CoderDojo Foundation

Your Guide to

CoderDojo Belts

What are CoderDojo Belts?

This Guide

This guide has been designed to give you an <u>outline</u> of the CoderDojo Belt Awarding system. It gives you a little bit of background on belts, how they developed at CoderDojo and how they are implemented in Dojos.

The criteria used has come from a variety of different criteria used in Dojos around the world. You are free to develop your own belt system within your Dojo, this is just a guide to help you!

Background

In the early days of CoderDojo there was an online discussion including James Whelton (CoderDojo co-founder) with Dojo mentors and parents. This discussions centred on using belts and awards to encourage and asses skill levels. Alot of items were discussed including the idea of belts, awards, encouragement and assessing skill levels.

Fairness, achieving skill (not just giving empty awards), pressure from parents, mentors and kids, etc. were all discussed. All of these elements have been considered in the belt criteria created by Dojos and in this guide.

Divergence Between Dojo Belt Systems

Some Dojos have already implement a badge/belt system in their Dojo. Some Dojos may be tempted to use their own criteria and decide white belts are for younger kids and blue for older, etc which breaks away from the original idea of belts suggested by the community.

While each Dojo is autonomous, and this is part of what makes CoderDojo speacial, we endeavor for a standard to be kept for belts across all Dojo's locally and globally so that Dojos can all communicate, share and help each other.

To support Dojo's in implementing a belt system we have correlated the belt ranking systems from Dojos around the world to provide a clear and concise guide.

Belt Ranking System

1. White Belt (2 GB)
● Attend 5 Dojo sessions,

● Understand the CoderDojo code - One Rule, Be Cool!,

● Get to know the names of 5 ninjas and 2 mentors and

● Create and finish a basic project.

2. Yellow Belt (4 GB)
● Create a project, as agreed with a mentor,

● Understand the coding concepts you have used in your project and

● Share your project with others.

3. Blue Belt (4 GB)
● Have previously earned the yellow belt in that track,

● Create a project, as agreed with a mentor that is more challenging than your yellow belt project,

● Understand the coding concepts you have used in your project,

● Share your project with others and

● Help mentor (eg help two new ninjas get started).

4. Green Belt (8 GB)
● Have previously earned the Blue belt in that track,

● Complete a project, as agreed with your mentor, that is more challenging than your Blue belt project,

● Understand the coding concepts you have used in your project,

● Share your project with the group and

● Regularly mentor at the Dojo.

5. Orange Belt (8 GB)
● Have previously earned the yellow belt in that track,

● Complete a project, as agreed with your mentor, that is more challenging than your Green belt project,

● Understand the coding concepts you have used in your project,

● Share your project with the group and

● Create a basic project.

Belt Ranking System

Most Dojo's that use belts award Red, Purple and Black belts on a case by case basis by the mentors as a group for especially advanced projects. Here are some suggestions for criteria for Red, Purple and Black belts.

6. Red Belt (16 GB)

● Has obtained White, Yellow, Blue and either Green / Orange belts

and

● Has written a game recommended by three separate CoderDojos.

or

● Red belts to be awarded by the mentors as a group for especially advanced projects.

7. Purple Belt (32 GB)

● Has produced a code training video (minimum of 5 minutes in length) that enables learning and has been published on the CoderDojo YouTube Channel and viewed more than 3,000 times.

or

● Purple belts to be awarded by the mentors as a group for especially advanced projects.

8. Black Belt (64 GB)

● Has produced an open source piece of code that is on Github and is in use by 1 million people or more.

or

● Black belts to be awarded by the mentors as a group for especially advanced projects.

Examples of the different coloured CoderDojo USB Belts.

Belt Tracks

Many Dojos apply different subject tracks to awarding their belts!

For example a Ninja can work with Scratch and be awarded a yellow, blue or green belt etc. for their work in Scratch and then move on to working towards their yellow, blue or green etc. belts in HTML, Python or for Minecraft modifications!

To be awarded a Blue belt in HTML the recipient must have already completed the yellow belt in that track.

Using tracks is a great way of encouraging young people to progress their skills in different areas, there is always another challenge for them to focus on and it is rare that you will run out of challenges for them!

