

Extra Credit: Skill Progression

Description

Learning a new skill takes dedicated, consistent, intentional practice. The act of learning a skill, or progressing in a skill that you already have teaches us that we can do just about anything if we put the work in. Learning a new skill allows us to practice discipline, a trait that is required to achieve any goal whether it be in the academic, professional, or personal realm.

Choose one tangible skill that you can easily measure your progress in. Document your progress and answer questions reflecting on the process four times throughout the quarter.

What is a skill?

A skill is not a hobby or simply an activity. Going to the gym is an activity. A pull-up is a skill. For example, instead of stating “I want to be better at skateboarding,” rephrase this as, “I want to learn how to do a kickflip.”

For the purposes of this exercise, we will consider a skill something that is:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Progressable

Practice and Progression

We don’t learn a new skill by mindlessly trying and failing thousands of times. In order to progress, we need to practice specific exercises that help us move towards the goal. We must master one step before we are ready to move on to the next. Sometimes when we find ourselves stuck at a plateau and not progressing after several practice sessions, we must go back a step or two to strengthen the foundation.

Ideas

Skills that require motor control are easy to measure and demonstrate progress. Some ideas for a skill that you can work on are: handwriting, handwriting with non-dominant hand, juggling, photorealistic drawing, illustration, playing a musical instrument, and practicing a yoga pose. You are welcome to choose a skill that you are already working on. You can choose to refine the skill at your current level, or move towards a goal that is beyond your current capabilities. For example, if you already know how to juggle, try to learn different juggling patterns, or learn how to juggle against a wall (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49Jr6KEFQ08>).

Physical Skills

[Chin Up](#)

[Push Up](#)

[Hip Mobility](#)

Specifications

Practice

Make time for at least 15 minutes per practice session, at least 3x per week on different days. Time spent practicing is often directly proportional to the rate of progression, however, it is possible to "overtrain" which might cause stagnation, or regression.

Submission

To document your skill progression, you will be required to check in four times throughout the quarter to track and reflect upon your progress. You will be uploading your progress using Google forms.

Submission Links

Submission 1: <https://forms.gle/G1QsSxEgZD1KYsma8>

Submission 2: <https://forms.gle/zKHepiteSaWYGNkU9>

Submission 3: <https://forms.gle/zBvLJzyazhTggruG8>

Submission 4:

Reflection

Reflection is an important part of progression. It's important to give space to think about the process, contemplate the struggles, and consider what can be done to overcome those struggles. The process of reflection helps us strengthen our intention - our focus on the goal. Making space for regular reflection also is a way to practice discipline, which is required to accomplish any task.

For each submission, include an http link to your proof of practice. Acceptable proofs of practice are discussed in the next section. Submission entries should total at least 250 words (all responses combined) and should answer the following questions:

Submission 1: Why?

- Why are you choosing to do this extra credit assignment?
- What skill did you choose? Why?
- How do you plan on measuring this skill?
- When do you plan to practice?
- What is your plan for progressing?
- How do you plan on documenting your progress?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Example

Proof of Practice

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bst04Tyn3XL/>

Why are you choosing to do this extra credit assignment?

I assigned this extra credit assignment because I want to empower my students and help them gain confidence in their ability to learn new things. I chose to be an educator because I feel that I am in a unique position not only to teach my students

about the fascinating topics of computer engineering, but also to give them the tools to be successful in whatever endeavors they choose later on in life. I want to inspire my students and help them lead more fulfilling lives once they leave CMPE 12.

What skill did you choose? Why?

I am currently learning how to juggle because one of my movement teachers started having us practice juggling at the end of mobility classes as a fun way to develop coordination and exercise our brains.

How do you plan on measuring this skill?

I plan on measuring this skill by counting the number of catches I can do in a row. I hope to be able to have 50 catches by the end of the quarter.

When do you plan to practice?

In addition to practicing in my mobility class, I will practice for 15 minutes whenever I go into the office before I start working.

What is your plan for progressing?

