



Don't forget to read the [Project Brief Guide](#) before selecting your topic!

## Topic 3: Learning a new skill

*Recommended if you prefer a straightforward project topic*

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### Background

Whether it's something as serious as a formal education in law or as delightful as learning how to solve a Rubik's cube in under 30 seconds, there will always be people who are interested in learning something new.

People learn lots of new things for different reasons. These reasons can encompass physical, mental, and emotional growth. Ultimately, learning something new can help a person achieve personal or professional growth. The process of learning often involves choosing **what to learn, how to learn it, and measuring one's progress.**

If you're interested in skill and knowledge building, habit-forming, tracking progress, or socializing/applying what's been learned, this may be the topic for you.

## Quick Start

Once you've chosen this topic:

We first recommend spending up to 30 minutes jotting down some things you've learned in the past 6 months. Was there a skill or two you learned that gave you a strong sense of accomplishment? Spend the next 30 minutes mapping out your learning process. You can visualize with quick sketches, describe it through writing, or use any other method that is comfortable for you.

These could be related to:

- Learning goals you created
- Resources you used to learn this new skill (books, classes, apps, etc.)
- Tools or habits that helped you stay on track with your progress
- Ways you've shared and/or applied what you learned

Next, let's think about how your experience can apply to future users. Start defining what learning the skill means to **you**. Next, think of how **others** might define it differently. Do they want to develop a new skill for a side gig, pursue a general interest, or foster a new habit? How might this affect what a "skill" means to them?

Together with this research, refer to the following questions. They should help you generate ideas for narrowing down this topic and starting your research from the users' point of view.



As you uncover more insights into a problem users want solved, your ideas might change to better suit your project and interests later on — **this is normal.**

### Finding a skill to learn

The starting point for most people learning a skill is to *find* what they want to learn.

- Why might they want to learn a new skill?
- What research might they carry out before deciding to take up a new skill?
- What is motivating them to learn a new skill?
- Is the new skill related to their current interests or is it out of their comfort zone?
- Why might they decide to learn one skill over another?
- What timeline do they have to learn this new skill?
- How might they see themselves applying the new skill?

### Process of learning

Once an individual decides what to learn, the next step is *making progress*.

- What resources help them achieve their learning goals?
- How might they measure progress?
- Do they prefer to learn on their own or in a group setting? Why?
- How do they stay motivated to continue building on their new skill?

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What aspects of this process keep them engaged and committed (eg. accountability)?</li> <li>• What might they be feeling and thinking during this learning process?</li> </ul> |
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| Socializing and applying                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| <p>After reaching a level of mastery with the new skill, the individual might want to <i>share or apply</i> what they learned.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do they know they've fully learned the new skill?</li> <li>• How do they assess completion of their learning goals?</li> <li>• How might they build on this skill in the future?</li> <li>• How might they learn with others?</li> <li>• What medium might they use to share what they have learned?</li> <li>• Who might they share their new skills with?</li> <li>• How does the new skill enrich their life?</li> <li>• Where might they use this new skill?</li> <li>• What might they be feeling and thinking as they apply their new skills and knowledge?</li> </ul> |