaineer mainboards allow you to get started straight away, just by connecting the mainboard to a PC through the standard micro-USB cable that comes with the board.

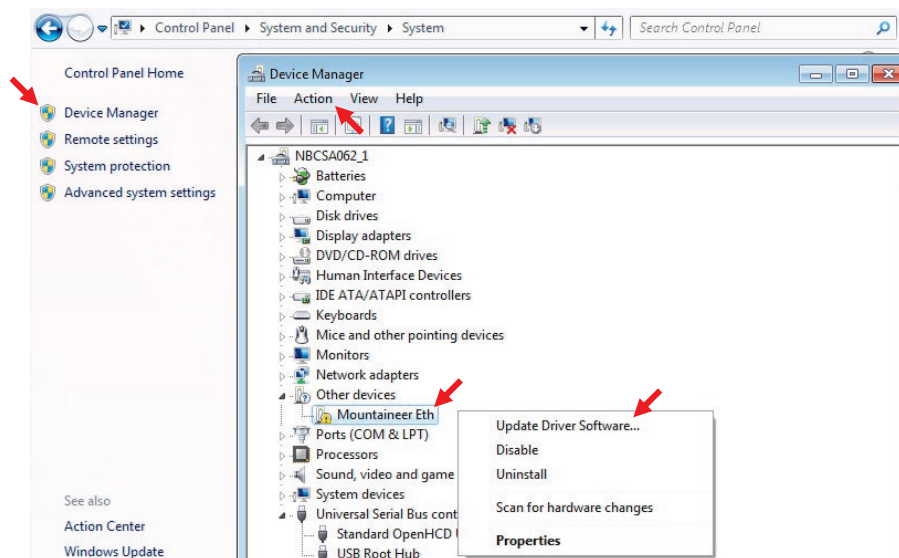
Your very first Gadgeteer program can therefore run with a minimal amount of cable clutter. Using the Ethernet mainboard even allows you to connect to the Internet without the need of any external module. Don't worry, Gadgeteer-compatible third-party modules will work with these mainboards as well. But for now, we'll focus on the on-board capabilities of the boards.

Step 1: install the development environment and the drivers

First, you'll need to install [Microsoft Visual Studio 2010](#) or its free version, [Microsoft Visual C# 2010 Express](#) (either will work fine).

Then, download the [.NET Micro Framework Software Development Kit \(SDK\)](#), the [.NET Gadgeteer Core](#) as well as the [Mountaineer SDK](#). Simply double-click on the installer files (.msi) in the same order as listed above.

To install the [USB drivers](#), connect a Mountaineer board to your computer, open the Device Manager (Windows Key + Pause, then click "Device Manager" on the left hand side), look for a device called "Mountaineer Eth" or "Mountaineer USB" (probably in the "Other devices" section). Maybe you'll have to refresh the display by clicking on **Action >> Scan for hardware changes**. Once you've found the board, right-click on it and select "Update Driver Software...":



Then click "Browse my computer for driver software" and go to the folder where you downloaded the drivers (the files must be unzipped). Click on "Install" if you see a security warning asking if you trust the software from CSA Engineering AG.

If you also have the other mainboard type (Mountaineer ETH or Mountaineer USB), you'll have to repeat these steps in order to install its driver.



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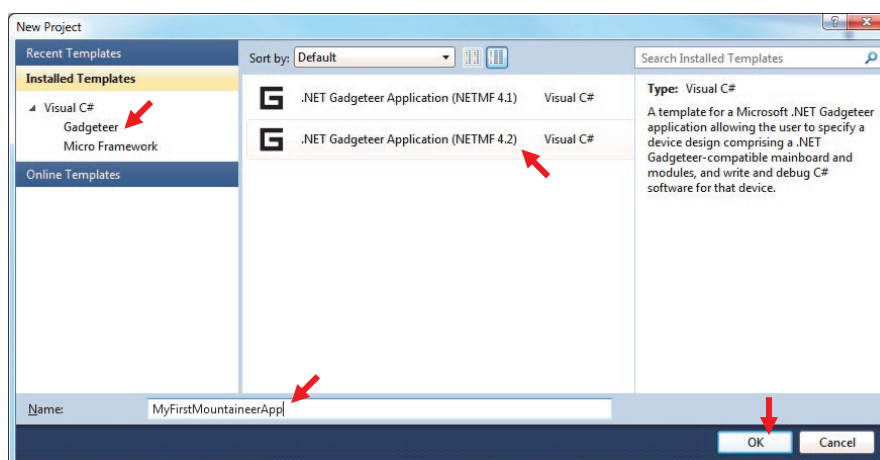
Step 2: connect the hardware

It can't be easier: plug the provided micro-USB cable into a free USB port of your PC on one side, and into the Mountaineer mainboard on the other side. That's it, your Mountaineer mainboard is now ready for programming!

