A black and white logo

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**Personal Portfolio Website**

Steven Filbert

September 29, 2025

Executive Summary

 **Goal:** A concise, high-level overview.

 **What to write:** Summarize the project's purpose (to create a professional online portfolio), the technologies used (HTML, CSS, JavaScript, GitHub Pages), and the final outcome (a live, responsive website showcasing your skills and projects).

1. **Introduction**
   1. Project Motivation

As a recent graduate with a Bachelor of Cyber Security, entering a competitive technology job market required the creation of a strong, professional online presence. While a traditional resume and LinkedIn profile are essential, they are static and limited in their ability to fully showcase technical skills. This project was undertaken to create a dynamic, central hub that links all my professional assets—resume, LinkedIn, and GitHub—into one cohesive platform. It serves as a digital handshake, offering recruiters and hiring managers a more in-depth and interactive look into my capabilities and projects beyond the constraints of a single-page document.

* 1. Goals and Objectives

The development of this portfolio website was guided by a set of clear and measurable objectives:

* **To Demonstrate Technical Proficiency:** The primary goal was to showcase hands-on proficiency in core front-end technologies, including semantic **HTML5**, modern **CSS3**, and vanilla **JavaScript**.
* **To Create a Central Professional Hub:** The website is designed to be the single source of truth for my professional profile, providing direct access to my resume, project repositories, and professional network.
* **To Gain Practical End-to-End Development Experience:** This project provided an opportunity to manage a complete development lifecycle, from initial planning and design, through coding and version control with **Git**, to final deployment and hosting.
* **To Enhance Professional Branding:** By designing and building a clean, modern, and user-friendly website, the objective was to create a positive and memorable first impression that reflects a strong commitment to quality.

1. Planning and Design Phase
   1. Content Strategy

The content for the portfolio website was strategically chosen to guide a potential employer from a general introduction to specific proof of technical skill. A single-page layout was selected to create a seamless, linear narrative. The information architecture consists of five key sections:

* **Hero Section:** Serves as the immediate introduction, presenting my professional title and providing direct calls-to-action to my LinkedIn, GitHub, and downloadable resume.
* **About Section:** Expands on the introduction, offering a brief professional narrative that provides context to my skills and career ambitions.
* **Skills Section:** A visually scannable overview of my key technical competencies, designed for quick assessment by recruiters.
* **Projects Section:** The core of the portfolio, providing concrete evidence of my abilities. Each project is presented with a description, the technologies used, and a link to the source code.
* **Contact Section:** A final call-to-action, making it easy for interested parties to get in touch.
  1. Design & User Experience (UX)

The design philosophy was centred on creating a clean, professional, and minimalist aesthetic that keeps the focus on the content. A mobile-first, responsive design was a primary technical requirement to ensure a seamless experience across all devices.

* **Layout:** A single-page vertical scroll was chosen for its straightforward user journey, allowing information to be presented in a logical, story-like progression.
* **Colour Scheme:** A simple and professional palette was selected, using a dark charcoal for the background, white for text to ensure high readability, and a single accent colour to draw attention to key elements like links and buttons.
* **Typography:** The font family **Roboto** was chosen for its excellent on-screen readability and modern, neutral feel. A clear hierarchy was established using different font weights (**Bold** for titles) and sizes to guide the user's eye through the content.
  1. Technology Stack Selection

The technologies for this project were selected to demonstrate a strong command of foundational web development principles.

* **Front-End:** The website was built using foundational **HTML/CSS and JavaScript** without a front-end framework. This approach was deliberately chosen to showcase a deep understanding of core web technologies, including semantic HTML structure, modern CSS for layout and responsiveness, and vanilla JavaScript for interactivity.
* **Hosting:** **GitHub Pages** was selected as the hosting platform. While I have familiarity with other platforms like **Firebase** and **Microsoft Azure**, GitHub Pages was the ideal choice for this project due to its seamless integration with the Git version control workflow, its zero-cost hosting for public static sites, and its widespread use for developer portfolios. The more powerful features of Firebase or Azure, such as backend services and databases, were not required for this static portfolio site.

1. Development and Implementation
   1. Project Setup

The development environment was chosen for efficiency and adherence to modern web development standards. The primary code editor used was **Visual Studio Code (VSCode)**, selected for its robust features, integrated terminal, and extensive extension support.

