

Introduction to Programming
Using Perl and CGI
Third Edition

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Computers are fast, powerful, and inexpensive. They make great slaves. They are also very stupid. The challenge is how to instruct them. Programming is the process of telling computers how to act.

This book teaches the fundamentals of programming.

The book is designed to support an introductory (100-level) college course that meets for about forty hours during a semester or quarter.

We do not assume any prior programming knowledge or experience.

When you complete this course, you will be writing useful programs that run on the desktop or on the Web, and you will know whether programming is fun for you and worth pursuing with bigger projects and/or additional languages.

Contents

0	Preface	9
I	Basics: Output	16
1	Hello, World!	17
2	Online Basics	27
3	Passwords	34
II	Basics: Input	37
4	Input: Hello, Joe!	38
5	Syntax and Semantics	43
6	Simple Variables	51
7	Testing	61
8	Going Online	63
9	Going Dynamic	75

<i>CONTENTS</i>	3
10 Online Input	79
III Basics: Math	88
11 Basic Calculation	89
12 Names, Parsing, Scanning	92
13 Style	96
14 Instruction Sequences	101
15 Crafting Formulas	105
16 Debugging	108
17 Games and Projects	111
18 Unit Test: Basics	113
IV Decisions: Numeric	118
19 The If Statement	119
20 Numeric Comparison	121
21 Two Alternatives: The Else Statement	124
22 Block Structure	127
23 Programming Style	129
24 Many Alternatives: Elsif	135

<i>CONTENTS</i>	4
V Decisions: Other	138
25 And, Or, Xor, Not	139
26 String Comparison	143
27 Online	151
28 Remainder	158
29 Precedence	161
30 Unit Test: Choices	166
VI Loops: Repeated Actions	172
31 Counting	173
32 While Loops	179
33 For Loops	187
34 Self-Modification	190
35 Games and Projects	195
36 Unit Test: Repeated Actions	200
VII Arrays: Repeated Data	205
37 Lists	206
38 Arrays (Indexed)	211

<i>CONTENTS</i>	5
39 Walk the List	214
40 Split and Join	216
41 Online	218
42 Unit Test: Repeated Data	222
VIII Subroutines: Organizing	227
43 Subroutines	228
44 Arguments	238
45 Global versus Local	242
46 Code Factoring	246
47 Black Boxes	249
48 Games and Projects	252
49 Unit Test: Organizing	255
IX Hashes	259
50 Hashes	260
51 Games and Projects (Hashes)	264
X Persistence: Database	269
52 State: Persistent Data	270

<i>CONTENTS</i>	6
53 HTTP Cookies	276
54 Database	280
XI HTML Tips and Tricks	294
55 Web Design and Development	295
56 HTML Tips and Tricks	296
XII Web Inputs	297
57 Web Form Data	298
58 Fragile versus Robust	305
59 Hidden Fields	314
60 Forms: Web-based Input	318
61 Regular Expressions	327
62 JavaScript	336
63 Games and Projects	346
XIII Complex Programs	351
64 Complex Programs	352
65 Nested Loops	353
66 Games and Projects (Loops)	359

<i>CONTENTS</i>	7
67 Random Numbers	363
68 Unit Test: Complex	370
XIV Publishing	373
69 Web Hosting	374
70 Backups	376
71 HTML	378
72 Extracting CGI Inputs	384
XV Projects	385
73 Projects	386
74 Hangman Project	388
75 Hotter, Colder	395
XVI Appendices	398
A Answers to Selected Exercises	399
B Text Editor Recommendations	427
C Formatted Printing: printf	429
D File I/O	442
E Patterns	446

<i>CONTENTS</i>	8
F The True Meaning of Solution	452
G Binary Numbers	455
Index	463

Chapter 0

Preface

Contents

0.1	To the Teacher	10
0.2	To the Student	10
0.3	Why Programming?	11
0.4	Why Perl?	11
0.5	Coverage	12
0.6	Advanced Material*	13
0.7	Installing Perl on Your Personal Computer	13
0.7.1	Microsoft	13
0.7.2	Mac / Linux	13
0.8	Suggestions?	14
0.9	Exercises	14

“How difficult it is to teach those who have no experience, the things of which they have not any knowledge by their senses!” - William Harvey (1578-1657)

This book is available free online at <http://ipup.doncolton.com/> in a PDF version.

The rest of this chapter looks at the philosophy underlying the course.

Most people will want to skip ahead to chapter 1.

0.1 To the Teacher

It is difficult to help a new student over the hurdles of learning programming for the first time. You need examples. You need explanations. You need challenges. You need motivation. But mostly you need the right mix for your student body.

I was not finding it in the books I was using. Students would buy the books that I required and then read them as little as possible.

Maybe it's a mistake, but I decided to try to meet the students where they were at rather than expecting them to meet me where I am. I decided to give them a book that pretty much gives them exactly what they need, no more, no less.

But that is impossible. Every student is different.

But I adopted the approach of leading them through specific tasks that open their eyes to bigger possibilities. Each activity includes specific things to do as well as talk about why it is important and how it fits in with everything else. It also introduces the vocabulary they will need to seek out more information on their own.

I did conclude that students are very skillful at using Google® and other search engines to find examples and answers on the web.

That was a liberating conclusion. It helped me keep the book to 450 pages instead of running on to a thousand that the students would not read anyway. Probably 450 is too big also.

0.2 To the Student

This book teaches you how to program.

It explains enough of the “how” that you can do various things, but it does not dig deeply into the intricate details of what you can do. Those details are an important study. There are almost endless websites and blogs where you can see examples of this or that. I find them very valuable. Use them. You will gain new insights. I know I do.

But the key question for this book is **why**. I illustrate with situations and examples that try to motivate different topics. I try to answer the question, “Who cares?” In the end, I hope that you will come away with a better

concept of what is behind the scenes that makes each topic interesting or useful, and not merely a skill at doing something that you are not yet sure you care to do.

This is probably your first programming class. You may be taking it simply because you have to. It's a required class. I hope to win you over into seeing how programming can be a fun and useful tool in your life.

0.3 Why Programming?

Computers are fast, powerful, and inexpensive. They make great slaves. The challenge is how to instruct them. Programming is the process of telling computers how to act.

This book teaches the fundamentals of programming. When you complete this course, you will be writing useful programs that run on the desktop or on the Web, and you will know whether programming is fun for you and worth pursuing with bigger projects and/or additional languages.

The book is designed to support an introductory (100-level) college course that meets for about forty hours during a semester or quarter.

We do not assume any prior programming knowledge or experience. We do assume you have math skills to do simple algebra (solve $x - 7 = 3$) and that you have access to a computer with Perl installed. Section 0.7 (page 13) explains how to install it.

0.4 Why Perl?

Many students will only learn one computer language. Perl seems like a good choice because it is well known, powerful, portable, typical, well supported, and freely available.

Well Known: By this I mean employers have heard of it. It has been in many top-ten lists of popular programming languages. It has been around since 1987 (four years before **Linux**).

Powerful: By this I mean useful programs can be written fairly easily. It has been called the Swiss Army Knife (or even Swiss Army Chainsaw) of programming languages.

Portable: By this I mean programs written for the **Linux platform** will also work on **Microsoft** or **Macintosh** and vice versa. In fact, Perl programs run on dozens of computer platforms.

Typical: By this I mean that skills in Perl transfer well to other programming languages such as PHP and Java. It is very similar to many of the languages that were invented after it.

Well Supported: By this I mean there is a large user community that is actively helping each other and there are large collections and archives of program libraries available to everyone.

Freely Available: By this I mean it can be easily found and downloaded from the Internet without paying any extra money or licensing fees.

0.5 Coverage

I wrote this book for two main purposes. (1) Cover the material I think is most important when learning to program, and do it in the order I want to cover it. (2) Give students a free alternative to buying a dead-tree edition of a textbook.

This book covers the minimum information needed to pass the class plus some introduction to other material frequently asked by students. This book is not intended to teach every topic in depth. Instead, it touches on the main points. The Internet of today is a huge and wonderful resource, powered by those very same computers we seek to tame through programming. We assume the students of today are skillful at using search engines and other tools to get in-depth answers on topics of interest to themselves, once they know the topics exist and what they are called.

Some students will find that having a dead-tree edition of some book on Perl is a great investment. You may not have the Internet while traveling. You may not want to curl up with a computer when you could curl up with a book. (Okay, maybe very few people would want to curl up with a book about computing.) If you are a book kind of person, you are encouraged to find one you like and read it. Or print this one out.

0.6 Advanced Material*

I get questions in class. Most of the time they are about things everyone in a 100-level class should understand. Sometimes the questions are more advanced. I answer them but I do not expect everybody to understand. Some of that material has made its way into this book. Maybe too much.

Advanced sections are marked in several ways. First, larger sections that stand alone are placed in the appendices.

Second, smaller sections that really belong with other things are given a star in their section title. Normal Distribution* would be an example of that. I may talk about it when I talk about random numbers, but I do not expect everybody to understand or even be interested.

Third, individual paragraphs may contain wording to let the reader know that the material is advanced and can be skipped.

0.7 Installing Perl on Your Personal Computer

Search for Perl on the web. A good search string might be “install perl” or “download perl”. You can find lots of good advice and tutorials on this simple process.

0.7.1 Microsoft

For **Microsoft** PCs, ActiveState.com has a nice and free Perl distribution. Download it to your PC and run the installer. Perl program file names must end in `.pl`.

0.7.2 Mac / Linux

For **Macintosh** and **Linux**, Perl is probably already installed. Get a terminal window and type `which perl` to see if anything is installed.

To run your programs, the easy way is to type:

```
perl abc
```

where abc is replaced by your program name. It does not have to end in `.pl`.

The other way, which we will see in later chapters, and which is required when we start writing CGI programs for the web, takes more steps.

(a) Put a line at the top of your program that looks something like this:

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
```

where the `/usr/local/bin/perl` part is replaced by whatever you got when you did the `which perl` command.

(b) Change the permissions on your file to **0755**. (There are other numbers that will also work, but if you don't know something better to use, use **0755**.) You can do it like this:

```
chmod 0755 abc
```

where `abc` is replaced by the name of your program.

(c) Start your program by typing this command:

```
./abc
```

where `abc` is replaced by the name of your program. There are ways to be able to leave off the `./` part. These involve modifying the path in your environment. That's beyond the scope of this book, but you should know that it is possible.

0.8 Suggestions?

This is the third edition. That means there have been changes, and pretty major ones from the previous edition.

Large parts of the book have been stable, with only minor changes over the past many months. But I still consider this book to be a work in progress. If you find things I could improve (maybe typographical errors or things that are unclear to you), please let me know. Sometimes I can rework a paragraph, page, section, or chapter so it will help you and others understand things better.

0.9 Exercises

Exam Question 1 (p.399):

Is Wikipedia a good source of information about programming?

Acceptable Answer:

yes

Exam Question 2 (p.399):

Is Google a good source of information about programming?

Acceptable Answer:

yes

Exam Question 3 (p.399):

What year was Perl invented?

Acceptable Answer:

1987

But I don't really care. It was a long time ago. That's all you need to know.

Exam Question 4 (p.399):

What are the top ten programming languages?

Acceptable Answer:

Ask Google.

Star indicates advanced material. Advanced means I usually do not expect a typical 100-level student to know it, but I know what some students will be interested in it.

Unit I

Basics: Output

Chapter 1

Hello, World!

Contents

1.1	Our First Program	17
1.2	Making it Run (MS Windows)	18
1.3	Command Line Interface (CLI)	18
1.4	Making it Run (Mac / Linux)	19
1.5	Making it Wait	19
1.6	The Language of Computers	21
1.7	Narrow-minded Wording	22
1.8	Pseudo Code	23
1.9	Exercises	24

Let's get started at programming. We will write a program first and talk about it later.

1.1 Our First Program

Our first programming task is to get the computer to say hello.

Here is the first version of the program. On **Microsoft** Windows you can use a text editor like Microsoft **Notepad** (or Notepad++) to key in the program. Save it as “hello.pl”.

```
print "Hello, World!";
```

That's it. One line. In section 1.6 (page 21) we explain it in detail.

1.2 Making it Run (MS Windows)

We want to run our program. Let's assume we are using a **Microsoft** Windows computer (operating system) and that Perl is installed. Then we can use a text editor like **Microsoft** Notepad to key in the program and save it. When we save it, the file name must end with `.pl` (dot pee ell). That ending indicates that the file is a Perl program. Some computers will also allow `.perl`.

In case you don't have Perl already, section 0.7 (page 13) talks about installing Perl on your computer.

Let's assume you save your program to your desktop. After saving your program you can run it by double-clicking it. The screen should flash briefly. What happened? The program ran. What did it do? It printed the words, "Hello, World!". Or rather, it opened a window (probably black), ran the program, displayed the words on the window, and then closed the window, all so fast that you could barely tell anything was happening.

There are a few things you can do to make the double-click work better, but generally we will not use the double-click. We will instead use the command line interface.

1.3 Command Line Interface (CLI)

When we double-click the program icon, we are using the **GUI** or Graphical User Interface to interact with our program.

Exam Question 5 (p.400):

What does GUI stand for?

Required Answer:

graphical user interface

There is another, older interface. It is called the Command Line Interface, or **CLI**. It is not as convenient as double-clicking, but when there is an error, it gives us more information.

Exam Question 6 (p.400):

What does CLI stand for?

Required Answer:

command line interface

Click on the Windows **Start** button.

Then click on the word **Run**.

Then type in **cmd** and press Enter.

A black window should open up. We will call it the “command window.” This is the **CLI** or Command Line Interface.

You can click and drag your program into the command window. When you drop it, you will see the “fully qualified” name of your command. To run it, just press Enter.

Instead of flashing briefly and vanishing, error messages will be displayed in your command window.

1.4 Making it Run (Mac / Linux)

We will do this from the command line. In Mac OS X it is called the “Terminal” window.

Within that window, we type **which perl** to make sure Perl is installed. It normally comes pre-installed on **Macintosh** and **Linux** computers. If we get a response, typically `/usr/bin/perl` or something like that, we are ready to use Perl. If we get no response, then we have to install Perl.

In case you don’t have Perl already, section [0.7](#) (page [13](#)) talks about installing Perl on your computer.

Assuming Perl is installed, type `perl myprog` to run your program, assuming you called it `myprog`. You can call it almost anything. You do not need it to end with `.pl`.

1.5 Making it Wait

This section is helpful if you are using the double-click method of running your program.

Let’s add another line to the program. This line is intended to make the

computer wait before closing the window. We will do this by preventing the program from ending too quickly.

```
print "Hello, World!";  
$wait = <STDIN>;
```

In this case our program has two statements. The first will print the words, “Hello, World!”. The second will request input. Since it is waiting for input, the window will stay open so we can see what it says.

Go ahead. Try it.

Making it Wait Temporarily

Let’s try one more thing before we move on. We can make the computer wait a certain amount of time before closing the window. We will do this by delaying the program from continuing.

```
print "Hello, World!";  
print "\n";  
sleep 10;
```

The `print "\n";` statement causes the computer program to print out the Hello, World! line. Without it, the computer may assume the line is incomplete and may wait until it knows the line is complete before printing. This waiting is called **buffering**. The `\n` causes the computer to **flush** the buffer.

The `sleep 10` statement causes the computer program to pause for ten seconds.

Save it and run the program by double-clicking it.

It should open a window, print the words, “Hello, World!”, and pause ten seconds, even if you press enter. (You can probably press control-C to break out of the program if you want to end it early.)

After ten seconds, the program will resume execution, finish running, and close the window.

1.6 The Language of Computers

The rest of this chapter is dedicated to helping you with a very important concept: why computers don't understand you.

```
print "Hello, World!";
```

Computers take your meaning from the exact words you write. In this case, the computer will recognize your statement as having three parts. The first part is the word `print`. It recognizes this part, called a **token**, by the fact that it is an unbroken series of letters. Once it has identified the token it can look it up to find out what it means. The computer, or rather Perl, has a pre-defined meaning that goes with the word `print`.

The second part of the statement is `"Hello, World!"`, recognized in this case by the fact it starts and ends with a double quote mark. When a token starts with a quote mark (either single or double), it continues until the matching quote mark is found. The quote mark is called a **delimiter**. Everything between is the token. This special kind of token is called a **literal**, or a **string** of letters. Notice that this token has a space in it.

The third part of the statement is the semi-colon at the end. It has a pre-defined meaning of ending the statement, or more correctly, separating the statement from the next statement. In some languages semi-colons terminate statements. In Perl they separate statements. This means that the last statement does not need a semi-colon after it. (It is a good habit to put one there anyway, since if you add more lines later, it will need to be there.)

Let's look at the `wait` line from the example above.

```
$wait = <STDIN>;
```

`$wait` is just the name of a variable. We will use many variables in the future. This is the first one we have seen. Variable names (in Perl, in the simple case) are constructed from a dollar sign, followed by a letter, followed by zero or more letters and digits. In this case, the variable name is dollar sign and the four letters `w`, `a`, `i`, and `t`. Perl does not recognize any special meaning for those letters. It might as well have been `$xy2z0p` for all Perl cares. Using `$wait` is helpful to the programmer by suggesting the role played by that variable. It helps the program wait.

= (the equals sign) is the assignment operator. It tells Perl to put something into the variable on the left (that is, `$wait`).

`<STDIN>`, pronounced “ess tee dee eye en” or “standard in,” is the standard input channel. The `<>` part indicates an input channel and the `STDIN` part means standard input. Normally that would be the keyboard. “Standard out” is the screen. `$wait` did not mean anything special to Perl, but `STDIN` does mean something special.

When the program runs, this line will cause the computer to wait for the user (the human that is running the program) to type some input (or no input) and press Enter or Return.

1.7 Narrow-minded Wording

Computers don’t have common sense. They cannot guess your meaning. They have a very precise language. If you step outside their narrow abilities, your program will be rejected. More on that later.

Suppose I wrote this program. What would it do? What should it do?

```
Print "Hello, World!";
```

In this case the computer would parse three tokens just as before. (Parse means divide into parts. See chapter 12 (page 92) for more on parsing.) However, the first token would be `Print` which is not on the computer’s list of words it knows. You and I can look at it and decide it probably means `print` based on our own common sense. Someone could even program the computer to recognize `Print` as an alternate spelling for `print`. But at this point normally the computer would choke on our program and tell us that we have a syntax error. (We explain what syntax error means in chapter 5, page 43. For now, it means the computer is confused and does not understand what you typed.) There is a near-infinite number of ways we could write things so other humans would understand but the computer would not.

What about this one?

```
print "Hello, World!".
```

The computer will not understand the dot (also known as period or full stop) at the end of the line. That would be a syntax error. You or your friend

or your tutor may look at the line and understand exactly what you mean. They can even tell you that you need to change the dot to a semi-colon. Why can't the computer do that? Computers don't have common sense.

What about this one?

```
print Hello, World!
```

The computer will not understand the word Hello. The quotes are missing. (Picky, picky, picky. Get used to it.)

1.8 Pseudo Code

This was our first program.

```
print "Hello, World!";
```

It is written in a way the computer will understand. Humans can probably also understand it.

Here is another way of writing that same program.

```
Have the computer say "Hello, World!"
```

It is written in a way that the computer does not understand. It is intended for human understanding.

As we write computer programs, normally we start by writing the program in a way humans would understand but computers do not.

This type of writing is called **pseudo code**. Pseudo means false. It is false code because the computer does not understand it. Code is what the computer understands.

Exam Question 7 (p.400):

What does pseudo mean?

Acceptable Answer:

fake

We start by writing our thoughts. Later we translate them into the language of computers.

We may want to keep a record of our thoughts as part of the finished program. Here is what it might look like.

```
# Have the computer say "Hello, World!"  
print "Hello, World!";
```

The first line is a comment. It is introduced by the `#` symbol, usually pronounced **pound** or **hash** (also known as **hashtag**) but sometimes **sharp** or **fence** or even **tic-tac-toe**.

Lines that start with `#` are ignored by Perl but can be seen by the programmer. It is a good way to leave yourself a note.

The recommended way to write a program is:

- (a) Write the pseudo code.
- (b) Convert the pseudo code into comments.
- (c) Insert the actual code after each comment.

1.9 Exercises

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

Vocabulary words are sprinkled throughout each chapter. They are also indexed at the back of the book. Certain vocabulary words are so important that you should actually memorize them. This brief list identifies those words.

Exam Question 8 (p.400):

What is buffering?

Acceptable Answer:

waiting for more data

buffering: We like computers to be efficient. One thing we often have them do is wait to print things until they know the line is complete so they can send one big message instead of lots of little messages. This is called “buffering” the output. To get the buffer printed, you need to find a way to **flush** it. One easy way is to end the line by printing “`\n`”. Usually (but not always) another way is to ask for input. There are also ways to explicitly flush the buffer.

A similar example is when you watch streaming video (such as YouTube or Netflix). Buffering prevents the start and stop that may happen if you immediately start watching as the video is received. If transmission is too slow, you might pause many times. To prevent that, often several seconds of material is preloaded before playback begins. This is called buffering.

Often the transmission is by printing, and the message is one line of text.

Exam Question 9 (p.400):

What does the “sleep 5” command do?

Acceptable Answer:

pause your program for 5 seconds

Exam Question 10 (p.400):

What command will pause your program for five seconds?

Acceptable Answer:

sleep 5

sleep: a command that causes your program to pause for some number of seconds before continuing. In these examples, we are using 5 seconds. You can specify a different number of seconds, of course.

Exam Question 11 (p.400):

What is a syntax error?

Acceptable Answer:

illegal wording

A syntax error is a mistake in the wording (grammar or vocabulary) of how the program is written. Often it is a missing semi-colon.

syntax error: a problem in grammar or vocabulary of how the program is written. The computer is confused and cannot figure out what the program is supposed to do. Another human might understand, but computers are typically very limited in their understanding.

For greater efficiency, printed lines are not sent to the screen until they are complete. Instead, they are buffered, awaiting more data. The line is complete when a “\n” is found.

This is similar to texting someone on your cell phone. You can type and make corrections but the text is not sent until you actually press the send key, or maybe if you enter the “newline” character.

Exam Question 12 (p.400):

What does the `print "\n";` command do?

Acceptable Answer:

sends the current print line

The command `print "\n";` tells Perl the current print line is complete and there is no need to buffer (wait) for more characters. It tells Perl to go ahead and print the line.

Exam Question 13 (p.400):

What does the `$wait = <STDIN>` command do?

Acceptable Answer:

Reading from STDIN causes your program to wait for input, preventing its termination.

Exam Question 14 (p.400):

In Microsoft Windows, what file name ending is used for Perl?

Required Answer:

.pl

Exam Question 15 (p.400):

What does `Print` do?

Acceptable Answer:

`Print` (upper case P) does nothing. `print` (lower case p) prints text. With a capital P it is an error.

Chapter 2

Online Basics

Contents

2.1 Using a Browser	28
2.2 Static Webpage	29
2.3 Putting Images on the Web	30
2.4 Adding Images to Webpages	30
2.5 Markup	31
2.6 Backup	31
2.7 Summary	32

Throughout this course we will do a number of programs “online.” By that we mean the programs will become part of the World Wide Web, available to people around the world.

In this very introductory chapter, we create a simple “static” webpage and put a picture on it. In chapter 8 (page 63) we will build on this foundation by writing programs that create “dynamic” webpages.

You will need a web account to do the activities of this chapter. You will need to know (a) your domain name, (b) your login name, (c) your password, and (d) how to get help.

Important Vocabulary: These are words worth memorizing. There are more at the end of the chapter.

web server: is a computer that hosts webpages and web-based programs.

Exam Question 16 (p.400):

What is a web server?

Acceptable Answer:

A computer that hosts webpages and web-based programs.

static: is something that does not change, as though it were frozen in time. It does not change “by itself.” For it to change, something must intervene, such as a human physically editing it.

Exam Question 17 (p.400):

What does static mean?

Acceptable Answer:

does not change by itself

Static means it does not change unless an outside force changes it.

The location of books in a library is static. They only move if someone moves them.

dynamic: is something that can change in response to things around it. It **does** change by itself. It is programmed in some way.

Exam Question 18 (p.400):

What does dynamic mean?

Acceptable Answer:

can change by itself

Dynamic means it can change without any outside force.

The location of geckos in my house is dynamic. They can move at their own discretion. Other things can influence them, such as the availability of food, but they can make the change all by themselves.

2.1 Using a Browser

Online we use a browser such as **Firefox**(tm) or **Microsoft Internet Explorer**(tm) to display a webpage. We see the results locally but the page itself lives someplace else.

The browser allows a human, called the **user**, to click on a **link** or type in a **URL** (universal resource locator, more properly called a **URI** for universal resource identifier).

Through a chain of events, the URL causes the server to find (or create) the

webpage content that the user will see. If the content is a static page, the server will simply find it and send a copy, plus some introductory (header) information, to the browser.

If the content is a dynamic page, the server will start a program. The program will create the webpage and give it to the server. The server will send the newly created webpage back to the user.

In either case, the browser then renders it as a webpage for the human that made the original request. Normally the browser does not know whether the page is static or dynamic.

2.2 Static Webpage

Let's assume your domain name is `doncolton.com`. Where you see it mentioned below, substitute your own information.

We will assume you are using cPanel® to access your account. If not, find the appropriate documentation.

Log in to your web host. Use the File Manager to navigate to your `public_html` directory.

We will create a folder for our work. We will assume it is called `ipup`.

In your browser, go to `http://doncolton.com/ipup/`. You should see a **404 error** because no web content exists yet.

In the File Manager click on Create Folder and key in `ipup`.

In your browser, go to `http://doncolton.com/ipup/`. You should see an empty directory. We are making progress.

Inside the `ipup` folder, create a file named **`index.html`**. Then edit the file so it consists of wording like, "Hi, I'm (Your Name Here). Welcome to my website."

(The name "`index.html`" is special. "`Index.html`" will probably not work.)

In your browser, go to `http://doncolton.com/ipup/`. You should see the webpage that you just created.

Congratulations. You have created a static webpage. Each time it is requested by a browser, the web server will find the page and transmit it to the browser.

2.3 Putting Images on the Web

There are two exciting reasons for doing online programs. One is that you can easily share your website with anyone in the world. Another is the ease with which we can display pictures.

In fact, far beyond simple pictures, the web gives us a great deal of control over how webpages appear. That is a subject for a whole course by itself, and is far beyond the scope of this present course. In this course we will give you just enough of the basics so you can start to catch the vision of what you can do. If you happen to know more about webpages, you are invited to use that skill, even though it is beyond the scope of this class.

In this section, we add a picture to your webpage.

First, acquire a digital picture. We will assume it is called `mypic.jpg`.

Use the File Manager to upload your picture. Put it in the same directory where your `index.html` file is located.

We should be able to see the picture by following this URL.

```
http://(your domain)/(directory)/(filename)
```

For example,

```
http://doncolton.com/ipup/mypic.jpg
```

2.4 Adding Images to Webpages

Now, add it to your `index.html` webpage by inserting the following line:

```

```

We should be able to see your revised webpage including the picture by following this URL.

```
http://(your domain)/(directory)/
```

Note: `src` stands for the word “source”. A common error is to type “scr” which suggests the word “screen” but that will not work.

2.5 Markup

The `` notation is called **markup**. Markup is the “M” in HTML, which stands for Hyper Text Markup Language. In this case, it tells the browser to insert your picture.

Pretty much all markup in HTML looks like `<...>`, where the `<` and `>` mark the start and end of the markup. They are called “angle brackets” but they are really just the same characters as are used for “less than” and “greater than” in mathematics. The `...` in the middle is replaced by the specific markup statements we want to include.

Markup gives the browser semantic (meaning) information about your webpage, and also style information for how to make the page appear to the person who is viewing it.

We will get more into markup in chapter 8 (page 63).

Chapter 71 (page 378) gives a bigger introduction to HTML. Because HTML controls the appearance of webpages, and there is a huge variation in what webpages need to be, many books have been written to help web designers achieve the look and feel they want. In this book we will only barely scratch the surface of this huge topic area.

2.6 Backup

You are just starting to develop your web programming skills. Over time you will develop a number of webpages and web programs. Some will be really good, and you will share them with friends or use them in a business.

They could all vanish in a moment.

Your web hosting provider could go out of business. They could be hit by a major fire or earthquake or flood. Or they could suspend your account because they think you violated one of their terms of service. Whatever. It could happen.

You could even accidentally delete them.

The bottom line is that you need to have a copy of all your files.

<http://www.worldbackupday.net/> has more.

Chapter 70 (page 376) goes into this in detail. However, at this point, just

remember that files can go missing. If that happened, would you care?

If you would care, make regular backups.

2.7 Summary

You have created a personal webpage and placed a picture onto it.

Important Vocabulary: These are words worth memorizing. There are more at the start of the chapter.

index.html: a standard file name for a webpage. When a URL refers to a directory (folder), the web server looks for an index file first. If it finds one, it will display it. Otherwise, it will generate an index and display it.

Exam Question 19 (p.400):

What is index.html?

Acceptable Answer:

webpage typical file name

markup: Markup tells the browser how to present the content of your webpage to the person who is viewing it. It includes the ability to insert pictures into webpages.

Exam Question 20 (p.400):

What does markup do?

Acceptable Answer:

tells browser how to present the content

img: a markup tag for identifying an image to be inserted into a webpage.

Exam Question 21 (p.400):

What HTML tag inserts a picture into a webpage?

Acceptable Answer:

img

user: the person that is looking at your webpage or running your program.

Exam Question 22 (p.400):

What is a user?

Acceptable Answer:

A person looking at your webpage or running your program.

link: something you click on, part of a webpage, which takes you from one page to another.

Exam Question 23 (p.400):

What is a link?

Acceptable Answer:

Part of a webpage. When you click it, you go to a new location.

URL: universal resource locator, more properly called a URI. It is the name by which a resource, such as a webpage, can be found on the world wide web.

Exam Question 24 (p.401):

What does URL stand for?

Acceptable Answer:

universal (or uniform) resource locator

URI: universal resource identifier, more commonly called a URL. It gives the path by which a resource, such as a webpage, can be found on the world wide web.

Exam Question 25 (p.401):

What does URI stand for?

Acceptable Answer:

universal (or uniform) resource identifier

Chapter 3

Passwords

Contents

3.1	Methods of Authentication	34
3.2	Creating a Password	35

3.1 Methods of Authentication

Computers facilitate access to resources. Before computers we dealt with humans, typically on a familiar basis. They knew us. We did not have to prove who we were when carrying out business. When you borrow \$5 from your friend, he probably does not ask to see your ID.

But when you ask for \$20 from the cash machine, it wants your ID card and your PIN number. Why is that? Because the computer does not know who you are.

Is it possible for you to give someone your bank card and have them get the \$20 from the cash machine? Sure, if you trust them. Give them your card. Tell them your PIN. Let them handle the transaction.

The purpose of the bank card and the PIN number is authentication. Anyone who has both those items will be presumed to have the right to use them.

The key to a door is typically a single token of authority.

The bank card and pin are two tokens that must be used together.

In general, a security token is something you are, something you have, something you know, or something you can do.

Things you **are** would include biometrics like finger prints and retina scans. It could include the length and shape of your fingers and toes. It could include the way you walk or the shape of your body. It could include your voice print.

Things you **have** would include keys, passports, driver's licenses, and ID cards.

Things you **know** would also be called "shared secrets." When I am trying to prove to you that I am me, I could tell you something that only you and I know. That would be evidence of my identity. The combination of a lock is a shared secret. The PIN number with your bank card is a shared secret.

Things you can **do** would include skills you can demonstrate, such as playing the violin or standing on one leg.

3.2 Creating a Password

Cracked: 11151982, 4glory, ALOHA, carlos, cheerio, daniel8, is351, surfer, marathon, monster, tevita

How do you pick a good password? And who cares?

There are many sources of password advice. This is a short summary that should help you pick a good password.

Hackers are constantly attacking web servers and other network resources in the attempt to "own" them so they can be used for sending spam, carrying out distributed denial of service attacks, or doing other bad things. Most days we are probed hundreds of times by hackers looking to break in. We do not want to become a victim.

To stay one step ahead of the hackers, on our departmental web hosting machine we run our own password hacking program to test all passwords for ease of break-in. If we break your password, we assume a hacker could too. So we warn you to secure your account better, and if you don't fix it we suspend your account to protect ourselves.

The cracked list above is a partial list of actual student-chosen passwords that were cracked by our password hacking program. Those would be examples of bad passwords.

Here are some rules for picking a good password:

* The key thing is that your password should be (a) easy for YOU to remember, (b) hard for someone who sees it to remember, and (c) hard for anyone to guess.

* Especially avoid dictionary words. These are the first things that hackers try. Dictionary is not limited to English.

* Avoid short passwords. Hackers use a process called “brute force” to simply try every possible password. Hackers can start with one-letter passwords, then two-letter passwords, and so on. Because computers are fast, they can break all short passwords, no matter what they are. Seriously, for an important password, it should be 12 characters or longer.

* I recommend that you use the initial letters of a phrase you can remember. For example, “It was the best of times. It was the worst of times” might become “iwtBotiwtWot”. (12 characters.)

* Modify your password by replacing some letters with digits or other special characters. For example, “iwtBotiwtWot” might become “1wtB0t1wtW0t” where we replace the “i” with a digit “1” and the letter “o” with a digit “0”.

* Here are some character swaps to get you thinking: A=4=@ B=%=8=6 E=3 G=6 I=1(one)=1(e1)=! K=1<=x O(oh)=0(zero) q=9 er=0r S=\$=5 T=7=+. Anything that looks graphically similar would work.

* Change your password if you think it has been discovered. Some places require passwords to be changed every six weeks or at some other set interval. I have seen no evidence that this improves security. Many users simply alternate between two passwords, as in Aloha1 and Aloha2. Others append the date to their password, as in AlohaJan, AlohaFeb, AlohaMar, etc. Is that really any more secure? Well, maybe a little. But a human that sees one password can probably figure out the next one.

Exam Question 26 (p.401):

What method do I recommend for creating a secure password?

Acceptable Answer:

initials of a phrase

Pick a phrase you can remember. Use the first letter from each word. Maybe change some letters into CAPITALS or digits or other symbols that remind you of the letter.

Unit II

Basics: Input

Chapter 4

Input: Hello, Joe!

Contents

4.1 Standard In	38
4.2 Line Breaks	39
4.3 NewLine	40
4.4 Exercises	41

Our second task is to make the computer say hello, calling the user by name.

4.1 Standard In

Here is the first version of the program.

```
print "What is your name? ";
$name = <STDIN>;
print "Hello, $name!";
```

We are familiar with most of this. The new part is the "Hello, \$name!" part.

Inside double quotes the dollar sign introduces the variable `$name` which will contain whatever the user typed on the previous line.

Type it in and run it.

4.2 Line Breaks

Notice that when you run it, if you type in `Joe`, the output will be like this:

```
What is your name? Joe
Hello, Joe
!
```

Strangely the `Hello`, and the name are on one line but the exclamation mark is on a different line. Why is that?

It turns out that the input, `<STDIN>`, returns everything that was typed, including the **enter** on the end of the line. When `$name` is printed as part of the literal, we get `J, o, e, enter`, in place of the `$name`.

We need to get rid of that pesky enter at the end of the line.

Fortunately Perl has a command for getting rid of enters at the ends of lines. It is called **chomp**. (Yeah, I think it sounds a little silly. These things happen.)

Exam Question 27 (p.401):

When should we use `chomp`?

Acceptable Answer:

Right after `STDIN`, and only then.

The more accurate (and complicated) version of the truth is that we should use `chomp` when the variable contains a string that ends with a newline ... **and** ... we plan to use that variable in a context where the newline would cause problems, like in a print statement.

The simplified rule is this: we always `chomp` right after `STDIN`, and never at any other time.

For example, if we just did some math and calculated a new value for some variable, say `$x`, we would never `chomp` `$x` because it does not have a newline on it.

One could probably cook up some obscure set of circumstances when `chomp` might be appropriate at another time, but it takes a real stretch of the imagination.

The simplified rule is this: we always `chomp` right after `STDIN`, and never at any other time.

Here is our new program:

```
print "What is your name? ";
$name = <STDIN>;
chomp ( $name );
print "Hello, $name!";
```

Here is the new result:

```
What is your name? Joe
Hello, Joe!
```

What would happen if we try this?

```
print "What is your name? ";
$name = <STDIN>;
chomp ( $name );
chomp ( $name );
chomp ( $name );
print "Hello, $name!";
```

Chomp only removes the enter if it is present. After the first chomp, the other chomps have no additional effect. The program will run the same as with one chomp.

There is a similar command called **chop**. It removes the last character, whether it was an enter or something else. After the first chop, the other chops continue to remove additional characters. A program with several chops will **not** run the same as with one chop (unless it runs out of data to chop).

Another thing: don't go overboard with **chomp**, throwing it everywhere in your program. The only place to put it is at or near the place that input is received. Don't use it on variables that you know will not have a newline at the end.

4.3 NewLine

We have an annoyingly large amount of variation on what should be a simple subject. Life has such moments. The concept is called **newline**.

Originally two printer control codes were created. Originally **carriage return** (**CR**, hex **0D**, binary 00001101, also `\r`, also the **return** key) repositioned the cursor (print head) to the start of the line. Originally **line feed** (**LF**, hex **0A**, binary 00001010, also `\n`, also **line break**, also the **enter** key) moved the cursor down a line.

They were nearly always used together as **CRLF**, (**0D0A**). Some people found this to be wasteful and redundant. Apple (**Macintosh**) shortened it one way. **Unix** (**Linux**) shortened it another way. **Microsoft** did not shorten it. This has resulted in a world of minor confusion.

Perl uses `\n` to stand for newline, which on Apple (**Macintosh**) equipment means what Apple wants, and on **Unix** it means what **Unix** wants.

You should be aware that these words are often used interchangeably and usually mean the same thing. If you get into data communications and networking, you will definitely learn more about this.

4.4 Exercises

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

newline: a special character that tells the computer to begin a new line on its output medium (usually a computer screen).

Exam Question 28 (p.401):

What is a newline?

Acceptable Answer:

A character that tells the computer to begin a new line of output.

string: zero or more characters of text.

Exam Question 29 (p.401):

What is a string?

Acceptable Answer:

zero or more characters of text

empty string: a string with no characters in it.

Exam Question 30 (p.401):

What is an empty string?

Acceptable Answer:

a string with no characters in it

chomp: a command that removes the last character from the contents of a variable, but only if it is a newline. When input is received from the keyboard, it generally ends with a newline. Usually the newline is not really wanted.

Exam Question 31 (p.401):

What does “chomp” do?

Acceptable Answer:

removes newline from the end of the contents of a variable

chop: a command that removes the last character from the contents of a variable no matter what it is. If the contents are freshly received input, the last character will be a newline. “chomp” is safer for removing such newlines.

Exam Question 32 (p.401):

What does “chop” do?

Acceptable Answer:

removes the last character from the contents of a variable

Exam Question 33 (p.401):

What is the difference between newline, line break, carriage return, line feed, CRLF, CR, LF, enter, return, and \n?

Acceptable Answer:

nothing

Well, almost nothing. The words are often used interchangeably and usually mean the same thing. Technically there are two control codes related to this. One is CR, code 13, hex 0D. The other is LF, code 10, hex 0A. Originally CR repositioned the cursor (print head) to the start of the line and LF moved the cursor down a line. Some people found this to be wasteful and redundant. They went with one or the other. This has resulted in a world of minor confusion.

Chapter 5

Syntax and Semantics

Contents

5.1	Communication	43
5.2	Semantics is Meaning	45
5.3	Do What I Mean, Not What I Say	45
5.4	Syntax is Wording	46
5.5	Common Symbols	46
5.6	Computers Are Stupid (But Fast)	49
5.7	Key Points	49
5.8	Exercises	50

Programming is difficult for one main reason. Computers don't think the way people think. Therefore, computers cannot communicate the way people communicate. Although we can understand a process perfectly, and can do it ourselves, and can teach other people to do it, we still need a special approach to get the computer to do it. This chapter examines the question of why that is true and how to successfully write programs.

5.1 Communication

How do we learn to communicate?

Babies learn to talk. We have all done it. We were babies. Now we talk. How did it happen?

My theory is that basically we are able to learn because we can feel what we think other people are feeling. Hunger. Anger. Fear. Exhaustion. We map their words and gestures to those feelings to give them meaning. Whatever words our mothers say when they hold us and smile and smother us with kisses, those are good words. They must be. It is the very human-ness we share that gives us the ability to put ourselves in someone else's shoes and guess what's going on. Essentially, we are born with that foundation.

Scientists tell us that when one human becomes aware of another human a certain part of the brain jumps into action. It is a very reliable effect seen in fMRI scans (Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging). The medial prefrontal cortex, known as the social cognition area of the brain, is strongly connected to figuring out what other people are thinking and intending. Computers have no such response.

I tell a story about my son, now grown up with several children of his own. When he was small he approached me in the kitchen. He had an empty glass. He said, "I want taste." I knew immediately what he wanted based on things that recently happened. He wanted soda pop. Why did he call it taste? I think it is because someone asked him, "Do you want a taste?", and then gave him a sip. Oh. That must be "taste." That would be a good word to remember. That is how his vocabulary was growing. Sure, he got it wrong, but he was making a guess based on what he thought the other person meant. It was a guess. It was actually a pretty good guess.

Most of the guesses we make turn out to be right. Sometimes they are wrong. Sometimes they are so wrong that it is funny. But most of the time they are right or at least close enough.

Another son, maybe about three years old at the time, was standing on a chair at the kitchen table one day. A bug landed on the table. I turned to my son and said, "Don't eat the bug." He looked puzzled and said, "What?" I repeated, "Don't eat the bug." He thought a bit longer, apparently confused, and then repeated back, "What?"

He understood completely each of the words I had used. What he did not understand is why I would tell him that. He had no intention of eating the bug. So what I said did not make any sense to him. He decided he must not have heard me correctly. So he asked for clarification.

Have you ever taken something too literally and gotten the annoyed response, "Oh, you know what I mean!"?

Read some children's books on Amelia Bedelia by Peggy Parish for fun

examples of a maid who takes things too literally.

5.2 Semantics is Meaning

The word **semantics** signifies the meaning of a thing. If I wave a stick at you and appear to be angry, you may take it as a threat. You are looking at the semantics: what did I probably mean. Or if I seem angry with you and make a hand gesture you have never seen before, you may interpret it as an insult. If I seem upset at you but I say, “I love you too,” you may take it as sarcasm.

Meaning is very powerful. Somehow just by being human, we seem to get the meaning in lots of situations, even if a language is used that we were not familiar with.

I assert that humans understand by looking for a reasonable interpretation of what they see or hear. I assert that humans overlook the exact words if the meaning seems to be different.

5.3 Do What I Mean, Not What I Say

Humans can make up rules that are flawed.

In about 1987 I was driving in Massachusetts. I had studied the official driver’s license study guide, which as I recall said that when an emergency vehicle was approaching, you were supposed to pull over, off the main part of the road. I was stuck in traffic. An ambulance was coming toward me from behind. So I pulled off the road. Actually, it turns out the ambulance was driving on the edge of the road. (I may have known that. I don’t remember.) My actions probably slowed them down. I was following the written rules as I had seen them in the driver’s manual. But the intention of the law was, “Get out of the way.” And that is exactly what I did not do. The written rule was wrong. I should have followed the spirit of the law instead of the letter. I felt stupid.

In 1997 I visited a website for a school that I was considering working at. At the bottom of the home page it had a link to some acceptable use rules. I was curious so I followed the link. In some legalistic terms it said, “You can visit our website, but you can’t download anything.” Well, duh. How exactly do you visit a website without downloading anything? Narrowly

construed, just by looking at their rules I was already violating their rules. So I decided they must not mean precisely what they say. I had to make my best guess about what they had meant. I ended up assuming they had a different definition of download than me. I went ahead and looked at the rest of their website without feeling any guilt.

These examples show that humans can easily make up rules that are flawed if taken too literally. Fortunately, as humans, we naturally attempt to figure out what was meant by the rules. Blindly following the wording of the rules is not always the best approach, and is often considered to be silly.

5.4 Syntax is Wording

Legal contracts are not much fun to read unless you are a lawyer. Maybe not even then. I have carefully read a number of contracts including some of those “click to accept” licenses on software. The level of precision is annoyingly tedious. They are not much fun to read.

Why are they written that way? Because in a court of law **semantics** (meaning) depends on **syntax** (wording). If you are arguing about something, it is probably because you have different opinions about what the contract means. At that point we turn to a lawyer or judge to tell us both what it means. Get it in writing. The point is to protect yourself when the other person does not agree with your position.

Lots of communication is based on common sense. Maybe almost all of it. When it is based on exact wording, the going gets tough.

5.5 Common Symbols

Amid all the syntax, computer programming uses a variety of symbols. Many of these have common names that are familiar. Some have names that are common in the programming field but are not familiar. Right here we will introduce them to you. Later we will call them by their familiar names and expect you to know which symbol we mean.

Okay, you don’t have to actually memorize them right now. Just remember that we introduced them and if you run into a word you don’t know, look here or in the index for an explanation.

Hopefully most of them are familiar.

star means `*` and is more properly called **asterisk**. It is commonly used in formulas to mean multiplication. It is commonly used in regular expressions to mean zero or more.

Exam Question 34 (p.401):

What is the multiplication operator?

Required Answer:

`*`

plus means `+`. It is commonly used in formulas to mean addition. It is commonly used in regular expressions to mean one or more.

paren means `(` or `)`. They are more properly called **parentheses** (plural) or **parenthesis** (singular). The `(` is also called **left paren**, **open paren**, and **opening paren**. The `)` is also called **right paren**, **close paren**, and **closing paren**. They are commonly used to delimit or surround elements, especially in formulas.

slash means `/` and is more properly called **virgule**. Also called **forward slash**. It is commonly used in formulas to indicate fractions (like 1/2) or division. It is also commonly used in regular expressions as a delimiter.

Exam Question 35 (p.401):

What is the division operator?

Required Answer:

`/`

backslash means `\` as distinguished from **slash**. It is commonly used as an escape character to indicate that the character that follows has its alternate meaning.

colon means `:`. It is also commonly used in emoticons like `:)`.

semi-colon means `;`. It is commonly used to separate statements. It is also commonly used in emoticons like `;-)`.

hash means `#` and is more properly called **octothorpe**. Also called **hashtag**, **pound**, **fence**, and **tic tac toe**. It is commonly used to introduce a comment. It is also used to introduce associative variable names (hashes).

amp means `&` and is more properly called **ampersand**. It is also called **and**, **pretzel**, and **treble clef**. It is commonly used to mean **and** in formulas. It is commonly used along with semi-colon as a special character

delimiter in HTML.

dollar means `$` and is also called **dollar sign**, and **currency sign**. It is used to introduce scalar variable names.

at means `@` and is also called **commercial at** and **at sign**. It is often used in email addresses. It is also used to introduce array variable names.

dot means `.` and is also called **point**, **here**, **period**, **full stop**, **decimal point**, and **decimal**. It is mostly used in numbers as a decimal point. It is also used to specify string concatenation. It is used in regular expressions to stand for any one character.

dash means `-` and is also called **hyphen** and **minus**.

pipe means `|`. It is commonly used to mean **or** in formulas. It is also called **broken pipe**.

tilde means `~`. It is commonly used in `=~` for regular expressions.

bang means `!` and is also called **exclamation mark**. It is commonly used to mean **not**.

shebang means `#!` and is also called **hash bang**. It is commonly used to introduce a script in **Linux** and **Unix**.

brace or **curly brace** means `{` (left or opening) or `}` (right or closing). They are also called simply **curly**, **open curly**, or **close curly** when the context seems clear enough. They are commonly used to delimit or surround elements like **parens** are. They are very commonly used to surround a block of programming statements.

square bracket means `[` (left or opening) or `]` (right or closing). They are also called simply **bracket**, **open bracket**, or **close bracket** when the context seems clear enough. They are commonly used to delimit or surround elements like **parens** are.

angle bracket means `<` (left or opening) or `>` (right or closing). They are commonly used to delimit or surround HTML markup elements like **parens** are used to surround parts of a mathematical formula. They are also called simply **angle**, **open angle**, or **close angle** when the context seems clear enough. They are also commonly used in formulas for **less than** and **greater than**. They are commonly used in **email** addresses to surround the address, separate from the name of the person owning the address.

5.6 Computers Are Stupid (But Fast)

Well, here's the bottom line. You can write a program. It can be wrong. Still, I can understand it. The tutors can understand it. Your friends can understand it. You can understand it. But the computer does not.

Why not? Because computers are stupid. They have no common sense. They are forced to give a precise meaning to each word you type. The meaning is not based on what they think you intended. It is based on exactly what you said.

(Well, strictly speaking, there are some computers that try to understand what you mean in ways similar to how humans understand. They are still highly experimental and not very efficient. The common, ordinary computers we use and for which we write programs almost never go the extra mile to understand us. It's not expedient. The cost is too great. *Maybe* someday in a future Star Trek kind of world they will understand as we do.)

This is the main thing that makes programming difficult. Computers do not understand us the way other humans do. I suspect they never will, at least not by the end of this semester.

The whole semester will be consumed in me teaching and you learning how to communicate what is in your mind to a machine that does not understand what you want.

Because despite the fact that computers are stupid, they are also very fast, very reliable, and very cheap (compared to people). They don't call in sick or take vacation. And with some programming skill, many interesting tasks can be broken down into simple steps that computers can perform. For these reasons, even though computers are pretty stupid they are still very popular.

The art of programming is to convert useful activities into simple steps that a computer can perform.

5.7 Key Points

Semantics: Humans understand each other based on the most likely semantic interpretation of the words involved. If the words don't seem to make sense, humans will search for alternate meanings until something does make sense.

Syntax: Computers understand us based on syntactic (grammatical) interpretation of the words involved. Computers have no idea whether the words make sense or not. Computers are just blindly obedient.

Legal **contracts** are an example of human communication that must be syntactically correct in case humans decide they disagree on the meaning. But even in the case of contracts, the syntax may be imperfect. In those cases lawyers and judges interpret the contract to resolve what it means.

5.8 Exercises

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

semantics: the meaning or substance of things.

Exam Question 36 (p.402):

What is semantics?

Acceptable Answer:

the meaning of something

syntax: the expressed form of things. Especially the grammar that connects words together.

Exam Question 37 (p.402):

What is syntax?

Acceptable Answer:

the wording of something

Exam Question 38 (p.402):

Why is it difficult to give good instructions to a computer?

Acceptable Answer:

they do what you say, not what you mean

Human communication is based on common sense, directed by words. Computer communication is based on words alone because computers do not understand common sense.

Chapter 6

Simple Variables

Contents

6.1	What's Simple?	52
6.2	Variable Names	52
6.3	Putting Something Into a Variable	54
6.4	Printing a Variable	55
6.5	Concatenation	56
6.6	Calculating with a Variable	56
6.7	Use Meaningful Names	56
6.8	Summary	58
6.9	Exercises	58

Compare watching a DVD to playing a computer game. Both are highly visual. Both have sound. Both can be done for hours at a time.

But watching a DVD is the same every time you do it. Nothing you do will change what happens next. Playing a computer game is all about you being in control. Your main goal is to change what happens next.

Within the computer, when we print, “Hello, World”, it’s like watching a DVD. Every time we run the program, the same thing will happen. Maybe that’s good. But maybe we need more than that.

In order to print, “Hello Fred”, when talking to Fred, and, “Hello Joe”, when talking to Joe, we generally use a variable to hold the name of the person we are talking to. Then we print, “Hello \$name”, and the computer inserts the appropriate name.

This chapter provides the basics of working with simple variables. In Perl these are technically referred to as **scalar** variables. Later we look at lists (arrays), lookup tables (hashes), and databases.

6.1 What's Simple?

A simple variable holds one piece of information. Examples would be a number (3.1415) or a name (Fred). A series of characters is called a **string**. Strings can be very short (no characters at all) or very long (whole sentences, paragraphs, or books).

Note: many languages treat whole numbers, numbers with decimals, individual characters, and strings of characters as different types of data. They are. We will talk more about this in the database chapter. Perl and other scripting languages tend to simplify and use a single variable type for all of them.

6.2 Variable Names

This section talks about choosing a legal name for a variable. Beyond being legal, variable names should be meaningful. See section 6.7 (page 56) for style comments about using meaningful variable names.

In Perl, variable names are prefixed by a dollar sign (\$) that identifies the variable as simple (or more precisely, as a scalar). The dollar sign can be thought of as part of the variable name or not. We will think of it as a prefix to the variable name.

The first real character of the variable name comes right after the dollar sign. It must be a letter, A through Z or a through z. As a special case, the **underscore** character (`_`) is considered to be a letter.

After the first character, digits are also allowed.

There is no specific maximum length for a variable name. You can make it as long as you like.

`$ABC` and `$abc` are not the same variable name. That is, the names are **case sensitive**. Letters like “ABC” are called **upper case** or **capital letters**. Letters like “abc” are called **lower case** or **small letters**.

Sidebar: A sidebar is something related to the main story, but it is not **the** main story. It may contain information you will need later but not in this course. It may contain interesting trivia that gives additional light to assist the main story. It can be safely skipped.

Sidebar: Back in the mid 1960s I worked about a year as a newspaper delivery boy in Logan, Utah. I made \$30 a month for working an hour or so per day, which was good money for me. Once or twice I got to go back into the newspaper building and watch them set type. It was fascinating. Each letter was on an individual slug. The typesetters (or composers) would quickly pull letters and put them into a stick. They would insert spacing to make the stick of letters the desired length. Then they would insert the whole line into the column. It must have taken forever, but they were fast. They also had a linotype machine that would let a human type on a typewriter keyboard and it would create a whole line of type in hot lead all at once. After the whole page was composed, a paper mask was made over the typeset letters. It looked a lot like wet toilet paper or papier mâché. When it dried, the paper mask was removed and put into a drum. Hot lead was poured behind it. When the lead cooled, the paper was torn away leaving a cylinder of lead that exactly copied the typeset letters. The cylinder was then mounted on the printing press and turned. As it turned, ink was applied to the cylinder and then paper was pulled across the rotating cylinder. The ink transferred to the paper. I thought the whole process was very cool.

I guess I tell the story to show that the words we use today are based on things that happened before. Sometimes those things no longer happen, but the words remain. Maybe someday “clockwise” will be such a word when clocks are digital and not hands rotating on a circular face. Anyway, I hope it makes the phrases more meaningful and memorable. Plus, I like telling stories.

The point: The upper and lower cases were used years ago by type setters. Small letters were more commonly used so they were placed in the lower case to be easily accessed. Capital letters were more rarely used so they were placed in the upper case which was more out of the way.

End of sidebar.

When the case of the letters makes a difference, we call it **case sensitive**. When they do not make a difference, we call it **case insensitive**.

Variable names in Perl are **case sensitive**.

Things other than letters, digits, and underscores are not allowed in variable

names. Specifically, spaces are not allowed.

6.3 Putting Something Into a Variable

The main way to put information into a variable is to use the **assignment** operator which looks like an equals sign.

Here we have a variable named `$x` and we are copying the number 5 into that variable.

```
$x = 5;
```

We may read commonly this as, “X equals five”, but we do not mean `$x` is already equal to 5. In reality we are copying. It would be more accurate to say, “X gets 5”, instead of, “X is equal to 5.” This is computer science, not mathematics. It may look the same but the meaning is different.

The semantics of the assignment syntax in Perl and many other computer languages is that the copying is done from right to left. The following example does not copy a 5 into `$x`. Instead, it tries to copy the value of `$x` into the number 5, which does not make much sense.

```
5 = $x; # wrong
```

Next we have a variable named `$x` and we are copying the string "5" into that variable. A string is a series of zero or more characters.

```
$x = "5";
```

The string with zero characters, "", is also called the **empty string**.

Next we copy the string "Hello, World!" into a variable named `$x`.

```
$x = "Hello, World!";
```

Next we have a variable named `$x` and we are copying from the keyboard into that variable. When the program reaches this statement, it will wait for the user to type something and press Enter. The letters typed together with the Enter at the end will be copied into the variable.

```
$x = <STDIN>;
```

Next we have a variable named `$x` and we are copying from the keyboard into that variable. When the program reaches this statement, it will wait for the user to type something and press Enter. The letters typed but NOT the Enter at the end will be copied into the variable. The Enter is removed by the **chomp** command.

```
chomp ( $x = <STDIN> );
```

Note that each time you put something new into a variable, the computer forgets what was there before. Simple variables only hold one thing at a time.

Also note that **chomp** should only be used when there is the chance that a **newline** is at the end of the variable.

```
chomp ( $x = "Hello" ); # wrong
```

6.4 Printing a Variable

The following command prints the words "Hello, World!" without using a variable.

```
print "Hello, World!";
```

We can directly print the contents of a variable. The following commands print the words "Hello, World!".

```
$x = "Hello, World!";  
print $x;
```

We can print the contents of a variable as part of a longer statement. The following commands print "I shout Hello, World! every morning.". Inserting a variable into the middle of a string is called **interpolation**.

```
$x = "Hello, World!";  
print "I shout $x every morning.";
```


6.5 Concatenation

We can also print more than one thing at the same time by connecting them using the dot operator. Combining strings in this way is called **concatenation**.

```
$x = "Hello, World!";  
print "I shout " . $x . " every morning.";
```

Dot can be handy when we are trying to do a calculation and print at the same time. The **precedence** of dot is the same as plus, so to be safe we use parentheses to force all calculations to take place before stringing things together. See section 11.5 (page 90) and chapter 29 (page 161) for more on precedence.

```
$x = 5;  
$y = 6;  
print "$x + $y = " . ( $x + $y ) . "\n";
```

6.6 Calculating with a Variable

We will talk in detail about calculation and basic operators in chapter 11 (page 89). For now just understand that we can use things like + (add) and * (multiply) to calculate.

We can use a variable to hold a number for calculation. The following program asks the user for a distance in inches. It stores that value in a variable (\$in). Then it uses the number in a calculation.

```
print "How many inches? ";  
chomp ( $in = <STDIN> );  
$cm = 2.54 * $in;  
print "$in inches equals $cm cm.";
```

6.7 Use Meaningful Names

The computer does not recognize any particular meaning for your variables based on their names. Technically, you can call them whatever you want. If

the variable is to hold a distance in inches, you could call it `$inches` or `$in` or `$aloha`. The computer does not care.

If you can give a meaningful name to a variable, do it.

Humans (including programmers) naturally ascribe meaning to things they recognize. That makes naming an important style issue. A human seeing a variable name of `$aloha` might expect it to hold a greeting, especially a localized greeting, such as “Hello” or “Hola” or “Bula” or “An nyoung” or “Guten Tag”.

Because humans ascribe meaning to things they recognize, variable names should contain values that match those meanings. For example, if you have a variable named `$start`, people should correctly assume it holds a starting value for something. If you later change that value so it is not a starting value, you have violated the assumption that people would naturally have about its contents. This is a bad style error. Here is a classic bad example:

```
for ( $start = 1; $start <= 10; $start++ ) {  
    print "$start\n"; }
```

Because `$start` changes as the loop runs, it is no longer the starting value, and has violated the trust people have in the meaning of your variable names.

Descriptive: It is good practice to create variable names that describe the information stored inside. Thus, `$inches` would be a good name for a variable that holds a distance in inches. `$aloha` would not be a good name for such a variable. When you create variables that are not meaningful, you increase the chances of creating programming errors in your code when you forget what they hold. This happens even to professional programmers.

Always try to be descriptive.

Ambiguity: Let’s talk about inches again. If your program is to calculate the size (volume) of a cabinet, and you are given the height, width, and depth in inches, then `$inches` would be a pretty bad choice for a variable name. Which dimension are we talking about? Names like `$height`, `$width`, and `$depth` would be far more clear.

Pronouns: Short variable names like `$x` are handy for localized scopes but you should not rely on the value in `$x` in far distant parts of your program. Think about how we use pronouns (he, she, it). They are useful in localized contexts. They are problematic when referring to distant objects because

the context can be forgotten. Misunderstandings can easily happen. That would be like programming errors.

Hungarian: No, not the language spoken in Hungary. Instead, it is a naming convention developed by a Hungarian that worked at Microsoft. Read **Hungarian notation** on Wikipedia for a very helpful discussion of variable naming for real projects.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungarian_notation

6.8 Summary

You should know the following things.

1. Simple variable names use a prefix of \$, begin with a letter (underscore counts as a letter), continue with zero or more letters, digits, or underscores, and can be as long as you like.
2. Upper case letters are different than lower case letters. \$abc is not the same as \$ABC.
3. Simple variables can hold a number or a string.
4. Simple variables only hold one thing at a time. When you put something new in, the prior contents are simply lost.
5. Simple variables can be used in print statements.
6. Simple variables can be used in calculations.
7. Variable names should be meaningful to prevent programming bugs.

6.9 Exercises

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

lower case: Small letters: abcdefg. Old-time typesetters kept these letters in the lower case on their workbench because they used them more often than the big letters.

Exam Question 39 (p.402):

Give an example of lower case.

Acceptable Answer:

small letters

upper case: Big letters: ABCDEFG. Also called capital letters. Old-time typesetters kept these letters in the upper case on their workbench because they were less often used so it was okay to have to reach a bit to get them.

Exam Question 40 (p.402):

Give an example of upper case.

Acceptable Answer:

BIG LETTERS

case sensitive: Situations where the difference between upper and lower case makes a difference. Is “hello” the same as “HELLO”? If so, we are not case sensitive. If they are different, then we **are** case sensitive.

Exam Question 41 (p.402):

What does case sensitive mean?

Acceptable Answer:

Big letters and small letters do not mean the same thing.

Exam Question 42 (p.402):

What character comes at the front of every scalar variable?

Acceptable Answer:

\$

Exam Question 43 (p.402):

What are the syntax rules for variable names?

Acceptable Answer:

Must start with a letter. Can continue with letters and digits. Underscore counts as a letter.

Exam Question 44 (p.402):

Are variable names case sensitive?

Acceptable Answer:

yes

Exam Question 45 (p.402):

What makes for a good variable name?

Acceptable Answer:

legal and meaningful

Good variable names are, first of all, legal. Also they should be meaningful

to the programmer and anyone else that may need to understand the program. Hungarian notation (see section 6.7, page 56) is one suggestion for making good variable names.

Exercise 46:* What is the syntax for assignment?

Exam Question 47 (p.402):

What does interpolation mean?

Acceptable Answer:

insert in the middle

Interpolation means inserting a variable into the middle of a literal string.

Exam Question 48 (p.402):

What does concatenation mean?

Acceptable Answer:

combine strings end to end

Chapter 7

Testing

Contents

7.1 A Broken Example	61
7.2 Syntax Errors	62

Because computers are so picky about the details of each program, it is easy to get things wrong. This chapter looks at the kinds of things that typically go wrong and how to detect them.

7.1 A Broken Example

Here is a simple program.

