

Why C Programming?

2025 Winter APS105: Computer Fundamentals
Jon Eyolfson

Lecture 1
1.0.1

I'm Jon, Your Instructor

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There's 4 Course Entries in Your Timetable

Lectures

Where we learn concepts

Plenary Lectures

Additional practice for labs

Tutorials

Additional practice for exams

Labs

In-person lab help from TAs

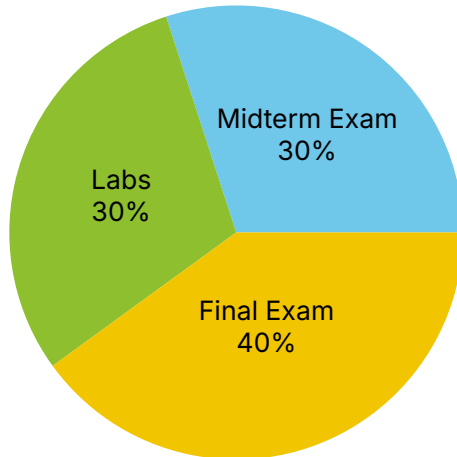
Academic Integrity is Serious

You may discuss course content, you do not copy it!

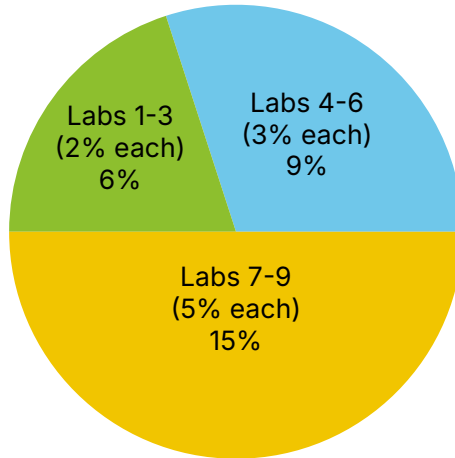
You're primarily harming your own learning

It's much easier to detect copying software

The Majority of Your Grade is Exams



There are 9 Labs, Progressively Weighted More



Officially, We Use Quercus and an Online Textbook

Direct Quercus link: <https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/371657>

Online Textbook: <https://learningc.org/> (no other materials required)

Piazza: <https://piazza.com/class/m5dkvmh5bv87oy>

Additional Resources for Section 3

Lecture livestreams and recordings: <https://youtube.com/@eyolfson>

Lecture slides (and YouTube links): <https://eyolfson.com/courses/aps105/>

Discord community: <https://compeng.gg/settings/> (Connect with Discord)

In This Course, You Tell Your Computer What to Do

Computers execute (or run) a **program**

The art of writing a program is **programming**

Why C Programming, Specifically?

Humans write programs in a [programming language](#)

C is a programming language, first appearing in the 1970s

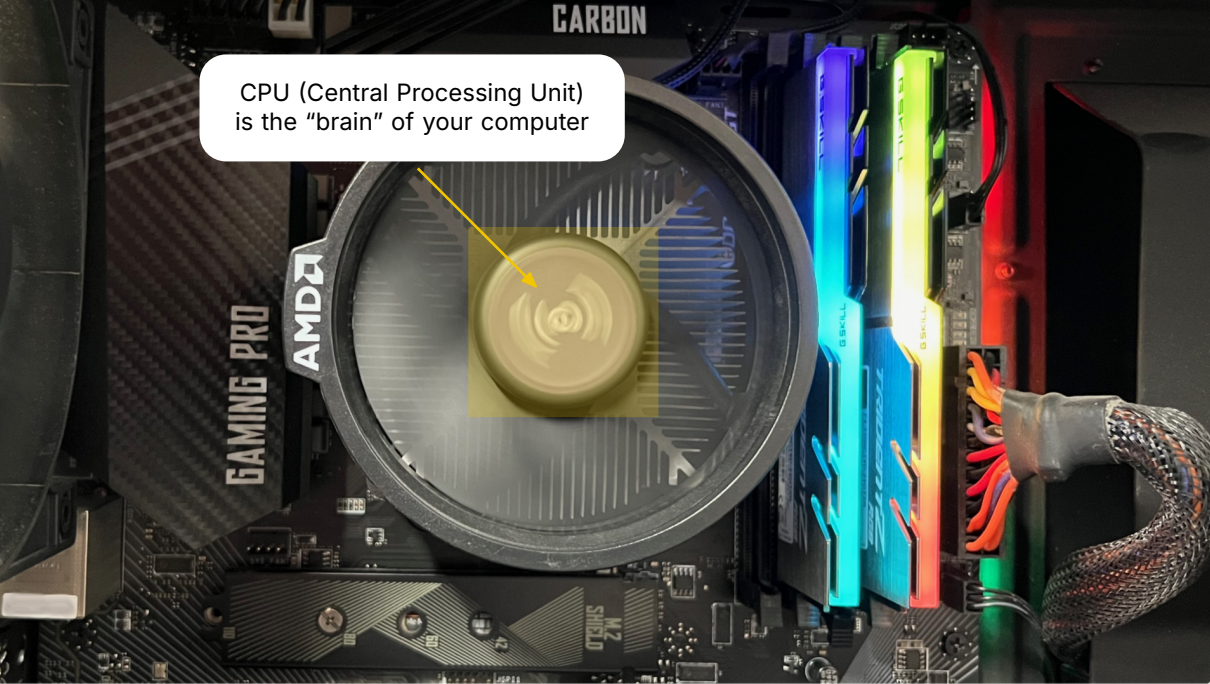
C is a small language, with few features, it's closer to how a computer works

