



Chapter 6

JavaScript: Introduction to

Scripting

Internet & World Wide Web
How to Program, 5/e



OBJECTIVES

In this chapter you will:

- Write simple JavaScript programs.
- Use input and output statements.
- Learn basic memory concepts.
- Use arithmetic operators.
- Learn the precedence of arithmetic operators.
- Write decision-making statements to choose among alternative courses of action.
- Use relational and equality operators to compare data items.



6.1 Introduction

6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page

6.3 Modifying Your First Script

6.4 Obtaining User Input with `prompt` Dialogs

6.4.1 Dynamic Welcome Page

6.4.2 Adding Integers

6.5 Memory Concepts

6.6 Arithmetic

6.7 Decision Making: Equality and Relational Operators

6.8 Web Resources



6.1 Introduction

- ▶ JavaScript
 - Scripting language which is used to enhance the functionality and appearance of web pages.
- ▶ Before you can run code examples with JavaScript on your computer, you may need to change your browser's security settings.
 - IE9 *prevents* scripts on the local computer from running by default
 - Firefox, Chrome, Opera, Safari (including on the iPhone) and the Android browser have JavaScript enabled by default.



6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page

- ▶ We begin with a simple script that displays the text "welcome to JavaScript Programming!" in the HTML5 document.
- ▶ All major web browsers contain **JavaScript interpreters**, which process the commands written in JavaScript.
- ▶ The JavaScript code and its result are shown in Fig. 6.1.



```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2
3 <!-- Fig. 6.1: welcome.html -->
4 <!-- Displaying a line of text. -->
5 <html>
6   <head>
7     <meta charset = "utf-8">
8     <title>A First Program in JavaScript</title>
9     <script type = "text/javascript">
10
11       document.writeln(
12         "<h1>Welcome to JavaScript Programming!</h1>" );
13
14   </script>
15   </head><body></body>
16 </html>
```

Fig. 6.1 | Displaying a line of text. (Part 1 of 2.)



Fig. 6.1 | Displaying a line of text. (Part 2 of 2.)



6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page (cont.)

- ▶ Spacing displayed by a browser in a web page is determined by the HTML5 elements used to format the page
- ▶ Often, JavaScripts appear in the <head> section of the HTML5 document
- ▶ The browser interprets the contents of the <head> section first
- ▶ The <script> tag indicates to the browser that the text that follows is part of a script. Attribute type specifies the scripting language used in the script—such as text/javascript



6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page (cont.)

The script Element and Commenting Your Scripts

- ▶ The <script> tag indicates to the browser that the text which follows is part of a script.
- ▶ The type attribute specifies the MIME type of the script as well as the **scripting language** used in the script—in this case, a text file written in javascript.
- ▶ In HTML5, the default MIME type for a <script> is "text/html", so you can omit the type attribute from your <script> tags.
- ▶ You'll see it in legacy HTML documents with embedded JavaScripts.



6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page (cont.)

- ▶ A string of characters can be contained between double quotation ("") marks (also called a **string literal**)



Software Engineering Observation 6.1

Strings in JavaScript can be enclosed in either double quotation marks ("") or single quotation marks ('').



6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page (cont.)

- ▶ Browser's document object represents the HTML5 document currently being displayed in the browser
 - Allows you to specify HTML5 text to be displayed in the HTML5 document
- ▶ Browser contains a complete set of objects that allow script programmers to access and manipulate every element of an HTML5 document
- ▶ Object
 - Resides in the computer's memory and contains information used by the script
 - The term object normally implies that attributes (data) and behaviors (methods) are associated with the object
 - An object's methods use the attributes' data to perform useful actions for the client of the object—the script that calls the methods



6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page (cont.)

- ▶ The parentheses following the name of a method contain the arguments that the method requires to perform its task (or its action)
- ▶ Every statement should end with a semicolon (also known as the **statement terminator**), although none is required by JavaScript
- ▶ JavaScript is case sensitive
 - Not using the proper uppercase and lowercase letters is a syntax error



Good Programming Practice 6.1

Terminate every statement with a semicolon. This notation clarifies where one statement ends and the next statement begins.



