THE CODING DOJO HANDBOOK

a practical guide to creating a space where **good** programmers can become **great** programmers

Emily Bache
Foreword by Robert C. Martin

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Dojo Principles

These principles were written by Christophe Thibaut, and first published in [Laurent Bossavit's blog](http://bossavit.com/dojo/archives/2005_02.html)[1] in 2005, as a guide for new members of the first dojo, in Paris, France. (I have edited them in minor ways to improve readability.)

The First Rule

One important rule about the Dojo is : At the Dojo one can't discuss a form without code, and one can't show code without tests. It is a design training place, where it is acknowledged that "the code is the design" and that code without tests simply doesn't exist.

Finding a Master

The master can't be a master of every forms. I feel quite at ease with recursive functions and list processing e.g. but I think I don't know how to create even a simple web app. Fortunately, while it's the first time they really deal with "tail-recursion" some practitioners here have done professional web apps for years!

Come Without Your Relics

Of course, you know how to do it. You know how and why this code is better than that one. You've done it already. The point is to do it right now, explain it to us, and share what you learned.

Learning Again

In order to learn again something, we just have to forget it. But it's not easy to forget something when you're alone. It's easier when we give our full attention to someone who is trying to learn it for the first time. We can learn from other people's mistakes as well as from our own if we listen carefully.

Slow Down

Learning something should force you to slow down. You can go faster because you learned some tricks, but you cannot go faster and learn at the same time. It's OK, we're not in a hurry. We could do that for years. Some of us certainly will. What kind of deadline will we miss if we spend four more weeks on this code kata rather than on four different katas? More precisely, when we reach the next plateau, is it because we went through the previous one, or is it just because we were flying over it?

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[1] http://bossavit.com/dojo/archives/2005_02.html

Throwing Yourself In

At some point someone will begin to master a particular Code Kata, and want to approach another one. Those threatened by boredom should throw themselves first into a Prepared Kata presentation.

Subjecting To A Master

If it seems difficult to you, look for other practitioners who can judge your code and could easily show something new about it to you. Ask again until the matter contains absolutely no more difficulty to you.

Mastering A Subject

If it seems easy to you, explain it to others who find it difficult. Explain it again as long as they find it difficult.