

Submit: **Portfolio (Project: Choose and Build a Portfolio)**

Note: this is an application-based project. Once you reach Javascript, a career coach will review this project and offer feedback and/or suggestions for improvement.

Project: Choose and Build a Portfolio

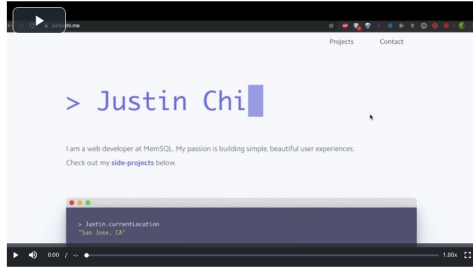
Your portfolio is one of the most powerful tools in your software developer toolbox; it's the easiest way of showing what you're truly capable of as a developer, and is a quick and simple way for recruiters and hiring managers to get an idea of what you can bring to their teams. Even better, you don't have to write full paragraphs, the way you'll have to do when writing a cover letter! All you need to do is pick an attractive portfolio design, fill it with projects you've already created, and then keep iterating as you grow and improve.

In this module, we'll talk about the elements of a strong portfolio, and will walk you through creating your portfolio quickly and simply, while still ensuring that it's strong enough to grab someone's attention.

Part 1: What Makes a Good Portfolio

In a few minutes, we'll link you to designed templates for creating your own portfolio. You'll be able to use these portfolios as the **foundation** for your own, but you can also personalize the portfolio—to reflect **your personality and creativity**.

To personalize your portfolio in an attractive way, you first need to know what makes a good portfolio! Take a few minutes to review the video below.



In essence, if you take a look at any of the example portfolios we list below, you'll see that they each hit those four main points. They are all **simple**: there's no extraneous information—only basic background information, contact information, and a project showcase. They are all **visual**: they use screenshots, mockups, live demos, and other visual tools to *show* the viewer what you're capable of. They are all **thorough**: while the design itself may be simple, they make use of links (both in-text and otherwise) to show extra background information about their work, projects, and history. And they all **look good**: they use 1-3 elegant fonts, focus on 2-3 different colors, use HD images, and use color palettes that look good together.

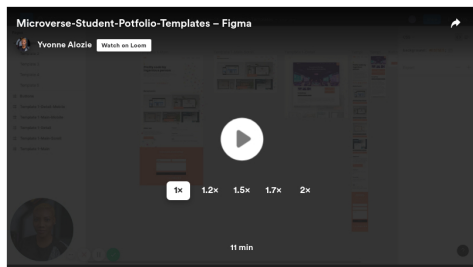
Now you know what makes a good portfolio. Let's now choose a template for your own!

Part 2: Pick a Portfolio Template

If you search long enough, you'll find thousands of great portfolio designs online. We don't want you to search that long, though! The most important thing right now is **creating a portfolio and getting it online**. You can iterate and improve upon the design later. Right now, the goal is creating a great MVP.

We have provided some solid portfolio templates you can choose from. Choose the one you like the most. Again, **do not focus on searching for portfolio designs somewhere else**. Let us narrow down your search, or you will get lost on the internet. The templates are hosted on Figma - a collaborative UI design tool built in the browser. Please watch the video below to learn how to navigate Figma and the style guide.

- [Microverse Student Portfolio Templates](#), - (Links to the portfolio templates).



To learn more about how to use Figma, you can visit and interact with the [Figma community](#).

Part 3: Come Up With a Plan to Personalize and Build

We encourage using the templates above directly or as the inspiration for your own portfolio. However, it's important to add your own personalized mark to your portfolio; this can help your own creative expression as a developer! **Your portfolio should be a place where visitors can get to know you so feel free to use a different color or button style.**

Take an hour (and no more than an hour) to study the template you've chosen, and think about how you can add your personalized touch using the style guide. Perhaps you want to move elements around, choose different colors and fonts, add (or remove) a few elements to really make it pop.

Once done, take another hour to study the design, thinking about how you would turn it into code. The template already provides the CSS code for all the elements. You might also want to write down any animation ideas you have—just think about the code that you'll eventually need, and create a basic outline to follow.