I plan on progressing by taking the following steps. I will progress to the next step when I can achieve 10 successive catches:

- *Throwing a ball with one hand and catching it with the same hand without looking at my hand. Try this with both hands.*
- *Throwing a ball from one hand to another without looking at my hands.*
- *Starting with one ball in each hand, throw each ball to the other hand in succession. Every repetition, switch which hand is throwing first.*
- *Starting with two balls in one hand and one ball in the other, throw one ball from the hand that has two balls, then throw the ball in the other hand, catch the first ball, throw the other ball from the first hand and catch so the hand that initially had one ball now has two balls. With every repetition, alternate which hand starts with two balls in one hand.*
- *Instead of stopping after one round, I will continue the flow of throwing and catching.*

How do you plan on documenting your progress?

I plan on documenting this process with video posts. I will record myself with my phone and upload the videos to Instagram.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I never thought I would learn how to juggle. I have been awed by my brother's ability to juggle from a young age, but I never had the drive to learn myself. Now as an adult, I'm excited to improve my hand-eye coordination and exercise my brain in this way.

Submission 2: How is it going?

- Are you making time to practice as often as you intended to?
- Are there obstacles to fitting in your practice time? How do you think you can overcome these obstacles?
- Has your progression plan changed from your initial post? If so, provide an updated plan.

- Are you using any resources or taking inspiration from any sources to help you accomplish your goal?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Submission 3: Ups and Downs

- What are you learning about yourself over the course of your practice? Are there aspects of your process that are reflected in other parts of your life?
- Are you enjoying the process? Are there parts that are not enjoyable?
- If you've experienced a plateau in your progress, how did you / do you plan to overcome this plateau?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Submission 4: Final Reflection

- In what ways were you able to progress in your skill?
- How did your expectation of this process change?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- Describe how this activity affected your life within and outside of CE12.
- Do you plan on continuing to work on this skill after CMPE 12 is over?
- What are some other skills you intend to learn?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Proof of Practice

Acceptable proofs of practice include scans, videos, and audio files. Upload these to an external website and provide the link in the Google form for the corresponding entry submission. The easiest way to provide proof would be to add your video or image to Instagram with the tag #ce12_skill.

If you believe an image or video is not suitable proof for your skill progression, meet with Rebecca to discuss alternative options.

Instagram

As a way to build community and inspire others in their own skill progressions, you are welcome to post your progress videos to Instagram with the tag #ce12_skill.

Presentation

For full credit, you must present your skill progression to the class. You are welcome to do a live demo of your skill, but this is not required. Your presentation should discuss some of the highlights from your entries including:

- Why did you choose this specific skill?
- How did you measure your skill?
- What was your plan for practice and progression?
- Did your progression plan change?
- Did you encounter any obstacles over the quarter?
- How did you overcome these obstacles?
- Did you use any resources or take inspiration from any sources to help you accomplish your goal?
- How far did you get into your progression?
- How did your expectations of this process change over the quarter?
- What did you learn about yourself during this process?

Your slide deck should be in PDF format and added to [this directory](#). File names should be in the following format (all lowercase):

cruzid_skill_topic.pdf

For example: rrashkin_skill_juggling.pdf

Due Dates

Each entry must be uploaded by the Sunday after the week in the date range indicated below:

ENTRY	WEEK
Entry 1	Week 2
Entry 2	Week 4
Entry 3	Week 6
Entry 4	Week 9
Presentation	Last day of class before final exam

Grading Rubric

2 pt Entry 1

 1 pt thoughtful responses to questions (must total over 250 words)
 1 pt proof of practice

2 pt Entry 2

 1 pt thoughtful responses to questions (must total over 250 words)
 1 pt proof of practice

2 pt Entry 3

 1 pt thoughtful responses to questions (must total over 250 words)
 1 pt proof of practice

2 pt Entry 4

 1 pt thoughtful responses to questions (must total over 250 words)
 1 pt proof of practice

2 pt Presentation

 1 pt slides include all proofs of practice to show progression
 1 pt presentation with reflection