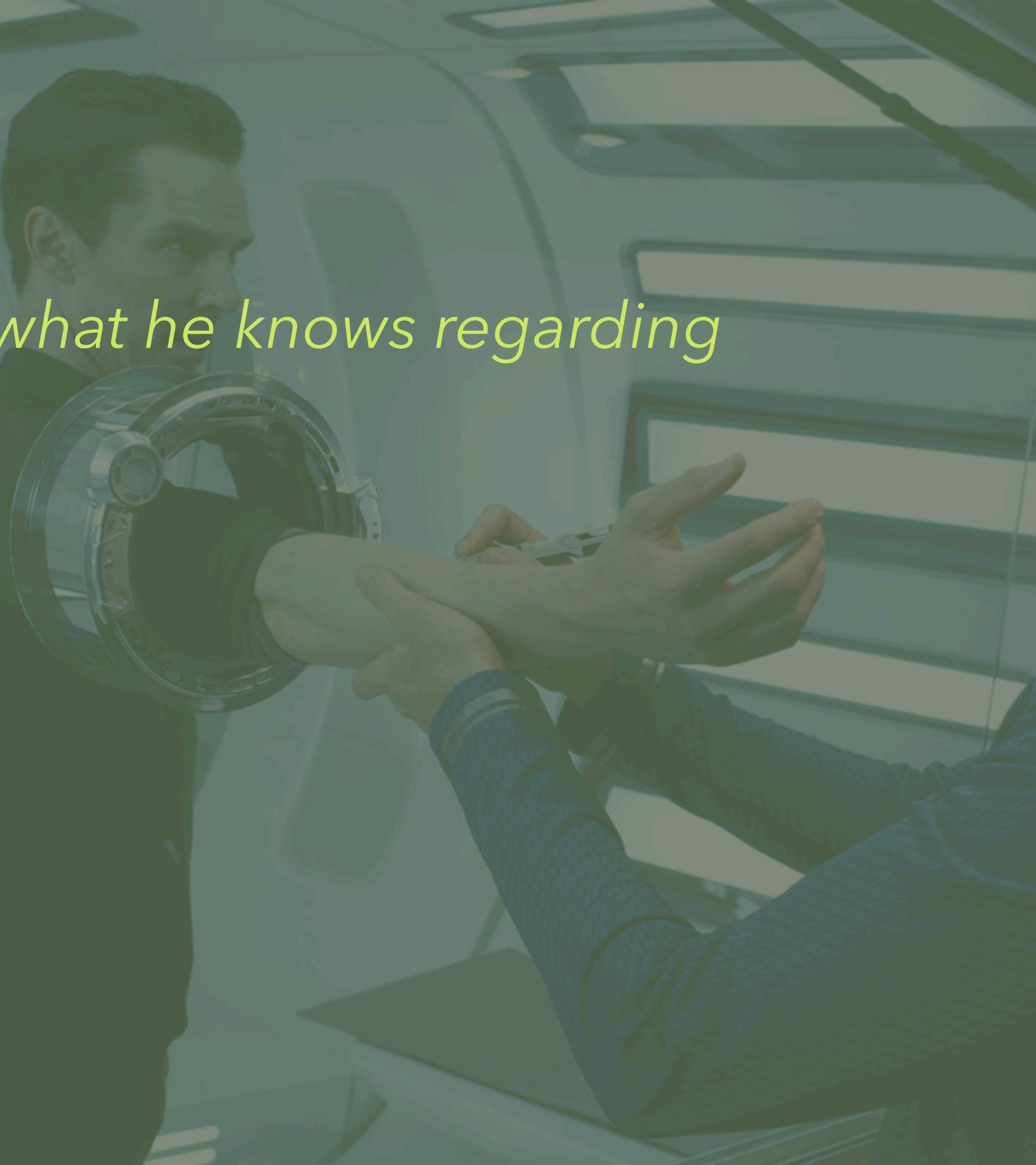


Beyond the Slab

(or, a beginner shares a little of what he knows regarding hardware hacking)





who am i?



jon

last update: Sunday, 05-Jan-97 12:53:51

i am jm, owner & maintainer of [beats.com](#), & webmaster of [Golden Dome Productions](#) (which is going under a re-reconstruction!)

[my man flynn's got his new EP out](#), and i'm diggin' it so far. (disclaimer: i don't have much to do with eartube 'cept the fact i get advanced copies 'cos i'm friends with this cat...oh, & the website's here. make sure you [contact eartube](#), and not me, for info!)

pager: 1-888-653-0480 (toll free)

(note that i'll only answer ld calls if i recognize the phone #)

[e-page me](#) (up to 120 chars)

[email:](#) jm@goldendome.com

(jm@beats.com for personal stuff)

[PGP Public Key Block](#)

[Geek Code](#)

my domain, ill.beats.com.

Here's some [unschooling info](#) (note: the Jon is not me in those pages).



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Member,





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bio 1997



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[bio](#) [go](#)

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and yes, i did own, and subsequently sold beats.com in the early 2000s.

