

All Code Sucks

Why Bad Code is Everywhere and What to Do About It

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21 March 2025

What is sucky code?

“Programs are meant to be read by humans and only incidentally for computers to execute.”

— Donald Knuth

The Great Hunt for Non Sucky Code



Why Code Sucks

The Statistics Favour Suck

- Half of everything is below average

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The Statistics Favour Suck

- Half of everything is below average
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- The 3 Year Old Programmer

Why Code Sucks

Organisations Tend To Suck

- Software Startups

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- Summer Student Projects

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Organisations Tend To Suck

- Software Startups
- Summer Student Projects
- Prototypes in Production

Why Code Sucks

The Psychology of Suck

- The Illusion of Explanatory Depth

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The Psychology of Suck

- The Illusion of Explanatory Depth
- Availability Bias

What To Do

Adapted from Michael Feathers

- **Discovery** Log behavior
- **Exploration** Scripted investigation
- **Automating** Test harnesses (or clamps)
- **Deconstruction** Separate the target code
- **Enable** Switching with a feature flag
- **New Code** Side by side rewrite

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The Challenge

Where I need your help

“It’s not that hard...”

— *Billy Beane*

“It’s incredibly hard”

— *Ron Washington*

Thank You!

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