

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Need opinions on what I should focus on learning first.](#)

Drepazin - June 9, 2026, 1:14 am

Hey fellas. So, I'm new to hacking/programming or anything computer related beyond a superficial understanding. I DO realize how useful and versatile knowing about these topics are though, and I genuinely do want to learn as I see how it can benefit many aspects of my life.

My issue is, I'm unsure what I should focus on first. I've concluded that if I'm to get anywhere, I need to know a programming language. From what I've read, Python seems a great place to start. Fairly simple compared to other languages, many applications and teaches you the general syntax required to learn other languages easier. I've settled on learning this through the "Python Programming MOOC 2026" course offered by the University of Helsinki.

Well, what I am wondering is, should I just start learning Python and assume I'll pick up the essentials of computing/hacking as I learn? Should I supplement the course with something? There are many computing terms I do not understand, aspects that fall outside of programming. I'm also unsure of what topics are most important to learn for anyone wanting to be proficient at computing, and which topics can be ignored unless seeking to specialize.

I don't want to do anything crazy, but I DO want to understand the terms, ideas, tools and topics generally spoken about here. I want to be able to keep up and contribute, not just be a passive-learner who lets 90% of the info go over their head. I have the conviction and time to get good at this, but I need clear direction and structure, so if anyone could provide a bit of that, I'd be extremely grateful. Any reassurance or anecdotes on the beginning of your journeys would also be nice!

Thanks guys :)

Riggs - June 9, 2026, 2:34 am

With the boom of AI I think learning any programming language is becoming more and more futile, especially in the security space. That's not to say you shouldn't try to understand how certain types of languages can help solve different problems, but knowing how to think like a programmer, rather than be one, and direct AI effectively is what I would personally recommend focusing on.

In the same way you could try to learn a whole new foreign language, but what's the point in that if you're now always surrounded by infinite translators that know that foreign language better than you ever could? I think it makes more sense to focus on becoming an eloquent communicator yourself who can easily convey your ideas through any translator (AI) and work on your expression refinement (prompts) to get the results you're after.

Just my view. Best of luck on your journey, irrespective of what path you choose.

Mastercarder - June 9, 2026, 6:22 am

(Jun 9, 2026 02:34 AM)Riggs Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) With the boom of AI I think learning any programming language is becoming more and more futile, especially in the security space. That's not to say you shouldn't try to understand how certain types of languages can help solve different problems, but knowing how to think like a programmer, rather than be one, and direct AI effectively is what I would personally recommend focusing on.

In the same way you could try to learn a whole new foreign language, but what's the point in that if you're now always surrounded by infinite translators that know that foreign language better than you ever could? I think it makes more sense to focus on becoming an eloquent communicator yourself who can easily convey your ideas through any translator (AI) and work on your expression refinement (prompts) to get the results you're after.

Just my view. Best of luck on your journey, irrespective of what path you choose.
Completely agree with this response. Couldn't have said it any better myself.

The Pact - June 9, 2026, 6:55 am

(Jun 9, 2026 01:14 AM)Drepazin Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Hey fellas. So, I'm new to hacking/programming or anything computer related beyond a superficial understanding. I DO realize how useful and versatile knowing about these topics are though, and I genuinely do want to learn as I see how it can benefit many aspects of my life.

My issue is, I'm unsure what I should focus on first. I've concluded that if I'm to get anywhere, I need to know a programming language. From what I've read, Python seems a great place to start. Fairly simple compared to other languages, many applications and teaches you the general syntax required to learn other languages easier. I've settled on learning this through the "Python Programming MOOC 2026" course offered by the University of Helsinki.

Well, what I am wondering is, should I just start learning Python and assume I'll pick up the essentials of computing/hacking as I learn? Should I supplement the course with something? There are many computing terms I do not understand, aspects that fall outside of programming. I'm also unsure of what topics are most important to learn for anyone wanting to be proficient at computing, and which topics can be ignored unless seeking to specialize.

I don't want to do anything crazy, but I DO want to understand the terms, ideas, tools and topics generally spoken about here. I want to be able to keep up and contribute, not just be a passive-learner who lets 90% of the info go over their head. I have the conviction and time to get good at this, but I need clear direction and structure, so if anyone could provide a bit of that, I'd be extremely grateful. Any reassurance or anecdotes on the beginning of your journeys would also be nice!

Thanks guys :)

While the other two guys are right, my son was saying how a lot of people that go into vibe coding with zero knowledge of programming at all, end up making some big mistakes from knowing NOTHING, and it helps to at least know how to do some coding to help you understand why problems are happening once you start using vibe coding.,

7 - June 9, 2026, 8:59 am

(Jun 9, 2026 02:34 AM)Riggs Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) With the boom of AI I think learning any programming language is becoming more and more futile, especially in the security space. That's not to say you shouldn't try to understand how certain types of languages can help solve different problems, but knowing how to think like a programmer, rather than be one, and direct AI effectively is what I would personally recommend focusing on.

In the same way you could try to learn a whole new foreign language, but what's the point in that if you're now always surrounded by infinite translators that know that foreign language better than you ever could? I think it makes more sense to focus on becoming an eloquent communicator yourself who can easily convey your ideas through any translator (AI) and work on your expression refinement (prompts) to get the results you're after.

Just my view. Best of luck on your journey, irrespective of what path you choose.
Completely agree.