Scratch, Python and Minecraft Belts to be awarded to Ninjas at CoderDojo Athenry.

Purchasing USB Belts

Ireland

USB Ireland

Contact: Colin Dunne (sales@usbireland.ie)
Phone: 01 8225565

Quantities: 50, 100, 250, 500, 1000+
Capacity: 64MB, 128MB, 256MB, 512MB, 1GB, 2GB, 4GB, 8GB, 16GB.
Colours Available: Black, White, Blue, Red, Green and more.
Branding Options: Colour Printing

Eg. Pricing: 50 x 4GB Branded USB Wristbands = €4.95 per unit.
100 x 4GB Branded USB Wristbands = €3.75 per unit.

All prices include delivery and are ex vat. Please contact directly for a quote.

US

USBMemoryDirect (in the US)

As of October 2014

Contact: Matthew Davis (matthewd@usbmemorydirect.com)
Direct +1 866.404.4645 x323 Fax +1 954.337.0206 www.usbmemorydirect.com

52 x 1 GB = $7.40 per unit White Special Slap Wristband = $395.20
10 x 1 GB = $6.60 per unit Yellow Normal Wrist Style = $66.00
All prices include delivery - no sales taxes applied

International

Flash Bay

Contact: Hugo Sabin (hugo@flashbay.com)

Prices confirmed as below:
50 x 2GB = €5.48 per unit ex VAT (White)
25 x 4GB = €6.96 per unit ex VAT (Yellow)
25 x 4GB = €6.96 per unit ex VAT (Blue)

These are guide proves and they can be ordered from any company you wish, they are not restricted to the above! It is typically cheaper to order USB belts in bulk.

Awarding USB Belts

Some notes on awarding belts:

Communicate Clearly
● Belts should be given to Dojo attendees who have earned them for their dedication to the Dojo and developing their programming skills! Belts should not be awarded for nothing as this will diminish the value of them!

● We (the whole Dojo - mentors, parents and all club members) will help you get there

● We will be clear about what is required to get to the next belt level

● We will give you feedback for next time if you did not make it

● An element of Social Good is a must - (e.g. mentoring others in the Dojo, making a website for a charity, teach elderly people to use the net, etc.)

● What the difference between a White/Yellow/Blue belt is (e.g. for Scatch, HTML/CSS, Python, etc.) Many Dojos apply different subject tracks to awarding their belts!

Applying for a Belt

'Applying' sounds very formal but the basic idea is that anyone once can request to be assessed for a Belt. Mentors then discuss with that person what is needed for the next belt for them and agree between the how best to demonstrate them.

3 Steps:

1. Learn Skills (badges) - these are the practical skills that are picked up at Dojos week in, week out
2. Put Skills into Practice - demonstrate that skills are understood and are being put into practice together (not just transcribed)
3. Recognition - Belts are awarded based on recognition from Mentors and peers

A belt awarding event at CoderDojo Athenry.

Awarding USB Belts

Putting this into practice:

- Pick a week to award belts. The end of term or a final session of a series is best!
- Explain what was needed to be a yellow or blue belt
- Work one to one with everyone to set a challenge of interest to them to achieve a belt
- Mentors evaluate if the challenge is achieved and is enough to award a belt
- Award the belt or provide feedback on how to take the project a bit further to be ready next time (see 'Making the Decision to Award a Belt' below)

Guidelines for Awarding Belts

Agreement and consistency is absolutely key to this so you can ensure a unanimous decision process and importantly support and guidance if the Dojo member is not ready.

To ensure the rules did not change with the mentor we agreed that:
- at least 2 mentors would have to agree that the Dojo member was ready to go for his/her belt.
- that any of the mentors involved could veto the decision
- veto would be respected (no arguments! :)

If someone is not ready to be considered for a higher belt they must be given clear instruction on what they needed to work on to be ready next time.

It is important to follow the 'Above All, Be Cool' philosophy here. It is not cool to upset someone or make them feel a failure - so approaching things sensitively is important but equally it is not cool to make an award that has no real worth or meaning so a balance is needed!

This guide has been created by the CoderDojo Foundation in collaboration with the CoderDojo Community.

For support please contact info@coderdojo.org.

Thank you to our contributors: