# Start Your Own Blog

Your task is to **create your own blog, post few technical articles and add links to Telerik Software Academy**. Your blog should be active at least few months, ideally more long-term. You should post technical and other articles and backlinks to Telerik Academy and its affiliated sites.

If you already have a blog, you could use it instead of creating a new one.

## Blog Hosting Options

There are several blog hosting options you may use. You may watch the "CMS Systems and WordPress" video from [our SEO course](http://seocourse.telerik.com).

### Public Blog Hosting Services

There are numerous public free blog hosting providers. Some popular blog hosting services:

* Wordpress.com – strong WordPress-based platform, very powerful
* Blogger.com / Blogspot.com – very popular, easy-to-use, limited control over the content
* Tumblr.com
* Posterous.com
* Livejournal.com
* Glog.bg

### Own Domain + Hosting + WordPress

You could purchase your own domain + web hosting and install your own blog platform.

### Recommended Hosting Providers

* SuperHosting.bg
  + Free hosting on subdomain (ask the trainers)
  + 70% discount for paid hosting on your own domain (ask the trainers)
* ICN.bg
  + Free hosting on subdomain (ask the trainers)
* Host.bg
  + Free hosting on subdomain (ask the trainers)
* PHPFog.com
  + Free shared hosting on subdomain (no time limit)

### Recommended Blogging Platforms

* **WordPress** – the world's #1 blogging software platform, easy-to-use, huge community, and thousands free themes, plugins, etc.
* **MovableType** – a leading blogging and content publishing platform
* **Sitefinity** – a leading .NET based CMS system + Blog

### Blog Themes

You may use the built-in blog themes provided by your blog hosting platform / service. Optionally you may design and develop your own custom theme.

In case you prefer WordPress, you may be interested to try the following high-quality free themes:

* Boldy – <http://wordpress.site5.net/boldy/>
* Snowblind – <http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/snowblind>
* Ashford – <http://ashford.turtleinteractive.com>
* Natura – <http://newwpthemes.com/natura-free-wordpress-theme/>
* ZBench – <http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/zbench>
* Bueno – <http://www.woothemes.com/2009/11/bueno/>
* IFeature – <http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/ifeature>
* Skeleton – <http://demos.simplethemes.com/skeleton>
* iTheme2 – <http://themify.me/themes/itheme2>
* Busby – <http://wplift.com/themes/busby>
* LANDA ­– <http://newwpthemes.com/landa-free-wordpress-theme/>

## Publishing Your Blog Content

Your blog should be active, at least for few months.

* You should write at least 2 articles monthly
* You may post in Bulgarian or in English or in both languages (mix)
* You may post technical and other (e.g. personal) articles

### What to Blog About?

Your blog content should be related to mainly to IT, technology, software development and computer programming. It may also include some personal stories (if you want). Ideas for blogging:

* Blog about your favorite programs you developed during the courses in the Academy (e.g. if you wrote your own "Snake" game or "Tetris" game, blog about it).
* Blog about your most interesting C# programs in the C# course.
* Blog about upcoming events, e.g. the .NET user group's seminars, upcoming courses, upcoming tests and exams, upcoming webinars, new versions of .NET, Windows 8, Visual Studio, …
* Blog about the academy – your experience at Telerik Academy. Be honest in your story. Explain the positives and negatives. Fair thoughts are more valuable than too vaunt words.
* You might blog your software engineering essay you wrote in the Academy.

Ensure you have articles related to Telerik Academy and articles not mentioning it at all.

### How to Write a Blog Post?

* Use a good title (short and descriptive summary)
* Structure the content by using sub-titles
* Use SEO-friendly URL (a.k.a. permalink / slug). Prefer slugs like "my-csharp-exam-problem-2-lines" instead of "zadacha-2" or "index.php?id=24&lang=en&start=3".
* Use at least one image for each post
  + Take free images from image banks like <http://iconfinder.com> and <http://morguefile.com>
* Use at most 1-2 external links
* Use rel="nofollow" for the links you want to mention without giving a page rank (e.g. when linking to low-quality content)
* Write at least 10 sentences in every blog post. Too short posts are not good idea.
* Use unique content, your own text and source code (avoid copy-pasting from Internet).

For more information, see the "Copywriting" video from [our SEO course](http://seocourse.telerik.com).

### Write for the Public, Not for Your Friends

When you write a public blog in Internet, it is intended for the general reader who is interested in topics you discuss. Your blog is not for your friends only. That's why a blog post titled "**Problem 3**" is meaningless, low-quality content. Who knows about Problem 3? Don't assume your readers are students at Telerik Academy. They are not, so please explain for the general audience.

### Blogging about Problems and Homework from Academy Courses

If you want to blog about some problem given as homework or project in Telerik Software Academy, it is a good idea but only if you follow the following guidelines:

* Title the Post correctly, e.g. "Multiplication of Polynomials in C#" instead of "Problem 12".
* Describe the problem. What problem you are trying to solve. Give some examples. Provide sample input and sample output.
* Make a short analysis of the problem – possible ideas, algorithms, etc. Describe how you came to your solution.
* Describe the solution step by step in understandable form.
* Provide a working source code – either embedded in your blog or in GitHub / PasteBin / JSFiddle.
* Provide screenshots of your solutions (optionally).
* Record a video tutorial about your solution (optionally).
* Provide external links to sites describing the techniques and algorithms you have used (optionally).