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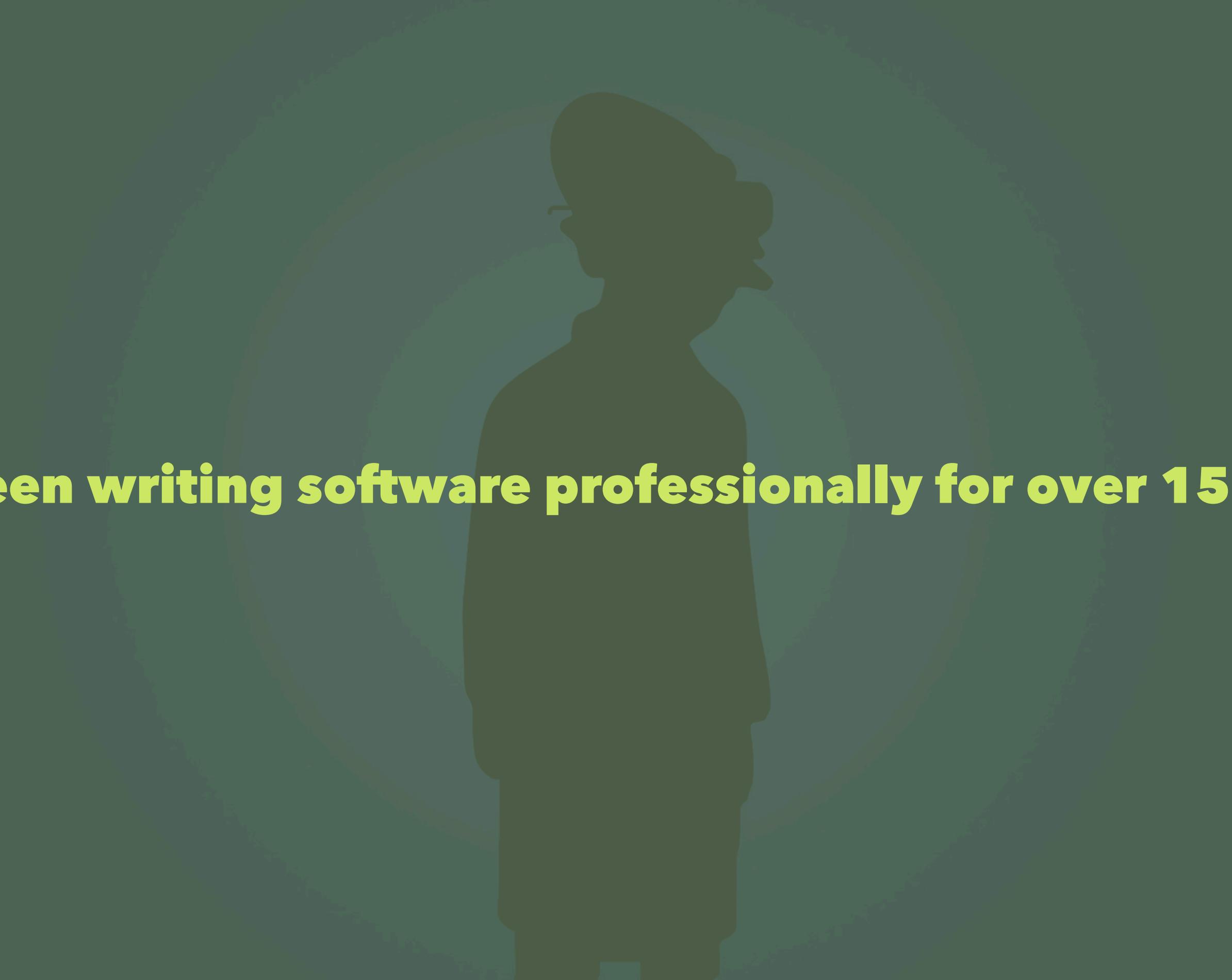
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Member,



A dark silhouette of a person sitting at a desk, viewed from behind. The person is looking towards the right side of the frame, where a computer monitor is visible. The background is a light color.

I've been writing software professionally for over 15 years.

I was introduced to embedded computing working for a Major Appliance Manufacturer in their research lab.



