

Exercise 53

THE SHORTEST EXPLANATION FOR THE LONGEST EXERCISE

By now, you probably know that I think the concern over being "smart enough" is almost entirely nonsensical. But it persists, and I want to give you a chance to see for yourself.

It might be argued that the exercises to date haven't been reflective of what real programmers do on a daily basis. That's certainly true: the purpose of the exercises is two-fold:

1. Help you discover if you are "smart enough" to be a programmer
2. Help you discover if you enjoy programming enough to take it on as a career.

This exercise is different, in that it is very much something you might be asked to do as a professional programmer (though usually this would be reserved for a more experienced coder).

I've also pointed out that one of the best ways for inexperienced programmers to gain experience is to study the code of more expert developers.

This exercise requires nothing more from you than study. "Nothing more"? Ha — that will be plenty. Do study it until you understand how all the parts work together. There's nothing new introduced in this exercise, but it will require quite a bit of hard work on your part.

If you've already decided you don't want a coding career, then you might want to skim the code. But if you're serious about becoming a professional programmer, take the time to study it in depth.

If you get stuck, this isn't an indication of anything other than the fact that there's a fair amount of code, and not all of it is obvious. It definitely does *not* mean that you don't have what it takes to become a pro.