

# Tech News

## Last Tech Club of the Year

Today is the last Tech Club meeting of the school year (my class at UCSC has their final exam next Tuesday).

## Robogames in San Francisco

On June 15–17 Fort Mason in San Francisco is hosting Robogames, which is billed as the world's largest robot competition. They are expecting over 500 robots competing in categories like wrestling, stair climbing, basketball, combat (1, 3, 12, 30, 60, 120, 220, and 340 pound categories), sumo, robot soccer, and so forth. There are 72 competitions listed on the postcard.

More information can be found at  
<http://RoboGames.Net>

## Summer

Over the summer I expect the Tech Club kids to continue playing with scratch, creating animations, games, dances, ... . If you post your games on the web at [mit.scratch.edu](http://mit.scratch.edu) and put them in the Spring Hill Tech Club Gallery (<http://scratch.mit.edu/galleries/290>), the rest of us will be able to see what you've done. I'd particularly like to see some "name" animations for the Names Gallery (<http://scratch.mit.edu/galleries/293>)—there are 20 projects in that gallery, but only one (Abe's and mine) from Spring Hill.

If your parents want to get you away from the computer, try some of the projects from the Exploratorium Snack site:

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/snackintro.html>

These can be a lot of fun and are not too difficult to set up. Several of the Family Science Night projects came from this site.

If the parents want to send you to camp, the idTech camp at UCSC has flash animation and video game creation camps that are still open. Several of the Tech Club kids are at a point where they could benefit from these classes. (Note: I have no experience with idTech, but from what I have heard of them, they seem pretty good.) <http://www.internaldrive.com/>

If your taste runs more to theater than to programming, there are excellent day camps being offered by West End Studio Theater ([wetheater.com](http://wetheater.com)). These are the same instructors who have been teaching for Pisces Moon—they are creating a new nonprofit to concentrate just on kids' theater classes. They have some

technical production (lights, scenery, sound) and script writing workshops, as well as circus arts and the usual play productions. Abe will be doing several productions with them this summer.

## Next year

There will be Tech Club next year, most likely on Thursdays after school. We'll have a new crop of 4th and 5th graders to teach scratch and other fun tech stuff to. I'll expect those with more experience to help out the newer techies.

## Tutorials: teaching scratch to others

If you do find yourself having to teach someone else (like a parent or a sibling), you might find some of the tutorial material on the scratch website useful. The scratch community is also creating a number of new materials, including kid-produced ones. You can contribute to this effort by creating very small programs that clearly illustrate how to do specific useful tasks. The thread "useful demos of scratch features and functions" is collecting projects that illustrate particular programming tricks

<http://scratch.mit.edu/forums/viewtopic.php?pid=2518>

Look at the scratch forum for the topic "scratch tutorials" under "Educators"

<http://scratch.mit.edu/forums/viewtopic.php?id=563>

for more information about tutorials by kids, and for a pointer to

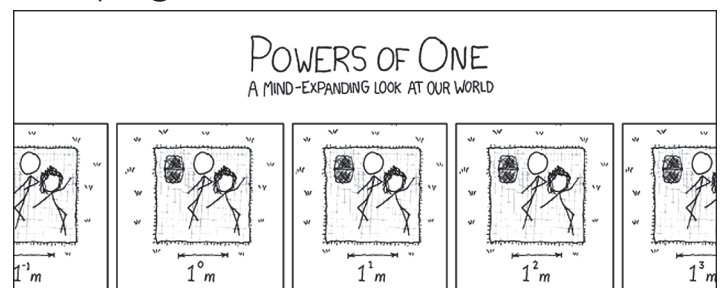
<http://www.redware.com/scratch/>

a set of tutorials in scratch written by one user.

## Contact me

If you find something interesting this summer that we should do in Tech Club, send me email at

[karplus@soe.ucsc.edu](mailto:karplus@soe.ucsc.edu)



If this cartoon (from <http://www.xkcd.com/c271.html>) seems a bit confusing, you may want to visit [www.powersof10.com](http://www.powersof10.com) to see what it is a parody of.