**Remember**: if you just put a problem description and a piece of source code at your blog is will be meaningless. The solution of certain problem is not the source code itself, but the idea of the solution, how it works, and the steps for implementing the idea.

## Linking to Telerik Academy

If you like, the Software Academy, give your credit to it. This may be done in few ways.

Important: do not put too much links out from your site because this will be considered a spam.

### Sidebar Links

Add sidebar links to the some of the academy Web sites (your favorites). You may add links to the following web sites (some of them, not all):

* The main Telerik Academy sites:
  + <http://academy.telerik.com>
  + <http://telerikacademy.com>
  + <http://forums.academy.telerik.com>
  + <http://schoolacademy.telerik.com>
  + <http://algoacademy.telerik.com>
  + <http://www.telerik-kids.com>
* The social sites related to Telerik Software Academy:
  + <http://www.facebook.com/TelerikAcademy>
  + <http://www.facebook.com/TelerikSchoolAcademy>
  + <http://www.facebook.com/TelerikAlgoAcademy>
  + <http://www.facebook.com/TelerikKidsAcademy>
  + <http://www.youtube.com/TelerikAcademy>
  + <https://twitter.com/TelerikAcademy>
  + <https://plus.google.com/u/0/105769630299292709719>
* The sites of the individual Telerik Academy courses or tracks:
  + <http://html5course.telerik.com>
  + <http://mvccourse.telerik.com>
  + <http://seocourse.telerik.com>
  + <http://csharpfundamentals.telerik.com>
  + <http://aspnetcourse.telerik.com>
  + …
* The sites of the Academy trainers:
  + <http://www.nakov.com>
  + <http://www.nikolay.it>
  + <http://itgeorge.net>
  + <http://www.minkov.it>
* The affiliated Telerik Academy sites:
  + <http://www.bgcoder.com>
  + <http://noit.devbg.org>
  + <http://www.kursove-uroci-knigi-obuchenie-programirane-web-design-csharp.info>
  + <http://nlpclub.devbg.org>
  + …

It is a good idea to link some other content, which is non-related to the Academy.

* Links to your favorite sites, e.g.
  + Favorite technological sites / blogs
  + Favorite sports or new sites
* Link to your projects and profiles
  + Your profile at GitHub / Google Code / CodePlex / Assembla / Project Locker
  + Your Facebook / Twitter / Google+ profiles
  + Some sites of your friends or follows

### Sidebar Banners

Everyone is also invited to share the Telerik Software Academy banners at their blog. You might find the official Telerik Academy banners at <http://academy.telerik.com/about/share>.

### RSS Widgets

You may add RSS widgets to display content from Telerik Academy in your blog's sidebar:

* <http://forums.academy.telerik.com/feed/qa.rss>
* <http://academy.telerik.com/Feeds/News>
* <http://www.nakov.com/feed/>

### Facebook Like Box

You might add the Facebook Like Box associated with Academy's Facebook Page:

* <http://developers.facebook.com/docs/reference/plugins/like-box/>

### Twitter Timeline Widget

You might add the Twitter Timeline Widget associated with Academy's Twitter Profile:

* <https://twitter.com/settings/widgets/new/user>

### Embed YouTube Playlists

You might embed your favorite videos or playlists from Academy's YouTube channel, e.g.

* <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF4lVL1sPDSl9BULMQjBWfBSkGKjv02Mf>
* <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF4lVL1sPDSmYKhoOfcA-VFZ3iJlOxjm_>

## SEO

Your blog will be meaningless if no one knows it exists, right? So put some effort to popularize it!

### Links from Your Friends

Ask your friends who have sites or blogs to link to your new site. Ask your friends to share your blog in their profiles in Facebook / Twitter / Google Plus / Pinterest / Reddit / StumbleUpon / Delicious / Digg / Slashdot / DZone / Svejo / …

### Your Profile

* Update your profile in Facebook, Google Profiles, Google+, Twitter, SlideShare, LinkedIn, etc. to include a link to your blog. Share articles from your blog in the social networks.
* Register your blog at Blogosfera (<http://www.dnevnik.bg/blogosfera/>). The registration form is located here (fill the RSS feed of your blog): <http://id.capital.bg/preferences.php>.
* Register your blog at <http://topbloglog.com>.
* You might also register yourself in [www.crunchbase.com](http://www.crunchbase.com). Be sure to provide links to your blog and other sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

### Link Building

Register your blog to directories and social bookmarking sites, e.g.

