**What is MEAN, and why it's GOOD?**

So, what is a MEAN stack? The idea is quite simple actually - you have 4 main parts:

* [MongoDB](http://www.mongodb.org/) as the database
* [Express](http://expressjs.com/) as the web framework
* [AngularJS](https://angularjs.org/) as the frontend framework, and
* [Node.js](http://nodejs.org/) as the server platform

These are some of the advantages of a MEAN stack:

* Single language is used in the whole application
* Support for the [MVC pattern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Model%E2%80%93view%E2%80%93controller)
* [JSON](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JSON) is used for transfering data
* Node.js's huge module library
* Open source so you can tweak it to your preferences if you're an experienced user

Ok, enough with the chit-chat, now we'll go and install all the necessary parts.

I have changed my learning plan since I started learning the MEAN stack. The main difference is that I have reversed my approach by starting with the big picture of how everything is connected together in a small application before diving into the details of each technology or framework.

Here is a suggested learning plan:

Start with building a small complete MEAN stack app, assuming that you know basic JavaScript and HTML. Use online tutorials like Thinkster's or buy a book.

Once you are confident and have built a couple of apps on your local machine, its time to dive deep into each framework. The benefit of using an app stack like MEAN is that you can swap one or more of the technologies in the stack.

Dive deep into AngularJS, ExpressJS, MongoDB and Mongoose (an ODM), and Node.js.

Along the way learn advanced HTML APIs, JavaScript and CSS with Bootstrap/Foundation.

Then its time to learn automation (Grunt or Gulp), testing (Chai, Mocha, Jasmine), version control (Git) and finally deployment.

Hopefully after the full-stack sample apps and deep dives, you should be able to build your first independent portfolio app. If you don't have an idea for one, build a full-featured clone of an existing web application like Facebook or Quora.

Then, depending on your interests, you can start developing your own products or work on client projects.

**Update 3 (Dec 7 2015):**

Edx has recently launched a 5 week self-paced course delivered by MongoDB.

[Introduction to MongoDB using the MEAN Stack](https://www.edx.org/course/introduction-mongodb-using-mean-stack-mongodbx-m101x)

Coursera has a specialization that has courses that cover the individual technologies of the MEAN stack and combine it with a final capstone project. You can take all the individual courses with the exception of the capstone project for free:

[https://www.coursera.org/special...](https://www.coursera.org/specializations/full-stack)

I also found another great set of tutorials on the MEAN stack:

<https://thinkster.io/topics/mean>

[Lynda.com](http://lynda.com/) keeps adding tutorials on the individual technologies of the MEAN stack.

[JavaScript Video Courses and Tutorials from lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com/JavaScript-training-tutorials/244-0.html)

[AngularJS Tutorials | Lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com/AngularJS-training-tutorials/1696-0.html)

[Node.js Video Courses and Tutorials from lynda.com](http://www.lynda.com/Node-js-training-tutorials/1283-0.html)

FreeCodeCamp has expanded its MEAN stack challenges and way-points, and will expand its curriculum to 2080 hours in the beginning of 2016.

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**Update 2(August 24 2015):**

I am blogging about learning the MEAN stack at [Learning Web Development](https://learnwebdev.quora.com/). Also check out my question: [I have a learning plan for web development. I would like to get feedback on where it can be improved?](https://www.quora.com/I-have-a-learning-plan-for-web-development-I-would-like-to-get-feedback-on-where-it-can-be-improved) [Darryl Snow](https://www.quora.com/profile/Darryl-Snow-1)'s answer and the Answer Wiki should be a good starting point for learning the MEAN stack.

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Update(August 13 2015): I found FreeCodeCamp's 800 hr curriculum to be pretty good. It  teaches you the MEAN stack by building projects. <http://www.freecodecamp.com/>

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[Lynda.com](http://lynda.com/). Subscription-based (25$ a month for basic membership):

Do the courses in the following order:

* + Introduction to the JavaScript language(2hr 54m)
  + JavaScript Essential Training (5 hr 31m)
  + Node.js First Look (2 hr 10m)
  + Node.js Essential Training (3hr 17m)
  + Test-Driven Development with Node.js (33m)
  + Up and Running with AngularJS (1hr 18m)
  + Building a Data-Driven App with AngularJS (3h 52m)
  + Building a website using Node.js and Express.js (2hr 46m)
  + Developing for the MEAN stack and MongoDB. (2 hr 57m)
* [Udemy: Online Courses Anytime, Anywhere](http://udemy.com/) - Search for the individual technologies (JavaScript, MongoDB, Express, Angular, Node.js) and you will find plenty of courses. Wait for discounts (as low as 10$) to purchase individual courses

[Microsoft Virtual Academy](http://www.microsoftvirtualacademy.com/)

* Building Apps with Node.js JumpStart
* You've got Documents! A MongoDB JumpStart
* Intro to AngularJS
* MEAN Stack JumpStart

[Tuts+](http://tutsplus.com/)  has many courses on the individual technologies on the MEAN stack as well.

Search on YouTube for MEAN stack tutorials - [MEAN stack - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=MEAN+stack)

Books

* [SitePoint](https://www.sitepoint.com/premium/)  has 3 books (one on AngularJS, one on Node.js, and one on MEAN stack).
* Search on [Amazon.com](http://amazon.com/) for MEAN stack - and you will find several books on the topic.

P.S. I am in the process of learning JavaScript and the MEAN stack at the moment. I will add my ratings and reviews of each course/book I complete as I progress.