



# BEACON CHAIN

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## THE FIRST LIGHT.

On 1 December 2020 at 12:00:23 UTC, Ethereum's Beacon Chain began. Its proof-of-stake system brought validators into operation alongside the existing proof-of-work Mainnet. Ethereum had gained a new consensus chain, while miners continued securing the transactions and applications people were already using.

Genesis followed a minimum launch threshold of 16,384 validator deposits of 32 ETH each, equivalent to 524,288 ETH. That requirement set the floor for starting the network. It should not be read as the actual number of validators present at genesis.

Validators used software to participate in the new chain. Lighthouse, Nimbus, Prysm and Teku were among the mainnet clients identified in the Ethereum Foundation's pre-launch update. Their different implementations shared the task of following the same consensus rules.

The illustration gives that beginning a visible signal: an Ethereum-shaped light shines from a lighthouse above a restless harbor. Below it, the timestamp, deposit threshold and client plaques anchor the imagined setting to historical details. Across the water, a mining building remains brightly lit.

The unfinished bridge captures work still ahead. The Beacon Chain initially agreed on its own state; it was not processing Mainnet transactions. Only with The Merge on 15 September 2022 did its consensus system replace Mainnet's proof-of-work. THE FIRST LIGHT marks the start of that journey.

### DETAILS IN THE ART

#### 01 THE ETHEREUM BEACON

The Ethereum-shaped light inside the lantern sends a violet beam over the harbor. The lighthouse visualizes the new consensus chain coming online.

#### 02 12:00:23 UTC

The plaque above the door records the precise genesis time on 1 December 2020. The seconds distinguish it from the earlier noon minimum-time setting.

#### 03 THE MINIMUM THRESHOLD

The sign pairs 16,384 with 32 ETH each: 524,288 ETH in minimum qualifying deposits. MINIMUM matters; this is a launch threshold, not an actual genesis-validator count.

#### 04 FOUR CLIENT PLAQUES

Lighthouse, Nimbus, Prysm and Teku appear beside the doorway. These names identify launch-era client software, rather than four validators or four physical institutions.

#### 05 THE MINE AND UNFINISHED BRIDGE

Lit mining rigs across the water recall Mainnet continuing under proof-of-work. The missing bridge span signals that uniting the two systems still lay ahead, at The Merge in September 2022.

### SOURCE & ART NOTE

Sources: Ethereum Foundation, eth2 update 21 (2020); Ethereum Foundation, eth2 update 19 (2020); Ethereum.org, The Beacon Chain; Ethereum.org, The Merge. The harbor, lighthouse, mine and unfinished bridge are symbolic scenery, not literal construction. THE FIRST LIGHT is approved original editorial copy. Client names are historical references, not endorsements.