```
print "What is your name? ";
$name = <STDIN>;
print "Hello, $name!";
```

Let's introduce some typical bugs.

```
Print "What is your name? ";
$name = <STDIN>
print "Hello, $nam!";
```

The three errors are “Print” instead of “print” on line 1, missing semi-colon on line 2, and “\$name” spelled wrong on line 3.

Call it “buggy.pl” and save it to your desktop.

Try running it by double-clicking. Probably the program will start, briefly flash on the screen, and then vanish.

Section 1.3 (page 18) discusses the Command Line Interface (CLI). When debugging it is usually much better to use the CLI than the GUI.

Run it again using the command line interface. You should be able to see the actual error messages that were generated.

7.2 Syntax Errors

Some mistakes can be detected by looking at the wording of the program. Such errors are called **syntax errors**. Other errors cannot be detected until the program tries to run. These are called **runtime errors** or **semantic errors**.

(more to be added)

Chapter 8

Going Online

Contents

8.1	Using a Browser	64
8.2	Hippopotamus Offline, Online	64
8.3	All on One Line? Adding Markup	66
8.4	Errors: What Could Go Wrong?	67
8.5	Tower of Babel	69
8.6	Back to Markup	70
8.7	text/css Explained	71
8.8	Putting Images on Webpages	73

In chapter 2 (page 27) we showed how to create a static webpage and include a picture on it. In this chapter we go dynamic. We create a fresh webpage by running a computer program.

This chapter shows how to put simple programs online. By “simple” we mean something that does not need user input. In chapter 27 (page 151) we build on this foundation by showing how to receive simple user input, specifically the pressing of buttons, into an online program. In chapter 60 (page 318) we show how to work with a greater variety of user inputs.

Important Vocabulary: These are words worth memorizing. There are more at the end of the chapter.

local: is a program running at the computer where you are sitting. It is not

running on the web.

Exam Question 49 (p.402):

What does local mean?

Acceptable Answer:

Running at the computer where you are.

offline: means a program that is not running on the web. It is another word for local.

Exam Question 50 (p.403):

What does offline mean?

Acceptable Answer:

Running at the computer where you are.

online: means a program that *is* running on the web.

Exam Question 51 (p.403):

What does online mean?

Acceptable Answer:

Running at a server where you are not.

8.1 Using a Browser

With a program at your desktop, you can run it by double-clicking the icon or by opening a command-line window and typing the command itself.

Online we use a browser such as **Firefox**(tm) or **Microsoft Internet Explorer**(tm) to run the program. We see the results locally but the program itself runs remotely.

Our next step is to create a dynamic webpage. Rather than saving the page on our web server, we will write a program that creates the page each time it is requested.

8.2 Hippopotamus Offline, Online

Our basic example is a program that prints the word “Hippopotamus” five times.

The offline version of the program is fairly simple. Write it and save it to

your desktop as `hippo.pl`.

```
print "Hippopotamus\n";
print "Hippopotamus\n";
print "Hippopotamus\n";
print "Hippopotamus\n";
print "Hippopotamus\n";
```

You can test it offline by doing a `start / run / cmd` to open a command line window. In that window, type `cd desktop` and then `hippo.pl` to run your program.

By adding a few lines, we can convert our program to run online.

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header

print "Hippopotamus\n";
print "Hippopotamus\n";
print "Hippopotamus\n";
print "Hippopotamus\n";
print "Hippopotamus\n";
```

The first line tells the server how to run the program. It specifies where `perl` is to be found on the server.

The second line has the server tell the browser that the information it is about to receive is text, possibly including html markup.

If you were using cookies, you could also set one or more cookies as part of the header. Chapter [53](#) (page [276](#)) has more on that.

Sidebar: There is another important attribute that we will not really cover in this course. It is the **charset**, or character set in which your webpage is encoded. We will be using the universally-accepted set called **ASCII**, consisting of English letters, digits, and punctuation. However, those interested should do a little study on their own. Here is a great place to start: an article written in 2003 that gives a good introduction to the subject.

It is: “The Absolute Minimum Every Software Developer Absolutely, Positively Must Know About Unicode and Character Sets (No Excuses!)”, by Joel Spolsky.

<http://www.joelonsoftware.com/articles/Unicode.html>

End of sidebar.

I should stress that, as you might guess, these lines need to be typed pretty much exactly as shown.

I should stress that, as you might guess, these lines need to be typed pretty much exactly as shown. Yes, I said that twice on purpose. Pay close attention to detail.

In your `ipup` folder on your web host, create a sub-folder (directory) and name it `hippo`.

Inside the new `hippo` folder, upload your program.

Rename your program to `index.cgi`.

Set the permissions to `0755` if it is not so already.

You should now be able to run the program by using the following URL. Of course, substitute your own domain name and directory names.

`http://doncolton.com/ipup/hippo/`

(You can probably leave off the trailing `/` in most browsers.)

It should display the word “Hippopotamus” five times, just as if it were running on your local computer.

8.3 All on One Line? Adding Markup

Notice that the word “Hippopotamus” appears five times on the same line, not on separate lines like the offline program did. That is because in HTML, “`\n`” is treated like all other forms of whitespace by the browser.

In section 4.3 (page 40) we will talk about newlines and how they differ from one operating platform to another. HTML adopts the rule that when you want to go to a new line, you need to say `
` to cause the current line to break. (Sometimes the `br` is written as `
` or even `
` with a space.) Let’s add that to our program.

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header
```

```
print "Hippopotamus<br>\n";
print "Hippopotamus<br>\n";
print "Hippopotamus<br>\n";
print "Hippopotamus<br>\n";
print "Hippopotamus<br>\n";
```

The `
` notation is called **markup**. Markup is the “M” in HTML, which stands for Hyper Text Markup Language. Markup tells the browser how to style your webpage for the person who is viewing it.

Chapter 71 (page 378) gives a bigger introduction to HTML. Because HTML controls the appearance of webpages, and there is a huge variation in what webpages need to be, many books have been written to help web designers achieve the look and feel they want. In this book we will only barely scratch the surface of this huge topic area.

You can put `
` before some text to cause it to start on a new line.

You can put `<h1>` and `</h1>` around some text to cause it to be rendered as a level 1 (primary) heading.

You can put `<h2>` and `</h2>` around some text to cause it to be rendered as a level 2 (secondary) heading. Heading levels range from 1 to 6.

You can put `` and `` around some text to cause it to be rendered as BOLD characters.

You can put `<i>` and `</i>` around some text to cause it to be rendered as slanted *italic* characters.

8.4 Errors: What Could Go Wrong?

There are several common errors that programmers may encounter. If your page is not working, here are some things to check.

404 error (File Not Found): If you get a **404 error**, it means your path is not correct. Did you create a folder named `hippo`? Is it inside your `public_html` folder? Did you call your program `index.cgi`? Did you accidentally use capital letters when you were supposed to use small ones?

Forbidden: If you get a message like this, make sure your file permissions and directory permissions are set properly. The right setting for a text file

is usually **0644**, which normally happens automatically without any extra effort on your part. The right setting for a program file is usually **0755**, which normally requires intervention on your part.

Exam Question 52 (p.403):

What does 0644 mean?

Acceptable Answer:

webpage read-write permissions

The first character of 0644 is zero, and means that the number is not a normal (base-10) number. Because the next character is a digit, it means the number is in base eight (**octal**).

If the next character was an “X” or an “x” it would mean the whole number is in base 16 (**hex**).

In binary, 644 becomes 110 100 100, and means rw- r- r-, which means the owner can read and write, others in their group can read, and anyone else can read.

Exam Question 53 (p.403):

What does 0755 mean?

Acceptable Answer:

web program read-write permissions

In binary, 755 becomes 111 101 101, and means rwx r-x r-x, which means the owner can read, write, and execute, others in their group can read and execute, and anyone else can read and execute.

500 error (Internal Server Error): This usually means the first two lines are wrong somehow. Did you type **user** instead of **usr**? Did you type **perl--** without a space instead of **perl --** with a space? Are the **#!** characters the absolutely first characters in your file? Did you put **content_type** or **content-type** or **context-type** or **content=type**? (Only one of them is correct.)

It could also mean that you have some other error in your program, such as a missing semi-colon or incorrect quote marks.

(1) Try running your program from the command line. See if it shows any error messages.

(2) Verify that your **content-type** line is exactly right, and that it is followed by a blank line.

(3) Set the permissions to 0755 if it is not so already.

8.5 Tower of Babel

In terms of languages, we are starting to juggle several balls at once. Let's take a step back and survey this tower of babel, the layers from top to bottom, and from bottom to top, which define our interaction with the user.

Ultimately we want to communicate information and **ideas** to a human, which we also call the user. Maybe we want to motivate that human to take some action, now or later.

Information and ideas are expressed in language (or maybe pictures). We call that the **content**.

Language is styled using markup. The language and markup together are the webpage. We call that the marked-up content. It is the webpage.

The marked-up content / webpage is sent to the browser from the server. It is sent by being "printed" by our program.

What our program prints is controlled by the steps that our program follows. That's where we as programmers come into the scene.

Ideas. Language. Mark up. Printing. Programming.

The program (written in Perl) understands its own commands, including the command to print. It does not understand the meaning of the things it is printing. It just prints them for delivery to the browser.

It is like the first stage of a rocket. It lifts the rest of the rocket toward space, but then it falls away itself.

The browser never sees the program. It sees the things that the program printed. It understands the markup parts of what it was given. It does not understand the meaning of the words that were marked up. It just styles them and renders them for delivery to the human.

The markup is like the second stage of a rocket. It lifts the rest of the rocket toward space, but then it falls away itself.

The human never sees the markup. (Well, they can see it if they know how to ask for it, but normally they do not.) The human sees the words that were rendered. Hopefully the human understands the meaning of the words.

The content is like the payload of a rocket. It is the thing for which the rest of the rocket exists. It is the thing the rocket is lifting towards space.

Programming. Printing. Markup. Language. Ideas.

Each of these is written in a different language. The programming is done in Perl. The markup is done in HTML. The language is done in English, or French, or Arabic, or Chinese. The ideas are in the language of the human mind and heart and spirit.

8.6 Back to Markup

Browsers are totally used to presenting webpages with very little markup. They do it all the time. Browsers make lots of assumptions. They have defaults for how to present things.

A **default** is a value or activity that is used when no other value or activity has been requested.

For example, if we do not give other instructions, the letters on the browser screen will be black and the background will be white. We can change those settings, but unless we change them, those are the default colors we will see.

A complete treatment of **CSS**, Cascading Style Sheets, is beyond the scope of this course. However, a light introduction would probably be helpful. We will get you started. You are then free to take things to the next level.

In addition to the `content-type:` line we told you to use, and which is required, there are a few more lines we would like you to use. They are recommended.

Here is a bit of introductory material that your program should print out when it starts talking to the browser. You will recognize the first line.

```
content-type: text/html

<!DOCTYPE html><head lang=en><meta charset=utf-8>
  <title>Your Title Goes Here</title>
  <style type=text/css>
    body {
      background-color: #AFFFFFF;
      font-family: sans-serif;
      padding: 10px 10px 10px 10px;
```

```
        border: 1px dotted #000000;  
        margin: 0 20% 0 20%; }  
    </style>  
<body>
```

After that introductory material, we print all the content (with markup) that we want the browser to receive.

At the end of your webpage, to clean up the loose ends, we can print this, but in HTML5 it is optional.

```
</body></html>
```

We will refer to this as a **wrapper** because it wraps around your content. Part of it goes before your content, and part of it goes after your content. It sets the stage. Then it cleans up.

8.7 text/css Explained

In the previous section, we gave you the following lines.

```
<style type="text/css">  
  body {  
    background-color: #AFFFFFF;  
    font-family: sans-serif;  
    padding: 10px 10px 10px 10px;  
    border: 1px dotted #000000;  
    margin: 0 20% 0 20%; }  
</style>
```

We will explain them briefly now. You can find lots more information online or by taking a class in web design.

`<style type="text/css">` and `</style>` mark the start and end of the style sheet. Our style sheet is part of the webpage.

Another popular option is to have an external style sheet and just mention it by name, like this. Then all the styling commands would go in that file instead of being directly included in your webpage.


```
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="abc.css">
```

`body { ... }` identifies styling commands that apply to the entire body of your webpage. By that we mean the parts that go between `<body>` and `</body>` in the marked-up webpage. You can use similar syntax to create styling commands that apply to paragraphs (content between `<p>` and `</p>`) or h1 headings (content between `<h1>` and `</h1>`).

`background-color: #AFFFFF;` says that for the body, the background color shall be AFFFFF. The AFFFFF is a hex code for a color. Hex codes are made out of hex digits. The hex digits are 0 through 9 and A through F, with A=10 and F=15.

Colors are specified in Red-Green-Blue order, sometimes written **RGB**. For each of those three colors, the amount of light is specified as a number between 00 (none) and FF (total).

The AA part tells how much Red to include in the color. AA means the red is about two-thirds lit up, one-third dark. The next two letters, FF, indicate how much green to include. FF means green to the max. The last two letters, also FF, indicate how much blue to include. Again, we have blue to the max.

You can use other hex digits to get a wide variety of other colors.

`font-family:` tells what kind of letter shapes will be used throughout the body of your webpage, unless you override that choice later. Family choices include serif, sans-serif, monospace, cursive, and fantasy. More precise choices include Arial, Times, Courier, and other font names.

`sans-serif;` means that the letter shapes will come from a font family named sans serif. Sans is Latin for “without” and serifs are those fancy extenders (hooks and barbs) that you often see on the ends of typed letters, but not usually on hand-written letters.

Style Rule: Most people seem to like serifs on their printed text, but they don’t like serifs on browser “body” text (as opposed to headings). Maybe it is related to the chunkiness of the pixels on screen versus on paper. I get about 125 pixels per inch on my laptop screen, but modern printers get 600 dots per inch or more. At 600 dpi, the serifs can be nice and smooth. At 125 dpi they may appear to be more chunky and annoying.

`padding:` means extra space around your content. It has the same background (color or image) as your content.

`10px`; means ten pixels of space should be added all around your content, on all four sides.

border: describes a line that can go around the outside of the padding. You can have a border or not. If you have one, the choices include solid, double, dotted, dashed, and several others.

border: 1px dotted #000000; means that the border is one pixel thick, and is a dotted line, and the color is 000000, meaning no red light, no green light, and no blue light, or, in other words, black (no light of any kind).

margin: tells how much space to provide outside of the border, right up until we run into the border of something else, or until we run into the edge of the screen (view port).

margin: 0 20% 0 20%; means that the top margin will be zero. The right margin will be 20% of the screen width. The bottom margin will be zero, and the left margin will be 20%. The numbers are always specified in “top, right, bottom, left” order, like minutes on a clock, at 00, 15, 30, and 45.

8.8 Putting Images on Webpages

The basic HTML code for putting an image on a webpage is this:

```

```

Just replace “picture.jpg” with whatever the file name is for your picture, and the “my picture” with a description appropriate for blind people.

Besides **img** and **src**, there are a few more parameters that are important. They are **alt**, **width**, **height**, and **title**.

```

```

The **alt** information is used by screen readers for blind persons, and is displayed when the picture is not available.

The **width** parameter tells the browser how much space the picture will be using in terms of pixels wide. It also tells the browser to force the picture to be that wide by resizing it if needed.

The **height** parameter tells the browser how much space the picture will be using in terms of pixels tall. It also tells the browser to force the picture to be that tall by resizing it if needed.

If you specify **width** but not **height**, the browser will adjust the height by the same proportion as width. This keeps the picture's **aspect ratio** the same. The aspect ratio is the ratio of width to height.

If you specify both **width** and **height**, you can force the picture to be stretched in funny ways.

The **title** parameter gives words that will appear if you hover your mouse over the picture. Generally after a half a second the words will appear.

Linking to Bigger Pictures If your purpose in using width and/or height is to make the picture appear lots smaller, you should probably resize it instead, using **GIMP** or **Photoshop®** or some similar tool.

But what if you want the speed of having a small image, and at the same time the detail of having a large image for those who want it?

You can display the small image and link it to the large image.

We use the `...` markup to make a link to another page. In this case, the other page is the big picture.

So we can do this:

```
<a href="big.jpg"></a>
```

The small.jpg picture will appear in the webpage. If you click on it, you will be taken to the big.jpg picture.

Chapter 9

Going Dynamic

Contents

9.1 Roll the Dice	75
9.2 Putting Images on Webpages	77
9.3 Summary	78

So far we are online, but not really very dynamic. In this chapter we change that by adding something that will change.

9.1 Roll the Dice

We can make a much more useful program. Let's roll some dice. This requires a new capability: random numbers.

Chapter [67](#) (page [363](#)) introduces random numbers at a greater level of detail. At this point, just trust me on it. You can get random numbers from 1 to 6 (inclusive) by using this formula.

```
$dice = 1 + int ( rand(6) );
```

Exam Question 54 (p.[403](#)):

What subroutine call gives a random number between 0 and 6?

Required Answer:

```
rand(6)
```

The `rand(6)` part creates a number between zero and 5.999. (Technically it is between zero and 6, not inclusive.) The `int` part trims off the digits after the decimal leaving us with a whole number, either 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. The `1+` part adds one to the result, giving us either 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Here is a command-line version of the program.

```
$dice1 = 1 + int ( rand(6) );
$dice2 = 1 + int ( rand(6) );
print "You have rolled $dice1 and $dice2.\n";
```

Try it and see that it works.

Here is the online version of the program.

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header

$dice1 = 1 + int ( rand(6) );
$dice2 = 1 + int ( rand(6) );
print "You have rolled $dice1 and $dice2.\n";
```

We will use `"content-type: text/html\n";` etc., both here and in future examples. However, you should always consider printing the whole wrapper we mentioned in section 8.6 (page 70), or one like it, whether we remind you or not. It will make your page look much nicer.

In your web account's `ipup` folder, create another folder (directory) and name it `dice`.

Inside the new `dice` folder, upload your program.

Rename your program to **`index.cgi`**,

Set the permissions to `0755` if it is not so already.

You should now be able to run the program by using the following URL.

<http://doncolton.com/ipup/dice>

9.2 Putting Images on Webpages

Putting up a couple of numbers is fun but we can do better. Much better. Let's put up actual pictures of the **dice**.

To do this, the first problem is to acquire pictures of the six possible outcomes. I did this by using a digital camera and an actual physical die. (Dice is plural, die is singular.) I took pictures of each of the six faces. Then I used **GIMP** (you could use **Photoshop®**) to trim the images down and resize them. Make the resulting images about 100 pixels on each side. Save them as 1.jpg, 2.jpg, 3.jpg, 4.jpg, 5.jpg, and 6.jpg.

Another option is to simply find images already on the web. You are free to make copies of my dice faces. Drag them off my webpage onto your desktop. You can find them here:

<http://ipup.doncolton.com/dice/>

Upload the six jpg files into the same directory where your dice program is located.

In order to display the actual dice pictures instead of the numbers, we need to modify our program.

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header

$dice1 = 1 + int ( rand(6) );
$dice2 = 1 + int ( rand(6) );
print "You have rolled $dice1 and $dice2.\n";

print "<img src=\"\$dice1.jpg\" alt=\"\$dice1\">";
print "<img src=\"\$dice2.jpg\" alt=\"\$dice2\">";
```

We have added two lines. Each adds an image to the webpage.

Hit your browser's "reload" button to run your online program again. Did you see pictures?

9.3 Summary

We have demonstrated how to move a program from your desktop to the web. The program itself is modified by the addition of two new lines at the top. The program is copied to a web server and proper permissions established. Lots of small things can go wrong. These need to be corrected. Finally, we can add actual images to enrich our computing experience.

There are two big advantages to being online. (1) Anyone in the world can use your program. (2) It is fairly easy to put graphics into your program.

There is one big disadvantage to being online. Inputs. It is more difficult online to write a conversational program where you prompt for and receive inputs. You will notice that the programs in this unit do not use any inputs. For now, we just wanted to get your feet wet. We will go swimming later.

Important Vocabulary: These are words worth memorizing. There are more at the start of the chapter.

rand: a command that returns a random number between zero and one, or between zero and the limit specified.

Exam Question 55 (p.403):

What does rand do?

Acceptable Answer:

returns a random number between zero and one

int: a command that turns a non-integer into an integer by dropping all parts after the decimal. It turns 3.1415 into 3.

Exam Question 56 (p.403):

What does int do?

Acceptable Answer:

returns the integer part of a number

index.cgi: a standard file name for online programs. A few other names are possible but this is the one we will use throughout this course.

Exam Question 57 (p.403):

What is index.cgi?

Acceptable Answer:

web program typical file name

Chapter 10

Online Input

Contents

10.1 Online Input	79
10.2 The olin Subroutine	79
10.3 An Online Program	80
10.4 Form vs Interactive	84
10.5 Alternate Ordering	84
10.6 Autofocus	85
10.7 Memo To Self	86

10.1 Online Input

Getting input from a browser is often tricky. In this chapter, we give you a simple method to get input. We introduce a subroutine named **olin** that you can use. This will satisfy most of our needs. In a later (advanced) chapter we will show and explain how to get the input directly.

10.2 The olin Subroutine

You can place a copy of this subroutine at or near the beginning or end of every program you write that requires online inputs.


```

# olin: online input.
# usage: olin $name $default
# $name is the online input field name.
# $default is returned if there is no such input.
# only the first occurrence of $name is returned.
sub olin { my ( $name, $res ) = @_;
  if ( $_olin eq "" ) { $_olin = "&" . <STDIN> }
  if ( @_ == 0 ) { return $_olin }
  if ( $_olin =~ /&$name=( [^&]* ) / ) {
    $res = $1; $res =~ s/[+]/ /g;
    $res =~ s/%(..)/pack('c',hex($1))/ge }
  return $res }

```

10.3 An Online Program

How exactly does one use the **olin** subroutine? Following is a simple program that shows how to use the **olin** subroutine to receive inputs through a browser.

You are encouraged to type in this program and try running it.

This program creates a webpage that has two inputs. One is for the user to type their name. The other is for the user to submit the form into which they have typed their name.

We have inserted labels like **#1** throughout the program. They appear just before lines we want to talk about.

The following program is written in pretty much the same order as one would write an interactive program. **The only reason for that is to help you understand the parts. However, that is not the best way to write your program.**

Section 10.5 (page 84) below gives this same program but in an order that probably makes more sense.

```

#! /usr/local/bin/perl --
#1
print "content-type: text/html\n";
print "\n"; # this ends the header
print "<h1>Don's Hello Program</h1>";

```

```

#2
print "<form method=post action=''>";
print "What is your name?";
#3
print "<input type=text name=abc value='' size=10 autofocus>";
#4
print "<input type=submit name=xyz value=go>";
#5
$name = olin ( "abc", "" );
#6
print "Hello, $name. I am pleased to meet you.";
#7
# online input subroutine
sub olin { my ( $name, $res ) = @_;
  if ( $_olin eq "" ) { $_olin = "&" . <STDIN> }
  if ( @_ == 0 ) { return $_olin }
  if ( $_olin =~ /&$name=( [^&]* ) / ) {
    $res = $1; $res =~ s/[+]/ /g;
    $res =~ s/%(..)/pack('c',hex($1))/ge }
  return $res }

```

Before the #1:

The first line in every online program we write is this:

```
#! /usr/local/bin/perl --
```

Because it must be first, we cannot put anything in front of it.

It is pretty technical, but then again a lot of programming is pretty technical. We will explain it here. You don't really need to understand it, but it might be handy.

The #! part tells the server that this is a program, and in particular, it is a script, or is written in a scripting language.

The /usr/local/bin/perl part tells the server that this scripting language can be interpreted by perl, which can be found at the location provided. That is, starting at the root of the file system, go to the `usr` folder. Within that, go to the `local` folder. Within that, go to the `bin` folder. Within that, run the `perl` program.

The -- part tells the server that there is no more input on this line. This is important if the script was written on a **Microsoft** system and therefore

has `\x0D` appended to the line. This could cause the server to be looking for `perl\x0D` instead of looking for `perl`, which could cause the program to fail.

#1:

The following two lines are printed. That means they are not understood by the server or by perl. They are intended to be understood by the browser.

The content-type line is part of the header. It must be sent from the server (where your program is running) to the browser. In this case, it tells the browser that the information has the **mime type** of `text/html`.

The second `\n` creates a blank line. The blank line marks the end of the header.

#2:

```
<form method=post action=''>
```

For input to be received by the server, the input must be part of a **form**. The form statement must appear before its **input** statements appear. Input fields that appear before you start the form are not treated as part of the form.

When a form is submitted, the input fields that belong to that form are sent from the browser to the server.

Advanced: It is possible but can be tricky to have more than one form. You simply include another **form** statement. That will end the previous form and start a new one. The **input** statements that follow will be part of the new form, not the old one. Make sure that is what you want before you do it.

#3:

```
<input type=text name=abc value='' size=10 autofocus>
```

The input statement creates a blank into which the user can type some text. Other types include **submit** buttons, **radio** buttons, **checkbox** boxes, and **hidden** fields.

This input field has the name `abc`. We will use that later, at step 5, when we retrieve the input that was typed there.

This input field has an initial value of `' '`, which is to say, nothing. We could have provided an initial value but we left it blank.

This input field has a size of 10 characters wide. The space presented on the browser screen will be wide enough for 10 characters to be typed. (Usually it is a bit wider than needed.)

The autofocus attribute marks this as the field where the cursor (the focus) should start.

#4:

```
<input type=submit name=xyz value=go>
```

Like the text field at step 3, we have another input field here. This one is of type **submit** which means it creates a button that the user can press.

Like all input fields, this one needs a name. The name we have given it is `xyz`.

For submit buttons, the value defines the value that will be returned when the button is pressed, but also it defines the value that will be displayed on the button itself.

#5:

```
$name = olin ( "abc", "" );
```

This line is a perl statement. It specifies that the variable `$name` will receive a value. The value will come from the `olin` subroutine which is defined at step 7.

Section 10.2 (page 79) also presents the **olin** subroutine.

The `olin` subroutine has two parameters.

The first parameter to `olin` is `abc`. It specifies the name of the field to be retrieved. Notice at step 3 above we gave the name `abc` to an input field. These are intentionally the same, and the program will not work if they are different.

The second parameter to `olin` is `""`. It specifies that if the requested field is not found, `""` should be returned instead.

#6:

```
print "Hello, $name. I am pleased to meet you.";
```

This is a perl statement that prints something. The thing it prints includes `$name`, which just received the value from the field `abc`. The entire printed content will be sent to the browser as part of the webpage we are creating.

#7:

The online input subroutine is included. We will talk more about its workings in a later chapter of this book. For now you can simply cut and paste it into your programs and use it to retrieve any inputs that may exist on your webpages.

10.4 Form vs Interactive

One important concept is the order in which things happen. With a webpage, the page is sent to the browser. The browser **renders** the page for the user. Then the user interacts with the page.

When the user is ready, they press a **submit** button. That causes all the inputs within that form to be sent to the server for processing.

The unit of granularity is the whole page. The whole page is sent to the browser. All the inputs from the page are returned to the server.

This is dramatically different from the interactive nature of the command-line based programs we have written before. With a command-line program, the program prints things and then asks for input. This can happen many times, as though it were a conversation. The unit of granularity is the individual question and answer.

10.5 Alternate Ordering

Above we presented the program in roughly the same order as we might do an interactive program. However, forms-based programs often follow another ordering.

- (a) Retrieve all the inputs. Because it is a forms-based program, we do not have to ask for inputs. They are already present, probably.
- (b) Do all the calculations.
- (c) Depending on the results of the calculations, in one massive print statement, write the entire webpage.

We will show how the program from this chapter might be done using this more normal ordering.

```

#! /usr/local/bin/perl --

sub olin { my ( $name, $res ) = @_;
  if ( $_olin eq "" ) { $_olin = "&" . <STDIN> }
  if ( @_ == 0 ) { return $_olin }
  if ( $_olin =~ /&$name=( [^&]* ) / ) {
    $res = $1; $res =~ s/[+]/ /g;
    $res =~ s/%(..)/pack('c',hex($1))/ge }
  return $res }

$name = olin ( "abc", "Fred" );

print "content-type: text/html\n
<h1>Don's Hello Program</h1>
<form method=post action=''>
What is your name?
<input type=text name=abc value=\"\$name\" size=10 autofocus>
<input type=submit name=xyz value=go>
<br>
Hello, $name. I am pleased to meet you.";

```

10.6 Autofocus

As part of the input field, there is a special attribute you can include called autofocus. If you add this word to your input tag, then the browser will start the cursor in that field automatically. It looks something like this:

```
<input name=abc size=10 autofocus>
```

The attributes can appear in any order, so this would work the same:

```
<input autofocus size=10 name=abc>
```

If you have autofocus on more than one field, the browser is at liberty to select which one will receive it. Normally I have seen it select the first one, but sometimes I have seen it select the last one. If possible, just have one autofocus field.

Autofocus does not do any good on a hidden field or on a submit button. It works well on fields where input can be typed in.

10.7 Memo To Self

The idea of **memo to self** is very important in online programming.

Each time an online program runs, it must respond quickly, completely, and conclusively. We do not know whether the user will respond quickly, or wait hours before responding, or simply close their browser without responding. Therefore, an online program cannot afford to wait for a response. It must quickly come to a decisive conclusion.

But, in case the program is called upon to run again, it must also provide enough information for it to pick up the pieces and move forward. We call this information **state**, or a **memo to self**. This concept of **persistent data** is introduced here, in this section, and is explored further in chapter 52 (page 270).

To illustrate, in this section we present an online program that simply counts. When the program is first run, it discovers that it has no inputs, so it initializes its counter to 0. Each time it runs, it increases the counter by 1 and displays the new value.

Retrieve inputs. Do all calculations. Write the webpage.

```
#!/usr/bin/perl --

sub olin { my ( $name, $res ) = @_;
  if ( $_olin eq "" ) { $_olin = "&" . <STDIN> }
  if ( @_ == 0 ) { return $_olin }
  if ( $_olin =~ /&$name=( [^&]* ) / ) {
    $res = $1; $res =~ s/[+]/ /g;
    $res =~ s/%(..)/pack('c',hex($1))/ge }
  return $res }

# Retrieve inputs.
$count = olin ( "count", "0" );

# Do all calculations.
$count = $count + 1;

# Write the webpage.
print "content-type: text/html\n
<!DOCTYPE html><head lang=en><meta charset=utf-8>
```

```
<style>
body { text-align: center; }
div { font-size: 1000%; }
</style>
</head><body>
<h1>Don's Counting Program</h1>
<form method=post action=.>
<input type=hidden name=count value='$count'>
<div>$count</div>
<input type=submit name=xyz value=next>
</form></body>";
```

Explanations:

`/usr/bin/perl` and `/usr/local/bin/perl` usually do the same thing.

`sub olin` has been previously explained.

`$count` will hold the current count, which it receives as an input from the form. If no input is found, it receives the default value of zero.

The only calculation we do is to add one to the existing count.

The style section centers the body of the page, and sets the div part of the page to be ten times as big as normal text.

The hidden field provides a **memo to self** that will be retrieved the next time the program runs.

In the counting program above, the decisive conclusion is to display the current number and then simply stop. There is no looping involved. We just stop.

But the **memo to self** part of this process is carried out by the hidden field (cleverly named "count") that holds the most recent value, which value is given back to the program the next time it runs.

Unit III

Basics: Math

Chapter 11

Basic Calculation

Contents

11.1 Add	89
11.2 Subtract	89
11.3 Multiply	90
11.4 Divide	90
11.5 Precedence and Parentheses	90
11.6 Assignment	91

Perl and most other programming languages have easy ways to calculate with numbers. The calculations are written in fairly standard mathematical notation, like $a+b$. In this chapter we run through a list of basic operators and explain what each means.

11.1 Add

Addition is specified by using the + (plus) sign between two things. It's about what you would expect.

11.2 Subtract

Subtraction is specified by using the - (minus or dash or hyphen) sign between two things. It's about what you would expect.

11.3 Multiply

In computer programming, we often use the asterisk (*) to represent **multiplication**. In arithmetic we are accustomed to using an \times (\times) to represent multiplication, but in computer programming we want the letter x to be a letter, so in many computer languages the asterisk has been assigned the meaning of multiply.

We say $3*5$ is three times five, or 15.

11.4 Divide

Regular calculator division is called floating-point **division**. In this kind of division, $5/2$ is 2.5. **Floating point** means that the decimal can be in the middle of the number. Usually when we divide two numbers, we mean floating point divide.

There is another kind of division, integer division, which we will discuss later. In that kind of division, $5/2$ is 2 with a remainder of 1. With integer division the decimal point is fixed at the end of the number, never in the middle.

11.5 Precedence and Parentheses

Precedence is covered in greater detail in chapter 29 (page 161).

When we say $3+2*5$, should the computer add first or multiply first?

Exam Question 58 (p.403):

In $3+2*5$, does + happen first or *?

Acceptable Answer:

*

We can control the order of calculation by using parentheses. We can say $(3+2)*5$ or $3+(2*5)$, depending on what we mean.

When we leave out the parentheses, the computer follows rules of **precedence**. For convenience and simplicity, mathematicians have standardized on the precedence of multiplication before addition. It does not have to be that way, but by convention we have agreed as a group to follow that rule.

In the $3 + 2 \times 5$ example, this means we multiply 2 and 5 for a result of 10. We then add 3 for a result of 13.

Writing without parentheses is shorter. Shorter is more desirable because it is less work and also less cluttered. But it does require us to learn the rules of precedence so we will get the same answer as everyone else. These are covered in more detail in a future chapter.

11.6 Assignment

Assignment is represented by the = (equals) sign. It makes a copy of the value of the expression on the right and places it into the variable on the left. This will calculate 13 and put it into `$x`.

```
$x = 3+2*5;
```

Programming exercises can be found in chapter [18](#) (page [113](#)).

Chapter 12

Names, Parsing, Scanning

Contents

12.1 Computers Are Stupid	93
12.2 Robust	93
12.3 Parsing	94
12.4 Summary	95
12.5 Exercises	95

I am spending a lot of time trying to help you understand the behavior and limitations that computers have. I do this because I have found students frequently imagine computers to be much more intelligent than they actually are. You have to come down to their level if you want to talk to computers and have them understand. Fortunately, it is worth the effort.

This seems like a good time to tell why we have such strict rules on variable names.

As you will recall, a variable name must start with a letter. (Letters include A through Z, a through z, and underscore.) It can continue with letters and digits. (Digits include 0 through 9.) It has a dollar sign as a prefix. It must not include special characters or spaces.

Why is that?

12.1 Computers Are Stupid

It's not polite to say things like that. Hopefully no computers are listening. In section 1.1 we established that computers are stupid. Humans understand things by looking for meaning. This allows us to overlook many kinds of mistakes that others might make.

For example, imagine a traffic light, red on top, yellow in the middle, green on the bottom. Red means stop. Yellow means stop if you can. Green means go. Now imagine the red lens that should cover the top light is broken and mostly missing. When the light should be red it is white. You drive up to the light. The white light (on top) is shining. What should you do?

Normally the human would conclude the light was supposed to be treated as though it were red. The human looks for the meaning and overlooks what it sees as trivial variations.

Computers often fail that kind of test. Computers generally are programmed to look for specific conditions and respond to them. Slightly different conditions can result in failure to properly recognize the situation.

12.2 Robust

If a program fails when the user makes small errors, we say the program is **fragile** or **brittle**.

If a program does not fail like that, we say the program is **robust** or **flexible** or **bullet proof** or **user-friendly**.

We call it **graceful degradation** when small errors create small problems. If you are a minute late for a movie, you still get to see 99% of the movie. If you drop your keys over pavement, you can pick them up. In each case the penalty is small.

We call it **catastrophic failure** when small errors create large problems. If you are a minute late for a bus, you wait for the next bus. If you drop your keys over a grate, it may be very hard to get them back. In each case the penalty is large.

Well-designed programs are **robust**.

Programmers can spend lots of time making their programs less brittle, but it is a difficult task. There are too many things that can go wrong. It is

virtually impossible to catch all of them and respond nicely.

12.3 Parsing

Vocabulary warning: this section introduces even more new words, many of which are only used in this section.

Computer programs are typically written in text. They are then converted into a runnable program through a process called compiling. Compiling is done by a **compiler**.

The word **parse** literally means to divide into parts, in this case for analysis. Parsing is associated with things like grammars and parts of speech.

Parsing is the activity your compiler does when it reads in your program and tries to understand it. The first step in parsing is called **lexical scanning**. In this step, the text of your computer program is divided up into individual words, called **tokens**.

In the next step, the tokens are organized according to the **grammar** of your programming language.

Let's look at an example.

```
print "Hello, World!";
```

In this example, the lexical scanner would break up the program into tokens. It would find the following tokens:

```
print
"Hello, World!"
;
```

Tokens are identified by the spaces between them and by the **punctuation** around them. The same tokens would be found if the program looked like this:

```
print"Hello, World!" ;
```

The spacing between tokens is usually not significant. If you can have one space, you can have several. It's all the same to the compiler. Spaces, tabs,

and newlines are collectively called **white space** because they are invisible, or white, as opposed to other things—like dashes—that are sometimes used for space. Where you can have one white space of any type, you are allowed to have many of any type. This comes in handy when we start working with programming **style**.

12.4 Summary

For the parser to work efficiently, variable names and other tokens must follow simple rules. The simple rule as stated in chapter 6 (page 51) is that variable names are prefixed with a dollar sign, start with a letter (including underscore), and continue with letters and digits.

It is possible to have much more flexible rules for variables, and indeed for programming in general, but that makes it much harder for computers to do their jobs. There is a whole field of study called Natural Language Processing. It is a difficult task.

12.5 Exercises

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

white space: Characters that are invisible. Examples include spacebar, tab, and newline. They are called “white” because they do not use any ink.

Exam Question 59 (p.403):

What is white space?

Acceptable Answer:

invisible characters, especially spacebar, tab, and newline

White space is placed between the words of a program to make it easier to read and to remove ambiguity (multiple meanings).

Exercise 60:* Identify the errors in the following code.

```
Print "Enter a length in inches: ";
chomp $inches <STDIN>;
$cm = 2.54 $inches
Print "$inches inches equals $cm centimeters.\n;
```


Chapter 13

Style

Contents

13.1 Why?	96
13.2 Permitted Changes	97
13.3 Spacing Changes	97
13.3.1 Whitespace	97
13.3.2 Blank Lines	97
13.3.3 Indentation	98
13.4 Other Changes	98
13.4.1 Comments	99
13.4.2 Names	99

Semantics is what you mean. Syntax and style are how you say it.

Our goal in this chapter is to set some standards for how programs are expressed. We say more in chapter [23](#) (page [129](#)).

13.1 Why?

The computer is equally comfortable no matter how neat and orderly your code appears. The key question with style is how easily other programmers can read your code and fix it when necessary.

And it is not just for other programmers. Sometimes improving the style can help you, the original programmer, see and fix bugs sooner.

The purpose of style is to make things easier for the programmer to read and understand.

13.2 Permitted Changes

As we apply stylistic changes to a program, we can change the way the program appears. However, we are not allowed to change the behavior of the program. We can only make changes that improve readability, not meaning.

13.3 Spacing Changes

Most changes fall in the category of adding or subtracting whitespace, including spaces, tabs, and new lines.

13.3.1 Whitespace

Whitespace is the invisible parts of what you write. Every time you press the space bar you are adding whitespace to your program. Every time you press Enter you are adding whitespace.

The main purpose of whitespace is to keep things (tokens) from crashing into each other. Our goal is to make them easy to read. It is also a syntactic crutch to tell us where to divide the words. Consider “together” and “to get her”. Same letters. Different meaning. Spaces can clarify the meaning.

A secondary but important purpose of whitespace is to show relationships. Starting on a fresh line shows that the old thought is ended and something new is starting. Leaving a blank line shows that the old thought has Really ended and something new is Really starting. Lines in a “paragraph” cluster together to show that they are related. These are semantic crutches to help make the meaning more clear.

13.3.2 Blank Lines

If a block of code is many lines long, it is recommended that blank lines be inserted in appropriate places to divide up the code into “paragraphs”

(shorter visual pieces). The places chosen should be meaningful, such that related code is kept together.

Excessive blank lines should not be used.

13.3.3 Indentation

Sometimes programming involves organizing your code into blocks. A block is introduced by an opening curly brace, `{`, and ended by a closing curly brace, `}`.

Rule: Lines within a block are consistently indented.

In the following example, the `print` statement is nested inside the `while` loop. For that reason, we traditionally indent it a few spaces. All lines at that same level of nesting should have the same amount of indentation. It makes reading the code easier.

```
$x = 1;
while ( $x <= 100 ) {
    print "$x\n";
    $x++ }
print "done!\n";
```

In the following example, the `if/else` statement contains nested `print` statements.

```
if ( $speed <= 55 ) {
    print "Have a nice day!\n"; }
else {
    print "Slow down please!\n"; }
```

13.4 Other Changes

Besides changing the spacing of the program, there are other things we can change that do not change the meaning. Specifically, we can add comments and sometimes we can change variable names.

13.4.1 Comments

Code should include an appropriate degree of commenting.

Comments help the programmer organize his/her thinking while writing the program. Write the main comments first before you start writing code. When comments are written after the program is complete, frequently they are of the unhelpful type. It's almost not worth commenting when the program is done.

Write comments as you go along. Each time you stop to ponder how to do something, think about whether a comment should be included to explain your thinking to others.

Comments help the programmer remember the organization of the program when it is necessary to fix bugs or add new functionality.

Comments really help other programmers that may have to work on your code after you hand it off and move to another project.

Comments should primarily describe the purpose of the code. It is much less important to state exactly what is happening, since that is usually obvious.

```
$x = $x + 1; # add 1 to x (bad)
$Ct = $Ct + 1; # count the items processed (good)
```

At the start of a subroutine, it is good to write a block of comments telling about the subroutine as a whole: what the inputs are, what the outputs are, whether it is of limited or general use, and if limited where it is called from. Focus first on why it was written and what it should accomplish. Then if necessary tell how it actually works.

If your code uses an algorithm that may be a bit tricky to understand, it would be good to explain in detail how it actually works, maybe even giving references to the source of the algorithm if you got it from a book or website.

13.4.2 Names

Pick names that are meaningful and helpful.

Short variable names, like `$x` are like pronouns in English, words like “he,” “she,” “it,” “they,” etc. They are acceptable in tight pieces of code where the context is clear and the meaning of the variable is clear. But as the code

gets bigger and the variable starts to range over a larger number of lines it can become confusing and it becomes appropriate and sometimes necessary to change the variable name to something more meaningful.

Variables, subroutines, files, and other named objects should be named in useful and helpful ways. Your program may work just fine with variables like `$frog` and `$cracker`, but unless the variables are related to actual frogs and crackers, you will create a nightmare for the next programmer that has to read your code.

By convention, variables start with lower-case letters (a-z). Long variable names can be built up from several words connected by underscores. For example:

```
$miles_per_gallon
$address_current
```

Another common option for long variable names is to use what is called **camel case** (as compared to **upper case** and **lower case**). For example:

```
$milesPerGallon
$addressCurrent
```

Exam Question 61 (p.404):

Give an example of camel case.

Acceptable Answer:

```
wordsAfterFirstHaveCaps
```

Variables that start with upper-case letters are generally special in some important way. They may be constants or global variables.

```
$SpeedLimit = 55;
```

Variables that start with an underscore are generally intended to be private. They may be in library subroutines. Libraries use the underscore to avoid picking a variable name that you might also pick.

Avoid starting common variable names with upper-case letters or with an underscore. Start with a lower-case letter unless you have a good reason to do something else.

Chapter 14

Instruction Sequences

Contents

14.1 Equations	101
14.2 Steps	102
14.3 Sequence	103
14.4 Later	103
14.5 Exercises	104

Mathematics and programming can look a lot alike. This leads to confusion at times. Sequence is an important area where this can be a problem.

14.1 Equations

In mathematics, a system of equations is viewed to be a set of facts that are true no matter what the order is. Consider these equations.

$$\begin{aligned}x + y &= 7 \\ y &= 3\end{aligned}$$

Using normal rules of algebra, you can easily see that x must be equal to 4. We could figure it out like this:

$$(1) \quad x + y = 7$$

- (2) $y = 3$
- (3) $x + 3 = 7$ (substitute line 2 into line 1)
- (4) $x + 3 - 3 = 7 - 3$ (subtract 3 from both sides)
- (5) $x = 4$ (simplify 3-3 and 7-3)

It would not matter if we started out with this instead:

$$\begin{aligned}y &= 3 \\x + y &= 7\end{aligned}$$

The reason is that mathematical equations are supposed to be statements of truth that have no particular order to them. They are just all true at the same time.

14.2 Steps

In computing, each statement is not a statement of truth. It is a command to be carried out. It is an instruction.

$$\begin{aligned}y &= 3 \\x + y &= 7\end{aligned}$$

In programming, this would take the value 3 and copy it into the variable y . Then the program would die because $x + y = 7$ cannot be carried out. The $=$ sign means **assignment**, or “copy” instead of “it is equal”. We can copy into a variable. We cannot copy into an expression like $x + y$. We would probably have to rewrite the program as follows.

$$\begin{aligned}y &= 3 \\x &= 7 - y\end{aligned}$$

Now we can calculate the value of x . It will be seven minus the value currently stored in y . Since y has a three in it, we calculate that x should receive the value of four.

Reversing things, we have the following:

```
x = 7 - y
y = 3
```

Here the first step is to calculate x . We have seven. We look at variable y . Since y has not yet received its value of three, it does not have a value, or it has a value of **garbage**. Since the steps are happening in order, x receives a value of garbage.

Then y receives its value of three. But this does not help x because that step is now ancient history. Computers do not remember what they just did. All they remember is what the variables are right now and what step they are working on.

(For **uninitialized variables** instead of using garbage, Perl uses "" in a string context and 0 in mathematical contexts. Other languages are not always so helpful. You should always **initialize**, which means give a value to each of your variables before using them.)

14.3 Sequence

Sequence is the most important method we have of controlling our programs. In nearly every programming language, steps are written one after the other. The computer is required to execute one step completely and then go on to the next step.

(There is an exception called **pipelining** in which the computer starts working on the next instruction before finishing the first instruction. If done properly, it can result in much faster programs. There is a whole field of study centered around pipelining. For this course we will ignore it. You can learn about it in a class on computer organization or computer architecture.)

14.4 Later

Later we will look at ways to change the sequence of operations. Steps never run backwards, but we can make programs jump from one part of the program to another. This is called **goto**. Programs can be made to choose between two paths based on the results of a calculation. This is called **if/else** or conditional execution. Programs can be made to repeat

instructions over and over. This is called **iteration** or **looping**. There are other things including subroutines and parallel programming.

For now, the important thing to remember is that programs run sequentially, one step after another. The order of the steps is usually very important. Sequence is the foundation of programming.

14.5 Exercises

Exam Question 62 (p.404):

After $x = 5$; $x = 6$; what is the value of x ?

Required Answer:

6

Exercise 63:* What will the following program print?

```
$a = 5;  
$b = 6;  
$a = 10;  
$b = $b + $a;  
$c = $a - 3;  
print $a;  
print $b;  
print $c;
```

Chapter 15

Crafting Formulas

Contents

15.1 Coin Purse	105
15.2 Rough Formula	106
15.3 Improved Formula	106
15.4 Test Your Formula	107

The task of programming frequently involves the creation of formulas. We have the real world in front of us. We know how it operates. We need to explain it to the computer.

But formulas can be scary. It is easy to get Math Anxiety at this point. Relax. Take a deep breath. Let's work through a few examples.

15.1 Coin Purse

Imagine I hand you a coin purse. It contains two quarters, three dimes, and two pennies. What is the total value of the money in the coin purse?

If you are not familiar with US coinage, I may need to tell you that a quarter is worth 25 cents, a dime is worth 10 cents, a nickel is worth 5 cents, and a penny is worth 1 cent. Now what is the total value of the money in the coin purse?

Most people have little or no trouble in answering 82 cents. (You did get 82 cents, right?)

15.2 Rough Formula

Let's put that in a formula. I will tell you $\$Q$, $\$D$, $\$N$, and $\$P$, the number of quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies respectively. I want a formula that converts those four numbers into a total value for the purse.

When I give this problem in my introductory programming class, about half of the students respond with this answer, or something like it:

$$\text{\$val} = \$Q + \$D + \$N + \$P$$

The other half respond with this answer, or something like it:

$$\text{\$val} = 25 * \$Q + 10 * \$D + 5 * \$N + 1 * \$P$$

Both answers are basically right. The first answer is correct if you intended to add up the total **value** based on the **value** of the quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. The second answer is correct if you intended to add up the total **value** based on the **number** of quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. Both are correct.

Go back and look at the problem. It says the $\$Q$ is the number of quarters, not the value of the quarters.

15.3 Improved Formula

Starting with a rough formula, even an incorrect one, we can test it and debug it. Substitute in the numbers that we know should work. That would be called a test case. Look at the answer.

$$82 = 2 + 3 + 0 + 2$$

Nope. I don't think that is right. Hopefully we can see our mistake and say, "Hey, wait a minute, I did not mean to add 2 for quarters. I meant to add 50."

But you've got 2 as your input. If you want to use 50 in your formula, how do you convert it from what you have to what you want? In this case, multiply it by 25 (the value of each quarter).

$$\begin{aligned} 82 &= 25 * 2 + 10 * 3 + 5 * 0 + 1 * 2 \\ 82 &= 50 + 30 + 0 + 2 \end{aligned}$$

That's looking correct.

15.4 Test Your Formula

Are we done yet? Maybe. But generally it is a good idea to work a couple of sample problems by hand and make sure the answers come out right before we decide we are done. Invent some data. Make sure you know what the correct answer should be. Then run your program (or formula) on your data and see if the answer comes out right.

Most of the time, if you came up with the data yourself and you know how you got it, you will be able to quickly see whether your formula is right or not.

Chapter 16

Debugging

Contents

16.1 Syntax Errors	108
16.2 Run-Time Errors	109

Your Perl program looks right to you, but it does not work. What you (are supposed to) do next is called “debugging.” Where do you start in finding the problem and correcting it?

For our examples, we will assume you have written a program called `myprog`.

16.1 Syntax Errors

There are two major kinds of errors: syntax errors and run-time errors.

Syntax errors are flaws in the wording of your program. They include such things as forgetting to end a statement with a semi-colon, or spelling “print” with a capital P as in “Print”. Generally computers are very stupid about figuring out what you mean. They are very good at doing what you say if it is within their power, but you must say it exactly the right way. If you say it wrong, the program will not be able to run.

Syntax errors are caught by the compiler or interpreter, usually before the program even starts to run. They are reported by identifying the line at which the compiler decided that it was hopelessly confused. The actual error is usually just before that point, but it could be many lines earlier if

the mistake is a missing quote mark, for instance.

Many compilers will try to report as many syntax errors as they can find. This is a throw-back behavior more suited to an earlier time in the history of computing, when programs were submitted through a real window using a deck of punched cards and outputs were retrieved four hours later. It was desirable to see as many errors as possible all at once. But those days are gone for most of us.

Focus your attention on only the first error. Later errors could well be part of a domino effect much like taking the wrong turn with driving directions. Once you are off course, the other errors may simply reflect the fact that you are already off course, and may not be actual errors themselves. Focus your attention on only the first error (or other things you know are errors). Fix it and then try running your program again.

16.2 Run-Time Errors

Run-time errors, sometimes called **semantic errors** or **logic errors**, are flaws in the logic of your program. They include things like forgetting to initialize a variable before adding to it, or doing things in the wrong order. The resulting program will still run, but may do the wrong thing.

Run-time errors cannot be reliably caught by the compiler. Probably the best and easiest way of figuring them out is by lacing your program with **print** statements to dump the values of various variables to show you how the program is acting. This effect can also be achieved by using a good debugger using features like single-step and breakpoint. Most languages have debuggers available. Learning to use a debugger can take time and effort. It is usually easier to rely on print statements and to graduate to debuggers after you have developed some skill.

Sometimes it is good to put **assert** statements into your program. In Perl, these are **if** statements that check for things you are sure must be true, and if they are not true, you want your program to stop so you can fix the error. For example:

```
if ( $a > 1 ) { print "assert failed, a>1: a is ($a)"; die }
```

Later, if your program is working and the assert makes your program run too slowly, you can comment it out or delete it.

Print statements and assert tests are sometimes called **scaffolding**. During building construction it is common to set up metal or wooden frames around the building to allow construction workers a place to stand. These frameworks are called scaffolding. When the building is completed, the scaffolding is removed. When your program is debugged, the scaffolding is either deleted or commented out.

In Perl, when you **comment out** something you simply put a # (pound sign) symbol at the start of each line to convert it into a comment. You do not delete the lines so that later if you need to debug that section again, you can just un-comment those lines and use them. Deciding whether to delete or comment out the scaffolding is largely left up to the programmer.

Another phrase is **test bed**. This name is used when your program must be tested in the context of some larger system. For example, your program might rely on other programs or subroutines to create inputs and display outputs. In that case, to test your part of the program you would develop or **stub** out other parts of the program. The stubs are generally highly simplified. Instead of actually asking for input, for example, they might always provide the same input.

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

syntax error: A mistake in the grammar of a program. Syntax errors are detected when the program is first read, before any attempt is made to carry out the instructions.

logic error: A mistake in the semantics of a program. Logic errors are detected when the program runs but does not do what the programmer wanted.

Exam Question 64 (p.404):

What is a logic error?

Acceptable Answer:

a mistake in the semantics of a program

Chapter 17

Games and Projects

At the end of each unit we look at some simple games and projects that use our knowledge of the material just learned. These may make good in-class activities or homework assignments.

At this point you should be able to do programs involving output (chapter 1, page 17), input (chapter 4, page 38), simple variables (chapter 6, page 51), operators (chapter 11, page 89), sequence (chapter 14, page 101), online without inputs (chapter 8, page 63), and random numbers (section 9.1, page 75).

Mad Libs (Offline)

<http://www.eduplace.com/tales/> has a collection of stories, sometimes called Mad Libs. The user is asked for a number of words or phrases, such as “best friend’s name” or “favorite food”. These are then used in a fictional story. Your task is to invent and program a **Mad Lib** using at least five different words or phrases provided by the user. Have fun and be creative!

Slot Machine (Online)

Instead of rolling dice, simulate a slot machine program that displays three pictures, such as lemons, oranges, cherries, the digit seven, or other lucky or unlucky symbols. Find images on the web or create your own.

Magic Eight Ball (Online)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magic_8-Ball

The user thinks of a question and visits your website. You randomly answer yes, no, or maybe. Use a variety of wordings, such as “Definitely” or “I doubt it”. Could use graphics.

Chapter 18

Unit Test: Basics

Contents

18.1 Vocabulary	113
18.2 Exercises: Strings	115
18.3 Exercises: Numeric	116
18.4 Exercises: Numeric Story Problems	116

To demonstrate mastery of this unit, you should be able to write each of these programs (basic string, basic numeric) in 5 to 10 minutes, including testing. As you develop this speed you will be better prepared to master the content in future units and you will be better able to apply your knowledge to opportunities around you.

At this point you should be able to do programs involving output (chapter 1, page 17), input (chapter 4, page 38), simple variables (chapter 6, page 51), operators (chapter 11, page 89), and sequence (chapter 14, page 101).

18.1 Vocabulary

The following words are worth memorizing. They are introduced in earlier chapters of this unit. It is assumed that you know them. They may appear in test questions without further explanation.

sleep: a command that causes your program to stop for some number of seconds before continuing.

semantics: the meaning or substance of things.

syntax: the expressed form of things. Especially the grammar that connects words together.

newline: a special character that tells the computer to begin a new line on its output medium (usually a computer screen).

chomp: a command that removes the last character if it is a newline.

chop: a command that removes the last character of a string, no matter what it is.

lower case: Small letters: abcdefg. Old-time typesetters kept these letters in the lower case on their workbench so they would be easy to reach because they used them more often than the big letters.

upper case: Big letters: ABCDEFG. Also called capital letters. Old-time typesetters kept these letters in the higher case on their workbench because they were less often used so it was okay to have to reach a bit to get them.

case sensitive: Situations where the difference between upper and lower case makes a difference. Is “hello” the same as “HELLO”? If so, we are not case sensitive. If they are different, then we **are** case sensitive.

white space: Characters that are invisible. Examples include spacebar, tab, and newline. They are called “white” because they do not use any ink.

syntax error: A mistake in the grammar of a program. Syntax errors are detected when the program is first read, before any attempt is made to carry out the instructions.

logic error: A mistake in the semantics of a program. Logic errors are detected when the program runs but does not do what the programmer wanted.

local: is a program running at the computer where you are sitting. It is not running on the web.

offline: means a program that is not running on the web.

online: means a program that *is* running on the web.

web server: is a computer that hosts webpages and web-based programs.

rand: a command that returns a random number between zero and one, or between zero and the limit specified.

int: a command that turns a non-integer into an integer by dropping all parts after the decimal. It turns 3.1415 into 3.

index.cgi: a standard file name for online programs. A few other names are possible but this is the one we will use throughout this course.

18.2 Exercises: Strings

Things to watch out for: (a) `\n` and `/n` are not the same. (b) `/` and `\` are not the same.

Pure Output

Exercise 65: Write a program to do the following. Print out the word “Hippopotamus” five times. Don’t worry about spacing or newlines.

Basic Strings: Input / `chomp`

Exercise 66:* Prompt for and read in the name of an animal. Print on one line: “I think (animal) would make a nice pet.” where (animal) is replaced by the name that was just read.

Exercise 67:* Prompt for and read in the name of a zoo animal. Print on one line: “I love to see the (animal) at the zoo.” where (animal) is replaced by the zoo animal that was just read.

Exercise 68: Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a name. On one line print “Hello, X, how are you?” where the letter X is replaced by the name that was read in.

Exercise 69: Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a name. On one line, print “I think (name) is a lovely name!” where (name) is replaced by the name that was just read.

Exercise 70: Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in the name of a person. Print on one line: “I would say that (name) is my best friend.” where (name) is replaced by the name that was just read.

Exercise 71:* Prompt for and read in a kind of animal. Prompt for and read in a name. Print out this story (or very similar). “Yesterday I took my

pet (animal) to school. My friend (name) laughed all day.”

18.3 Exercises: Numeric

Things to watch out for: (a) `\n` and `/n` are not the same. (b) `/` and `\` are not the same. (c) `"$x+$y"` and `$x+$y` are not the same.

Basic Numeric: Input and Simple Calculation

Exercise 72:* Prompt for and read in a number. Add 5. Print the result.

Exercise 73:* Prompt for and read in a number. Subtract 10. Print the result.

Exercise 74:* Prompt for and read in a number. Multiply by 2. Print the result.

Exercise 75:* Prompt for and read in two numbers. Add them. Print the result.

Exercise 76:* Prompt for and read in a number. Double it. Print the result.

Exercise 77:* Prompt for and read in a number. Tell what number comes before it. Tell what number comes after it.

Exercise 78:* Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. Do it again. Do it again. Add the three numbers together. Print out the answer.

Exercise 79: Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. Multiply it by itself and print the result.

18.4 Exercises: Numeric Story Problems

Exercise 80:* Write a program to do the following. An airplane has 240 seats. Ask how many passengers are on board. Read in the number. Calculate how many seats are empty. Report the answer.

Exercise 81:* Convert miles to kilometers. Assume that one mile is 1.6 kilometers. Prompt for and read in miles. Calculate the answer in kilome-

ters. Print the result in a helpful way.

Exercise 82:* A family plans to save ten percent of its income. Prompt for and read in numeric values for two paychecks (husband's and wife's). Print the total savings in a helpful way.

Exercise 83:* Phonecard. Prompt for and read in values for Connect Fee, Per-Minute Rate, and Minutes Connected. Calculate and print the cost of the call. Example: connect is 0.50, per-minute is 0.05, minutes is 20, the total cost would be 1.50. Don't worry about formatting the number. If 1.50 comes out looking like 1.5, that's okay.

Exercise 84: Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in values for Starting Balance, Deposits, and Withdrawals. Calculate and print the Ending Balance.

Exercise 85: Temperature. Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a temperature in Celsius. Convert it to Fahrenheit and print the result in a friendly and helpful way. The formula to get Fahrenheit from Celsius is: $F=32+9/5*C$.

Exercise 86: Knots. Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a speed in miles per hour. Convert it to knots and print the result. Assume that one mile per hour is equal to 0.868976 knots.

Exercise 87: Prompt for and read in the score for Alvin. Prompt for and read in a score for Betty. Prompt for and read in a score for Charles. Report the average score.

Exercise 88: GPA. Prompt for and read in numeric values for three grades. Calculate the average and print it. Include helpful prompts and descriptive text.

Exercise 89: Write a program to do the following. Amy, Bob, and Cathy are having a party for the children of an orphanage. They each bring cookies to divide evenly among the children. Find out how many cookies each person brought. Report the total. Find out how many children are at the orphanage. Report how many whole cookies each child can receive. Tell how many cookies are left over. (Assume all the cookies are identical.)

Unit IV

Decisions: Numeric

Chapter 19

The If Statement

Contents

19.1 Syntax	119
19.2 Coordinated Alternatives	120
19.3 Exercises	120

Computers must be able to respond to changing needs. This can be done by using an **if** statement. The result is that the computer program chooses to do something special or to skip it. The special code is followed in case the condition turns out to be **True**. Otherwise it is simply skipped.

19.1 Syntax

The syntax of the **if** statement is as follows:

```
if ( condition ) { special }
```

if is the literal word “if”.

Parentheses surround the condition. The condition is a mathematical expression that evaluates to either **True** or **False**. Chapter [20](#) (page [121](#)) discusses these expressions in detail. Here are some examples.

```
if ( $count < 100 ) ...  
if ( $name eq "Joe" ) ...
```



```
if ( $speed > 55 && $speed < 70 ) ...
```

The special code must be enclosed in curly braces. The special code is a block of instructions to be carried out if the condition is true.

19.2 Coordinated Alternatives

We can handle several alternatives by the coordinated use of several **if** statements.

```
if ( $x == 1 ) { print "x is one" }
if ( $x != 1 ) { print "x is not one" }
```

19.3 Exercises

Exercise 90:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = 9; $y = 3;
if ( $x < $y ) { print "$x is less than $y." }
if ( $x > $y ) { print "$x is greater than $y." }
if ( $x == $y ) { print "$x is equal to $y." }
```

Exercise 91:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = "hello"; $y = "world";
if ( $x < $y ) { print "$x is less than $y." }
if ( $x > $y ) { print "$x is greater than $y." }
if ( $x == $y ) { print "$x is equal to $y." }
```

Exercise 92:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = 9; $y = 3;
if ( $x < $y ) { print "$x is less than $y." }
if ( $x > $y ) { print "$x is greater than $y." }
if ( $x = $y ) { print "$x is equal to $y." }
```

Programming exercises can be found in chapter [30](#) (page [166](#)).

