

Hacktoberfest is a month-long celebration of open-source software held every **October**. Hosted by DigitalOcean, it encourages developers (and non-developers) to contribute to projects on GitHub and GitLab.

Since we are currently in **December 2025**, the 2025 event has concluded, but you can start preparing now for **Hacktoberfest 2026**.

How it Works: The Rules

To "complete" Hacktoberfest and earn rewards, you must follow these core requirements:

- **Register:** You must sign up on the official [Hacktoberfest website](#) using your GitHub or GitLab account.
- **The Goal:** Historically, you must have **4 to 6 pull requests (PRs)** merged or accepted between **October 1st and October 31st**.
- **Eligible Projects:** Not every repository counts. Look for:
 - Repositories with the **"hacktoberfest"** topic tag.
 - PRs that a maintainer has labeled with the **"hacktoberfest-accepted"** label.
- **Quality over Quantity:** Spammy PRs (e.g., adding a single space or fixing a typo in a README that doesn't need it) will be marked as **invalid** and can lead to a ban.

Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners

1. Preparation (Pre-October)

- **Learn Git:** Familiarize yourself with `fork`, `clone`, `branch`, `commit`, and `pull request`.
- **Find Projects:** Use the GitHub search bar to look for `topic:hacktoberfest`.
- **Look for Labels:** Within those projects, search for issues labeled **"good first issue"** or **"help wanted."**

2. The Contribution Process (October)

1. **Fork:** Create a copy of the project to your own GitHub account.
2. **Clone:** Download your fork to your computer.
3. **Branch:** Create a new branch for your specific fix (e.g., `git checkout -b fix-styling-bug`).
4. **Code:** Make your changes and test them.
5. **Push & PR:** Push your branch to GitHub and click "Open Pull Request."

3. Review Period

Once you submit, there is usually a **7-day review period**. If the maintainer merges your PR or labels it as accepted, it counts toward your goal!

Rewards & Perks

Hacktoberfest has shifted toward digital-first rewards in recent years to be more sustainable.

- **Digital Badges:** Complete milestones to earn "Holopin" badges for your GitHub profile.
- **Physical Swag:** Historically, the **first 10,000 to 40,000** finishers had the choice between a limited-edition **Hacktoberfest T-shirt** or having a **tree planted** in their name.
- **Company Goodies:** Many companies (like Appwrite, Intel, or Jenkins) run their own side-events during October with extra t-shirts and stickers.



Pro-Tips

- **Don't wait until October 30th:** Maintainers get overwhelmed at the end of the month. Start early!
- **Non-Code counts:** You can contribute by writing documentation, designing logos, or even translating text.
- **Communicate:** Always comment on an issue before you start working on it to ensure no one else is already doing it.