

# Programmer traits & Habits of Mind

## Self-Assessment

You will be asked periodically to complete a self-inventory to monitor your programming skills.

These eight skills have been matched to eight of the 16 Habits of Mind:

*The 16 Habits of Mind are habits of thought and action that help people manage uncertain or challenging situations. They can help people take action when there is no known solution to a problem. The Habits support thoughtful and intelligent action.*

From [16 habits of mind curriculum](#) (pdf), p4

Please answer honestly each time.

## Instructions

Rank yourself on a scale of 1 to 5

1: Strongly disagree; I'm not like this at all and I don't want to develop this skill

2: Disagree; I'm not like that, but am willing to develop this skill

3: Neutral; I sometimes have this skill and am willing to develop this skill

4: Agree; I use this skill often

5: Strongly agree; People around me say I have this skill most times.

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## I am passionate about problem-solving.

Good programmers are energized by the challenge of finding a solution.

They may make mistakes, but they will accept that they made a mistake, will learn from it, and will move on.

**16 habits equivalent:** Problem-solver

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## I am accurate.

Good programmers fix their bugs at the source. They do not program a 'work-around' solution to patch the symptoms.

**16 habits equivalent:** Accurate

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## I am persistent.

Good programmers do not give up!

**16 habits equivalent:** Persistent

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## I am a planner.

Good programmers look for multiple solutions and can see the impact of choosing one solution method over another.

In fact, 90% of the time they are thinking, researching, experimenting to find the best solution. They spend only 10% of the time actually writing code.

**16 habits equivalent:** Flexible thinker

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## I am a pessimist.

Good programmers are pessimists. They ask themselves "What can go wrong?" and then they make sure that their programming solution takes care of them.

Even though good programmers are pessimistic, they are also optimistic that their final programming project will be a success.

**16 habits equivalent:** Questioner

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## **I am detailed.**

Good programmers make sure that they

- put comments to explain their code
- spell variable names correctly
- follow the conventions required in a group project
- indent their code for easy reading

**16 habits equivalent:** Clear and precise

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## **I am a team player.**

Good programmers will follow the conventions as outlined by the team members. They do **not** change the rules in the middle of the project!

The larger the project, the more important it is that team players follow the rules.

**16 habits equivalent:** Team player

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## **I am reflective.**

Good programmers look back at the code they have written and will look for ways to make sure that

- unused code is deleted
- comments are included
- sections of code are indented properly
- long routines are broken into smaller, more manageable ones
- duplicated routines are combined into one

Good programmers strive for perfection, even though in practice, they know that it isn't always possible.

**16 habits equivalent:** Critiquer of my learning

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## **Resources**

[Good Programmers](#)

[16 habits of mind curriculum](#) (pdf): A Curriculum for Community High School of Vermont Students

[Wortzel's Blog](#) *Characteristics of a Good Programmer*

[Why did you become a programmer?](#) by Chip Wenz of NetworkWorld

[How to recognise a good programmer:](#) advice to employers, by Daniel

[Career Cruising](#)