Chapter 20

Numeric Comparison

Contents

20.1 Numeric Operators	122
20.2 Exercises	123

In the previous chapter we introduced decision making by the computer. In their typical form, decisions either select one of several alternative blocks or decisions cause some block of actions to happen repeatedly. The current chapter focuses on the decisions themselves. Decisions are made using **Boolean** operations.

Mathematical calculations generally result in numeric answers, like $3+2*5$ is 13. But some calculations result in answers that are True or False. For example, $x < 5$ is True if x is less than 5, and False otherwise.

Calculations that result in True and False are called **Boolean**, after George Boole, a pioneer in computer logic. Their primary use is in things like **if** statements.

See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boole>.

Perl tends to output a 1 to indicate True and a "" (the empty string) to indicate False. Many other languages use 0 to indicate False.

Perl regards these things as False: the empty string, the zero string, and all numeric zeros. Specifically, "", "0", 0, 0., 0.0, 0.00, etc.

Perl regards these things as True: all other strings and all non-zero numbers.

20.1 Numeric Operators

We can compare two things to see which is less or greater, or whether they are equal. For these operators, the answer is always True or False.

For numbers we use the following symbols.

numeric	what it means
<code>\$A < \$B</code>	is A less than B ?
<code>\$A <= \$B</code>	is A less than or equal to B ?
<code>\$A > \$B</code>	is A greater than B ?
<code>\$A >= \$B</code>	is A greater than or equal to B ?
<code>\$A => \$B</code>	oops: means something else
<code>\$A == \$B</code>	is A equal to B ?
<code>\$A = \$B</code>	oops: means copy B into A
<code>\$A != \$B</code>	is A different than B ?

If we say `$a < $b`, we mean “is `$a` less than `$b`?”

`$x = 3 < 5`; makes `$x` equal to 1 because “three is less than five” is True, and 1 is the thing Perl uses to indicate True.

`$x = 6 < 5`; makes `$x` equal to "" because “six is less than five” is False, and "" is the thing Perl uses to indicate False.

We use `<=` for “less than or equal to” because the \leq symbol is not found on most computer keyboards.

We use `>=` for “greater than or equal to” because the \geq symbol is not found on most computer keyboards.

Note: It is tempting to write `=>` but that means something different.

We use `==` for “equal to” because the `=` symbol is already being used for another purpose (assignment). `$a=$b` means to copy the value from `$b` and store it into variable `$a`. `$a==$b` means to compare `$a` and `$b` and answer with True if they are mathematically equal and False if they are mathematically different.

We use `!=` for “not equal to” because the \neq symbol is not found on most computer keyboards. Some computer languages use `<>` (less than or greater than) to mean not equal, but `!=` will be used in this course.

All the comparisons in this chapter are based on mathematical (numeric) value.

When comparing strings (as opposed to numbers), Perl uses alphabetic operators: `lt`, `le`, `gt`, `ge`, `eq`, and `ne`, instead of the mathematical symbols. We will consider these in chapter 26 (page 143).

20.2 Exercises

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

True: All non-zero numbers and non-zero strings, including negative ones, are regarded as being True.

Exam Question 93 (p.407):

What numeric values represent True?

Acceptable Answer:

any non-zero number

Exam Question 94 (p.407):

What string values represent True?

Acceptable Answer:

any non-empty string

False: Zero and the empty string are regarded as being False.

Exam Question 95 (p.407):

What numeric values represent False?

Acceptable Answer:

zero

Exam Question 96 (p.407):

What string values represent False?

Acceptable Answer:

the empty string

Exercise 97:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = 9;
$y = 3;
print "a" . ( $x < $y ) . "\n";
print "b" . ( $x > $y ) . "\n";
print "c" . ( $x == $y ) . "\n";
```

Chapter 21

Two Alternatives: The Else Statement

Contents

21.1 Syntax	124
21.2 Completeness	125
21.3 Exercises	125

In chapter 19 (page 119) we learned that the `if` statement can be used to make special-case behaviors part of the program. We learned that we can say:

```
if ( $x == 1 ) { print "x is one" }
if ( $x != 1 ) { print "x is not one" }
```

In this chapter we introduce `else` as a way to do the same thing without deciding twice.

```
if ( $x == 1 ) { print "x is one" }
else { print "x is not one" }
```

21.1 Syntax

The syntax of the `else` option is as follows:

```
if ( condition ) { truepart } else { falsepart }
```

else cannot be used on its own. It must immediately follow an **if** statement. It then becomes part of that **if** statement and provides the alternative that will happen when the condition is not satisfied.

Here is the placement rule: Each “else” statement is a continuation of the previous “if” statement, which it must immediately follow. An “else” statement that does not immediately follow an “if” statement is a syntax error.

21.2 Completeness

Else is important because it helps us avoid overlooking some alternative. For example, if you drive less than 55 you are fine. If you drive more than 55, you are “fined.”

```
if ( $speed > 55 ) { print "you are FINED." }
if ( $speed < 55 ) { print "you are fine." }
```

What if you drive exactly 55? We accidentally left out that alternative so nothing will print. It would be safer to have a catch-all in the program.

```
if ( $speed > 55 ) { print "you are FINED." }
else { print "you are fine." }
```

This way we know we have covered every case.

21.3 Exercises

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

default: a value or activity that is used when no other value or activity is specified. In an if statement, else identifies the default action.

Exam Question 98 (p.408):

What does default mean?

Acceptable Answer:

A value that is used if nothing has been specified.

Exercise 99:* What will the following program print? (Be careful.)

```
$x = 3; $y = 9;  
if ( $x < $y ) { print "$x is less than $y." }  
if ( $x > $y ) { print "$x is greater than $y." }  
else { print "$x is equal to $y." }
```

Programming exercises can be found in chapter [30](#) (page [166](#)).

Chapter 22

Block Structure

Some years ago when I learned programming there was a new technology that was all the rage. It was called “structured programming.” (Today the rage is “object-oriented programming.”)

It was a response to a now-famous letter published in 1968 by computing pioneer Edsger Dijkstra entitled “Go To Statement Considered Harmful.”

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goto_considered_harmful.

The **Go To** (or **goto**, or **branch**) statement gives great power to computer programming. It is fundamental. It allows programs to repeat instructions over and over. It allows programs to select one group of instructions instead of another group. But it is a sharp knife and most of us should not run with it lest we hurt ourselves. Specifically, it increases the opportunity for bugs in our programs, and some of those bugs are very difficult to find and eliminate.

Code written with **goto** statements can become very confusing, with the sequence of control jumping around from place to place. Such code is often called **spaghetti code** because it is hard to tell where it is coming from or going to, much like trying to follow the noodles in spaghetti.

The response was to increasingly design computer languages that avoided unrestricted goto statements by using safer alternatives. These safer alternatives came to be called structured programming and relied on considering programs to be assembled from simpler blocks of code.

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structured_programming.

At this point in the history of programming, structured programming has advanced from being the next new thing to being so pervasive that it is not even named. It is just assumed.

What's a Block?

Briefly, a block is a collection of code that has exactly one way in and one way out. This keeps things organized so spaghetti code does not result.

How then do we create alternatives, where two ways (or more) exist? It is done through **nesting**.

We want the power of the **goto** statement without the associated bug-creation dangers. Structured programming gives us that.

A linear sequence of statements has one way in and one way out. It makes a natural block. Therefore it can be treated as though it were a single statement. Curly braces, `{}`, are used in Perl and some other languages to collect a sequence of statements into a block.

In chapter 19 (page 119) we introduced the **if/else** control structure. In chapter 32 (page 179) we consider the **while** and **for** control structures.

The **if/else** control structure has one way in and one way out. While the **if/else** is in progress there are several directions things could go, but each of them is also a block nested inside the **if** statement, each with one way in and one way out.

The **while** loop and the **for** loop are also control structures with one way in and one way out. There are some restricted **goto** statements available for use within loops. Those are **next**, **last**, and **redo**.

Because a block acts as though it were a single statement, it can be used within another block. We say the blocks can be **nested**.

In Perl, because a block ends with `}`, you can generally skip putting a semi-colon before or after a curly brace. Leaving out the semi-colons when not needed can improve readability by reducing clutter in your program.

Chapter 23

Programming Style

Contents

23.1 Remove Useless Code	130
23.2 Avoid Repeated Code	130
23.3 Indentation	131
23.4 Special Numbers	132
23.5 Internationalization (i18n)*	133

We introduced style in chapter 13 (page 96). We continue and expand our discussion here.

Complexity can paralyze us. Yet most computer programs are complex. Programmers deal with that complexity several ways. In this chapter we examine the role of Programming Style in managing complexity. In chapter 43 (page 228) we look at Subroutines as another tool against complexity.

Computers do not care much how a program is written as long as it parses correctly. Humans, on the other hand, benefit greatly from having everyone else follow rules that we call “Programming Style.” Most programming shops (places of employment for programmers) have adopted rules of style that all programmers are expected or required to obey. These rules make everyone’s code easier to read and understand. The rules in this chapter are my rules.

23.1 Remove Useless Code

If a line of code does not contribute to the correct operation of a program, it should be removed. Keep your code clean and tight.

One reason is that such lines cause the program to run more slowly, but usually the impact is so small as to not matter.

The other reason is that such lines cause future programmers to wonder why they are there. Programmers are looking for meaning. If you initialize a variable and then do not use it, they are left to scratch their heads and try to figure out what is really supposed to be going on.

If a statement does not contribute to the correct operation of your program, remove it. If you still think it should be there, comment it to explain why.

23.2 Avoid Repeated Code

If you are doing the same thing in more than one place, look for a way to reduce it down to only happening once. Partly this is for efficiency, but more importantly it is to consolidate where each piece of code appears so it is easier to keep up to date. That way, when changes are required, they only need to be made in one place, not several.

Here is an example that uses the same string literal twice.

```
if ( $light eq "Green" ) {  
    print "It is okay to go." }  
elsif ( $light eq "Yellow" ) {  
    print "It is okay to go." }  
else { print "You must stop." }
```

The phrase, "It is okay to go.", is repeated. This can be avoided in several ways.

We may be able to make a more complicated comparison.

```
if ( $light eq "Green" or $light eq "Yellow" ) {  
    print "It is okay to go." }  
else {  
    print "You must stop." }
```

We can catch the wording and then reuse it.

```
$go = "It is okay to go.";
$stop = "You must stop.";
if ( $light eq "Green" ) { print $go }
elsif ( $light eq "Yellow" ) { print $go }
else { print $stop }
```

The best approach varies from case to case, but the principle is to avoid repeating things, especially things that might change in the future.

We could show examples that use whole blocks of code repeatedly, but hopefully you get the idea. Subroutines are a good solution to some cases of repetition.

23.3 Indentation

Structured programming involves organizing your code into blocks. An if/else statement includes two blocks inside itself: first, the true block, and second, the false block.

By convention, inner blocks are indented several spaces in comparison to the outer block of which they are a part.

In the following example, the `print` statement is nested inside the `while` loop. For that reason, we traditionally indent it a few spaces. All lines at that same level of nesting should have the same amount of indentation. It makes reading the code easier.

```
$x = 1;
while ( $x <= 100 ) {
    print "$x\n";
    $x++; }
print "done!\n";
```

In the following example, the if/else statement contains nested `print` statements.

```
if ( $speed <= 55 ) {
```

```
    print "Have a nice day!\n";  
  } else {  
    print "Slow down please!\n";  
  }
```

In the following example, the closing curly braces have been moved a bit. See whether you think the code is as easy to understand.

```
if ( $speed <= 55 ) {  
  print "Have a nice day!\n"; }  
else {  
  print "Slow down please!\n"; }
```

For programs submitted to me, it is generally recommended to move the closing curly brace up to the preceding line unless you believe it makes the program more difficult to read and understand.

In the following example, the closing curly braces have been moved again. See whether you think the code is as easy to understand.

```
if ( $speed <= 55 )  
{  
  print "Have a nice day!\n";  
}  
else  
{  
  print "Slow down please!\n";  
}
```

Personally, I find this style a lot more tiresome and difficult to work with. Mostly it is difficult for me because I cannot fit as much of the program on my screen. It's like watching television with a magnifying glass. I want to see the big picture. This obscures it for me. Compact is usually better.

23.4 Special Numbers

Often a program will rely on certain numbers to make decisions, control loops and influence other aspects. The use of these numbers is typically

buried in the code. Sometimes the numbers themselves are buried in the code. Invisibility is generally a bad thing. It is better to assign important numbers to variables (or constants) at the top of the program. Consider this example:

```
for ( $i = 1; $i <= 100; $i++ ) { print "$i\n" }
```

Compare it to this:

```
$Limit = 100;
...
for ( $i = 1; $i <= $Limit; $i++ ) { print "$i\n" }
```

The goal here is to easily modify the program in the future. Let's say that due to a decision by senior management, the 100 limit no longer applies, but has been replaced by a 250 limit. To fix the program, you would need to look for every occurrence of 100 and change it (if appropriate) to 250. Or you could just change the one occurrence.

By convention, such variable names for special variables like this one are written with an initial upper-case letter (e.g., `$Limit`). Ordinary variable names start with a lower-case letter (e.g., `$limit`).

The example above may not look so bad, but think about this:

```
for ( $i = 1; $i < 101; $i++ ) { print "$i\n" }
```

The code produces the same output, but there is no 100 present. How do you find it to change it to 251? You would have to read through every line of code. It is much easier if you can do a search to limit the things you must look at.

The goal is to make it easy to fix the program when future changes are needed. If you decide to make something a certain color, ask yourself whether that color might ever need to be changed. If so, make it a variable and assign it a value at the top of your program.

23.5 Internationalization (i18n)*

Special numbers is the tip of the iceberg. What about changing the words as well? There is increasingly a recognition that we can and should separate

the logic of the program from the presentation of the user interface. What that means is the underlying programming is probably true whether you are writing your program to be used in China, England, France, or Brasil. But the presentation, or what the user actually sees, may vary a lot.

Internationalization is the porting of your program into the international world. Because that word is sooo long, a common abbreviation has arisen. **i18n** (eye eighteen en) stands for the letter **i** followed by 18 other letters followed by the letter **n**. Eye 18 N means internationalization.

What changes might be required? First of all, the prompt strings may need to change. Instead of saying “Please enter a number” you might need to say it in Spanish or Chinese.

A common way to approach this is to number the strings and put them in a database. Translated strings could be added. Then the specification of a language (or culture) and string number lets us look up and use the proper wording.

What else? Well, the data used might vary. If we are doing personal names in English we may well assume that people have a first, middle, and last name. Maybe also a suffix like Junior. Maybe also a title like Reverend or Doctor. But some cultures use several middle names. In Hawaii it is common to have three middle names. In Spain the family name is a combination from the father’s side and the mother’s side. Names reflect culture. It may be necessary to have totally different code for names. Or maybe we really only need three things: (a) the full legal name, (b) the sorting name, and (c) the familiar name.

The character set may need to change. Early programming was done using ASCII and EBCDIC. ASCII is the American Standard Code for Information Interchange. EBCDIC is Extended Binary Coded Decimal Interchange Code. EBCDIC is an IBM code that grew out of the Hollerith codes that were used for the 1890 Census in the United States. ASCII used seven bits per character. Extended ASCII uses eight bits per character. Unicode uses 16 bits. Consult the web for lots of interesting information.

ASCII: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ASCII>

EBCDIC: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ebcdic>

Hollerith: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollerith>

UNICODE: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unicode>

Chapter 24

Many Alternatives: Elsif

Contents

24.1 else vs elsif	136
24.2 Exercises	136

It is common to have more than two choices. There is an **elsif** option that can be helpful. (Notice that **elsif** is not quite spelled the way you might guess.) Here is an example.

```
if ( $speed <= 55 ) { case1 }
elsif ( $speed <= 70 ) { case2 }
elsif ( $speed <= 90 ) { case3 }
else { case4 }
```

For this example, if speed is 80 the first condition, being less than or equal to 55, is false. Therefore case1 is skipped. Next the program checks for less than or equal to 70. That is also false so case2 is skipped. Next the program checks for less than or equal to 90. This is true so case3 is taken. Because case3 was taken, case4 is skipped.

Sometimes this is called an **else/if** or **elsif ladder**.

Here is the revised placement rule: Each line that starts with “els” (elsif or else) is a continuation of the previous “if” statement. It must immediately follow an “if” or “elsif” statement. An “elsif” or “else” statement that does not immediately follow an “if” or “elsif” statement is a syntax error.

Some languages use **switch** and **case** to do what Perl achieves with **elsif**.

24.1 else vs elsif

```
if ( cond ) { body1 } else { body2 }
```

This is the **if/else** statement. If the condition is true then body1 is executed. If not then body2 is executed.

```
if (cond) { body1 } elsif (cond) { body2 } ... else { bodyN }
```

This is the **if/elsif/else** statement. The if and elsif parts are checked, one by one, until a true is found. The matching body is executed. If nothing is true, the else body is executed.

24.2 Exercises

Exercise 100:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = 3; $y = 9;
if ( $x < $y ) { print "$x is less than $y." }
elsif ( $x > $y ) { print "$x is greater than $y." }
else { print "$x is equal to $y." }
```

Exercise 101:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = 5;
if ( $x < 3 ) { print "x is really small." }
elsif ( $x < 4 ) { print "x is small." }
elsif ( $x < 5 ) { print "x is medium." }
elsif ( $x < 6 ) { print "x is large." }
elsif ( $x < 7 ) { print "x is really large." }
else { print "x is huge." }
```

Exercise 102:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = 5;
if ( $x < 3 ) { print "x is really small." }
if ( $x < 4 ) { print "x is small." }
```

```
if ( $x < 5 ) { print "x is medium." }
if ( $x < 6 ) { print "x is large." }
if ( $x < 7 ) { print "x is really large." }
else { print "x is huge" }
```

Exercise 103:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = 5;
if ( $x < 4 ) { print "a." }
elseif ( $x < 6 ) { print "b." }
elseif ( $x > 4 ) { print "c." }
else { print "d." }
if ( $x > 6 ) { print "e." }
elseif ( $x < 4 ) { print "f." }
elseif ( $x < 5 ) { print "g." }
if ( $x < 6 ) { print "h." }
elseif ( $x > 4 ) { print "i." }
if ( $x > 6 ) { print "j." }
elseif ( $x > 5 ) { print "k." }
elseif ( $x < 4 ) { print "l." }
if ( $x > 6 ) { print "m." }
else { print "n." }
```

Programming exercises can be found in [chapter 30](#) (page 166).

Unit V

Decisions: Other

Chapter 25

And, Or, Xor, Not

Contents

25.1 Logical And	140
25.2 Logical Or	141
25.3 Exclusive Or	141
25.4 Not	142

To this point we have focused on the comparison operators and not really talked much about how they could be combined into larger and more precise statements.

We can begin with a classic statement of mathematics. When some number x is between two other numbers, such as 3 and 5, we can write

$$3 < x < 5$$

Unfortunately, we cannot write it this way for the computer. As we will see in the precedence chapter ([29](#), page [161](#)), first we would see if 3 is less than x . The result would be True or False. Then we would check to see if True (or False) is less than 5. This is sure to lead to trouble.

We could nest some `if` statements.

```
if ( 3 < $x ) { if ( $x < 5 ) { ... } }
```

That works.

It is good to have an alternative to nested `if` statements. Another approach is to say it like this.

```
if ( 3 < $x and $x < 5 ) { ... }
```

This will compare 3 with x, and then x with 5, as we actually intended. The two results will then be combined using the **and** operator.

The standard **Boolean** connectives are **and**, **or**, and **not**.

Because we have nesting, we do not actually need Boolean connectives, but they often can help by making our programs more concise and clear.

25.1 Logical And

We have **and** (`&&`), also called “**logical and**” (as distinct from “**bitwise and**”).

What does **and** mean? We are combining two quantities. How do we do it?

When we say “the sky is blue and I am happy,” we are combining two statements. The first is “the sky is blue.” The second is “I am happy.” We can determine the truth of each statement separately. Look outside. Is the sky blue? If so, then the truth value of the first statement is True.

When both statements are true, the resulting compound statement is true. If either statement is false, the resulting compound statement is false. That is the way that **and** works.

The **truth table** for **and** looks like this. (We can also use the word **and** instead of the ampersands `&&`.)

expression	expression	value
1 && 1	1 and 1	1
1 && 0	1 and 0	0
0 && 1	0 and 1	0
0 && 0	0 and 0	0

We have a convention for what to do if the input numbers are not one or zero. All non-zero numbers are treated as “true.” Only zero is treated as “false.” In particular, both positive **and** negative numbers are “true.”

Thus, `5&&0` is false, `-7&&12` is true, and `0&&4` is false.

25.2 Logical Or

We have **or** (`||`), also called “logical or” (as distinct from “bitwise or”). When the answer is yes, we use 1 (one), representing true. When the answer is no, we use 0 (zero), representing false.

The `|` symbol on my keyboard is found right above the Enter key and right below the Backspace key. It is also called **pipe** or **broken pipe** or **vertical bar** or **bar**.

What does **or** mean? We are combining two quantities. How do we do it?

When we say “the sky is blue or I am happy,” we are combining two statements. When either statement is true, the resulting compound statement is true. If both statements are false, the resulting compound statement is false. That is the way that **or** works.

The **truth table** for **or** looks like this. (We can also use the word **or** instead of the vertical bars `||`.)

expression	expression	value
1 1	1 or 1	1
1 0	1 or 0	1
0 1	0 or 1	1
0 0	0 or 0	0

Once again, non-zero inputs are treated as “true.” Only zero is treated as “false.”

Thus, `5||0` is true, `-7||12` is true, `0||4` is true, and `0||0` is false.

This version of **or** is also called **inclusive or** because it includes the case where both statements are true. In legal writing it is often phrased “and/or.” There is another version of **or** called **exclusive or**.

25.3 Exclusive Or

We have **exclusive or** whose **truth table** looks like this:

expression	value
1 xor 1	0
1 xor 0	1
0 xor 1	1
0 xor 0	0

With **exclusive or** (**xor**) the result is true when exactly one statement or the other, but not both, is true. Exclusive or is also called **parity**. It is true if an odd number of things were true. It is false if an even number of things were true.

expression	value
1 xor 1 xor 1	1
1 xor 0 xor 1	0
0 xor 1 xor 1	0
0 xor 0 xor 1	1

If you have a large room with light switches at each door, frequently they are wired in an **xor** arrangement, so that flipping any one switch will change the light (from on to off or vice versa).

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiway_switching.

and, **&&**, **or**, **||**, and **xor** are available as logical operators. They are also available in slightly different form as bitwise operators. These are discussed in the appendix on binary numbers.

25.4 Not

The unary operator **not** can be included to turn a True into a False or vice versa.

Areas for Caution*

C and Perl behave slightly differently. In C, `5||3` is true, represented by 1. In Perl the answer is also true, but it is represented by 5, the number at which short circuit took over. Language designers tend to agree on basic principles but vary on some details. When programming in a new language it is smart to verify that things work as expected before writing much code.

Chapter 26

String Comparison

Contents

26.1 Several Kinds of Equal	143
26.2 Comparison Operators	144
26.3 Equals, Not Equals, and Newlines	145
26.4 Upper Case, Lower Case	146
26.5 A-I, J-R, S-Z, etc.	147
26.6 Barewords	149
26.7 Exercises	149

Strings have different operators than numbers do. If we use the numeric operator, Perl will convert the string into a number before doing the comparison. In most cases, the number will be zero. This can lead to confusing results.

26.1 Several Kinds of Equal

Most people would agree that “5.0” is equal to “5.” To know this we would have to know the meaning of those characters. A child might not know they mean the same thing.

There are things that are equal in meaning but not equal in expression. We may say that a “stone” is equal to a “rock,” but the word “stone” does not have the same letters in the same order as does the word “rock.” Nor does “5.0” have the same characters as “5.”

In this chapter we expand on the distinction between mathematical equality and another kind that is called **lexicographic**. A **lexicon** is a dictionary. Lexicographic comparison is based on the order of words in the dictionary. Another word we use in this context is **literal**, which literally means letter by letter.

26.2 Comparison Operators

Here is a table that lists the operators we use to compare strings. Notice that they are composed of letters but the numeric comparison operators were composed of mathematical symbols like $<$.

numeric	string
$<$	lt
$<=$	le
$>$	gt
$>=$	ge
$==$	eq
$!=$	ne

What does it mean for one string to be less than another? We mean that it appears first in the dictionary. Consider the counting numbers: 1, 2, 3. By saying $1 < 3$ we are saying that 1 comes before 3. Similarly, by saying `"eight" lt "five"` we are saying that the word `"eight"` appears earlier in the dictionary than does the word `"five"`.

We can compare any two strings as follows. We begin with the first letter (or character) of each string. If they are different, we are done, and the string whose character is earlier in the alphabet is regarded as less than the string whose character comes later in the alphabet.

If they are the same, we move along to the next character and repeat the process. This continues until a difference is found, or until both strings end at the same time, or until one string ends but the other does not.

The statement `"eight" lt "eighty"` is true because the word `"eighty"` would appear after the word `"eight"` in the dictionary.

When does “eight” come before “seven”? In the dictionary.

Even more interestingly, “9” is less than “10” numerically, but “10” is less than “9” lexicographically. Numerically we are comparing the values. Lexicographically we are comparing the characters that express those values.

26.3 Equals, Not Equals, and Newlines

We use the operators **eq** and **ne** to test for equality. Two strings are equal if they have exactly the same characters in exactly the same order.

"hello" and "hello" are equal.

"hello" and "hello " are not equal.

"hello" and "hello\n" are not equal.

Even something as insignificant as an extra space changes things from equal to not.

Remember **chomp**? We introduced it back in chapter 4 (page 38). It is normally used together with `<STDIN>` to remove the newline (`\n`) that comes at the end of things typed in at the keyboard.

Consider this program:

```
$password = "topsecret";
$attempt = <STDIN>;
if ( $attempt eq $password ) { success }
else { failure }
```

If the program runs and the user types in “topsecret” and presses enter, the result will be failure. That is because `$attempt` will contain the letters “topsecret\n” including the newline.

The thing to remember is that inputs generally come with newlines at the end. If you are comparing to something already known, you need to account for the newline, either by removing it from the input, or by including it with the thing already known.

The following program will work because the newline is added to the thing already known.

```
$password = "topsecret\n";
$attempt = <STDIN>;
```

```
if ( $attempt eq $password ) { success }
else { failure }
```

The following program will work because the newline is removed from the input.

```
$password = "topsecret";
chomp ( $attempt = <STDIN> );
if ( $attempt eq $password ) { success }
else { failure }
```

26.4 Upper Case, Lower Case

Capital letters can be an area of difficulty. Should upper-case **E** be treated the same as lower-case **e**? Fortunately we can take control of the situation.

uc converts a string to **upper case**.

```
$name = "MacDonald";
$name2 = uc ( $name ) ;# parens are optional
print $name2; # prints MACDONALD
```

lc converts a string to **lower case**.

```
$name = "MacDonald";
$name2 = lc ( $name ) ;# parens are optional
print $name2; # prints macdonald
```

If you are bringing in input and want to immediately convert it to upper or lower case, you can use this short cut and do it in one step instead of two.

```
$name1 = lc <STDIN> ;# convert input to lower case
$name2 = uc <STDIN> ;# convert input to upper case
```

However, if you do it this way, the original input is lost. If you need the original input, use a two-step process.

```

$name1a = <STDIN> ;# capture the original input
$name1b = lc $name1a ;# convert input to lower case
$name2a = <STDIN> ;# capture the original input
$name2b = uc $name2a ;# convert input to upper case

```

26.5 A-I, J-R, S-Z, etc.

How might we compare strings?

Imagine a school where students are assigned to advisors depending on their last name. Students from A-I go to Smith. Students from J-R go to Jones. Students from S-Z go to Knight.

Here is the first attempt at such a program. (It is wrong, by the way.)

```

if ( $name ge "A" && $name le "I" ) { ... Smith ... }
if ( $name ge "J" && $name le "R" ) { ... Jones ... }
if ( $name ge "S" && $name le "Z" ) { ... Knight ... }

```

This looks like a fairly direct translation of the problem. The error is that `$name` is not the first letter of the name. It is the entire name. A name like “Ivan” is not equal to “I”. In fact, the program above will correctly assign all students except those whose names start with “I”, “R”, or “Z”.

When we said “A-I” we meant to include all students whose names start with any of those letters, including names like “Ivan.” But “Ivan” is not less than or equal to “I.” This is an example of an implicit requirement. Although the problem literally says “A” through “I” it means something slightly more inclusive. Therefore, we cannot use `le "I"` as our decision.

There are two solutions. (1) Find a way to isolate the first letter of the name. We will see how to do this when we consider regular expressions in chapter 61 (page 327). (2) Expand the boundaries to cover more names. In this chapter we will take this second approach.

```

if ( $name ge "A" && $name le "Izz" ) { ... Smith ... }
if ( $name ge "J" && $name le "Rzz" ) { ... Jones ... }
if ( $name ge "S" && $name le "Zzz" ) { ... Knight ... }

```

Notice we have added “zz” to the boundary. Now a name like “Ivan” will be correctly decided because “Ivan” is less than or equal to “Izz”.

Technically we have not covered all possible names, but we have certainly covered all likely names. Missing still are names that start with “Izz” for instance. Maybe there is someone named “Izzy.” That could mess us up. But in general, “Izz” should suffice.

Still better would be an approach that really covers the whole range including highly improbable names.

We are making the code more accurate, but we are also making the code harder to understand. At some point we cross the line from clear to cryptic. At that point (or sooner) we need to add some comments to help explain what we are trying to do.

(Ideally the test for A-I would use the exact letters A and I, but since that is not possible, we need to explain what we are doing.)

```
# is name in the A-I range?
if ( $name ge "A" && $name lt "J" ) { ... Smith ... }
# is name in the J-R range?
if ( $name ge "J" && $name lt "S" ) { ... Jones ... }
# is name in the S-Z range?
if ( $name ge "S" && $name le "Zzz" ) { ... Knight ... }
```

We don’t have anything after “Zzz” such that we could say strictly less than. But that suggests a simplification. There *is* nothing after “Zzz” so why bother checking? Likewise there is nothing before “A” so why bother checking that either?

```
# is name in the A-I range?
if ( $name lt "J" ) { ... Smith ... }
# is name in the J-R range?
if ( $name ge "J" && $name lt "S" ) { ... Jones ... }
# is name in the S-Z range?
if ( $name ge "S" ) { ... Knight ... }
```

Another short cut is begging to be taken. Twice we compare name against “J” and twice we compare name against “S”. We could do that with `else`-type statements.

```
# is name in the A-I range?
```

```

if ( $name lt "J" ) { ... Smith ... }
# is name in the J-R range?
elsif ( $name lt "S" ) { ... Jones ... }
# is name in the S-Z range?
else { ... Knight ... }

```

The thing to remember is this: When we cannot explicitly state the end of the range, perhaps we should pick the first thing beyond the range and use that as our standard instead. `le "I"` does not work. `le "Iz"` is better. `le "Izz"` is better still. But `lt "J"` is best of all.

26.6 Barewords

A word about **barewords**. Any word without quotes or `$` or some other thing to characterize it is called a **bareword**, meaning a word that is bare of any indicator. When Perl finds a **bareword** it first tries to see whether it might be a special procedure such as `while` or `else` or `chomp` or a user-defined **subroutine**. After failing to find it on any of those lists it pretends that we put quotes on the word and it treats it as a string.

```

if ( $name lt "N" ) { ... # this is a good example
if ( $name lt N ) { ... # this may work but is wrong

```

Areas for Caution*

Internationalization. Comparing words for dictionary order can vary by language. Be alert to possible problems. But that is beyond the scope of this book.

26.7 Exercises

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

uc: a command to convert a string to all upper case letters.

Exam Question 104 (p.409):

What does `uc` do?

Acceptable Answer:

convert string to upper case

lc: a command to convert a string to all lower case letters.

Exam Question 105 (p.409):

What does lc do?

Acceptable Answer:

convert string to lower case

bareword: a word without quote marks, \$, or some other thing to characterize it. Generally it is treated as though quotes were present. Barewords are dangerous and fragile because they are ambiguous (more than one possible meaning).

Exam Question 106 (p.409):

What does bareword mean?

Acceptable Answer:

word without markings

Exercise 107:* What will the following program print?

```
$x = "hello";  
$y = "world";  
print "a" . ( $x < $y );  
print "b" . ( $x > $y );  
print "c" . ( $x == $y );
```

Chapter 27

Online

Contents

27.1 Rock Paper Scissors, Online, No Inputs	152
27.2 Adding Graphics	153
27.3 The SUBMIT Button	154
27.4 Rock Paper Scissors, Online, With Inputs	155
27.5 User Interface	156
27.6 Exercises	156

In chapter 8 (page 63) we showed how to put simple programs online. By “simple” we meant something that does not work with user input. In this chapter we build on that foundation by showing how to receive simple (closed set) user input, specifically the pressing of buttons, into an online program. In chapter 60 (page 318) we show how to receive multiple and arbitrary (open set) user inputs.

Our example for this chapter is Rock, Paper, Scissors, online.

This is a classic game that uses random choices. Each player picks either rock, paper, or scissors. Then simultaneously they reveal their choices and a winner is determined. Rock beats scissors. Scissors beats paper. Paper beats rock. Although it is very simple to play, it is actually a very challenging strategy game where each opponent tries to guess what the other will select based on analysis of what they have done in the past.

See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock-paper-scissors>.

See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan-ken-pon>.

27.1 Rock Paper Scissors, Online, No Inputs

We will start out simple, with no inputs. Instead we simulate two players and we randomly select a throw for each of them.

We start out with some introductory lines. The `#!` line tells the server that this is a script and it is written in a language that can be understood by the `/usr/local/bin/perl` program. The `content-type` line is the server talking to the browser and telling it that it is receiving a webpage written in the `text/html` language. The `<h1>` line simply puts an informative title at the top of the screen.

```
#! /usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header
print "<h1>Don Colton's Rock Paper Scissors</h1>\n";
```

Instead of printing `"content-type: text/html"`; etc., consider printing the whole wrapper we mentioned in section 8.6 (page 70).

We will set up three variables that we can use throughout the program. They represent Rock, Paper, and Scissors. This makes it easier for us to change wordings later, or to fix spelling errors.

```
$r = "ROCK";
$p = "PAPER";
$s = "SCISSORS";
```

We will randomly throw a choice for the first player. We do it as a number between zero and two (inclusive). We then translate it into rock, paper, or scissors. Advanced: Section 67.3 (page 365) provides an interesting improvement to this approach utilizing subroutines and arrays.

```
$p1 = int ( rand(3) ); # 0, 1, 2
if ( $p1 == 0 ) { $rps1 = $r }
if ( $p1 == 1 ) { $rps1 = $p }
if ( $p1 == 2 ) { $rps1 = $s }
print "Player 1 throws $rps1<br>\n";
```

We do similar actions to create a throw for player 2.

```

$p2 = int ( rand(3) ); # 0, 1, 2
if ( $p2 == 0 ) { $rps2 = $r }
if ( $p2 == 1 ) { $rps2 = $p }
if ( $p2 == 2 ) { $rps2 = $s }
print "Player 2 throws $rps2<br>\n";

```

By this point we have two variables, `$rps1` and `$rps2`, which hold the results of the two throws. We need to compare the throws and declare a winner. The easy case is when they are both the same.

```

if ( $rps1 eq $rps2 ) { print "It's a DRAW.\n" }

```

The other case is when they are different. We have six alternatives represented by the lines below.

```

if ( $rps1 eq $r && $rps2 eq $s ) {
    print "$r breaks $s! Player 1 wins!\n" }

if ( $rps1 eq $s && $rps2 eq $r ) {
    print "$r breaks $s! Player 2 wins!\n" }

if ( $rps1 eq $r && $rps2 eq $p ) {
    print "$p smothers $r! Player 2 wins!\n" }

if ( $rps1 eq $p && $rps2 eq $r ) {
    print "$p smothers $r! Player 1 wins!\n" }

if ( $rps1 eq $p && $rps2 eq $s ) {
    print "$s cut $p! Player 2 wins!\n" }

if ( $rps1 eq $s && $rps2 eq $p ) {
    print "$s cut $p! Player 1 wins!\n" }

```

27.2 Adding Graphics

Let us upgrade the rock, paper, and scissors variables to display appropriate images. These `img` statements cause actual images to be displayed on the screen. They require three jpg files to be placed in the same directory as

our RPS program. The **height** parameters cause the images to be all the same size.

```
$r = "<img src=rock.jpg alt=rock height=100>";  
$p = "<img src=paper.jpg alt=paper height=100>";  
$s = "<img src=scissors.jpg alt=scissors height=100>";
```

27.3 The SUBMIT Button

In its current form the program can be run over and over again by hitting the browser's reload button.

We can upgrade the program by adding a **submit** button at the top of our program, right after the `<h1>` line.

```
print "<form method=post action=''>";  
print "<input type=submit name=x value='Throw Again'>";
```

This does two important things. First, it creates a **form**. The main two parameters are the **method**, which we have specified to be **post**, and the **action**, which we have specified to be nothing, or rather, nothing besides the default which is to run the same program again. Without a **form**, no inputs will be sent by the browser.

Second, it creates a **submit** button. The **value** part of the submit button is the actual text that will appear on the button. The **name** part is something we will talk about later when we do CGI programming. For now it does not matter what it is, but it cannot be blank.

The placement of these two lines is as follows. The **form** must be introduced before any inputs can happen. Normally we put it toward the top of the program, possibly right after the content-type line. (If you use `<body>`, it comes after that.)

The **submit** button can appear any place after the form is introduced.

Technically by using a **form** we have created input for our program. We have not explained how our program receives that input. Indeed, the current program actually ignores any input it receives. The only effect is the **action**, which causes the program to be run again.

Chapter 60 (page 318) covers this material in greater detail.

27.4 Rock Paper Scissors, Online, With Inputs

Next we will do some actual inputs. We will have three submit buttons labeled ROCK, PAPER, and SCISSORS, to allow the human to play against the computer.

Add these lines right after your content-type line:

```
chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );
print "DEBUG: input was (($input))<br>\n";
```

Remove this line (or whatever you made it):

```
print "<input type=submit name=x value='Throw Again'>";
```

Add these lines at the bottom of your program:

```
print "<h1>Make Your Throw</h1>\n";
print "<input type=submit name=x value=ROCK>\n";
print "<input type=submit name=x value=PAPER>\n";
print "<input type=submit name=x value=SCISSORS>\n";
```

Run your program. Each time it runs, the button you pressed should be indicated in the debug line at the top. Keep working on it until that happens. Then continue.

Next, we will change the following lines. Here is the old version.

```
$p1 = int ( rand(3) ); # 0, 1, 2
if ( $p1 == 0 ) { $rps1 = $r }
if ( $p1 == 1 ) { $rps1 = $p }
if ( $p1 == 2 ) { $rps1 = $s }
print "Player 1 throws $rps1<br>\n";
```

Here is the new version.

```
if ( $input eq "x=ROCK" ) { $rps1 = $r }
if ( $input eq "x=PAPER" ) { $rps1 = $p }
if ( $input eq "x=SCISSORS" ) { $rps1 = $s }
print "Player 1 throws $rps1<br>\n";
```

With this change, suddenly your program is receiving inputs and acting upon them. You can actually play against the computer.

When you have it working, comment out the DEBUG line.

27.5 User Interface

The user interface is the totality of how the user interacts with the program. It includes whether there is a submit button, and where it is located on the screen, and what it says. It includes whether there are graphic images or simple text. It includes the artistry and graphical design.

We have intentionally left this version of Rock Paper Scissors in a very simplistic form. You the reader could probably make a number of improvements to make the program more fun to use and more effective at communicating with the user.

What can you do to improve it?

27.6 Exercises

Exercise 108: Call the Toss.

The flip of a coin is often used to determine who goes first in a contest of skill. One player tosses the coin while the other player calls the toss, heads or tails. If the caller is correct, the caller is allowed to choose who goes first. If the caller is incorrect, the tosser is allowed to choose who goes first.

Design and create an online program. Each time the program runs, explain that the computer will flip a coin and the human should call the toss. Present two buttons, one labeled “I call heads” and the other labeled “I call tails”.

If CGI input is received, randomly (fairly) toss heads or tails. Then compare with what the user selected. Present an image of a coin, heads or tails according to the toss. Repeat the user’s call. Announce the winner.

For example, if the user called (pressed) tails and the computer tossed tails, show a graphical image of the tails side of a coin, state “The coin was tails”, state “You called tails”, and state “You won the toss”.

If the user called (pressed) tails and the computer tossed heads, show a graphical image of the heads side of a coin, state “The coin was heads”,

state “You called tails”, and state “You lost the toss”.

Chapter 28

Remainder

Contents

28.1 Remainder	158
28.2 Cookies and Children	159
28.3 Calculating Leap Years	159
28.4 Integer Division*	160

We assume you already know about add, subtract, multiply, divide, and assign. Here we add a handy operator for calculating the remainder of division.

28.1 Remainder

Normally when we think of division, we think of calculator division, where $5/2$ is 2.5.

Sometimes we want the remainder.

$5 / 2 = 2 \text{ r } 1$, five divided by two is two with a remainder of one.

The percent sign (%) is used to indicate integer division, but usually we only want the remainder. $11\%4$ means eleven divided by four, but just the remainder is kept, which is 3.

Exam Question 109 (p.410):

What is the remainder operator?

Acceptable Answer:

percent

Remainder is sometimes called **modulus** or **mod**. Division with remainders is sometimes called “clock arithmetic” because 11 o’clock plus three hours equals 2 o’clock on a 12-hour clock: $(11+3)\%12$ is 2.

When we are trying to be specific, regular division is called floating-point division. With integer division the decimal point is fixed at the end of the number, never in the middle.

Floating point means that the decimal can be in the middle of the number. Usually when we divide two numbers, we mean floating point divide.

28.2 Cookies and Children

One example that I frequently use to describe integer division is my “cookies and children” example. In this example, we imagine that we have, say, eleven cookies and four children. We wish to divide the cookies.

Now, because we are dealing with children, there are several rules we must follow. (1) We must give each child the maximum number of cookies possible. (2) We must give each child the same number of cookies as every other child. (3) We must not break any of the cookies. (4) Any extra cookies are kept by the “mommy.”

$11\%4$ means eleven cookies, four children. Each child gets two cookies and there are three cookies left over for the mommy. The answer is 3 (the number the mommy gets).

28.3 Calculating Leap Years

Given a year number, tell whether it is a Leap Year or not. Leap Year is the year in which February has 29 days. The rest of the time February has 28 days. (We are using the Gregorian calendar, which is the common calendar used for business throughout the world.)

Rules: Normal years are not leap years. But if the year is divisible by 4, it is a leap year. Unless it is divisible by 100, in which case it is not a leap year. Unless it is divisible by 400, in which case it really is a leap year. Confused yet?

2000 is a leap year. 2100 is not a leap year. 2008 is a leap year. 2009 is not a leap year.

Write the program. You will learn a lot.

Hint: the rules shown above are meant to be understood by a human. If you try to translate them directly into Perl you are likely to make some mistakes. Think carefully.

It generally helps to look for the most simple cases first and deal with them. For leap years there are the non-4s, the 4s, the 100s, and the 400s. 4s are complicated because they can be 100s or 400s. Deal with them last.

28.4 Integer Division*

In Perl, division is always done using floating-point numbers unless you make a special effort to force it to be integer. Don't bother.

One option is to use the directive "use integer;" in your Perl program. It will cause all numbers to be whole numbers.

```
use integer;
```

That is probably overkill for your particular needs. To do an integer divide on just one instance there are two other options. For one, you can subtract the remainder before doing the division.

```
$leftover = $cookies % $children;  
$each = ( $cookies - $leftover ) / $children;
```

Another option is to use the `int` mathematical operator that removes the fractional part of a number and trims it back to just the integer part.

```
$each = int ( $cookies / $children );
```

Negative numbers can be problematic. Is $-11/4$ equal to -3 with a remainder of 1 , or -2 with a remainder of -3 ? It is clear that the remainder will be between plus-or-minus the denominator (4 in this case). Different programming languages may handle this differently. Fortunately, we are usually dealing with positive numbers.

Chapter 29

Precedence

Contents

29.1 Precedence Tables	162
29.2 Unary Operators	163
29.3 Short Circuits	164
29.4 Assignment	165

When we say something like “three plus two times five” there are two ways to interpret it. We could do the plus first, then the times, for an answer of 25. Or we could do the times first, then the plus, for an answer of 13.

When there is more than one reasonable answer, it is called **ambiguity**.

Humans deal with ambiguity fairly well in most cases. Often we do not even notice it. Common sense is called into play and the reasonable alternatives are rated for likelihood. The unlikely alternatives are dropped. If there is only one left, we are happy. If there are two or more reasonable alternatives, we recognize that ambiguity exists.

In a case like $3 + 2 \times 5$, there is not much common sense to call upon. So we have commonly accepted rules. These rules are called the rules of **precedence**.

Precedence comes from the word **precede**, meaning to go before, or to happen first.

For convenience and simplicity, mathematicians have standardized on the precedence of multiplication before addition. It did not have to be that way, but by convention we have agreed as a group to follow that rule.

In the $3 + 2 \times 5$ example, this means we multiply 2 and 5 for a result of 10. We then add 3 for a result of 13.

If we want the other meaning, we use parentheses to alter the precedence. We say $(3 + 2) \times 5$, meaning add 3 and 2 for a result of 5. Then multiply that by 5 for a result of 25.

Writing without parentheses is shorter (more compact). Shorter is more desirable because it is less typing and less cluttered. It is less work to write, but it does require us to memorize the rules of precedence so we will get the same answer as everyone else.

29.1 Precedence Tables

By **convention** (that is, by common agreement), multiply, divide, and remainder all have the same precedence, and we do the operations within that class from left to right.

$8/4/2$ means 8 divided by 4, then that divided by 2. $8/4=2$ and $2/2=1$ so the answer is 1.

If we did not follow the left-to-right precedence, we might have figured it like this: $4/2=2$ and $8/2=4$ for an answer of 4.

We can see that the order is significant. It makes a difference.

Here is a simple precedence table.

rank	operators	dir
1	* / %	l-r
2	+ -	l-r

This table means that the top-ranking precedence, the number one precedence, is shared by multiply (*), divide (/), and remainder (%). Within that class, precedence is left-to-right (l-r).

Similarly, the second-ranking (number two) precedence is shared by add (+) and subtract (-). Within that class, precedence is also left to right (l-r). (Most precedence is left to right.)

Here is a more complete precedence table.

rank	operators	dir
1	++ -- -	unary
2	* / %	l-r
3	+ - .	l-r
4	< <= > >=	l-r
5	== !=	l-r
6	&&	l-r
7		l-r
8	and	l-r
9	or	l-r

29.2 Unary Operators

++ and -- are introduced when we talk about loops. Here we only wish to mention their precedence.

Rarely the ++ or -- is used in part of a longer expression. This can be confusing and should be avoided. But here is how it works. If the operator comes after the variable name, it is called post-increment (or post-decrement), and the variable is incremented after the rest of the calculation is done. If the operator comes before the variable name, it is called pre-increment (or pre-decrement), and the variable is incremented before the rest of the calculation is done. For example:

```
$a = 5; $b = 4;
$x = $a++ * --$b + 3;
print "$a $b $x\n"; # 6 3 18
```

We can split out the increments and decrements as follows.

```
$a = 5; $b = 4;
--$b; # pre-decrement: 4 -> 3
$x = $a * $b + 3; # 5 * 3 + 3
$a++; # post-increment: 5 -> 6
print "$a $b $x\n"; # 6 3 18
```

Like I said, this can be confusing. The number of times it has been truly useful to me is very small. Avoid combining ++ and -- in expressions with other things. When possible use them all by themselves.

29.3 Short Circuits

In the case of “logical and” and “logical or” there is a shortcut we can frequently take to reach an answer. This shortcut is called a “short circuit.”

To better explain this, consider the following mathematical calculation:

$$13534582934581254 \times 0$$

Can you determine the answer? Can you do so without the aid of a calculator?

We know that when any number is multiplied by zero, the answer is zero. This is a shortcut we can use to determine the result. We may even be able to determine the answer to a calculation before all the parts are known. For example, if I say: $0 \times 1353\dots$ you can tell me the result before I provide the rest of that big and ugly number. You would have “short circuited” the calculation.

When we use “and” to combine two numbers, if the first number is zero, we know the answer will be false (zero).

When we use “or” to combine two numbers, if the first number is non-zero, we know the answer will be true (one).

In both of these cases, we do not even bother to calculate the rest of the formula. By the rules of computing, we are actually forbidden to calculate the rest of the formula. We must stop when we know the answer.

When does this matter? Here is an example.

“`5/0`” is **error** because dividing by zero is illegal.

“`5%0`” is **error** because dividing by zero is illegal.

“`5%0 || 7`” is **error** because dividing by zero is illegal.

“`7 || 5%0`” is **true**. The divide by zero never happens because short-circuiting tells us the answer: **true** or anything is **true**.

“`5/0 && 0`” is **error** because dividing by zero is illegal.

“`0 && 5/0`” is **false**. The divide by zero never happens because short-circuiting tells us the answer: **false** and anything is **false**.

There is no short-circuit for “exclusive or.”

29.4 Assignment

Assignment happens last. It also works right to left instead of left to right. For example, we can initialize several variables at the same time like this.

```
$a = $b = $c = 0;
```

The actual order of execution is that zero gets copied into `$c`, which is then copied into `$b`, which is then copied into `$a`.

Chapter 30

Unit Test: Choices

Contents

30.1 Vocabulary	166
30.2 Exercises: Numeric	167
30.3 Exercises: Strings	169
30.4 Exercises: Online	170

To demonstrate mastery of this unit, you should be able to write each of these programs (numeric choices, string choices) in 5 to 10 minutes, including testing. As you develop this speed you will be better prepared to master the content in future units and you will be better able to apply your knowledge to opportunities around you.

At this point you should be able to do programs involving `if` (chapter 19, page 119), `else` (chapter 21, page 124), `elsif` (chapter 24, page 135), Boolean operators (chapter 20, page 121), and integer divide and remainder (chapter 28, page 158).

30.1 Vocabulary

The following words are worth memorizing. They are introduced in earlier chapters of this unit. It is assumed that you know them. They may appear in test questions without further explanation.

True: All non-zero numbers and non-zero strings, including negative ones, are regarded as being true.

False: Zero and the empty string are regarded as being false.

default: a value or activity that is used when no other value or activity is specified. In an if statement, else identifies the default action.

uc: a command to convert a string to all upper case letters.

lc: a command to convert a string to all lower case letters.

bareword: a word without quote marks, \$, or some other thing to characterize it. Generally it is treated as though quotes were present. Barewords are dangerous and fragile.

30.2 Exercises: Numeric

Things to watch out for: (a) remember that = is the assignment operator, not a comparison operator. (b) if numbers are specified in the problem, try hard to use those same exact numbers in the answer. (c) => and >= are not the same. (d) $3 < \$x < 5$ does not work the way you might think.

Easy Numeric Conditionals

Exercise 110:* Prompt for and read in a number. If it is less than zero print "You are in trouble." If not, print "So far, so good."

Exercise 111: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in two numbers. If the first is less, print "Things are getting better." If the first is more, print "Things were better before." You can assume the numbers will not be the same.

Exercise 112: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. If it divides evenly by 2, print "This number is even." Otherwise print "This number is odd."

Exercise 113: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. If it is greater than 10, print "That's a big number." Otherwise print "That's not so big."

Exercise 114: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. If it is 100 or more, print "WOW". If not, print "Oh well."

Exercise 115: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. If it is an even number, print “(this number) is EVEN.” If it is an odd number, print “(this number) is ODD.” Replace (this number) by the actual number that was read in.

Exercise 116: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in two numbers. Print “The smaller number is X”. Print “The bigger number is Y”. Replace X by the smaller number. Replace Y by the bigger number. You can assume the numbers will not be the same. Smaller means less than.

Medium: Elif Numeric Conditionals

Exercise 117: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a distance. If the distance is 500 miles or more, print “you should fly.” If it is 100 to 500 miles, print “take the train.” If it is less than 100 miles, print “drive your car.”

Exercise 118: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. If it is 4, print “You get an A.” If it is 3, print “You get a B.” If it is 2, print “You get a C.” If it is anything else, print “You need to try again.”

Exercise 119: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. If it is between five and ten (inclusive), double it and print out the answer. If it is less, subtract three and print out the answer. If it is greater, add seven and print out the answer.

Exercise 120: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Ask for and read in two numbers. If they are more than 10 apart, print that they are far apart. If they are between 1 and 10 apart, print that they are close to each other. If they are closer than 1 print that they are almost identical.

Exercise 121: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. If the number is a multiple of 2, print “This number is even.” Otherwise print “This number is odd.” If the number is a multiple of five, print “This number is round.” If the number is a multiple of seven, print “This number is lucky.” If the number is a multiple of 13, print “This number is unlucky.” Put each printed statement on a line by itself. 35 is odd and round and lucky.

Compound Conditionals

Exercise 122:* Using proper programming style, prompt for and read in a number. If it is even and not a multiple of 13, print “Yeehah”. Otherwise print “Ouch”. Use %. For 26 the answer is Ouch. For 28 the answer is Yeehah. For 31 the answer is Ouch.

Exercise 123: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in two numbers. If one is a factor of the other, say “(x) is a factor of (y).” Otherwise say “no factor found.” Replace (x) and (y) appropriately. (A factor is a number that divides into another number with no remainder. Examples: With 6 and 3, say 3 is a factor of 6. With 3 and 6, say 3 is a factor of 6. With 4 and 7, say no factor found.)

30.3 Exercises: Strings

Things to watch out for: (a) use the proper comparison operator. == and eq are not the same. (b) if strings are specified in the problem, try hard to use those same exact strings in the answer. (c) String literals should be in quote marks.

Exercise 124: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in three numbers. If any two of the numbers add up to the other one, print “Kangaroo.” Otherwise print “Platypus.” Kangaroo examples: 1 2 3. 3 2 1. 4 5 9. 4 4 8. -1 1 2. Platypus examples: 1 2 4. 1 1 1. 6 3 2.

Exercise 125: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Teachers: Read in the name of a class. If it is “CIS101” print “Your teacher is Prof Colton.” If it is “CIS350” print “Your teacher is Prof Lee.” If it is “CIS470” print “Your teacher is Prof Stanley.” Otherwise print “I don’t know who your teacher is.”

Exercise 126:* Read in a department prefix. If it is “ACCT” print “Accounting”. If it is “POSC” print “Political Science”. If it is “CIS” print “Computer and Information Sciences”. Otherwise print “Unknown”.

Exercise 127:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. A certain dictionary is so big it is divided into two volumes (separate books). The first has words up to and including “leaf”. The second has all words after that. Prompt for and read in a word. Tell whether the word would be

in the first volume or the second volume. Assume small letters will be used (not CAPITAL letters).

Exercise 128:* The will-call line for concert tickets is divided A-G, H-N, O-U, and V-Z. Prompt for and read in a name. Convert to upper case. Check which line the person should stand in. Print "You should stand in the H-N line" (but say the correct line for that person).

Exercise 129:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a name. If it starts with "N" or later, print "Please go to table 2." If it starts with "M" or earlier, print "Please go to table 1."

Exercise 130:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Your friends are having a party. Food has been assigned according to last name, with A-L bringing breads, M-Q bringing salads, and R-Z bringing desserts. Prompt for and read in the last name. Print out the food type to be brought.

Exercise 131: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. A certain encyclopedia is divided into twenty volumes (books). In volume 12 the first entry is "Matrimony" and the last entry is "Neoplasm". Prompt for and read in a word. If it would be in volume 12, print "Try Volume 12." If not, print "Don't try Volume 12." Examples: "Elephant" is not. "music" is. "Music" is.

Exercise 132: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Special half-price tickets for the Superferry will be sold on Friday. Sales times depend on your last name. A-K can buy tickets from 8 AM to 10 AM. L-Q can buy tickets from 11 AM to 1 PM. R-Z can buy tickets from 2 PM to 4 PM. Besides those times tickets are not available. Prompt for and read in a last name. Respond with the time that tickets are available.

Exercise 133: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. The will-call line for concert tickets is divided A-J, K-O, and P-Z. Prompt for and read in a name. Convert to upper case. Check which line the person should stand in. Print "You should stand in the A-J line" (but say the correct line for that person).

30.4 Exercises: Online

Exercise 134: Show Me The Money. Using approved style, write an online program to do the following. Put three buttons on the screen. Label them

\$1, \$10, and \$100. Each time a button is pushed, show the buttons again plus a picture representing that kind of money.

Exercise 135: Animal Farm. Using approved style, write an online program to do the following. Put three buttons on the screen. Label them Cow, Pig, and Sheep. Each time a button is pushed, show the buttons again plus a picture representing that kind of animal.

Exercise 136: Food Court. Using approved style, write an online program to do the following. Put three buttons on the screen. Label them Pizza, Ice Cream, and Donuts. Each time a button is pushed, show the buttons again plus a picture representing that kind of food.

Exercise 137: Sports Bar. Using approved style, write an online program to do the following. Put three buttons on the screen. Label them Soccer, Baseball, and Basketball. Each time a button is pushed, show the buttons again plus a picture representing that sport.

Unit VI

Loops: Repeated Actions

Chapter 31

Counting

Contents

31.1 Counting	174
31.2 A Loop	174
31.3 Repeat	175
31.4 Increment	176
31.5 Decrement	177
31.6 Flags and Counters	177

When we say “repeating actions” we mean doing the same thing over and over again. But what is the “same thing”?

The same thing could be the exact same thing, so you cannot tell the difference. But normally it is only “sort of” the same thing. There are usually subtle differences.

For example, when you are **walking**, your feet are doing the same thing, over and over again. Pick up one foot. Put it in front of you. Put it down. Pick up the other foot. Put it in front of you. Put it down. Repeat.

But there are subtle differences between the paces. Each step puts you farther down the road. And there may be a last step where you finally reach your destination.

When we talk about repeating actions, we will be looking at what is the same every time and what is slowly changing.

In programming, normally the instructions are the same every time and the

contents of the variables are slowly changing.

31.1 Counting

A classic example is **counting**. I remember learning to count. My father paid me a dollar the first time I counted from 1 to 100. (I repeated the same process with my own children, also paying them a dollar when they correctly counted from 1 to 100.)

Counting is a repeating action. What stays the same is the process. Each step of the way we add one to the total. What changes is the total. Each step of the way it becomes larger.

The whole process is sometimes called a **loop**.

The part that stays the same is called the **loop invariant**. **Invariant** means that it does not vary (change).

31.2 A Loop

Here is a pseudo-code example of a program for counting.

```
start at 1
repeat {
  say the number
  add one to it }
```

For “start at 1” we can use a variable. Let’s use x .

```
 $x = 1;$ 
```

We will handle “repeat” in a moment.

For “say the number” we can print it.

```
print " $x$ \n";
```

For “add one to it” we do some math.

```
 $x = x + 1;$ 
```

This results in a mostly-finished program.

```
$x = 1; # start at 1
repeat {
    print "$x\n"; # say the number
    $x = $x + 1; # add one to it
}
```

31.3 Repeat

Perl has several ways to repeat things. The main words for repeating are **while**, **for**, which we talk about soon, and **foreach**, which we talk about later.

We will briefly introduce **while** here, and will discuss it more in chapter 32 (page 179).

The syntax of the while loop is

```
while ( condition ) { action }
```

The action is a sequence of invariant steps that will happen each time the loop repeats.

The condition is a **Boolean**. We introduced numeric conditions in chapter 20 (page 121), discussed **and**, **or**, and **not** in chapter 25 (page 139), and discussed precedence in chapter 29 (page 161).

For simplicity, we will start with a condition that is always true: 1.

```
$x = 1;
while ( 1 ) {
    print "$x\n";
    $x = $x + 1; }
```

This creates an actual working program that counts “forever.”

If we want the program to stop when it gets to 100, we can change the condition.

```
$x = 1;
while ( $x <= 100 ) {
    print "$x\n";
    $x = $x + 1; }
```


In this version of the program, each time we get ready to enter the loop we check to see whether x is less than or equal to 100. As long as that is true, the loop will continue to run. When x reaches 101 the condition will no longer be true and the loop will end.

31.4 Increment

Increment and decrement, which we introduce here, are examples of self-modification, which we will discuss at greater length in chapter 34 (page 190).

The activity $x = x + 1$; is called **incrementing** the variable x .

Counting by incrementing is an incredibly common activity in loops. Because it is so common, computer languages often have short-cut ways to express the increment activity. In many languages, the shortcut is **plus plus**.

Instead of saying $x = x + 1$;, the plus-plus version is:

```
 $x$ ++;
```

When we say x plus plus, we are saying add one to x .

Increment is a vocabulary word you should memorize.

Exam Question 138 (p.411):

What does increment mean?

Acceptable Answer:

increase by one

Exam Question 139 (p.411):

What does decrement mean?

Acceptable Answer:

decrease by one

Implicitly, increment and decrement mean to add or subtract one. More generally, you can increment or decrement by a number other than one.

You may have heard of a computer language named **C++** (c plus plus). The plus plus in the name is meant to say that this language is basically the same as the **C** programming language. But it is incrementally better. It is more than **C**. It is the successor to **C**.

You may have heard of a computer language named **C#** (c sharp). The sharp symbol is actually four plusses: plus plus, plus plus. It means to say that **C#** is the successor to **C++**.

Computer programmers seem to be fond of cleverness like this.

31.5 Decrement

Counting down is also common.

The activity `$x = $x - 1;` is called **decrementing** the variable `$x`.

Instead of saying `$x = $x - 1;`, many languages allow this:

```
$x--;
```

When we say `x minus minus`, we are saying subtract one from `x`.

Decrement is a vocabulary word you should memorize.

31.6 Flags and Counters

Sometimes we can respond to a situation the moment we detect it. Other times we need to remember what happened and respond to it later.

For example, we may want to look at a list and notice whether the name “Joe” appears on the list. Then, later in the program, we may need to print something special if Joe was found, and something else if Joe was not found.

Before the loop, we can initialize a variable, maybe `$foundjoe`, to have a value of zero. Then, as the loop runs, if Joe is found, we can set the variable to have a value of one. At the end of the loop, the variable remembers whether Joe was found or not.

When we use a variable in this way, we call it a **flag**. Flags are generally either true or false. Often we use 0 to represent false and 1 to represent true.

```
$foundjoe = 0;
foreach $guy ( @guys ) {
    if ( $guy eq "Joe" ) {
        $foundjoe = 1 } }
```

```
if ( $foundjoe == 1 ) {
    print "Joe was found.\n" }
else {
    print "Joe was not found.\n" }
```

If the only thing we want to know is whether Joe was found, we can break out of the loop as soon as we are sure of the answer. In this example, we use the “last” command.

```
foreach $guy ( @guys ) {
    if ( $guy eq "Joe" ) {
        $foundjoe = 1; last } }
```

We may need more than just a simple true or false. We may need to know how many times something happened. In a case like that, we can use a **counter**.