A note: make sure that you also have an idea of how your code will work on mobile devices. Over 50% of all website traffic originates from mobile phones, so ensuring that your design is attractive both on large screens and small ones is incredibly important.

Part 4: Choose Which Projects You Want to Highlight

Your portfolio is a representation of your best work; it should not contain every single project you've ever worked on. Instead, you should choose between 4-6 projects to highlight: your most attractive ones, your most technically complex ones, and/or the ones you're most proud of.

A note: pick projects that show diverse skills. In other words, don't pick 6 JavaScript projects;

pick a couple Rails ones, a couple React ones, etc. You want your portfolio to highlight the breadth of your development abilities.

Another note: if possible, try to avoid using the To-Do list app as a project, unless you've really customized it to look super cool. To-Do lists are great practice, which is why the Microverse curriculum uses them, but they're also the most common project junior web developers complete. Try to only include it if you've customized it to look fantastic, or if you've added additional features.

Part 5: Gather Screenshots of Your Projects

Now that you've come up with a plan for creating your portfolio, it's time to gather screenshots of your projects. There are a few **DOs and DON'Ts** to keep in mind when choosing screenshots.

- **DO** choose screenshots that display your technical ability.
- **DON'T** choose screenshots of login pages.
- **DO** choose screenshots that display good UI.
- **DO** crop and resize screenshots if necessary, to make sure that they're all the same size.
- **DON'T** choose screenshots that look unprofessional (that feature adult topics, inappropriate jokes, etc.) Yes, this happens sometimes, and it will almost always result in a rejection.

Part 6: Gather Design Resources

You're almost ready to start building your portfolio, but you'll probably need a few design resources as well, such as stock images and icons. There are a lot of free resources out there, some of which are already linked in the portfolio template style guide, but again, please stick to these for now in order to avoid spending too long searching.

Free Stock Photos

- [Unsplash](#) (free stock photos)
- [Pexels](#) (free stock photos)

Free Icons

- [Icons8](#) (free icons)

Free Illustrations

- [Duck by Icons8](#) (free vector images)
- [unDraw](#) (free and open source illustrations)

Free Mockups

- [Graphic Burger - iPhone](#) (free mobile device mockups)
- [Graphic Burger - Laptop](#) (free laptop mockups)

Free Color Palettes (For Choosing Complementary Colors for your Portfolio)

- [Flat UI Colors 2](#)
- [Coolers](#)

Part 7: Decrease Image File Size

Page load speed isn't something we notice at all, unless it's slow—and if it's slow, most people would rather close out of a page entirely, rather than wait for it to load.

Gather all the screenshots and image files you'll be using for your portfolio, and pass them through [TinyPNG](#) to reduce their size significantly. This will speed up the loading of your site, and will prevent viewers from leaving.

Part 8: Include Links to Your GitHub Source Code AND to Live Demos

This step is incredibly important, and it's also a step that many people miss. An attractive screenshot can tell a prospective employer that you're a good designer, and that you have a good understanding of UI/UX. However, that employer will have **no idea** whether you're able to write good code unless they can view or test that code themselves.

Make sure that each one of your portfolio projects links to its respective GitHub repository. Make sure to **also include live demo links** wherever possible. Not all recruiters have a development background, so not everyone who views your profile will be able to accurately decipher your code. However, if you include live demo links, then everyone—whether they understand software development or not—will be able to look at your projects and gain an understanding of your capabilities.

Part 9: Create a repository and start building an attractive, responsive portfolio.

This step is the easiest to talk about, but obviously the hardest to accomplish. If you're not sure how to get started, [we recommend this article by Cassandra Wilcox](#), a front-end developer and an instructor at Girls Who Code, on how to quickly turn a mockup into an actual website.

In this case, you don't have a mockup; you have a fully-fledged design, which should make the process go more smoothly. **You should take no more than 2-3 days to build your portfolio.** We know that many of you are perfectionists who want to ship only the highest quality products, but developers also need to understand the importance of MVPs. You'll be able to tweak and iterate upon your portfolio later. For now, take 2-3 days and then stop.

Part 10: Test it!

