Posted by u/realmslayer 2 years ago

For those who struggle with syntax:

The problem:
You finished "insert tutorial series here" and now you want to make your own thing. You plan it out, then you sit down to do so, and now you can't remember exactly how to do loops, so you look it up and copy it in, then get back to it. Rinse repeat, then when you go to compile nothing works and it takes time to fix. Programming takes forever cause you are constantly on google looking at implementation.

What's happening?
You haven't internalized the exact sequence of symbols you need to accomplish a given task. When you go to do that task, you might remember most of the implementation, but close is for horseshoes and handgrenades. This leads to being able to explain what you need to do, but unable to do it.
To use an analogy: You're playing street fighter, your opponent is jumping in your face. You know you need to counter with shoryuken, but the dragon punch input is such a pain in the arse and you REALLY don't want to spend more time in practice mode on this.

The solution:
In order to internalize syntax, you need to do it a lot. There are a few approaches, depending on how much boring you can handle.

Method one: The Bart Simpson method.

This is miserable, but its exactly what it sounds like. Find whatever syntax you're having trouble with and just write that garbo over and over in your IDE. It sucks, but its how everyone learns their letters as a kid. Use this method when you don't also need the grammar for some reason(grammar isn't until grade 2 anyways)

Method 2 : Manual attempt, Auto check.
Same as above, except you write to paper first then get on your comp to compile so you know if its right. This might work better for some.

Method 3: Actually thinking about it. This is the hard way, and it takes some experience. Not a ton, but definitely a non-trivial amount. I suspect that doing things this way is why you see experienced programmers pick up new languages/ frameworks so fast, and I think its kinda key to being able to read code more easily.

That's what you would get if you looked at the "English documentation" this is arguably harder than:

For (iter = 0; iter <3; iter ++) { } Which the docs might say is something like:
Initializer; comparison; increment { statement}

All code is like this and usually there's overlap between languages, so this is the best way to learn the little micro stuff if you can.

That's it, basically. You want to get to the point where if you are watching a video and they say "we are going to put a loop here" you don't have to sit and watch him do it.

As someone who had a ton of trouble with syntax until very recently(and still struggles a bit sometimes) doing this helped a ton with internalizing the really basic stuff.