***I've been in the Nordstrom Innovation Lab
for about 3 years.***

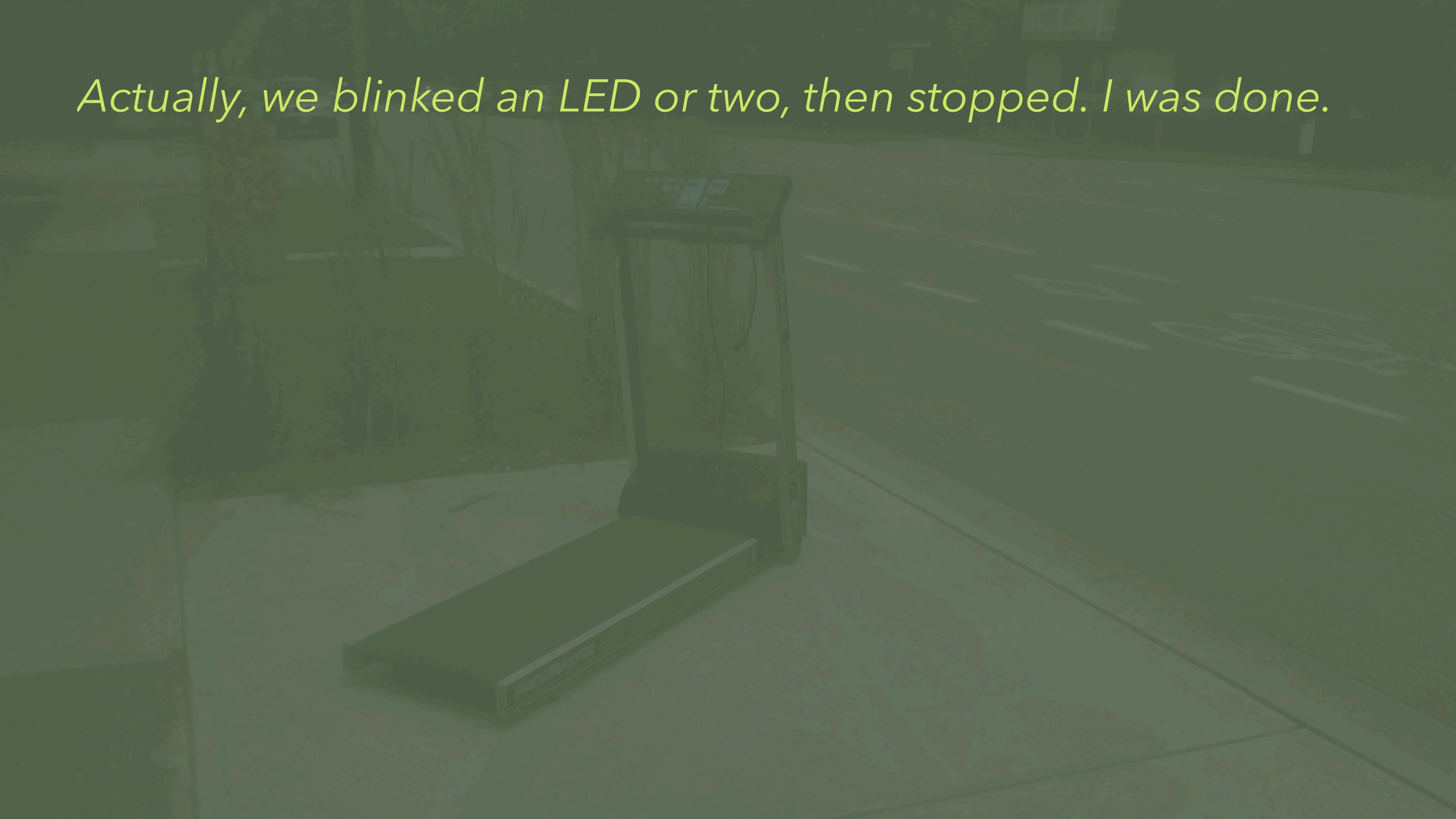
We focus on testing things that the business may find too risky to spend a lot on up front, and often try to do it fast.

This means we ~~get to play with~~ test cool nascent technologies and processes every now and then in order to get there.



We started!

Actually, we blinked an LED or two, then stopped. I was done.

