

Lesson

Monday

# Introduction to Programming

## (/introduction-to-programming)

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

### / Asking Coding Questions through the Help Queue

Text

To request help on a coding question, you'll need to access the Help Queue. The **Help Queue** is a ticketing system that we use to track coding questions. You'll be given a URL to the Help Queue that will take you to a form that looks something like this:

## Portland - Intro Question

Questions from full-time Intro students at the Portland campus.

1. What computer station are you at?\*

Answer here..

2. Have you debugged the issue on your own for at least 15 minutes (going through the lessons for reference and searching google)?\*

☐ No

☐ Yes

3. Which peers at Epicodus have you check-in with?\*

Answer here..

4. Please give a detailed explanation of the issue:\*

Answer here..

5. What research have you done? Give specific references to what you searched on google or what resources you used.\*

Answer here..

6. Please include the section of code that is throwing an error and what error you are getting.\*

Answer here..

Submit

View Submissions (2)

Your form may look slightly different depending on which campus you are at but the main questions are all the same.

The Help Queue uses a Discord robot called “Dyno” to create tickets on the Epicodus Discord server. When you access the Help Queue, Dyno will prompt you to log into a Discord account in the browser before you can access and submit the form.

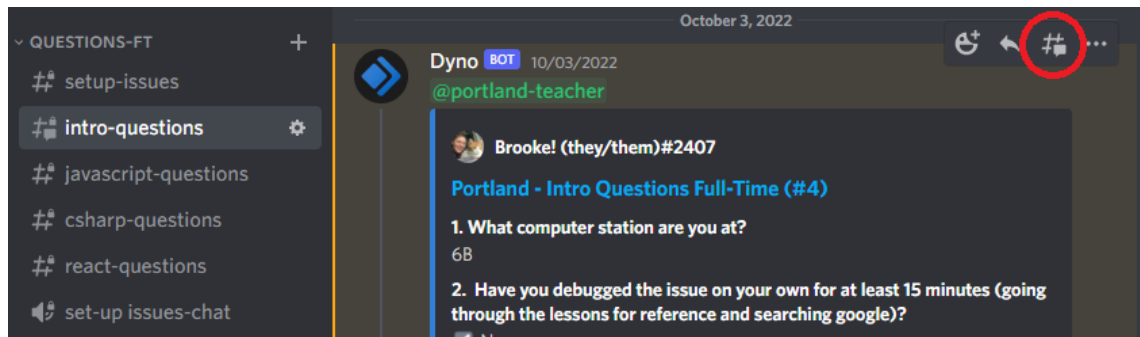
Using the Help Queue helps keep questions and answers organized so everyone has a good resource to reference. It also allows your Teacher to find a good stopping point in their work before coming over to your station to help you and your pair.

When you submit the form, a ticket will be created on Discord. Your Teacher will be notified and will come by to help you soon. Your Teacher may take a moment while they read through your issue and perhaps do some research of their own. While you wait, continue to work on the issue you are having or take a quick break away from the computer if you and your pair feel like you are getting frustrated with the issue.

You don't need to be logged into Epicodus's Discord Server to submit your coding question. However, you do need to be logged in to see that your question has been posted in the **#questions** channel and to chat further about it on Discord.

Your question will be posted to the **#questions** channel that corresponds to your current Course. For example, if you are in Intro to Programming, you can find your question posted in the **#intro-questions** channel. The image below has an example of what this looks like.

You can't type in this channel but you can create a **thread** on a post to continue the conversation. To create a thread, hover over the post and you will see four icons appear in the upper right of the post. Click the icon that is a pound or hash symbol with the speech bubble and you can start a conversation in a thread. In the following image the thread icon is circled in red.



## Additional Instructions for In-Person Students

Although you may be in the same office as your Teacher, it is really important that you don't directly go to your Teacher get their attention for a coding question. Your Teacher may be helping another student or in a meeting. Even if your Teacher is at their desk, they are working and need space to focus just like you.

Since you'll be working in-person and sharing a computer with a peer, Epicodus will provide a proxy student Discord account that you can use to interact with the Epicodus Discord server and ask questions through the Help Queue without needing to use your personal Discord account.

If you do decide to use your personal account and want to have Discord open, please take care to log out of your account when you leave the computer and to put any potential Not Safe For Work (NSFW) or distracting servers in a folder so they are not as visible.

## The Purpose of the Form's Questions

The questions on the form serve to get as much information as possible about the issue you are facing. They create basic expectations for you to do some research and debugging before asking for help, but more importantly this guides you on how to ask for help effectively. No matter where you are asking for help — in class, in an online forum, or at your next place of work — if anyone is going to help you they need you to provide as much information as possible.

Simply saying “We are stuck with X, can anyone help?” is usually not enough. Good context to provide for the coding issue you are having is to answer questions like:

- What exactly is the end result you are trying to achieve?
  - Perhaps someone has a different but more effective approach to take
- What have you tried already to solve this problem?
  - This lets anyone who is trying to help better know where to start.
- What errors are you getting? What section of code is throwing the errors?
  - This allows anyone who is trying to help you try to recreate the error themselves so see what might be the issue.

Coding can be frustrating, and when you have been stuck for a long time it is even *more* frustrating. It is easy to direct that frustration at other people who are trying to help or to get more frustrated when others don't know a straightforward answer. Doing your best to research, debug, and communicate about the coding issue will always help others better help you.

However, we won't be able to avoid frustration. Instead, we can mitigate those feelings by taking a break to calm down and remembering that this is just another day in the life of coding. Make it your goal at Epicodus to recognize when frustrations come up and to take the necessary steps to mitigate them.

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