



## *Computer Science at Home*

These days might be a good time to explore computer science. Here are a few ideas to get started. There are ideas for all grade levels in these resources and you might be surprised how fun this can be! I have some training in this and am happy to help if you get stuck! If you dig into this and have an interested student, I can find some more options, too.

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- <https://hourofcode.com/us/learn> From our friends at code.org, this website offers activities that are used during the annual Hour of Code in December. There are coding activities for all grade levels. The “pre-reader” designated activities are even good for our littlest littles. The activities may direct you to a different platform (Tynker, Kodable) where downloading an app might be an option, but as long as you get your student set up, they’ll have a good time exploring after they’re set. I have used Hour of Code with students since its inception, and it’s a great resource.
- Code Break, a live, weekly interactive classroom, including a weekly challenge. Tune in Wednesdays at noon. Learn more at [code.org/break](https://code.org/break).
- <https://scratch.mit.edu/> Scratch is a programming language developed for children at MIT. Impressive, huh? Children (ages 8-16+) can learn to program interactive media like stories, games and animations. These can be shared with others, though I think there is an option to do the activities and not share/save. Coding is done in blocks instead of in a programming language. A getting started video is here: <https://scratch.mit.edu/projects/editor/?tutorial=getStarted>
- <https://www.scratchjr.org/> Same as above but for the younger crowd (ages 5-7). Available as a free app.
- <https://nicerc.org/2020/03/nicerc-home/> From an organization called NICERC (National Integrated Cyber Education Research Center). They provide free curriculum in cyber, STEM and computer science to teachers. These activities (free for parents!) are a bit more “unplugged” than the Scratch and Hour of Code. Several require printing access or some simple materials. Good for activities that can be done together for most grade levels. I haven’t done any of these myself, but they look fun!