

Lesson

Wednesday

Introduction to Programming

(/introduction-to-programming)

/ Git, HTML and CSS (/introduction-to-programming/git-html-and-css)

/ Homework: Git Expectations for Independent Projects

Text

At the end of most sections, you'll be working on an independent project. These projects can be stressful, especially when you're learning new material. Epicodus is committed to supporting you throughout the process — as long as you are putting the work in. We expect students to work hard, communicate well, and be conscientious, both throughout the program and on independent projects. A good commit history is an important way for you to demonstrate these qualities. We understand if concepts are hard or you just can't get something working on an independent project. But there is no excuse for not putting forth the effort.

So how do instructors know what kind of effort you are putting forth on an independent project? Sure, we look at your code — and if it looks great, that helps. But code isn't the only thing we look at. We expect a strong commit history that clearly demonstrates that the work is yours.

Also, what if you have a rough day and can't get things working? How can you demonstrate that you were working hard if the code is a mess? Very likely, it will be a mess sometimes — and that's part of the process. It's okay. But that's when we expect a strong commit

history to show that you were working hard — even if your project may have bugs or not be complete yet. If you are stuck on an issue, you can do a WIP commit (work-in-progress) to let your instructors know that you are stuck.

Think of your commit history as being a bit like a time clock at work. It documents that you are working hard. If you don't have that documentation, it may be hard for us to see if you are putting in the work.

This is why we offer a general guideline of approximately 8-12 commits a day for independent projects for full-time students and 4-8 for part-time students. This is at least one commit an hour, which clearly demonstrates you've spent the day working on your independent project. Note that if all your commits come in a short time frame (such as in the fifteen minutes before you submit your project), that will also not reflect well on your work. Your commits should reflect not just *quantity* but *quality*. And they should also demonstrate that you have been working throughout the duration of the project. While we do not have a minimum requirement, we will still check your commit history for information about how your day went.

If you're working hard, make sure your commit history reflects that. On the other hand, for folks that don't put in the work on an independent project, there is really no way to cover that up with your commit history. And yes, we've seen students just make meaningless changes to their code to make it look like they are working hard. It does not reflect well on those students.

A good commit history shows that you've been working hard. A poor commit history suggests otherwise. So, make sure that no matter how your independent project is going, you use Git to carefully document your work. It will serve you well both at Epicodus and your future career.

[Previous \(/introduction-to-programming/git-html-and-css/homework-preparing-for-your-first-code-review\)](#)

Next (/introduction-to-programming/git-html-and-css/thursday-schedule-and-expectations)

Lesson 50 of 64

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