```
$foundjoe = 0;
foreach $guy ( @guys ) {
    if ( $guy eq "Joe" ) {
        $foundjoe++ } }
print "Joe was found $foundjoe times.\n";
```

Chapter 32

While Loops

Contents

32.1 Finding the Pattern	180
32.2 Explicit versus Implicit	180
32.3 Repetition	181
32.4 while Loop	181
32.5 last, next, and redo	184
32.6 Infinite Loops	184
32.7 if versus while	185
32.8 Exercises	186

What does it mean when I say, “1, 2, 3, ..., 100”?

If you guessed the numbers from 1 to 100, you are right. The three dots (the ellipsis) have a special meaning. They mean (a) there is a pattern, (b) the pattern should be obvious, (c) the pattern continues, (d) the pattern starts and ends as indicated, at 1 and 100.

Obvious. Implicit but obvious. Obvious to humans. Not obvious to computers.

So, how do we explain it to the computer? How do we make the things that are obvious to us obvious to it?

```
print "1, ";  
print "2, ";  
print "3, ";
```

```
(etc.)
print "100";
```

We *could* do that. It would be painful and heartbreaking to write. But we *could* do it. If we make it a thousand or a million it is really not fun to even think about.

How do we explain it to the computer?

We will rework the instructions so they are all the same, and use variables to handle the parts that change.

32.1 Finding the Pattern

In the 1, 2, 3, example, the pattern is that we add one to the number to get the next number. We could write a program like this.

```
$x = 1;      print "$x, ";
$x = $x + 1; print "$x, ";
$x = $x + 1; print "$x, ";
$x = $x + 1; print "$x, ";
(etc.)
```

Writing our program this way makes the pattern explicit but it also makes the program take about twice as many statements. This is a case where it is worth our time to take a step backward so we can take a big step forward.

32.2 Explicit versus Implicit

Explicit versus **implicit**. It's vocabulary time. Explicit and implicit share the same ending: plicit. Ex means out, like export. Im means in, like import. "ply" is fold. The root is plectere, meaning to plait or braid. It is found in "implicit" and "explicit." When something is implicit, the meaning is folded in, or braided, or plaited. Hidden, but still present. When something is explicit, the meaning is folded out for all to see. The same root is plex in complexity, pli in simplicity and pliers and pliable, and ply in plywood.

Humans tend to like things implicit, up to a point. Example: I say, "Do you know what time it is?" What do I mean? I mean, "I want to know the

time. Please tell it to me.” It would be considered direct but rude to say it that way. So we fold the meaning inside. We do not come right out and say what we mean. Instead, we hint at the meaning and expect the other person to figure it out. Humans are funny creatures.

Computers do not do well with implicit. Computers need explicit.

32.3 Repetition

Some actions should be repeated until a condition is satisfied (or while a condition is true). Virtually every programming language provides a way to specify such **looping**, also called **iteration**.

Armed with the explicit pattern, we can now arrange it into a loop.

```
$x = 1;
repeat {
  print "$x, ";
  $x = $x + 1; }
```

The program is suddenly **lots** shorter. Like four statements instead of 200. That’s our gigantic step forward. But there are several difficulties yet to overcome.

We are introducing a new word here, “**repeat**.” Repeat is not actually part of Perl. It is part of English. So our use of it here is what we call **pseudo code**. Pseudo means fake or imitation. It is really more of a comment.

We need the real word that Perl understands. And we need some way to stop when we get to 100. But at least we have the concept here.

32.4 while Loop

The most simple loop in Perl is the **while** loop. The syntax is very much like the **if** statement, except that after doing the true part (called the body of the loop), the condition is tested again. If it is still true, the body is executed again. And again. And again. Until the condition becomes false.

```
while ( condition ) { body }
```

There are two main approaches to ending the loop. You can use an interior test or you can use a pre test.

Interior Test

The simplest approach is a condition that is always true. This is also called an **infinite loop**. This is also called an interior-test while loop because it does the test somewhere in the middle of the loop to determine whether we are done.

Here is an example program that prints out the numbers from 1 to 100.

```
$x = 1;
while ( 1 ) {
    print "$x, ";
    if ( $x >= 100 ) { last }
    $x = $x + 1; }
```

We replaced the “repeat” with “while (1)” and we added a line to help us quit when we reach our goal.

Because 1 means true, `while(1)` means while true, or, in other words, forever.

last causes the loop to exit immediately. Execution continues with the next statement (if any) after the loop.

Here is how the program works.

The variable `$x` receives the initial value of 1. Then the **while** loop begins. It executes the body of the loop one time. This will print out the number 1. Then it will check to see if we reached our goal. Then it calculates a new value for `$x` setting it one higher than before.

Next, because this is a loop, we do it all again. We print 2. We check against our goal of 100. We increment.

Next, we print a 3, check the limit, and change `$x` to 4.

dot dot dot

Next, we print a 99, check the limit, and change `$x` to 100.

Next, we print a 100, check the limit, and terminate the loop.

Pre Test

It is a bit more complex, but also more common to write the loop so the condition is tested first before the body of the loop is executed. This is also called a **pre-test loop**. The condition starts out being true but eventually becomes false when the loop has completed its work.

Instead of saying `while(1)`, we can replace the `1` with a more complicated condition. Then we can do away with the `if` statement inside the loop.

```
$x = 1;
while ( $x <= 100 ) {
    print "$x, ";
    $x = $x + 1; }
```

The condition, `$x<=100`, keeps us in the loop so long as the condition is true. On the earlier example, we exited the loop when we passed 100. Here we stay in the loop until we reach 100.

Here is how the program works.

The variable `$x` receives the initial value of 1. Then the **while** loop begins. It checks the condition and finds that 1 is less than or equal to 100 (true), so it executes the body of the loop one time. This will print out the number 1. Then it calculates a new value for `$x` setting it one higher than before.

Next, because this is a loop, the condition is checked again. We find that 2 is still less than or equal to 100, so we execute the body again. Then `$x` is incremented to become 3.

Next, we print a 3 and change `$x` to 4.

dot dot dot

Next, we print a 99 and change `$x` to 100.

Next, we print a 100 and change `$x` to 101.

Next, we find that 101 is no longer less than or equal to 100, so we break out of the loop.

Opposite Approaches

With an interior test, the test tells us when to quit. With a pre test, the test tells us when to keep going. So the tests are opposite. In a loop to 100, the tests look like this:

```
interior: if ( $x > 100 ) { last }
```



```
pre-test: while ( $x <= 100 ) { ...
```

32.5 last, next, and redo

Perl provides some options for changing the way the loop runs. The three options are **next**, **last**, and **redo**. These are actually **goto** statements, but very constrained ones.

last causes the loop to be ended immediately. Execution continues with the next statement after the loop. Some languages use **break** to do the same thing.

next causes the remainder of the iteration to be skipped. Execution continues with the condition at the top of the loop. Some languages use **continue** to do the same thing.

redo restarts the loop immediately. The condition is not evaluated again. Instead, execution continues right after the condition at the top of the loop.

32.6 Infinite Loops

Usually an infinite loop is a bad thing. It is something that happens accidentally when your program runs wild and does not stop as it should. You might describe it as “my keyboard locked up” or “the computer stopped responding” when the truth may be that the computer is running just fine, but running a program that is stuck in a loop that will never end. Worst case you can always unplug the computer if you need to.

The **while** loop has a natural way to stop looping. The condition must be true for the loop to continue running.

Sometimes you want a loop to run forever, or to run until some complicated thing is recognized. We can write it like this.

```
while ( 1 ) { block }
```

How do you get out of an infinite loop? Generally, as we saw above, there is some sort of if statement in the loop. When it is satisfied, it will break out.

```
while ( 1 ) {
```

```

...
if ( condition ) { last }
...
}

```

If the loop involves getting input from the keyboard, you can also rely on the user to simply kill your program when they are tired of it. They may hit control-C or press the red X in the corner of the window. If they have an easy way to kill the program, you don't have to build it in.

```

print "Let's see who can think of the biggest number.\n";
while ( 1 ) {
  print "What is your number: ";
  chomp ( $num = <STDIN> );
  $next = $num + 1; # cheat
  print "My number is $next. I win!\n";
  print "Let's play again!\n" }

```

Trivia fact: The address for Apple Computer's corporate headquarters is "1 Infinite Loop, Cupertino, CA 95014". Check it out on Google Earth. It really is a loop. Do you think they are making a statement?

32.7 if versus while

Notice that **if** and **while** look a lot alike. **while** and **if** are each control structures. They alter the normal flow of programs from one line to the next. They introduce new things to do.

```
if ( condition ) { body }
```

This is the simple **if** statement. If the condition is true the body is executed exactly once. If not, not.

```
while ( condition ) { body }
```

This is the **while** loop. If the condition is true the body is executed. And again. And again. Until it is no longer true.

else and **elsif** apply to **if** statements. They are not part of the **while** loop. They provide a way to consider several or many alternatives from which only one will be selected.

redo, **next**, and **last** apply to loops. (They apply to the innermost loop that they are inside.) They are not part of the **if** statement. They provide a way to end the iteration or loop early, either restarting with the same item, continuing directly with the next item, or quitting entirely.

32.8 Exercises

Exam Question 140 (p.412):

What does implicit mean?

Acceptable Answer:

true but not openly stated

Implicit (implied) means that something is true but not openly stated. The meaning is present but hidden. Literally implicit means folded or braided inward.

Exam Question 141 (p.412):

What does explicit mean?

Acceptable Answer:

openly stated

Explicit means that something is obvious or openly stated. Literally explicit means folded or braided outward.

Exam Question 142 (p.412):

What does efficient mean?

Acceptable Answer:

not wasteful

Efficient means that it completes the task without too many extra steps. It implies that it is also effective.

Exam Question 143 (p.412):

What does effective mean?

Acceptable Answer:

it works

Effective does not imply efficient. It can be slow and wasteful, but still ultimately be effective.

Programming exercises can be found in chapter 36 (page 200).

Chapter 33

For Loops

Contents

33.1 Comparison of “while” and “for”	188
33.2 Infinite Loops	189
33.3 Summary: if vs while vs for	189

Up until 1956 most programming was done in Assembly language. In 1956 **FORTRAN** became the first high level language to be introduced. (**LISP** was introduced soon after, in 1958.) With the advent of high level languages most engineering programming began to be done in FORTRAN. Wikipedia has an article here:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fortran>

Why do we care?

As an efficiency, FORTRAN introduced the **DO LOOP** as a way to create a loop by specifying an index variable, a starting value, and an ending value. We care because this model has survived in numerous languages as the **for** loop. Wikipedia has an article here:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/For_loop

When you are first learning to program, **for** loops tend to be a bit confusing. They do not seem to be quite as logical as **while** loops. However, they are commonly used and it is important to be familiar with them and able to use them.

33.1 Comparison of “while” and “for”

Loops are commonly used to run through a list of numbers or examine a set of alternatives. For example, one might wish to print a table of trigonometry values or step through the values stored in an array (see chapter 39, page 214).

With a **while** loop, there is usually a variable called the index variable. It will take on the value of each number in the list, one by one. For example, to work through the list 1 to 100, the following **while** loop could be used.

```
$i = 1; while ( $i <= 100 ) { body; $i++ }
```

This formulation correctly reflects the order in which things happen but has the disadvantage that “the light switch is not by the door; it is on the other side of the room.” Specifically, the `$i++` statement is used to move to the next value of `$i` but if the body is large, it can be quite remote from the rest of the control structure (the initializing and testing `$i`).

In the interest of collecting all the control elements into one place, the **for** loop rearranges things as follows.

```
init; while ( condition ) { body; step }  
for ( init; condition; step ) { body }
```

With the **while** loop, the initializations all happen before the loop begins. They are represented here by the word `init`.

Next the loop begins. It checks to see whether there is any work to be done. This test is called the `condition`. If the test is True, the `body` of the loop is executed. Before restarting the loop, the control variable is updated to its new value in the `step` phase.

The **for** loop moves the `init` and `step` pieces up next to the `condition` so they are all visually together. Here is a more specific example.

```
$i = 1; while ( $i <= 100 ) { body; $i++ }  
for ( $i = 1; $i <= 100; $i++ ) { body }
```

The setup is done before the loop begins. The condition is handled as before. The step is done at the end (or bottom) of each loop. Typically the step is used to modify the control variable being tested in the condition.

The **for** loop has a major advantage that the setup, condition, and step, are all collected into one place. This makes it easier to see what the program is doing and harder to write buggy programs.

next: The **for** loop has another advantage. In any loop, the **next** command causes the current iteration to end and a new iteration to begin. This is a problem if the increment has not happened yet, but happens at the bottom of the loop. If the increment does not happen, we may well find ourselves in an infinite loop.

With the **for** loop, a **next** command causes the iteration to end. However, the increment will still happen because it is not hidden at the end of the loop. It is part of the loop's control structure.

33.2 Infinite Loops

You can leave out parts of the **for** loop. If there is no initialization, you could write this.

```
for ( ; condition; step ) { body }
```

If you want to create an **infinite loop** with no initialization, no condition, and no step, you can write it like this. In this case the condition is taken to be always `True`.

```
for (;;) { body }
```

33.3 Summary: if vs while vs for

for is the most complex of the control structures we have studied. The advantage of **for** is that, like the dashboard of an automobile, all the controlling elements are right at the top, easy to find and clearly stated.

The disadvantage is the confusing complexity. Specifically, the word **for** which declares the loop is written before the **init** but the **init** is executed before the loop begins. And the **step** is written before the **body** but the **body** is executed before the **step**. It is the price of having a dashboard.

redo, **next**, and **last** can be used inside **for** loops just as they can in **while** loops.

Chapter 34

Self-Modification

Contents

34.1 Plus Plus, Plus Equals	191
34.2 Pre- and Post-	191
34.3 An Interesting Plus Plus Bug	192
34.4 Generalized Self-Modification	193
34.5 Dot (Concatenation)	194
34.6 Precedence of Self-Modification	194

This chapter covers a number of additional operators commonly used in calculation, especially in loops.

Here are some vocabulary words you should learn.

binary means “involving two,” for example, two numbers.

unary means “involving one.”

composition literally means positioning things together. We use it to describe nested operations, where something is happening inside something else, rather than before or after. Compare this with concatenation.

increment means to add one to something.

decrement means to subtract one from something.

pre means “before.”

pre-increment means to add one to something before using its value.

post means “after.”

post-increment means to add one to something after using its value.

concatenation means to chain things together in sequence. Compare this with composition.

34.1 Plus Plus, Plus Equals

Binary means that two numbers are involved. Most of the operators we use are binary infix operators, meaning that two numbers are involved and the operator goes between them, as in $5+3$.

Unary means that only one number is involved in the expression. We are all familiar with the fact that putting a dash in front of a number converts it to being negative. The dash, also called a minus sign, is a unary operator.

There are two other commonly used unary operators: $++$ and $--$. These are used to **increment** or **decrement** a variable, which means increase or decrease its value by exactly one.

$i++$ means the same thing as $i = i + 1$.

$++i$ means the same thing as $i = i + 1$.

$i--$ means the same thing as $i = i - 1$.

$--i$ means the same thing as $i = i - 1$.

$i = i++$ does **not** mean the same thing as $i = i + 1$.

34.2 Pre- and Post-

This part is tricky. Pay close attention.

Normally we write $x++$, x plus plus.

We can also write $++x$, plus plus x.

When the increment is a statement all by itself, they mean the same thing.

It is common to double up statements, like doing `chomp` and `STDIN` at the same time. Doing several things like that is called **composition**. We compose things by posing (positioning) them `com` (together).

When increment is used as part of a composition, it often makes a big difference whether the plus plus is in front of the variable or after it.

Post-Increment

The normal case has the plus plus after the variable.

When the plus plus comes **after** the variable, the increment happens **after** the rest of the statement does. This is called post-increment. **Post** means after.

```
$x = 5;
$y = $x++;
print "$x $y\n"; # prints 6 5
```

Why is \$y only 5? \$x gets 5, then \$x gets copied into \$y and then \$x gets incremented. It is a post-increment.

Pre-Increment

When the plus plus comes **before** the variable, the increment happens **before** the rest of the statement does. This is called pre-increment. **Pre** means before.

```
$x = 5;
$y = ++$x;
print "$x $y\n"; # prints 6 6
```

Why is \$y 6? \$x gets 5, then \$x gets incremented, and then \$x gets copied into \$y. It is a pre-increment.

As you might expect, the same pre- and post- rules apply to decrement.

Because composition with plus plus is tricky, if you do it, be cautious. You may see it in programs written by other people. You need to understand it and be aware that it can make a difference in how the program operates.

34.3 An Interesting Plus Plus Bug

Here is an amusing bug I have seen several times in programs.

```
$x = $x++;
```

The programmer evidently intended to increment `$x`. However, what they actually did was (a) grab the original value of `$x`, (b) increment `$x`, and (c) store the original value back into `$x`.

So, in fact, `$x` has the same value at the end as it did at the beginning. But for a brief moment in the middle it changed.

Exam Question 144 (p.412):

After `$x = 5; $x++`; what is the value of `$x`?

Required Answer:

6

Exam Question 145 (p.412):

After `$x = 5; $x = $x++`; what is the value of `$x`?

Required Answer:

5

34.4 Generalized Self-Modification

There is a more general version of `++`. It is actually pretty commonly used, so you should be familiar with it and comfortable using it.

```
$x += 1; # means $x = $x + 1;  
$x -= 1; # means $x = $x - 1;
```

Using this syntax, we can separate out the amount of increment. If we want to count by twos, we could do it like this.

```
$x += 2; # means $x = $x + 2;
```

We can do `op=` for many operators.

```
$x *= 2; # means $x = $x * 2;  
$x /= 2; # means $x = $x / 2;  
$x %= 2; # means $x = $x % 2;
```

We cannot do `op=` for all operators.

```
$x <= 2; # does NOT mean $x = $x < 2;  
$x >= 2; # does NOT mean $x = $x > 2;
```

The reason these operators exist is because their functions can actually be done directly in machine language (also called Assembler or Assembly Language). Some high-level languages (like C and Perl) have made the same capabilities available.

34.5 Dot (Concatenation)

Strings use the dot character to indicate **concatenation**. That is, "x"."y" is equal to "xy". It adds two strings by combining them end to end. (Concatenation is introduced in section 6.5, page 56.)

```
$x .= "x"; # means $x = $x . "x";
```

In a way, .= is the opposite of **chop**.

34.6 Precedence of Self-Modification

It can be really confusing, so don't do it unless you have a really good reason, but these operators can be combined with each other. The precedence is right to left. And if you try to get too tricky, it will break.

```
$a = 5; $b = 4;  
print "$a $b\n"; # 5 4  
$a += $b += 3;  
# add three to b  
# then add b to a  
print "$a $b\n"; # 12 7
```

Chapter 35

Games and Projects

Contents

35.1 Hi Lo Game	195
35.2 99 Bottles of Carbonated Non-alcoholic Beverage	196
35.3 2 Nim	197
35.4 3 Nim	198
35.5 Variations	198

In this chapter we look at some simple games and projects that can be programmed using nothing more advanced than random numbers, if/else, and loops.

Random numbers are introduced in section [9.1](#) (page [75](#)) and covered in more detail in chapter [67](#) (page [363](#)).

35.1 Hi Lo Game

In this game one person picks a number, maybe between 1 and 100, and the other person has to guess the number in as few guesses as possible. After each wrong guess, the person is told whether the truth is higher or lower.

We will write a program to pick the number and let us guess.

```
$num = int(rand(100)) + 1; # pick a number
print "I am thinking of a number between 1 and 100.\n";
```

```

while ( 1 ) { # infinite loop
  print "What is your guess: ";
  chomp ( $guess = <STDIN> );
  if ( $num == $guess ) { print "YOU WIN!!!\n"; last }
  if ( $num > $guess ) { print "$guess? Go higher.\n" }
  if ( $num < $guess ) { print "$guess? Go lower.\n" }
}

```

Write it. Run it. Play it.

We can add even more jazz to the program. Let's count the number of guesses the player makes and congratulate her if she gets the answer sooner than expected. Expected would be about 7 guesses. Here are some lines to add to the program. See if you can tell where they should go.

```

$guessCt = 0; # guess count
$guessCt++; # one more guess has happened
if ( $guessCt <= 7 ) { # compare to the expected performance
  print "Wow, only $guessCt guesses. ";
  print "You're really good at this!\n" }
else {
  print "You found my number in only $guessCt guesses.\n" }

```

How to win: Theoretically you can rule out half the possibilities each time you guess. If you guess 50 and your guess is too high, then you know the number is between 1 and 49. Each time you can guess the middle of the range of numbers that are left. After 0 guesses you have 100 possibilities. After 1 guess you have 49 or 50 possibilities left. After 2 guesses you have 25 left. After 3 guesses, 12 left. After 4 guesses, 6 left. After 5 guesses, 3 left. After 6 guesses, 1 left. By your seventh guess you should be able to always win.

35.2 99 Bottles of Carbonated Non-alcoholic Beverage

There is a well-known US/Canada song that goes like this.

```

99 bottles of (root) beer on the wall,

```

```

99 bottles of (root) beer.
Take one down and pass it around,
98 bottles of (root) beer on the wall.

```

Often it is sung on long road trips to keep the kids occupied so they don't keep asking, "Are we there yet?" It then repeats its way down to zero or until people get tired of singing it. Write a program to print out the verses of this song. Prompt for and read in the starting number of bottles.

See also:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/99_Bottles_of_Beer_on_the_Wall

35.3 2 Nim

In games of **Nim** there is a pile of stones. Players take turns removing some number of stones. Typically there are two players. The person who takes the last stone wins.

(If you want to say the person who takes the last stone loses, that is the same as ignoring the last stone and playing for who wins the normal way. Then the other player will be forced to take the last stone.)

In **2 Nim** the rule is that each player takes one or two stones on each turn.

```

print "Let's play Nim!\n";
$stones = int(rand(20)) + 10 ;# 10 to 29 stones
while ( $stones > 0 ) {
    # human takes a turn
    print "There are $stones stones.\n";
    print "How many stones would you like (1 or 2): ";
    chomp ( $stakes = <STDIN> );
    $stones -= $stakes;
    # computer takes a turn
    print "There are $stones stones.\n";
    $stakes = int(rand(2)) + 1;
    print "Computer takes $stakes.\n";
    $stones -= $stakes;
}
print "Let's play again sometime!\n";

```

As written, this game needs a bit of help. If you key it in and play it you will find that (a) the human could easily cheat, and (b) the computer does not notice when the stones run out. In fact, the computer does not even figure out who won.

Your task is to improve the program, adding such personal touches as you may find desirable.

How to Win: Try to leave a multiple of three stones. Once you do that, you can always force a win.

35.4 3 Nim

This version is like 2 Nim except you can take up to three stones.

How to Win: Try to leave a multiple of four stones. Once you do that, you can always force a win.

35.5 Variations

With any of these games, you can make some typical variations.

(a) Put the game in a loop so it automatically starts over when it normally would have ended.

```
while ( 1 ) {  
    ... insert the whole program here ...  
}
```

This is called a **nested loop** because the original loop has been placed inside another loop. The original loop is called the **inner loop** and the new loop is called the **outer loop**. We take a closer look at nested loops in chapter 65 (page 353).

nested loop: a set of loops with one inside the other, much like carved Russian Dolls. When we measure time, we use nested loops. Seconds are nested within minutes. Minutes are nested within hours.

inner loop: a loop that is inside another loop.

Exam Question 146 (p.412):

What is an inner loop?

Acceptable Answer:

a loop inside another loop

outer loop: a loop that has another loop inside itself.

Exam Question 147 (p.412):

What is an outer loop?

Acceptable Answer:

a loop that has another loop inside

(b) Count the number of times the computer wins and the number of times the human wins. Report the totals after every game.

(c) Add random comments such as “Wow, great move.” and “I did not see that coming.”

(d) Add simple graphics. The number of stones in Nim could be shown as a line of “O”s in addition to (or instead of) stating a number.

Chapter 36

Unit Test: Repeated Actions

Contents

36.1 Vocabulary	200
36.2 Exercises	201

This chapter is a collection of programming questions that are typical of those you should be able to do by this point in the course. You should be able to do while loops (chapter 32, page 179) and for loops (chapter 33, page 187).

36.1 Vocabulary

The following words are worth memorizing. They are introduced in earlier chapters of this unit. It is assumed that you know them. They may appear in test questions without further explanation.

last causes the remainder of the loop to be skipped. The condition is not checked again. Instead, the loop is ended and execution continues with the next statement after the loop. Some languages use **break** to do the same thing.

next causes the remainder of the loop to be skipped. Execution continues with the condition at the top of the loop. Some languages use **continue** to do the same thing.

redo restarts the loop immediately. Execution continues right after the condition at the top of the loop.

printf: a command to format numbers, usually to a constant width by adding spaces or zeroes. See appendix C (page 430) for information about formatted printing.

nested loop: a set of loops with one inside the other, much like carved Russian Dolls. Time keeping uses nested loops. Seconds are nested within minutes. Minutes are nested within hours. We take a closer look at nested loops in chapter 65 (page 353).

inner loop: a loop that is inside another loop.

outer loop: a loop that has another loop inside itself.

36.2 Exercises

Things to watch out for: (a) `$x++` and `$x+1` are not the same. `$x=$x++` does not do what you might think. (b) `while(;)` is wrong. (c) `for(;)` is wrong. (d) `if` and `while` and `for` are not the same. (e) `while()`; is usually wrong.

Easy: Simple, Predictable Loops

Exercise 148:* Print the numbers from 1 to 500. Leave space between numbers.

Exercise 149:* Print the numbers from 2 to 100 counting by 2s. 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, ..., 98, 100. Don't worry about spacing or punctuation.

Exercise 150: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Print the numbers from 100 down to 1. Put each number on a line by itself.

Exercise 151:* Use a while loop to print the numbers from `n` down to zero. Then print "blast off!" Prompt for and read in the starting number.

Exercise 152: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Counting by fives (5, 10, 15, ...), print the numbers from 5 to 1000. Put each number on a line by itself.

Exercise 153: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. Assume it is more than 100. Print all the numbers from 1 up to and including the number that was read in.

Exercise 154: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. Starting at that number, print the next 700 numbers. Then stop. Do not worry about punctuation or spacing in the output, except the numbers should not bump into each other. Example: if the number is 50, you should print from 50 through 749.

Exercise 155: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. Counting by 2s, print the next 100 numbers. (If the number was 77, you should print 79, 81, 83, ... 277.)

Medium: Predictable Loops with Complications

Exercise 156:* Print the numbers from 1 to 500, skipping the multiples of 3. Leave space between numbers.

Exercise 157:* Coin Toss: For each coin toss, randomly select "H" or "T" with equal likelihood. Do 100 coin tosses, showing the results of each.

Exercise 158: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Print 100 random numbers. Each number should be a digit between 1 and 6 (inclusive) as though you were rolling dice. Example: 2 4 3 4 1 5 3 3 4 2 5 6 4 3 ...

Exercise 159: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a number. Print the numbers from one up to the number entered, except when a number is a multiple of seven, print the word "skip" instead. Leave space between each thing you print.

Exercise 160: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a starting number. Prompt for and read in an ending number. Print all the numbers from start to end, in that order. Be alert to the fact that you could be counting up or you could be counting down.

Exercise 161:* Print the triangular numbers up to 1000. The first few triangular numbers are 1, 3, 6, 10, ... (1, 1+2, 1+2+3, 1+2+3+4, ...).

Exercise 162: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a word. Use a loop and use chop to print all the prefixes of the word, from the full word down to the first letter, one per line. For example, if the word is Washington, print the following:

```
Washington  
Washingto
```

Washingt
Washing
Washin
Washi
Wash
Was
Wa
W

Medium: Unpredictable Loops

Exercise 163: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a name. See whether it is “Joe”. If so, print “At last I have found you.” If not, try again. Keep trying until you find Joe.

Exercise 164: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Factors: Prompt for and read in a target number. Use a loop to look at all the numbers from 2 up to but not including the target, in order. For each number that divides exactly into the target, print this statement:

“The number (factor) is a proper factor of (target).\n”

Replace (factor) with the number that divides exactly. Replace (target) with the target number. It should all print on one line.

If you know how to skip numbers that will obviously not work, you are free to do that without actually trying them. If there are no factors, there is nothing to print.

Exercise 165: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Determine whether a number is prime. Ask for and read in a number. Check all possible factors. Print out each factor greater than 1 and less than the number. If there are no such factors, report that the number is prime. (A factor is something that divides exactly into the number.)

Medium: Counting Songs

Exercise 166: There is a children’s play song that goes like this: “5 little monkeys jumping on the bed, one fell off and hurt his head, Momma called the doctor and the doctor said, No More Monkeys jumping on the bed.” It

repeats with 4 monkeys, then 3, then 2, and finally 1. Using approved style, write a program to print out the verses of this song. Prompt for and read in the starting number of monkeys. Invent a clever ending.

Exercise 167: There is a children’s song that goes like this: “5 kids in a bed and the little one said roll over, roll over. So they all rolled over and one fell out, 4 kids in a bed and the little one said ...” It continues until the little one is all alone: “1 kid in the bed and he-e said, Ahhhh.” Using approved style, write a program to print out the verses of this song. Prompt for and read in the starting number of kids in the bed.

Exercise 168:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Here is one verse of a hiking song.

```
15 miles we yet must walk.  
But all along the way we talk.  
Talking brings such happy smiles.  
Suddenly there’s 14 miles.
```

On the last verse end with:

```
Suddenly there’s no more miles.
```

Unit VII

Arrays: Repeated Data

Chapter 37

Lists

Contents

37.1 Adding Items (push)	207
37.2 Deleting Items (pop, shift)	207
37.3 Adding Items (unshift)	207
37.4 Arrays in Arrays	208
37.5 Vocabulary	209

Earlier we talked about simple variables. Simple variables hold one thing at a time. Simple variables each have a name.

Sometimes we want a variable that will hold more than one thing. Maybe we want the names of the students in this class. That would be a **list**. Or maybe we want the food items we would need to buy to make a special dinner for someone we love. That would be a list.

Our second big category of variables is the **list**, also known as the **array**. We will use **list** and **array** to mean the same thing although they have a subtle difference in emphasis.

Lists act a lot like simple variables, but they have a sequence of slots (or elements), sort of like cars on a train. Each slot is a simple variable, except it does not have its own name. We will use **slot** and **element** to mean essentially the same thing although they have a subtle difference in emphasis.

```
$x = 5; # simple
@x = ( 100, 90, 92, 86 ); # array
```

In the first example, a simple variable named `x` receives the value 5. In the second example, an array variable named `x` receives the list of values 100, 90, 92, and 86. Simple variables are prefixed with a dollar sign: `$`. Array variables are prefixed with an at sign: `@`. Array elements are listed between parentheses and separated by commas.

37.1 Adding Items (push)

We can add items to the list. There are several ways to do it, but one popular way is “**push**.”

push adds a new last item to the list, making the list one longer. You can add several items at the same time.

```
push @list, $item;
push @list, $item1, $item2, $item3;
```

37.2 Deleting Items (pop, shift)

We can retrieve items from the list, deleting them as we go. There are more ways to do it, but here we will show two: **pop** and **shift**.

pop removes the last item from the list, leaving the list one shorter. Sometimes this is called **LIFO**, meaning “last in, first out.” When a list is used this way, it is called a **stack**.

shift removes the first item from the list, leaving the list one shorter. Sometimes this is called **FIFO**, meaning “first in, first out.” When a list is used this way, it is called a **queue**.

```
$item = pop @list;
$item = shift @list;
```

37.3 Adding Items (unshift)

Push, pop, and shift are the most popular ways of adding to a list and removing from a list.

What's missing? It might be nice occasionally to be able to put something new on the front of the list. This would be like "taking cuts" at the front of the line.

unshift is the opposite of **shift**. It adds a new first item to the list, making the list longer by one. You can add several new items, making the list longer by several.

```
unshift @list, $item; # one new item
unshift @list, $item1, $item2, $item3;
```

Note: The first item you add will always become the first element of the revised list. Any additional items will follow it. The old list comes last.

```
unshift @list, $item1, $item2, $item3;
# is the same as
unshift @list, $item3;
unshift @list, $item2;
unshift @list, $item1;
```

37.4 Arrays in Arrays

We said above that:

```
@x = ( 100, 90, 92, 86 ); # array
```

We can also include variables and arrays in such assignments.

```
@x = ( $a, 90, $b, 86 ); # array of 4 items
@a = ( 1, 2, 3 ); # array of 3 items
@b = ( "x", "y" ); # array of 2 items
@x = ( @a, 90, @b, 86 ); # array of 7 items
```

When you include one array inside another array, it is as though you included the elements of that array one by one.

37.5 Vocabulary

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

push: a command to add a new item to the end of an array.

Exam Question 169 (p.414):

What does push do?

Acceptable Answer:

add an item to the end of a list

pop: a command to remove the last item from the end of an array.

Exam Question 170 (p.414):

What does pop do?

Acceptable Answer:

remove the last item from a list

shift: a command to remove the first item from the front of an array.

Exam Question 171 (p.414):

What does shift do?

Acceptable Answer:

remove the first item from a list

unshift: a command to insert a new item at the front of an array.

Exam Question 172 (p.414):

What does unshift do?

Acceptable Answer:

add an item to the front of a list

LIFO: Last in, first out. When a sequence of things are added to a list, the most recent (last) item is the first one we will consider.

Exam Question 173 (p.414):

What does LIFO stand for?

Acceptable Answer:

last in first out

stack: a word to describe a list used in a last-in, first-out way. Consider a stack of dishes. New dishes are put on the top of the stack. When a dish is wanted, it is taken from the top of the stack. The last dish added becomes

the first dish taken away.

Exam Question 174 (p.414):

How does a stack work?

Acceptable Answer:

last in first out

FIFO: First in, first out. When a sequence of things are added to a list, the oldest (first) item is the first one we will consider.

Exam Question 175 (p.414):

What does FIFO stand for?

Acceptable Answer:

first in first out

queue: a word to describe a list used in a first-in, first-out way. Consider people waiting in line for movie tickets. The first person in line should be the first person to be able to purchase tickets.

Exam Question 176 (p.414):

How does a queue work?

Acceptable Answer:

first in first out

Chapter 38

Arrays (Indexed)

Earlier we said that each slot is a simple variable, except it does not have its own name. However, the slots or elements of the **array** can be accessed by number. The slot number is called an **index**.

(In the United States, the presidential residence is called the “White House.” It is also called 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. “White House” is a name. 1600 is a number, an index referring to its location as part of a list of properties that are sited along Pennsylvania Avenue. Special things get names. Less special things get numbers, indicating that they are just one among many. A few numbers are special, like zero and one.)

For the array `@x` shown here, the index values are as follows:

```
@x = ( 100, 90, 92, 86 ); # as a list
$x[0] = 100; # as a numbered element
$x[1] = 90;
$x[2] = 92;
$x[3] = 86;
```

It gets confusing here for two reasons. First, it is clear that the slots are numbered in order. But the numbers start at zero instead of one. (A few computer languages allow the index numbers to start at one, but zero is more normal.) Sorry about that zero thing, but it is common so get used to it.

Second, shouldn't it be “`@x[0] = 100;`” with an `@` sign instead of a dollar sign? Well, yes, that would make a lot of sense. But slot zero is a simple

variable. Slot zero is not an array. When we say `$something[1]`, we are saying the simple item in slot number one of the array `@something`.

Negative Slots

Perl allows us to count the slots from the front or the back. From the front they are counted starting at zero. From the back we use negative numbers. Negative zero is the same as zero, making it potentially ambiguous. Instead we start counting at the end with negative one.

```
@x = ( 100, 90, 92, 86 ); # as a list
$x[-1] = 86; # as a numbered element
$x[-2] = 92;
$x[-3] = 90;
$x[-4] = 100;
```

This can be handy. Sometimes you want to know what the first item on the list is. That would be `$list[0]`. Sometimes you want to know what the last item on the list is. That would be `$list[-1]`.

Adding by Slot Number

We can also add by putting something directly into a slot by number.

```
$list[10] = $item;
```

This sets or replaces item 10 in the list. If the list had more than ten items, nothing else changes. If the list was shorter, it grows to reach the new last element.

Effects of Push and Pop

Important Warning: Slot numbers are affected by changes to the size of the list. In particular, if you add to the list using **push** or **unshift**, or if you delete from the list using **pop** or **shift**, all the slot numbers get updated.

Putting something into slot [4] and assuming it will stay there could be unreliable. In chapter 50 (page 260) we will look at another alternative called **hash** tables.

Inserting / Deleting from the Middle

This is NOT on the test, but you might be curious.

You can use **splice** on an array to modify the middle of the array. You need to know the index number of the first item to delete, how many items in a row (possibly zero) to delete, and what (zero or more) items to replace them with.

Syntax: `splice (array, start, length, replacements);`

Without replacements it is a pure delete. With zero length it is a pure insert.

```
@list = ( 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 );
print "@list\n"; # prints "0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8"
# replace [4] and [5] with 9, 10, 11
splice ( @list, 4, 2, 9, 10, 11 );
print "@list\n"; # prints "0 1 2 3 9 10 11 6 7 8"
```

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

index: a number that tells which slot of the array is being considered. Numbering starts with zero at the front and counts up. Numbering from the back starts at -1 and counts down using negative numbers.

Exam Question 177 (p.414):

What is an index number?

Acceptable Answer:

tells which slot of the array will be used

Chapter 39

Walk the List

Contents

39.1 foreach	215
39.2 \$_ (dollar underscore)	215

Let's say we have a list `@x` and we want to walk down the list and print out everything on the list.

We can find out the size of the list by copying it into a simple variable. I am not sure why they decided to use this particular syntax, but it is handy.

```
$size = @list;
```

Armed with this knowledge, we could use a program like this:

```
$size = @x;
for ( $i = 0; $i < $size; $i++ ) {
    print "$x[$i]\n" }
```

We are using `$i` as an index variable. The first time through the loop we print `$x[0]`. The last time through the loop we print `$x[$size-1]`.

We don't actually need the variable `$size`. This works too.

```
for ( $i = 0; $i < @x; $i++ ) {
    print "$x[$i]\n" }
```

39.1 foreach

Déjà vu: Let's say we have a list `@x` and we want to walk down the list and print out everything on the list. We could use a program like this:

```
foreach $item ( @x ) {  
    print "$item\n" }
```

This program is quite a bit shorter than the one before. It also runs slightly faster. But the main advantage is that it is easier to write and easier to understand.

We are using `$item` as an alias variable in a `foreach` loop. The first time through the loop it equals `$x[0]`. The last time through the loop it equals `$x[$size-1]`.

In most cases where I want to walk down a list, I find that `foreach` is by far the most convenient way to get the job done. Your mileage may vary.

39.2 \$_ (dollar underscore)

The `foreach` command permits the `$item` part to be implicit. In that case, the variable used is `$_`. We can rewrite our program from above as follows:

```
foreach ( @x ) { print "$_\n" }
```

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

foreach: a type of loop that avoids index numbers while still giving access to each array element in turn.

Exam Question 178 (p.414):

How does `foreach` work?

Acceptable Answer:

loops through an array without using index numbers

Chapter 40

Split and Join

We can convert the contents of an array into a string and store it in a simple variable. And we can go the other way.

The easiest way is just to interpolate the array into a string. Items will normally appear with spaces between them.

```
$x = "@y";
```

Interpolation can be a handy way to compare two arrays. Compare these alternatives, with and without quotes.

```
if ( @x == @y ) { ... } ;# compares lengths numerically
if ( @x eq @y ) { ... } ;# compares lengths
if ( "@x" eq "@y" ) { ... } ;# compares contents
```

With quotes the arrays are converted into strings. The strings are then compared in the usual way. Without quotes the arrays are converted into numbers that represent their length.

```
@x = ( 1, 2, 3, 4 );
@y = ( 4, 5, 6, 7 );
if ( @x == @y ) { 4 == 4; this will happen }
if ( @x eq @y ) { "4" eq "4"; this will happen }
if ( "@x" eq "@y" ) { this will not happen }
```

We can also use `join` to combine things. The first thing after `join` is the string to insert between list items. The remaining things make up the list to be combined.

```
@y = ( 1, 2, 4, 8 );
$x = join " and ", @y;
print $x; # "1 and 2 and 4 and 8"
```

We might want to pick the join string carefully so we can reverse the effect later. We can use `split` to separate a string into items of an array. In this next example we are splitting on space, which means that any time we run into a space, we start a new list item.

```
@y = split " ", "this is a test";
print $y[1]; # will print "is"
```

As a special case, if we split on nothing, the string gets separated into individual letters.

```
@y = split "", "this is a test";
print $y[1]; # will print "h"
```

The split string (the first item after the word `split`) is actually a regular expression. We talk about those in chapter 61 (page 327).

Important Vocabulary: Words worth memorizing.

split: a command to separate a string on certain boundaries thus creating an array.

Exam Question 179 (p.415):

What does split do?

Acceptable Answer:

convert a string into an array

join: a command to combine the elements of an array thus creating a string.

Exam Question 180 (p.415):

What does join do?

Acceptable Answer:

convert an array into a string

Chapter 41

Online

Contents

41.1 localtime	218
41.2 Online Clock	220

Not many online activities come to mind that use arrays at our current level of skill. Most things will have to wait until we learn to deal with multiple inputs in the next unit.

However, we can have some fun with **time**.

Perl provides several built-in time-related functions. We will look at **localtime**.

41.1 localtime

As its name implies, **localtime** gives information about the current time on the computer where Perl is running. Specifically it returns an array, and that is our interest here.

Exam Question 181 (p.415):

What subroutine call gives the current time?

Required Answer:

localtime

But let's back up a few steps.

time is a perl function that returns the total number of seconds since January 1, 1970, GMT, (typically). `time()` is another way to write it. Try running this very short program a few times:

```
print time;
```

gmtime is a perl function that converts that total number of seconds into an array of time details, such as hours, minutes, and seconds. `gmtime` stands for Greenwich Mean Time. It does not depend on your current location.

`gmtime` and `gmtime()` and `gmtime(time)` and `gmtime(time())` all return the same thing. If the argument is not specified, it defaults to `time()`.

If your local time zone is Hawaii, also known as HST (Hawaii Standard Time) or HAST (Hawaii Aleutian Standard Time), then your time zone offset is -10 hours. You can see your local time by using this calculation.

```
gmtime(time-10*60*60)
```

Essentially, we are taking the current (GMT) time and subtracting ten hours worth of seconds.

localtime is a perl function that returns an array of time details. `localtime` depends on your current location, or, rather, the current location of the computer where your program is running, which could be somewhere else in the world.

`localtime` and `localtime()` and `localtime(time)` and `localtime(time())` all return the same thing. If the argument is not specified, it defaults to `time()`.

gmtime and **localtime** just convert time, which is a number of seconds, into an array of other numbers.

The array includes:

(0) seconds past the minute, a number between 0 and 59 normally, or 60 when a leap second occurs. Leap seconds are very rare.

(1) minutes past the hour: 0..59.

(2) hours past midnight: 0..23. Basically this is **military time**. If you want AM and PM, use an if-statement and do some math.

(3) day of the month, using the standard Gregorian calendar: 1..31 (depending on the month).

(4) month number: 0..11, where 0 is January and 11 is December. We will explain why shortly.

(5) years since 1900.

(6) day of the week: 0..6, where 0 is Sunday and 6 is Saturday.

(7) days since the start of the year: 0..364 normally, or 0..365 in leap years. This is called the **Julian Date**.

(8) a flag for whether daylight saving time is in effect: 0 or 1.

One way to access this information is by index:

```
@time = localtime(time);
$seconds = $time[0];
$year = $time[5] + 1900;
```

Another way to access this information is by slot naming.

```
( $sec, $min, $hr, $d, $mo, $yr, ... ) = localtime(time);
$yr += 1900; # correct the year
```

41.2 Online Clock

Task: create a website that displays the current time. Include a submit button that will redisplay the current time whenever it is pressed.

Months: We promised to explain why 0 for January makes sense.

```
@months = ( "Jan", "Feb", "Mar", ..., "Dec" );
$month = $months[$mo]; # convert 0..11 into 3-letter month
```

Arrays are naturally numbered from zero. By filling an array, `@months`, with the twelve month names, January naturally ends up in slot zero.

Similarly the days of the week are numbered from zero.

```
@days = ( "Sun", "Mon", "Tue", ..., "Sat" );
$day = $days[$dow]; # convert 0..6 into 3-letter day of week
```

One thing remains: how to display seconds and minutes in a two-digit format. We appreciate a time like 12:08, but are put off by 12:8. This can be solved by using **printf** (print formatted) or **sprintf** (string print formatted).

We will demonstrate briefly here, but see appendix C (page 430) for lots more information about formatted printing.

```
$h = 5; $m = 6; $s = 7;
printf ( "%02d:%02d:%02d", $h, $m, $s ); # print directly
$time = sprintf ( "%02d:%02d:%02d", $h, $m, $s ); # store
```

In this example, we use the time 05:06:07, meaning 5:06 AM, plus 7 seconds. The `%02d` coding tells Perl to format the matching number as a two-digit number with leading **zeroes**. `%04d` would create a four-digit number with leading zeroes, so 26 would become 0026.

printf-style formatting is available in many computer languages, including C and Perl.

sprintf does the same formatting that **printf** does, but instead of printing the result, it returns the value so it can be stored in a variable for later use.

Chapter 42

Unit Test: Repeated Data

Contents

42.1 Vocabulary	222
42.2 Exercises	223

This chapter is a collection of programming questions that are typical of those you should be able to do by this point in the course. You should be able to do arrays and foreach loops (chapter 38, page 211).

42.1 Vocabulary

The following words are worth memorizing. They are introduced in earlier chapters of this unit. It is assumed that you know them. They may appear in test questions without further explanation.

push: a command to add a new item to the end of an array.

pop: a command to remove the last item from the end of an array.

shift: a command to remove the first item from the front of an array.

unshift: a command to insert a new item at the front of an array.

LIFO: Last in, first out. When a sequence of things are added to a list, the most recent (last) item is the first one we will consider.

stack: a word to describe a list used in a last-in, first-out way. Consider a stack of dishes. New dishes are put on the top of the stack. When a dish is

wanted, it is taken from the top of the stack. The last dish added becomes the first dish taken away.

FIFO: First in, first out. When a sequence of things are added to a list, the oldest (first) item is the first one we will consider.

queue: a word to describe a list used in a first-in, first-out way. Consider people waiting in line for movie tickets. The first person in line should be the first person to be able to purchase tickets.

index: a number that tells which slot of the array is being considered. Numbering starts with zero at the front and counts up. Numbering from the back starts at -1 and counts down using negative numbers.

foreach: a type of loop that avoids index numbers while still giving access to each array element in turn.

split: a command to separate a string on certain boundaries thus creating an array.

join: a command to combine the elements of an array thus creating a string.

42.2 Exercises

Things to watch out for: `@x[1]` and `$x[1]` are not the same.

Easy: One Array One Pass

Exercise 182:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Use a loop. Prompt for and read in a name. Add the name to the end of an array. Repeat until you get a blank name.

Exercise 183:* Create a loop. On each pass through the loop, prompt for and read in a name. If the name is “William” break out of the loop. Otherwise, add the name to an array of names and continue with the loop.

Exercise 184:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Given a string in `$a`, use a while loop and the chop function to convert it into an array named `@a`, one letter per slot. (Chop returns and removes the last letter of a string.)

Exercise 185:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Assume that you are given an array `@a` that has things in it. Go through

the array and print out each thing, one per line. Do not print anything else.

Exercise 186:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Assume that you are given an array @a that has numbers in it. Go through the array and print out any numbers that are an exact multiple of 5, one per line. Do not print anything else.

Exercise 187:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Assume that you are given an array @x. Go through the array and print out every fifth item, one per line. Do not print anything else.

Exercise 188:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Assume you have an array named @x. Look through the array to see if one of the entries is the number 5. Report “5 is found” or “5 is not found” depending on which thing is true.

Exercise 189:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Assume you are given an array named @visitors. Look through the array and tell whether “Joe” is one of the visitors.

Exercise 190:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Assume you are given an array named @things. Write a program that prints out all the things one per line, counting from zero, with a typical line looking like this:

```
The number 5 thing is "hello".
```

Exercise 191:* Assume you already have an array named @ARGV. It is filled with numbers. Write a program that adds up the numbers and reports the total.

Exercise 192:* Fill an array with the numbers from 10 to 900 counting by 10s.

Exercise 193:* Assume that you are given an array @deck that has shuffled cards in it. Deal out five cards each to three players, @Adam, @Bob, and @Charlie, by removing cards from the front of the deck, giving the first card to Adam (by adding it to the @Adam array), the second to Bob, the third to Charlie, the fourth to Adam, and so on in turn until each has five cards.

Medium: Two Arrays or Passes

Exercise 194:* Read in 100 strings one by one and store them in an array. Then read in one more string and check the array to see if it is already

present. If present, print “PRESENT”. If not present, print “ABSENT”. Do not prompt or print anything else.

Exercise 195:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Perfect Shuffle: Assume you have two arrays, @left and @right. Assume they have the names of playing cards, such as “2D” for the Two of Diamonds. Combine them into one new array called @cards that consists of the first card from @left followed by the first card from @right, followed by the next card from @left and the next from @right. You cannot assume how many cards there are in each pile, but you can assume they will both run out of cards at the same time.

Exercise 196:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Assume that you are given an array @a that has data in it. Construct an array @b with the same data but in reverse order. Do not use indexing (things like [2]). Use things like push, pop, shift, unshift, and foreach.

Exercise 197:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Use a loop to read in names one by one. Examine each name. If it is not “Joe” keep reading in names. When you find “Joe” stop reading in names. Go back through the list and print out the names you have read. Do not use indexing ([i]). Instead use things like push, pop, and foreach.

Hard: Nested Loops or Complications

Exercise 198: Boring!

Using approved style, write a program to do the following.

Ask “What’s for dinner?” and accept an answer. Keep a list of previous answers. If the new answer is not already on the list, add it and say “Yummy!” Otherwise say “Boring. We just had that!”

Repeat the process endlessly.

Variations: Choose another theme like movies to watch, places to visit, people to date, games to play, clothing to wear, books to read, classes to take, anything where variety is the spice of life.

More variations: Keep all answers, even repeated ones. Customize your response depending on how many times the answer has already been given. For zero, say (for example) “Yummy”. For one, say “I guess that’s okay.” For two say “This is getting old.” For three say “Mom, can’t you think of

anything else?” Make up your own answers.

More variations: Forget old answers. Only keep the five most recent answers. Do this by checking the answer count and “shift”ing one off if it gets too many.

Exercise 199:* Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Read in a list of numbers, one per line, until you get a blank line. Add up the numbers and print out the total. Also print out the average. Then tell how many numbers are above average and how many are below.

Exercise 200:* Given two lists of words, @old and @new, compare them to find out whether the same word is present in both arrays. If such a word exists, find it and print it out. If no such word exists, print “no duplicates found”. If more than one set of duplicates exists, report whichever one you want.

Exercise 201: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Merge: Assume you have two arrays, @left and @right, each filled with sorted numbers, low to high. Combine (merge) them into one new array called @both that combines all the numbers still in sorted order. Start by taking the lower number from left and right. Repeat by taking the next lower number from left and right. Continue until both sides are empty. Assume that one side will run out before the other does. Assume that some of the numbers may be the same. You are free to destroy left and right in the process of creating both.

Unit VIII

Subroutines: Organizing

Chapter 43

Subroutines

Contents

43.1 Clean Your Room	229
43.2 Getting Organized	230
43.3 Factoring: Division of Labor	230
43.4 The Interface	231
43.5 The Subroutine Call	232
43.6 The Subroutine Definition	233
43.7 Print versus Return	233
43.8 Return	234
43.9 Code Factoring (Again)	235

We have been using built-in subroutines from the beginning of the course. The first one we used was `print`. The printing process is rather elaborate and involved. We don't have to understand it personally. We have a subroutine that we can call upon to do that work. Someone else wrote it a long time ago. It is part of the standard library of subroutines.

Subroutines give us a way to manage and reduce complexity. This involves a small loss in efficiency for the computer. More statements must be carried out to achieve the same goal. But this can be a really big win for the programmers. Simple statements mean less bugs. Less bugs is a worthy trade-off for the small loss of efficiency.

Would you rather have a program that runs quickly but is wrong, or a program that runs slowly and is correct?

The actual trade-off is for a program that runs just slightly slower and has less bugs.

Subroutines are a good deal.

In this unit we learn how to write our own subroutines.

43.1 Clean Your Room

When my oldest child was about eight years old, we told her to clean her room. For some reason she went inside her room, sat on the floor, and cried. (At least that's how I remember it.) So I sat down next to her. "What's wrong?" "I don't know how to clean my room." "Okay, I'll help you." At this point she brightened up, possibly expecting that I would do the work for her. But instead I said, "Close your eyes." "Okay." "Now stick out your hand and put it on the floor." "Okay." "Open your eyes and tell me what you are touching." "It's a story book." "Great. Where do story books go?" "On the book shelf." "Great. Go put it there and come back." "Okay."

At this point the process repeated. "Close your eyes." "Sigh." "I see you have the idea. When we say 'Clean your room' we mean that you should pick up things, one by one, and put them where they belong. Dirty clothes go in the hamper. Clean clothes go in your dresser or closet. Books go in the book case. Everything has a place. Putting things away is cleaning your room."

(On the other hand, Mark Twain said "Have a place for everything and keep the thing somewhere else." Then he clarified, "This is not advice, it is merely custom.")

In computer terms I was defining a subroutine. I wanted to call that subroutine by saying "Clean your room." I wanted it to be easy to call. I did not want to explain how to clean each time the task needed to be performed.

A **subroutine** is a set of instructions that has been given a special name. It is also known as a **function** or a **method** or a **procedure**. It is defined in one place and **called** from one or more other places.

43.2 Getting Organized

Organization (from Latin organum, meaning a tool or instrument) is a process of separating and specializing. We can organize a program by isolating parts to become tools that are used by the other parts.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organizing> has more.

When our programs are organized, they become easier to maintain, update, and improve as needed to meet the changing demands of life.

When our programs are disorganized, they are difficult to maintain and often they must be thrown away and rewritten to meet the changing demands of life.

Good organizing is often a delicate balance between making simple *things* and making simple interfaces *between* things. And it is a balance between the cost of organizing one time and the cost of rewriting maybe never or maybe many times.

43.3 Factoring: Division of Labor

When creating a subroutine, we should start with an understanding of what tasks need to be done. We need to decide whether they will be done by the main program or by a subroutine. Our goal is to simplify the main program by moving some of the work to one or more subroutines.

Back in the real world, let's say we need water. We may have a kitchen sink. We can get water from the sink. Or we may need to visit a well or a stream. We get water from the source and then haul it to where the water will be used.

The division of labor is called **factoring**. In the kitchen sink example, transporting the water is the job of the plumbing. The user does not need to transfer the water. In the well / stream example, transporting the water is part of the user's duty. We can divide or factor the task so that the plumbing is responsible or the user is responsible.

If we are camping, we may not want to invest the time to build plumbing. If we plan to stay somewhere a long time, we may very well want to undertake a project to build plumbing.

Similarly with subroutines, we can factor the responsibilities so the subrou-

tine does things or the calling program does things. This division affects the interface. More on interfaces shortly. It takes careful consideration to find the best way to factor the activities so that the interface is as clean and simple as possible.

Sometimes programmers will **refactor** their code, meaning they will redivide the tasks into different groups to be done by different subroutines. Refactoring can be a really big job. Always the goal is to simplify and improve the program because simple things can be used easily, almost without thinking. Complex things can require lots of careful thought which tends to prevent their use at all. The complexity of computers scares away a lot of people.

Subroutines help us reduce complexity for the programmer.

43.4 The Interface

The **most important part** of a subroutine is the **interface**. An **interface** is something that goes between two things. It is where the two things are “talking” to each other, where they “couple” or “join.” We like our interfaces to be as simple, logical, and natural as possible, so we must define the interface carefully.

At the kitchen sink, the interface for getting water is “twist the knob and the water comes out.” “Twist the other way and it stops.” Or maybe there is a single handle that gives hot on one side, cold on the other, and warm in the middle. On a drinking fountain maybe it is “press the button or push the bar and the water comes out.”

In an automobile, the driver’s control interface is the dash board, the steering wheel, the pedals, and the other knobs and buttons. It can be pretty complicated. Manual transmission gives more control but is more difficult to learn. Automatic transmission is easier to learn but gives less control.

With subroutines, the interface is the design for how information gets into the subroutine, how results get reported, and what other work is done in the process.

The **interface** consists of three things: (a) the call: what you tell it, (b) the return: what it tells you, and (c) the side effects: what else happens.

The Call: When you **call** a subroutine you say its name and you are allowed

to tell it things. Those things are called **parameters** or **arguments** or **command line**.

The Return: When the subroutine finishes its work it is permitted to report to you the results of its work. That is called the **return value** or **return code** or **status** or **exit status** or **result**.

Side Effects: As work proceeds there may be **side effects** that are visible to other parts of your program. Sometimes these involve **global variables**. Sometimes they involve STDIN or printing.

43.5 The Subroutine Call

In the room cleaning example, the subroutine name is “clean” and the parameter is “your room.” The same cleaning procedure could be applied to the living room or play room or garage or back yard. A somewhat different procedure might apply to the kitchen or the bathroom where simply putting things away is not enough.

In computer terms, we would say:

```
$status = clean ( "your room" );
```

or maybe:

```
$status = clean ( "your room", "now" );
```

We would be looking for a status of “all finished.” In my story the first time I called the subroutine, the status came back “I don’t know how.”

Syntax of the Call

When a subroutine is called, a list of zero or more **parameters**, also known as **arguments**, is **passed** (provided). Upon its return, an answer may, if desired, be sent back, either nothing or a **scalar** or an **array**. Here are some examples of calls.

```
name ( arg, arg, arg, ... ); # nothing is returned
$result = name ( arg, arg, arg, ... ); # scalar is returned
@result = name ( arg, arg, arg, ... ); # array is returned
```

Zero or more parameters includes zero as a possibility. **rand()** is an example of a subroutine that will run without any parameters being specified.

43.6 The Subroutine Definition

Where can you put your **subroutine** definition? You are always safe to **define** the subroutine before you use it. Some languages (including Perl) allow you to **call** the subroutine before it is defined. Others do not. Some programmers strongly prefer putting the main program first and the subroutines later. Sometimes subroutines are placed in separate files or **libraries**.

Syntax of the Definition

The **subroutine** is defined with the introductory word **sub** followed by the name of the subroutine. The name follows the same rules as variables: start with a letter, continue with letters and/or digits, underscore counts as a letter. Next comes the body of the subroutine which is surrounded by curly braces. Here is an example of a subroutine definition.

```
sub abc123 { body }
```

The body is a set of statements to be executed whenever the subroutine is called. The body is not executed when the subroutine is defined. It is only executed when the subroutine is called.

The input arguments can be examined by the subroutine. They arrive in an array named `@_` (“at underscore”). We will say more about that in chapter [44](#) (page [238](#)).

Other information can be retrieved or written using **global** variables. We will say more about that in chapter [45](#) (page [242](#)).

Style Issues

Subroutines should be separated from the surrounding program by a blank line. The subroutine should be introduced by a detailed comment that tells the name of the subroutine, the purpose, the inputs, the outputs, the side effects, and what parts of the whole program would call it.

The body of the subroutine, beginning with the opening curly brace, should be indented just as a loop or other block would be.

43.7 Print versus Return

A subroutine is a program within a program.

When a normal program wants to communicate with its user, it uses “`print`” or something like it to send information out, and it uses “`<STDIN>`” or something like it to get information in. `Print` and `stdin` communicate with the ultimate user, normally a human.

When a subroutine wants to communicate with its user, we have to ask, “Which user?” If we want to communicate with the ultimate user, the human, then we would probably use `print` and `stdin`. But often we want to communicate with our closest user. That would be the program that called us. In that case, `print` and `stdin` do not work (normally). So we have another way to get information in and out. The way in is through arguments and global variables. The way out is through `return` and global variables.

It is very important to understand that `return` and `print` are *not* the same. `return` returns something to the *calling program*. `print` sends information to the *ultimate user*, normally the human.

These are referred to as the **UI** or **user interface** and the **API** or **application program interface**. Programs normally talk to other programs through the API. Humans normally talk to programs through the UI. The UI is normally verbose and tries to be helpful to the human. The UI assumes that the human will not be familiar with everything, so it prompts the human. The API, on the other hand, assumes that the calling program and the called program are following detailed rules of communication, and that the goal is an efficient and unambiguous transaction.

43.8 Return

The subroutine can return nothing, or it can return a result, either a **scalar** (simple variable) or an **array** (list), using the `return` command.

Here is a brief example that adds two numbers and returns the result. It is a fully functional, correct subroutine.

`my` is used to introduce local variables. We cover that more in chapter 45 (page 242).

```
sub add2 {
  my ( $n1, $n2, $res );# local variables
  ( $n1, $n2 ) = @_ ;
  $res = $n1 + $n2;
```

```
return $res }
```

Here is how we might call it.

```
$sum = add2 ( 5, 8 );
print "$sum\n"; # will print 13
$sum = add2 ( 21, 34 );
print "$sum\n"; # will print 55
```

Here is a brief (not terribly useful) example that returns an array filled with numbers from 1 to some limit. It is included here simply to show how to return an array.

```
sub one2n {
  my ( $i, $limit, @result );
  ( $limit ) = @_ ;
  for ( $i = 1; $i <= $limit; $i++ ) {
    push @result, $i }
  return @result }

```

As usual, there is far, far more that we are not saying. But this should get you started. Beyond that, remember that Internet search engines are your friends.

43.9 Code Factoring (Again)

By **code factoring** we mean the dividing out of common elements. We are simplifying our program by breaking it into meaningful pieces. Although it is possible to divide up code almost anywhere, there are natural boundaries that should be found and used.

In mathematics we might see an expression like this:

$$5x + 10$$

Another way to write it is to recognize that there is a factor of 5 present. We can rewrite the expression like this:

$$5(x + 2)$$

The new expression has two factors, 5 and $x + 2$.

Similarly programs can be divided into independent pieces that interact with each other.

Here is an example with code.

```
print "Please enter your name: "; chomp ( $name = <STDIN> );
print "Please enter your age: "; chomp ( $age = <STDIN> );
```

Notice the repetition. We can factor that out and create two calls. (You should *always* design the subroutine call first. This is called the **interface**. Then design the subroutine to support it. Don't let the tail wag the dog.)

```
$name = ask ( "your name" );
$age = ask ( "your age" );
```

We support these calls with a subroutine definition.