Common Programming Error 6.1

Forgetting the ending `</script>` tag for a script may prevent the browser from interpreting the script properly and may prevent the HTML5 document from loading properly.



6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page (cont.)

- ▶ The `document` object's `writeIn` method
 - Writes a line of HTML5 text in the HTML5 document
 - Does not guarantee that a corresponding line of text will appear in the HTML5 document.
 - Text displayed is dependent on the contents of the string written, which is subsequently rendered by the browser.
 - Browser will interpret the HTML5 elements as it normally does to render the final text in the document



Common Programming Error 6.2

JavaScript is case sensitive. Not using the proper uppercase and lowercase letters is a syntax error. A syntax error occurs when the script interpreter cannot recognize a statement. The interpreter normally issues an error message to help you locate and fix the incorrect statement. Syntax errors are violations of the rules of the programming language. The interpreter notifies you of a syntax error when it attempts to execute the statement containing the error. Each browser has its own way to display JavaScript Errors. For example, Firefox has the Error Console (in its Web Developer menu) and Chrome has the JavaScript console (in its Tools menu). To view script errors in IE9, select *Internet Options...* from the *Tools* menu. In the dialog that appears, select the *Advanced* tab and click the checkbox labeled *Display a notification about every script error* under the *Browsing* category.



Error-Prevention Tip 6.1

When the interpreter reports a syntax error, sometimes the error is not in the line indicated by the error message. First, check the line for which the error was reported. If that line does not contain errors, check the preceding several lines in the script.



6.2 Your First Script: Displaying a Line of Text with JavaScript in a Web Page (cont.)

A Note About Embedding JavaScript Code into HTML5 Documents

- ▶ JavaScript code is typically placed in a separate file, then included in the HTML5 document that uses the script.
- ▶ This makes the code more reusable, because it can be included into any HTML5 document—as is the case with the many JavaScript libraries used in professional web development today.
- ▶ We'll begin separating both CSS3 and JavaScript into separate files starting in Chapter 10.



6.3 Modifying Your First Script

- ▶ A script can display Welcome to JavaScript Programming! in many ways.
- ▶ Figure 6.2 displays the text in magenta, using the CSS color property.
- ▶ Method write displays a string like writeln, but does not position the output cursor in the HTML5 document at the beginning of the next line after writing its argument



```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2
3 <!-- Fig. 6.2: welcome2.html -->
4 <!-- Printing one line with multiple statements. -->
5 <html>
6   <head>
7     <meta charset = "utf-8">
8     <title>Printing a Line with Multiple Statements</title>
9     <script type = "text/javascript">
10       <!--
11         document.write( "<h1 style = 'color: magenta'>" );
12         document.write( "Welcome to JavaScript " +
13           "Programming!</h1>" );
14       // -->
15     </script>
16   </head><body></body>
17 </html>
```

Fig. 6.2 | Printing one line with separate statements. (Part I of 2.)



Fig. 6.2 | Printing one line with separate statements. (Part 2 of 2.)



6.3 Modifying Your First Script (Cont.)

- ▶ The + operator (called the “concatenation operator” when used in this manner) joins two strings together



Common Programming Error 6.3

Splitting a JavaScript statement in the middle of a string
is a syntax error.



Common Programming Error 6.4

Many people confuse the writing of HTML5 text with the rendering of HTML5 text. Writing HTML5 text creates the HTML5 that will be rendered by the browser for presentation to the user.



6.3 Modifying Your First Script (Cont.)

Displaying Text in an Alert Dialog

▶ Dialogs

- Useful to display information in windows that “pop up” on the screen to grab the user’s attention
- Typically used to display important messages to the user browsing the web page
- Browser’s window object uses method alert to display an alert dialog
- Method alert requires as its argument the string to be displayed



```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2
3 <!-- Fig. 6.3: welcome3.html -->
4 <!-- Alert dialog displaying multiple lines. -->
5 <html>
6   <head>
7     <meta charset = "utf-8">
8     <title>Printing Multiple Lines in a Dialog Box</title>
9     <script type = "text/javascript">
10       <!--
11         window.alert( "Welcome to\nJavaScript\nProgramming!" );
12         // -->
13     </script>
14   </head>
15   <body>
16     <p>Click Refresh (or Reload) to run this script again.</p>
17   </body>
18 </html>
```

Fig. 6.3 | Alert dialog displaying multiple lines. (Part 1 of 2.)