Understanding language types is very useful, learning API's, terminology, networking, hosting, basic security, linux (well all OS's to an extent) all of this before prompt engineering can change your experience forever. Even the logic of scripting, modulation, data and media production also. Sometimes people overuse AI when they could of used AI to manipulate a API that is more efficient or make AI design a perfectly suitable module or framework that already exists.. Like reinventing the wheel.

Anyway I could list loads of examples where just prompt engineering with no knowledge at all will not always produce the best results.

One of the biggest skills any person can use AI for first is the same thing you should first learn in hacking and anything you do in life... research & reconnaissance

AI - Prompt engineering can fast track the rest but without knowing what your building logically your just hit and hoping.

Shundev - June 9, 2026, 9:05 am

honestly bro python is good start, just dont think it will teach u everything by itself.

learn python main, and on the side learn basic linux + networking. like IPs, ports, DNS, HTTP, files, services etc. u dont need master all, just enough so words dont fly over ur head.

also build small stuff while learning, dont only watch courses. make dumb scripts, break them, fix them, thats how it clicks.

Drepazin - June 9, 2026, 9:30 am

(Jun 9, 2026 06:55 AM)The Pact Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) While the other two guys are right, my son was saying how a lot of people that go into vibe coding with zero knowledge of programming at all, end up making some big mistakes from knowing NOTHING, and it helps to at least know how to do some coding to help you understand why problems are happening once you start using vibe coding., Yeah, I agree with this. Whilst I'm fine with the idea of AI doing the heavy lifting, I still want to UNDERSTAND what I'm doing and looking at. If AI generates me code, how will I know what I want altered or if there is a bug unless I know the language? Besides, I'd feel like a fraud and a loser if I let AI do everything for me, where's the fun and pride in that?

(Jun 9, 2026 08:59 AM)7 Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Completely agree.

Understanding language types is very useful, learning API's, terminology, networking, hosting, basic security, linux (well all OS's to an extent) all of this before prompt engineering can change your experience forever. Even the logic of scripting, modulation, data and media production also. Sometimes people overuse AI when they could of used AI to manipulate a API that is more efficient or make AI design a perfectly suitable module or framework that already exists.. Like reinventing the wheel.

Anyway I could list loads of examples where just prompt engineering with no knowledge at all will not always produce the best results.

One of the biggest skills any person can use AI for first is the same thing you should first learn in hacking and anything you do in life... research & reconnaissance

AI - Prompt engineering can fast track the rest but without knowing what your building logically your just hit and hoping.

Yep, exactly. AI can do a lot, but unless I know what I'm talking about, I can't direct it efficiently. Also, I'd feel like a fraud if I relied entirely on AI. I want to feel competent and proud of what I achieve, how could I feel that if I didn't put in any of the work myself? I'd feel ashamed to even be on this site if all I did was vibe-code but couldn't be bothered to do anything myself.

So, I'll learn python and as I learn and practice, I'll supplement my education by researching all the topics you've mentioned here. By that point, I should have a decent enough understanding to navigate this world and know what interests me.

Thanks for your input, I have clarity now.

(Jun 9, 2026 09:05 AM)Placebo.sys Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) honestly bro python is good start, just dont think it will teach u everything by itself.

learn python main, and on the side learn basic linux + networking. like IPs, ports, DNS, HTTP, files, services etc. u dont need master all, just enough so words dont fly over ur head.

also build small stuff while learning, dont only watch courses. make dumb scripts, break them, fix them, thats how it clicks.

Oh yeah, for sure, I'm a practical learner. Unless I actually use what I just learned, I forget a good chunk of it. So, I'll constantly be making shitty scripts for all sorts of trivial and pointless tasks, anything to learn. This is quite exciting for me, actually. I've always found programming daunting, but for some reason I now feel like I'm ready :)

UPGRADING - June 9, 2026, 11:35 am

+1 riggs

bitlocker - June 16, 2026, 10:38 am

(Jun 9, 2026 01:14 AM)Drepazin Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Hey fellas. So, I'm new to hacking/programming or anything computer related beyond a superficial understanding. I DO realize how useful and versatile knowing about these topics are though, and I genuinely do want to learn as I see how it can benefit many aspects of my life.

My issue is, I'm unsure what I should focus on first. I've concluded that if I'm to get anywhere, I need to know a programming language. From what I've read, Python seems a great place to start. Fairly simple compared to other languages, many applications and teaches you the general syntax required to learn other languages easier. I've settled on learning this through the "Python Programming MOOC 2026" course offered by the University of Helsinki.

Well, what I am wondering is, should I just start learning Python and assume I'll pick up the essentials of computing/hacking as I learn? Should I supplement the course with something? There are many computing terms I do not understand, aspects that fall outside of programming. I'm also unsure of what topics are most important to learn for anyone wanting to be proficient at computing, and which topics can be ignored unless seeking to specialize.

I don't want to do anything crazy, but I DO want to understand the terms, ideas, tools and topics generally spoken about here. I want to be able to keep up and contribute, not just be a passive-learner who lets 90% of the info go over their head. I have the conviction and time to get good at this, but I need clear direction and structure, so if anyone could provide a bit of that, I'd be extremely grateful. Any reassurance or anecdotes on the beginning of your journeys would also be nice!

Thanks guys :)

Find something that interests you. What do you like. In the end its going to become a hobby for you and you will be doing it quite often so find something that you enjoy doing.