```
sub ask {
  my ( $q, $ans );
  ( $q ) = @_ ;
  print "Please enter $q: ";
  chomp ( $ans = <STDIN> );
  return $ans }

```

The beauty of this is that the subroutine can be carefully constructed and tested *one time*. Then it can be used many times. Once it is built, it becomes a black box that you do not ever have to look at again. (We explain the phrase “black box” a bit later.)

With the subroutine in hand, the main program simplified. Simplicity is an important virtue for programming. Consider these two lines, side by side.

```
print "Please enter your name: "; chomp ( $name = <STDIN> );
$name = ask ( "your name" );
```

Both lines do the same thing. The second line is probably closer to the way a human would like to see it. The first is probably closer to the way the computer would like to see it. Who should win? That's just the tip of the

iceberg. Subroutines make life much easier. They let us organize. This is very valuable.

As we write code, we should be asking ourselves whether the code we are writing is so specialized that it will probably not be useful anyplace else, or could it be generalized so our efforts can find a home in other programs.

Although we can talk about it at length, probably the best way to learn it is by discovery. As you write a few subroutines, your understanding will increase and you will make better choices.

Chapter 44

Arguments

Contents

44.1 Direct Access	238
44.2 Unlimited Parameters	240

The input arguments to a subroutine can be examined by the subroutine. They arrive in a predefined array named `@_` (“at underscore”).

44.1 Direct Access

The input arguments can be accessed directly where they are, by using a `$_[x]` type of notation that indexes directly into the arguments array. If the first three parameters are name, address, and city, you could copy them like this:

```
$name = $_[0];  
$address = $_[1];  
$city = $_[2];
```

There is a nice trick you can use to copy all the parameters into named variables at the same time. If the first three parameters are name, address, and city, you could copy them like this:

```
( $name, $address, $city ) = @_;
```

WARNING: Consider the following example.

```
$name = @_; # wrong
```

Rather than copying the first parameter into `$name` it actually copies the count of the number of parameters into `$name`. If we are only expecting one parameter, then `$name` will probably be 1 when the statement finishes.

We really need the parentheses so that the left side of the equals sign is an array, like this:

```
( $name ) = @_; # correct
```

Here is a bigger example.

Let's say that we prompt for input, read in a number, and verify that it is between 1 and 10 (inclusive). Or an age between 14 and 99. If it is, we go about our business. But if not, we print an error message and prompt for the number again.

We decide we want to call it like this:

```
$num = askAZ ( "a number", 1, 10 );
$age = askAZ ( "your age", 14, 99 );
```

We can modify our subroutine (or make a new one) that handles the additional functionality. We elect to create a new one named `askAZ`, which reminds us we are asking something and we are providing the limits (the A to Z) in which it must fall.

```
sub askAZ {
  my ( $q, $min, $max, $ans );
  ( $q, $min, $max ) = @_;
  while ( 1 ) {
    print "Please enter $q: ";
    chomp ( $ans = <STDIN> );
    if ( $min <= $ans && $ans <= $max ) { return $ans }
    print "Please enter a number between $min and $max.\n"
  } }
}
```

Notice that we are allowed to return from the middle of a subroutine. It is equivalent to doing a “last” and then returning, but it is easier to write.

Notice we have four variables in our subroutine. Three are used to hold information given by the caller. One is used to hold the answer we will return to the caller.

Also we created an infinite loop. It will continue asking the question until the user provides an acceptable answer.

We are removing a complexity burden from the main program. We want the main program to appear and be as simple as possible. We want the subroutines to be generic so they can be used in other programs we might write later.

44.2 Unlimited Parameters

The commands **pop**, **shift**, and **foreach** can be used directly on the `@_` array.

Say we wanted to add up the numbers that were given to us. We want to be able to say

```
$x = total ( 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 );
```

and have `$x` end up with the number 15. Following is a subroutine that will do that job.

```
sub total {
  my ( $total, $num );
  $total = 0;
  foreach $num ( @_ ) { $total += $num }
  return $total }

```

Remember that `$total += $num` means `$total = $total + $num`.

Notice that in this subroutine we use the input array, `@_`, directly. We use **foreach** to walk down the array and as we encounter each entry we add it to the total.

We could also compute the average. The subroutine is almost the same.

```
sub average {
  my ( $total, $num );
  $total = 0;

```

```
foreach $num ( @_ ) { $total += $num }  
return $total / @_ }
```

All we have done here is rename the subroutine and make one additional calculation right at the end. We are dividing by `@_`, which is treated as the number of items in the parameter list. Of course, there is a risk of dividing by zero. We should take care of that by including a line like the following:

```
if ( @_ == 0 ) { return 0 }
```

We could also combine the two subroutines, letting “average” call “total” as follows.

```
sub average {  
  if ( @_ == 0 ) { return 0 }  
  return total ( @_ ) / @_ }
```

Chapter 45

Global versus Local

Contents

45.1 Declaring a Variable	244
45.2 Syntax of “my”	244

In Perl all variables are **global** unless you do something to prevent it. Today this is recognized as a bad thing, but to change Perl now would break too many programs. So we muddle on.

The opposite of **global** is **local**. Newer programming languages tend to avoid global variables. Global variables make an end run around the formal interface of parameters and return values. They allow direct access to things that would normally be private.

When a variable is **global** each time we say its name we refer to the same storage bin.

```
$x = 5;
...
print $x;
...
sub abc {
    print $x;
    ... }
```

In this example, the variable `$x` is set equal to 5. Sometime later in the program it is printed. Because it has the same name, it means the same

storage location, which still has (presumably) the 5 that we put there earlier. Later, inside the subroutine, when `$x` is mentioned, it still means that same storage location. It still prints a 5.

More recent languages tend to dislike this behavior because it leads to buggy programs.

Consider the family next door. Pretend they have a boy named “Joe.” When you say “I am going over to Joe’s house” everybody knows what you mean. Joe’s name is global, at least around you.

Imagine that another family moves in on the other side. Pretend they also have a boy named “Joe.” To solve the neighborhood problem maybe you would call them “big Joe” and “little Joe” or something. But inside their homes, each one is still just “Joe” to his family.

The name “Joe” is defined locally in the context of the family where it is used.

We can force a local interpretation of the variable by explicitly declaring it through saying `my`.

Here is a global example.

```
sub abc { $x = 10; print "$x\n" }
$x = 5;
print "$x\n";
abc;
print "$x\n";
```

This will print “5, 10, 10” because when `abc` runs, it will change the global value of `$x`.

Here is a local example.

```
sub abc { my $x; $x = 10; print "$x\n" }
$x = 5;
print "$x\n";
abc;
print "$x\n";
```

This will print “5, 10, 5” because when `abc` runs, it will change the local value of `$x`. The difference is the `my $x`; in the second program.

45.1 Declaring a Variable

The word **my** causes **\$x** to belong to the subroutine instead of the whole program. This is called **declaring a variable**.

Why bother?

As programs get big, the parts become more and more isolated from each other, just as children grow up, move out, and establish their own lives. Subroutines grow up and become moderately independent parts of the program.

This is a good thing. We want it to be this way.

We want them to be independent because changes in one subroutine should not have surprising effects in other parts of the program. When you use global variables your program is fragile to the extent that variable names could accidentally be re-used.

Say one programmer writes subroutine **xyz** and uses variable **\$abc**. Another programmer writes subroutine **pqr** and also uses variable **\$abc**. They are dancing on each other's feet. The program may break and it will be hard to find out why it happened.

There are two typical solutions. One solution is to assign each programmer a range of variable names. Joe's variables could all start with **\$j_** followed by the rest of the variable name, hence, **\$j_abc**. Bob's variable names could all start with **\$b_**, resulting in **\$b_abc**. Problem solved.

A better solution is to locally declare each variable before or when it is first used in the subroutine, like **my \$abc**. Then both programmers can use **\$abc** or any other variable name they like, and nobody needs to know or coordinate and assign a naming scheme.

When you use **my** your variables become **local**. Otherwise your variables will normally be **global**.

45.2 Syntax of “my”

One approach to declaring variables is to mark them the first time they are used. Simply put the word **my** in front of it. This will cause it to be a local variable.

```
my $x = 5; # okay
print $x;
my $y = $x + 2; # okay
print $y;
```

Another approach to declaring variables is to mark them all at the start of the subroutine.

If you use **my** with more than one variable, the list must be enclosed in parentheses.

```
my $x; # okay
my $x, $y, $z; # FAILS
my ( $x, $y, $z ); # okay
my $x; my $y; my $z; # okay
```

Chapter 46

Code Factoring

Contents

46.1 A Basic Example	246
46.2 A More Advanced Example	246

** PRELIMINARY **

In this chapter we focus on identifying the common pieces in code and converting them into subroutines.

46.1 A Basic Example

to be added

46.2 A More Advanced Example

This example is a little more tricky.

```
if ( $x == 1 ) {  
    for ( $i = 1; $i < 10; $i++ ) { print "Hippo" } }  
if ( $x == 2 ) {  
    for ( $i = 1; $i < 10; $i++ ) { print "Lion" } }  
if ( $x == 3 ) {
```

```

    for ( $i = 1; $i < 10; $i++ ) { print "Eagle" } }
if ( $x == 4 ) {
    for ( $i = 1; $i < 10; $i++ ) { print "Fox" } }
if ( $x == 5 ) {
    for ( $i = 1; $i < 10; $i++ ) { print "Bear" } }

```

Here we see several elements repeated. Each chunk has the following form:

```

if ( $x == ?? ) {
    for ( $i = 1; $i < 10; $i++ ) { print "??" } }

```

We would like to create a subroutine that captures the common elements. Our first attempt might look like this:

```

# the calls
ifprint ( 1, "Hippo" );
ifprint ( 2, "Lion" );
ifprint ( 3, "Eagle" );
ifprint ( 4, "Fox" );
ifprint ( 5, "Bear" );
# the subroutine
sub ifprint {
    my ( $trigger, $animal );
    ( $trigger, $animal ) = @_;
    if ( $x == $trigger ) {
        for ( $i = 1; $i < 10; $i++ ) { print "$animal" } } }

```

Okay. That works. It is probably not the best approach, though. We need to figure out the intentions of the programmer and design the call to match those intentions. Another approach might be like this:

```

# the calls
if ( $x == 1 ) { multiPrint ( "Hippo" ) }
if ( $x == 2 ) { multiPrint ( "Lion" ) }
if ( $x == 3 ) { multiPrint ( "Eagle" ) }
if ( $x == 4 ) { multiPrint ( "Fox" ) }
if ( $x == 5 ) { multiPrint ( "Bear" ) }
# the subroutine

```



```
sub multiPrint {  
  my ( $animal, $i );  
  ( $animal ) = @_  
  for ( $i = 1; $i < 10; $i++ ) { print "$animal" } }  
}
```

We need to find the place where the pieces should be separated.

Chapter 47

Black Boxes

Contents

47.1 Formal Interface	251
---	------------

A subroutine should be a black box. A **black box** has an interface that is public and potentially a lot of hidden components that are supposed to be left alone by most of us.

Say I give you a magical device that will cook food. I call it a Microwave Oven. I show you how to work it. You use it happily for several years. Do you know how it works?

Well, a microwave has a user **interface**. Most people who say “sure, I know how a microwave works” really mean that they know how to press the buttons. They know the interface. Show them a new microwave and they can figure out how to work it.

But at a deeper level, most people have no idea how a microwave really works, or why it makes sparks when you put metal inside. No metal is allowed! Those are just the rules. If you were an electrical engineer, maybe you would understand why those are the rules, but for the rest of us, there are “no user serviceable parts inside.” So don’t open the box. You’ll probably just break it.

An object (or situation) like this is called a **black box**.

A black box is any device that does a task for us but we don’t really know how it works. We just know it works. Black refers to the fact that we cannot see inside it to tell how it works. In contrast, a **white box** or **clear box** is

one that we *can* look inside.

Computers are a black box to most people. Microwaves. Clocks. Electricity. Rockets. Government. Car engines. Any number of things.

And yet we live our lives and we use these things. We rely on them. But we don't understand them.

It's probably better that way. Who has time to go to medical school before having a baby? And yet you would want your doctor to have been to medical school.

We love the fact that there are things we can rely on without knowing exactly how they work.

SOMEBODY has to know how those things work. And it is wonderful when we can be that person. A race car driver probably understands his car engine quite well. He's an expert. That knowledge might be useful once in a while. A computer expert may really know what is happening when he clicks the mouse on a webpage.

SOMEBODY has to know, but it does not have to be me.

Because I don't have to know, it reduces the complexity in my life. I flip the switch. The light comes on. It works whether I understand or not. This is a good thing.

Computer programs can be the same way. Programs become complex in order to do the wonderful things we have come to expect. Complexity means they are hard to fix when they break. We would like to divide that complexity into black boxes. Experts can each understand their own black box. We can use those black boxes to assemble a solution.

`print` is a black box that we use all the time in programming. `<STDIN>` is another black box.

Making subroutines is the way we can create our own black boxes for use in our own programs. That way we don't have to reinvent the wheel each time we need a wheel. We can just cut and paste a subroutine into our new program and start using it right away.

47.1 Formal Interface

One beauty of the black box is that we can swap it out for a new and improved black box. We can buy a faster, better computer and still use it the way we did before. As long as the user interface is about the same, we will be okay.

What if we change the user interface? What if we upgrade our operating system or move forward to the next version of Office software? Suddenly the changes in the interface cause serious frustration. It's like being a stroke victim. We have to relearn common tasks.

So it is very important to think about the formal user interface each subroutine will have. That's why I said earlier that you must always design the subroutine call first. Then design the subroutine to support it.

We want to conceal all the complexity of the subroutine. We do not want the complexity to be part of the formal interface. That way, any changes to the innards of the subroutine should not cause the rest of the program to break. We don't want our program to be a stroke victim.

The formal interface consists first of the subroutine name. You want something that is clear and concise. Not too long and verbose. Easy to understand when you see it.

Second, the interface involves the **parameters (arguments)** that will be used. The subroutine itself represents a set of actions. Those actions might be applied in different circumstances, or with different specific details. The easily changed parts should be represented by parameters.

Third, the interface involves the **return** value or values. When the subroutine finishes, what should it say? Maybe nothing. Maybe "I finished successfully" or "I had error 13" (whatever that is). Or maybe it should give us information we were seeking, like "The current time is 10:03 AM."

Fourth, the interface involves **side effects**, which are those things not already mentioned. Common side effects are use of **print** and/or **<STDIN>**. Other side effects might be the utilization or updating of **global variables**.

Chapter 48

Games and Projects

Contents

48.1 Games Menu	252
48.2 Input Edits	252
48.3 Input Edits with Default	253
48.4 Input Edits with Alternatives	254

In this chapter we look at some simple games and projects that use our knowledge up through subroutines.

48.1 Games Menu

Make each game you have written into a subroutine. Then make a menu that offers a list of your games to the player and runs the game they select.

48.2 Input Edits

It is common that we want an input. The human can type whatever they want. Once the program receives it, we want the input to be converted into some standard form that is easy to use.

We may want to invent a subroutine that gathers answers to yes/no questions. Call the subroutine `yesno`. Give it one input, being the question that

is asked. It returns one answer, being either “y” or “n” depending on what the user entered.

```
sub yesno {
    my $q;
    ( $q ) = @_ ;# grab the question
    while ( 1 ) { # repeat until success
        print "$q: "; # ask the question
        chomp ( $Ans = <STDIN> ); # get the answer
        $ans = lc $Ans ;# convert to lower case
        if ( $ans eq "y" ) { return "y" }
        if ( $ans eq "yes" ) { return "y" }
        if ( $ans eq "n" ) { return "n" }
        if ( $ans eq "no" ) { return "n" }
        print "\nYou said \"$Ans\" but I don't understand.\n";
        print "I really only understand 'y' and 'n'.\n";
        print "Please try again.\n\n";
    }
}
```

Make this subroutine work. Test it.

48.3 Input Edits with Default

Modify the subroutine to take one more input. The second input will be the default answer. If the user just presses Enter and nothing else, the default value should be used.

The human should be notified what the default value will be. Normally this is done by putting the alternatives after the question, and making the default a capital letter.

Example: If the question is “Would you like to eat?” and the default is yes, the question might be presented to the user as follows.

```
print "Would you like to eat? [Yn] ";
print "Would you like to eat? (Y,n) ";
print "Would you like to eat? (Y/n) ";
```

Often the first alternative, [Yn], is used. See regular expressions in chapter 61 (page 327) for an explanation. But any method can be used that you believe will be clear to the human.

48.4 Input Edits with Alternatives

Modify the subroutine to take many more inputs. The first parameter is the question. The second parameter is be the default answer. Instead of just “yes” and “no” as acceptable alternatives, use additional parameters to specify a list of other acceptable alternatives. Loop until one of the acceptable alternatives is entered.

Chapter 49

Unit Test: Organizing

Contents

49.1 Vocabulary	255
49.2 Exercises	256

This chapter is a collection of programming questions that are typical of those you should be able to do by this point in the course. You should be able to do subroutines (chapter [43](#), page [228](#)).

49.1 Vocabulary

The following words are worth memorizing. They are introduced in earlier chapters of this unit. It is assumed that you know them. They may appear in test questions without further explanation.

argument: information explicitly passed to a subroutine as part of the subroutine call.

parameter: information explicitly passed to a subroutine as part of the subroutine call.

global variable: information implicitly available to the subroutine and throughout the program.

local variable: information available only within a specific subroutine.

return: the completion of a subroutine; also the information explicitly passed back from the subroutine upon completion.

49.2 Exercises

Things to watch out for: (a) make sure your variables are local unless otherwise requested by the problem. (b) When subroutines provide an answer, usually it is returned, not printed. `print` and `return` are not the same thing. (c) When subroutines get input, usually it is arguments or parameters, not `STDIN`. `<STDIN>` and input parameters are not the same thing. Parameters and arguments *are* the same thing. (d) `$x = @_;` is not the same thing as `($x) = @_;`. Without parentheses you get the number of parameters. With the parentheses you get the first parameter.

Easy: Simple In, Process, Out

Exercise 202:* Write a subroutine named `add3` that receives as input three parameters. It adds them together and returns the result.

Exercise 203:* Write a subroutine called `stars` that takes two inputs: the number of stars to write and the character to be the star. Return a string composed of those characters. Example: `stars(10,"*")` should return `*****`.

Exercise 204:* Write a subroutine that adds up the numbers given to it and returns their total. If no inputs are provided, return zero.

Exercise 205:* Write a subroutine named `average` that accepts an argument array and calculates and returns the mathematical average (mean) of the array. If the array is empty, return zero.

Exercise 206:* Write a subroutine that finds the largest and smallest numbers among its parameters. It should return `"smallest largest"` where `smallest` and `largest` are replaced by the correct numbers. Assume at least one number is provided as an input.

Exercise 207: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Write a subroutine named `max` that takes a list of numbers and returns the greatest (maximum) one. You can assume there is at least one entry in the argument list.

Exercise 208: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Write a subroutine named “min” that takes a list of numbers and returns the least (minimum) one. You can assume there is at least one entry in the argument list.

Exercise 209: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Write a subroutine named “pick” that takes a list of arguments and randomly picks one and returns it. Each argument should have the same chances of being picked.

Exercise 210:* Write a subroutine named dice that returns two random whole numbers between 1 and 6, as though a pair of fair dice had been rolled. Return them as “\$x \$y” where \$x is one roll and \$y is the other.

Exercise 211: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Write a subroutine named “cointoss” that takes one parameter, the number of coins to toss and returns an array with that many random choices of “heads” and “tails” as though a fair coin had been tossed for each one.

Medium:

Exercise 212:* Write a subroutine name numType that accepts a number as its only parameter and returns “lucky”, “unlucky”, or “normal” as the result. A number is lucky if it divides by 7 but not by 13. A number is unlucky if it divides by 13 but not by 7. A number is normal if it divides by both or neither.

Exercise 213: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Write a subroutine named dice that takes one parameter, the number of dice to roll, and returns an array with that many random integers from 1 to 6, as though a fair dice had been rolled for each one.

Exercise 214: Write a subroutine named “pick” that accepts an argument array and randomly returns one of the arguments. Each slot should be equally likely. Sample usage: \$coin=pick("heads","tails");

Exercise 215: You are given the following broken subroutine. It is supposed to accept one input parameter, multiply it by itself, and return the answer. (That answer is called the square of the number.)

```
subroutine square { $x == @_; returns $x * $x }
```

Fix the subroutine. Then write a program that uses it to print the squares of numbers from 1 to 100.

Hard:

Exercise 216:* Write a subroutine named `yesno`. It accepts one argument: a question. It returns one result: the answer “yes” or “no”. Inside the subroutine it asks the user the question. It listens for an answer. If the answer is yes or no it returns the answer. If not it complains and then repeats the process until it finally gets a good answer.

Exercise 217:* Write a subroutine that asks a user to pick either Rock, Paper, or Scissors. Keep asking until you get a valid answer. Return that answer.

Exercise 218:* Reorganize the following program by creating an appropriate subroutine and calling it. Give the complete final program with subroutine. Here is the original program:

```
print "Please enter the name of a boy: ";
chomp ( $person = <STDIN> );
print "Please enter a color: ";
chomp ( $color = <STDIN> );
print "Please enter a number: ";
chomp ( $number = <STDIN> );
print "Please enter a food: ";
chomp ( $food = <STDIN> );
print "Please enter a day of the week: ";
chomp ( $day = <STDIN> );
print "A story for you:

$person has a Surprising Day

On $day morning, $person woke up.
He was hungry. He decided to eat $food.
He was so hungry he probably ate $number of them.
Afterward he was feeling a little $color.
His mom gave him some medicine and he felt better.

";
```

Unit IX

Hashes

Chapter 50

Hashes

Contents

50.1 Store and Retrieve	261
50.2 List by Key, Value, or Both	262
50.3 Lookup	262

Arrays and hashes each store values. Arrays do it by numeric index. Hashes do it by key string. Arrays preserve order. Hashes do not. Arrays utilize functions like `push`, `pop`, `shift`, and `unshift`. Hashes utilize functions like `keys`, `values`, `each`, and `delete`.

If you need to preserve order, use an array.

If you need to store and retrieve by key, use a hash.

A **hash** is also called an **associative array** or a **dictionary**, or even a poor man’s **database**. It is like an indexed array, but the index is called a **key**, and instead of being a number, can be a string. This is a huge “plus.” On the other hand, **hash** does not have any concept of order, so `push`, `pop`, `shift`, and `unshift` do not make any sense. **hash** only supports keys and values.

Persistence: We can use a hash within a program to store and retrieve data, but everything is lost when the program ends. If we want things to still exist the next time we run the program, we should be looking at databases. In chapter 54 (page 281) we introduce databases and will go into detail using MySQL, a popular and free database system.

The introductory symbol for a **scalar** is the \$ dollar sign. The introductory

symbol for an **array** is the @ commercial at sign. The introductory symbol for a **hash** is the % percent sign. Using a # (hashtag) would have been more mnemonic (memorable), but # is already in use for comments.

With an array the index is surrounded by square brackets, like this: [1]. With a hash the index (or key) is surrounded by curly brackets, like this: {1}.

With a **hash** we can store, retrieve, delete, and list by key.

Lots more information can be had by doing a Google search on “perl hash”.

50.1 Store and Retrieve

Here are two examples of storing values into a hash.

```
$x{1,2} = "Florida";
$x{xyz} = "New York";
```

In the first example, “1,2” is the key and “Florida” is the value.

In the second example, “xyz” is the key and “New York” is the value.

Here is an example of storing payroll information by name.

```
while ( 1 ) {
    print "name: ";
    chomp ( $name = <STDIN> );
    print "income: ";
    chomp ( $income = <STDIN> );
    $payroll{$name} = $income; }
```

Once the %payroll hash is filled, we can use it to look up information about any employee.

```
while ( 1 ) {
    print "name: ";
    chomp ( $name = <STDIN> );
    print "The income of $name is $payroll{$name}.\n"; }
```

50.2 List by Key, Value, or Both

We can extract an array from a hash. We can get a list of keys. We can get a list of values. We can get a list of keys and values.

```
@x = keys %whatever; # keys in random order
@x = values %whatever; # values in random order
@x = each %whatever; # key/value pairs in random order
```

We can print the contents of a hash using the keys.

```
foreach $k ( keys %whatever ) {
    print "key: $k, value: $whatever{$k}\n" }
```

We can print the contents of a hash using both keys and values.

```
foreach ( $k, $v ) ( each %whatever ) {
    print "key: $k, value: $v\n" }
```

50.3 Lookup

We can find whether a specific key is in the hash. **exists** checks the key. **defined** checks the value. It is possible for a key to exist but not have a defined value.

```
if ( exists $whatever{key} ) { key is there }
if ( defined $whatever{key} ) { value is defined }
if ( $whatever{key} ) { value is true }

$whatever{key} = 1; # true, defined, exists
$whatever{key} = "xyz"; # true, defined, exists
$whatever{key} = 0; # false, defined, exists
$whatever{key} = ""; # false, defined, exists
$whatever{key} = $x[7]; # false, not defined, exists
delete ( $whatever{key} ); # false, not defined, not exist
```

You can initialize a hash by giving it an array of keys and values:

```
%whatever = ( key1, value1, key2, value2, ... );
```

You can delete all the keys in a hash by using this command:

```
%whatever = ( );
```


Chapter 51

Games and Projects (Hashes)

Contents

51.1 Animal	264
51.2 Exploration	266

In this chapter we look at some simple games and projects that use our knowledge up through arrays and hashes.

51.1 Animal

In this game you think of an animal and the computer tries to guess it by asking you yes/no questions. This is an example of a **decision tree**.

The basic dialog goes something like this.

```
Let's play Animal!  
Are you thinking of an animal? yes  
Does it live on land? yes  
Horse? yes  
I win. Let's play again!
```

`%kb` is a hash that contains our knowledge base of everything we know. Each line is the “what next” based on answers already received. That series is

called a decision tree. Also we update the decision tree when we learn new information.

```
$kb{' '} = "Does it live on land"; # ask when you know nothing
$kb{y} = "Horse";
$kb{n} = "Whale";
```

`$alist` is the answer list, or list of answers to the questions we have already asked. We update it as the questioning goes along.

```
print "Let's play ANIMAL!\n";
while ( 1 ) { # start a round
  print "\nYou think of an animal. I will guess it.\n";
  $alist = ""; # start over with no answers
  while ( 1 ) { # keep asking questions
    $save = $alist; # basis for updates later
    print "$kb{$save}? "; # ask question (or guess)
    chomp ( $ans = <STDIN> ); # assume y/n answer
    $alist .= $ans; # update our answer list
```

After each question, we are closer to reaching a conclusion. Eventually we will run out of questions. When that happens, if the last answer was “y” then we guessed correctly. If not, we try to learn a new animal.

```
    if ( exists $kb{$alist} ) { next }
    if ( $ans eq "y" ) { print "Hurray! I win!\n"; last }
    # must be a new animal
    $old = $kb{$save};
    print "I give up. What animal was it? ";
    chomp ( $new = <STDIN> );
    print "Oh, $new. Wow. I never would have guessed.\n";
    print "What question could I ask to tell the
difference between an $old and a $new? ";
    chomp ( $question = <STDIN> );
    print "For $new what would the answer be? ";
    chomp ( $yesno = <STDIN> );
```

At this point we have a new animal and a new question. We can update the knowledge base.

```

    $kb{$save} = $question;
    $kb{$save . "y"} = $old;
    $kb{$save . "n"} = $old;
    $kb{$save . $yesno} = $new;
    last }
print "Let's play again!\n" }

```

Write it. Run it. Play it. Figure out how to improve it. (It's pretty much bare bones and could use a lot of loving care.)

Idea for debugging: Add a “list” command that tells all the information in your database. Use `keys` to get a list of the keys. Use `sort` to sort the keys into ascending order. Use `foreach` to walk the list and print each matching key and value.

Idea for improvement: Read the chapter [D](#) (page [442](#)) on File I/O. Add a “save” command to your game. Write out the knowledge base. Next time the game starts read in the knowledge base so you do not lose all the knowledge learned from the users of your game.

51.2 Exploration

This is a variation of a classic game called **Zork** or **Adventure**. In this game, you are at one of several locations. A description of your surroundings is printed. You can then move in various directions. Your location is updated and the new surroundings are described.

In the classic versions of the game, you can also pick up and use objects, but we will not do that here. Instead, we will just explore.

Like *Animal*, our choices lead us forward. Unlike *Animal*, we can back up and even wander in circles. So instead of indicating our location by `$alist`, we will use `$at`, which holds some id marker for the room we are in.

Another big difference is that the world does not normally change as we explore it (although it could). Everything is set up in advance. The fun and excitement is in creating a fantasy world.

Each location or room is described by data.

```

$kb{0,short} = "Home";
$kb{0,long} = "You are in a beautiful meadow."

```

```

North you hear a waterfall.  South you see a river.
East is a mountain.  West is more forest.";
$kb{0,N} = 1;
$kb{0,S} = "river";
$kb{0,W} = "forest2";
$kb{1,short} = "Waterfall";
$kb{1,long} = "The waters thunder down as you gaze
on in amazement.  This is truly a place of great beauties.
But somehow you feel as though there are hidden secrets.
South is a path.";
$kb{1,S} = 0;
$kb{1,N} = 2;
$kb{2,short} = "Hidden Cave";
$kb{2,long} = "You have discovered a mysterious cave
behind the rushing torrents of water.  It seems that no
one has been here in ever so long.  It is cool and peaceful.
Above you is a ledge.  Perhaps you can climb up to it.";
$kb{2,S} = 1;
$kb{2,U} = 3;

```

This is clearly a fantasy location. You could start by describing the actual house or village where you grew up. Before you key in your knowledge base you may want to start by drawing a map so you can keep everything straight more easily.

My knowledge base starts with the visitor at location `$at=0`. Yours could be different. Mine uses numbers to identify locations. Yours could be different.

When the game starts, and as you enter each new location, you would normally print out the short name of the place, `$kb{$at,short}`, followed by the long name. Then you wait for inputs.

If the user types in some form of the word “North” you set `$dir` to “N” and set `$at` to be `$kb{$at,$dir}`. Similarly for “South” use “S”, for “East” use “E”, for “West” use “W”, for “Up” use “U”, and for “Down” use “D”. In fact, you can invent your own directions, like “NE”, “In”, “Under”, or whatever.

If the user selects a direction that is not (currently) possible, you could respond with something like: “I’m sorry. I don’t seem to be able to go that direction at this time.”

If you want to remember where you have been, as you enter each room you

can update the knowledge base by saying something like `$kb{$at,seen}=1`. Then, the next time you visit that place you could get by with only saying the short description.

Unit X

Persistence: Database

Chapter 52

State: Persistent Data

Contents

52.1 Medical Records	271
52.2 Persistent Data	272
52.3 Clutter	272
52.4 Trust	273
52.5 Data Kept by the User	274
52.6 Data Kept by the Provider	275

Computers run programs to interact with people. Program operation is characterized by flurries of activity to satisfy a request, and long periods of silence in between, waiting until the user is ready to talk again. The user may view this as an ongoing interactive **session**. However, during the periods of silence, the computer usually turns to other tasks.

This chapter introduces the concept of a **persistent** data, also known as **state**, also known as a **session**. It identifies several ways to recover the state of a transaction so that the session can be established or continued, including visible fields, hidden fields, and http cookies.

Earlier, in section 10.7 (page 86), we introduced these concepts under the name of **memo to self**.

While computer activity is under way, information is held in variables and arrays. When a program resumes operation after a long period of silence, it restarts with no memory of what it did before. Sometimes it needs to know what happened before so it can do the proper thing next. When that is the

case, data storage needs to be involved.

Current information (what the user is giving us now) helps us know what the user wants to do next.

The long-term information that we need to remember from one run to the next is called **state** or **persistent** data. It includes the history of our past dealings with this particular user. It helps us decide how to respond to current requests.

52.1 Medical Records

Consider medical records. Each time you visit a healthcare facility or provider (for example, a hospital emergency room or a medical doctor), you are seeking to cure an illness or prevent future problems. Medical tests may be performed and analysis done. The results are entered into your medical chart. If there is no chart, a new one must be prepared. If there is a chart it can be consulted to find out your medical history. The chart contains details that might be important in the future, including data to help us see trends. The chart might be kept by you or by your healthcare provider.

Imagine that you keep your medical records. What are the benefits and difficulties?

Benefits of Keeping Your Own Records

One benefit is that each time you visit a new doctor, you can bring along your records. That saves time because the doctor does not need to request the records from the previous provider. In case of emergency, especially if you are traveling away from home, the time saved could make an important difference in your survival. Another benefit is that you can see exactly what is written in those records. This might allow you to uncover any errors that have crept in. It might also allow you to learn more about your medical conditions, enabling you to research them on the Internet. This could make you a more informed consumer of health care services. Another benefit is that your doctor would not need to maintain records on each patient. Whole rooms full of files might be turned into more useful space.

Difficulties with Keeping Your Own Records

One difficulty is that you might lose the records. In this case, a backup

should be kept somewhere. Another difficulty is that you might find out you are going to die. You might not want to know what is really wrong with you. People differ on how much of the truth they want to hear. You may differ even from day to day. Another difficulty is you might change the records because you don't like what they say. You don't want people to know that you have some particular problem. Or you may want to receive some special treatment. The opportunity for mischief could make medical personnel less trusting of what they find in your records.

52.2 Persistent Data

Similar to the medical records example, **persistent data** is involved in many of our dealings with computers.

Many examples come to mind: financial records including tax returns and bank balances, school records including transcripts and grades, and travel documents including passports and visas.

Each time your CGI program starts up, it receives one line of input sent by the browser. That line of input contains the contents of each field that was on the form (screen) being sent. That line might be really, really long. One simple solution is to include all the needed data amongst the information being sent from the screen.

This solves the problem. Nearly. There are two real issues with it. First, there is clutter. And second, there is trust.

52.3 Clutter

Should we clutter up the screen? No.

For input to be transmitted from the browser to the server, it must be part of the **form** that appears on the screen.

We could also use **cookies**. These are discussed in Chapter 53 (page 276).

It can be distracting to a user when their screen has too much data that is visible. The user interface is very important and too much complexity will be confusing and possibly frightening to the user.

Fortunately we have a solution. We can utilize **hidden** fields. These are

fields with a name and a value just like all other fields. They are part of the form but they do not appear on the screen.

Following is an example of a hidden field that contains a username and password previously entered by the user.

```
<input type=hidden name=user value=fred>  
<input type=hidden name=pass value=aloha>
```

With these two fields included in the form, each time the form is submitted the CGI program will receive the following as part of the input provided by the browser:

```
user=fred&pass=aloha
```

This should allow the server to access **fred**'s data as needed to do the tasks for which it was designed.

There is (theoretically) no limit to the number of hidden fields you can include, or how much data can be in each one. Practically speaking there may be memory or buffer size limits for all fields. I once ran into a limit around 4192 characters. If this might be a problem for you, do some experimenting to find out. It may depend on your server. It may depend on the user's browser.

52.4 Trust

Should we trust the user? It depends.

How would a bank feel about a customer who walked in and said, "Hey, I have ten thousand dollars on deposit in your bank, and I would like half of it now please." How could they know if he is telling the truth?

The bank may not trust you to remember exactly how much money is on deposit. You could be lying about it. Depending on the size of the request, the bank will normally consult its own trusted records for that piece of information.

If you are a customer of that bank, they will have a file on you. That file will probably be available based on an account number, and possibly based on the account owner's name.

The bank might say, “Hello. May I please see some identification?” You provide a driver’s license or passport. The bank compares the picture and checks the ID documents for signs of tampering. If nothing seems to be strange, they will conclude you are who you say and they will grant you the privileges that the account owner should have.

In this case, the bank trusts the user to provide some identity information. It then **authenticates** or verifies that information by comparing to:

- (a) **something you know**, a shared secret, like what is your PIN number or your mother’s maiden name, or what was the date and amount of your last deposit,
- (b) **something you possess**, a physical artifact, like a special card or a passbook or a key to the deposit box,
- (c) **something you are**, also known as **biometrics**, like a finger print or a photograph of you that they may have on file,
- (d) **something you can do**, like create a signature similar to the one they have on file, or respond to a **challenge** with a suitable response. In this case I may give you a random challenge and you may need to come up with the proper response. Someone overhearing the process would still be unable to steal your identity unless the exact same challenge question was asked.

Each of these authentication methods suffers from limitations. A password or key can be copied. An ID card can be forged.

After proving your identity, you are granted access to your account.

With a computer system, frequently **authentication** is done by a username and a **password**. The username identifies the account. The password proves that you know the shared secret.

Whole books have been written about authentication and **identity theft**, but the information above should more than suffice. If you want to know more, search the Internet using the key words given above.

52.5 Data Kept by the User

We trust the user to assist in establishing their identity. And we trust the user to make their request.

Normally we do not trust the user to accurately remember the history of

our dealings with them. We use our own internal records for that. And we use our own internal policies to decide what to do next.

An online shopping cart is an interesting example. The shopping cart is really only an extended method for the user to make a request. The request consists of a list of items to be purchased and details of who will pay and where to send the merchandise. Authentication can come last. If the shopping cart is abandoned and no sale takes place, we do not need to remember anything. If a sale does occur, we need to make a proper record of it in case questions later arise.

For an online shopping cart, until the purchase is complete we can trust the user to maintain all of the data about the upcoming transaction. However, we would probably verify some things just before completing the transaction. Are the claimed prices accurate? Do we still have sufficient stock on hand? Will the credit card be honored?

Hidden fields provide one way for a program to let the user be responsible for their data without too much clutter.

52.6 Data Kept by the Provider

Computer files, including especially databases, provide a way for the program to keep its own information. Chapter 54 (page 281) will introduce databases and show how to use them to store and retrieve trusted **persistent data** by keeping it where the user cannot mess it up.

Chapter 53

HTTP Cookies

Contents

53.1 Advantages of Cookies	276
53.2 Disadvantages of Cookies	277
53.3 How to Set a Cookie	277
53.4 How to Read a Cookie	278

In chapter [52](#) (page [270](#)) we introduced the concept of a **session**, and that there are several ways to recover the state of a transaction so that the session can be established or continued. Displayed fields (such as username and password) can be sent from the webpage. Hidden fields can also be sent from the webpage. **Cookies** can also be sent, not actually **from** a webpage, but in conjunction with it. This chapter discusses Cookies.

See also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTTP_cookie for an excellent and detailed discussion of cookies.

Cookies are kept by the user, or specifically the user's browser. Because of this there are several advantages and several disadvantages.

53.1 Advantages of Cookies

Because cookies are maintained by the user, they need not be held by the service provider. The service provider (that would be you writing the CGI program) may have thousands or millions of customers or clients, and yet

not need to keep track of any of them. This can greatly reduce the data storage burden for the service provider.

Cookies reach farther than Hidden Fields: Hidden fields are restricted to operation on the form on the page for which they were transmitted and no other page. Cookies are sent on each webpage request to a related website. This means that cookies can share data between websites and between webpages. The user can have two or more pages open in different tabs or browser windows and information can transfer between pages, even days apart. This can be very handy.

53.2 Disadvantages of Cookies

Because cookies are held by the user, they are at risk of tampering. Essentially, cookies cannot be fully trusted. They can be used for tracking or light-weight relationship management, but anything serious should probably be kept by the provider and stored in a database instead. Data encryption can provide a level of protection against some risks. If you encrypt the data you have sent, when it comes back and decrypts successfully you can probably trust that the data has not been tampered with. But can you trust that it came from the same person as you expect?

Another disadvantage of cookies is that some users do not trust them. I don't have statistics, but my sense is that this was once a larger percentage of users but seems to be smaller now. Still, some users will either refuse cookies (in which case you can reciprocate by refusing service), or they will delete the cookies later, perhaps each time they close their web browser, making them look like a new customer each time they visit.

53.3 How to Set a Cookie

Cookies can be sent from the web server to the browser. Specifically cookies can be sent as part of the header information in conjunction with the **content-type** line.

Cookies can be tagged to indicate which websites or webpages belong with it. They can also be tagged to indicate expiration date. The expiration can be at the end of the session or at a specific date in the future. Users can, of course, override those expiration dates and cause the cookie to be deleted

earlier than expected.

Without an expiration date, the cookie will expire when the browser is closed.

```
print "content-type: text/html\n";
print "set-cookie: name=value;\n";
print "\n"; # blank line to end the header
```

With an expiration date, the cookie requests to persist until the specified date. (The user may or may not allow it to happen.)

```
print "content-type: text/html\n";
print "set-cookie: name=value; expires=(date);\n";
print "\n"; # blank line to end the header
```

The (date) part would of course be replaced by a date written in some reasonable format.

Each cookie also has a path and a domain. These default to the path and domain of the page that set the cookie. By explicitly defining path and/or domain in the cookie you may be able to override the default and cause other pages to also see the cookie.

```
print "content-type: text/html\n";
print "set-cookie: name=value; path=/; domain=.example.org\n";
print "\n"; # blank line to end the header
```

Cookies can also be set by a JavaScript (or similar) program that is embedded in the webpage sent by the web server.

53.4 How to Read a Cookie

When a webpage request is issued, the browser looks through its list of cookies to see which ones are related to the request. It then automatically sends those to the server similar to the way that **form** data is sent.

The server collects the cookies and passes them along to your program. You can find the cookies in the `ENV(HTTP_COOKIE)` **environment variable**.

```
$cookies = $ENV{HTTP_COOKIE};
```

See also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environment_variables.

Cookies appear to be subject to the same **percent code** encryption as form fields. They appear to be separated by ;␣ (semi-colon, space). They can be separated by code like the following:

```
foreach $nv ( split /; /, $ENV{HTTP_COOKIE} ) {  
    $nv =~ s/[+]/ /g;  
    ( $name, $value ) = split /=/, $nv;  
    $name =~ s/%(..)/pack('c',hex($1))/eg;  
    $value =~ s/%(..)/pack('c',hex($1))/eg;  
    # do something with the name and the value  
    print "cookie: <b>$name</b> = $value<br/>\n";  
}
```


Chapter 54

Database

Contents

54.1 Databases for Trusted Persistent Storage	281
54.2 MySQL by Hand	282
54.2.1 Connect to the MySQL Server	282
54.2.2 How To Quit	282
54.2.3 A Few Alerts	283
54.2.4 Change Your Password	283
54.2.5 What Databases Exist?	284
54.2.6 Creating a Database	284
54.2.7 Focus on Your Database	284
54.2.8 Databases Contain Tables	285
54.2.9 Create a Table	285
54.2.10 Enter Data into Your Table	285
54.2.11 Display the Data in Your Table	286
54.2.12 Think Beyond the Example	286
54.3 MySQL by Program	286
54.3.1 Connect to MySQL	286
54.3.2 Issue a Query	287
54.3.3 Viewing Results	287
54.3.4 Display Your Data	288
54.4 \$x and \$y ??	289
54.5 Sample dbselect Program	289
54.6 Advanced Queries	291

54.6.1 Column Data Types Allowed	291
54.6.2 Updating a Row	292
54.6.3 Deleting a Row	292
54.6.4 How to Add a Column	293
54.6.5 How to Delete a Table	293
54.6.6 Not Case Sensitive	293
54.7 Doing More	293

In chapter 52 (page 270) we introduced the need for persistent data. Examples included financial records, school records, and travel documents.

In each case, the main documents were not trusted to the user. Instead, the main documents were kept by the service provider or other authority. The user proved his identity and was then granted rights based on the trusted data. This could include the ability to pass through an immigration checkpoint or take money out of a bank account.

Chapter 50 (page 260) introduces some concepts of databases and teaches how to use **hash** tables to get a temporary database. In this chapter we look into persistent (permanent) databases that do not vanish when your program stops running, or even when your computer shuts down. Specifically we will look at **MySQL**, a popular and free implementation of the **SQL** structured query language that is used by many databases.

54.1 Databases for Trusted Persistent Storage

Databases provide persistent storage. This means your programs can remember things from one run to the next. The dominant database approach of today (2009) is called SQL (pronounced “ess-cue-ell” or “sequel”).

The SQL approach is to organize data into **tables**. This approach works fairly well. Tables are collections of **rows** and **columns**, much like a very simple spreadsheet in Excel. The **columns**, also called **fields** or **attributes**, describe the data to be stored.

In this chapter, we learn to use an SQL database system called MySQL. The programming interface also applies to other database engines, such as Oracle. We are using MySQL because it runs fast and is essentially free, so you can run it on your own machine at home if you desire.

54.2 MySQL by Hand

There are three main ways to work with a database. First, we use the web interfaces provided by cPanel and phpMyAdmin. Second, we use the command line interface to directly enter queries. Third, we use the Perl database interface (DBI) to talk to the database server. In the long run, you will do most of your database work using another program that you will write, such as a CGI program. When you are debugging, or when you are doing one-time kinds of things like creating tables, working by hand can be a good solution.

54.2.1 Connect to the MySQL Server

Use this command (e.g., from cs.byuh.edu) to connect to MySQL.

```
mysql -p -h HHH -u UUU
```

Replace HHH with the host name. Replace UUU with your own username. When you are prompted for a password, type it in. Your instructor should tell you your hostname, username, and password. You will be able to change your password later.

The `-p` tells mysql to prompt you for a password.

The `-h` tells mysql to what hostname to connect to.

The `-u` tells mysql what username to use.

54.2.2 How To Quit

Once you have successfully connected to the mysql server, you should see the following prompt:

```
mysql>
```

This means that the mysql server is waiting for you to enter a command. The first command we will enter is `exit`, so that we will know how to quit when we are done. `quit` also works.

```
mysql> exit
```

54.2.3 A Few Alerts

Pay attention to capital and lower-case letters. On some platforms big and little letters are interchangeable, so “DonC” and “donc” are treated the same. This is called “case insensitive.” On other platforms the big and little letters are distinguished, so “DonC” and “donc” are different. This is called “case sensitive.” Be aware of the difference.

The up-arrow is your friend. Press it several times. Press the down-arrow several times. Try the other arrow keys (left and right). When you have a line looking the way you want it, you can press ENTER from anyplace in the line. You do not need to be at the end of the line. Using these keys will speed up your work.

54.2.4 Change Your Password

The following command allows you to change your password to something you like better. The quotes, equal sign, parentheses, and semi-colon are all required as shown.

```
mysql> set password = password("whatever");
```

Change your password. Type `exit;` to quit. Then log back in using the new password.

Avoid using any of your existing passwords. This is because your mysql password is going to end up in your programs, right in plain text. People may see it, so you may want to make it hard to remember. I recommend you invent something totally random, like “vlksH36E.” Nobody will guess that. Even if they see it, nobody will remember it. And you will hardly ever need to type it in.

Certain characters can cause difficulty in a password (or a table name, for that matter). Characters to avoid include space, backslash (\), at (@), dollar (\$), and quote ("). There may be others. These characters are “meta-characters” or “escape characters” which means that they have a special meaning. They escape from the normal meaning. For instance, when we print “\n” we do not expect to get a backslash and an n. We expect to get a newline. The backslash is special. Now that you have been warned, I will admit that you can use these special characters, but it requires extra care. For most people it is easier to avoid them.

54.2.5 What Databases Exist?

See what databases exist on this “host.” Use the following command. It should give you a list of the databases that currently exist.

```
mysql> show databases;
```

54.2.6 Creating a Database

You will probably not do this, but later you may want to set up your own server and databases. Here are the commands to create a database and to grant access rights to a user.

```
mysql> create database DDD;
mysql> grant all on DDD.* to UUU
    -> identified by "PPP";
```

In this example, DDD is the name of the database. UUU is the username, which is limited to 16 characters. PPP is the password. Apparently a user can only have one password, so if you issue the command again with a different password, the first password is replaced.

Notice the `grant` command was split over two lines. When `mysql` did not find a semi-colon (;) at the end of the `grant` line, it prompted for more input using `->` instead of `mysql>`. When you get a `->` prompt unexpectedly, maybe type a semi-colon and press enter.

54.2.7 Focus on Your Database

When you arrive in `mysql`, the instructor will have already granted you all rights within your own database. Tell `mysql` to focus on your database by typing the following command:

```
mysql> use DDD
```

where “DDD” is replaced by the name of the database assigned to you. `mysql` should then respond with “Database changed.” Notice that in most commands, a semi-colon (“;”) is required after the command. On this command the semi-colon seems to be optional.

54.2.8 Databases Contain Tables

You will be working with tables within your database. You can see a list of the existing tables by using this command:

```
mysql> show tables;
```

Initially there should be nothing there. You should see a message saying something like “Empty set.”

54.2.9 Create a Table

Create a table by doing something like this:

```
mysql> create table scores (  
->   student varchar(50),  
->   score int(6)  
-> );
```

In this example, `scores` is the name of the table. It has two columns. One is called `student` and can hold a string of up to 50 characters. The second is called `score` and can hold a number up to nine digits, with a default printing width of six digits.

You can put that command all on one line if you like, or spread it out over multiple lines like shown above. `mysql` will continue prompting you for the remainder of your command until you put in the semi-colon “;” to tell it that you are done.

Now show tables again. You should see your new table.

54.2.10 Enter Data into Your Table

Insert something into your table by using commands like these.

```
insert into scores values ( "Fred", 100 );  
insert scores values ( "Bob", 70 );  
insert into scores ( score, student )  
  values ( 95, "Anne" );  
insert scores set student="Don", score=75;
```

54.2.11 Display the Data in Your Table

See what you have in your table by using a command like this. Star (*) lists all columns in the default order, but you can assert more control if you want.

```
mysql> select * from scores;
mysql> select student from scores;
mysql> select score from scores;
mysql> select student, score from scores;
mysql> select score, student from scores;
```

You can also control the order in which your information is returned.

```
mysql> select * from scores order by score;
```

54.2.12 Think Beyond the Example

Invent your own table with three or more columns. Insert into it three or more rows. Be creative. When you have your table built and populated, do a “select *” on the table and show your instructor. (Table names and column names should avoid spaces.)

54.3 MySQL by Program

The previous section told how to work with a database by hand. In this section, we show how to work with it from another program. We will illustrate using the Perl DBI (data base interface). We will not show you everything that is possible. Instead, we focus on a few simple commands that will allow you to do some interesting things.

54.3.1 Connect to MySQL

In your Perl program, you can use the following lines to connect to and disconnect from a MySQL database. You are telling the computer the same things you had to specify by hand (in the section above) when you connected to MySQL. The difference is that this protocol is easier for programming, and the by-hand protocol is easier for humans.

```

use DBI; # to include needed definitions
$db = "DDD";
$host = "HHH";
$username = "UUU";
$password = "PPP";
$x = DBI->connect( "DBI:mysql:$db:$host",
    $username, $password, {RaiseError=>1} );

```

Of course, you should replace DDD, HHH, UUU, and PPP with the correct information. If your host is the “localhost” you can leave that part off from the connect statement. RaiseError is an example of information you can send as part of the connect process. If the connect fails, `$x` will be false. You can say `if($x)` to test whether the connection worked.

After connecting, you can access any of the tables and data in the database. When you are done, you should disconnect as follows.

```

$x->disconnect(); # when you are done

```

54.3.2 Issue a Query

When you are connected to the database, you can issue queries (inquiries, requests, commands). Data retrieval is probably the most common activity. There is a four-step process for retrieving data from a table. The first two steps are prepare and execute.

```

$query = "select * from inv"; # or ...
$query = "select * from inv order by cost";
$y = $x->prepare($query); # introduce task
if ( !$y ) { die "query failed\n" }
$y->execute(); # carry out the task

```

Replace `inv` with the actual name of your table. It is `scores` in the examples above.

54.3.3 Viewing Results

If your query creates results (like `select` does), then after you have executed the query, the results are ready for you to process. You can fetch the results

one row at a time. If there are many rows of output, you need to do this in a loop so you can fetch each of them. Here are two ways to get the data from each row. In the first way, we retrieve all the columns for one row into an array.

```
while ( @z = $y->fetchrow_array() ) {
    print $z[1]; # print the second column
    ( $xxx, $yyy, $zzz, $frog ) = @z;
    print $frog; # print the first column
}
```

Of course, the names `$xxx`, etc., can be whatever variable names you wish to use. In the second way, we retrieve all the columns into a hash. Columns are identified by their formal name within the table.

```
while ( $z = $y->fetchrow_hashref() ) {
    print $z->{price}; # print price column
}
```

After processing the rows we want, we can end at any time.

```
$y->finish(); # when done with this query
```

54.3.4 Display Your Data

Write a program that displays the rows from the table you created earlier. Connect. Query. Display results. Disconnect. Quit. At first, do not worry if your data do not line up neatly. But do separate them by at least a few spaces so they don't run together.

To make your data line up in neat columns, you can use the `\t` tab character (a quick and dirty solution), or you can format the data to a specific width, using `printf`. Here is an example.

```
$format = "student: %-20s score: %5.0f\n";
printf ( $format, $student, $score );
```

54.4 \$x and \$y ??

In the previous discussion, we introduced some “objects” that are used to access the data and carry out queries. They were called `$x` and `$y`. This section briefly explains what they are and how they are used.

Imagine you are shopping at Amazon.com. You sit down at a computer, start your browser, and type in the Amazon url. Then you start shopping. You have a “shopping cart.” When you find something you want, you add it to your cart. Eventually you pay and check out, or you abandon the cart.

Now imagine that while you are shopping, you move to another computer, surf over to Amazon, and check your shopping cart. Will you see the things that you picked on the first computer? Probably not. Thousands of people are shopping Amazon at any moment. They each have their own shopping cart.

`$x` is like that shopping cart. When you connect to a database, you get back a ticket (`$x`). Every time you want to add to your shopping cart, or remove from it, or pay for it, you need to identify your shopping cart. You need to say “`$x->prepare`” rather than just “`prepare`”. `$x` represents the shopping cart.

When shopping at Amazon, you can actually have two or three shopping carts by using different computers, or even by starting another browser window on the same computer. When accessing a database, you can have several sessions going at the same time:

```
$x1 = DBI->connect( ... );  
$x2 = DBI->connect( ... );  
$x3 = DBI->connect( ... );
```

Each of these connections has its own `$x`, its own shopping cart, so to speak. You can use one to do one thing while you use another to do something else. One could be connected to an automotive parts warehouse while another is connected to a credit card processing facility and a third is connected to a customer database.

54.5 Sample dbselect Program

```
#!/usr/bin/perl -Tw
```

```

# read a line of cgi
chomp ( $in = <STDIN> );

use DBI;
$x = DBI->connect (
    "DBI:mysql:DDD:mysql.cs.byuh.edu",
    "UUU", "PPP" );

# show tables
print "Content-type: text/html

<!DOCTYPE html><head lang=en><meta charset=utf-8>
<title>DB Select</title>
<body>
<h1>DB Select</h1>

Please select a table for viewing.

<form method=post action=\"\">
";

$y = $x->prepare ( "show tables" );
$y->execute();
while ( 1 ) {
    ( $table ) = $y->fetchrow_array();
    if ( !defined($table) ) { last }
    print " <input type=submit";
    print " name=table value=\"${table}\">\n";
}
$y->finish();

# if table is specified list its contents
if ( "&$in&" =~ /&table=([^\&]+)&/ ) {
    $table = $1;
    print "<h1>Contents of Table $table</h1>
<table border=1>
";

    $y = $x->prepare (

```

```
    "select * from $table" );
    $y->execute();
    while ( 1 ) {
        @z = $y->fetchrow_array();
        if ( @z == 0 ) { last }
        print "<tr>";
        foreach $cell ( @z ) {
            print "<td>$cell" }
        print "\n";
    }
    $y->finish();
}

# end of processing
$x->disconnect();
print "</table>\n";
exit;
```

54.6 Advanced Queries

Here is some additional information you may find useful.

54.6.1 Column Data Types Allowed

In our example above, we created a table with two columns: student and score. Student was followed by the note “varchar(50)” and score was followed by the note “int(6)”. Varchar and int are called data types or column types. Here is a more complete sample of the column types allowed in mySQL. For a complete list, consult the mySQL book.

tinyint	-128 .. 127 (one byte)
smallint	-32768 .. 32767 (two bytes)
mediumint	-8388608 .. 8388607 (three byte)
int	9 digits (four bytes)
bigint	20 digits (eight bytes)
float	like C, four bytes
double	like C, eight bytes
decimal(m,d)	string, m+2 bytes
char(m)	string, m bytes
varchar(m)	string, 1 to m+1 bytes
tinytext	up to 256 bytes
text	up to 65536 bytes
date	YYYY-MM-DD, three bytes
time	hh:mm:ss, three bytes
datetime	eight bytes
timestamp	four bytes (auto updating)
year	one byte

54.6.2 Updating a Row

You will need an update query. In this example, `mystuff` is a table name, `desc` is the column to be changed, `yadda` is a new value, and `ID` is the column to be matched.

```
update inven set desc="yadda" where ID=37;
update inven set desc="yadda"
  where ID=37 and price=33.91;
update inven set desc="yadda", price=99.99
  where ID=19;
```

54.6.3 Deleting a Row

You will need a delete query. In this example, `inventory` is a table name, `ID` is the column to be matched, and `99` is a value. If you leave off the “where” part, all rows in your table will be deleted.

```
delete from inventory where ID='99';
delete from inventory where ID like '201%';
delete from inventory where cost=price;
```

54.6.4 How to Add a Column

To modify an existing table, use the `alter table` query. Here are some samples of things you can do:

```
alter table foo add price int after cost;
alter table bar change price float;
alter table bletch drop cost;
```

54.6.5 How to Delete a Table

To delete a table, use the `drop table` query.

```
drop table bletch;
```

54.6.6 Not Case Sensitive

MySQL is **not** case sensitive, so name your tables and rows with that in mind. However, perl **is** case sensitive, so within any programs you write be consistent in how you capitalize things.

54.7 Doing More

If you wish to go beyond this short introduction to database you may want to buy these books.

- **Recommended:** *MySQL*, by: Paul DuBois. New Riders press. ISBN 0-7357-0921-1. SRP \$49.99.
- **Alternate:** *Programming the Perl DBI*, by: Alligator Descartes and Tim Bunce. O'Reilly press. ISBN 1-56592-699-4. SRP \$34.95.

“MySQL” by DuBois is more expensive, but really covers both SQL and the Perl DBI well. I recommend it highly.

Unit XI

HTML Tips and Tricks

Chapter 55

Web Design and Development

I pause here briefly to say that I have written another free PDF book. It is entitled:

Introduction to Web Design and Development: HTML, CSS, JavaScript

<http://iwdd.tk/> has the book.

This is an introductory book. It goes into much more depth than this current book on **HTML** (Hyper-Text Markup Language), **CSS** (Cascading Style Sheets), and **JavaScript** (the scripting language most often used on webpages).

In this book, we will simply cover the material most often needed. If you are doing something more fancy, see my other book.

Chapter 56

HTML Tips and Tricks

Contents

56.1 Putting the Cursor Someplace Special	296
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56.1 Putting the Cursor Someplace Special

The cursor is the thing on the webpage that shows where your typing will appear.

The easiest way to do this is by using the autofocus attribute.

Unit XII

Web Inputs

Chapter 57

Web Form Data

Contents

57.1 Event-Driven Programming	299
57.2 Single versus Multiple	299
57.3 Web Input Example	300
57.4 Extracting Fields	301
57.5 Regular Expressions	302
57.6 Extraction	303
57.7 Summary	303

Until this point, when we got input from a webpage it was simply a button to tell us what to do next. There was not really a conversation going on. That is about to change.

Normal programs repeat the following process: (a) display a prompt, (b) **read in a line of input**, and (c) store the result in a variable for later use. Eventually enough data has been collected that an answer can be computed and displayed.

Display first. Read and remember last.

Web programs repeat this process instead: (a) **read in a line of input**, (b) store the result in a variable for later use, and (c) display a prompt.

Read and remember first. Display last.

This is called **event-driven programming**. And if the whole thing seems backwards, well, it is backwards.

57.1 Event-Driven Programming

What it all boils down to is this: when your program asks you a question, does it wait around for the answer or not?

In normal programming the program waits for the answer and then works with it.

In event-driven programming, the program does not wait for the answer. The program just quits. When the answer comes, the program starts up again, looks at the answer (whatever inputs it was sent), and figures out what is supposed to happen next.

See section 10.7 (page 86) where the concept of a **memo to self** is introduced.

This is **very** different from normal programming.

Does it have to be this way? Yes.

It is all about the efficient use of resources.

The server is a resource. When it is running your cgi program, your program is consuming time on that server. That's a resource.

If your program actually waited for the next input to arrive, it would continue using up resources on the server. With enough programs waiting, eventually the server would run out of resources. It would then stop accepting new requests. It would look to everyone else like the server had quit responding when in fact it was simply waiting for you.

In hacking, this is called a **denial-of-service attack**. Hackers do this by sending a lot of traffic to a website all at once. If enough fake users can keep the system busy, then the legitimate users will be denied service. The system may actually crash so nobody can use it.

But it does not require hackers. It could just happen with ordinary users. The event-oriented design helps us escape from this problem.

57.2 Single versus Multiple

The first challenge of web-based programming is the awkwardness of the event-driven cycle.

Let's move along to the second challenge: the fact that you get all your data

at once and you have to unpack it before you can use it.

Chapter 8 (page 63) showed how to put simple programs online. By “simple” we meant something that does not work with user input. Chapter 27 (page 151) built on that foundation by showing how to receive simple (closed set) user input, specifically the pressing of buttons. Now we will see how to receive multiple and arbitrary (open set) user inputs.

Online programs ask for all the input at once, by displaying a form. They also receive it all at once, one line with everything mashed together. `<STDIN>` happens once and only once. (If you do another `stdin`, you will get a blank line. Usually that is not very helpful.)

This leaves us with the problem of unpacking that all-at-once suitcase full of data into separate variables like we want.

These two challenges are the main subject of this unit.

57.3 Web Input Example

Consider a simple webpage with several submit buttons.

```
<form method=post action=''>
  <input type=submit name=choice value=Rock>
  <input type=submit name=choice value=Paper>
  <input type=submit name=choice value=Scissors>
```

This webpage will be displayed as three buttons, [Rock], [Paper], and [Scissors]. When a button is pressed, the browser will send input to the server. The input will be one of these three possibilities: `choice=Rock`, `choice=Paper`, or `choice=Scissors`. We covered this back in chapter 27 (page 151).

Now let’s add a few more fields where users can type in more information.

```
<form method=post action=''>
Player 1: <input type=text name=player1 value='' autofocus><br>
Player 2: <input type=text name=player2 value=''><br>
Choice:
  <input type=submit name=choice value=Rock>
  <input type=submit name=choice value=Paper>
```

```
<input type=submit name=choice value=Scissors>
```

Here we have added two blanks where the names of the players can be typed. Let's assume the user types "Don" in the first blank and "Joseph" in the second blank. Then they press [Scissors].

What will be sent by the browser? Three fields. Two text fields and one submit button. For the first field, the browser will send:

```
player1=Don
```

For the second field, the browser will send:

```
player2=Joseph
```

For the third field, the browser will send:

```
choice=Scissors
```

The third field should look familiar.

However, the browser must send all three inputs at the same time. It packs them together by "joining" them using an ampersand (&). The result looks like this:

```
player1=Don&player2=Joseph&choice=Scissors
```

On the server side, our program has to dis-assemble this line and extract the individual fields of information. We want to have a result like this:

```
$player1 = "Don";
$player2 = "Joseph";
$choice = "Scissors";
```

57.4 Extracting Fields

In section [10.2](#) (page [79](#)) we introduced a subroutine named **olin**. It handles all the details of bringing in input and extracting fields. It is the recommended way to go.

But we could do it more directly. In this unit, we show how to bypass olin and extract the input data directly.

How do we extract the information we want?

First, we bring in the input.