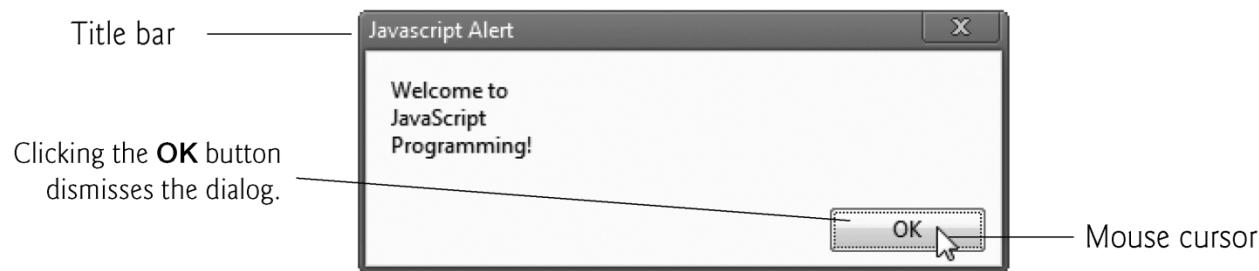


Fig. 6.3 | Alert dialog displaying multiple lines. (Part 2 of 2.)



6.3 Modifying Your First Script (Cont.)

Escape Sequences

- When a backslash is encountered in a string of characters, the next character is combined with the backslash to form an **escape sequence**. The escape sequence `\n` is the **newline character**. It causes the cursor in the HTML5 document to move to the beginning of the next line.



| Escape sequence | Description |
|-----------------|---|
| \n | <i>New line</i> —position the screen cursor at the beginning of the next line. |
| \t | <i>Horizontal tab</i> —move the screen cursor to the next tab stop. |
| \\" | <i>Backslash</i> —used to represent a backslash character in a string. |
| \" | <i>Double quote</i> —used to represent a double-quote character in a string contained in double quotes. For example, <code>window.alert(\"in double quotes\");</code> displays "in double quotes" in an alert dialog. |
| \' | <i>Single quote</i> —used to represent a single-quote character in a string. For example, <code>window.alert('\'in single quotes\');</code> displays 'in single quotes' in an alert dialog. |

Fig. 6.4 | Some common escape sequences.



6.4 Obtaining User Input with prompt Dialogs

▶ Scripting

- Gives you the ability to generate part or all of a web page's content at the time it is shown to the user
- Such web pages are said to be dynamic, as opposed to static, since their content has the ability to change



6.4.1 Dynamic Welcome Page

- ▶ The next script creates a dynamic welcome page that obtains the user's name, then displays it on the page.
- ▶ The script uses another *predefined* dialog box from the window object—a **prompt** dialog—which allows the user to enter a value that the script can use.
- ▶ Figure 6.5 presents the script and sample output.



```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2
3 <!-- Fig. 6.5: welcome4.html -->
4 <!-- Prompt box used on a welcome screen -->
5 <html>
6   <head>
7     <meta charset = "utf-8">
8     <title>Using Prompt and Alert Boxes</title>
9     <script type = "text/javascript">
10       <!--
11         var name; // string entered by the user
12
13         // read the name from the prompt box as a string
14         name = window.prompt( "Please enter your name" );
15
16         document.writeln( "<h1>Hello " + name +
17                           ", welcome to JavaScript programming!</h1>" );
18         // -->
19       </script>
20     </head><body></body>
21   </html>
```

Fig. 6.5 | Prompt box used on a welcome screen. (Part I of 2.)

