



THE SPARKS FOUNDATION

*...inspire, innovate, integrate*

# Guide to asking questions on Stackoverflow

## What is Stackoverflow?

Stack Overflow is a Q&A website where you can ask questions on a wide range of programming topics and get feedback from other users.

## How to ask questions?

### 1. Preparing to ask

- **Verify your question hasn't already been asked or answered.** This can usually be accomplished with a simple online search of the problem you are having. If your question is a duplicate or has already been answered, it may be closed by moderators. Some ways of refining your search are as follows:
  - To search a tag and a topic, type: [tag] topic
  - To search a specific phrase, surround it with quotes: "phrase"
  - To exclude a tag, phrase, or topic, preface these with a minus (-) sign
  - For tags: [tagA] -[tagB] (searches tagA while limiting tagB)
  - For phrases: topic -"phrase" (searches the topic while limiting a specific phrase)
  - For topics: topicA -topicB (searches topicA while limiting topicB)
- **Include minimal but sufficient information.** Including too much information can get you into trouble or make it difficult for other users to parse where exactly your problem is. This goes especially for code; copying your entire program into your post is rarely helpful.
- **Sign in or sign up.** To post a question on Stack Overflow, you will need to log in with your Google account, Facebook profile, or your Stack Overflow account.[6] If you need to make an account, visit [stackoverflow.com](https://stackoverflow.com) and click the "sign up" link found on the top status bar of the page. Then, follow the prompts to create your account and select "log in," which can be found next to the "sign up" link.

## 2. Asking your question

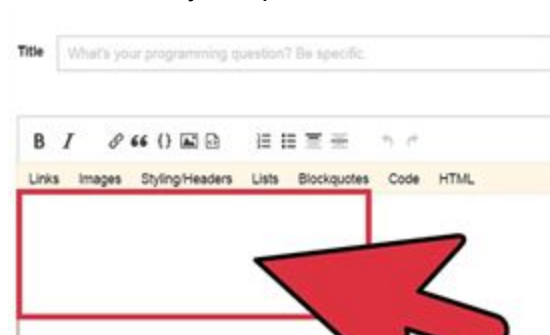
**Click the "Ask Question" button.** Navigate to the Stack Overflow homepage in your browser at [stackoverflow.com](https://stackoverflow.com). In the upper right hand corner of the page, you should see the Ask Question button, which you should click to continue.



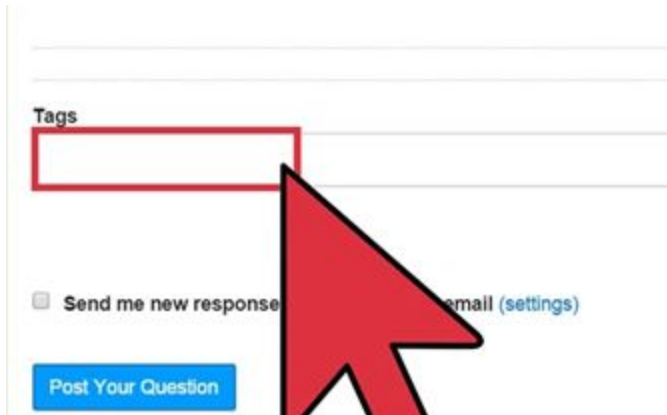
**Read the disclaimer.** Then check the box indicating you have read and understand the disclaimer and click "Proceed." Now you're ready to ask your question!



**Fill in the necessary information.** This is where your problem description and title come in handy. Fill in the information and take a moment to double check spelling and grammar. Then click on "Post your question."



**Add any relevant tags.** In the tags field, when you begin typing, the Stack Overflow system will automatically suggest likely tags to help you with this process. Be sure you read the descriptions for your tags. An incorrect tag can seriously limit potential responses. Three important tags to include with relation to your topic are: language, library, and API.



**Finishing and Following up.** If you have asked a few questions on Stack Overflow, or if you've forgotten the exact title of a question you've recently asked, you can do a user search. To do this type into the search field:

- user:username (returns only results for the username provided)
- user:username topic (returns only results for the username provided with the associated topic)



**Sharing the question with The Sparks Foundation.** After posting the question on stackoverflow, please share the link from the browser in:

- The Sparks Foundation Network on LinkedIn (for Phase 1 Interns)
- Whatsapp groups (for Phase 2 Interns)