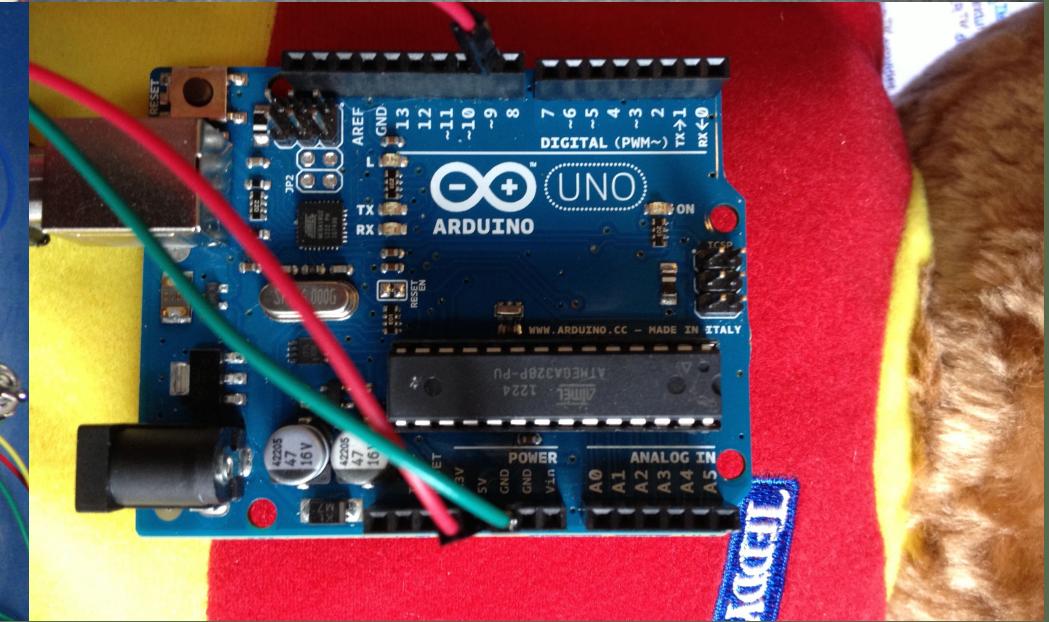
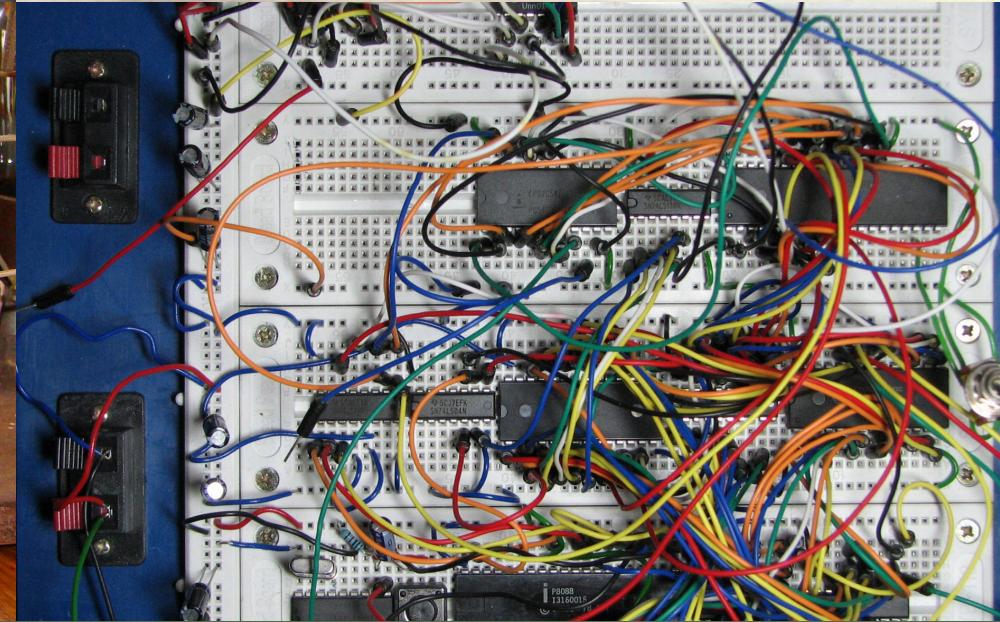
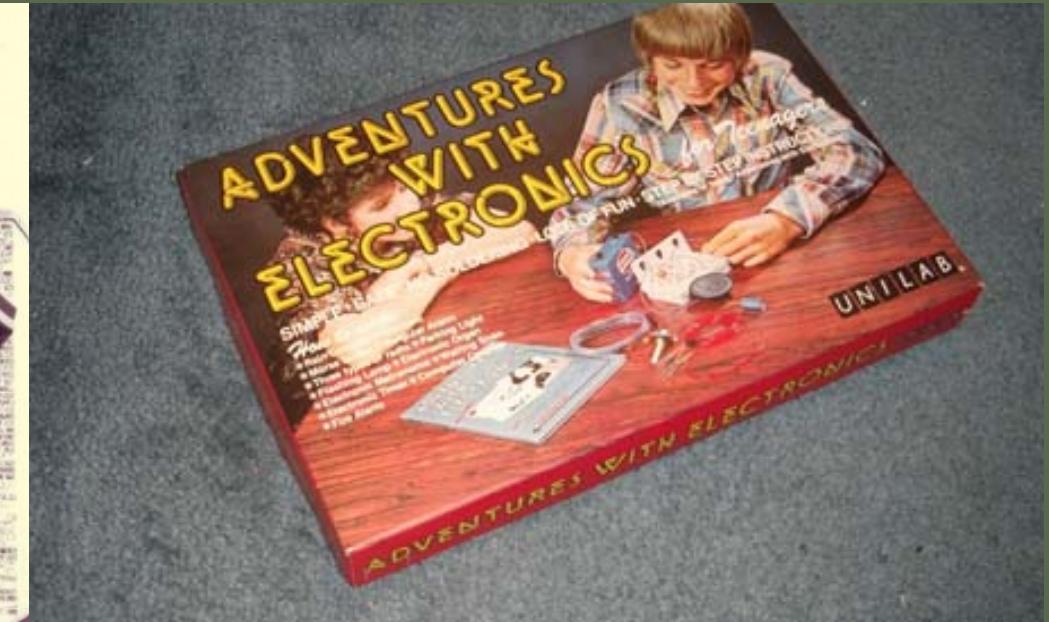
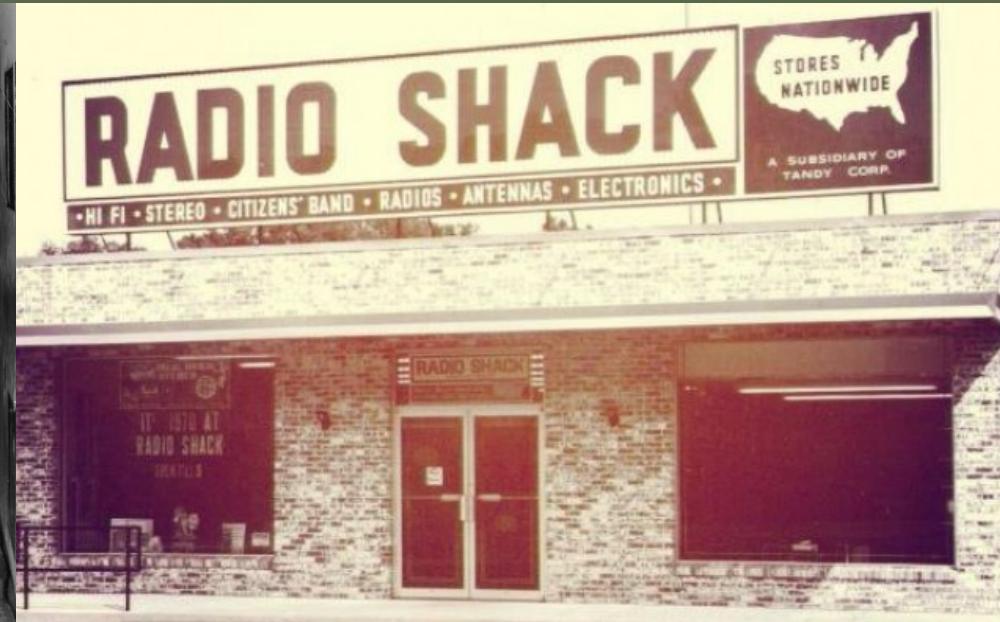


**Then, at work,
someone asked me
to dim some lights.**



Why hack hardware?