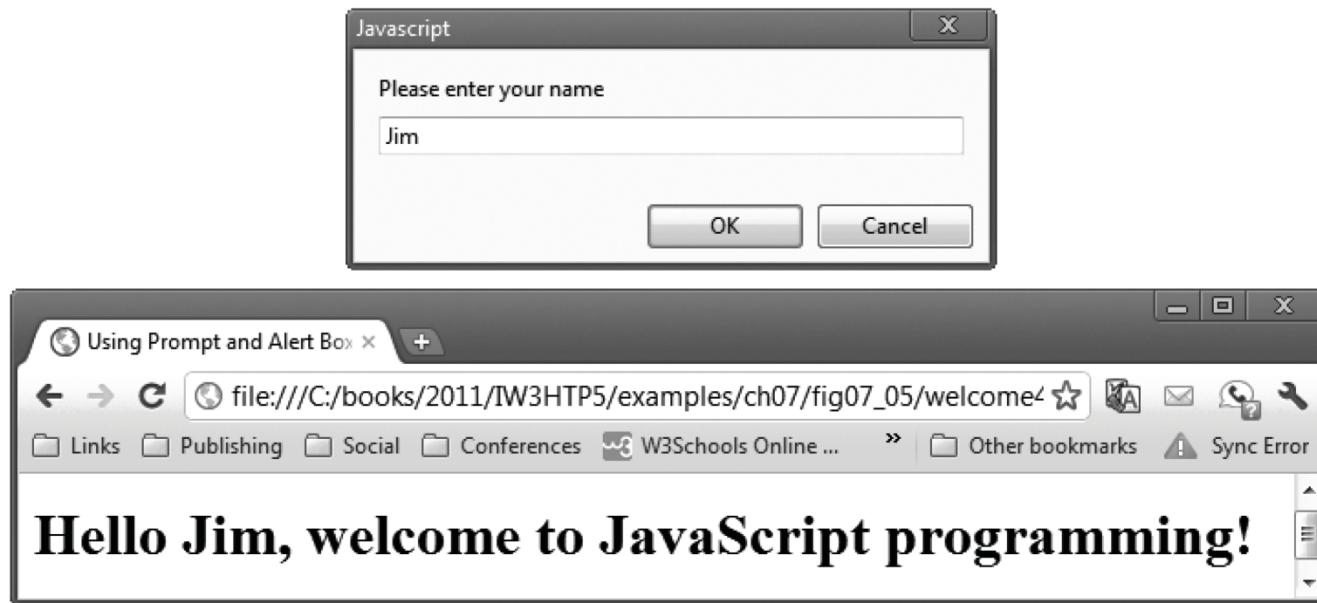


Fig. 6.5 | Prompt box used on a welcome screen. (Part 2 of 2.)



6.4.1 Dynamic Welcome Page (cont.)

- ▶ **Keywords** are words with special meaning in JavaScript
- ▶ **Keyword var**
 - Used to declare the names of variables
 - A variable is a location in the computer's memory where a value can be stored for use by a script
 - All variables have a name, type and value, and should be declared with a var statement before they are used in a script
- ▶ A variable name can be any valid **identifier** consisting of letters, digits, underscores (_) and dollar signs (\$) that does not begin with a digit and is not a reserved JavaScript keyword.



Good Programming Practice 6.2

Choosing meaningful variable names helps a script to be “self-documenting” (i.e., easy to understand by simply reading the script).



Good Programming Practice 6.3

By convention, variable-name identifiers begin with a lowercase first letter. Each subsequent word should begin with a capital first letter. For example, identifier `itemPrice` has a capital P in its second word, `Price`.



Common Programming Error 6.5

Splitting a statement in the middle of an identifier is a syntax error.



6.4.1 Dynamic Welcome Page (cont.)

- ▶ Declarations end with a semicolon (;) and can be split over several lines, with each variable in the declaration separated by a comma (forming a comma-separated list of variable names)
 - Several variables may be declared in one declaration or in multiple declarations.
- ▶ Comments
 - A single-line comment begins with the characters // and terminates at the end of the line
 - Comments do not cause the browser to perform any action when the script is interpreted; rather, comments are ignored by the JavaScript interpreter
 - Multiline comments begin with delimiter /* and end with delimiter */
 - All text between the delimiters of the comment is ignored by the interpreter.



Good Programming Practice 6.4

Although it's not required, declare each variable on a separate line. This allows for easy insertion of a comment next to each declaration. This is a widely followed professional coding standard.



6.4.1 Dynamic Welcome Page (cont.)

- ▶ The window object's prompt method displays a dialog into which the user can type a value.
 - The first argument is a message (called a prompt) that directs the user to take a specific action.
 - The optional second argument is the default string to display in the text field.
- ▶ Script can then use the value that the user inputs.