Step 3: prepare your first application with a Mountaineer mainboard

Launch Microsoft Visual Studio 2010 or Microsoft Visual C# 2010 Express (hereafter called VS) and follow these steps:

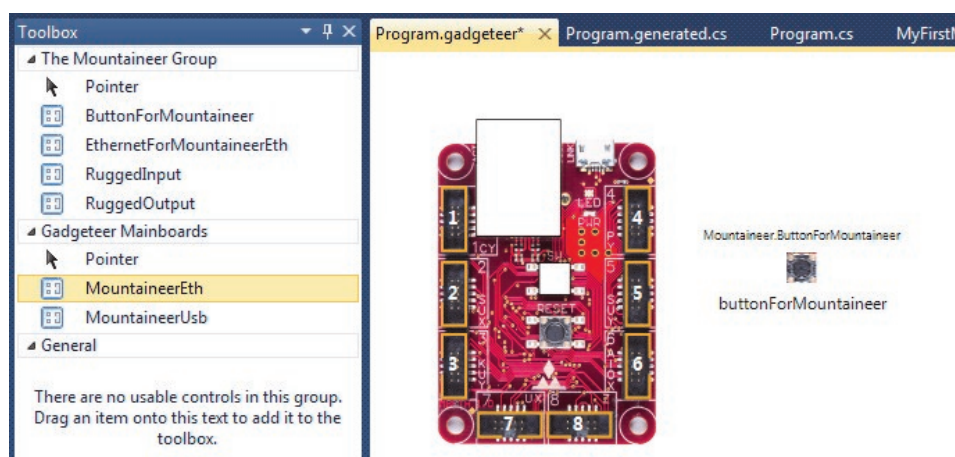
- 1) Click **File >> New project...**
- 2) Under "Installed Templates", expand the "Visual C#" tab and click on "Gadgeteer"
- 3) Select ".NET Gadgeteer Application (NETMF 4.2)"
- 4) Give a name to your project (for example „MyFirstMountaineerApp“) and click OK



Note: the screenshots and menus are shown here for Visual C# 2010 Express and are slightly different for Visual Studio 2010.

VS now opens the .NET Gadgeteer Designer, allowing you to virtually connect the modules you need to the mainboard. For this first application, you'll just use the built-in user button and the Debug LED:

- 1) Check that the Toolbox is visible. If not, click **View >> Other windows >> Toolbox** to display it. This toolbox gives you access to all installed Gadgeteer mainboards and modules, classified by manufacturer.
- 2) You'll need the appropriate Mountaineer mainboard. Drag & drop it from the toolbox onto the Designer main screen (there's no need to do that if the mainboard you want is already on the Designer screen)
- 3) Drag & drop the module "ButtonForMountaineer" from the toolbox onto the Designer main screen, next to the mainboard. You should now see something like this:





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The white squares on the mainboard picture mean that the mainboard is by default not initialized with any built-in module. That's why you need to add the button as described above.

There's no need of connecting the button together with the mainboard because this module is already embedded in the hardware of the mainboard. Adding this built-in module on the Designer simply tells VS that the mainboard must be initialized to support it.

Now, after saving this design (CTRL+S), you've got your mainboard automatically initialized. In the Solution Explorer, check out the file "Program.generated.cs", you'll see the code the Designer wrote for you.

Step 4: write the code

Go back to "Program.cs". This file is where you'll have to write your code. You'll see here how to use some basic principles of Gadgeteer: the timers, the event handlers, etc. The program you're going to write will make the Debug LED blink a couple of times when the button is pressed. The blinking will be handled by a timer, whereas the button events will be managed by an event handler.

Your program will run from the method ProgramStarted, already implemented in the template.

