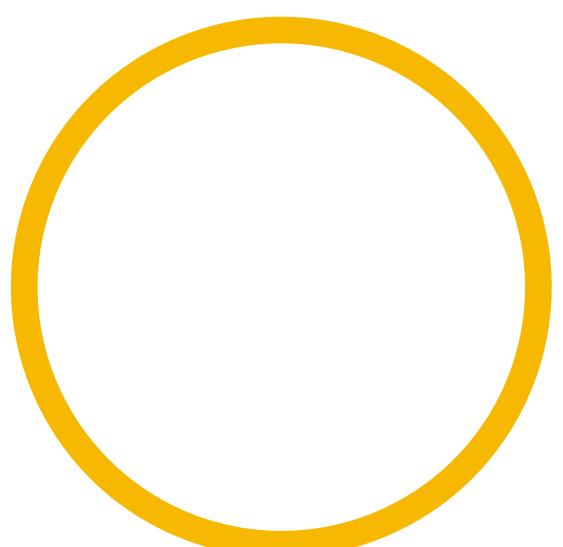


12 Strategies to Learn How to Code



Introduction



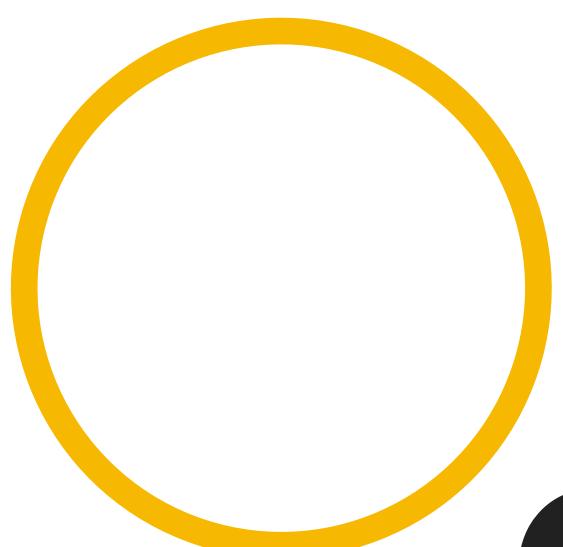
How do you learn to code? We asked our students what their top strategies were for learning how to code. As we compiled their responses we started to see patterns emerge. We grouped their answers into best practices and are sharing them with you here.

If you are learning to code, these best practices will help you start a career in tech.

1. Find a Mentor

It's tough learning anything new because you don't know what you don't know. Having a mentor who's a few steps ahead of you is ideal.

When your mentor is much more experienced they may assume too much about what you know. A mentor who is just a few steps ahead of you would have gone through what you're going through much more recently.



2. Join a Community



Learning with a group is much more effective than trying to study on your own. A community of learners will help and support you. They will keep you accountable for your goals.

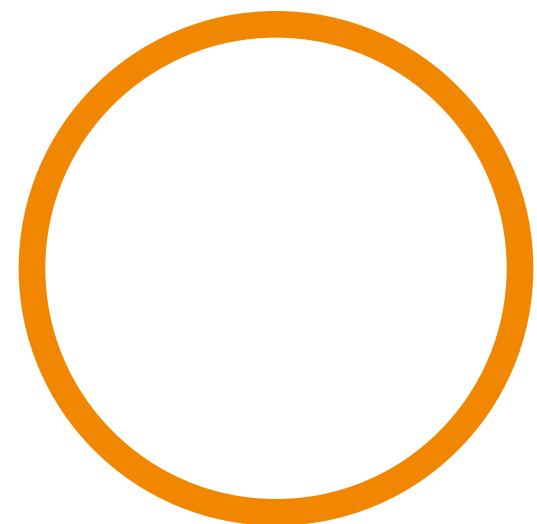
It's also important to contribute to whatever community that you join. A good measure of whether you understand a concept is whether or not you can teach it to someone else. Building connections is what humans are meant to do and it will only help you in your career.

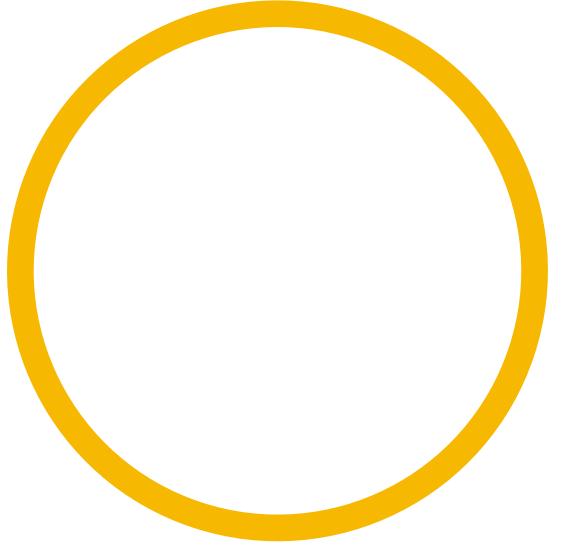
3. Believe in Yourself

Learning to code can seem intimidating, but it's like learning any other skill. You can learn anything with practice and consistency. You have to believe that you can do it. Imposter syndrome is rampant in the tech industry. Everyone feels like they don't belong and they tricked their way past an interview. You belong in tech and you deserve to be there!

4. Have an Open Mindset

Don't put unnecessarily high expectations on yourself. Learning something new is an opportunity for you to grow as a person. Go into it thinking you're going to have fun and take the pressure off yourself. Be kind to yourself and allow yourself the freedom to explore a new interest.