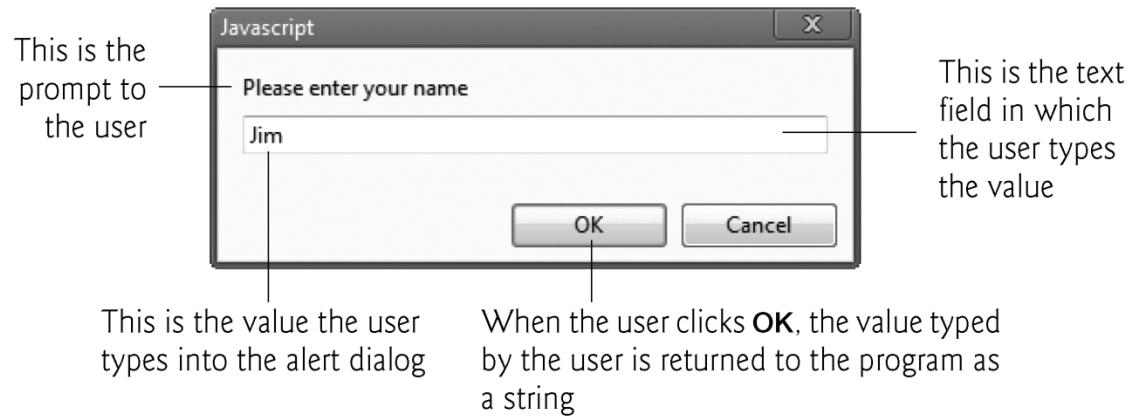


Fig. 6.6 | Prompt dialog displayed by the window object's `prompt` method.



6.4.1 Dynamic Welcome Page (cont.)

- ▶ A variable is assigned a value with an assignment statement, using the assignment operator, =.
- ▶ The = operator is called a binary operator, because it has two operands.



Good Programming Practice 6.5

Place a space on each side of a binary operator. This format makes the operator stand out and makes the script more readable.



6.4.1 Dynamic Welcome Page (cont.)

- ▶ **null keyword**
 - Signifies that a variable has no value
 - null is not a string literal, but rather a predefined term indicating the absence of value
 - Writing a null value to the document, however, displays the word “null”
- ▶ **Function parseInt**
 - converts its string argument to an integer
- ▶ **JavaScript has a version of the + operator for string concatenation that enables a string and a value of another data type (including another string) to be concatenated**



6.4.2 Adding Integers

- ▶ Our next script illustrates another use of prompt dialogs to obtain input from the user.
- ▶ Figure 6.7 inputs two *integers* (whole numbers, such as 7, -11, 0 and 31914) typed by a user at the keyboard, computes the sum of the values and displays the result.



```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2
3 <!-- Fig. 6.7: addition.html -->
4 <!-- Addition script. -->
5 <html>
6   <head>
7     <meta charset = "utf-8">
8     <title>An Addition Program</title>
9     <script type = "text/javascript">
10    <!--
11      var firstNumber; // first string entered by user
12      var secondNumber; // second string entered by user
13      var number1; // first number to add
14      var number2; // second number to add
15      var sum; // sum of number1 and number2
16
17      // read in first number from user as a string
18      firstNumber = window.prompt( "Enter first integer" );
19
20      // read in second number from user as a string
21      secondNumber = window.prompt( "Enter second integer" );
22
```

Fig. 6.7 | Addition script. (Part I of 3.)



```
23     // convert numbers from strings to integers
24     number1 = parseInt( firstNumber );
25     number2 = parseInt( secondNumber );
26
27     sum = number1 + number2; // add the numbers
28
29     // display the results
30     document.writeln( "<h1>The sum is " + sum + "</h1>" );
31     // -->
32   </script>
33 </head><body></body>
34 </html>
```

Fig. 6.7 | Addition script. (Part 2 of 3.)