* [www.dobavilink.info](http://www.dobavilink.info) – a list of Bulgarian directories
* [www.ebizmba.com/articles/social-bookmarking-websites](http://www.ebizmba.com/articles/social-bookmarking-websites) – top 15 social bookmarking sites
* [www.bestcatalog.net/seo\_tips/directories.htm](http://www.bestcatalog.net/seo_tips/directories.htm), [www.vretoolbar.com/articles/directories.php](http://www.vretoolbar.com/articles/directories.php), [www.whenweseo.com/web\_directories/high\_pagerank\_directories.jsp](http://www.whenweseo.com/web_directories/high_pagerank_directories.jsp) – list of top international directories for articles

### Developer Profile

Create your own **public developer profile** in the leading project hosting sites:

* GitHub profile at <http://github.com>
* Google Code profile at <http://code.google.com>
* CodePlex profile at [http://www.codeplex.com](http://www.codeplex.com/)
* Optionally create a developer profile in few less significant project hosting sites like:
  + <http://sourceforge.net>
  + [http://gitorious.org](http://gitorious.org/)
  + [http://openfmi.net](http://openfmi.net/)
  + [https://bitbucket.org](https://bitbucket.org/)
  + [http://www.assembla.com](http://www.assembla.com/)

Obligatory fill your profile and provide a link to your blog (or RSS if possible).

### Upload Your Open-Source Projects

Upload your best projects from the academy as open source projects in your public developer profiles. Your public developer profile will be a good way to demonstrate your skills at a job interview. Steps to upload a project:

1. Choose a **project of your best to share publicly** in Internet. This could be for example a console "Snake" game or solution to some of the problems from our courses. Upload good projects only. If your code is bad, the whole world will know, right?
2. Review the source code and add **backlinks to your blog in each of the source code files**. Example: <https://github.com/nakov/nakov.io.cin/blob/master/Cin.cs>.
3. **Create a repository** in GitHub / Google Code / CodePlex for your project and upload it. Be sure to put backlinks in the commit message.
4. Create a description / wiki / home page for your repository and add backlinks to your blog.
5. Add **backlinks to your blog at all possible places**. This will be rewarded later. Many bots and search engines will index your code and will display the links inside.
6. Add comments / discussions / forums posts / etc. in your project with backlink to your blog.

Ideally, you should publish at least 5-6 projects in at least 3 public repositories. You may write a blog post about each of your projects and link you its repository from your blog post.

### Ohloh Profile

Create your public open-source developer profile at <http://ohloh.net> and register all your open-source projects. Follow these steps:

* Create your **public Ohloh profile**. Fill your info and add links to your blogs. Example: <https://www.ohloh.net/accounts/nakov>.
* **Register at Ohloh your open-source projects** from GitHub, Google Code and CodePlex at Ohloh: <https://www.ohloh.net/p/new>.
* For each registered project perform the following:
  + Add **RSS feeds to your blog**, e.g. <https://www.ohloh.net/p/schoolacademy/rss_articles>
  + Add links to your blog and other sites: <https://www.ohloh.net/p/schoolacademy/links>

Note that all your commits are monitored by Ohloh and backlinks from your source code or commit messages are published at Ohloh and other similar sites. So be sure to put backlinks in your commits and in the committed source code.

## Other SEO Hints

* Create a Twitter profile at <http://twitter.com>. Link your Twitter account to your blog to automatically tweet all your posts. You may need a WordPress plugin.
* Create an <http://identi.ca> account and link your Twitter account to it.
* Connect your blog to Facebook to share on Facebook all your posts (find a plugin to do this automatically on your behalf).

If you follow these hints each of your blog posts will be automatically shared on many locations with virtually zero effort.

## Why You Should Have a Blog?

The final but most significant concept of the task is that it provides skills and knowledge that will be useful for your career development.

Why should you have a blog?

* To demonstrate your knowledge and expertise in software engineering
* To share your knowledge with others – Telerik Academy’s style
* To get noticed by potential employers or talent hunters
* To become part of the bloggers’ community
* Because having a blog is required from all telerikers who want to get promoted from a junior to a regular position
* Because it’s fun

Having a blog nowadays is essential, so why wait? Follow our step-by-step guide and start your blog today!

## Blog Examples from Former Telerik Academy Students

If you wander how your blog could look like and what its content should be, you might find useful to check few good blog examples created by students who have graduated Telerik Academy:

* [http://stamo-gochev.com](http://stamo-gochev.com/)
* [http://www.vgudzhev.cloudvps.bg](http://www.vgudzhev.cloudvps.bg/)
* <http://tkurtev.wordpress.com>
* <http://ivanov.avaart.net>
* [http://pavelkolev.com](http://pavelkolev.com/)
* <http://blog.saykor.com>
* [http://gutsev.com](http://gutsev.com/)
* [http://stkirov.wordpress.com](http://stkirov.wordpress.com/)
* [http://dimityr.wordpress.com](http://dimityr.wordpress.com/)
* <http://angelov-it.com>
* [http://pavelraykov.wordpress.com](http://pavelraykov.wordpress.com/)
* <http://plamenvarbanov.wordpress.com>
* <http://tihomir.me>
* [http://wtf.bg](http://wtf.bg/)
* <http://boyanmarinov.com/blog/>
* <http://it.blogbg.eu>
* <http://velin.wendi101.com>
* <http://kdikov.overbet.net>
* <http://nkolarov.wordpress.com>
* <http://dotninja.wordpress.com>