```

#! /usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header
chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );
print "DEBUG: the input was (($input))<br>\n";

```

The DEBUG line at the end is scaffolding to help us debug our program. When we are confident we can delete it or comment it out.

We know the input line will look something like this:

```
player1=Don&player2=Joseph&choice=Scissors
```

We can extract the inputs by creating a regular expression that matches that line.

```

$input =~ /player1=(.*)&player2=(.*)&choice=(.*)/;
$player1 = $1;
$player2 = $2;
$choice = $3;

```

57.5 Regular Expressions

We have `string =~ /pattern/;`, or specifically:

```
$input =~ /player1=(.*)&player2=(.*)&choice=(.*)/;
```

The `=~` is a new form of comparison. We already know about `==` for comparing two numbers and `eq` for comparing two strings. `=~` is for comparing a string with a pattern.

Let's look at the rest.

```
/player1=(.*)&player2=(.*)&choice=(.*)/
```

The slashes at the front and back are delimiters. They are not actually part of the regular expression. They just show where it starts and ends.

The rest is a pattern. It is compared to the string, character by character, to see whether it matches.

Most pattern characters only match themselves. Letters and digits are like that. A few characters are special.

The `(.*)` is special. The dot means “any character.” The star means “zero or more of them”. The parentheses mark whatever matches for extraction.

(What if you want to match a dot or a star or a paren? Then you escape it by putting a backslash in front of it in the pattern.)

So the entire pattern matches any string that has the characters `p, l, a, y, e, r, 1, =, zero-or-more-of-any-character, &, p, l, a, y, e, r, 2, =, zero-or-more-of-any-character, &, c, h, o, i, c, e, =, zero-or-more-of-any-character`.

57.6 Extraction

Within the regular expression, any time we find parentheses, they mark that section of the pattern for extraction. The first left paren through its matching right paren are extracted into `$1`. The second left paren through its matching right paren are extracted into `$2`. This continues up through `$9`.

Here is an example.

```
$input = "The time is 11:45 AM.";
$input =~ /The time is ((.):(.)) AM./;
$time = $1;
$hour = $2;
$minute = $3;
```

In this example, the surrounding phrase “The time is ... AM.” serves as context, a landmark, for finding the information we want.

The `...:` part will match `11:45`.

The first left paren surrounds `...:`, which is the entire time.

The second left paren surrounds `..` before the colon, which is the hour, `11`.

The third left paren surrounds `..` after the colon, which is the minute, `45`.

The dots match single characters.

57.7 Summary

This is what you need to remember.

Regular expressions are patterns that can be matched against input strings (or other strings).

Normal letters and digits in the pattern match the same letters or digits in the input string. Because we know them in advance, their main purpose is to help us focus on the information-rich parts that change. They become the context or landmarks that guide us to the information we are seeking.

Special characters, like dot, star, and parentheses, have special meaning. If you want them to match themselves, you must escape them by putting a backslash in front, `\.` for dot, `*` for star, etc.

Parentheses mark regions of the pattern that should be extracted from the input string. The match for the first paren goes into `$1`.

Chapter 58

Fragile versus Robust

Contents

58.1 Narrow Focus	306
58.2 Take What You Need	307
58.3 Kangaroos	308
58.4 Special Characters (plus and percent)	309
58.5 More About Regular Expressions	311

As mentioned in chapter 57, the browser combines the various inputs that are part of the form data and sends it to the server.

We know the input line will look something like this:

```
player1=Don&player2=Joseph&choice=Scissors
```

We can extract the inputs by creating a regular expression that matches that line.

```
player1=(.*)&player2=(.*)&choice=(.*)
```

This approach is perfect except for one thing. It is fragile.

Fragile is a word we use to describe things that are easily broken. In this case, the regular expression is located in one part of the program while the web form is typically located in another part of the program. When the web form changes, the input will change. When the input changes, the regular expression will no longer work.

Example: Let's say that suddenly it becomes a three-player game. The

input may look like this:

```
player1=Don&player2=Joseph&player3=Ben&choice=Scissors
```

We would need a different regular expression to handle this different input.

The opposite of fragile is **robust**. Robust means that when it breaks, it only breaks a little.

We will look at some more robust ways of getting the information we want.

58.1 Narrow Focus

Rather than recognizing the whole string at once, we would like to recognize each individual part. That way a change in one part of the string will not mess up our ability to process another part of the string. Less fragile. More robust.

We need enough context to make a correct match against the input string. Here is the input string again. How would we match player2?

```
player1=Don&player2=Joseph&choice=Scissors
```

With a narrow focus, we have to rule out using player1 and choice. We will look at the player2 field only. What is it, exactly?

```
player2=Joseph
```

We could use a regular expression like this:

```
player2=(.*)
```

The problem is, dot-star matches everything after player2. Specifically, it would match

```
Joseph&choice=Scissors
```

We can stop the match by increasing the context in the regular expression. Let's do this instead:

```
player2=(.*)&
```

The `&` at the end prevents us from “consuming” `choice=Scissors` because there would be no `&` available to end our pattern match. We have success.

This does raise a problem though. What if player2 is the last field? Then there won't be any `&` at the end. What about that?

We will solve that problem by restricting the dot. Instead of matching zero or more of any character, we will match zero or more of “any character but &.”

The regular expression for any character but x is `[^x]`. The regular expression for any character but & is `[^&]`.

```
player2=([^&]*)
```

58.2 Take What You Need

Using the narrow-focus approach, we can extract each piece of information that we need. Anything we do not ask about gets silently ignored.

```
$input =~ /player1=([^&]*)/; $player1 = $1;
$input =~ /player2=([^&]*)/; $player2 = $1;
$input =~ /choice=([^&]*)/; $choice = $1;
```

What if something is missing? What if we do not have a `player2` in our inputs? What then?

For each input we can invent a default value. That will be the value we use if nothing is given to us. If `player2` is missing, we may want the default value to be the empty string, `""`. We can do it like this.

```
if ( $input =~ /player2=([^&]*)&/ ) { $player2 = $1 }
else { $player2 = "" }
```

The `if` statement checks to see whether the regular expression matched. If it did, then it copies the `$1` value. If not, the `else`-clause takes effect.

Or we could do it like this, establishing the default first and then over-writing it when we have more information.

```
$player2 = ""; # default unless changed later
if ( $input =~ /player2=([^&]*)&/ ) { $player2 = $1 }
```

Which approach is better? They both work fine.

58.3 Kangaroos

The **kangaroo** is an animal that is famous because it carries its young in a pouch. Small kangaroo sits inside big kangaroo. Kangaroo words are words that contain other words. One fun example is:

“devil” contains “evil” contains “vil” contains “il” contains “l.” (It is a bit contrived. “vil” is short for “vile,” “il” is short for “ill,” and “l” is short for “hell.” Still, very cute.)

Kangaroos can be a problem when we are trying to pattern-match an input string. Consider this situation:

```
Old Address: <input type=text name=oldaddr value=''>
New Address: <input type=text name=addr value=''>
```

Let’s say they key in an old address of “Honolulu” and a new address of “Laie”. The string we get will look like this:

```
oldaddr=Honolulu&addr=Laie
```

Now let’s extract the information.

```
$input =~ /oldaddr=(^[&]*)/; $oldaddr = $1;
$input =~ /addr=(^[&]*)/; $addr = $1;
```

What will we get?

`$oldaddr` will get the value of “Honolulu”.

`$addr` will also get the value of “Honolulu”.

What??

This is true because `addr` is a kangaroo of `oldaddr`.

The string “`addr=Honolulu`” is part of the larger string, “`oldaddr=Honolulu`”.

Ah. Okay. What to do about it?

To make sure we never catch any kangaroos, we normally expand the context just a bit. We know that the `name=value` pairs are separated by ampersands. That means that every name (except the first) will have an ampersand right in front of it. We could do this:

```
$input =~ /&oldaddr=(^[^&]*)/; $oldaddr = $1;
$input =~ /&addr=(^[^&]*)/; $addr = $1;
```

The added context totally eliminates the possibility of kangaroos because ampersands can never be part of a name. (If they **were** part of a name, the ampersand would be converted into a percent code, explained in section 58.4, page 309.) This is totally safe.

Except for one thing. The first name does not have an ampersand in front of it.

By far the easiest thing to do is provide one.

```
chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );
$input = "&$input"; # add sentinel to front
```

By adding the ampersand to the input string, we are making it so that each name=value pair has an ampersand in front of it. This gives us reliable context in every case.

The extra ampersand is called a **sentinel**. Sentinel is a military term for the soldier that guards the gates or the fence around a group of other soldiers. It catches problems before they get inside. This makes life easier for the soldiers inside.

The `&` makes life easier for the regular expression inside. It serves the role of a sentinel.

58.4 Special Characters (plus and percent)

If the fields just contained letters and digits, we are done. However, if the fields or field names might include spaces or special characters we have another step. We have to replace plusses and percent codes.

CGI input defines certain characters to be field separators. Specifically the ampersand (`&`) is used to separate name-value pairs from one another, and the equals sign (`=`) is used to separate names from values. But what happens if a name or a value includes one of these special characters? They must be quoted somehow.

Browsers quote special characters. Letters, digits, and a few other characters usually come through exactly as typed, but most special characters

are replaced by **percent codes**. Before use, those codes must be converted back into their original characters.

The most noticeable replacement is that each **space** is replaced at the browser by the **plus** sign. Thus, “this is a test” gets transmitted as `this+is+a+test`.

At the server you can reverse this effect by using the following command.

```
$item =~ s/[+]/ /g;
```

When to do this: It is safe (and recommended) to do this step very soon after reading in the line of input.

The `=~` indicates a pattern match. The `s/` indicates that a substitution will take place. Between the first pair of `//` we have a regular expression for the plus character. Between the last pair of `//` we have a string literal for a space. The `g` at the end indicates that the change is to be made globally throughout the `$item` and not just on the first occurrence.

The other replacement is that many special characters are replaced by **percent codes** related to hexadecimal ASCII coding. Thus, “a+b” gets transmitted as `a%2Bb`. (The percent code for plus is `%2B`.)

At the server you can reverse this effect by using the following command.

```
$item =~ s/%(..)/pack('c',hex($1))/eg;
```

When to do this: Because this has the potential to create special characters like the ampersand and the equals, the only safe time to do this is after the data has been initially extracted.

<http://xkcd.com/327/> has a fun comic where this comes into play, “Exploits of a Mom.”

The `/(..)/` is a regular expression to find a percent sign followed by two characters. Those two characters will be hex digits. They are extracted and can be accessed through the special variable `$1`. The `eg` at the end indicates two things: that this operation is to be (g) globally applied, and that the replacement is to be (e) executed rather than literally inserted. The `pack` command converts a number into something else. The `'c'` makes it convert the value into a character. The `hex` command takes a single argument, `$1` as a hexadecimal number, and converts it into a normal base-10 number.

The entire effect of the command is to replace all the percent codes in `$item` with their corresponding original characters.

Order makes a difference. The plus substitution must happen before the percent code substitution. Otherwise, a true plus would be accidentally converted into a space.

Also, any data extraction must happen before the percent code conversion. Otherwise, ampersands and equals signs that appear in the input could be mistaken for field separators.

58.5 More About Regular Expressions

Regular expressions give us an efficient way to pick out information of interest based on the landmarks around it.

The extraction phase uses a technique called **regular expressions**. Whole books have been written about regular expressions. Regular expressions are very powerful, very efficient, and very useful. We explain regular expressions in chapter 61 (page 327). Here is a quick preview.

Reminder: `==` is used to compare two numbers.

Reminder: `eq` is used to compare two strings.

New: `=~` (equals tilde) is used to compare a text string (on the left side) against a pattern (on the right side).

We will call the two parts the **text** and the **pattern**.

The text is the body of information that we are to examine. We want to know whether (and sometimes how) it matches the pattern.

The pattern is also called a regular expression. It is built up from normal and special characters that describe the pattern.

Every normal character is a Regular Expression that means “match this character.” Thus, they have their own, literal meaning. Most characters are normal characters, including all letters and digits.

Special Characters

Ideally every character would stand for itself, taking on its own literal meaning. An “a” in the pattern would match an “a” in the text. But we need some flexibility so some characters are designated as special.

On a computer keyboard, Backspace would be a good example of a special key. When typing a document, if Backspace is pressed we do not expect a backspace character to be inserted into our document. Instead, we consider it to be a command to delete the previous character.

For regular expressions, the special characters include dot, plus, star, square bracket, backslash, and several others. Special characters have their special meaning unless they are escaped by a backslash.

`.` (dot) is special. It is a Regular Expression that means “match a single character”. It acts as a wild card.

`[abc123]` is a Regular Expression that means “match one character from the set a, b, c, 1, 2, 3”. The square brackets are special.

`[^abc123]` is a Regular Expression that means “match one character that is NOT from the set a, b, c, 1, 2, 3”. The square

brackets and the caret are special.

Multipliers

`.+` is a Regular Expression that means “match one or more single characters”. The plus means one or more of the previous thing.

`.*` is a Regular Expression that means “match zero or more single characters”. The star (asterisk) means zero or more of the previous thing.

`.?` is a Regular Expression that means “match zero or one single characters”. The question mark means zero or one of the previous thing. Essentially it makes the previous thing optional.

Grouping

Multipliers apply to the previous thing. In “`ab*`” the star applies to the “b,” not the “ab.” If we want it to apply to a group of things, we use parentheses to show the grouping. “`(ab)*`” causes the star to apply to “ab” together.

Parentheses also activate an extraction capability.

`(.+)` is a Regular Expression that means “match one or more single characters and extract the results”. The parenthesis mean group and extract.

Escaping Specials

Special characters have special meaning unless they are escaped by a backslash. When they are escaped, they take on their literal meaning of “match this character exactly.”

`\+` is a Regular Expression that means “match a plus character”. The backslash escapes the usual special meaning of plus, causing it to revert to its alternate, literal meaning.

The other common way to escape special characters is to put them into an explicit character class, surrounded by square brackets.

`[+]` is a Regular Expression that means “match a plus character”. Because plus has special meaning (as one or more), to match a literal plus we place square brackets around it establish a character class context where the plus does not have that special meaning.

Escaping Normals

Normal characters have their literal meaning but some have special meanings when they are escaped. `\d` is probably the most frequently seen example of escaping a normal character.

`\d` is a Regular Expression that means “match a digit”. By itself, `d` is normal, but when escaped it becomes special.

`\d*` is a Regular Expression that means “match zero or more digits”. The star (asterisk) means zero or more of the previous thing.

`(\d*)` is a Regular Expression that means “match zero or more digits and extract the results”. The parenthesis mean group and extract.

Common Web Patterns

Ampersand is important in web inputs. Browsers use ampersands to mark the boundary between name/value pairs they are sending from the webpage to the server. Browsers use equal signs to connect the name to the value in a name/value pair.

`[^&]` is a Regular Expression that means “match any character except ampersand (&”. The caret (^) means “everything but” in the character class.

`([^&]*)` is a Regular Expression that means “match zero or more characters except ampersand (&) and extract them”.

Split can also be used with web-based input to separate the name/value pairs like this:

```
foreach $nv ( split "&", $input ) {
  \s print "$nv\n" }
```

Chapter 59

Hidden Fields

Contents

59.1 Three Ways to Remember	315
59.2 Hidden Fields	315
59.3 Cookies	316

Normally when you interact with a program, you expect an ongoing dialog. The program says something. You say something. Repeat until the conversation is over.

This method requires the program to remember the conversation until it ends. A certain amount of its memory or hard drive gets devoted to remembering tasks that are under way.

With the Internet, the computer may be carrying on conversations with dozens or hundreds of people all at the same time, each in turn.

That's not so bad itself, but the people may take a really long time to reply. Days sometimes. It is not unusual to start shopping online, walk away from the computer to do a bunch of other things, and only end the shopping many hours later with a purchase or an abandoned shopping cart.

What about those abandoned shopping carts? Does the computer know they are abandoned? Does it need to remember the conversation that was under way?

For simplicity, the design decision was that basically there shall be no conversations. Not really. What looks like a conversation is just a series of separate transactions. After each transaction, the computer records what it

needs to record in its database and then it forgets all about what you were saying. It releases the resources that were being used.

This means that each time you press “Submit,” the server gets the request and does not remember what it was doing with you. It has to check its files and look at the information it just received. Then it decides what to do next.

59.1 Three Ways to Remember

There are three common ways to remember what is going on.

The newest way is called AJAX. Under this model, the program is not really running on the server. Instead, the program runs on the browser and the browser makes micro-requests to the server as more information is needed. It is used a great deal on sophisticated websites. Exactly how to do it is beyond the scope of this book.

The two ways we will talk about are hidden fields and cookies.

A hidden field is like a regular field on a webpage, except it is not displayed. You can see it if you look at the “page source” or some other debugging tool. Otherwise it is invisible. When a form is submitted, any hidden fields are submitted as name=value pairs.

A cookie is like a hidden field but it can apply to many webpages at the same time. Each time a form is submitted, all the cookies are submitted as well. Cookies also consist of name=value pairs.

59.2 Hidden Fields

To create a hidden field, you simply embed it in your form on your webpage. Here is an example of a user id. You would put this line into the webpage you are creating.

```
<input type=hidden name=uid value=12345>
```

To get the value back, you look at the line of <STDIN> which is sent from the browser. You can extract it like this:

```
# do the next two lines to get all the input
  chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );
  $input = "&$input&";
# do the next two lines to extract the uid field
  $input =~ /&uid=(\[^\&]*)&/;
  $uid = $1;
```

Note: You also have to worry about plus and percent. See section [58.4](#) (page [309](#)) for details.

You can have as many hidden fields as you like.

In chapter [52](#) (page [270](#)) we talk more about hidden fields and the concept of “state.”

59.3 Cookies

You can set cookies by including them in the header, with the “content-type” line. Here is an example.

```
print "content-type: text/html\n";
print "set-cookie: uid=12345;\n";
print "\n"; # end of headers
```

You retrieve cookie information from a special environment variable. Its use is very similar to STDIN.

```
# do the next two lines to get all the input
  $cookies = $ENV{HTTP_COOKIE};
  $cookies = "; $cookies; "; # add "sentinels"
# do the next two lines to extract the uid field
  $cookies =~ /; uid=(\[^\&]*); /;
  $uid = $1;
```

Note: You also have to worry about plus and percent. See section [58.4](#) (page [309](#)) for details.

Some users do not accept cookies, so you need to think carefully about whether you are willing to require them.

An example use of a cookie would be to store a person's first name. Say your program has asked the user for their name. Let's say they tell you it is "Don." Your program could then send a cookie saying that name=Don. Next time the user returns to your webpage, this information would be sent back to you. You could then say something like "Welcome back, Don" at the top of the webpage.

In chapter [53](#) (page [276](#)) we talk more about cookies.

Chapter 60

Forms: Web-based Input

Contents

60.1 Counting to N: Offline versus Online	318
60.2 Testing	320
60.3 Prototype	322
60.4 Adding Two Numbers	322
60.5 Debugging	323
60.6 High-Low Game	324
60.7 Exercises	326

(This chapter is being replaced by chapter [57](#) (page [298](#)). It contains important information that has not yet been moved elsewhere.)

60.1 Counting to N: Offline versus Online

Here is a simple program.

```
print "Professor Colton's Counting Program\n";
print "count how high? ";
chomp ( $high = <STDIN> );
for ( $i = 1; $i <= $high; $i++ ) { print " $i" }
print "\nDone!\n";
```

We wish to count to N online.

This gets a bit tricky because web programs do not stop in the middle to ask for input. Instead, we will run the program twice. The first time we will ask for input. The second time we will process it.

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header

print "Professor Colton's Counting Program\n";
chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );

if ( $input eq "" ) { # nothing was entered
    print "count how high? ";
    print "<form method=post>";
    print "<input name=high>";
    exit }

$input =~ /high=(.+)/;
$high = $1;

for ( $i = 1; $i <= $high; $i++ ) { print " $i" }
print "\nDone!\n";
```

I will explain the new parts.

```
chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );
```

This line accepts one line of input sent from the browser to your program on the server.

```
if ( $input eq "" ) { # nothing was entered
```

This line checks to see if the input was blank. If it was blank, we will ask the question. Otherwise we will generate the answer. If you use `chomp` on your input, check for `""`. If you do not use `chomp` on your input, check for `"\n"`.

```
print "<form method=post>";
```

This line tells the browser that it is expected to send our program the inputs provided by the user. Notice there are no spaces around the equals sign.

```
print "<input name=high>";
```


This line tells the browser to make an input box (**field**) on the webpage and to name it **high**. Notice there are no spaces around the equals sign. Notice there are quotes (single or double) around the field name.

Every input needs a **field name**. The field name should be composed of letters and digits like a normal variable name. It is possible to use other characters as well, but that will make things tricky. As you start out, avoid anything but letters and digits in field names. Also give each field a different name. Later, when you know how to properly extract and escape things, you can break these rules.

```
exit
```

This line tells the server to stop running your program. Everything you have printed will be sent to the browser. Nothing else will be done at this time.

```
$input =~ /high=(.+)/;
```

This line tells the server to look through the line of input it got. It is looking for the information sent by the browser. If the user keyed in the number 55, the browser will send **high=55** to the server and the server will feed it to your program. Your program will look for **high=** followed by a number.

At this point, consider the **(.+)** part to just be magic.

```
$high = $1;
```

This line takes the number found and copies it to a variable named **\$high** for later use.

Input variations: We can check for various configurations of input by including an **if** statement. We could do something like this:

```
if ( $input =~ /high=(.+)/ ) { $high = $1; ...
```

This would try to match the input to a pattern consisting of the letters “high=” followed by any characters. If the match is successful, the body of the **if** statement would be executed. If not, we would fall through to the next thing.

60.2 Testing

Sometimes we need to test our online program without having it be online. We can run the program from the command line. When the program starts, if it is expecting any input, it should pause to wait for one line of STDIN.

In the above example, the first time the program runs there is no input. We simulate that by just pressing ENTER when the program starts. That will provide one blank line of input, the same as when your program is first starting up. Your program should then run and produce the HTML output that would normally be sent to the browser.

Make sure `content-type: text/html` (the header) is the first line of output. Make sure the header is followed by a blank line. (Cookies are discussed in chapter 53, page 276. There are other things that can be in the header, but they are beyond the scope of this book.)

Make sure the remaining output is the HTML that you were expecting.

Make sure there are no error messages.

The second time the program runs, there should be input. We can simulate such input by typing in one line through STDIN. In the example above, the web form has one input field with a name of `high`. We can simulate entry of the number 12 in that blank by typing the following:

```
high=12
```

The general rule is that each input is expressed as a name, an equals sign, and a value, NO SPACES. The name must be exactly the same as the **field name** that was specified in the input form.

If there are several input fields, we can string them together using the **&** (**ampersand**) symbol. Let's say the form had the following input fields:

```
<input name=x>
<input name=y>
<input name=z>
```

If we want a value of 5 for x, 7 for y, and 12 for z, we could type in the following line of simulated input.

```
x=5&y=7&z=12
```

Notice there are no spaces. There are NEVER ANY SPACES in CGI input. There are never any spaces added around the equals signs or the ampersand signs.

Also, order may make a difference. The browser will send you the fields in the order that they occurred on the form. When you are simulating the running of your program, you should do the same thing.

60.3 Prototype

The following example shows how to write an online program.

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header
chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );

(things to do every time)

if ( $input eq "" ) { # nothing received
    (things to do when no input was found)
    exit }

(extract and clean up the inputs)

(things to do when input was provided)
```

60.4 Adding Two Numbers

We will now show how to get more than one input.

Here is the offline version of the program.

```
print "Professor Colton's Adding Program\n";
print "first number? ";
chomp ( $first = <STDIN> );
print "second number? ";
chomp ( $second = <STDIN> );
$answer = $first + $second;
print "The total is $answer\n";
```

Here is the online version of the same program.

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header
```

```

chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );

# things to do every time
print "Professor Colton's Adding Program\n";

if ( $input eq "" ) { # nothing was entered
  # things to do when input was not provided
  print "<form method=post>";
  print "first number? ";
  print "<input name=first>";
  print "second number? ";
  print "<input name=second>";
  exit }

# extract the inputs
$input =~ /first=(.*)&second=(.+)/;
$first = $1;
$second = $2;

# things to do when input was provided
$answer = $first + $second;
print "The total is $answer\n";

```

The interesting part here is extracting the inputs. Everything else should be fairly straightforward.

Notice that each field is listed along with its own = sign and with its own number.

Notice that the first field is extracted into \$1 and the second field is extracted into \$2.

If the fields just contained letters and digits, we are done. However, if the fields might include spaces or special characters we have another step. We have to replace plusses and percent codes.

60.5 Debugging

Plus signs, percent codes, ampersands, only one line of input, the order of fields, and other things can make it difficult to debug a CGI program. It can

be very helpful to insert a DEBUG line at the top of your program. That way you can see exactly what your program is seeing. (The first few lines are already in your program. They are shown here just to provide context.)

```
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header # already there
chomp ( $in = <STDIN> ); # already there
print "<p>DEBUG: (($in))</p>\n"; # NEW
```

The DEBUG line can appear after the STDIN and content-type lines have occurred. Later, when you want to stop seeing the debug line, just comment it out:

```
# print "<p>DEBUG: (($in))</p>\n"; # NEW
```

Later, if you are having difficulty again and need to see what is going on, activate it again by removing the # from the start of the line.

60.6 High-Low Game

In this section we give a program that plays the high-low number guessing game. The computer will guess the number. The human will think of the number and tell the computer whether each guess is too high, too low, or just right.

We start with the standard opening.

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl --
print "content-type: text/html\n"; # header info
print "\n"; # end of header

chomp ( $input = <STDIN> );
# print "<p>Debug: $input</p>";
```

Next we introduce the program.

```
print "<h1>Don's High-Low</h1>\n";
print "<p>Think of a number between 1 and 100
and I will guess it</p>\n";
```

In this section we capture the things we wanted to remember. We start with default values, 1 for low, and 100 for high. Then we replace them if possible with the latest values that were in use.

This highlights the fact that each time the user presses a button, the computer program starts over from the beginning. It only remembers what we told it to remember. Now we have to relearn the information that we were told to remember.

```
$low = 1; $high = 100;
if ( $input =~ /low=(\d+)/ ) { $low = $1 }
if ( $input =~ /guess=(\d+)/ ) { $guess = $1 }
if ( $input =~ /high=(\d+)/ ) { $high = $1 }
```

Next we check to see which button was pressed. We want to respond with some sort of statement depending on what was pressed. If nothing was pressed, we assume the game is just starting.

```
$msg = "Let's play!"; # default value
if ( $input =~ /its=Correct/ ) {
    $msg = "$guess is RIGHT! YAY! I WIN.
    <b>Let's Play Again</b>";
    $low = 1; $high = 100 }
if ( $input =~ /its=Too.High/ ) {
    $msg = "$guess is too high, huh?";
    $high = $guess }
if ( $input =~ /its=Too.Low/ ) {
    $msg = "$guess is too low, huh?";
    $low = $guess }
if ( $input =~ /its=Start.Over/ ) {
    $msg = "Let's play again!";
    $low = 1; $high = 100 }
print $msg; # print the last thing decided
```

Notice the Too.High, Too.Low, and Start.Over. The dots in the middle of each string are the regular expression for “any character.” We use that because the spaces that will be on the buttons get sent as plus signs. The browser never sends spaces. We could match them with `[+]` or `\+` but dot is easier and we don’t expect any accidental matches.

Now, based on the numbers in high and low, calculate a guess and propose it.

```
$guess = int ( ( $high + $low ) / 2 );  
print "<h2>I guess $guess</h2>\n";
```

Finally, we create the web form and display it to the user. The hidden fields carry the information that we wish to remember later.

```
print "<form method=post action=''>  
<input type=submit name=its value='Too Low'>  
<input type=submit name=its value='Correct'>  
<input type=submit name=its value='Too High'>  
<input type=submit name=its value='Start Over'>  
<input type=hidden name=low value='$low'>  
<input type=hidden name=guess value='$guess'>  
<input type=hidden name=high value='$high'>  
</p>\n";
```

60.7 Exercises

Exercise 219: Using the techniques shown in this chapter, try converting a few programs from local (offline) to online.

Chapter 61

Regular Expressions

Contents

61.1 Recognition	328
61.1.1 License Plates	328
61.1.2 Character Classes	330
61.1.3 Character Ranges	331
61.1.4 Matching Several Characters	332
61.1.5 Multipliers	332
61.1.6 A Small Lie	334
61.1.7 More Shortening	334
61.2 Data Extraction	335

In chapter 60 (page 318) we introduced regular expressions as a way to extract data sent from the browser to a program running on a web server. In this chapter we look at regular expressions in depth.

Regular expressions give us the ability to do open set recognition. **Closed set** means that there are only a few specified options, like rock, paper, and scissors. **Open set** means that there are an unlimited set of options (or nearly unlimited). Rock, paper, scissors, hand grenades, cuddly toys, tacos, perfume, whatever you can think of. It is easy for a program to foresee and deal with each alternative in a closed set. It is more challenging to deal with the unlimited number of alternatives in an open set.

Regular Expressions are used for processing blocks of text. They have other uses, but we will focus on the text uses here. We will use the syntax of

PERL. Similar syntax applies to TCL and other languages that support regular expressions.

A block of text is also called a **string**. It is composed of a sequence of characters. Typically we think of the string as being words designed for human view.

We have two main goals. The first goal is to recognize a string as belonging to a certain category, such as phone numbers or female names. As a human, if I show you a phone number, you are likely to be able to identify it as a phone number, even if you have never seen that phone number before.

The second goal is to extract useful information from the string. This information may be located and identified by its surrounding context.

There can be other goals, such as the modification of the string to cause it to meet certain standards. For instance, we could find all instances of two or more spaces in a row and replace each instance with a single space. Or we could look for common spelling errors and replace them with their corrections.

Because these types of problems occur again and again, computer scientists have been motivated to find a good solution. The solution is called **regular expressions**.

61.1 Recognition

The first goal is to recognize a string as being a member of a certain category. Is it a social security number? Is it a vehicle license plate number? Is it a possible word in English? As a human, you are likely to be able to answer yes or no in each case with a high degree of accuracy. Let's begin by focusing on license plates.

61.1.1 License Plates

In Hawaii currently a vehicle license plate generally consists of three letters followed by three digits. There are other configurations, including so-called vanity plates that can be almost anything. Let's focus on typical plates. Say your computer program input is ABC123 and you must determine if that meets the pattern. As a human you can easily say yes. But as a computer program, how easy is it? One could build a program with a lot of

if statements, like this:

```
# Plan A: check every plate
# about 17.5 million lines long
$ok = 0; # default
if ( $plate eq "AAA000" ) { $ok = 1 }
if ( $plate eq "AAA001" ) { $ok = 1 }
if ( $plate eq "AAA002" ) { $ok = 1 }
... you can guess what goes in between
if ( $plate eq "ZZZ999" ) { $ok = 1 }
if ( $ok == 1 ) { print "success!" }
```

This would be a really long program. About 17.5 million lines. You would probably like to avoid writing it. So here is an alternative that looks at each character separately. Each time we get one right, we add to our count.

```
# Plan B: check every letter
# about 120 lines long
$ok = 0; # how many chars are right
$char6 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $char6 eq "0" ) { $ok++ }
if ( $char6 eq "1" ) { $ok++ } # plus 2..8
if ( $char6 eq "9" ) { $ok++ }
$char5 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $char5 eq "0" ) { $ok++ } # plus 1..9
# do three digits and three letters
$char1 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $char1 eq "A" ) { $ok++ }
if ( $char1 eq "B" ) { $ok++ } # plus C..Y
if ( $char1 eq "Z" ) { $ok++ }
# now see if we got six hits
if ( $ok == 6 ) { print "success!" }
```

Validating one digit takes 10+1 lines. Validating one letter takes 26+1 lines. Plus a few other lines totals around 120. You would probably agree it is a big improvement over Plan A above.

Vocabulary: **tractable** is the word we use when a task can be pulled apart into smaller tasks that can be completed separately. The six-character license recognition task is tractable because it can be broken down into six

smaller tasks of recognizing one digit each. Traction is pulling. A tractor pulls things.

intractable is the word we use for tasks that cannot be broken down into smaller parts. Sometimes we (incorrectly) use the word to mean a task that cannot be completed.

61.1.2 Character Classes

To recognize a digit, we can use the following regular expression.

```
if ( $ch6 =~ m/[0123456789]/ ) { $ok++ }
```

This deserves some explanation. The first interesting thing is the `=~` operator, which in PERL indicates that a regular expression is being matched or substituted. (It can also indicate a translation operation, but that is beyond the scope of this chapter.)

The `m/./` part indicates that a matching operation is happening. The `m` means match. (An `s` is used for substitution.) The slashes are delimiters that surround the regular expression.

The `[0123456789]` part indicates a character class. It matches when any of the characters in that list matches.

This gives rise to yet another plan.

```
# Plan C
# about 14 lines long
$ok = 0;
$ch6 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch6 =~ m/[0123456789]/ ) { $ok++ }
$ch5 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch5 =~ m/[0123456789]/ ) { $ok++ }
$ch4 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch4 =~ m/[0123456789]/ ) { $ok++ }
... do something for the letters
if ( $ok == 6 ) { print "success!" }
```

You can see that this is a big improvement over Plan B. It shortens the testing of each digit by nine lines. It shortens the program considerably. The result is about 14 lines, which is almost 90% smaller than 120 lines.

61.1.3 Character Ranges

It is common to want to match a character to an uninterrupted range of characters, such as zero to nine, or A to Z. Regular expressions typically include a short-cut way to express the same thought given above by using a dash to indicate a character range.

```
if ( $ch6 =~ m/[0-9]/ ) { $ok6 = 1 }
```

Characters (digits and letter and punctuation) are stored in the computer as a sequence of binary digits (bits: zeros and ones). One typical code is called ASCII. Another is UNICODE. Character ranges work because the digits zero to nine take up adjacent positions in the character code.

```
0 in ASCII is 0110000
1 in ASCII is 0110001
2 in ASCII is 0110010
3 in ASCII is 0110011
4 in ASCII is 0110100
5 in ASCII is 0110101
6 in ASCII is 0110110
7 in ASCII is 0110111
8 in ASCII is 0111000
9 in ASCII is 0111001
```

If you are familiar with binary numbers, you will see that the ASCII codes for “0” to “9” are the binary numbers for 48 through 57. The main thing is that the range includes everything we do want and nothing we don’t want.

Thinking about letters, we might have considered doing this:

```
$ch1 =~ m/[ABCDEFGHJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ]/
```

Fortunately the letters A to Z form a range. We can say `[A-Z]`. And little a to little z form a range `[a-z]`. Unfortunately those two ranges are separated so we cannot say `[A-z]` and have it work correctly.

Here is an improved program

```

# Plan D
# about 14 lines long
$ok = 0;
$ch6 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch6 =~ m/[0-9]/ ) { $ok++ }
$ch5 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch5 =~ m/[0-9]/ ) { $ok++ }
$ch4 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch4 =~ m/[0-9]/ ) { $ok++ }
$ch3 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch3 =~ m/[A-Z]/ ) { $ok++ }
$ch2 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch2 =~ m/[A-Z]/ ) { $ok++ }
$ch1 = chop ( $plate );
if ( $ch1 =~ m/[A-Z]/ ) { $ok++ }
if ( $ok == 6 ) { print "success!" }

```

61.1.4 Matching Several Characters

Regular expressions are not limited to matching a single character at a time. We can match several characters at the same time. In this regular expression, we are looking for letter, letter, letter, digit, digit, digit.

```
$plate =~ m/[A-Z][A-Z][A-Z][0-9][0-9][0-9]/
```

Notice that we eliminate the chops and we can make the whole process happen in a single statement:

```
if ( $plate =~ m/.../ ) { print "success!" }
```

This is an incredible improvement, but language tinkerers seem to never be satisfied until they have squeezed the last drop of redundancy out of something.

61.1.5 Multipliers

Here is another improvement.

```
if ( $plate =~ m/[A-Z]{3}[0-9]{3}/ ) ...
```

This improvement uses `{3}` as a multiplier to say that `[A-Z]` must happen exactly three times, and `[0-9]` must also happen exactly three times.

We can use the multiplier to give us some flexibility on the length. Here is a regular expression to match a license plate that consists of between 1 and 7 letters or digits in any order.

```
if ( $plate =~ m/[A-Z0-9]{1,7}/ ) ...
```

Notice that we have included two character ranges in the character class, and we have given a multiplier of `{1,7}` which means a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 7 repetitions.

To match three or more of something, we can say `{3,}`. To match less than five of something, we can say `{0,4}`.

There are three special cases that are so popular they have an even shorter short cut.

```
{0,}   is   *
{1,}   is   +
{0,1}  is   ?
```

When something can be repeated zero or more times, we put a star (*) in the regular expression. For one or more times, we can put a plus (+). If something is optional, meaning it can occur zero or one times, we can put a question mark (?).

Here is a regular expression for a number with a decimal point:

```
[+-]?[0-9]+[.][0-9]+
```

Notice it has an optional sign (`[+-]?`), followed by one or more digits (`[0-9]+`), followed by a dot (`[.]`), followed by one or more digits. If we are using dash (-) itself as one of the characters, we simply list it last (or first) in the character class.

61.1.6 A Small Lie

It is time to correct a small oversight in our discussion. To keep things simple, we have not talked about position anchors. There are two of them commonly used with regular expressions. The start-of-string anchor is caret (^). The end-of-string anchor is dollar (\$).

Without these position anchors, all our regular expressions mentioned above will match any string that **contains** the target. For instance,

```
$line =~ m/[+-]?[0-9]+[.][0-9]+/
```

will match any `$line` which has a decimal point number anywhere inside. To restrict our attention to lines that have nothing else before the number, we can say this:

```
$line =~ m/^[+-]?[0-9]+[.][0-9]+/
```

Notice the caret at the front of the regular expression. To restrict our attention to lines that have nothing else **after** the number, we can say this:

```
$line =~ m/[+-]?[0-9]+[.][0-9]+$
```

To restrict our attention to lines that have nothing else before or after the number, we can say this:

```
$line =~ m/^[+-]?[0-9]+[.][0-9]+$
```

61.1.7 More Shortening

By the way, the `m` in the `m/.../` construct is optional. We can leave it out if we are using slashes as the delimiters. It is another short cut.

Also, there is a short cut for digit. Instead of saying `[0-9]`, we can simply say `\d`. There are a number of similar short cuts.

61.2 Data Extraction

Say we want the middle two digits of a US Social Security number. We can recognize the number like this:

```
/^\d{3}-\d{2}-\d{4}$/
```

This means: Must begin at the start of the string. Match three digits. Match one dash. Match two digits. Match another dash. Match four digits. Must end at the end of the string.

By placing parenthesis around the part we wish to extract, we can isolate parts of the string that interest us.

```
$ssn =~ /^\d{3}-(\d{2})-\d{4}$/
$middle = $1;
```

In this case, there are parenthesis around the `\d{2}`. Because these are the first set of parenthesis, the matching part is stored in special variable `$1`.

Here is a longer example:

```
$ssn = "321-54-9876";
$ssn =~ /^(\d{3})-(\d\d)-(\d{4})$/;
$first = $1;
$middle = $2;
$last = $3;
```

In this case, `$first` will end up containing 321. `$last` will end up containing 9876.

In chapter 60 (page 318) we look at ways to use regular expressions to unpack the data that comes to us from forms on webpages. We can then use that data to respond to the user.

Chapter 62

JavaScript

Contents

62.1 Example: Counter	337
62.2 Example: Calculator	338
62.3 Thin Client / Thick Client	340
62.4 Event-Driven Programming	341
62.5 Event Handlers	342
62.6 DOM and AJAX	343
62.7 Useful DOM Attributes	343
62.8 Useful JavaScript Functions	343
62.9 Ideas for Further Study	344

This chapter gives an overview of **JavaScript** and the relationships between **server-side** computing and **client-side** computing. You should be familiar with these concepts but actually doing much of anything with them is beyond the scope of this book. Instead we will introduce them by talking through some examples. We will teach you the vocabulary, and help you follow up on your own time. At the end of the chapter I give suggestions for further study.

JavaScript is the most popular language for **client-side** programs.

62.1 Example: Counter

We will start with a short sample webpage. Then we will talk in generalities. This page should be stored with a .html ending. It can even be run from your desktop without the use of a server at all.

```
<h1>Don's Count by 7</h1>
<p onclick="inker()">Press Here to Increment</p>
<p>Here is the count: <span id="count">Ready!</span></p>
<script type="text/javascript">
counter = 0;
countLoc = document.getElementById("count");
function inker(){ counter += 7; countLoc.innerHTML = counter; }
</script>
```

Key in and save the webpage on your desktop. Double-click it to run it in your local browser.

The `<h1>` part should be familiar, but a bunch of the rest is new. We will briefly introduce it now.

onclick: If you click with your mouse on anything in this `<p>` (paragraph), then it will invoke the function named `inker` and pass it no parameters. This is called an **event handler**.

inker: This is a function that is defined later in the JavaScript section. Its purpose is to increment a variable and update the webpage with the new value. The name `inker` is not special in any way. You can call it anything you like as long as you call it the same thing in both places, here in the `onClick` statement and later in the function definition.

span: This is an HTML markup that identifies a certain part of the webpage, from `` to ``.

id=: Within the `span` markup we have specified an `id` of `count`. The `id` could have been almost anything. Now that we have named a part of the webpage we can refer to it later.

script: The `<script>` and `</script>` tags mark off a region of code that is not displayed. Instead it is executed by the browser immediately. It will initialize some variables and create a function, the `inker` function we mentioned in our `onclick` statement.

document: This is a special word that refers to the entire webpage on which we are running.

getElementById: This is a special access method for finding an element of the webpage, given only its id (name). Specifically we are gaining access to that `span` area that we named. In JavaScript, we are creating a variable `countLoc` that points to that span.

function: A function is a subroutine. In JavaScript they are called functions. In Perl they are called subroutines. We identify the name, list the parameters, and give the body. In this particular body we refer to the global variable `counter` and add seven to it.

innerHTML: Ah, the true magic. This is where we update the webpage. When we say `countLoc.innerHTML`, we refer to the HTML within the span. We are replacing it with a new value, the value of `count`.

As you might imagine, you can use a similar trick to replace any part of your webpage. Give it an id. Then replace its `innerHTML`.

You can also modify attributes of any part of your webpage. You can, for example, change their color.

You can also sense other actions beside clicks. There is a large list including things like **onMouseOver**.

For fun, try modifying the webpage you created. Reload it and try out your changes. See if you can change things without actually breaking it.

If it's not too much trouble, try disconnecting your computer from the Internet. Then run your webpage. This is to prove that your page is not using the Internet. Your program is running right inside your page.

62.2 Example: Calculator

To illustrate event-driven programming, I wrote an example webpage that implements a simple calculator in JavaScript.

Note: If you do a cut and paste, make sure that the quote marks are correct. They should not be typesetter quote marks (slanted).

```
<h1>Don's JavaScript Calculator</h1>
```

```
A <input id="a"><br>
```

```

B <input id="b"><br>
<button onClick="abAdd()">A + B</button>
<button onClick="abSub()">A - B</button>
<button onClick="abMul()">A &times; B</button>
<button onClick="abDiv()">A &divide; B</button><br>
<div id="res" onClick="bigger()"></div>

<script type="text/javascript">
function getStr(id) {
    return String(document.getElementById(id).value) }
function getNum(id) {
    return Number(document.getElementById(id).value) }
function exportt(ele,val) {
    document.getElementById(ele).innerHTML = val }
function abAdd() { var a = getNum("a"); var b = getNum("b");
    var res = a + b;
    exportt("res", "" + a + " plus " + b + " is " + res ) }
function abSub() { var a = getNum("a"); var b = getNum("b");
    var res = a - b;
    exportt("res", "" + a + " minus " + b + " is " + res ) }
function abMul() { var a = getNum("a"); var b = getNum("b");
    var res = a * b;
    exportt("res", "" + a + " times " + b + " is " + res ) }
function abDiv() { var a = getNum("a"); var b = getNum("b");
    var res = a / b;
    exportt("res", "" + a + " divided by " + b + " is " + res ) }
function bigger() { // make it bigger and turn it blue
    var style = document.getElementById("res").style;
    style.fontSize = "400%"; style.color = "blue" }
</script>

```

First, let's talk about the HTML.

We have an h1 header.

We have two input fields, a and b, presented on the screen.

We have four buttons. Each button is associated with an onClick event. When the onClick event happens, a function is called.

We have a div (division) where the result will be shown.

Now let's talk about the JavaScript.

We have several functions. The first three, `getStr`, `getNum`, and `export`, are helper functions just to make the rest of the program shorter.

The next four handle the `onClick` events.

`abAdd` (a b add) is called when `onClick` happens on the A+B button.

It imports the value present in field a and calls it a.

It imports the value present in field b and calls it b.

It calculates a result and calls it res.

It exports to the res division a string built of from a, b, res, and some explanatory wordings.

Then `abAdd` terminates.

Give it a try!

62.3 Thin Client / Thick Client

For this course, web programs almost always run on a server somewhere. The user runs a browser on their local computer. The browser uses the Internet to talk to the server. The server runs the programs and provides the information requested by the browser. The browser renders that information in the form of a webpage. The server basically just tells how to build the webpage and the browser does the rest of the work.

Programs that run on a server are called **server-side** programs. Programs that run inside the browser are called **client-side** programs. Server-side is powerful but expensive. It is expensive because your communications bandwidth and your allocation of machine cycles is shared among all your users. It does not scale up well. By that we mean that the more users you have, the slower things tend to go.

If you have lots of users your server can get pretty busy. Sometimes your users will be sitting around waiting for the server to respond. The browsers are idle and waiting. The server is overwhelmed.

Thin Client

We can make a different division of labor between the server and the browser, which is also called a **client**.

When the server does all or most of the work and the client does little or

none, it is called a **thin client** architecture.

On the other hand, when we can find ways to have the client take on a substantial part of the work, it becomes a **thick client** architecture.

The way we do that is with **client-side** programming.

Thick Client

As mentioned above, the most popular client-side programming approach is **JavaScript**.

Client-side is less powerful but also less expensive. It is less expensive because each user brings their own computer to the party. Cycles you use on their computer do not affect any of your other users. Less powerful means client-side programs do not have as easy access to databases.

In a nutshell, JavaScript gives you the ability to embed a program, or many programs (functions), right inside your webpage. JavaScript lets you have variables, conditionals, loops, arrays, functions, objects, and other capabilities so you can do calculations right inside your webpage.

62.4 Event-Driven Programming

JavaScript interaction is **event-driven**, which means that events, normally caused by the user, act as triggers that make parts of your JavaScript program run. A click here can run this piece. A mouse-over there can run that piece. A form submit can run some other piece. Every keystroke in a field could cause a function to run. The various pieces can share data. There are lots of ways you can hook in and wait for triggers to happen.

When the user does certain actions that you are listening for, your JavaScript functions have the ability to respond in any of the following ways. (a) They can update the values stored in variables. (b) They can change what is displayed on the webpage. (c) They can communicate with a server.

This makes it possible to, say, visit a webpage that has a game embedded into it. The game could then be played without further calls to the website. Perhaps when the game is won, the website could then be contacted to report a winner. Or not. The game can be running even if the Internet is unavailable.

ActionScript is pretty much a Multi Media version of **JavaScript**. It is a proprietary language controlled by **Adobe**. It lets you control the playback

of video clips and sound, and the movement of graphical elements on the screen. Your program could let the user interactively jump from clip to clip in a movie. **ActionScript** is a key part of **Flash**.

62.5 Event Handlers

You can attach event handlers to the elements of your HTML code. They normal syntax is like this:

```
<tag event='handler() '>whatever</tag>
```

tag is usually something like **div**, **span**, **img**, or **input**.

```
<input event='handler()' size=20>
```

```
<img event='handler()' src=filename alt=' '>
```

The event is often something from the following list.

onClick: triggers when the mouse is clicked while pointing at the element

onmouseover: triggers when the mouse moves from outside an element to inside that element.

onkeypress: triggers when a keystroke occurs inside that element. This could be usefully attached to an input text field.

onresize: triggers when the window size changes.

onsubmit: triggers when the submit button is pressed.

onunload: triggers when the user navigates away from the current page.

You can find additional event handlers by searching the web using key terms like “javascript event handlers” and maybe a few from the list above. That should find you pages where more are listed.

handler is the name of the function you want the browser to call when the event happens.

whatever (if applicable) means whatever html code you wish to be part of the webpage. Often it is the wording that the user will click on.

62.6 DOM and AJAX

The ability to change what is displayed on a webpage is based on **XML** (eXtensible Markup Language), **CSS** (Cascading Style Sheets), and the **DOM** (Document Object Model). The DOM gives JavaScript access to all parts of the webpage so they can be inspected and changed.

The ability to communicate with a server is based on **AJAX** (Asynchronous JavaScript And XML). AJAX is built into most browsers. JavaScript can use it to report information to a server and to fetch information from a server.

Although JavaScript is beyond the expectations for typical students in a 100-level course, students who really want to develop their skills will definitely look into **JavaScript**, **DOM**, and **AJAX**.

62.7 Useful DOM Attributes

JavaScript typically examines user input and modifies the webpage that is displayed. To do these things, it must be able to specify the part of the page to be examined or replaced.

innerHTML: Set `element.innerHTML` equal to the new value you wish to replace what may have been inside that element before.

value: Copy from `element.value` to find the information that is currently in that input field.

62.8 Useful JavaScript Functions

getElementById: This is a special access method for finding an element of the webpage, given only its id (name). It is very handy.

getElementsByClassName(id): This is a special access method for finding a collection of elements on the webpage, given only its class (name).

Number(): Converts a value (string or number) into a number. This is important because the plus operator, `+`, is “overloaded” to mean both addition and concatenation, depending on the operands. You may have to force the operands to be numbers so they will add instead of concatenate.

Example: $1 + 1$ is 2.

Example: `'1' + '1'` is `'11'`.

Example: `Number('1') + Number('1')` is 2.

Math.random() is a JavaScript function that returns a **pseudo-random** number between 0 and almost 1. It is the equivalent of Perl's **rand** function.

Math.floor() is a JavaScript function that returns the rounded down integer value of a number. It is the equivalent of Perl's **int** function.

62.9 Ideas for Further Study

As I said, any real study of JavaScript is well beyond the scope of this course. We have our hands full already. But JavaScript is a very important language for website development. It is by far the most used language for in-page scripting and will probably remain so for many years. As your skills develop, you may find the time and interest to pursue it further.

Another very popular language is **ActionScript** by Adobe which is used with **Flash**.

I recommend you learn JavaScript by first doing a few simple webpages. Then, when you find a need that it could fill, read some tutorials on the web.

Tutorials:

I found some helpful tutorials by doing a Google search using words like JavaScript and tutorial.

I found a really excellent tutorial on JavaScript by Patrick Hunlock. I recommend it to you. Patrick also has tutorials on AJAX and other fun things.

http://www.hunlock.com/blogs/Essential_Javascript_--_A_Javascript_Tutorial

You Tube:

I found some entertaining and enlightening videos on <http://youtube.com/>. Search on JavaScript. I found a great talk by Douglas Crockford.

Books:

When you really know you want to learn how to use it, get a good book. Your reading of web tutorials should have given you some good book rec-

ommendations.

These are a couple of books that came highly recommended. I am using them to learn JavaScript.

Title: JavaScript: The Definitive Guide, Fifth Edition

By: David Flanagan

Publisher: O'Reilly Media

Print ISBN: 978-0-596-10199-2

Suggested Retail Price: \$49.99 (in 2010)

Title: JavaScript: The Good Parts

By: Douglas Crockford

Publisher: O'Reilly Media / Yahoo Press

Print ISBN: 978-0-596-51774-8

Suggested Retail Price: \$29.99 (in 2010)

Chapter 63

Games and Projects

Contents

63.1 Nim	346
63.2 Nim, Two Player, Online	348
63.3 Double Nim	349

Mad Libs (Online)

<http://www.eduplace.com/tales/> has a collection of stories, sometimes called Mad Libs. The user is asked for a number of words or phrases, such as “best friend’s name” or “favorite food”. These are then used in a fictional story. Your task is to invent and program a **Mad Lib** using at least five different words or phrases provided by the user. Have fun and be creative!

Make this as a webpage. When the page first comes up, prompt for the different words. Then when it is submitted, create the story using those words.

63.1 Nim

In games of **Nim** there is a pile of stones. Players take turns removing some number of stones. Typically there are two players. The person who takes the last stone wins.

(If you want to say the person who takes the last stone loses, that is the same as ignoring the last stone and playing for who wins the normal way. Then the other player will be forced to take the last stone.)

In **2 Nim** the rule is that each player takes one or two stones on each turn. Here is the **offline** version. We will use it as a basis for building an **online** version.

```

print "Let's play Nim!\n";
$stones = int(rand(20)) + 10 ;# 10 to 29 stones
while ( $stones > 0 ) {
    # human takes a turn
    print "There are $stones stones.\n";
    print "How many stones would you like (1 or 2): ";
    chomp ( $stakes = <STDIN> );
    $stones -= $stakes;
    # computer takes a turn
    print "There are $stones stones.\n";
    $stakes = int(rand(2)) + 1;
    print "Computer takes $stakes.\n";
    $stones -= $stakes;
}
print "Let's play again sometime!\n";

```

As written, this game needs a bit of help. If you key it in and play it you will find that (a) the human could easily cheat, and (b) the computer does not notice when the stones run out. In fact, the computer does not even figure out who won.

Your task is to convert the program to being an online program using a hidden field to pass along the number of stones remaining. While you are at it, please feel free to improve the program, adding such personal touches as you may find desirable.

How to Win: Try to leave a multiple of three stones. Once you do that, you can always force a win.

63.2 Nim, Two Player, Online

For this project, two people will play nim against one another. The computer will keep track of what has happened and will announce the winner. There are three screens.

(1) When the game starts, ask for the names of two players. When the names are submitted, randomly select a number of stones between 20 and 30. Use something like `$stones=20+int(rand(11))`.

(2) While the game is under way, do the following things on each turn. You can do them in whatever order makes the most sense to you.

On the first move, tell whose turn it is, by name, and how many stones are left. Say something like “John, you go first. There are 23 stones left.”

After the first move has been made, tell whose turn it was, by name, and how many stones they took. Say something like “John just took 2 stones. Fred, it’s your turn. There are 16 stones left.”

Optionally display a picture showing how many stones are left.

Let the player press one of the following buttons.

[Take 1 Stone]

[Take 2 Stones] (but only if there are at least two stones left)

[I give up. \$otherplayer wins.]

Repeat showing this screen until there is a winner.

(3) When somebody gives up, or when there are no stones left, print a large message declaring the name of the winner. Whoever takes the last stone wins. Also display a button:

[Play Again?]

After pressing Play Again, restart the game from (1).

How To

On each screen, display a heading at the top identifying you as the author, and that this is your Two-Player Nim game.

You will need at least three hidden variables: one for the number of stones left and one for each player’s name.

Each time your program starts, extract the names, the number of stones

left, and the identity of the button that was pressed.

You will need some way to tell whose turn just ended. There are many ways to do that. Think of something.

Until your program is working properly, for debugging purposes on each screen display the input that you received. Also display what you extracted from that input.

After extracting the state of the game, update it based on the button that was pressed. Then display the appropriate screen and quit.

Step 1: read in the inputs and display the headings.

Step 2: update the state of the game.

Step 3: draw a new screen and quit.

There are basically three screens. (a) The startup screen asks for two names. (b) The in-progress screen tells whose turn it is and gives options. (c) The winner screen tells who won. You need some way to figure out which screen to show next.

63.3 Double Nim

In games of **Nim** there is a pile of stones. Players take turns removing some number of stones. Typically there are two players. The person who takes the last stone wins.

In **Double Nim** the rule is that each player takes up to twice as many stones as the previous player took. However, the first player is not allowed to take all the stones on the first grab.

Your task is to modify 1 2 Nim so it allows each player to take up to twice as many stones as the prior person took.

How to Win: This one is tricky. It calls for a **Fibonacci** decomposition of the number of stones. The Fibonacci numbers are 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, etc., where each number is the sum of the prior two.

The Fibonacci decomposition is the sum of the largest possible Fibonacci numbers that add up to the existing pile of stone.

Example: If there are 30 stones, we need to know all Fibonacci numbers up to 30. They are 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, and 34. Okay, we overshot

the goal. The largest Fibonacci number in 30 is 21. That leaves 9. The largest Fibonacci number in 9 is 8. That leaves 1, which is itself a Fibonacci number.

Therefore, the Fibonacci decomposition of 30 is $21 + 8 + 1$.

The optimum strategy is to take the last number in the decomposition. For 30, take 1. For 29, take 8.

If you are unable to take the number you want, just take any random number that you are allowed to take and hope your opponent will make a mistake.

Unit XIII

Complex Programs

Chapter 64

Complex Programs

Up until this point we have tried to keep each unit as simple as possible. We introduced **if** statements but we did not do much with nested if statements. We introduced loops but did not do much with nested loops.

In this unit we explore a few of the things that can be done when we allow the programs to become a bit more complex. Hopefully you are ready for that now.

Chapter 65

Nested Loops

Contents

65.1 Counting the Hours	353
65.2 Starbox	354
65.3 Right Triangle	355
65.4 Centered Triangle	356
65.5 Times Tables	357

We can have loops within loops.

65.1 Counting the Hours

Let's look at the telling of time. We have hours, minutes and seconds. 60 minutes per hour. 60 seconds per minute. Here we print sixty seconds.

```
for ( $sec = 0; $sec < 60; $sec++ ) {  
    print "$sec\n"; }
```

The first ten numbers do not look right because traditionally seconds are formatted as a two-digit number. We can solve that with **printf**, which we briefly explain here and at greater length in appendix C (page 430).

printf uses `%.02d` to format numbers. The `02` you will see below indicates leading zeroes are requested and a minimum of two digits should be printed (more if necessary).

```
for ( $sec = 0; $sec < 60; $sec++ ) {
    printf "%02d\n", $sec; }
```

Now let's start building that up into a clock. This code will print the times from 1:00 up to 3:59.

```
# print from 1:00 to 1:59
for ( $sec = 0; $sec < 60; $sec++ ) {
    printf "1:%02d\n", $sec; }
# print from 2:00 to 2:59
for ( $sec = 0; $sec < 60; $sec++ ) {
    printf "2:%02d\n", $sec; }
# print from 3:00 to 3:59
for ( $sec = 0; $sec < 60; $sec++ ) {
    printf "3:%02d\n", $sec; }
```

Clearly there is a pattern here. We should exploit it. We should use another loop to provide the minutes.

```
for ( $min = 0; $min < 60; $min++ ) {
    for ( $sec = 0; $sec < 60; $sec++ ) {
        printf "%02d:%02d\n", $min, $sec; } }
```

And what is to stop us from going to hours as well?

```
for ( $hour = 1; $hour <= 12; $hour++ ) {
    for ( $min = 0; $min < 60; $min++ ) {
        for ( $sec = 0; $sec < 60; $sec++ ) {
            printf "%02d:%02d:%02d\n", $hour, $min, $sec; } } }
```

65.2 Starbox

Let's print a geometric figure, a box of stars.

```
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
```

```
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* * * * *
```

This box of stars is ten on a side. We can break it down into an outer loop that prints rows of stars making up the whole square, plus an inner loop that prints individual stars making up one row.

Let's start with the inner loop that prints one row.

```
$size = 10;
for ( $col = 0; $col < $size; $col++ ) { print "* " }
print "\n";
```

This prints `$size` stars, each followed by a space.

Now let's put an outer loop around it.

```
$size = 10;
for ( $row = 0; $row < $size; $row++ ) {
    for ( $col = 0; $col < $size; $col++ ) { print "* " }
    print "\n"; }
```

We can easily modify this program so it prints boxes of arbitrary size.

65.3 Right Triangle

Let's print a geometric figure, a right triangle of stars. This one is a bit more complicated. The rows are not of equal length. We will modify the inner loop so it stops at `$row` instead of `$size`. Row 1 will stop after 1 star. Row 5 will stop after 5 stars.

```
$size = 5;
for ( $row = 0; $row < $size; $row++ ) {
    for ( $col = 0; $col <= $row; $col++ ) { print "* " }
    print "\n"; }
```

When the program is run, the result looks like this.

```
*
* *
* * *
* * * *
* * * * *
```

65.4 Centered Triangle

A centered triangle might look nicer.

```
    *
   * *
  * * *
 * * * *
* * * * *
```

What can we do to make that happen?

In this case we need to print some spaces before each row of stars. The bottom row has no spaces in front. One up has one space. Two up has two spaces. The top row has the most spaces.

We can invent a formula for the number of spaces. It turns out to be $\$size - \row . On a size 5 triangle, row 5 has zero spaces and row 1 has 4 spaces.

Let's add another loop inside the outer loop and right before the inner loop.

```
$size = 5;
for ( $row = 0; $row < $size; $row++ ) {
    for ( $col = 1; $col <= $size-$row; $col++ ) { print " " }
    for ( $col = 0; $col <= $row; $col++ ) { print "* " }
    print "\n"; }
```

Notice in this case we have one outer loop and two inner loops. We could express it like this:

```
( () () )
```

The inner loops are side by side. One happens first. The other happens second. They are both inside the outer loop. When the outer loop runs five times, each time both inner loops will run.

In terms of style, we use indenting to show that the second and third **for** loops are sub-parts of the outer loop.

65.5 Times Tables

When I was growing up, I had to memorize some multiplication facts. We called it the “times tables.” They looked something like this.

```

X | 1  2  3  4  5
---+-----
1 | 1  2  3  4  5
2 | 2  4  6  8 10
3 | 3  6  9 12 15
4 | 4  8 12 16 20
5 | 5 10 15 20 25

```

Let’s write a program to print such a table. What are the components?

First, we have a top line that consists of numbers 1 through 5. It identifies the columns. Plus there is a heading in front of the line.

Second, we have a line of dashes.

Third, we have the body of the table, consisting of five lines. Each line consists of five “products.” Each line also has a heading identifying the row number.

Here is a program to print the table.