Because, it's not that hard anymore, and actually fun



Why is this space blowing up?

1. *Arduino and friends.* These platforms have made it so easy to write software to our electronics. Hardware's more malleable than ever
2. *Support for higher level languages.* We're no longer speaking the language of the "Metal", but in languages in which we're already productive
3. *It's less expensive to prototype electronics than in the past*

The Landscape

What's available?

Here's a short list

*Arduino: Uno, Nano, LillyPad, Duemilanove, ..., Beaglebone,
Beaglebone Black, ChipKit, Edison, LightBlue Bean,
LPCXpresso, Netduino (.Net Micro Framework!), Parallax
Propeller Activity Board, Raspberry Pi, Raspberry Pi B, Seeed
Linkit (GPRS even!), Spark Core (OTA programming), Tessel,
Teensy, TI LaunchPad, Trinket, Twine, Beacons (Bluetooth)*

Kinds of devices

- Microcontrollers (Arduino & variants)
- "Tiny computers" (BeagleBone, Raspberry Pi series)
- Wireless microcontrollers (Spark Core, Lightblue Bean)
- Language-specific boards (Tessel, Netduino)
- Specialty Boards (LillyPad Arduino)

Necessary Skill Sets

- *Computer hacking skills*
- *Desire skills*
- *Google skills*
- *Asking for help skills*

So, wanna see something IRL?



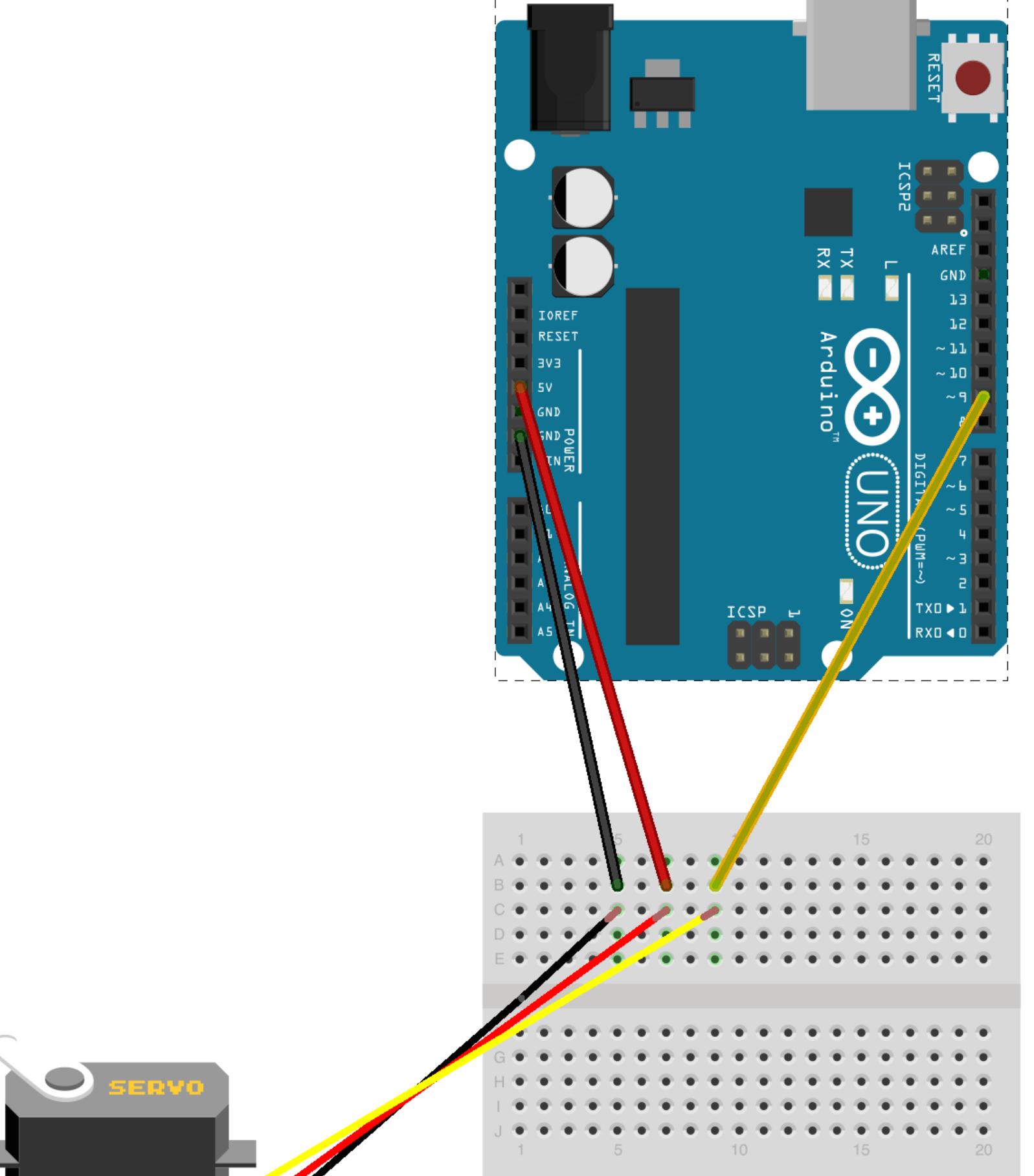
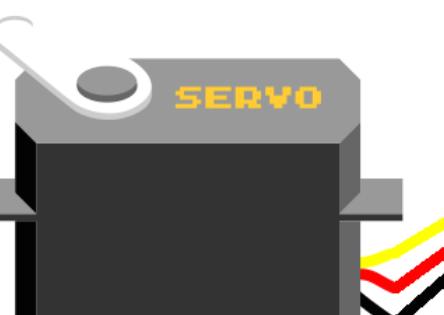
<https://github.com/jonmadison/arduino-servo-control>

```
var five = require("johnny-five"),
  board = new five.Board();
var program = require('commander');
var keypress = require('keypress');

program
  .version('1.0.0')

board.on("ready", function() {
  console.log("board ready. left right arrow keys, 'q' to quit.");
  var servo = new five.Servo({
    "pin": 9,
    "startAt":program.startAt
  });
  process.stdin.on('keypress', function (ch, key) {
    // console.log('got "keypress"', key);
    if (key && key.name == 'right') {
      servo.to(0);
    }
    if (key && key.name == 'left') {
      servo.to(180);
    }
    if(key && key.name == 'q') {
      process.exit(0);
    }
  });
  process.stdin.setRawMode(true);
  process.stdin.resume();
});


