

WWDC 2019: Meet Apple's youngest app developer, Ayush

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Ayush Kumar is only allowed 30 minutes of screen time a week.

And it's during that half hour, according to his dad, Amit, he squeezes in playing Minecraft and other games, watching YouTube videos and coding.

But the fourth grader is so good at coding, and enjoys it so much, dad mentioned a scholarship contest staged by Apple, which brings in students from around the world to attend its Worldwide Developers Conference, and Ayush accepted the challenge.

"I told him, 'You probably can't get in,'" says Amit, a self-described engineer and entrepreneur in the San Francisco Bay Area, "but you can try."

Dad extended the screen time for the weekends, and 10-year-old Ayush got in. From WWDC, Ayush sat down with U.S. TODAY for what was his second podcast interview. (The first was for his fourth-grade class.)

"I love coding," he says. "And I thought it would be an awesome opportunity to be here with developers and learn more about coding."

To get accepted by Apple, he created a physics-based app with "a catapult lever that you release to fire a projectile." It was inspired by a fourth-grade science project he created to explore his love of physics. The app has been submitted to the Apple App Store and is under review.

Ayush wanted to attend WWDC because "you get to learn about the new things about Apple and things that seem boring but fun to learn about. Things people don't think about, like privacy and security."

Ayush says he's been coding since he was 4, and his goal is to continue doing it as an adult.

"I'd like to be an app developer. I like cars, too. I'd like to make technology for cars," like working on the big screens that are the center of a Tesla. "I'll maybe start my own car company and be the lead of the tech for the car."

Asked to name a few favorite apps, he declines, as he doesn't own an iPhone. He uses the family iPad for playing games. "I don't like adulty things," he says.

At the WWDC, Apple lays out its latest software and vision for the future. For the past several years, Apple has been trying to hype app developers on making apps with augmented reality, mixing live action with animation. This year, Apple tripled down on its bet, updating its AR tools with new software.

Ayush is sold. "I really want to code with that," he says.

AR hasn't taken off yet because it's "really new and hard to use" for creating apps, he says. "You have to have a [flat surface](#) and everything has to work out just right." The new tools—which Apple calls ARKit 3—make it easier, he says.

Apple's Scholarship program offers young app makers a free WWDC19 ticket (which go for over \$1,000) and lodging for the conference, as well as one year of membership in the Apple Developer Program.

The minimum age to enter is 13, but for Ayush, Apple made an exception.

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