

# Getting Involved with Open Source

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# Why?

## Why not?

- Practice your coding skills
- Implement features you want immediately instead of waiting around hoping someone else does
- Getting your name out there
- Interacting with others
- Looks good on Resumés

# How?

- Join a mailing list, ex. Linux Kernel Mailing List, you will get to see code patches and general talk about development
- Explore open source projects, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, LibreOffice, even your Linux window manager and file manager is open source
- Browse source code repositories - SourceForge, Github, Google Code
- Download some code and just try to build it and run it
- Try to make simple changes in the code and see what happens and try to learn how it works
- Contribute changes or features you may make back to the community via a mailing list or version control

# Making your own Open Source projects

Sites such as Github and SourceForge make this easy. They allow you to host your repositories out there for anyone to see. Your projects don't have to be very significant, maybe just things that you played around with but think of it as a way to showcase your skills. It's possible to also recruit others to help you or just collaborate with people that you wanted to work with in the first place.

# The Job Market

Unfortunately employers would like to see your practical coding skills and simply listing internships isn't enough a lot of the time. Using your open source projects and contributions can give you an edge over others. You can showcase not only your work but you also show that you can collaborate with others to make software (a big plus for many companies).

An artist wouldn't walk around without a portfolio so why should you do the same? Think of your repositories as a virtual portfolio where you can showcase your work. Add your Github or SourceForge to your resumé and maybe even state involvement you've had in projects.

Put yourself out there. If you do jobs may even come looking for you.

# Questions?

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