**Getting Started With Visual Studio Code and Copilot**

**Downloading Copilot, Visual Studio Code, and Python**

* A GitHub account is required to use Copilot.
  + Go to: <https://github.com/signup>
  + Go into your settings in GitHub and enable Copilot. GitHub is free for students.
* Install Python:
  + [www.python.org/downloads](http://www.python.org/downloads)
  + Download and install the latest version of Python (3.12.4 at the time of writing).
* Install Visual Studio Code:
  + <https://code.visualstudio.com/Download>
  + Select the main download for your Operating System (e.g., Windows Download or Mac Download).

**Introduction to Copilot and Visual Studio Code**

After successfully setting up Visual Studio Code and Copilot, complete the following steps:

1. Create a new file in Visual Studio Code.
2. On the first line, type:



The # sign at the beginning is crucial and should be included in what you type. It indicates a comment. Comments are not executable code; they are meant to provide a human-readable explanation of the code's functionality. This helps other software engineers understand the code. Nowadays, comments also serve to prompt Copilot. After writing a comment, Copilot offers suggestions.

1. To prompt Copilot to generate code, insert a return at the end of the line to move to a new line. Pause briefly, and you should see a suggestion appear. These suggestions will be in light gray italics until you accept them. Here is what your screen should look like:

A black background with green and orange text

Description automatically generated

Line 1 is the prompt we wrote.

Line 2 is the code created by Copilot.

1. You can run your program by clicking the play button in the upper-right corner of Visual Studio Code.
2. Congratulations! You wrote your first program using Copilot.