```

$size = 5; # how big to make the table

# first row
print " X |"; # print the upper left corner
# print the numbers across the top
for ( $col = 1; $col <= $size; $col++ ) {
    printf "%3d", $col }
print "\n";

```

```
# second row
print "---+"; # print the upper left corner
# print a line of dashes
for ( $col = 1; $col <= $size; $col++ ) { print "---" }
print "\n";

# rest of the rows
for ( $row = 1; $row <= $size; $row++ ) {
    printf "%2d |", $row;
    for ( $col = 1; $col <= $size; $col++ ) {
        printf "%3d", $row * $col }
    print "\n" }
```

Notice the style. We have included comments to tell us what is happening. We have included some blank lines to visually cluster the other lines according to which line is being printed. And for the rest of the rows we have nested loops identified by the indentation of the program.

Programming exercises can be found in [chapter 36](#) (page 200).

Chapter 66

Games and Projects (Loops)

Contents

66.1 Calendar	359
66.2 Tic Tac Toe	360

In this chapter we look at some simple games and projects that can be programmed using nothing more advanced than random numbers, if/else, and loops.

Random numbers are introduced in section [9.1](#) (page [75](#)) and covered in more detail in chapter [67](#) (page [363](#)).

We take a closer look at nested loops in chapter [65](#) (page [353](#)).

66.1 Calendar

Not actually a game, this program is to print out a one-month calendar. For inputs you can ask the human what day the month starts and how many days the month has. Then print out a calendar that looks like this.

```
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa
      1  2  3  4
  5  6  7  8  9 10 11
12 13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24 25
```


26 27 28 29 30

Variation: Instead of the small version of the calendar, print big squares like this:

```

APRIL 2009
  SUN   MON   TUE   WED   THU   FRI   SAT
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
|       |       |       |   1  |   2  |   3  |   4  |
|       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
|   5  |   6  |   7  |   8  |   9  |  10  |  11  |
(et cetera)

```

Advanced: Given the month and year, figure out what day the month starts on. You can probably find a formula on the web. Or you can puzzle it out for yourself. Here are the facts: There are 365.2425 days per calendar year. Leap years happen on multiples of 4, but not multiples of 100, but yes multiples of 400. In a leap year, February has 29 days. Otherwise February has 28 days.

66.2 Tic Tac Toe

This classic game takes a few more lines to program but can be a very satisfying achievement. Here are the issues:

- How will you show the human what the grid looks like?
- How will the human tell you where they want to move?
- How do you recognize the game to be over?
- How do you make the computer be less stupid?

Let's start with the grid. One option is that we can show it like this.

```

 1 | 2 | 3
---+---+---
 4 | 5 | 6
---+---+---
 7 | 8 | 9

```

Moves: The human can tell us their move by giving us the number for the cell they want to occupy. After the human takes cell number 1, the grid might look like this.

```

H |   |
---+---+---
  |   |
---+---+---
  |   |

```

We could trust that the human remembers what the cell numbers are, since they have probably not scrolled off the screen yet.

Each location could be represented by a variable, `$c1` through `$c9`, for instance. This makes the grid look something like this.

```

print "
  $c1 | $c2 | $c3
---+---+---
  $c4 | $c5 | $c6
---+---+---
  $c7 | $c8 | $c9";

```

We can check for a win as follows.

```

if ( "$c1$c2$c3" eq "HHH" ) { print "Human Wins" }
if ( "$c4$c5$c6" eq "HHH" ) { print "Human Wins" }
if ( "$c7$c8$c9" eq "HHH" ) { print "Human Wins" }
if ( "$c1$c4$c7" eq "HHH" ) { print "Human Wins" }
if ( "$c2$c5$c8" eq "HHH" ) { print "Human Wins" }
if ( "$c3$c6$c9" eq "HHH" ) { print "Human Wins" }
if ( "$c1$c5$c9" eq "HHH" ) { print "Human Wins" }
if ( "$c3$c5$c7" eq "HHH" ) { print "Human Wins" }

```

Repeat with "CCC" and "Computer Wins."

Quickly you can see that the program is easy to write, but is going to have a lot of lines.

That's where it gets fun. There is a pattern here. The pattern can be exploited to make the program lots shorter. But it is not easy to see how.

Hint: This may be easier to write using arrays (chapter [38](#), page [211](#)).

Chapter 67

Random Numbers

Contents

67.1 Roll the Dice	364
67.2 Pick a Card	364
67.3 Flip a Coin	365
67.4 Shuffle	365
67.5 Normal Distribution*	366
67.6 What is Random Good For?	367
67.7 Truly Random or Not?	368
67.8 srand: Seeding the Sequence	369

Games and business simulations both benefit greatly from the use of random numbers. What exactly are they?

A random number is a number that you cannot predict exactly. Like flipping a coin could yield heads or tails, picking a random number could yield something to help you make a choice.

In Perl, random numbers are available from the `rand` function. It returns a uniformly distributed number between zero and one (but never equal to one, and probably never actually equal to zero).

By uniformly distributed, we mean that on average, ten percent of the time the number will be between 0 and 0.1. Ten percent of the time the number will be between 0.8 and 0.9.

67.1 Roll the Dice

Often we want a whole number (an integer). For example, we may want two numbers between 1 and 6 to represent the roll of two dice. To get one of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, with equal probability, we can use the following formula.

```
$roll = 1 + int ( rand() * 6 );
```

In this example, `rand` returns a number between zero and one. Multiplying it by six gives us a number between zero and six. Taking the `int` part throws away any digits after the decimal. Thus, 5.31376 gets turned into 5. This gives us six equally likely values: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. By adding 1 the numbers are now in the desired range.

67.2 Pick a Card

Let's say we want to randomly pick an item from a list. In this example, `@cards` is an array that contains five cards. We are using `9H` to stand for the nine of hearts, `TS` to stand for the ten of spades, etc. The first line initializes the array to contain five cards. The second line picks one of the cards. `@cards` is treated as the number of cards (5). `rand` picks a number from 0.01 to 4.99 (more or less). `int` converts the number to 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 with equal probability. `$cards(number)` identifies a specific card. `$cards[0]` is `9H`, `$cards[1]` is `3C`, etc.

```
@cards = ( "9H", "3C", "KD", "JD", "TS" );
$pick = $cards[int(rand(@cards))];
```

If we want a random card from a full, standard 52-card deck, we can do it like this:

```
sub PickACard {
  my @suits = split "", "SHDC"; # Spades, Hearts, etc.
  my @ranks = split "", "A23456789TJQK"; # Ace through King
  my $suit = $suits[int(rand(@suits))];
  my $rank = $ranks[int(rand(@ranks))];
  return "$rank$suit" }
```

67.3 Flip a Coin

If we have a standard subroutine to randomly **pick** or **choose** an item from a list, we can use that to **flip a coin** (heads or tails) or do many other things.

```
sub pick { return $_[int(rand(@_))] }
```

What will this subroutine do, exactly? First, @_ contains the alternatives from which we will select. `rand(@_)` gives us a number between zero and the number of alternatives, not inclusive. `int` turns it into a whole number between zero and N-1. `$_[]` gives us the item in that slot. `return` sends it back.

So, how to flip a coin? Easy.

```
$coin = pick ( "heads", "tails" );
$rps = pick ( "rock", "paper", "scissors" );
```

67.4 Shuffle

With `PickACard` above, we generated a random card “with replacement.” By **replacement** we mean that if you generate another random card, there is a (one in 52) chance it will be the same. It is as though the card were drawn, viewed, and then replaced into the deck where it could be drawn again. This is also called **permutation**.

Sometimes we want random things **without** replacement. The **shuffle** subroutine given here will organize a list into a random order. Random items can be selected from that list by using **shift**, **pop**, or **foreach**.

```
sub shuffle {
  my @old, @new, $pick ;# 1 localize variables
  @old = @_; # 2 original list
  @new = ( ); # 3 list to be returned
  while ( @old ) { # 4 while old list has elements
    $pick = int ( rand ( @old ) ) ;# 5 choose
    if ( $pick != 0 ) { # 6 put chosen in front
      ( $old[0], $old[$pick] ) = ( $old[$pick], $old[0] ) }
    push @new, shift @old } ;# 7 move chosen to new list
  return @new }
```

In line 1 we localize our variables so they do not interfere with other variables by the same names elsewhere in our programs.

In line 2 we copy the parameter list into an array named `@old`. We could use `@_` just as well, but the name `@old` was chosen to be more aesthetically pleasing.

In line 3 we initialize the new list to be empty.

In line 4 we start a loop that will run as long as the old list is non-empty. `@old` will be interpreted as the number of elements remaining in the list.

In line 5 we randomly choose a slot in the old list. The slot number will be an integer between zero and the size of the list. If the size of the list is five, it will be a number greater than or equal to zero, and less than five. Thus, 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 will be the options, and they will be equally likely.

In line 6 we see whether we chose the first item. If not, we swap the first item with the chosen item. Thus, the first slot will contain the chosen item.

In line 7 we shift off the chosen item and at the same time push it onto the new list.

When the loop from line 4 finishes, we return the new list.

Here is an example shuffling a deck of cards. A nested loop generates the full deck. Then the shuffle subroutine reorders it.

```
# testbed for shuffle
@suits = split "", "SHDC"; # Spades, Hearts, etc.
@ranks = split "", "A23456789TJQK"; # Ace through King
foreach $suit ( @suits ) {
  foreach $rank ( @ranks ) {
    push @deck, "$rank$suit" } }
print "@deck\n" ;# show the cards in original order
@deck = shuffle ( @deck );
print "@deck\n" ;# show the cards in shuffled order
```

67.5 Normal Distribution*

The `rand` function returns a number that is uniformly distributed between zero and one (or some other endpoint). Many things in nature follow a distribution that is shaped like a bell curve. We can simulate that by adding

six uniform numbers together. We could use something like that to describe a random person.

```
# pretend males average 178 cm tall, std dev 2cm
$height = randND ( 178, 2 );
```

It calls `randND` a subroutine I wrote that you can use to generate normally distributed random numbers with a specified mean and standard deviation. If you really care about your random numbers, you may want to look on the Web for something more accurate, but this is not bad.

```
sub randND { # rand normally distributed
  my ( $mean, $stdev ) = @_;
  # add up six uniformly distributed random numbers (-1 to 1)
  # the result has a mean of 0.0 and stdev of sqrt(2)
  my $r = rand(2)+rand(2)+rand(2)+rand(2)+rand(2)+rand(2)-6;
  $r *= $stdev / sqrt(2); # scale to desired stdev
  $r += $mean; # scale to desired mean
  return $r }

```

To verify the accuracy of the distribution, you may want to generate a bunch of them and then calculate their mean and deviation. Here is a subroutine I wrote that you can use to calculate the mean and standard deviation of an array of numbers.

```
sub stdev {
  my ( $sum, $N, $n, $avg, $SS );
  $sum = 0; $N = @_; $SS = 0;
  foreach $n (@_) { $sum += $n }
  $avg = $sum / $N;
  foreach $n (@_) { $SS += ($n - $avg) * ($n - $avg) }
  $stdev = sqrt ( $SS / ($N - 1 ) );
  return ( $avg, $stdev ) }

```

67.6 What is Random Good For?

Two major examples come to mind. In the first example, the computer is playing a game against a human, or is providing a setting in which a game

is played. Of course the game would become quite boring if the computer's actions were easily predicted. We would like to have the ability to say: half of the time turn left, and the other half of the time turn right. Or: roll a dice, and one sixth of the time the result should be a 1.

The second example is more complex. Monte Carlo simulation is a business tool that relies on random numbers. In a typical scenario, a business may say: we see a 30% chance the economy will go down, and a 30% chance the economy will go up; we see a 40% chance that our competitors will respond to our price cuts. If the economy goes down and our competitors do not respond, this will be the result. (Et cetera.) With Monte Carlo, the computer randomly tries all possibilities and averages out the results so the business can know whether they should drop their prices or not.

The second example is to show that random numbers are not just for games. But games are easier to work with, so that is what we will use here.

67.7 Truly Random or Not?

Traditionally random numbers have been generated by doing a calculation. Say for instance that we start with some number x . Take the square root. Throw away the first two digits. Keep the next four. That becomes your new random number. Repeat the process for another random number.

```
1234 -> 35.128336
1283 -> 35.818989
8189 -> 90.493093
4930 -> 70.213958
2139 -> 49.249324
2493 -> ...
```

The numbers 1234, 1283, 8189, 4930, 2139, 2493, ... look pretty random. Because we know how they were derived, we know they are not random. But they still look pretty random, and could be used to turn left or right randomly: If the number is even, turn left, odd turn right. 1234 is even, so we go left. 1283 is odd, so we go right. Left, Right, Right, Left, Right, Right.

There are many algorithms for generating such random numbers. When random numbers are generated in this manner, they are called PSEUDO

random. PSEUDO is Latin for “fake.”

Truly random numbers can be generated by some physical phenomena such as radioactive decay as measured by a Geiger counter. In the INTEL Pentium chip, there is a true random number generator based on the random properties of thermal behavior of the CPU chip. Or something like that.

67.8 **srand**: Seeding the Sequence

Perl and most other languages with random number generators provide a way that you can get the same sequence of random numbers over and over again. This can be very valuable for testing.

The starting parameters for the sequence are called the **seed**.

The procedure for initializing the **seed** is called **srand**.

Chapter 68

Unit Test: Complex

Contents

68.1 Exercises	370
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To demonstrate mastery of this unit, you should be able to write programs that combine the skills learned in previous units.

68.1 Exercises

New Operators

Exercise 220: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Cash Register: Prompt for and read in the total cost of the purchase. Prompt for and read in the amount of money tendered by the customer. Print out the change to be returned, both as a total dollar amount and also as a list of coins. Assume the change will never be more than 99 cents and your coins include 25 cent, 10 cent, 5 cent, and 1 cent coins. Tell how many of each coin to give to the customer. Use the largest coins possible.

Exercise 221: Write a program to do the following. Prompt for and read in a distance in inches. Convert it to yards, feet, and inches. (There are 36 inches in a yard. There are 12 inches in a foot.) Sample input: 100. Correct output: 2 yards, 2 feet, 4 inches.) Do not worry about spacing or exact wording as long as the correct numbers come out in an understandable way.

Exercise 222: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Leap Year: Given a year number, tell whether it is a Leap Year or not. Leap Year is the year in which February has 29 days. The rest of the time February has 28 days. (We are using the Gregorian calendar, which is the common calendar used for business throughout the world.)

Rules: Normal years are not leap years. But if the year is divisible by 4, it is a leap year. Unless it is divisible by 100, in which case it is not a leap year. Unless it is divisible by 400, in which case it really is a leap year. Examples: 2000 is a leap year. 2100 is not a leap year. 2008 is a leap year. 2009 is not a leap year.

Nested Loops

Exercise 223:* Factor Counter: Use nested loops. For each number from 1 to 100, print out the number and the count of factors it has. Here are the first few answers: 1 1, 2 2, 3 2, 4 3, 5 2, 6 4, 7 2. "6 4" means that 6 has four factors. They are 1, 2, 3, and 6. A factor is any number that divides into the other number and leaves no remainder.

Exercise 224:* Use nested loops to print out this figure:

```
1
12
123
1234
12345
123456
1234567
12345678
123456789
```

Exercise 225:* Use a pair of nested loops to print this triangle:

```
9876543210
876543210
76543210
6543210
543210
43210
```

```
3210
210
10
0
```

Exercise 226:*

Multiplication Table. Use a pair of nested loops. Prompt for and read in a number. Print the times tables up to that number, each number taking four spaces. Example, if the number is 5, print the following:

```
1  2  3  4  5
2  4  6  8 10
3  6  9 12 15
4  8 12 16 20
5 10 15 20 25
```

Hint: To make \$x always take four spaces when printed, try this:

```
$x = sprintf ( "%4d", $x );
```

Exercise 227: Using approved style, write a program to do the following. Print out the prime numbers from 2 through 1000. Use an outer loop to consider all reasonable candidates. Use an inner loop to consider all reasonable factors. A factor is a number that divided exactly into the other number (with a remainder of zero). Example: 2 3 5 7 11 13 17 19 23 ...

Unit XIV

Publishing

Chapter 69

Web Hosting

Your instructor may provide you with web hosting in conjunction with your enrollment in this class. If not, you can get something on the open market. Prices are very reasonable lately.

To put content up on the web, the cheapest alternative is to buy a hosting package from a large web hosting service provider.

At this writing (Feb 2009, and again Jan 2014) such packages are available for around \$6 per month on a two-year contract. They provide unlimited storage for your website (but not to back up your local files, just for web content). Some provide a command-line login. You can get a **Linux** or **Microsoft** Windows server. Typically they throw in a domain name for free, but that can be a trick to keep you with them since the name is not always transferrable if you change hosts.

Use your favorite search engine. Search on “web hosting reviews”. See what comes up. Read a few reviews.

Your first goal is to figure out what criteria are important to you.

Does the host allow you to have CGI programs? You want that to be “yes.”

Does the host support programming in Perl? You want “yes.”

Does the host provide a command-line (ssh) login? You want “yes.”

What control panel do they provide, if any? **cPanel(R)** is popular but there are many others. Do they let you try it out? Many do.

Can you set up an email address? You want “yes.” How many?

Can you host more than one domain? You want “yes.”

How much hosting space is provided? Lots is better than little.

How much bandwidth can you use per month? Lots is better than little.

How many people are you sharing with? (You won’t find that in the advertising but you may find it in the reviews or blogs.) If lots are sharing the machine your performance will be miserable.

Are you limited in the types of content you can post? All restrict copyright violation such as posting “warez” (games hacked to remove their copy protection) and pirated music or video. Most places restrict Adult Content (pornography). Many also restrict spamming. Some restrict large files such as streaming videos and sound recordings.

Decide what things are important to you and look for a good provider.

Chapter 70

Backups

Contents

70.1 winscp	376
70.2 rsync	377

Your files could all vanish in a moment.

Fire. Flood. Earthquake. Bankruptcy. Your web hosting provider could cease to exist.

Or you could accidentally delete your files. Don't laugh. It has happened more than once.

The bottom line is that you need to have a copy of all your files.

<http://www.worldbackupday.net/> has more.

<http://blog.bwebcentral.com/1326> has more.

http://www.reddit.com/r/techsupport/comments/ga5yg/help_make_world_backup_day_a_reality_tell_us_your/ has more.

WinSCP: <http://winscp.net/eng/docs/start> has more.

If losing your files would make you sad, you should make regular backups.

70.1 winscp

to be added

70.2 rsync

to be added

Chapter 71

HTML

Contents

71.1 Web Forms	381
71.1.1 <code><form></code>	381
71.1.2 <code><input></code>	381
71.1.3 Example	382
71.2 Tables*	382
71.3 Validator*	383

Warning: **CSS** (Cascading Style Sheets) is the right way to do things. But it is mostly beyond the scope of this book. Instead we will **simplify a great deal** and teach you enough to get started. Take a course or read a book about making webpages to learn more.

HTML is used to **mark up** a document (content). The markup specifies formatting for the content. HTML stands for “hyper text markup language.” We will briefly identify the main markup elements you need to know. Remember that we are (here) greatly simplifying the world of HTML, and you can find more powerful and complex markup commands discussed elsewhere. Our purpose here is simply to introduce you and get you started.

The general rule is that markup goes around content. If you have a heading, you put a `<tag>` right before the heading and a `</tag>` right after the heading. But “tag” can be any of the many html markup tags that exist.

The exception to the general rule is markup that inserts something into the content. It is called a **void tag**. If you have an image or an input field, those

get inserted directly into the document. They do not “mark up” existing content. So instead of having a pair of tags, one without a slash and one with a slash, we only have one tag, like this: `<tag />`, where the slash at the end is saying “yeah, I know this is one of those void tags, and there is no separate ending tag for it.” The slash at the end was required for some versions of html, but with html5 it is optional.

The three most common void tags are `img`, `input`, and `br`:

```
<img src=abc.jpg alt=123>
<input type=text name=x value=abc>
<br>
```

The space-slash at the end is not strictly needed, but it is encouraged. You could get away with this:

```
<img src=abc.jpg alt=123>
<input type=text name=x value=abc>
<br>
```

`<!DOCTYPE html>` starts your document. `</html>` (optional) ends your document. Everything else goes between those tags. This particular DOCTYPE statement identifies your markup as HTML5 (HTML version Five).

`<head ...>` starts the heading portion of your document. The `lang=en` part says that the language of the webpage is English. `</head>` (optional) ends the heading portion of your document, and goes immediately in front of `<body...>`. The heading portion includes the title of your webpage, which should be between the `<head>` and `</head>` tags.

`<meta charset=utf-8>` tells the browser that your document is written using the character set known as UTF-8. Up until the browser reads this, it is assuming your character set based on what it sees. This gives it confidence. There are other character sets, like ones that specialize in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean characters. HTML5 requires a meta charset declaration but most browsers will still render your page just fine without it.

`<title>` starts the title portion of your document. `</title>` (required) ends the title portion of your document. Naturally the title goes between them. The title may be displayed on the frame of the browser or in the tab marker for the webpage. HTML5 requires a title for each webpage.

`<body>` starts the content (body) portion of your document. `</body>` (optional) ends the content (body) portion of your document. All the content of your document goes between those two tags.

`<h1>` and `</h1>` delimit a first-level heading in your document. The words of the heading go between them. Headings range from h1 to h6. h1 is the biggest heading. h6 is the smallest.

`<p>` is used to end a paragraph. Alternately, `<p>` and `</p>` (optional) are used to surround a paragraph.

`
` is used to break to a new line in the same paragraph.

`` and `` are used to surround **bold** type fonts.

`<i>` and `</i>` are used to surround *italic* type fonts.

`` is used to insert an image, where xx is the file name of the image and yy is the description for blind people. HTML5 requires an alt parameter for each image. You can control the size of the picture by using optional parameters like `width="100"` and `height="100"` for an overall command like this:

```

```

or, using single quotes (apostrophes):

```
<img src='mypic.jpg' width='100' height='100'>
```

You need the quotes if the thing quoted has certain special characters in it, such as space, equals, any kind of quote, or angle brackets. In most cases, you don't have those things, and you can leave out the quote marks like this:

```
<img src=mypic.jpg width=100 height=100>
```

My webmaster friends are cringing at a million things that I have not said. But my goal here is not to be complete. My goal is to get you started.

Do a search on the Internet. You can find instructions for setting the background color, changing font sizes, and lots more.

But this should get us started. Here is a sample webpage using html.

```
<!DOCTYPE html><head lang=en><meta charset=utf-8>
<title>Aloha</title>
<body>
<h1>Aloha from BYUH!</h1>
```

```
<p><img src=don.jpg alt="Don's Face"><br>
This is a <b>short</b> webpage!</p>
<p>Well, <i>that's all folks!</i></p>
```

71.1 Web Forms

Web forms provide the input to CGI programs. They consist of blanks into which the user can type information, and buttons or boxes of several types that can be checked or pressed. A webpage can have any number of forms.

71.1.1 <form>

Each form starts with a <form> command and ends with a </form> command. Forms cannot be nested within one another. Here is a sample <form> command:

```
<form method="post" action="bar.cgi">
```

It tells the browser that when this form is submitted, the input should be sent using the **post** method. (The other main method for sending input is called **get**.) The input will be sent to a program named **bar.cgi** on the web server. If an action is not specified, or is specified as being `action=""`, then the same program will run again, meaning the program that created the page that has the form on it.

71.1.2 <input>

Within the form, the most important item is the <input ...> item. These create the data entry areas, the check boxes, and the buttons that can be pressed to communicate with your CGI program.

```
<input type=button    name=x value="y">
<input type=checkbox     name=x value="y">
<input type=file      name=x value="y">
<input type=hidden    name=x value="y">
<input type=image     name=x value="y">
<input type=password  name=x value="y">
```

```
<input type=radio    name=x value="y">
<input type=reset    name=x value="y">
<input type=submit   name=x value="y">
<input type=text name=x value="y" size=20>
```

There are many resources on the web to show you examples of the `<input>` command. Each input will have a name and a value. The name and value are sent to your CGI program.

71.1.3 Example

In this example, there is a form with three visible inputs: nuts, bolts, and enter. When the user keys in values for nuts and bolts, and presses the enter button, a string of information is sent to the CGI program.

```
<form method=post action=bar.cgi>
<input type=hidden name=f value=1>
<input type=text name=nuts value="" size=20>
<input type=text name=bolts value="" size=20>
<input type=submit name=done value=enter>
</form>
```

If the user keys in the values 19 for nuts and 27 for bolts, and clicks on the enter button, the CGI program will receive a single line of standard input with exactly the following content:

```
f=1&nuts=19&bolts=27&done=enter
```

A program can be used to read this line and extract the data from it.

71.2 Tables*

When you want to align the elements of your webpage into neat columns, it is handy to use a table. You can start a table using a `<table>` command, and end it using a `</table>` command. Within the table, there are rows, each of which starts with a `<tr>` (table row) command and ends with `</tr>` at the end of the row. Within the row are data items. Each is introduced

by a `<td>` (table data) command and ended by a `</td>` at the end of the data item. Here is a sample table.

```
<table>
  <tr>
    <td>upper left</td>
    <td>upper right</td>
  </tr>
  <tr>
    <td>lower left</td>
    <td>lower right</td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

You can nest tables inside one another.

71.3 Validator*

The w3.org consortium provides a free webpage validation service. Go to their website at

<http://validator.w3.org/>

and type in the URI of your webpage. It will tell you if your page has the correct syntax or not, and how to fix it.

This chapter does not teach you enough to be able to write HTML that will validate properly. We skip a lot.

Chapter 72

Extracting CGI Inputs

In chapter [61](#) (page [327](#)) we discussed regular expressions. In this chapter we show how to use them to extract form input field data sent by a browser to a web server.

Input forms are made up of fields. Each field has a name and a value. The fields are assembled into one long string and sent to the server.

In our first example, the webpage has a form with two fields, nuts and bolts. The user has keyed in a value of 5 into the nuts field and a value of 12 into the bolts field. When the information is submitted, the browser constructs the following line and sends it to the server.

```
nuts=5&bolts=12
```

In this chapter we will show how to use regular expressions to extract the 5 and 12. We can then use them to update a database or fulfil an order.

Our first method is like this:

```
chomp ( $line = <STDIN> );  
$line =~ /^nuts=(\d+)&bolts=(\d+)$/;  
$nuts = $1;  
$bolts = $2;
```

Unit XV

Projects

Chapter 73

Projects

Contents

73.1 Invent a Project	386
---	-----

Doing a project is a great way to become empowered. Our nominal goal is that each student be able to build something fun and useful. The real goal is to enrich the student by giving them the ability to create the programs they need without always relying on others.

What is the right size for a project at this point in your skills development? This unit contains a few pre-defined projects that could be appropriate for demonstrating and improving your programming skills. They are given as examples. They have served in the past as actual assignments.

Because out-of-classroom projects by their nature are done without supervision, there is some risk that students will get inappropriate help. To guard against this, project points can only be earned by students who have already performed sufficiently well on the in-class exams and activities.

73.1 Invent a Project

Doing pre-defined projects can be boring and can lead to some inappropriate sharing of code. This does not enhance learning. So instead here is a list of requirements that your project should satisfy.

Fun: Your program should be fun. A game would be ideal. Fun is a subjective judgment, so we will trust you on this. If you think it is fun, we will agree that it is fun.

Creative: Do something creative and unique. If it looks like the project your neighbor already turned in, that would not qualify.

Online: It must run online as a web application. Anyone in the world should be able to run your program.

Authorship: The code comments and the program output should clearly identify you as the author and owner of the program.

Images: The program should appropriately use pictures, typically by way of an HTML `` statement. Ideally the pictures would change depending, for example, on the progress of the game.

Input: Your program must accept multiple inputs, for example buttons or text fields, to allow the user to interact with it. Hidden fields count as inputs.

State: Your program must have some sort of meaningful state that it carries forward. Some or all of the state must be carried in hidden fields that are actually important to your program's operation.

Chapter 74

Hangman Project

Contents

74.1 Requirements	388
74.2 Suggestions	390
74.3 Design	390
74.4 Sample Code	391

We will create a working online hangman game. In case you are not familiar with this game, you can read a description on Wikipedia.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hangman_\(game\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hangman_(game))

An example game, written by the author of this book and very similar to the game you are asked to write, can be played here.

<http://hangman.doncolton.com/play/>

A Hangman (and Crossword) Solver, also written by the author of this book, can be found here.

<http://hangman.doncolton.com/>

74.1 Requirements

The first requirement is that the resulting game should be fun to play. This, of course, is true of any game. The fun-ness aspect is not explicitly graded,

but it should be kept in mind as you design, develop, and implement your game.

Your program must be written in Perl.

Your program must run as a CGI program on the web.

The URL for your program may be assigned to you. If so, you must make your program work from that URL.

Every time your program runs, it should create a webpage that clearly identifies you as the author and Hangman as the game.

When your program is first started, and after each game ends, it should attempt to start a new game. The player should have at least these two options: (1) let the program pick a word to be guessed, and (2) let the user enter his own word to be guessed.

When the user lets the program pick a word, the word should be randomly selected from a list within your program. The list must have at least ten different words to choose from.

When the game is under way, your program must display a graphic illustration (for example, a hangman's scaffold) showing how many times the player has made a mistake. The game starts with zero mistakes. When six mistakes have happened, the game is lost.

When the game is under way, your program must also display letters and dashes to indicate the letters that have been correctly guessed and the letters that have not yet been guessed.

When the game is under way, your program must also display the letters that were incorrectly guessed, in the order those guesses were made.

When six mistakes have been made, the game is lost, and your program must announce that the game is lost and reveal the hidden word. It must also attempt to start a new game as indicated above.

When all letters have been correctly guessed, your program must announce that the game is won. It must also attempt to start a new game as indicated above.

74.2 Suggestions

It is recommended but not required that there be a way for the player to end the game early. If the player takes this option, the hidden word would be revealed and your program must attempt to start a new game.

It is recommended but not required that your program allow spaces to appear in the hidden word, thus making it a hidden phrase.

It is recommended but not required that your program have a list of words that are challenging to guess.

It is recommended but not required that your program allow the player to enter more than one letter at once. For example, the player could be allowed to enter the entire word or phrase.

It is recommended but not required that your program ignore guesses that have already been considered. Thus, if the player already guessed “e”, whether it was right or not, if they guess “e” again it should be ignored.

You may want to provide hints in the form of a list of the most common letters, maybe in order of popularity.

You may want to provide an alphabetical list of letters that have not already been guesses.

You may want to provide random taunts, telling the player how close they are to losing, or making fun of wrong choices. Similarly you may want to provide random statements of encouragement, telling the player how wise and intelligent they are for the good choices they have made.

You may want to use another graphic instead of a hangman’s gallows. Perhaps apples on a tree, as mentioned in Wikipedia. Perhaps time through an hour glass. Perhaps a fuse on a bomb. Think of something unique and fun.

74.3 Design

Your program must comply with indentation and other style requirements specified by the instructor.

The standard for indentation is that each level of nesting will have two or more spaces at the front of each line, and that the indentation will be uniform for all lines at that level of nesting.

Subroutines are to be placed after the main program. They should not be nested inside the main program or inside each other.

“`use strict;`” must be invoked to eliminate accidentally global variables.

There should be a subroutine that will return a word to be guessed. This subroutine should be called when the user requests the program to provide such a word. You may want to have an array of words and to select one at random.

There should be a subroutine that will accept as input the target word and the list of letters that have been tried. It should return letters and dashes (or underscores) to indicate what the user should be shown.

There should be a subroutine that will accept as input the target word and the list of letters that have been tried. It should return a list of wrong letters, in the original order.

There should be a subroutine that will accept input (whatever you deem appropriate) and will return a count of the number of errors that have been made.

All “state” information needed to continue the game should be included in the webpage that your program puts up. Thus, many people should be able to simultaneously play your game without interfering with each other. It is not required that the state information be encrypted, but it must at least be hidden to the extent that a casual player cannot see it. If “view page source” reveals it, that is not a problem.

74.4 Sample Code

No, I am not going to give you the source code for the program itself. What I will give you is the HTML code that my program produces.

Reminder: The HTML code here is simplified. It is not a good example of high-quality HTML code. It is an example of the minimum code you might use to achieve the goals of the assignment.

First we have the initial screen.

```
<body bgcolor=lime><form method=post>
<h1>Don Colton's Hangman Game</h1>
```



```

<img src=hang0.png width=280 height=291><br>
<h1>Type in a word or phrase
  for someone else to guess,<br>
  or let me pick something (if you dare).</h1>
<input type=submit name=go1 value='Use this :'>
<input name=phrase value='type something here'
  size=20><br>
<input type=submit name=go2a
  value='Pick something EASY for me.'>
<input type=submit name=go2b
  value='Pick something CHALLENGING for me.'>

```

It shows several **submit** buttons that allow the user to select their path forward.

Next we have a game underway.

```

<body bgcolor=lime><form method=post>
<h1>Don Colton's Hangman Game</h1>
<img src=hang1.png width=280 height=291>
<h1>phrase: _ 0 _ _ 0 0 _</h1>
<h1>miss: U</h1>
<input type=hidden name=bgcolor value=lime>
<input type=hidden name=phrase value=DOGWOOD>
<input type=hidden name=guesses value='UO'>
your next guess: <input name=guess value=''>
<input type=submit name=go3
  value=submit><br>
<input type=submit name=go4
  value='I give up. Just tell me.'>

```

It shows several **hidden** fields: `bgcolor` (background color), `phrase` (the secret word to be guessed), `guesses` (the prior guesses). It also has a blank where the next letter can be guessed and two submit buttons.

The **hidden** fields carry along all the information, also known as **state**, which is necessary for the program to make its next calculation. In this case we need to know the secret word and the letters guessed thus far. From that we can decide how many correct letters have been guessed. We can also decide what mistakes have been made.

Earlier, in section 10.7 (page 86), we talked about these hidden fields under the name of **memo to self**.

And we can tell by the number of mistakes which hangman picture to display. Notice the **img** field that indicated **hang0.png** initially and now indicates **hang1.png** after one incorrect guess was registered.

Here we have the successful guessing of the secret word.

```
<body bgcolor=lime><form method=post>
<h1>Don Colton's Hangman Game</h1>
<img src=hang3.png width=280 height=291>
<h1>phrase: D O G W O O D</h1>
<h1>miss: U C H</h1>
<h1>You escaped the hangman! Play Again?</h1>
<input type=submit name=go1 value='Use this :'>
<input name=phrase value='type something here'
  size=20><br>
<input type=submit name=go2a
  value='Pick something EASY for me.'>
<input type=submit name=go2b
  value='Pick something CHALLENGING for me.'>
```

Notice that we have blended the ending of one game with the questions required to start the next game.

Here we have the unsuccessful outcome of not guessing the secret word.

```
<body bgcolor=lime><form method=post>
<h1>Don Colton's Hangman Game</h1>
<img src=hang6.png width=280 height=291>
<h1>phrase: D O _ _ O O D</h1>
<h1>miss: U C X J M Q</h1><h1>Sorry!
  The secret was 'DOGWOOD'. Play Again?</h1>
<input type=submit name=go1 value='Use this :'>
<input name=phrase value='type something here'
  size=20><br>
<input type=submit name=go2a
  value='Pick something EASY for me.'>
<input type=submit name=go2b
  value='Pick something CHALLENGING for me.'>
```

Notice that again we have blended the ending of one game with the questions required to start the next game.

The goal of the program is to create webpages such as these.

Chapter 75

Hotter, Colder

Contents

75.1 Computer Picks	395
75.2 Human Picks	396

75.1 Computer Picks

This game is called **Hotter, Colder**. In this game, the computer thinks of a number between 1 and 100. The human tries to guess it.

On the first guess, the only two answers are “YOU WIN!!!” and “Nope, try again.”

On subsequent guesses, the possible answers are things like “YOU WIN!!!”, “You are getting warmer”, and “You are getting colder”.

Here is an off-line version of the game.

```
$num = int(rand(100)) + 1; # pick a number
print "I am thinking of a number between 1 and 100.\n";
print "What is your guess: ";
chomp ( $guess = <STDIN> );
$dist = abs ( $num - $guess );
if ( $dist == 0 ) { print "YOU WIN!!!\n"; exit }
print "Nope, try again.\n";
```

```

while ( 1 ) { # infinite loop
    $prev = $dist; # remember what they guessed last time
    print "What is your guess: ";
    chomp ( $guess = <STDIN> );
    $dist = abs ( $num - $guess );
    if ( $dist == 0 ) { print "YOU WIN!!!\n"; last }
    if ( $dist < $prev ) { print "You are getting warmer.\n" }
    if ( $dist > $prev ) { print "You are getting colder.\n" }
    if ( $dist == $prev ) { print "No change. Try again.\n" }
}

```

The challenge is to convert this to an online game, complete with pictures and a recounting of the history of guesses.

The user interface must provide a place for the human to type in a guess and a way to submit it.

The webpage must maintain a history of guesses, both a displayed version for the human to see and a hidden (or cookie) version that makes up the **session / state / persistent data / memo to self**.

Idea: have a button for “I give up, tell me”.

Idea: have a way for one human to pick the number that another human will guess. The computer can act as the referee.

Idea: Use graphics to indicate hotter or colder.

Idea: Let the user pick different limits instead of 1 and 100.

Idea: Use a cookie to remember the best score or the top scores from that computer. When someone gets a new high score invite them to join the list.

Idea: Change the statements to things like “You are getting REALLY hot” or “You are FREEZING” depending on just how close the guess was.

75.2 Human Picks

How about a challenge. Computer against human. Human gets to decide who guesses first.

This version is an interesting challenge for the programmer. Allow the human to pick a number and ask the computer to guess. Similar rules as before: display a history of guesses and their results.

Have several buttons for the human to press: “You are getting hotter”, “You are getting colder”, “No change”, and “You win!”

Strategy: After the first guess, theoretically you can rule out half the possibilities each time you guess. Theoretically. It is much more tricky than a game like High/Low, which makes it a bit more challenging to play.

You might guess 33 first, and then 66 on the next guess. If 66 is hotter, we know the number is closer to 66, which would make it 50 or more. Otherwise it is 49 or less. You might want to modify your guesses by a random factor to disguise your strategy.

Unit XVI

Appendices

Appendix A

Answers to Selected Exercises

Answers to Selected Exercises

Chapter 0: Preface

- 1: (p.14) Is Wikipedia a good source of information about programming?
- 2: (p.15) Is Google a good source of information about programming?
- 3: (p.15) What year was Perl invented?
- 4: (p.15) What are the top ten programming languages?

Unit I: Basics: Output

Unit I, Chapter 1: Hello, World!

- 5: (p.18) What does GUI stand for?
- 6: (p.18) What does CLI stand for?
- 7: (p.23) What does pseudo mean?
- 8: (p.24) What is buffering?
- 9: (p.25) What does the “sleep 5” command do?
- 10: (p.25) What command will pause your program for five seconds?
- 11: (p.25) What is a syntax error?
- 12: (p.25) What does the print “\n”; command do?
- 13: (p.26) What does the \$wait = <STDIN> command do?
- 14: (p.26) In Microsoft Windows, what file name ending is used for Perl?
- 15: (p.26) What does Print do?

Unit I, Chapter 2: Online Basics

- 16: (p.27) What is a web server?
- 17: (p.28) What does static mean?
- 18: (p.28) What does dynamic mean?
- 19: (p.32) What is index.html?
- 20: (p.32) What does markup do?
- 21: (p.32) What HTML tag inserts a picture into a webpage?
- 22: (p.32) What is a user?
- 23: (p.33) What is a link?

24: (p.33) What does URL stand for?

25: (p.33) What does URI stand for?

Unit I, Chapter 3: Passwords

26: (p.36) What method do I recommend for creating a secure password?

Unit II: Basics: Input

Unit II, Chapter 4: Input: Hello, Joe!

27: (p.39) When should we use `chomp`?

28: (p.41) What is a newline?

29: (p.41) What is a string?

30: (p.41) What is an empty string?

31: (p.42) What does “`chomp`” do?

32: (p.42) What does “`chop`” do?

33: (p.42) What is the difference between newline, line break, carriage return, line feed, CRLF, CR, LF, enter, return, and `\n`?

Unit II, Chapter 5: Syntax and Semantics

34: (p.47) What is the multiplication operator?

35: (p.47) What is the division operator?

- 36:** (p.50) What is semantics?
- 37:** (p.50) What is syntax?
- 38:** (p.50) Why is it difficult to give good instructions to a computer?

Unit II, Chapter 6: Simple Variables

- 39:** (p.58) Give an example of lower case.
- 40:** (p.59) Give an example of upper case.
- 41:** (p.59) What does case sensitive mean?
- 42:** (p.59) What character comes at the front of every scalar variable?
- 43:** (p.59) What are the syntax rules for variable names?
- 44:** (p.59) Are variable names case sensitive?
- 45:** (p.59) What makes for a good variable name?
- 46:** Assignment is written as “variable = value”, where the name on the left side of the command must be a variable, an equals sign must follow, and then an expression involving constants and/or variables. It must be written in that order. It would be incorrect syntax to write, “value = variable”.
- 47:** (p.60) What does interpolation mean?
- 48:** (p.60) What does concatenation mean?

Unit II, Chapter 7: Testing

Unit II, Chapter 8: Going Online

- 49:** (p.64) What does local mean?

50: (p.64) What does offline mean?

51: (p.64) What does online mean?

52: (p.68) What does 0644 mean?

53: (p.68) What does 0755 mean?

Unit II, Chapter 9: Going Dynamic

54: (p.75) What subroutine call gives a random number between 0 and 6?

55: (p.78) What does rand do?

56: (p.78) What does int do?

57: (p.78) What is index.cgi?

Unit II, Chapter 10: Online Input

Unit III: Basics: Math

Unit III, Chapter 11: Basic Calculation

58: (p.90) In $3+2*5$, does + happen first or *?

Unit III, Chapter 12: Names, Parsing, Scanning

59: (p.95) What is white space?

60: (line 1) Print should be print. (line 2) chomp needs an open paren next. equals sign needed after inches. closing paren after STDIN. (line 3) star (multiply) needed after 2.54. semicolon needed at end of line. (line 4) Print should be print. line 4: double-quote needed before ;

Unit III, Chapter 13: Style

61: (p.100) Give an example of camel case.

Unit III, Chapter 14: Instruction Sequences

62: (p.104) After $\$x = 5$; $\$x = 6$; what is the value of $\$x$?

63: 10, 16, 7

Unit III, Chapter 15: Crafting Formulas

Unit III, Chapter 16: Debugging

64: (p.110) What is a logic error?

Unit III, Chapter 17: Games and Projects

Unit III, Chapter 18: Unit Test: Basics

66: Nice Pet.

```
print "Please enter the name of an animal: ";
```

```
chomp ( $name = <STDIN> );
# if you do not chomp, the next line will be split.
print "I think $name would make a nice pet.\n";
```

67: Zoo Favorite.

```
print "Please enter a zoo animal name: ";
chomp ( $a = <STDIN> );
print "I love to see the $a at the zoo.";
# the chomp is necessary to get the right result.
```

71: Tell about an animal at school.

```
print "Enter a kind of animal: "; chomp ( $a = <STDIN> );
print "Enter a person's name: "; chomp ( $n = <STDIN> );
print "Yesterday I took my pet $a to school.\n";
print "My friend $n laughed all day.\n";
```

72: Add Five.

```
print "Please enter a number: ";
$num = <STDIN>;
$result = $num + 5; print $result;
```

73: Subtract Ten:

```
print "Please enter a number: ";
chomp ( $num = <STDIN> );
$num = $num - 10;
print "Subtracting 10 gives $num.\n";
```

74: Multiply by 2:

```
print "Please enter a number: ";
chomp ( $num = <STDIN> );
$num = $num * 2;
print "Multiplying by 2 gives $num.\n";
```

75: Add Two Numbers:

```
print "Please enter a number: ";
chomp ( $num1 = <STDIN> );
print "Please enter a number: ";
chomp ( $num2 = <STDIN> );
$ans = $num1 + $num2;
print "The sum of $num1 and $num2 is $ans.\n";
```

76: Double It:

```
print "Please enter a number: ";
chomp ( $num = <STDIN> );
$num = $num * 2;
print "Doubling it gives $num.\n";
```

77: Before and After.

```
print "Please enter a number: "; $n = <STDIN>;
$before = $n - 1; $after = $n + 1;
print "$before comes before it. $after comes after it.\n";
```

78: Add Three Numbers:

```
print "Enter a number: ";
$num1 = <STDIN>;
print "Enter a number: ";
$num2 = <STDIN>;
print "Enter a number: ";
$num3 = <STDIN>;
$answer = $num1 + $num2 + $num3;
print "The numbers add up to $answer.\n";
```

80: Airplane Empty Seat Count:

```
print "How many passengers are on board? ";
$pass = <STDIN>;
$empty = 240 - $pass;
print "There are $empty empty seats.\n";
```

81: Convert miles to kilometers.

```
print "Please enter miles: "; $miles = <STDIN>;
$km = $miles * 1.6;
print "That makes $km kilometers.\n";
```

82: Save Ten Percent.

```
print "Enter the husband's paycheck amount: ";
chomp ( $h = <STDIN> );
print "Enter the wife's paycheck amount: ";
chomp ( $w = <STDIN> );
$tot = $h + $w;
$sav = $tot * 0.10;
print "Savings is $sav\n";
```

83: Phonecard.

```
print "Please enter the connect fee: "; $cf = <STDIN>;
print "Please enter the per-minute rate: "; $rate = <STDIN>;
print "Please enter the minutes connected: "; $min = <STDIN>;
$cost = $cf + $rate * $min;
print "The call will cost $cost\n";
```

Unit IV: Decisions: Numeric

Unit IV, Chapter 19: The If Statement

90: It prints “9 is greater than 3.”

91: It prints “hello is equal to world.” The numeric operators convert “hello” and “world” into numbers. Since no actual digits are found at the front of the strings, the numeric values are each zero, and are equal to each other. To correct the program we should use “lt”, “gt”, and “eq” for our comparison operators.

92: Trick question. It prints “9 is greater than 3.3 is equal to 3.” The third if statement uses a single equals instead of a double equals. Single is for assignment. Double is for comparison. Therefore, it copies the value of y into x. 3 is true so the print happens also.

Unit IV, Chapter 20: Numeric Comparison

93: (p.123) What numeric values represent True?

94: (p.123) What string values represent True?

95: (p.123) What numeric values represent False?

96: (p.123) What string values represent False?

97: Perl uses the empty string for False so it prints this:

a

b1

c

Unit IV, Chapter 21: Two Alternatives: The Else Statement

98: (p.125) What does default mean?

99: It prints “3 is less than 9.3 is equal to 9.” The reason is that the first if is true, so we get less. The second if is false, so we do not get greater, but the else takes over and we get the equals. The else only applies to the second if.

Unit IV, Chapter 22: Block Structure

Unit IV, Chapter 23: Programming Style

Unit IV, Chapter 24: Many Alternatives: Elsif

100: It prints “3 is less than 9.” The reason is that the first if is true, so we get less. We then skip the elsif and else.

101: It prints “x is large.” The first three conditions are false so their blocks are skipped. The fourth condition is true so its block is executed. Because a true condition was found, the remaining else line are skipped.

102: It prints “x is large.x is really large.” The first three conditions are false so their blocks are skipped. The fourth condition is true so its block is executed. The fifth condition is true so its block is executed. To avoid executing the fifth block we would need to connect the statements using elsif (or nesting). Then the remaining blocks would have been skipped.

103: It prints “b.h.n.” Each line that starts with “els” (elsif or else) is a continuation of the previous if statement (and must immediately follow an if or elsif). Therefore, the whole program breaks out into five if ladders. The first ladder has four lines (abcd). The second ladder has three lines (efg). The third ladder has two lines (hi). The fourth ladder has three lines (jkl). The fifth ladder has two lines (mn). In the first block, a is false, b is true, and c and d are never considered. In the second block, all three are false and there is no else clause so nothing prints. In the third block, h is true and i is skipped. In the fourth block nothing is true. In the fifth block nothing is true so the else is executed.

Unit V: Decisions: Other

Unit V, Chapter 25: And, Or, Xor, Not

Unit V, Chapter 26: String Comparison

104: (p.149) What does uc do?

105: (p.150) What does lc do?

106: (p.150) What does bareword mean?

107: The answer is “abc1”. Actually Perl uses the empty string for false instead of using zero, so it would really be ("", "", 1). But the big question is why not (1, 0, 0). It is because we used mathematical operators instead of string operators. The numeric operators convert “hello” and “world” into numbers before comparing them. Since no actual digits are found at the front of the strings, the numeric values are each zero, and are equal to each other. To correct the program we should use “lt”, “gt”, and “eq” for our comparison operators.

Unit V, Chapter 27: Online**Unit V, Chapter 28: Remainder**

109: (p.158) What is the remainder operator?

Unit V, Chapter 29: Precedence**Unit V, Chapter 30: Unit Test: Choices**

110: Trouble.

```
print "Please enter a number: ";
chomp ( $num = <STDIN> );
if ( $num < 0 ) { print "You are in trouble." }
else { print "So far, so good." }
```

122: Yeehah, Ouch.

```
print "Please enter a number: "; $num = <STDIN>;
if ( $num % 2 == 0 && $num % 13 != 0 ) {
print "Yeehah" } else { print "Ouch" }
```

126: Department Names:

```
print "Please enter a department prefix: ";
chomp ( $dept = uc <STDIN> );
if ( $dept eq "ACCT" ) { print "Accounting" }
elsif ( $dept eq "POSC" ) { print "Political Science" }
elsif ( $dept eq "CIS" ) {
. print "Computer and Information Sciences" }
else { print "Unknown" }
```

127: Dictionary, leaf:

```
print "What word do you seek? ";
chomp ( $word = lc <STDIN> );
```

```
if ( $word le "leaf" ) { print "First Volume\n" }
else { print "Second Volume\n" }
```

128: Concert Lines:

```
print "Please enter a name: ";
chomp ( $name = <STDIN> );
$name = uc $name;
if ( $name lt "H" ) { $line = "A-G" }
elsif ( $name lt "O" ) { $line = "H-N" }
elsif ( $name lt "V" ) { $line = "O-U" }
else { $line = "V-Z" }
print "You should stand in the $line line";
```

129: Table by Names:

```
print "Please enter a name: "; $name = uc <STDIN>;
if ( $name ge "N" ) { print "Please go to table 2.\n" }
if ( $name lt "N" ) { print "Please go to table 1.\n" }
```

130: Party food assignments:

```
print "name: ";
$name = uc <STDIN>;
if ( $name lt "M" ) { print "bring bread.\n" }
elsif ( $name lt "R" ) { print "bring salad.\n" }
else { print "bring dessert.\n" }
```

Unit VI: Loops: Repeated Actions

Unit VI, Chapter 31: Counting

138: (p.176) What does increment mean?

139: (p.176) What does decrement mean?

Unit VI, Chapter 32: While Loops

- 140: (p.186) What does implicit mean?
141: (p.186) What does explicit mean?
142: (p.186) What does efficient mean?
143: (p.186) What does effective mean?

Unit VI, Chapter 33: For Loops**Unit VI, Chapter 34: Self-Modification**

- 144: (p.193) After `$x = 5; $x++`; what is the value of `$x`?
145: (p.193) After `$x = 5; $x = $x++`; what is the value of `$x`?

Unit VI, Chapter 35: Games and Projects

- 146: (p.198) What is an inner loop?
147: (p.199) What is an outer loop?

Unit VI, Chapter 36: Unit Test: Repeated Actions

- 148: Print 1 to 500.
- ```
$x = 1; # start at 1
while ($x <= 500) { # quit when we pass 500
. print "$x "; # print the number and a space
. $x = $x + 1; } # move along to the next number
```

**149:** Print 2 to 100 by 2s.

```
for ($i = 2; $i <= 100; $i += 2) { print $i }
```

**151:** Count from n down to 0, then blast off.

```
print "Starting number: "; $num = <STDIN>;
while ($num > 0) { # quit when we reach 0
. print "$num\n"; # print the number
. $num = $num - 1; } # move along to the next number
print "blast off!\n";
```

**156:** Print 1 to 500, skipping multiples of 3.

```
$x = 1; # start at 1
while ($x <= 500) { # quit when we pass 500
. if ($x % 3 != 0) { # only non-multiples of three
. . print "$x " } # print the number and a space
. $x = $x + 1; } # move along to the next number
```

**157:** Coin Toss 100 times.

```
for ($i = 1; $i <= 100; $i++) {
. if (rand(2) < 1) { print "H" }
. else { print "T" }
}
```

**161:** Triangular Numbers to 1000.

```
$total = 0; $i = 1;
while (1) {
. $total = $total + $i;
. $i = $i + 1;
. if ($total > 1000) { last }
. print "$total, " }
```

**168:** Walking Verse.

```
for ($m1 = 100; $m1 > 1; $m1--) {
. $m2 = $m1 - 1;
. print "$m1 miles we yet must walk.
But all along the way we talk.
Talking brings such happy smiles.
Suddenly there's $m2 miles.\n\n" }
print "1 miles we yet must walk.
But all along the way we talk.
Talking brings such happy smiles.
```

Suddenly there's no more miles.\n";

## Unit VII: Arrays: Repeated Data

### Unit VII, Chapter 37: Lists

- 169: (p.209) What does push do?
- 170: (p.209) What does pop do?
- 171: (p.209) What does shift do?
- 172: (p.209) What does unshift do?
- 173: (p.209) What does LIFO stand for?
- 174: (p.210) How does a stack work?
- 175: (p.210) What does FIFO stand for?
- 176: (p.210) How does a queue work?

### Unit VII, Chapter 38: Arrays (Indexed)

- 177: (p.213) What is an index number?

### Unit VII, Chapter 39: Walk the List

- 178: (p.215) How does foreach work?

**Unit VII, Chapter 40: Split and Join**

**179:** (p.217) What does split do?

**180:** (p.217) What does join do?

**Unit VII, Chapter 41: Online**

**181:** (p.218) What subroutine call gives the current time?

**Unit VII, Chapter 42: Unit Test: Repeated Data**

**182:** Add names to an array.

```
while (1) { # infinite loop
. print "Please enter a name: "; # prompt for a name
. chomp ($name = <STDIN>); # read in a name
. if ($name eq "") { last } # quit upon blank name
. push @x, $name; # Add the name to the end of an array.
}
```

**183:** Add names Until William.

```
for (;;) { # infinite loop
. print "Please enter a name: ";
. chomp ($name = <STDIN>);
. if ($name eq "William") { last }
. push @names, $name }
```

**184:** Use chop to convert string to array.

```
while ($a ne "") {
. unshift @a, chop ($a) }
```

**185:** Print Array Items.

```
foreach $x (@a) { print "$x\n" }
```

**186:** Print multiples of 5.



```
foreach $x (@a) {
 . if ($x % 5 == 0) { print "$x\n" } }
```

**187:** Print every fifth item.

```
for ($i = 4; $i < @x; $i += 5) {
 . print "$x[$i]\n" }
```

**188:** Find 5 in an Array.

```
foreach $num (@x) {
 . if ($num == 5) { print "5 is found\n"; exit } }
print "5 is not found\n";
– Alternate Solution (without exit) –
$found = 0;
foreach $num (@x) {
 . if ($num == 5) { $found = 1; last } }
if ($found == 1) { print "5 is found\n" }
else { print "5 is not found\n"; }
```

**189:** Is Joe a Visitor?

```
foreach $name (@visitors) {
 . if ($name eq "Joe") { print "Joe visited.\n"; exit } }
print "Joe did not visit.\n";
```

**190:** List Things.

```
$num = 0;
foreach $thing (@things) {
 . print "The number $num thing is \"$thing\".\n";
 . $num++ }
– Alternate Solution –
for ($i = 0; $i < @things; $i++) {
 . print "The number $i thing is \"$things[$i]\".\n"; }
```

**191:** Adding ARGV.

```
$total = 0;
foreach $x (@ARGV) { $total += $x }
print "total: $total\n";
```

**192:** Ten to nine hundred.

```
for ($i = 10; $i <= 900; $i += 10) {
 . push @x, $i }
```

**193:** Deal Five Cards.

```

for ($i = 1; $i <= 5; $i++) {
. $card = shift @deck; push @Adam, $card;
. $card = shift @deck; push @Bob, $card;
. $card = shift @deck; push @Charlie, $card; }

```

– Alternate Solution –

```

for ($i = 1; $i <= 5; $i++) {
. push @Adam, shift @deck;
. push @Bob, shift @deck;
. push @Charlie, shift @deck; }

```

**194:** Found in 100.

```

for ($i = 1; $i <= 100; $i++) {
. $x = <STDIN>;
. push @a, $x }
$y = <STDIN>;
$found = 0;
foreach $x (@a) {
. if ($y eq $x) { $found++ } }
if ($found) { print "PRESENT\n" }
else { print "ABSENT\n" }

```

**195:** Perfect Shuffle.

```

@cards = (); @t1 = @left; @t2 = @right;
while (@t1) { push @cards, shift @t1, shift @t2 }

```

**196:** Reverse Array.

```

@b = (); @temp = @a;
while (@temp) { push @b, pop @temp }

```

**197:** Names until Joe.

```

$name = ""; @names = (); # start empty
while ($name ne "Joe") { # watch for Joe
. chomp ($name = <STDIN>);
. push @names, $name }
foreach $name (@names) { print "$name\n" }

```

**199:** Total, average, above, below.

```

@nums = (); # start with an empty array
while (1) { # infinite loop
. # Read in a list of numbers, one per line
. chomp ($num = <STDIN>);

```

```

. # until you get a blank line.
. if ($num eq "") { last }
. push @nums, $num }
Add up the number and print out the total.
$total = 0;
foreach $num (@nums) { $total += $num }
print "The total is $total\n";
Also print out the average.
$average = $total / @nums;
print "The average is $average\n";
Then tell how many numbers are above average ...
$above = 0; $below = 0;
foreach $num (@nums) {
. if ($num > $average) { $above++ }
. if ($num < $average) { $below++ }
}
print "$above numbers are above average.\n";
print "$below numbers are below average.\n";

```

**200:** Present in Both.

```

foreach $w1 (@old) {
. foreach $w2 (@new) {
. . if ($w1 eq $w2) { print $w1; exit }
. }
}
print "no duplicates found";

```

## Unit VIII: Subroutines: Organizing

### Unit VIII, Chapter 43: Subroutines

### Unit VIII, Chapter 44: Arguments

**Unit VIII, Chapter 45: Global versus Local****Unit VIII, Chapter 46: Code Factoring****Unit VIII, Chapter 47: Black Boxes****Unit VIII, Chapter 48: Games and Projects****Unit VIII, Chapter 49: Unit Test: Organizing**

**202:** Add Three.

```
sub add3 {
 . my ($a1, $a2, $a3, $res);
 . ($a1, $a2, $a3) = @_;
 . $res = $a1 + $a2 + $a3;
 . return $res }
}
```

**203:** Stars.

```
sub stars {
 . my ($count, $star, $res);
 . ($count, $star) = @_;
 . $res = '';
 . while ($count > 0) {
 . . $res .= $star;
 . . $count-- }
 . return $res }
}
```

**204:** Add All.

```
sub add {
 . my $total = 0;
```

```
. foreach (@_) { $total += $_ }
. return $total }
```

**205:** Subroutine average.

```
sub average {
. my ($sum, $n);
. if (@_ == 0) { return 0 }
. $sum = 0; foreach $n (@_) { $sum += $n }
. return $sum / @_ }
```

**206:** Extremes.

```
sub extremes {
. my ($min, $max);
. $min = $max = $_[0];
. foreach (@_) {
. . if ($_ < $min) { $min = $_ }
. . if ($_ > $max) { $max = $_ }
. }
. return "$min $max" }
```

**210:** Subroutine dice.

```
sub dice {
. my ($x, $y);
. $x = int (rand(6)) + 1;
. $y = int (rand(6)) + 1;
. return "$x $y" }
```

**212:** Lucky, Unlucky, Normal.

```
sub numType {
. my $num;
. ($num) = @_;
. if ($num % 7 == 0 && $num % 13 != 0) { return "lucky" }
. if ($num % 7 != 0 && $num % 13 == 0) { return "unlucky" }
. return "normal" }
```

**216:** subroutine yesno.

```
sub yesno {
. my ($q, $ans);
. ($q) = @_;
. for (;;) {
. . print "$q: ";
```

```

. . chomp ($ans = <STDIN>);
. . if ($ans eq "yes") { return $ans }
. . if ($ans eq "no") { return $ans }
. . print "Please answer yes or no.\n" } }

```

**217:** Subroutine Rock.

```

sub Rock {
. my $choice;
. for (;;) {
. . print "Please pick Rock, Paper, or Scissors.\n";
. . chomp ($choice = <STDIN>);
. . if ($choice eq "Rock") { return $choice }
. . if ($choice eq "Paper") { return $choice }
. . if ($choice eq "Scissors") { return $choice }
. } # end of for loop
} # end of subroutine

```

**218:** The Food Story.

```

sub ask {
. my ($res, $q);
. ($q) = @_;
. print "Please enter $q: ";
. chomp ($res = <STDIN>);
. return $res }
$person = ask ("the name of a boy");
$color = ask ("a color");
$number = ask ("a number");
$food = ask ("a food");
$day = ask ("a day of the week");
print "A story for you:

```

\$person has a Surprising Day

On \$day morning, \$person woke up.  
He was hungry. He decided to eat \$food.  
He was so hungry he probably ate \$number of them.  
Afterward he was feeling a little \$color.  
His mom gave him some medicine and he felt better.