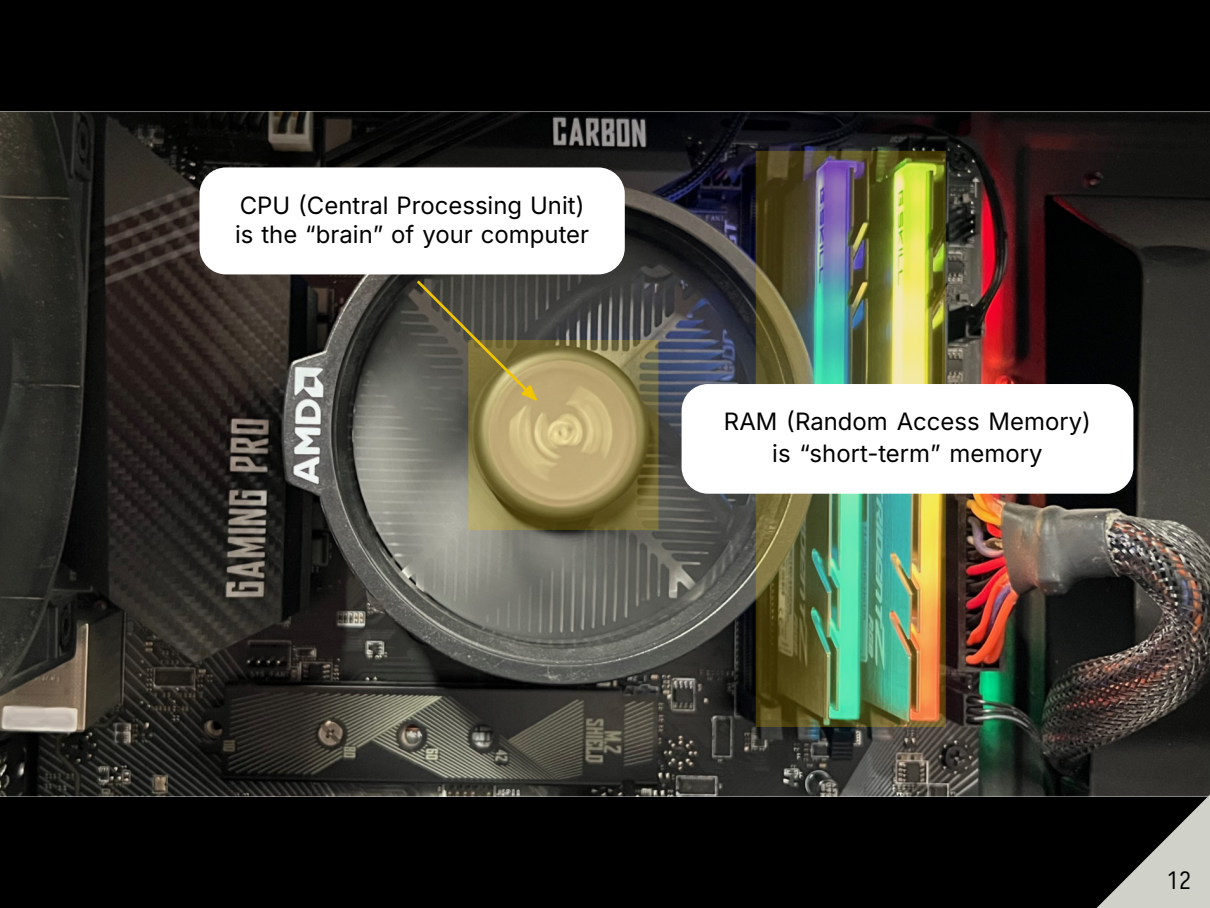
What is a Computer?

