Get Started with Coding

Learning to code is more popular than ever, and it’s never been easier for teachers to get started. Code is everywhere in our world, and even a little bit of coding literacy can take kids a long way. Beyond digital literacy, the process of learning to code can support skills that are valuable across a variety of subjects. What’s more, giving all students an introduction to coding opens up opportunities for more women and minorities to pursue computer science careers.

Tips for Teaching Coding in Your Classroom

- **Learn along with your students:**
  - Even without coding experience, just about any teacher can lead beginning-level lessons.
  - Many of the best tools use visual, drag-and-drop games and puzzles.
  - Show students how you learn something new! Regardless of your expertise, use learn-to-code lessons as an opportunity to model a growth mindset.

- **Help students become experts with a student-led knowledge base:**
  - Everyone’s bound to work at their own pace — promote a collaborative environment where students can help each other.
  - A physical bulletin board on your classroom wall could do the trick, or it could even be an online class FAQ page.
  - Kids who work ahead can offer support to others and also reinforce their own learning.

- **Let students’ own interests drive their learning:**
  - Tap into kids’ intrinsic motivation. It’s a great way to get them engaged, and it helps them persevere as they meet challenges along the way.
  - Encourage kids to become producers — not just consumers — of digital content. They’ll be even more motivated to figure out how it’s all made.

Suggested Tools

- **Code.org**
  Popular games, big names get kids and teachers pumped to program
  [www.commonsense.org/education/website/codeorg](http://www.commonsense.org/education/website/codeorg)

- **Scratch**
  Jump-start future programmers with adaptive sandbox tool
  [www.commonsense.org/education/website/scratch](http://www.commonsense.org/education/website/scratch)

- **Made with Code**
  Enticing projects and inspiring videos offer anyone an intro to coding