```

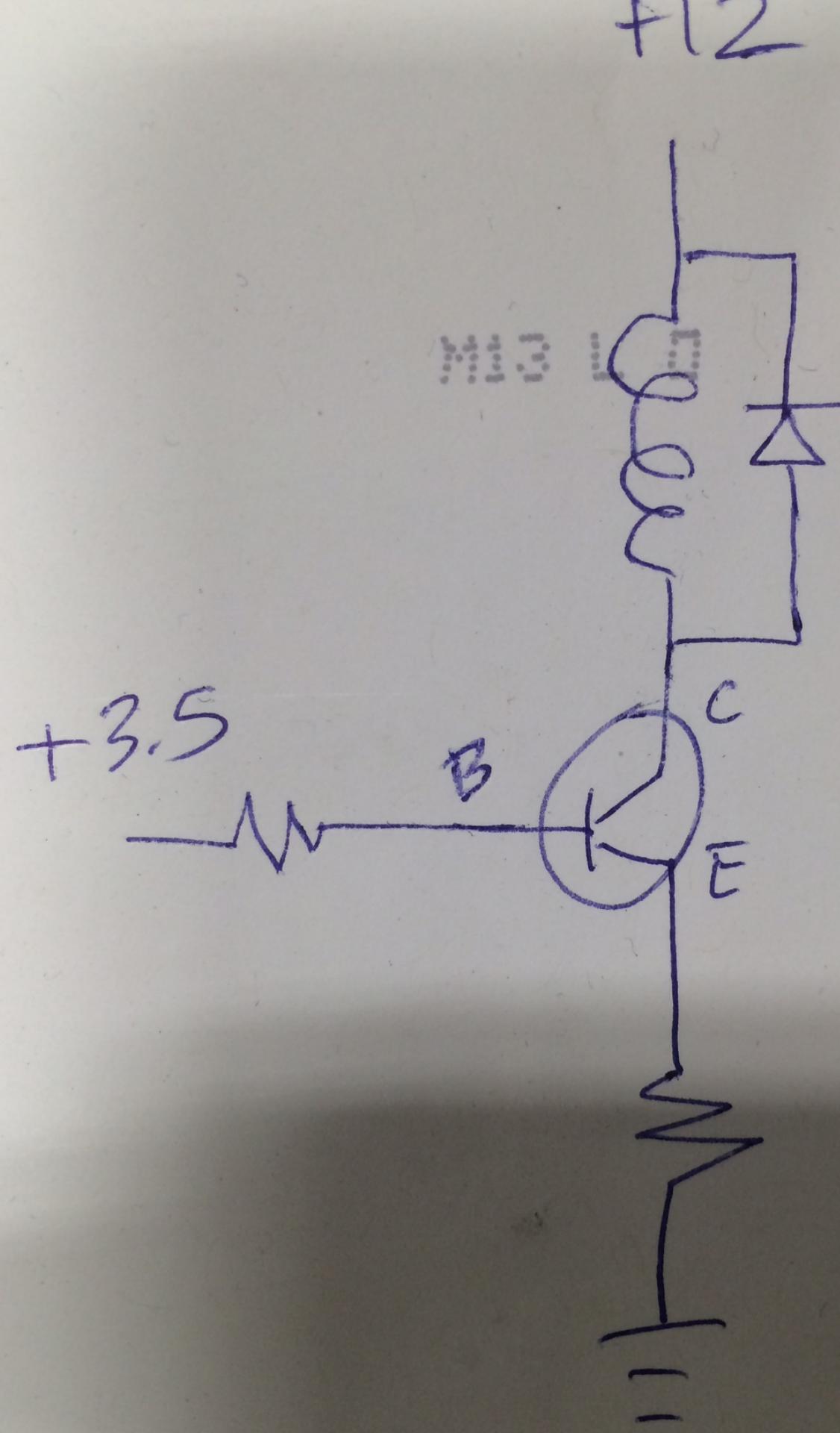


Other ways I could have done it

- Work directly with AC to dim the light switch
- Used LED Lighting, MOSFET or somesuch to boost electricity needed

