

From Gamer to Creator – Starter Pack

WORKSHOP HANDOUT

You were at the workshop. You saw a game get built in 20 minutes. Here's everything you need to keep going – all of it free.

Tonight's 10-Minute Challenge (do this first!)

1. Download the linked game: github.com/cristilio/workshops
2. Unzip the folder. Open the HTML file in any browser. Open the code in any text editor.
3. Find the line `let SPEED = 3;`
4. Change `3` to `15`. Save. Refresh. Play. Laugh.
5. Change something else – the emoji, the lives, anything.

Why GitHub? It's where most shared code lives – learning to download (and later share) projects there is a core developer skill.

How to download (no coding tools needed): open the repo link → click the green **Code** button → **Download ZIP** → unzip.

Guide: [docs.github.com – Downloading source code archives](https://docs.github.com/en/free-pro-team@latest/github/working-with-github/archives)

That loop – **change** → **run** → **observe** – is programming. You just did it.

The Learning Path

Never coded before?

1. **Scratch** (scratch.mit.edu) – drag-and-drop programming. Build 2–3 tiny games this week. Free, runs in browser.
2. **p5.js** (p5js.org + editor.p5js.org) – what we used today. Real JavaScript, instant visuals, zero install.
3. **Godot** (godotengine.org) – when you want “real” 2D/3D games. Completely free, used by professional studios.

Already comfortable? Go straight to p5.js or Python, then Godot.

The one rule: **build things, don't just watch videos about building things.** One finished tiny game beats ten tutorials.

Languages

- **JavaScript** – runs in every browser on Earth. Best with p5.js for games. Start here if you liked today.
- **Python** (python.org) – reads almost like English. Best all-rounder: games (Pygame), AI, automation, science.
- Don't agonize over the choice. The five concepts from the workshop (variables, events, conditions, loops, functions) are identical in every language.

Game Engines (all free)

- **Scratch** – day one. No typing needed.

- **p5.js** – code + instant visuals in the browser. Today's tool.
- **Godot** – free, open-source, professional. The best “first real engine.”
- **Unity / Unreal** – industry giants; free for learners. Come here after Godot, not before.

AI Tools (your infinitely patient tutor)

- **ChatGPT** (chat.openai.com) / **Claude** (claude.ai) / **Gemini** (gemini.google.com) – free tiers are plenty.
- Prompts that make AI a teacher instead of a crutch:
 - “Explain this line of code like I'm 15.”
 - “Why did this break? Explain the error in simple terms.”
 - “Give me a hint but NOT the answer.”
 - “Quiz me with 3 questions about the code I just wrote.”
- Golden rule: **never keep code you don't understand**. Ask AI to explain it until you do.

Free Learning Platforms

- **freeCodeCamp** (freecodecamp.org) – full coding curriculum, genuinely free forever.
- **CS50** (cs50.harvard.edu/x) – Harvard's legendary intro course, free online. Has a game dev version (CS50G).
- **Khan Academy** (khanacademy.org/computing) – gentle, interactive JS/game programming.
- **The Odin Project** (theodinproject.com) – when you're ready for full web development.
- **W3Schools** (w3schools.com) – quick reference for any HTML/JS/Python question.

YouTube Channels

- **Brackeys** – the classic game dev channel (great Godot series).
- **The Coding Train** – Daniel Shiffman teaching p5.js with pure joy. Perfect follow-up to today.
- **Sebastian Lague** – beautiful “Coding Adventures”; watch to fall in love with the craft.
- **Game Maker's Toolkit** – game *design* thinking: why games feel good.
- **Fireship** – fast, funny explainers on any tech topic (“X in 100 seconds”).
- **freeCodeCamp** – full-length free courses on everything.

Communities

- **itch.io** – publish your games for free (this is where your first release goes).
- **Game jams** – Ludum Dare, GMTK Jam, itch.io jams: build a game in 48 hours with thousands of others. The single fastest way to improve.
- **r/gamedev, r/learnprogramming** – Reddit communities that answer beginner questions kindly.
- **Discord servers** – p5.js, Godot, and freeCodeCamp all have official ones full of helpful people.

Books (optional)

- *Automate the Boring Stuff with Python* – free online at automatetheboringstuff.com.
- *The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses* (Jesse Schell) – when you're serious about design.

The five ideas you already know

You did all of these in the workshop – with your body, then in code:

You did	It's called	In code
Remembered your score	Variable	<code>score = 0</code>
Jumped when I clapped	Event	<code>def key_pressed(): ...</code>
Hands on head IF Jan-Jun birthday	Condition	<code>if month <= 6: ...</code>
Clapped until the fist went up	Loop	<code>def draw(): ... (60×/sec!)</code>
Dance	Function	<code>def dance(): ...</code>

Same five ideas as today's game – shown here in Python.

That's 90% of all programming. The rest is practice.

Every app, every game, every AI tool started as someone's small idea.

The difference is that someone decided to start building.

Start before you feel ready. – Joel Abraham Anoop

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