SimpleStepsCode.com presents:

The Step-by-Step Guide to Becoming a Front-End Web Developer

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Before you begin

Welcome! Before you start on the path to becoming a front-end web developer, here are some things you should know.

How to not be overwhelmed

The internet is full of people saying you need to learn every language, framework, and tool in order to be a front-end web developer. The advice is well-intentioned but damaging because it can be so overwhelming that you don’t know where to begin, so you never begin.

What you need is to focus on one thing at a time and not get distracted worrying about everything else. The aim of this guide is to give you a step-by-step idea of what to do in order to become a front-end web developer.

How to find time to learn

Don’t worry about setting aside a bunch of time to learn. **Just set aside 2 minutes, and if you’re having fun, you’ll go way over that.** That’s how sites like Facebook and YouTube get people to stay on there for hours.

How to learn efficiently

You learn the fastest by actually typing code. Seriously. **15 minutes of coding can often be more effective than hours of reading.** Reading is important too, but it should never be a substitute for actually coding.

Becoming a front-end web developer

Learn HTML: Put stuff on a web page

- Get a text-editor that you like (I like Sublime Text (it's a free download), but feel free to use whatever you want)
- Create a basic web page with some text
- Put other stuff on your page: headers, paragraphs, links, divs

Learn CSS: Style a web page

- Style the stuff on your page (colors, backgrounds, sizes, fonts, positioning, layout, etc)
- Learn the CSS box model to understand how CSS lays stuff out
- Learn about classes, ids, and selectors in order to make it easier to identify and style stuff on your pages
- While you're learning CSS, take the time to try out other features of HTML like lists and forms for example

- Learn how to make your pages responsive so they work on mobile as well as desktop

Learn JavaScript: Make your web pages more interactive

- Get comfortable with some of the basics: variables, functions, arrays, objects, loops, and events.
- Get comfortable manipulating the pieces of your page with JavaScript (examples: add two numbers and show the result on the page, show a lightbox when the user clicks a button, etc.)
- Understand how jQuery works (it's such a common library that you're bound to run into it, but if you know JavaScript, then you can pick up the basics of jQuery in an afternoon)

Pick up good coding habits as you go

- Make sure your code is clean, organized, well-commented, and easy to maintain.
- Don't bloat your pages with unnecessary plugins.

- Learn to make your pages load fast (a guide can be found here when you’re ready: http://simplestepscode.com/make-your-website-load-faster/)

Start creating a body of work you can show

- Codepen is a good place for small demos
- Additionally, you can host your own portfolio (a Google search for free hosting should give you some options)

Next steps: Career stuff

- Once you’re comfortable with the fundamentals, it’s time to choose what to do.
- If you want the freelance route, then learn about WordPress and hosting.
- If you want the job route, talk to developers, figure out the types of places you’d like to work, and then learn what tools they use there (examples: version control, frameworks, etc). A guide on how to do this can be found here: http://simplestepscode.com/how-to-get-a-web-development-job-in-four-steps/