Precourse Information

Hello, and a warm welcome to the Northcoders Precourse!

Make sure you read everything in this document carefully before you begin.

What is the Precourse?

The Precourse is a set of materials designed to prepare you for The Developer Pathway 13 week bootcamp. You'll cover these materials in the Introduction Week of the course.

How does it work?

The Precourse has 3 sections. I would strongly recommend you complete as much of section one as possible. You can also start, and even finish, the other sections if you have the time.

Section 3 > This section doesn't cover JavaScript and instead delves into HTML and CSS, which will later be useful for the Front-End block of the course.

How long will the Precourse take?

You can expect the Precourse to take you around 50-60 hours to complete. Allow 20-25 hours for the first two sections. The first two sections will take you around two weeks if you are working full-time, or a few days to a week if you're not. Obviously this will vary widely depending on your commitments. Be realistic about what you think you can achieve.

Again, the Precourse doesn't need to be completed before your start date, so don't put any pressure on yourself to get it done! Anything you do manage will only help you though.

What are the aims of the Precourse?
> Get comfortable using the command line, in Terminal
> Get familiar with git and Github
> Bed down the basics of JavaScript
> Get lots of practice solving problems with JavaScript
> Aim to increase your CodeWars score
> Be able to create static projects with HTML, CSS
> Foster the independent learning and problem solving skills which are essential for any programmer And most of all, get excited about the journey ahead!

What do we expect from you?

Each section of the Precourse comes with final challenges which should be completed and pushed to Github. We expect you to commit (or "save") your work regularly.

What if I get stuck?

Ask for help! You can ask your peers and Northcoders tutors for help on the northcoders-freshers Slack channel. If you need an invite to the Precourse Slack channel, just message Bethan or Maddison.

If you're finding a problem really tricky, that's ok! If you have asked for help and you still can't figure it out, leave that problem for a while and come back to it in a week or two, and see how you find it then. If you still can't solve it, don't worry. Know when to ask for help - don't spend hours on one small problem!

What if there's something I don't understand?

That's okay too. Some subjects, such as Git, Github, filtering and mapping are pretty heavy subjects. Everything we cover in the Precourse, with the exception of HTMlL and CSS, is covered thoroughly in the main course. The aim is familiarity rather than complete understanding.

Can I fail the Precourse?

If you have trouble with any of the material, that's okay and normal. We don't expect you to be able to solve everything perfectly. We just want to see that you've tried, and have taken on board our advice. It's normal to find something tricky!

What are your top tips?

Most importantly, have fun working through the problems! The more frustration you experience on a particular issue, the greater the satisfaction you will feel when you finally overcome it.

> Make use of our Freshers Slack channel. This is where you can get support from staff and often current students who have just gone through the same experience as you, as well as other future students who you may be spending much more time with in the future.
> When you're not sure about how to do something, Google it! There are so many resources online it is hard to know where to start sometimes. Pay attention to the date that responses were posted - JavaScript is an evolving language and a good answer in the past might not be best practice now.

> Read the documentation. Documentation is often the best resource available. Reading documentation isn't always effortless, but it is a skill in itself well worth learning.
> Know when to take a step back. If you're stuck, make yourself a hot drink / run a bath / GO TO BED.

Leaving a difficult problem and letting it settle in your head before going back to the screen is never a bad idea. Not every problem has to be passing all tests and using best practises. If you're still really stuck on something after following a tutorial, reading docs and asking for help, that is not something to worry about. But it's far more useful for you and us to submit what you've attempted, so we have something to work from when giving you feedback.

Stay in touch through the process. Keep checking in on Slack, even if you don't have an issue yourself - maybe you can help someone else. And don't forget to request a review when you have completed a section, and read the notes when they come through. Best of luck and enjoy