

# 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:

```
1 # output "Hello World" to the screen
```

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.

3. 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:

```
1 # output "Hello World" to the screen
2 print("Hello World") |
```

Line 1 is the prompt we wrote.

Line 2 is the code created by Copilot.

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