Hardware is the physical components of a computer



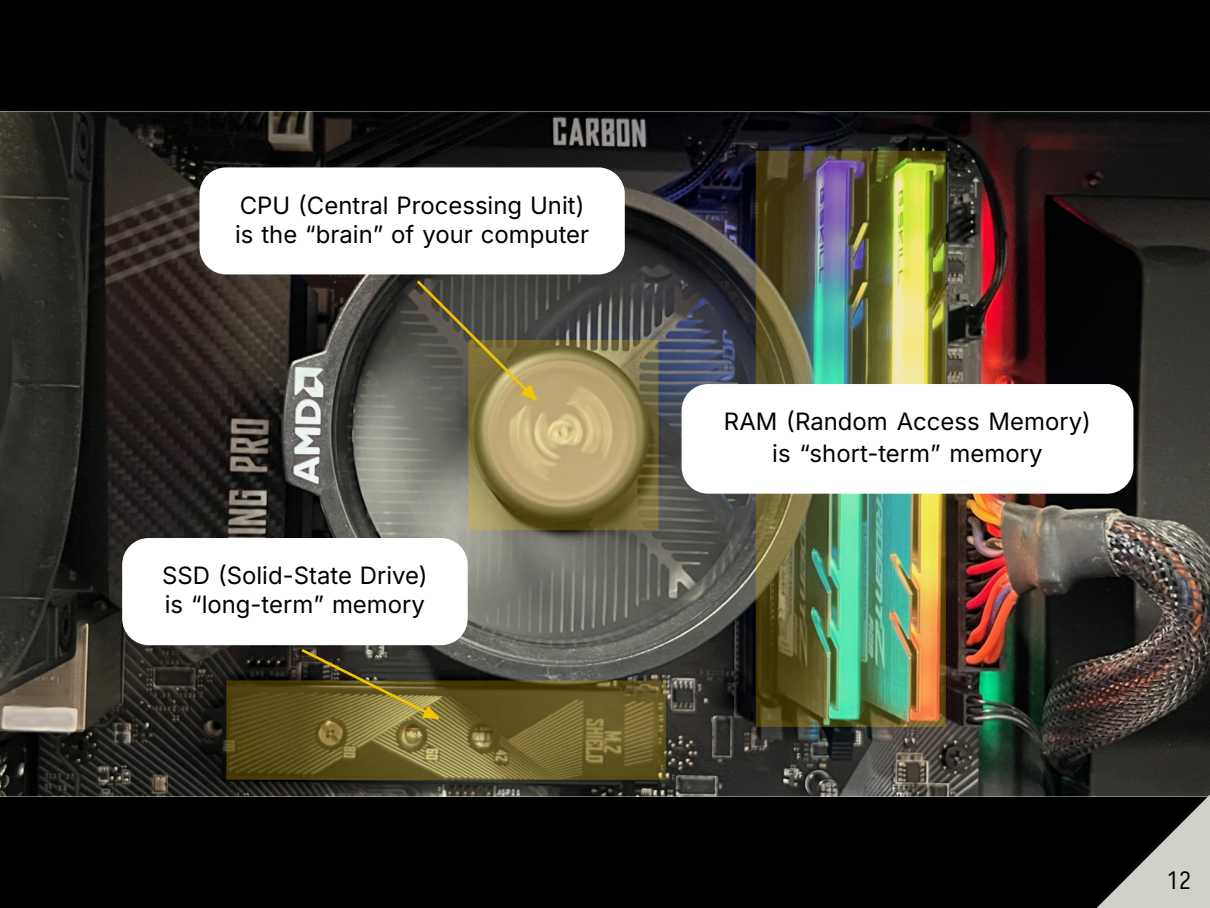
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RAM (Random Access Memory)
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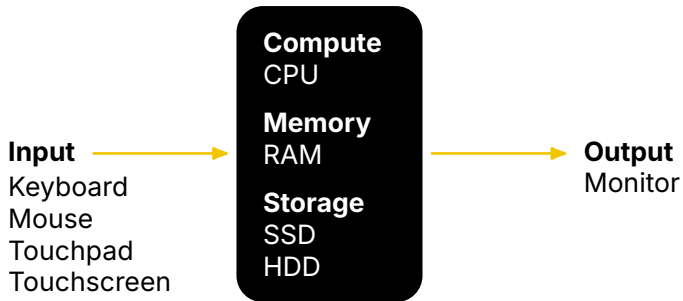