Let's first define some global variables for the class `Program`:

```
public partial class Program
{
    /// <summary>
    /// Defines how many times the LED must blink when pressing the button
    /// </summary>
    private const int BlinkTimes = 10;

    /// <summary>
    /// Defines the blink frequency. This time (milliseconds) defines the ON and OFF time intervals of LED
    /// </summary>
    private const int BlinkTimeMs = 100;

    /// <summary>
    /// Used to set the state of the LED: true = on / false = off
    /// </summary>
    private bool ledState = true;

    /// <summary>
    /// Used to count how many times the LED already blinked
    /// </summary>
    private int loopIndex = 0;

    /// <summary>
    /// Gadgeteer timer for blinking
    /// </summary>
    private GT.Timer blinkTimer;
```

Note: the XML comments (beginning with a triple slash) are not mandatory, but it's a good practice to use them for documentation purposes.

Next, initialize the Gadgeteer timer (just follow the example of the template) when entering the method ProgramStarted. Then initialize the event handlers to manage both button events "pressed" and "released":

```
// Use Debug.Print to show messages in Visual Studio's "Output" window during debugging.
Debug.Print("Program Started");

blinkTimer = new GT.Timer(BlinkTimeMs);
blinkTimer.Tick += new GT.Timer.TickEventHandler(blinkTimer_Tick);
Debug.Print("Timer initialized");

buttonForMountaineer.ButtonPressed += new ButtonForMountaineer.ButtonEventHandler(buttonForMountaineer_ButtonPressed);
buttonForMountaineer.ButtonReleased += new ButtonForMountaineer.ButtonEventHandler(buttonForMountaineer_ButtonReleased);
```



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```
} Debug.Print("Event handler linked");
```

If you type the code (instead of copying and pasting it from here), you'll enjoy the automated code generation for the event handler when typing "+=" and pressing the "Tab" key twice. This will also generate the methods showed later in this document. If you copy the code from here, VS will display this error message when pointing the cursor on the event handler method:

```
buttonForMountaineer.ButtonPressed += new ButtonForMountaineer.ButtonEventHandler(buttonForMountaineer_ButtonPressed);
```

The name 'buttonForMountaineer_ButtonPressed' does not exist in the current context

Don't worry, this error is normal because the method `buttonForMountaineer_ButtonPressed` doesn't exist yet. This will be fixed soon.

Now that the "pressed" and "released" button events can be detected, you have to describe which action you want to undertake when this happens. Let's decide the following:

- When pressing the button, start the blink timer for the LED
- When releasing it, do nothing but display a debug message (just to ensure it works)

Here are the two methods to handle these events (put them outside of `ProgramStarted`, still in the class `Program`):

```
private void buttonForMountaineer_ButtonPressed(ButtonForMountaineer sender, ButtonForMountaineer.ButtonState value)
{
    Debug.Print("Button pressed!");
    blinkTimer.Start();
}

private void buttonForMountaineer_ButtonReleased(ButtonForMountaineer sender, ButtonForMountaineer.ButtonState value)
{
    Debug.Print("Button released!");
}
```

Lastly, let's implement the method for blinking the LED. Since this method is handled by the timer, it will be periodically repeated. So basically, you just have to invert the LED state and count up to the defined blink times, for example 10 times. When this is reached, stop the timer and reset the counter:

```
private void blinkTimer_Tick(GT.Timer blinkTimer)
{
    if (loopIndex != 2 * BlinkTimes) // 2 * BlinkTimes because one blink needs two ticks (ON and OFF)
    {
        if (ledState)
        {
            Mainboard.SetDebugLED(true);
        }
        else
        {
            Mainboard.SetDebugLED(false);
        }
        ledState = !ledState;
        loopIndex++;
    }
    else
    {
        blinkTimer.Stop();
        loopIndex = 0;
    }
}
}
```

Your button event handler is still ready to trigger, so the next loop will start when pressing the button again.



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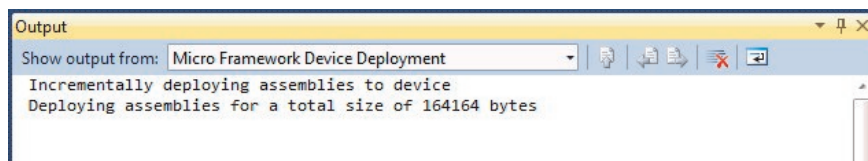
Step 5: build and deploy to the hardware

Now that your code is ready, it can be built and deployed to the device's Flash memory. Let's first check the configuration for the deployment:

- 1) Click **Project >> MyFirstMountaineerApp Properties**
- 2) Select the ".NET Micro Framework" register
- 3) Check that the following is selected: "Transport = USB" and "Device = MountaineerEth" (or "MountaineerUsb" depending on the board you use).

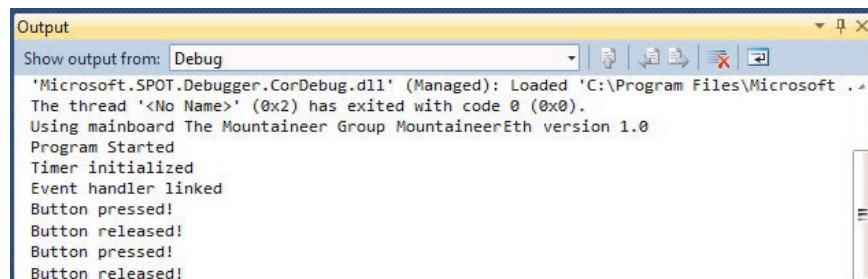
Now you can build your code:

- 1) Click **Debug >> Build Solution** (F6 key). You should see "Build succeeded" on the status bar. Otherwise, an error list will appear on the screen, telling you what's wrong in the code.
- 2) Click **Debug >> Start Debugging** (F5 key). The program will now be loaded ("deployed") onto the hardware.



VS tells you what happens during the deployment in the "Output" window. If you don't see this window, click **Debug >> Windows >> Output** to display it.

After waiting the end of the deployment, your code should be directly working on the board. Press the button labelled "SW" on your Mountaineer mainboard to try it out! You should see the debug messages in the "Output" window:



If you see these messages, the LED should blink as expected. Congratulations, you just wrote your first Mountaineer application successfully!

Step 6: debugging

Does your program work as expected? Do you experience some problems during its execution? Doesn't it work at all? No problem, VS gives you the opportunity to debug your code by going step by step or setting breakpoints in the code.

Is your debug toolbar active? It should look like this:



If not, you'll find it here: click **View >> Toolbars >> Debug**.

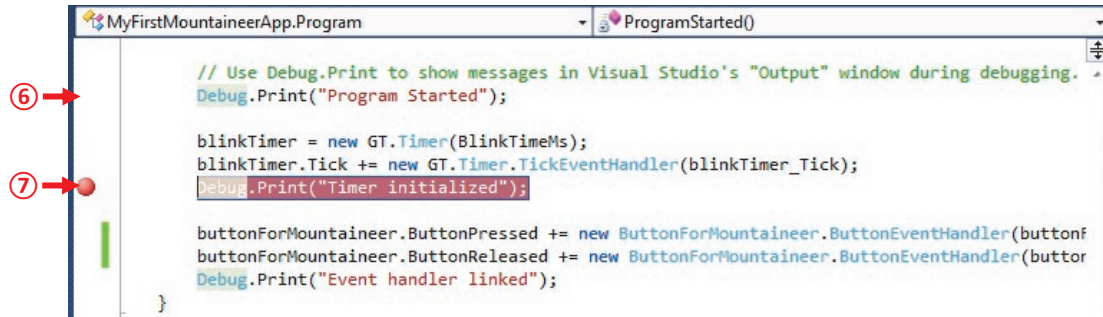


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These tools allow you executing the whole program (①), stopping the execution of the program (②), going one step forward (③), stepping over a statement (④, for example a `for` loop), or stepping out of a statement (⑤).

The program execution will stop when encountering a breakpoint. The breakpoints are very useful if you want to execute your code up to a certain line. In this case, set a breakpoint where you want the program to stop simply by clicking on the light grey margin on the left of the code (⑥):



Just click once on any breakpoint (⑦) to remove it.

Step 7: start playing!

Now it's your turn! Add external modules to your mainboard, develop, deploy, debug and... have fun with Mountaineer!

Useful links

Mountaineer

- <http://www.mountaineer.org>
- <http://www.mountaineer-boards.com>

Gadgeteer

- <http://www.netmf.com/gadgeteer>
- <http://gadgeteer.codeplex.com>

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