";

**Unit IX: Hashes**

**Unit IX, Chapter 50: Hashes**

**Unit IX, Chapter 51: Games and Projects (Hashes)**

**Unit X: Persistence: Database**

**Unit X, Chapter 52: State: Persistent Data**

**Unit X, Chapter 53: HTTP Cookies**

**Unit X, Chapter 54: Database**

**Unit XI: HTML Tips and Tricks**

**Unit XI, Chapter 55: Web Design and Development**

**Unit XI, Chapter 56: HTML Tips and Tricks**

**Unit XII: Web Inputs**

**Unit XII, Chapter 57: Web Form Data**

**Unit XII, Chapter 58: Fragile versus Robust**

**Unit XII, Chapter 59: Hidden Fields**

**Unit XII, Chapter 60: Forms: Web-based Input**

**Unit XII, Chapter 61: Regular Expressions**

**Unit XII, Chapter 62: JavaScript**

**Unit XII, Chapter 63: Games and Projects**

**Unit XIII: Complex Programs**

**Unit XIII, Chapter 64: Complex Programs**



**Unit XIII, Chapter 65: Nested Loops****Unit XIII, Chapter 66: Games and Projects (Loops)****Unit XIII, Chapter 67: Random Numbers****Unit XIII, Chapter 68: Unit Test: Complex**

**223:** Factor Counter.

```
for ($n = 1; $n <= 100; $n++) {
 . $ct = 0; for ($f = 1; $f <= $n; $f++) {
 . . if ($n % $f == 0) { $ct++ }
 . print "$n $ct," } }
}
```

**224:** Triangle Up.

```
$row = 1;
while ($row <= 9) {
 . $col = 1;
 . while ($col <= $row) {
 . . print $col; $col = $col + 1; }
 . print "\n";
 . $row = $row + 1; }
}
```

**225:** Triangle Down.

```
for ($row = 9; $row >= 0; $row--) {
 . for ($col = $row; $col >= 0; $col--) {
 . . print $col }
 . print "\n" }
}
```

**226:** Times Tables.

```
print "table max: "; $max = <STDIN>;
for ($row = 1; $row <= $max; $row++) {
 . for ($col = 1; $col <= $max; $col++) {
 . print "$row $col ";
 }
 . print "\n";
}
```

```
. . printf ". print "\n" }
```

## **Unit XIV: Publishing**

### **Unit XIV, Chapter 69: Web Hosting**

### **Unit XIV, Chapter 70: Backups**

### **Unit XIV, Chapter 71: HTML**

### **Unit XIV, Chapter 72: Extracting CGI Inputs**

## **Unit XV: Projects**

### **Unit XV, Chapter 73: Projects**

### **Unit XV, Chapter 74: Hangman Project**

### **Unit XV, Chapter 75: Hotter, Colder**

**Unit XVI: Appendices**

**Unit XVI, Chapter A: Answers to Selected Exercises**

## Appendix B

# Text Editor Recommendations

### Contents

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|                                                |            |
|------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>B.1 All Around</b> . . . . .                | <b>427</b> |
| <b>B.2 Microsoft Windows</b> . . . . .         | <b>428</b> |
| <b>B.3 Just Use A Word Processor</b> . . . . . | <b>428</b> |
| <b>B.4 What Do I Use?</b> . . . . .            | <b>428</b> |

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For several of the classes I teach, you need to create text files. This includes programming files, HTML files, CSS files, and configuration files.

To edit such files, we expect you to use a text editor, not a WYSIWYG editor.

Text editors are different from word processors. Word processors are designed to make documents. Text editors only edit text. They do not handle margins and fonts and bold and italic and underline.

Text editors just handle simple characters. But they also do very helpful things like syntax highlighting and checking.

### B.1 All Around

Komodo Edit has been strongly recommended to me, and from my readings it is well regarded by many people. Komodo Edit is free and Open-Source

software.

Komodo has a huge advantage in platform freedom compared to other editors I have used. You can use it on Microsoft Windows, on Apple OS X, and on Linux.

<http://komodoide.com/komodo-edit/> is the official place to download the latest version of Komodo Edit.

I don't have a lot of experience with Komodo yet.

## B.2 Microsoft Windows

If you are using a Microsoft Windows operating system, another good alternative is the text editor named **Notepad++** which you can find free on the Internet. I have recommended it in the past.

<http://notepad-plus-plus.org/> is the homepage for Notepad Plus Plus. It is free. It runs on Microsoft Windows.

## B.3 Just Use A Word Processor

You can actually use a word processor, but if you do, be careful to save your work as plain text. Something like Libre Office (Open Office) should work fine. It's not as bad as I make it sound.

<http://www.libreoffice.org/> is the homepage for Libre Office.

## B.4 What Do I Use?

For many years I have used EMACS, and it is still my go-to editor. It works well for the kinds of things that I do, and I have memorized many of the keyboard shortcuts (cursor movement, search, cut and paste, etc.). I see no reason to change. But if I were starting over, I would definitely consider other choices.

# Appendix C

## Formatted Printing: printf

### Contents

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|                                       |            |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>C.1 Background</b>                 | <b>430</b> |
| <b>C.2 Simple Printing</b>            | <b>430</b> |
| C.2.1 Naturally Special Characters    | 430        |
| C.2.2 Alternately Special Characters  | 431        |
| <b>C.3 Format Specifications</b>      | <b>432</b> |
| C.3.1 The Argument List               | 432        |
| C.3.2 Percent                         | 433        |
| C.3.3 The Width Option                | 433        |
| C.3.4 Filling the Extra Space         | 434        |
| C.3.5 The Justify Option              | 435        |
| C.3.6 The Zero-Fill Option            | 435        |
| C.3.7 Fun With Plus Signs             | 436        |
| C.3.8 The Invisible Plus Sign         | 436        |
| C.3.9 Plus, Space, and Zero           | 437        |
| C.3.10 Summary                        | 438        |
| <b>C.4 Printing Strings</b>           | <b>438</b> |
| <b>C.5 Floating Point</b>             | <b>439</b> |
| <b>C.6 Designing the Perfect Spec</b> | <b>440</b> |
| <b>C.7 Printing to a Variable</b>     | <b>441</b> |
| <b>C.8 Conclusion</b>                 | <b>441</b> |

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**printf** is the C language function to do **formatted printing**. The same function is also available in PERL. This appendix teaches how to use **printf**, and how to design the proper formatting specification for any occasion.

## C.1 Background

In the early days, computer programmers would write their own subroutines to read in and print out numbers. It is not terribly difficult, actually. Just allocate a character array to hold the result, divide the number by ten, keep the remainder, add 0x30 (hex 30) to it, and store it at the end of the array. Repeat the process until all the digits are found. Then print it. Too easy, right?

But even though it was easy (for Einstein), it still took some effort. And what about error checking, and negative numbers? So the computer programmers brought forth libraries of prerecorded functions. And it was good. Eventually the most popular of these functions were canonized into membership in the “standard” libraries. Number printing was popular enough to gain this hallowed honor.

This meant that programmers did not have to reinvent the number-printing subroutine again and again. It also meant that everybody’s favorite options tried to make it into the standard.

Thus was **printf** born.

## C.2 Simple Printing

In the most simple case, **printf** takes one argument: a string of characters to be printed. This string is composed of characters, each of which is printed exactly as it appears. So `printf("xyz");` would simply print an x, then a y, and finally a z. This is not exactly “formatted” printing, but it is still the basis of what **printf** does.

### C.2.1 Naturally Special Characters

To identify the start of the string, we put a double-quote (") at the front. To identify the end of the string we put another double-quote at the end.

But what if we want to actually print a double-quote? We can't exactly put a double-quote in the middle of the string because it would be mistaken for the end-of-string marker. Double-quote is a special character. The normal print-what-you-see rules do not apply.

Different languages take different approaches to this problem. Some require the special character to be entered twice. Perl uses backslash (virgule, `\`) as an escape character to change the meaning of the next character after it. Thus, to print a double-quote you type in backslash double-quote. To print a backslash, you must escape it by typing another backslash in front of it. The first backslash means "give the next character its alternate meaning." The second backslash has an alternate meaning of "print a backslash."

Without a backslash, special characters have a naturally special meaning. With a backslash they print as they appear. Here is a partial list.

|                 |                                   |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| <code>\</code>  | escape the next character         |
| <code>\\</code> | print a backslash                 |
| <code>"</code>  | start or end of string            |
| <code>\"</code> | print a double quote              |
| <code>'</code>  | start or end a character constant |
| <code>\'</code> | print a single quote              |
| <code>%</code>  | start a format specification      |
| <code>\%</code> | print a percent sign              |

### C.2.2 Alternately Special Characters

On the other hand we have characters that normally print as you would expect, but when you add a backslash, then they become special. An example is the newline character. To print an `n`, we simply type in an `n`. To print a newline, we type in a `\n`, thus invoking the alternate meaning of `n`, which is newline. Here is a partial list.

|                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| <code>\a</code> | audible alert (bell) |
| <code>\b</code> | backspace            |
| <code>\f</code> | form feed            |
| <code>\n</code> | newline (linefeed)   |
| <code>\r</code> | carriage return      |
| <code>\t</code> | tab                  |
| <code>\v</code> | vertical tab         |



### C.3 Format Specifications

The real power of **printf** is when we are printing the contents of variables. Let's take the format specifier `%d` for example. This prints a number. So, a number must be provided for printing. This is done by adding another argument to the **printf** statement, as shown here.

```
$age = 25;
printf ("I am %d years old\n", $age);
```

In this example, **printf** has two arguments. The first is a string: `"I am %d years old\n"`. The second is an integer, `$age`.

Because Perl has “interpolation” we normally would just do this:

```
$age = 25;
print "I am $age years old\n";
```

Interpolation is “simply printing numbers” without any special formatting. Simply printing numbers is not always enough. Shortly we will go beyond simple and show the power of `printf`.

#### C.3.1 The Argument List

When **printf** processes its arguments, it starts printing the characters it finds in the first argument, one by one. When it finds a percent it knows it has a format specification. It goes to the next argument and uses its value, printing it according to that format specification. It then returns to printing a character at a time (from the first argument).

It is okay to include more than one format specification in the **printf** string. In that case, the first format specification goes with the first additional argument, second goes with second, and so forth. Here is an example:

```
$x = 5;
$y = 10;
printf ("x is %d and y is %d\n", $x, $y);
```

### C.3.2 Percent

Every format specification starts with a percent sign and ends with a letter. The letters are chosen to have some mnemonic meaning (in English). Here is a partial list:

|                 |                                                     |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <code>%c</code> | print a single <b>character</b>                     |
| <code>%d</code> | print a <b>decimal</b> (base 10) number             |
| <code>%e</code> | print an <b>exponential</b> floating-point number   |
| <code>%f</code> | print a <b>floating-point</b> number                |
| <code>%g</code> | print a <b>general-format</b> floating-point number |
| <code>%i</code> | print an <b>integer</b> in base 10                  |
| <code>%o</code> | print a number in <b>octal</b> (base 8)             |
| <code>%s</code> | print a <b>string</b> of characters                 |
| <code>%u</code> | print an <b>unsigned</b> decimal (base 10) number   |
| <code>%x</code> | print a number in <b>hexidecimal</b> (base 16)      |
| <code>%%</code> | print a percent sign ( <code>\%</code> also works)  |

To print a number in the simple way, the format specifier is simply `%d`. Here are some sample cases and results.

| <code>printf</code>              | produces    |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| <code>("%d", 0)</code>           | 0           |
| <code>("%d", -7)</code>          | -7          |
| <code>("%d", 1560133635)</code>  | 1560133635  |
| <code>("%d", -2035065302)</code> | -2035065302 |

Notice that in the simple, `%d` way, there is no pre-determined size for the result. `printf` simply takes as much space as it needs.

### C.3.3 The Width Option

As I mentioned above, simply printing numbers was not enough. There were special options that were desired. The most important was probably the width option. By saying `%5d` the number was guaranteed to take up five spaces (more if necessary, never less). This was very useful in printing tables because small and large numbers both took the same amount of space. Nearly all printing was monospaced in those days, which means that a `w` and

an `i` both took the same amount of space. This is still common in text editors used by programmers.

To print a number with a certain (minimum) width, say 5 spaces wide, the format specifier is `%5d`. Here are some sample cases and results. (We will use the `□` symbol to explicitly indicate a space.)

| <code>printf</code>               | produces    |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| <code>("%5d", 0)</code>           | □□□□0       |
| <code>("%5d", -7)</code>          | □□□-7       |
| <code>("%5d", 1560133635)</code>  | 1560133635  |
| <code>("%5d", -2035065302)</code> | -2035065302 |

Notice that for shorter numbers, the result is padded out with leading spaces. For excessively long numbers there is no padding, and the full number is printed.

In normal usage, one would make the field wide enough for the biggest number one would ever expect. If your numbers are usually one, two, or three digits long, then `%3d` is probably adequate. In abnormal usage, one could end up printing a number that is too big for the field. **printf** makes the decision to print such numbers fully, even though they take too much space. This is because it is better to print the right answer and look ugly than to print the wrong answer and look pretty.

### C.3.4 Filling the Extra Space

When printing a small number like 27 in a `%5d` field, the question then became where to put the 27 and what to put in the other three slots. It could be printed in the first two spaces, the last two spaces, or maybe the middle two spaces (if that can be determined). The empty spaces could be filled with the blank character, or perhaps stars (`***27` or `27***` or `**27*`), or dollar signs (`$$$27`), or equal signs (`===27`), or leading zeros (like `00027`).

These extra characters are often called “check protection” characters because they are intended to prevent bad guys from changing the dollar amount on a printed check. It is relatively easy to change a space into something else. It is harder to change a star, a dollar sign, or an equal sign.

**printf** provides space fill (left or right) and zero fill (left only). If you want check protection or centering you need to make other arrangements. But

even without check protection or centering **printf** still has an impressive (and bewildering) collection of options.

### C.3.5 The Justify Option

Using **printf** numbers can be left-justified (printed in the left side of the field) or right-justified (printed in the right side of the field). The most natural way to print numbers seems to be right-justified with leading spaces. That is what `%5d` means: print a base-10 number in a field of width 5, with the number right-aligned and front-filled with spaces.

To make the number left-aligned, a minus sign is added to the format specifier. To print a number 5 spaces wide and left-justified (left-aligned) the format specifier is `%-5d`. Here are some sample cases and results.

| <code>printf</code>                | produces       |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| <code>("%-5d", 0)</code>           | 0 <u>    </u>  |
| <code>("%-5d", -7)</code>          | -7 <u>    </u> |
| <code>("%-5d", 1560133635)</code>  | 1560133635     |
| <code>("%-5d", -2035065302)</code> | -2035065302    |

As before, for shorter numbers, the result is padded out with spaces. For longer numbers there is no padding, and the number is not shortened.

### C.3.6 The Zero-Fill Option

To make things line up nice and pretty, it is common to write a date using leading zeros. We can write May 5, 2003 in the US as 05/05/2003. We could also write it as 2003.05.05. Notice that in both cases, the leading zeros do not change the meaning. They just make it line up nicely in lists.

When a number is zero-filled, the zeros always go in front, and the resulting number is both left- and right-justified. In this case the minus sign has no effect. To print a zero-filled number 5 spaces wide the format specifier is `%05d`. Here are some sample cases and results.

| printf               | produces    |
|----------------------|-------------|
| ("%05d",0)           | 00000       |
| ("%05d",-7)          | -0007       |
| ("%05d",1560133635)  | 1560133635  |
| ("%05d",-2035065302) | -2035065302 |

Shorter numbers are padded out with leading zeros. Longer numbers are unchanged.

### C.3.7 Fun With Plus Signs

Negative numbers always print with a minus sign. Positive numbers and zero usually do not print with a sign, but you can request one. A plus (+) in the format specifier makes that request.

To print a signed number 5 spaces wide the format specifier is `%+5d`. Here are some sample cases and results.

| printf               | produces    |
|----------------------|-------------|
| ("%+5d",0)           | 000+0       |
| ("%+5d",-7)          | 000-7       |
| ("%+5d",1560133635)  | +1560133635 |
| ("%+5d",-2035065302) | -2035065302 |

Notice that zero is treated as a positive number. Shorter numbers are padded. Longer numbers are unchanged.

Plus and minus are not related. Both can appear in a format specifier.

### C.3.8 The Invisible Plus Sign

This one is a little bizarre. It is an invisible plus sign. Instead of printing a plus on positive numbers (and zero), we print a space where the sign would go. This can be useful in printing left-justified numbers where you want the minus signs to really stand out. Notice these two alternatives.

| printf                | produces    |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| ("%+-5d",0)           | +0  000     |
| ("%+-5d",-7)          | -7  000     |
| ("%+-5d",1560133635)  | +1560133635 |
| ("%+-5d",-2035065302) | -2035065302 |

| printf                | produces    |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| ("%-5d", 0)           | 0           |
| ("%-5d", -7)          | -7          |
| ("%-5d", 1560133635)  | 1560133635  |
| ("%-5d", -2035065302) | -2035065302 |

Remember from above that the format specifier `%-5d` we get the following results (shown again for easier comparison).

| printf                | produces    |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| ("%-5d", 0)           | 0           |
| ("%-5d", -7)          | -7          |
| ("%-5d", 1560133635)  | 1560133635  |
| ("%-5d", -2035065302) | -2035065302 |

Notice that the plus signs disappear, but the sign still takes up space at the front of the number.

Notice also that we can combine several options in the same format specifier. In this case, we have combined the options plus, minus, and five, or space, minus, and five, or just minus and five.

### C.3.9 Plus, Space, and Zero

Here is another example of combining several options at the same time.

Using the format specifier `%_05d` or `%0_5d` we get the following results.

| printf                 | produces    |
|------------------------|-------------|
| ("%_05d", 0)           | 0000        |
| ("%_05d", -7)          | -0007       |
| ("%_05d", 1560133635)  | 1560133635  |
| ("%_05d", -2035065302) | -2035065302 |

Using the format specifier `%+05d` or `%0+5d` we get the following results.

| printf                 | produces    |
|------------------------|-------------|
| ("%+05d", 0)           | +0000       |
| ("%+05d", -7)          | -0007       |
| ("%+05d", 1560133635)  | +1560133635 |
| ("%+05d", -2035065302) | -2035065302 |

When we combine plus and space at the same time, the space arranges for room for a sign and the plus uses it. It is the same as if the space was not even specified. The plus takes priority over the space.

### C.3.10 Summary

The options are also called “flags” and among themselves they can appear in any order. Here is a partial list.

| flag | effect                                     |
|------|--------------------------------------------|
| none | print normally (right justify, space fill) |
| -    | left justify                               |
| 0    | leading zero fill                          |
| +    | print plus on positive numbers             |
| ␣    | invisible plus sign                        |

After the options, if any, the minimum field width can be specified. Also, you can specify the maximum field width for a string. (You cannot do that for a number.)

## C.4 Printing Strings

The %s option allows us to print a string inside a string. Here is an example.

```
if ($year == 11) { $grade = "junior" }
printf ("%s is a %s\n", "Fred", $grade);
```

The left-justify flag applies to strings, but of course the zero fill, plus sign, and invisible plus sign are meaningless.

| printf               | produces |
|----------------------|----------|
| ( "%5s", "" )        | ␣␣␣␣␣    |
| ( "%5s", "a" )       | ␣␣␣␣a    |
| ( "%5s", "ab" )      | ␣␣␣ab    |
| ( "%5s", "abcdefg" ) | abcdefg  |

| printf              | produces |
|---------------------|----------|
| ("%-5s", "")        | _____    |
| ("%-5s", "a")       | a_____   |
| ("%-5s", "ab")      | ab_____  |
| ("%-5s", "abcdefg") | abcdefg  |

Here is an example of specifying the maximum field width for a string. If the string is too big, the end is cut off (truncated).

| printf               | produces |
|----------------------|----------|
| ("%5.5s", "abcdefg") | abcde    |

## C.5 Floating Point

Floating point numbers are those like 3.1415, which have a decimal point someplace inside. This is in contrast to ordinary integers like 27, which have no decimal point.

All the same flags and rules apply for floating point numbers as do for integers, but we have a few new options. The most important is a way to specify how many digits appear after the decimal point. This number is called the **precision** of the number.

For ordinary commerce, prices are often mentioned as whole dollars or as dollars and cents (zero or two digits of precision). For gasoline, prices are mentioned as dollars, cents, and tenths of a cent (three digits of precision). Here are some examples of how to print these kinds of numbers. Let `e=2.718281828`.

| printf       | produces  |
|--------------|-----------|
| ("%.0f", e)  | 3         |
| ("%.0f.", e) | 3.        |
| ("%.1f", e)  | 2.7       |
| ("%.2f", e)  | 2.72      |
| ("%.6f", e)  | 2.718282  |
| ("%f", e)    | 2.718282  |
| ("%.7f", e)  | 2.7182818 |

Notice that if a dot and a number are specified, the number (the precision) indicates how many places should be shown after the decimal point.



Notice that if no dot and precision are specified for `%f`, the default is `%.6f` (six digits after the decimal point).

Notice that if a precision of zero is specified, the decimal point also disappears. If you want it back, you must list it separately (after the `%f` format specifier).

We can specify both a width and a precision at the same time. Notice especially that `5.2` means a total width of five, with two digits after the decimal. **It is very common and natural to think it means five digits in front of the decimal and two digits after, but that is not correct.** Be careful.

| printf                     | produces               |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| <code>("%5.0f", e)</code>  | <code>    3</code>     |
| <code>("%5.0f.", e)</code> | <code>    3.</code>    |
| <code>("%5.1f", e)</code>  | <code>   2.7</code>    |
| <code>("%5.2f", e)</code>  | <code>  2.72</code>    |
| <code>("%5.7f", e)</code>  | <code>2.7182818</code> |

We can also combine precision with the flags we learned before, to specify left justification, leading zeros, plus signs, etc.

| printf                      | produces            |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| <code>("%5.1f", e)</code>   | <code>  2.7</code>  |
| <code>("%-5.1f", e)</code>  | <code>2.7  </code>  |
| <code>("%+5.1f", e)</code>  | <code> +2.7</code>  |
| <code>("%+-5.1f", e)</code> | <code>+2.7  </code> |
| <code>("%05.1f", e)</code>  | <code>002.7</code>  |
| <code>("%+05.1f", e)</code> | <code>+02.7</code>  |
| <code>("%_05.1f", e)</code> | <code>_02.7</code>  |
| <code>("%-_5.1f", e)</code> | <code>_2.7  </code> |

## C.6 Designing the Perfect Spec

If you are designing a **printf** format specifier, the first step is to decide what kind of a thing you are printing. If it is an integer, a float, a string, or a character, you will make different choices about which basic format to use.

The second big question is how wide your field should be. Usually this will be the size of the biggest number you ever expect to print under normal

circumstances. Sometimes this is controlled by the amount of space that is provided on a pre-printed form (such as a check or an invoice).

Decide what you would like printed under a variety of circumstances. In this appendix we have often illustrated the results by using a small positive number, a small negative number, an oversized positive number, and an oversized negative number. You should include these options as well as large (but not oversized) numbers. Design your format for the biggest number that you would normally expect to see.

## C.7 Printing to a Variable

Sometimes we do not want to immediately print the information we are formatting. Sometimes we may want to capture it in a variable instead. `sprintf` fills that need.

`sprintf` formats things the same way that `printf` does, but instead of “printing” them it “returns” them. Catch the result in a normal, scalar variable.

```
printf (...); # print directly
$result = sprintf (...); # save, don't print
print $result; # print later
```

## C.8 Conclusion

The `printf` function is a powerful device for printing numbers and other things stored in variables. With this power there is a certain amount of complexity. Taken all at once, the complexity makes `printf` seem almost impossible to understand. But the complexity can be easily unfolded into simple features, including width, precision, signage, justification, and fill. By recognizing and understanding these features, `printf` will become a useful and friendly servant in your printing endeavors.

# Appendix D

## File I/O

### Contents

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|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| <a href="#">D.1 Redirection</a>       | 442 |
| <a href="#">D.2 Explicit Reading</a>  | 443 |
| <a href="#">D.3 Explicit Writing</a>  | 444 |
| <a href="#">D.4 Close is Optional</a> | 445 |
| <a href="#">D.5 Multiple Files</a>    | 445 |

---

Up to this point we have talked about receiving our inputs from the keyboard and writing our outputs to the screen.

Computer programming takes a more general view of input and output. Specifically, you can prepare your inputs in advance and store them in a file. Similarly, you can create outputs and write them to a file.

More information is available by searching the web. Here we present just a minimal walk-through of the possibilities.

### D.1 Redirection

Working from the command line we can generally reassign the inputs and outputs by using the > and < symbols. Here is an example using our Hello program.

```
print "Hello, World!\n";
```

First we run the program directly from the command line by typing `./Hello`. The output appears immediately.

```
./Hello
Hello, World!
```

Next we run the program directly from the command line while redirecting output.

```
./Hello > asdf
```

Notice that the output does not appear as before. Instead a file `asdf` is created and has as its contents the string `Hello, World!` that we saw before. `cat` is the command for typing out the contents of a file. (The word `cat` is short for concatenate.)

```
cat < asdf
Hello, World!
```

We can use `cat` to show us our program as well.

```
cat < Hello
print "Hello, World!\n";
```

While redirection is going on, our program does not need to do anything special to use files. The special things are all being handled outside of our program. In fact, it is difficult (but not impossible) to even find out that input and/or output has been redirected.

## D.2 Explicit Reading

It is also possible to explicitly open a file for reading at the same time that normal input comes from the keyboard.

You will remember that normal input comes from `<STDIN>`, or “standard input.” We can open another “channel” with a different name and get input from a file.

```
open IN, "asdf";
chomp ($line = <IN>);
close IN;
```

We can read repeatedly to bring in more than one line of data.

```
open IN, "asdf";
while ($line = <IN>) { print "$line" }
close IN;
```

The word `asdf` is a file name. It could be any name allowed by the operating system.

The word `IN` is called a file handle. By convention, file handles are written in CAPITAL letters, but that is not required. In fact, the word `IN` is not special in any way. We could have called it `FILE1` or something else.

### D.3 Explicit Writing

```
open FILE2, ">asdf2";
for ($i = 0; $i < 100; $i++) { print FILE2 "$i\n" }
close FILE2;
```

You can use `cat` to check the contents of `asdf2` to see that it contains the numbers from zero to 99.

The word `asdf2` is the name of the file being written. The `>` sign in front of the file name is Perl's way of saying that we are writing to the file instead of reading it. Perl uses the same symbol that is used on the command line for redirecting output.

The word `FILE2` is not special in any way. We could have called it `MY_OUTPUT` or something else.

Normally when you write to a file any prior contents are erased. It is possible to open a file in "append" mode, so that that new contents are added to the end of the existing file. This could be useful if the file is a log file, for example, used for making note of things that have happened. Instead of using one `>` symbol when opening the file, we use two of them. This also works on the command line.

```
open FILE2, ">>asdf2"; # append
```

## D.4 Close is Optional

Each file you open uses a certain amount of your computer's resources while the file is open. Normally when you are done with the file handle, you should close it to release the resources.

When your program ends its execution, resources that were in use are automatically released. Therefore, if you forget to close the file, it will be closed for you by the operating system when your program ends.

If your program crashes, however, the operating system may not have the chance to properly and methodically close your file. In a case like that, some of the output you sent may not actually be recorded.

Even though closing the file is somewhat optional, it is a good habit to make sure you do it at the right time.

## D.5 Multiple Files

It is possible to open several files for reading and several other files for writing. Naturally each one should have its own unique name.

# Appendix E

## Patterns

### Contents

---

|                     |                                       |     |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-----|
| <a href="#">E.1</a> | <a href="#">The Difference Method</a> | 446 |
| <a href="#">E.2</a> | <a href="#">Constant</a>              | 447 |
| <a href="#">E.3</a> | <a href="#">Odd</a>                   | 447 |
| <a href="#">E.4</a> | <a href="#">Squares</a>               | 448 |
| <a href="#">E.5</a> | <a href="#">Fibonacci</a>             | 448 |
| <a href="#">E.6</a> | <a href="#">Triangles</a>             | 449 |

---

In chapter [15](#) (page [105](#)) we talked about inventing formulas to explain things to the computer.

In chapter [32](#) (page [179](#)) we talked about “1, 2, 3, ..., 100”. The three dots mean: (a) there is a pattern, and (b) it should be obvious.

In this chapter we look at a few patterns and try to explicitly say what the pattern is. We look at one specific strategy for finding the pattern.

### E.1 The Difference Method

The best way to predict the future is to say it will be the same as the past has been. Usually you will be right. Tomorrow’s weather will be like it was today, usually. Or, “it is crazy to do the same thing as before but to expect different results.”

By definition, a pattern repeats. Generally it repeats with some small variation from one time to the next.

In analyzing to find a pattern, the first goal is to get an idea of what exactly is repeating. We use this information to account for how things are. Then we move forward to see what remains to be explained.

## E.2 Constant

1, 1, 1, 1, ...

Pretty consistent. This is just a bunch of ones dropping off the assembly line. Nothing is changing. Constant. What comes next? Another 1? Boring.

## E.3 Odd

1, 3, 5, 7, ...

Slightly more interesting. These are the odd numbers. Let's focus on what is the same and what is different, number to number.

The same: each thing is a number. Each thing is a whole number (integer). Each thing is a positive number. The numbers are getting bigger.

Different: the numbers are different.

Let's try to see how different they are. Using the "today's weather" theory, can we predict the next number if we know the current number?

From 1, the next number is 3. The difference is 2.

From 3, the next number is 5. The difference is 2.

From 5, the next number is 7. The difference is 2.

2, 2, 2, .... We found a pattern in the differences. This seems to account for everything. We can assume that the differences will continue to follow this pattern. Therefore,

From 7 the difference is 2 so the next number is 9.

From 9 the difference is 2 so the next number is 11.

More generally, from  $x$  the next number is  $x+2$ .



## E.4 Squares

1, 4, 9, 16, 25, ...

You may have recognized that these are the first five square numbers (one times one, two times two, ..., five times five). Pretend that it was not so obvious. Let's analyze it the way we did above.

Same: they are numbers. They are whole numbers. They are positive. They are increasing.

Let's look at the differences.

From 1 the next number is 4. The difference is 3.

From 4 the next number is 9. The difference is 5.

From 9 the next number is 16. The difference is 7.

From 16 the next number is 25. The difference is 9.

The differences seem to have a consistent pattern:

3, 5, 7, 9, ...

In fact, it is the pattern we saw earlier. And we can predict the future. The next difference should be 11.

From 25, the difference is 11, so the next number is 36.

From 36, the difference is 13, so the next number is 49.

## E.5 Fibonacci

1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, ...

This is the Fibonacci sequence (pronounced fib oh NOT chee), credited to a famous Italian guy named Leonardo Pisano Bigollo (1180-1250). Apparently his father was named Bonacci, and fibonacci means son of Bonacci. See Wikipedia if you want to know more.

Analysis: they are numbers. They are whole numbers. They are positive. They are increasing.

Differences: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5.

Does it look familiar? The set of differences is basically just the same sequence as before.

Can we predict the future? Next after 13 should be  $13+8$ .

People actually use this sequence in playing the stock market and in gambling. See Wikipedia.

## E.6 Triangles

Let's count the stars in a triangle.

```

 * row 1
 * * row 2
 * * * row 3
 * * * * row 4
* * * * * row 5

```

The first row forms a really small triangle. It has one star.

The first two rows form a triangle. It has three stars.

The first three rows form a triangle. It has six stars.

The first four rows form a triangle. It has ten stars.

The first five rows form a triangle. It has fifteen stars.

1, 3, 6, 10, 15, ...

Can we tell how many stars will be in a 100-row triangle? Would you like to count it by hand? Gauss had a famous solution. (Johann Carl Friedrich Gauss, 1777-1855. See Wikipedia.)

Let's do the analysis. It is obvious from the description of the problem that each triangle is larger than the last, and that the difference is just one more than the last difference.

Let's take the differences.

3-1=2, 6-3=3, 10-6=4, 15-10=5, ...  
2, 3, 4, 5, ...

What happened to 1? We have 2, 3, 4, 5, ..., which is an obvious pattern, but it does seem like there should have been a 1 on the front.

If we start with a zero-row triangle we can complete the series.

```
1-0=1, 3-1=2, 6-3=3, 10-6=4, 15-10=5, ...
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ...
```

A 100-row triangle would be 100 stars bigger than a 99-row triangle. We can write it like this:

```
triangle(100) = triangle(99) + 100
```

We can generalize. Instead of being specific to the number 100, we can try to state the relationship no matter what the number is.

```
triangle(n) = triangle(n-1) + n
```

This is called a **recursive** definition. **Recursion** is defining something that is large in terms of the same sort of thing when it was smaller. We use recursive definitions all the time. Here is an example.

```
Like father, like son.
```

Here is a program to calculate the number of stars in a 100-row triangle.

```
$total = 0;
for ($row = 1; $row <= 100; $row++) {
 $total += $row }
print $total;
```

This is an iterative solution. Iterative means that we are using a loop. Each time we pass through the loop we are updating `$total` which holds our running total. When we have processed 100 rows we should have our answer.

How can we be sure it is working? Let's print out the intervening answers? This should give us the answers from one to 1000.

```
$total = 0;
for ($row = 1; $row <= 1000; $row++) {
 $total += $row;
 print "The $row-row triangle has $total stars.\n" }
```

We can verify that the first few answers are correct. Then, based on that we can guess that the rest are correct. (Well begun is half done.)

## Appendix F

# The True Meaning of Solution

### Contents

---

|                                               |            |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>F.1 Boys, Girls, and Dogs</b> . . . . .    | <b>453</b> |
| <b>F.2 Complexity</b> . . . . .               | <b>454</b> |
| <b>F.3 Statements are Sentences</b> . . . . . | <b>454</b> |

---

Does this problem have a solution? The words **solve** and **solution** have roots that mean “to loosen” or dissolve. Buried in this word is the concept that a problem can be broken or disassembled into smaller parts, each of which will be easier to answer separately.

Another interesting word is **tractable** whose opposite is **intractable**. Tract comes from trahere, which means to draw or pull. To draw a piece of artwork is to pull a pencil or brush. A tractor pulls a plow or other piece of equipment on the farm.

A problem that is tractable can be pulled apart into simpler pieces. A problem that is intractable still may have an answer, but not a solution.

An answer but not a solution?

We are playing with definitions here. To solve as commonly used means to find an answer. Commonly any answer is called a solution. Commonly when something is intractable it has no answer. But literally there is a subtle difference that we will examine in this chapter.

The difference is whether we simplify or not.

## F.1 Boys, Girls, and Dogs

Time for a story. Consider this sentence: “The boy cried.”

Hopefully its meaning is pretty obvious. Some specific boy engaged in the act of crying. We may want to know more about this story, as boys do not normally cry.

More data: “The girl hit the boy.”

Now we may understand why the boy cried. I might cry too.

We can combine these two sentences. Combining makes things more complicated, but we do it all the time. Aside from making things more complex, it frequently offers some economy or reduction in the total cost of the item. That is, buying a car one part at a time is probably more expensive than buying a whole car all at once.

Consider this sentence: “The boy the girl hit cried.”

One sentence is **nested** in the middle of the other. We have combined the two previous sentences and decreased the total word count from eight to six. That’s a twenty-five percent improvement in economy. More miles per gallon. More meaning per word. The improvement came by using “the boy” only once instead of twice.

Is the sentence still comprehensible? Is it still clear? Most people would say that it is.

Enter the dog. “The dog bit the girl.” Ouch.

We could say, “The girl the dog bit hit the boy.” Complexity is rising but we can still pull it apart at full speed. The story is still clear. Let’s complete the story, a tragedy in one line.

“The boy the girl the dog bit hit cried.”

At this point, most people have suddenly exceeded their ability to take in this sentence at a run. The brain cannot take it. They grind to a halt and puzzle their way through it. Maybe they give up. Although it is perfectly good English, it is just a bit much to chew on. The words are **nested** three levels deep.

Much better to take this sentence apart, reduce the complexity, and tell the whole story using more words.

“The dog bit the girl.  
The girl hit the boy.  
The boy cried.”

Now that’s a version that we can take on the fly, chew it as it comes, and still be ready for more.

## F.2 Complexity

Like **tractable** and **solution** the word **complexity** is fun. Literally it means to be folded or braided together. The word “ply” is fold. The same root is plectere, meaning to plait or braid. It is found in **simplicity**, literally meaning “without braids or tangles.” It is found in “plywood” and “pliers” and “pliable.”

It is found in **implicit** and **explicit**. When something is implicit, the meaning is folded or braided in. Hidden, but still present. When something is explicit, the meaning is folded out for all to see.

## F.3 Statements are Sentences

Each statement in a program is like a sentence in a story. The semi-colon at the end of the line indicates the end of the statement. The period at the end of a line indicates the end of the sentence.

Sentences can be **nested** inside one another, sometimes several levels deep. Just like that, computer program statements can be nested inside each other, any number of levels deep. Usually this nesting happens in the middle of an **if** statement or a **while** loop. It is not always easy to simplify this complexity.

Fortunately for us, the computer will understand nested statements just fine.

Unfortunately for us, the programmers who maintain the program may get lost, just as in “the boy the girl the dog bit hit cried.”

# Appendix G

## Binary Numbers

### Contents

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|                                        |            |
|----------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>G.1 Bitwise Operators</b> . . . . . | <b>455</b> |
| <b>G.2 What is Binary?</b> . . . . .   | <b>456</b> |
| <b>G.3 Binary Shortcut</b> . . . . .   | <b>457</b> |
| <b>G.4 32 Bits</b> . . . . .           | <b>458</b> |
| <b>G.5 Binary Numbers</b> . . . . .    | <b>458</b> |
| G.5.1 Divide and Shift . . . . .       | 458        |
| G.5.2 Powers of Two . . . . .          | 460        |
| G.5.3 Numbers to Memorize . . . . .    | 462        |

---

Several number bases are common in the Information Technology field, including networking. Binary (base two) is the underlying model for most data communications. Octal (base eight) and hexadecimal (base 16, also called “hex”) are popular shorthands for presenting binary data. Decimal (base ten) is the number base we most commonly use. It is useful and occasionally important to be able to convert numbers from one base to another.

### G.1 Bitwise Operators

`and`, `&&`, `or`, `||`, and `xor` were discussed logical operators. They are also available in slightly different form as bitwise operators.

Logical treats the number as a whole as being either True or False. Bitwise treats each bit in the number individually as being True or False. This



is most often used in equipment control but also shows up in computer graphics, turning on and off pixels on the screen.

Bitwise operation views each number as a collection of binary bits. The number 5, for instance, would be seen as 101.

The bitwise operators  $\&$ ,  $|$ , and  $\wedge$  are used to calculate the and, or, and xor of the bits of binary numbers.

| expression | value |
|------------|-------|
| 5 & 9      | 1     |
| 5   9      | 13    |
| 5 ^ 9      | 12    |

Stating it in binary, it may be more obvious.

| expression  | value |
|-------------|-------|
| 0101 & 1001 | 0001  |
| 0101   1001 | 1101  |
| 0101 ^ 1001 | 1100  |

## G.2 What is Binary?

In base ten, the ordinary numbers we use are composed of the standard ten digits: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 0. The fact that there are ten different digits is what makes it base ten.

When we count in base 10, we use single-digit numbers up to 9. Then we use all the two-digit numbers: 10 to 19, 20 to 29, 30 to 39, ..., 90 to 99. For each first digit, we run through the entire set of second digits: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Notice that 0 to 9 is similar but not the same as 1 to 9, plus 0. Generally we count from 1, but from a strictly mathematical point of view, starting from 0 would make more sense.

After the two-digit numbers, we advance to three-digit numbers. 100 to 199, 200 to 299, ..., 900 to 999. The pattern is probably clear.

With binary numbers, we are limited to only two digits, zero and one. We count as follows: 1, 10, 11, 100, 101, 110, 111, 1000, 1001, 1010, 1011, and so on.

| power    | base 10 | base 2         |
|----------|---------|----------------|
| $2^0$    | 1       | 1              |
| $2^1$    | 2       | 10             |
| $2^2$    | 4       | 100            |
| $2^3$    | 8       | 1000           |
| $2^4$    | 16      | 1 0000         |
| $2^5$    | 32      | 10 0000        |
| $2^6$    | 64      | 100 0000       |
| $2^7$    | 128     | 1000 0000      |
| $2^8$    | 256     | 1 0000 0000    |
| $2^9$    | 512     | 10 0000 0000   |
| $2^{10}$ | 1024    | 100 0000 0000  |
| $2^{11}$ | 2048    | 1000 0000 0000 |

### G.3 Binary Shortcut

How do we know that  $2^{16}$  is about 64 thousand? To quickly answer such questions it is helpful to know two facts: (a) the powers of two up to 10, and (b) the fact that  $2^{10}=1024$  is almost one thousand.

| Exact Powers of Two |                 | Approximate            |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| $2^1 = 2$           | $2^6 = 64$      | $2^{10} =$ thousand    |
| $2^2 = 4$           | $2^7 = 128$     | $2^{20} =$ million     |
| $2^3 = 8$           | $2^8 = 256$     | $2^{30} =$ billion     |
| $2^4 = 16$          | $2^9 = 512$     | $2^{40} =$ trillion    |
| $2^5 = 32$          | $2^{10} = 1024$ | $2^{50} =$ quadrillion |

In the case of  $2^{16}$  we know that  $2^6$  is 64, so  $2^{16}=2^6 \times 2^{10}$  is about 64 thousand and  $2^{26}=2^6 \times 2^{10} \times 2^{10}$  is about 64 million.

Similarly,  $2^4$  is 16, so  $2^{14}$  is about 16 thousand and  $2^{24}$  is about 16 million.

## G.4 32 Bits

On the Internet, things are organized by bits. Take the following string of bits.

```
1011 1010 0100 1110 0101 0010 0000 0111
```

Generally we write IPv4 addresses in base 10. The first eight bits (1011 1010) are called the first octet. They translate to 186. The second eight bits (0100 1110) are called the second octet. They translate to 78. The third eight bits (0101 0010) are called the third octet. They translate to 82. The fourth eight bits (0000 0111) are called the fourth octet. They translate to 7. Generally we would write this address in “dotted-quad” notation, with each octet in base 10, like this.

```
186.78.82.7
```

## G.5 Binary Numbers

The binary number system uses only two digits: zero and one. Often instead of calling them digits, they are called bits, which is short for bi(nary digi)ts. With this restriction, instead of counting 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ... we count 1, 10, 11, 100, 101, .... It is a fully-functional numbering system, able to represent even numbers like  $\pi$  (3.1415) as 11.001 (with a bunch more digits). It takes about three times as many bits to express a number in binary as it does in base 10.

Data transmission on the Internet is generally thought of in terms of binary numbers because the underlying physical phenomena can be comfortably described in that way. Because the underlying nature is generally dealt with in binary, it is important for networking practitioners to also work in binary when appropriate.

### G.5.1 Divide and Shift

Divide and Shift is one easy method to convert a number from base 10 to binary. Divide it by two repeatedly. Each time you divide, take the remainder and add it to the front of the binary number you are constructing. Here for example we will convert 2005 (the year this tutorial was written).

Taking 2005, we divide by two to get 1002.5. But let's keep it to whole num-

bers. Dividing we get 1002 with a remainder of 1. We copy the remainder to the front of the binary number we are building.

|      |                |                     |
|------|----------------|---------------------|
| 2005 |                | our starting number |
| 1002 | 1              | divide and copy     |
| 501  | 01             | divide and copy     |
| 250  | 101            | continue            |
| 125  | 0101           | continue            |
| 62   | 1 0101         | continue            |
| 31   | 01 0101        | continue            |
| 15   | 101 0101       | continue            |
| 7    | 1101 0101      | continue            |
| 3    | 1 1101 0101    | continue            |
| 1    | 11 1101 0101   | continue            |
| 0    | 111 1101 0101  | continue            |
| 0    | 0111 1101 0101 | okay, stop          |

We could keep putting zeroes at the front, but there is no point.

2005 in base 10 becomes 111,1101,0101 in base 2.

To convert a number from base 2 to base 10, do the same thing in reverse. Double the base 10 number and add the first bit of the base 2 number. We will convert our second octet from above.

|    |           |                     |
|----|-----------|---------------------|
| 0  | 0100 1110 | our starting number |
| 0  | 100 1110  | double and add zero |
| 1  | 00 1110   | double and add one  |
| 2  | 0 1110    | double and add zero |
| 4  | 1110      | double and add zero |
| 9  | 110       | double and add one  |
| 19 | 10        | double and add one  |
| 39 | 0         | double and add one  |
| 78 |           | double and add zero |

0100,1110 in base 2 becomes 78 in base 10.

### G.5.2 Powers of Two

Powers of Two is another easy method to convert a number from base 10 to binary. We start with a table of powers of two. We subtract the largest power repeatedly. Then we add up the results. Again we will convert 2005.

|          |      |                |
|----------|------|----------------|
| $2^0$    | 1    | 1              |
| $2^1$    | 2    | 10             |
| $2^2$    | 4    | 100            |
| $2^3$    | 8    | 1000           |
| $2^4$    | 16   | 1 0000         |
| $2^5$    | 32   | 10 0000        |
| $2^6$    | 64   | 100 0000       |
| $2^7$    | 128  | 1000 0000      |
| $2^8$    | 256  | 1 0000 0000    |
| $2^9$    | 512  | 10 0000 0000   |
| $2^{10}$ | 1024 | 100 0000 0000  |
| $2^{11}$ | 2048 | 1000 0000 0000 |

|      |               |                      |
|------|---------------|----------------------|
| 2005 |               | our starting number  |
| 1024 | 100 0000 0000 | largest power of two |
| 981  |               | after we subtract    |
| 512  | 10 0000 0000  | largest power of two |
| 469  |               | after we subtract    |
| 256  | 1 0000 0000   | largest power of two |
| 213  |               | after we subtract    |
| 128  | 1000 0000     | largest power of two |
| 85   |               | after we subtract    |
| 64   | 100 0000      | largest power of two |
| 21   |               | after we subtract    |
| 16   | 1 0000        | largest power of two |
| 5    |               | after we subtract    |
| 4    | 100           | largest power of two |
| 1    |               | after we subtract    |
| 1    | 1             | largest power of two |
| 0    |               | done                 |
| 1024 | 100 0000 0000 |                      |
| 512  | 10 0000 0000  |                      |
| 256  | 1 0000 0000   |                      |
| 128  | 1000 0000     |                      |
| 64   | 100 0000      |                      |
| 16   | 1 0000        |                      |
| 4    | 100           |                      |
| 1    | 1             |                      |
| 2005 | 111 1101 0101 |                      |

Similarly we can add up the powers of two to get the answer in base 10.

|    |           |
|----|-----------|
| 78 | 0100 1110 |
| 2  | 10        |
| 4  | 100       |
| 8  | 1000      |
| 64 | 100 0000  |

$64 + 8 + 4 + 2 = 78$ , our answer.

Students should be able to convert numbers using either method, and should be confident with at least one method.

### G.5.3 Numbers to Memorize

To speed up calculations, it is helpful to memorize the sequence of powers of two, at least through 1024. When I say memorize the sequence, I don't mean that you remember that 64 is the sixth number, but rather that 64 comes after 32 and before 128. When we learn the alphabet, we often do not know that T is the 20th letter, but we know it is part of the sequence "Q R S T U V W."

It is also helpful to know the powers of two subtracted from 256, which are also the negative powers of two; a series of all ones followed by a series of all zeroes.

#### Negative Powers of Two

|     |           |         |
|-----|-----------|---------|
| 255 | 1111 1111 | 256-1   |
| 254 | 1111 1110 | 256-2   |
| 252 | 1111 1100 | 256-4   |
| 248 | 1111 1000 | 256-8   |
| 240 | 1111 0000 | 256-16  |
| 224 | 1110 0000 | 256-32  |
| 192 | 1100 0000 | 256-64  |
| 128 | 1000 0000 | 256-128 |

# Index

- operator, 191
- < (less than) operator, 122
- <= (less or equal) operator, 122
- <= operator, 193
- > (greater than) operator, 122
- >= (greater or equal) operator, 122
- >= operator, 193
- (.+), 312, 320
- (\d\*), 313
- \*= operator, 193
- ++ operator, 191
- += operator, 193
- = operator, 193
- ., 312
- . (concatenation) example, 56
- .\*, 312
- ., 312
- .= operator, 194
- ., 312
- /= operator, 193
- = (equals) operator, 21, 54
- ==, 311
- == (double equal) operator, 122
- == vs =, 122
- [+], 313
- % (remainder) operator, 159
- %= operator, 193
- &, 321
- \n, 40
- \+, 313
- \r, 40
- \d, 313
- \d\*, 313
- \$ (dollar) sign, 52
- && (and) operator, 140
- & (and) operator, 456
- ^ (xor) operator, 456
- || (or) operator, 141
- | (or) operator, 456
- 0A, 41
- 0D, 41
- 0D0A, 41
- 2 Nim, 197, 347
- 404 error, 29, 67
- 500 error, 68
- 99 bottles of ... on the wall, 196
  
- 0644, 68
- 0755, 14, 68
  
- action, 154
- ActionScript, 341, 342, 344
- addition, 89
- Adobe, 341
- Adventure, 266
- AJAX, 343
- alt, 73
- ambiguity, 161



- ambulance story, 45
- amp, 47
- ampersand, 47, 321
- and, 47, 140, 142
- and operator, 140, 456
- angle, 48
- angle bracket, 48
- API, 234
- Apple, 185
- application program interface, 234
- argument, 255
- arguments, 232, 251
- array, 206, 211, 232, 234, 261
- array, size of, 214
- arrays are lists, 206
- ASCII, 65, 134
- aspect ratio, 74
- assembler (language), 194
- assembly language, 194
- assert, 109
- assignment, 54, 102
- assignment bad example, 54
- assignment example, 20, 54, 165
- associative array, 260
- asterisk, 47
- at, 48
- at sign, 48
- attributes, 281
- authentication, 274
- autofocus, 85
  
- babies, 43
- backslash, 47
- bang, 48
- bar, 141
- bareword, 149, 150, 167
- Bigollo, Leonardo Pisano, 448
- binary, 190, 191
- biometrics, 274
- bitwise and, 140, 456
- bitwise or, 456
- bitwise xor, 456
- black box, 249
- Boole, George, 121
- Boolean, 121, 140, 175
- boring, 225
- boy, girl, dog, 453
- brace, 48
- bracket, 48
- branch, 127
- break, 184, 200
- brittle, 93
- broken pipe, 48, 141
- buffering, 20, 24
- bug eating story, 44
- bullet proof, 93
  
- C, 176
- C++, 176, 177
- C#, 177
- Calendar, 359
- call, 229, 231, 233
- camel case, 100
- capital letters, 52
- car buying, 453
- card, pick a, 364
- carriage return, 41
- case, 136
- case insensitive, 53
- case sensitive, 52, 53, 59, 114
- catastrophic failure, 93
- challenge, 274
- charset, 65
- checkbox, 82
- chomp, 39, 40, 42, 55, 114, 145
- chomp bad example, 55
- chomp example, 55
- choose, 365
- chop, 40, 42, 114, 194
- clear box, 249

- CLI, 18, 19
- client, 340
- client-side, 336, 340, 341
- clock arithmetic, 159
- close angle, 48
- close bracket, 48
- close curly, 48
- close paren, 47
- closed set, 327
- closing paren, 47
- cmd, 19
- code factoring, 235
- coin, 365
- coin purse example, 105
- Colder, 395
- colon, 47
- columns, 281
- command line, 232
- comment out, 110
- comments in programs, 99
- commercial at, 48
- compiler, 94
- complexity, 454
- composition, 190, 191
- concatenation, 55, 56, 60, 191, 194
- content-type, 277
- continue, 184, 200
- contracts, legal, 50
- convention, 162
- convert list to string, 217
- convert string to list, 217
- cookies, 272, 276, 278
- cookies and children, 159
- counter, 178
- counting, 174
- cPanel(R), 374
- CR, 41
- CRLF, 41
- CSS, 70, 295, 343, 378
- curly, 48
- curly brace, 48
- currency sign, 48
- dash, 48
- database, 260, 281
- decimal, 48
- decimal point, 48
- decision tree, 264
- declaring a variable, 244
- decrement, 177, 190, 191
- default, 70, 125, 167
- define, 233
- defined, 262
- delay (sleep), 20
- delimiter, 21
- denial-of-service attack, 299
- dice, 77, 364
- dictionary, 260
- Dijkstra, Edsgar, 127
- div, 342
- division, 90, 158
- DO LOOP, 187
- doc operator, 194
- document, 338
- dollar, 48
- dollar sign, 48, 52
- DOM, 343
- dot, 48
- dot operator, 55
- Double Nim, 349
- dynamic, 28
- EBCDIC, 134
- effective, 186
- efficient, 186
- element, 206
- else, 124, 125, 185
- else/if, 135
- elsif, 135, 136, 185
- email, 48

- empty string, 41
- empty string, 54
- enter, 41
- ENV(HTTP\_COOKIE), 278
- environment variable, 278
- eq, 145, 311
- eq (equal) operator, 144
- event handler, 337
- event-driven, 341
- event-driven programming, 298
- exclamation mark, 48
- exclusive or, 141, 142
- exists, 262
- exit status, 232
- explicit, 180, 186, 454
  
- factoring, 230
- False, 119, 123, 167
- false is 0, 121
- false is the empty string, 121
- fence, 24, 47
- Fibonacci, 349, 448
- field, 320
- field name, 320, 321
- fields, 281
- FIFO, 207, 210, 223
- Firefox, 28, 64
- flag, 177
- Flash, 342, 344
- flexible, 93
- flip, 365
- flip a coin, 364, 365
- floating point, 90, 159
- floating-point division, 159
- flush, 20, 24
- for, 175, 187–189, 357
- for example, 214
- foreach, 175, 215, 223, 240, 365
- foreach example, 215
- form, 82, 154, 272, 278
  
- formatted printing, 430
- FORTRAN, 187
- forward slash, 47
- fragile, 93, 305
- freely available, 12
- full stop, 48
- function, 229, 338
  
- games
  - Animal, 264
  - Cards, 364
  - Dice, 364
  - Exploration, 266
  - Hangman, 388
  - Hi Lo, 195
  - Nim, 2, 197, 346
  - Nim, 3, 198
  - Nim, Double, 349
  - Rock Paper Scissors, 258, 365
  - Tic Tac Toe, 360
- garbage, 103
- Gauss, Johann Carl Friedrich, 449
- ge (greater or equal) operator, 144
- get, 381
- getElementById, 338, 343
- getElementsByClassName(id), 343
- GIMP, 74, 77
- global, 233, 242, 244
- global variable, 255
- global variables, 232, 251
- gmtime, 219
- goto, 127, 128, 184
- goto harmful, 127
- goto instruction, 127
- graceful degradation, 93
- grammar, 94
- greater than, 48
- gt (greater than) operator, 144
- GUI, 18

- harmful, goto, 127
- hash, 24, 47, 213, 260, 261, 281
- hash bang, 48
- hashtag, 24, 47
- height, 73, 74, 154
- hello world, 17
- here, 48
- hex, 68, 310
- hidden, 82, 272, 392
- high-level language, 194
- Hotter, 395
- HTML, 295, 378
- HTTP\_COOKIE, 278
- Hungarian notation, 58
- hyphen, 48
  
- i18n, 134
- id=, 337
- identity theft, 274
- if, 109, 119–121, 124, 125, 181, 183, 185, 186, 352
- if/else, 136
- if/elsif/else, 136
- img, 32, 73, 153, 342, 393
- implicit, 180, 186, 454
- inclusive or, 141
- increment, 176, 190, 191
- indentation in programs, 131
- index, 211, 213, 223
- index.cgi, 66, 67, 76, 78, 115
- index.html, 29, 32
- infinite loop, 182, 189
- infinite loop example, 184, 185, 189
- initialize, 103
- inner loop, 198, 201
- innerHTML, 338, 343
- input, 82, 342
- input (STDIN), 54
- int, 78, 115, 344
- int function, 160
- interface, 231, 236, 249
- internationalization, 134
- Internet Explorer, 28, 64
- interpolation, 55, 60, 216
- interpolation example, 216
- intractable, 330, 452
- invariant, 174
- iteration, 181
  
- Java, 12
- JavaScript, 295, 336, 341, 343
- join, 217, 223
- join example, 217
- Julian Date, 220
  
- kangaroo, 308
- key, 260
- kids in a bed, 204
  
- ladder, 135
- last, 128, 182, 184, 186, 189, 200
- last example, 184
- lc, 146, 150, 167
- le (less or equal) operator, 144
- leap year, 159
- left paren, 47
- less than, 48
- lexical scanning, 94
- lexicographic, 144
- lexicon, 144
- LF, 41
- libraries, 233
- LIFO, 207, 209, 222
- light switches, 142
- line break, 41
- line feed, 41
- link, 28, 33
- Linux, 11–13, 19, 41, 48, 374
- LISP, 187
- list, 206

- lists are arrays, 206
- literal, 21, 144
- local, 63, 114, 242, 244
- local variable, 255
- localtime, 218, 219
- logic error, 110, 114
- logic errors, 109
- logical and, 140
- logical or, 141
- loop, 174
- loop invariant, 174
- looping, 181
- lower case, 52, 58, 100, 114, 146
- lt (less than) operator, 144
  
- machine language, 194
- Macintosh, 12, 13, 19, 41
- Mad Lib, 111, 346
- mark up, 378
- markup, 31, 32, 67
- math anxiety, 105
- math functions, int, 160
- Math.floor(), 344
- Math.random(), 344
- meaningful names, 99
- memo to self, 86, 87, 270, 299, 393, 396
- method, 154, 229
- Microsoft, 12, 13, 17, 18, 28, 41, 64, 81, 374
- military time, 219
- mime type, 82
- minus, 48
- modulus, 159
- monkeys jumping on the bed, 203
- multiplication, 90
- my, 234, 243–245
- MySQL, 281
  
- \n, 40
  
- name, 154
- names, meaningful, 99
- ne, 145
- ne (not equal) operator, 144
- nested loop, 198, 201
- nesting, 128, 453, 454
- newline, 40, 41, 55, 114
- next, 128, 184, 186, 189, 200
- Nim, 197, 346, 349
- Normal distribution, 366
- not, 48, 140
- Notepad, 17
- Notepad++, 428
- Number(), 343
- numbers that might change, 132
  
- octal, 68
- octothorpe, 47
- offline, 64, 114
- olin, 79, 80, 83, 301
- onClick, 342
- onclick, 337
- onKeyPress, 342
- online, 64, 114
- onMouseOver, 338, 342
- onResize, 342
- onSubmit, 342
- onUnload, 342
- open angle, 48
- open bracket, 48
- open curly, 48
- open paren, 47
- open set, 327
- opening paren, 47
- or, 48, 140–142
- or operator, 141, 456
- or, exclusive, 141
- outer loop, 199, 201
- outer loop, 198

- pack, 310
- parameter, 255
- parameters, 232, 251
- paren, 47
- parens, 48
- parentheses, 47
- parenthesis, 47
- parity, 142
- parse, 94
- passing parameters, 232
- password, 274
- pattern, 311
- pause (sleep), 20
- percent code, 279
- percent codes, 310
- period, 48
- permutation, 365
- persistent, 270, 271
- persistent data, 86, 270, 272, 275, 396
- Photoshop®, 74, 77
- PHP, 12
- pick, 365
- PickACard, 364
- pipe, 48, 141
- pipelining, 103
- .pl, 18
- platform, 12
- plus, 47, 310
- plus plus, 176
- point, 48
- pop, 207, 209, 212, 222, 240, 365
- pop example, 207
- portable, 12
- post, 154, 190, 192, 381
- post-increment, 191, 192
- pound, 24, 47
- powerful, 11
- pre, 190, 192
- pre-increment, 190, 192
- pre-test while loop, 183
- precedence, 56, 90, 161
- pretzel, 47
- print, 109
- printf, 201, 220, 221, 353, 430, 432–435, 440, 441
- procedure, 229
- programming, structured, 127
- pseudo, 369
- pseudo code, 23, 181
- pseudo random, 344, 368, 369
- punctuation, 94
- push, 207, 209, 212, 222
- push example, 207
  
- queue, 207, 210, 223
  
- \r, 40
- radio, 82
- rand, 78, 114, 232, 344
- randND, 367
- random numbers, 75, 363
- recursion, 450
- redo, 128, 184, 186, 189, 201
- refactor, 231
- regular expressions, 311
- remainder, 158
- renders, 84
- repeat, 181
- replacement, 365
- result, 232
- return, 41, 234, 251, 256
- return code, 232
- return value, 232
- RGB, 72
- right paren, 47
- robust, 93, 306
- rock, paper, scissors, 258, 365
- rows, 281
- Run, 19

- run-time errors, 109
- runtime errors, 62
  
- scaffolding, 110
- scalar, 52, 232, 234, 260
- script, 337
- seed, 369
- semantic errors, 62, 109
- semantics, 45, 46, 49, 50, 114
- semi-colon, 47
- semi-colon not needed, 128
- sentinel, 309
- server-side, 336, 340
- session, 270, 276, 396
- set-cookie, 278
- sharp, 24
- shebang, 48
- shift, 207–209, 212, 222, 240, 365
- shift example, 207
- shuffle, 365
- side effects, 232, 251
- sidebar, 53, 65
- simplicity, 454
- slash, 47
- sleep, 20, 25, 113
- sleep example, 20
- slot, 206
- small letters, 52
- solution, 452, 454
- solve, 452
- something you are, 274
- something you can do, 274
- something you know, 274
- something you possess, 274
- space, 310
- spaghetti code, 127
- span, 337, 342
- splice, 213
- split, 217, 223
- split example, 217
  
- sprintf, 220, 221, 441
- SQL, 281
- square bracket, 48
- srand, 369
- src, 73
- stack, 207, 209, 222
- standard deviation, 367
- star, 47
- Start, 19
- state, 86, 270, 271, 392, 396
- static, 28
- status, 232
- stdev, 367
- STDIN, 20, 22
- <STDIN> example, 54
- string, 21, 41, 52
- string convert lower, 146
- string convert upper, 146
- structured programming, 127
- stub, 110
- stupid, computers are, 49
- style, 95
- sub, 233
- submit, 82–84, 154, 392
- subroutine, 149, 229, 233
- subroutines
  - pick, 365
  - PickACard, 364
  - randND, 367
  - shuffle, 365
  - stdev, 367
- subtraction, 89
- switch, 136
- syntax, 46, 50, 114
- syntax error, 25, 110, 114
- syntax errors, 62, 108
  
- tables, 281
- talk, learning to, 43
- taste story, 44

- test bed, 110
- text, 311
- text/html, 82
- thick client, 341
- thin client, 341
- tic tac toe, 47
- tic-tac-toe, 24
- tilde, 48
- time, 218, 219
- title, 73, 74
- token, 21, 94
- tractable, 329, 452, 454
- traffic light example, 93
- treble clef, 47
- trivia
  - Apple address, 185
- True, 119, 123, 166
- true is 1, 121
- true is non-zero, 121
- truth table, 140, 141
- typical, 12
- uc, 146, 149, 167
- UI, 234
- unary, 190, 191
- underscore, 52
- Unicode, 134
- uninitialized variables, 103
- Unix, 41, 48
- unshift, 208, 209, 212, 222
- unshift example, 208
- upper case, 52, 59, 100, 114, 146
- URI, 28, 33
- URL, 28, 33
- user, 28, 32
- user interface, 234
- user-friendly, 93
- value, 154, 343
- variable naming, 52, 56
- vertical bar, 141
- virgule, 47
- void tag, 378
- wait, 20, 21
- walking, 173
- web server, 27, 114
- websites, <http://>
  - [hangman.doncolton.com](http://hangman.doncolton.com), 388
  - [ipup.doncolton.com](http://ipup.doncolton.com), 9
  - [validator.w3.org](http://validator.w3.org), 383
  - [www.eduplace.com](http://www.eduplace.com), 111, 346
- well known, 11
- well supported, 12
- while, 175, 181–185, 187–189
- while example, 182, 183
- while syntax, 181
- white box, 249
- white space, 95, 114
- why, 10
- width, 73, 74
- wrapper, 71
- XML, 343
- xor, 142
- xor operator, 456
- xor, exclusive or, 141
- zeroes, 221
- Zork, 266