5. Don't Compare Yourself to Others



Everyone is on their own personal learning journey and each journey is going to look different. There's no point in looking at other people and getting discouraged. With consistent practice and support, anyone can reach their goals. Comparing yourself to other people's progress will only hurt you.

6. Be Open to Failure

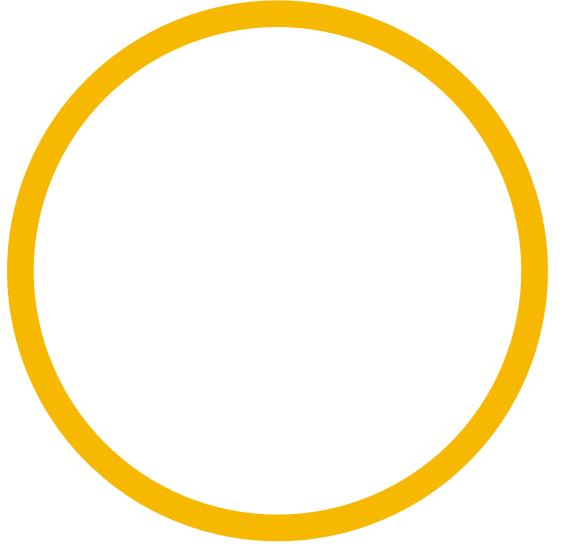
Learning to code is a marathon, not a sprint. Getting stuck and frustrated is part of the learning journey, otherwise, you aren't really challenging yourself.

7. Learn to Google

Don't re-invent the wheel. Most of the questions you might have are probably already answered somewhere. An important aspect of coding is knowing what to Google.

8. Apply to Jobs Before You're Ready

Coding interviews are an opportunity for you to apply what you've been studying. An interview is timed and forces you to think under pressure. Getting used to being in that environment will make things easier as you keep practicing.



9. Challenge Yourself

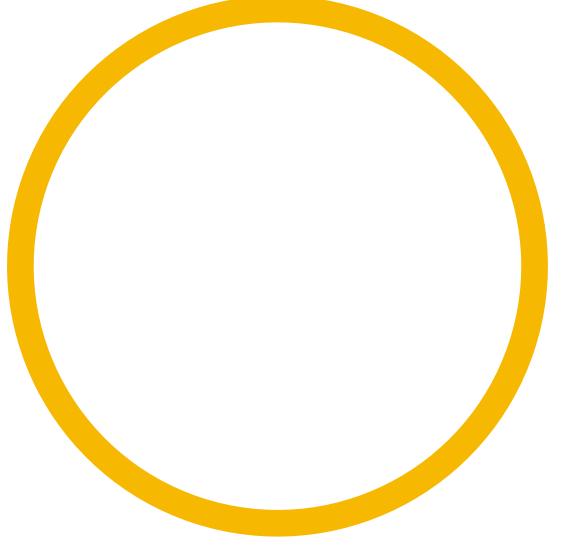


Keep taking on tasks that are just hard enough. Take on small tasks when you are starting off, but keep pushing yourself to take on bigger and more complicated tasks. Eventually you want to be able to build a complex interactive web or mobile application from scratch. In the beginning, you should focus on writing a few lines of code to solve much simpler problems.

Don't be afraid to ask for help, but try doing it yourself first and then reach out for assistance.

10. Read Documentation

Documentation is an online manual that creators of a framework have written to help newcomers learn the framework. Often people will jump in, trying to use the coding framework without reading how things are supposed to work. Read any available documentation before you start coding, and refer back to it whenever you get stuck. That's what it's there for!



11. Repetition is Key

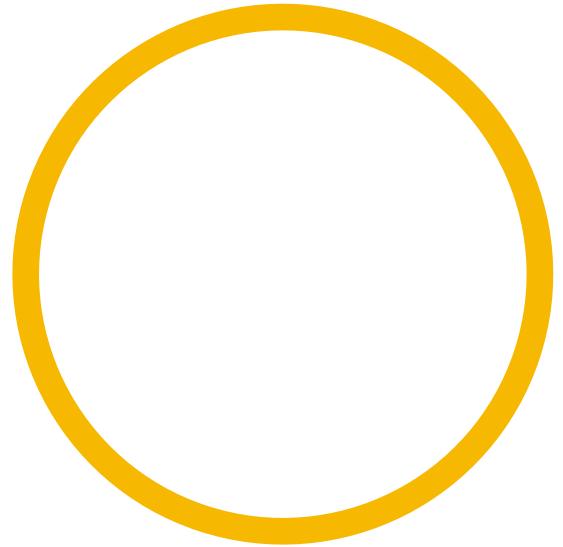


Keep practicing your skills repeatedly. Go back and look at your old code and see how you could have written it differently. Do you even recognize what you wrote? Is there a way to make it easier to read? Is there a way to solve the problem more efficiently?

The first time you write a piece of code is like writing a first draft for an essay. You can (and should!) go back to iterate over your work and improve it.

12. Step Away From the Screen

When you're stuck on a problem, it's easy to want to grind through a bug and stay seated until you figure out what's wrong. Fight that urge and take lots of breaks. Go outside for a walk and get some fresh air. Often you'll think of the solution the minute you decide to go think about something else.



Best Practices



There's a lot that goes into learning how to code, and some things are different for us all. After all, we all have different talents, aspirations, and circumstances.

But these insights and disciplines from our past students show us twelve of the best practices we can all follow to accomplish our goals and start a career in tech.