Version control was managed using **Git**, with a remote repository hosted on **GitHub**. This allowed for systematic tracking of changes, a clear commit history, and a straightforward deployment pipeline. The project was organized with a clean and logical file structure to ensure maintainability:

/vennfilbert.github.io

|-- /css

| |-- style.css

|-- /images

| |-- profile-picture.jpg

| |-- project-thumbnail-1.png

|-- index.html

|-- README.md

* 1. HTML Structure

The website was built using semantic **HTML5** to create a well-structured, accessible, and SEO-friendly document. Rather than relying on generic <div> tags for all containers, semantic elements were used to define the purpose of each section of the page.

* <header> was used for the introductory hero section containing my name and title.
* <nav> was implemented for the main navigation links.
* <main> wrapped the primary content of the page, including the distinct About, Skills, and Projects sections.
* <section> tags were used to group the content within each thematic block (e.g., <section id="projects">).
* <footer> contained the final contact information and social media links.

This approach not only improves the machine readability of the site for search engines but also enhances accessibility for users relying on screen readers.

* 1. CSS Styling

A mobile-first approach was adopted for styling, ensuring the website would be perfectly functional and readable on small screens before scaling up to larger displays. The layout was primarily managed using **CSS Flexbox**, which provided a powerful and efficient way to align and distribute space among items in a container.

Responsiveness was implemented using **media queries** targeting standard device breakpoints (e.g., tablets at 768px and desktops at 1024px). These queries adjust CSS properties like font sizes, container widths, and Flexbox layouts to optimize the user experience for different screen sizes, ensuring the design never appears broken or crowded.

* 1. Deployment

The website was deployed using **GitHub Pages**, a static site hosting service directly integrated with the project's GitHub repository. The process was streamlined and efficient:

1. A new public repository was created on GitHub with the specific name vennfilbert.github.io.
2. The local project folder was initialized as a Git repository.
3. The remote GitHub repository was added as the origin.
4. All project files were committed to the main branch.
5. The local commits were pushed to the remote origin on GitHub using git push origin main.

Within minutes of the final push, GitHub Pages automatically built and deployed the site, making it publicly accessible at the URL <https://vennfilbert.github.io>.

1. Challenges and Solutions

During the development of the portfolio website, a significant technical challenge arose in implementing a fully responsive layout for the "Projects" section. This section details the problem, the troubleshooting process, and the key learnings from the experience.

* 1. The Challenge: Responsive Layout

While the project cards were correctly styled and aligned on a desktop view, the layout would break on smaller screen sizes, particularly on mobile devices. The cards, arranged horizontally, would overflow their container rather than re-stacking vertically. This resulted in a horizontal scrollbar appearing and made the content unreadable, creating a poor user experience which undermined the project's goal of appearing professional and polished.

* 1. Troubleshooting and Solution

The troubleshooting process began by using the browser's built-in developer tools to inspect the CSS properties on a simulated mobile viewport. This analysis revealed that the container for the project cards was using a fixed layout that was not adaptable to smaller screens.

The problem was resolved by refactoring the CSS to adopt a mobile-first design philosophy, using modern layout techniques.

1. **Initial State (Mobile-First):** The CSS for the project container was initially styled for mobile devices, using **CSS Flexbox** with flex-direction: column; This ensured that on small screens, the project cards would stack vertically by default.
2. **Implementing a Breakpoint:** A **media query** was then introduced to handle larger screens. The query (@media (min-width: 768px)) targets tablets and desktops.
3. **Final Solution (Desktop State):** Inside the media query, the container's styles were overridden. The flex-direction was changed to row, and flex-wrap: wrap; was added. This allowed the project cards to arrange themselves in a flexible, horizontal grid on larger screens, wrapping to the next line if space was limited.

This solution not only fixed the layout issue but also resulted in a more robust and maintainable stylesheet that was optimized for a wide range of devices.

* 1. Key Learnings

This challenge provided several valuable lessons in front-end development:

* It offered deep, practical experience in implementing a mobile-first responsive design strategy, which is a modern best practice.
* It reinforced the critical importance of using browser developer tools for real-time inspection and debugging of CSS layouts.
* It strengthened my skills in advanced CSS properties, specifically Flexbox and the use of media queries, which are fundamental to creating any modern, user-friendly website.

1. Future Improvements

 **Goal:** Show that you can think critically about your work and plan for the future.

 **What to write:** List and briefly describe potential new features you could add later (e.g., a blog section, dark mode, contact form).

1. Conclusion and Key Learnings

 **Goal:** Summarize the project and your personal growth.

 **What to write:** Briefly recap the project's success in meeting your initial goals and state the most valuable skills you gained or strengthened through the process.