Introduction

Pair programming is a term that was coined by Kent Beck in the book “Extreme Programming : explained” from 1999.

It means that two people are working together in a certain fashion on one task using one computer.

Historically, there are several accounts where people work together on one computer and there was no need for naming it at that time, this was also before one computer for each person was a default.

This guide will cover the pair programming practice with some ideas for you to keep in mind and that can support you and your pairing experience

- Happy pair programming!

benefits

Staying focused : Two people pairing are less likely to be interrupted.

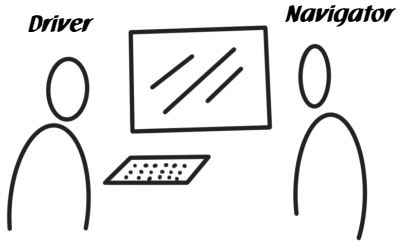
Fewer Erros: Constant code review leads to fewer bugs and to better software design.

Less knowledge and skill silos: Domain, system and product knowledge gets shared more frequently. Pairs learn from each other.

Better flow of work items: Less likely to get stuck and less wait time for feedback from others.

not guranteed

Classic Pair Programming



A pair consists of two people and two roles, the Driver and the Navigator. As a driver you have the keyboard and type the code needed for fulfilling the task at hand. As a navigator you support the driver with instant code review, software design, ideas and etc.. - Both need to communicate what is happening, what they have in their mind and what they are going to do next. So both are well informed.

Structure of a session

First two people agree to work together as a pair and choose a work item to work on.

Both read it and talk about what needs to be done, exchange information, and ideas and agree on the course of action to get it done.

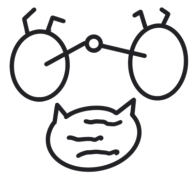
Agree on who will take on which role, then start and collaborate.

Take regular breaks and set a time when to stop.

After the session give feedback on what was good and what could be improved the next time. It is not about the work item, it is about how you have worked together as a pair.

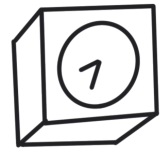
This way your pairing experience improves over time.

Positive impact



Discuss openly and find agreement on things you disagree on first.

Switch roles regularly. Choose a formal way to do so.



Time box your sessions and take regular breaks to recharge or to do administrative things.

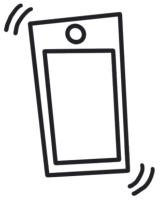
Celebrate your successes. Got that test green, finally refactored that one thing? Whatever, high five!

Negative impact

Don't blame or finger point. You are in this together and doing what you can.

Beware of being preoccupied. Take a break, recharge or do something else.

Beware of distractions. Turn off notifications and emails. Check on them at a later time.



Don't show and tell, it will disengage the other

References

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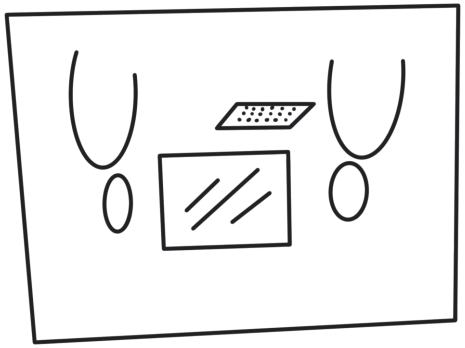
- a guide for a better experience -