CPU (Central Processing Unit) is the "brain" of your computer

RAM (Random Access Memory) is "short-term" memory

SSD (Solid-State Drive) is "long-term" memory

We Model a Computer as a Black Box



What's the Other Part of a Computer?

Software is the information the computer needs to run

The most important information is **instructions** that tell the CPU what to do

How Do Computers Store Information?

Computers use numbers and humans assign meaning to them

At the most basic level, they can only store 0 or 1



ATTENTION: NOT FOR
LUMINAIRE ENFERMÉ
LUMINAIRE SUTTABLE
EMPLACEMENTS
CAUTION: NOT FOR
DAMP LOCATIONS

Off
0

ATTENTION: NOT FOR
REPLACEMENTS
EMPLACEMENTS
LUMINAIRE ENFERME
LUMINAIRE SUIVABLE
FERME COMMENT
REPLACEMENTS
EMPLACEMENTS
LUMINAIRE ENFERME
LUMINAIRE SUIVABLE
FERME COMMENT

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We Usually Represent Numbers in Decimal

We represent numbers as a sequence of digits

Digits are numbers between 0-9 (10 options)

Computers represent numbers as a sequence of bits

A **bit** (binary digit) is either 0 or 1 (2 options)

Binary is a numeral system that only uses bits

Let's Represent the Decimal 176

100	10	1
1	7	6

Let's Represent the Decimal 176

10^2	10^1	10^0
1	7	6

Let's Represent the Decimal 176

$$2^7 \quad 2^6 \quad 2^6 \quad 2^4 \quad 2^3 \quad 2^2 \quad 2^1 \quad 2^0$$

Let's Represent the Decimal 176

128 64 32 16 8 4 2 1

Let's Represent the Decimal 176

128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0

Let's Represent the Decimal 176

128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0

Verify, $128 + 32 + 16 = 176$

Computers Store Information in a Finite Amount

A **byte** is a binary number that's 8 bits long

It can represent 256 (2^8) different things

In math we'd say $(5)_{10} = (101)_2$, in most programming languages

5 is the same as **0b101**

0b is a prefix that says the number that follows is in binary

Note, there are implicit leading zeros so

0b0000101 is the same as **0b101**

We Can Represent Letters and Numbers in Binary

We don't need a full byte, assume the most significant bit is always 0

We have 128 different representations (2^7)

A **character** is how a computer represents English
such as: letters, digits, punctuation, and spaces

For instance, "A" is represented as `0b01000001` or `65`

Your Program (or Applications) Run in an Operating System

The operating system (OS) is software that interacts directly with hardware
(You'll learn much more about this in ECE 344)

Code is text written in a programming language

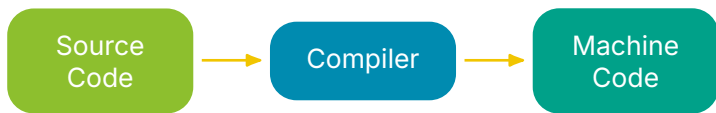
Source code is code for particular software

A library is code written by someone else that you can use

C provides a library called: the standard C library (libc)

We Need to Use a Program to Create Programs

A **compiler** transforms your source code into a program your OS can run



Machine code is the binary representation of instructions the CPU can run

We often use **compile** as a verb: "Let's compile our program."

We Need Another Program to Handle Input and Output for Us

A **terminal** uses a keyboard for input and a monitor for output

It is a text interface (it uses characters you see on your keyboard)

For this course, all the programs we create use a text interface

Your First Program

```
#include <stdio.h>

int main(void) {
    printf("Hello world\n");
    return 0;
}
```

Your First Program

`#include` reads the contents of another file,
`stdio.h` contains the `declaration` of `printf`

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defines a **function** called `main` that outputs a number (OS starts executing `main` always)

calls a function called `printf` that outputs a **string** (sequence of characters) to the terminal

stop execution of `main` and output the value `0` (OS interprets `0` as "no errors")