Door Unlock Mechanism--from legit schematic to project

- 12VDC Solenoid
- 12V Power supply
- Relay to condition our power from the Arduino's 3.3V to 12V



```

var router = require('tiny-router'),
tessel = require('tessel'),
relaylib = require('relay-mono');

var relayOpenDefault = 3000;

var relay = relaylib.use(tessel.port['A']);

[...]

relay.turnOn(1, function turnOnResult(err){
  [...]
})

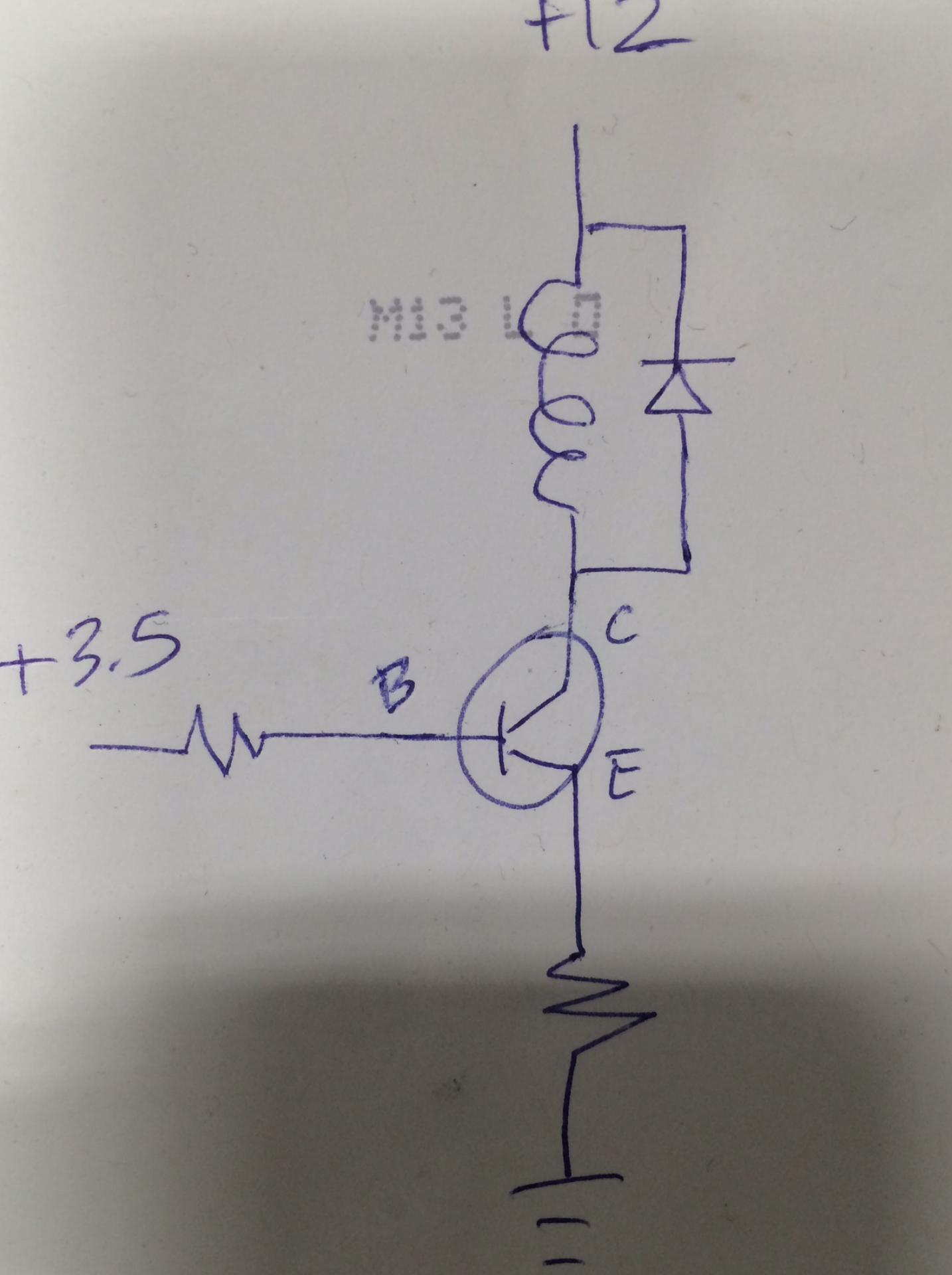
[...]

relay.on('ready', function relayReady () {
  router
    .get('/unlock', function(req,res) {
      unlock(req,res,relay);
    });
}

router.use('static', {path: __dirname + '/public'});

setTimeout(function(){
  router.listen(80);
},5000)
});

```



Other ways I could have done it

- *Use Raspberry Pi or BeagleBone, add a DB to store/sync unlock codes with a central service*

Other ways I could have done it

- Use *Raspberry Pi or BeagleBone, add a DB to store/sync unlock codes with a central service*
- Use *Bluetooth module instead of Built-in WiFi*

Other ways I could have done it

- Use *Raspberry Pi or BeagleBone, add a DB to store/sync unlock codes with a central service*
- Use *Bluetooth module instead of Built-in WiFi (but i was cheap, and in learning mode)*
- *These other ways depend on what i was trying to accomplish...*

