

An Introduction to **Side-Projects**

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Why do Side-Projects?

- Primary
 - (1) Learn
 - (2) Grow
 - (3) Have fun
- Secondary
 - (1) Make friends
 - (2) Career development
 - (3) Additional income (not always possible)

Picking a Side-Project

- **Passion** should drive you...
 - A topic you love
 - A problem that really bugs you
 - Something you just enjoy doing
- Examples
 - I love mathematics
 - Online advertisements really bug me
 - I enjoy talking about movies

How to do a Side-Project?

- Make a plan and do your research...
 - What tools and platforms can I use?
 - What apps already exist?
- Work incrementally, but dream big...
 - What can I realistically do in 4-hours? 10-hours? 100-hours?
- Ask your friends what they think...
 - Before you even start, try explaining the idea to someone else who can give kind feedback

How to get Started?

- Just do it!
- Keep with it!
- Push yourself!
- It will pay off in the end.

Work in progress...

- You have an idea or even a prototype
- How do you...
 - find real people to collaborate with?
 - share it with others?
 - get feedback?

How to meet real people?

- Consider going to a meeting or event in person or online (make sure that it's safe)
 - Hackathons
 - School clubs and events
- There are Philadelphia events that I sometimes attend...
 - Venture Cafe (on Thursdays) – near University City
 - Entre events in Philadelphia

How to make it Shareable?

- There can be risks with sharing your project publicly
- If you accept the risks, then you can put your...
 - App on the App Store
 - Video on Youtube / Vimeo
 - Article on Medium / Make: Projects (previously called ProjectBoard)
 - Code on Bitbucket / GitHub
- Make a website
 - PythonAnywhere / AWS / GitHub / etc
 - Free resources and discounts for students (when available)

Get Feedback

- Make a survey
 - Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, etc
- Share your creation and survey with...
 - Family, Friends, Classmates, and College community
 - Share with side-project communities
 - Ex: [Side-projects group](#) on LinkedIn
- There can be risks, but I sometimes...
 - Contact people who work in this area
 - Post to relevant forums and communities

Finished

- Now what? Here are some options...
 - Feel the satisfaction of completing your project
 - Just keep making it better
 - Maximize your viewership and downloads
 - Use it to help you get a job
 - Set it down and come back to it later

Viewership & Downloads

- Again, there can be risks with making your work public
- You can...
 - Share it with people who really need it
 - Initial users, communities, or influencers might help promote it
 - [\(I told a few stories\)](#)
- I encourage you to be moral and follow ethical practices
 - Some people do illegal things to promote their products (I do not encourage this behavior)

Get a job

- There is a lot that goes into getting a job (experiences can vary greatly)
 - Submit Application
 - Match with what they are looking for
 - Make a personal and memorable introduction
 - Nail the interview
- How can your side-project possibly help
 - Include it on your resume
 - Tell a potential employer about it (only if you feel comfortable)
 - Some potential employers ask for code samples. I have a couple side-projects that I use specifically as code samples.

My Side-Project

- (I talked about my side-projects)
- I learned how to...
 - build a mobile friendly web app
 - setup a web server
 - use OAuth2
 - make a social media bot (followed ethical practices)
 - grow an online community
 - gain some traction
 - build a data set

Thank you very much!

(let me know if you're working on a side-project)