Basics of Programming

lbjoseph

Introduction

Table of Contents

I remember having the desire to learn programming when I was 12 - I just wanted to make my own games. Sound familiar? Thinking it would be educational, my mom bought me a copy of Liberty BASIC. It was educational, mind you, but it was so engaging to me that she had a hard time getting me to do anything else for the next few years. Yes, I was a normal teenager and did things with friends, but most of my spare time alone was spent programming or reading about programming.

Learning and experimenting pay off, however. As you can see, I am now writing this article to help *you* learn the basics of programming.

The Problem With Programming Tutorials

If you try to find a good beginner's programming tutorial online, you'll usually run into one of the following problems:

- They're not youth friendly.
- They expect you to already know a different programming language.

- They start by teaching very difficult and often boring programming languages.

Instead, tutorials should have the following characteristics:

- Programming tutorials should be easily understood by youth and adults alike.
- Programming tutorials shouldn't expect you to have the slightest clue about programming.
- Programming tutorials should teach a fun and easy programming language.

The end of this article links to a series which does just that.

However, you should finish reading this introduction so you know how to go about learning and finding help.

Where to Find Help

Liberty BASIC has an *awesome* online community with dedicated supporters who are very helpful. You can find them here:
Liberty BASIC Forums

Also, Liberty BASIC has an online version of the help file. This is *the* reference to have.
Liberty BASIC Online Help

If you do nothing else, at least join the Liberty BASIC Forum and check it every week or so.

Before You Start

Liberty BASIC is referred to as LB in this article, as well as many others on the LBPE (Liberty BASIC Programmer's Encyclopedia - where you are right now).

It's easier to read and type that way. A lot can be learned by experimenting. If you have an idea to try something, go ahead and try it. That's pretty much the only way to find certain things out, anyways. Programming requires *you* to take the initiative and be willing to learn. Part of that is experimenting.

Do you *hate* math? You're going to like programming.

Do you *love* math? You're still going to like programming.

Programming allows you to apply the science of math to solve problems in an organized fashion, but doesn't require you spend all your time working with odd symbols and weird patterns of thinking. Programming is pretty natural, once you get the "hang" of it.

However, if you're writing a program that requires a lot of mathematical computations, you would have to be able to figure out the equations you need before you program them. You can't program anything you don't understand. The only way around that is to use someone else's code who did understand what they were doing; in which case, you only need to understand how to use their code.

No Brains Required

You don't have to be super smart to learn programming. You just need to be *willing* to learn. The online forums and tutorials available for Liberty BASIC are very supportive and easy to follow. All you have to do is spend a little time reading and practicing.

Jumpstart

There is a series of lessons (with pictures!) that teach programming from the ground-up on the LBPE. This series is called "Jumpstart."

This author highly recommends following the short lessons until you've taught yourself the basics. Also, there is a wealth of information available here on the LBPE as programming reference and how-to's.

Be sure to read everything. Skimming and speed reading do *not* work with programming. You have the ability to focus and pay attention for as long as you like. Your attention span is entirely up to you and how much you'd like to learn at a time.

Don't overwork yourself, either. Be sure to get up off your computer every so often and take a break. That's usually when this author figures most of his problems out.

[Begin Jumpstart](#)

(Patience is a virtue. Most of learning how to program is learning how to follow along the documentation that teaches you how to program.)

Good luck!

[Basics of Programming](#) | [Introduction](#) | [No Brains Required](#) | [Jumpstart](#)