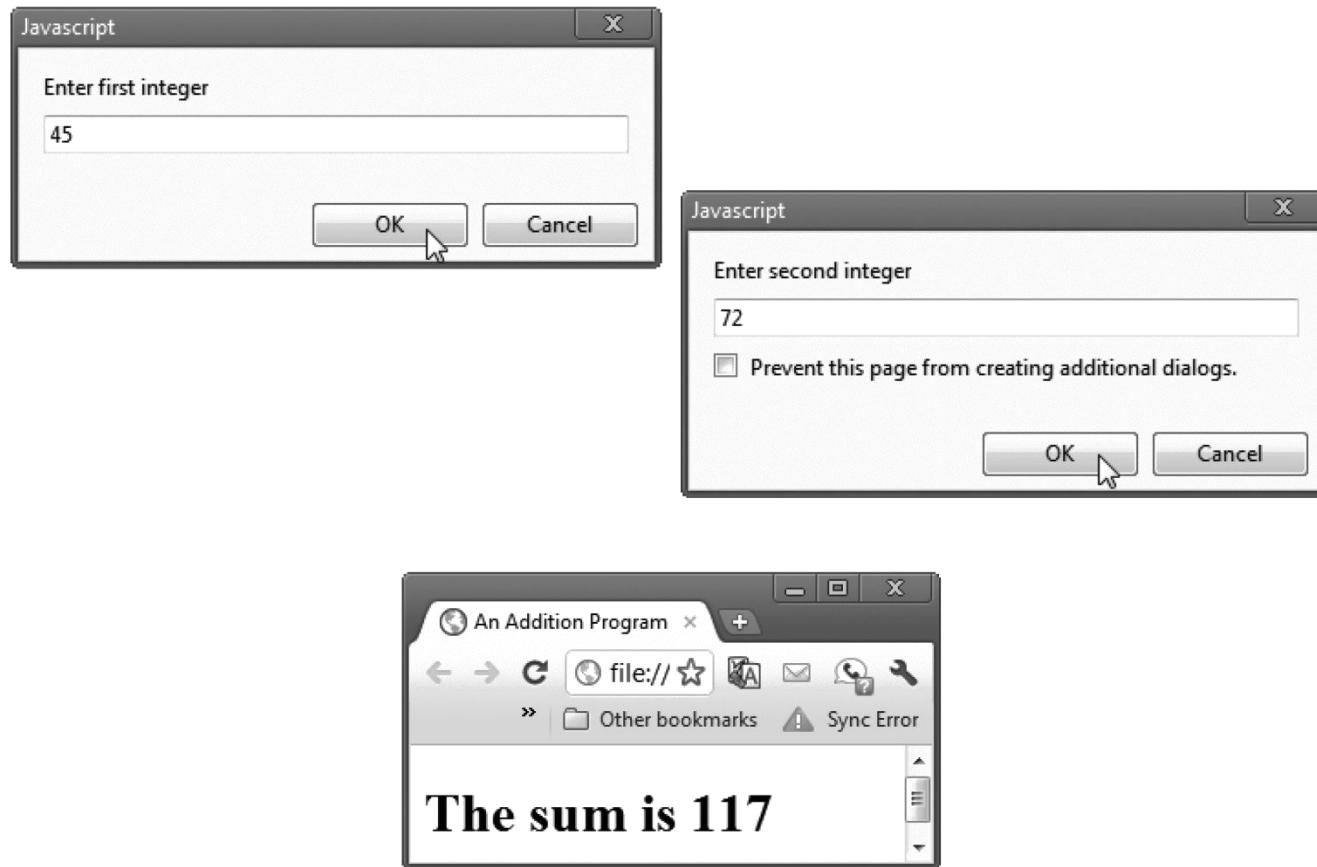


Fig. 6.7 | Addition script. (Part 3 of 3.)



Common Programming Error 6.6

Confusing the `+` operator used for string concatenation with the `+` operator used for addition often leads to undesired results. For example, if integer variable `y` has the value 5, the expression `"y + 2 = " + y + 2` results in `"y + 2 = 52"`, not `"y + 2 = 7"`, because first the value of `y` (i.e., 5) is concatenated with the string `"y + 2 = "`, then the value 2 is concatenated with the new, larger string `"y + 2 = 5"`. The expression `"y + 2 = " + (y + 2)` produces the string `"y + 2 = 7"` because the parentheses ensure that `y + 2` is calculated.



