



THE MERGE

083 / 15 SEP 2022 / ETHEREUM / MYTHIC

WEN MERGE?

On 15 September 2022, Ethereum completed The Merge, joining its existing Mainnet execution layer to the Beacon Chain's proof-of-stake consensus system. The work had been years in preparation. Launched on 1 December 2020, the Beacon Chain had operated alongside Mainnet, establishing its validator network while the original chain continued handling transactions under proof-of-work. Two systems were ready to become one.

The final connection followed a carefully staged sequence. Bellatrix prepared the consensus layer; Paris triggered the execution layer's transition when a predetermined total mining difficulty was reached. Validators staking ETH replaced miners as block producers, while Ethereum's accounts, applications and transaction history remained intact. Picture a bridge receiving its final span: a connection completed while the life it carried continued.

Ending energy-intensive mining reduced Ethereum's energy consumption by an estimated 99.95%. That striking change was the upgrade's clearest immediate environmental result, but its scope mattered. The Merge did not substantially lower gas fees or directly deliver a major increase in transaction throughput; those goals depended on separate scaling work. Its achievement was to change how the network reached agreement without discarding what had already been built, completing a long-planned crossing and laying groundwork for further upgrades.

DETAILS IN THE ART

01 The final span

A crane lowers the missing bridge section between two established structures. This fictional construction scene symbolises the integration of Mainnet execution and Beacon Chain consensus.

02 The Beacon lighthouse

The purple beacon recalls card 062, Beacon Chain. Its guiding light connects the consensus chain launched in 2020 with the network transition completed in 2022.

03 Builders across the collection

The workers and construction imagery echo card 028, The Ether Sale, and card 032, Ethereum Goes Live. They turn separate milestones into one continuing story of building Ethereum.

04 A city already alive

The Ethereum emblem hangs over a brightly lit city. Buildings, lights and flowing water suggest an existing world continuing through the transition, not a network being created from nothing.

SOURCE & ART NOTE

Sources: Ethereum.org: The Merge; Ethereum Foundation: Mainnet Merge announcement. The bridge, city, lighthouse and workers are fictional visual metaphors, not a historical construction project. Collection callbacks are artistic links. WEN MERGE? preserves the approved community phrase.