Testing a portfolio is obviously going to be a lot simpler than testing a complete back-end, but it's still very important. Use the following checklist to ensure that your website is portfolio-ready:

- Does my portfolio look great both on desktops and mobile devices? (Feel free to use a website emulator like [mobiReady](#) to test this)
- Do all of my links work? (You can use a broken link checker like [Dead Link Checker](#) to test).
- Do all of my links go where they're supposed to go?
- Do all of my images load properly?

Step 11: Don't Forget Your Attributions.

It's incredibly important to add attributions for every photo, icon, and web concept you used. In the footer of the webpage (or in a separate page), mention that you implemented a portfolio concept designed by [designer_name], for example. If you also used photos from a stock image websites, make sure to credit the artist as well. This can be as simple as "Photos by {artist_name}."

Part 12: Publish Your Website

There are two methods you can use right now to deploy your website.

Method One: you can deploy your website to [GitHub Pages](#). GitHub Pages are a great way to test changes and experiment with the UI of your portfolio; they're free, simple, and completely acceptable at this point. However, once you reach Career Prep, you will be asked to move your portfolio to a personalized domain name. This is the second method.

Method Two: buy an inexpensive domain name. Using a personalized domain name can highly improve the credibility of your portfolio. You can buy an inexpensive domain name from any provider (alternative TLDs like .me or .co tend to be even more inexpensive). A combination of your first and last name is a great, straightforward, professional name to use. **This is optional at this point; you are absolutely free to use GitHub Pages.** Just be aware that by the time you are ready to start your job search, you will be asked to choose a personalized domain.

Part 13: Add Google Analytics

There are several reasons you might want to add Google Analytics to your portfolio, but this is the largest: Google Analytics will tell you *exactly which of your application materials are strongest and which are weakest*, which can then tell you exactly how to improve your chances of getting a job. Let's explain what we mean by that.

Logically, the more jobs you apply to, the more people should visit your portfolio. If your portfolio **does not** see an increase in visitors, then you can assume that's because your resume and application aren't currently strong enough to get a hiring manager's attention. In that case, start working on improving your resume.

Let's say that Google Analytics shows that people do start visiting your portfolio, but you never

...they may be more likely to receive requests for interviews. In that case, you can assume that your resume and application are strong, but that your portfolio isn't showcasing your strength. In that case, you can begin working on expanding portfolio projects, or revamping the UI.

Google Analytics will tell you exactly where potential hiring managers might be losing interest. Read this [Stack Overflow post for instructions on how to add Google Analytics to GitHub pages](#), or [this Google Support page for instructions on how to add Google Analytics to your domain](#).

Part 14: Review Your Portfolio Using the Portfolio Rubric

[Open up the Portfolio Rubric](#). This rubric will walk you through every one of the elements of a strong development portfolio, and is the same rubric that career coaches will eventually use to assess your portfolio. **Please use this rubric to self-assess this project; your goal should be to make sure that each requirement receives the full 3 points.**

Part 15: Ask your Standup Team to Review your Portfolio.

By this point, you've probably been staring at a text editor (and at your Portfolio) for days. You might be very tired of it, or you may no longer have the energy to focus on details. This is the point when you should ask for feedback!

Send your standup team a link to your portfolio and to the rubric and ask them to give you feedback. If they prefer, they can use the following list of questions as a way to structure their feedback:

- Is the portfolio visual?
- Is the portfolio simple?
- Does the portfolio briefly give contact and background information?
- Is the portfolio attractive?
- Do all the links work properly?
- Would it make them want to learn more?
- What was their first impression?
- What do they like? What do they dislike?

Have them answer at least a few of these questions, and then use some of their feedback to further improve on your portfolio.

Part 16: You're done! Complete this step by submitting the form below.

Once you have completed all of the above steps on your portfolio **and have used the above rubric to self-assess your project**, please use the Airtable form below to submit your project for review, linking to your portfolio in the URL field! Once you reach Javascript, a career coach will review this project and offer feedback and/or suggestions for improvement.

Student *

Please select yourself from the list below.

+ Add

Please verify that you would like to submit your PORTFOLIO project. *

Select the project from the list below.

+ Add

Submission URL *

Please submit your portfolio URL. This should NOT be a link to the GitHub repository for your portfolio; it should instead be a link to your actual, live portfolio.

Complete Step

🔗 Start feedback