

# we write about the things we build and the things we consume

 written by Dan Govan on 22 January 2015 in ideas

## self-taught front-enders

Back when I was at uni the web was relatively young, so while there were a load of courses for software development or graphic design there was nothing at all for web development. Unsurprising then that myself and every front-ender of the time were self taught.

What is surprising is that that's still mostly the case. While both the roles of software developer and web designer have changed at a manageable pace (insofar as the latter is analogous to graphic designer), the in between that is front-end development moves so quickly that by the time a university curriculum on the subject can be approved it's already time to re-write it.

So even now most front end developers (...creative technologists, front end engineers...) are self taught, and there's a lot more to learn now as the number of technologies and tools has exploded. Thankfully so has the number of online resources to help: On top of the hundreds of blogs and youtube tutorials there are specialist sites like [Code School](#), [Codecademy](#), [TutsPlus](#), [Tree House](#), I've never been great at learning from books, so this interactive approach is awesome and much of it is free!

### pros and cons:

There are upsides to being self-taught; it implies being something of a curious self-starter with a passion for Making It Work, and it starts a lifetime of learning habits and self-improvement that's vital in the fast-paced world of front-end.

However I've found there can be downsides too: having learned a lot through trial and error I often lack the vocabulary and jargon to discuss programming, even when it's just describing what I'm doing. Similarly when talking about design I learned some of what works, but rarely why, which is unfortunate as much of the design workflow in this industry is back-and-forths with clients.

Asking around at MetaBroadcast I've found a few fans of [Coursera](#) and [khanacademy](#) both for independent self-teaching and for supplementing traditional methods so it's certainly not just front enders tap into this growing industry of remote learning!