Refining your Prototype

- *Who is your audience?*
- *Where will it live?*
- *How much more time do you have?*
- *Is Duck tape GEFN?*
- *Often, you'll want to move to PCB while you're still prototyping*

Things that will learn along the way, and will become more important

- *How to draw and read schematics*
- *Shields, Capes, Plates, oh my (also, Modules)*
- *Component foo*
capacitors, diodes, resistors, MOSFETs, all that jazz, and why they're important. You'll run into some earlier than others.
- *How to make your creation self-contained*
 - *Look into ATTiny*
 - *External Power Supplies*

My recommendations



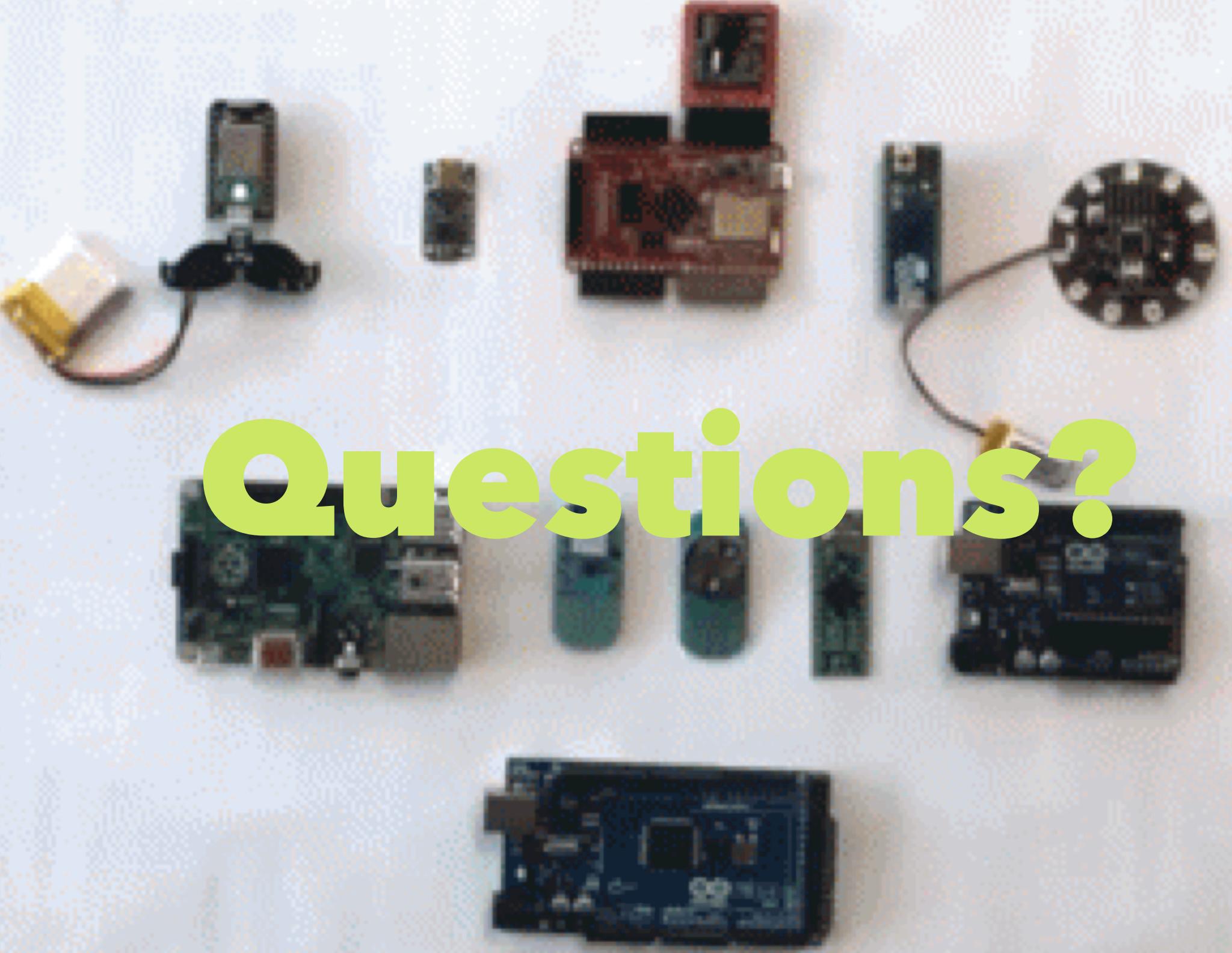
- Grab an Arduino (Uno or Mini) Kit to start
- Grab a Raspberry Pi or a Tessel -- you'll start to take your creations "off the screen"
- Find a local group!
- Ask for help

Resources

- *Learning Stuff:* www.allaboutcircuits.com, Youtube, duh
- *Buying stuff:* Adafruit, SparkFun, Seeed Studio
- Metrix Create Space
- Ada Technical Books
- <http://iot.ieee.org/>

Libraries/Toolkits

- *Johnny-Five* (Javascript)
- *CylonJS*
- *RPi.GPIO* (Python)
- *Netduino speaks .Net micro framework*
- *Fritzing for creating and sharing sketches and schematics*



Questions?

Thanks!

jon.madison@nordstrom.com

jonmadison on most social networks

Shouts to my nord folk

*Marius Grigoriu, Paul Payne, Mark Selander, Erin Shellman,
Cheri Thompson, Brett Wagner, Nbitu Yilma*

(The Lab's hiring, like everyone else ;-)