6.5 Memory Concepts

- ▶ Variable names correspond to locations in the computer's memory.
- ▶ Every variable has a name, a type and a value.
- ▶ When a value is placed in a memory location, the value replaces the previous value in that location.
- ▶ When a value is read out of a memory location, the process is nondestructive.



number1

45

Fig. 6.8 | Memory location showing the name and value of variable number1.

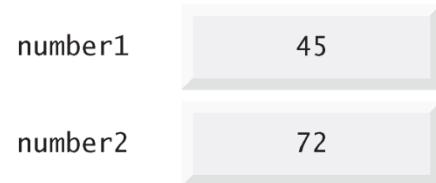


Fig. 6.9 | Memory locations after inputting values for variables number1 and number2.

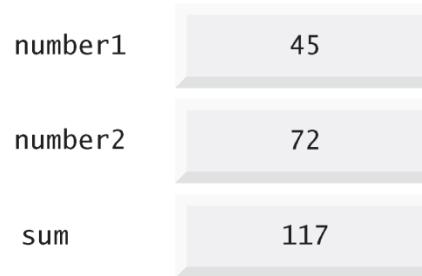


Fig. 6.10 | Memory locations after calculating the sum of number1 and number2.



6.5 Memory Concepts (Cont.)

- ▶ JavaScript does not require variables to have a type before they can be used in a script
- ▶ A variable in JavaScript can contain a value of any data type, and in many situations, JavaScript automatically converts between values of different types for you
- ▶ JavaScript is referred to as a loosely typed language
- ▶ When a variable is declared in JavaScript, but is not given a value, it has an **undefined** value.
 - Attempting to use the value of such a variable is normally a logic error.
- ▶ When variables are declared, they are not assigned default values, unless specified otherwise by the programmer.
 - To indicate that a variable does not contain a value, you can assign the value **null** to it.



6.6 Arithmetic

- ▶ The basic arithmetic operators (+, -, *, /, and %) are binary operators, because they each operate on two operands
- ▶ JavaScript provides the remainder operator, %, which yields the remainder after division
- ▶ Arithmetic expressions in JavaScript must be written in straight-line form to facilitate entering programs into the computer

| JavaScript operation | Arithmetic operator | Algebraic expression | JavaScript expression |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Addition | + | $f + 7$ | <code>f + 7</code> |
| Subtraction | - | $p - c$ | <code>p - c</code> |
| Multiplication | * | bm | <code>b * m</code> |
| Division | / | x/y or $\frac{x}{y}$ or $x \div y$ | <code>x / y</code> |
| Remainder | % | $r \bmod s$ | <code>r % s</code> |

Fig. 6.11 | Arithmetic operators.



6.6 Arithmetic (Cont.)

- ▶ Parentheses can be used to group expressions as in algebra.
- ▶ Operators in arithmetic expressions are applied in a precise sequence determined by the rules of operator precedence:
 - Multiplication, division and remainder operations are applied first.
 - If an expression contains several of these operations, operators are applied from left to right.
 - Multiplication, division and remainder operations are said to have the same level of precedence.
 - Addition and subtraction operations are applied next.
 - If an expression contains several of these operations, operators are applied from left to right.
 - Addition and subtraction operations have the same level of precedence.
- ▶ When we say that operators are applied from left to right, we are referring to the associativity of the operators. Some operators associate from right to left.



| Operator(s) | Operation(s) | Order of evaluation (precedence) |
|-------------|---|--|
| * , / or % | Multiplication Division Remainder | Evaluated first. If there are several such operations, they're evaluated from left to right. |
| + or - | Addition Subtraction | Evaluated last. If there are several such operations, they're evaluated from left to right. |

Fig. 6.12 | Precedence of arithmetic operators.



6.7 Decision Making: Equality and Relational Operators

- ▶ if statement allows a script to make a decision based on the truth or falsity of a condition
 - If the condition is met (i.e., the condition is true), the statement in the body of the if statement is executed
 - If the condition is not met (i.e., the condition is false), the statement in the body of the if statement is not executed
- ▶ Conditions in if statements can be formed by using the equality operators and relational operators



6.7 Decision Making: Equality and Relational Operators (Cont.)

- ▶ Equality operators both have the same level of precedence, which is lower than the precedence of the relational operators.
- ▶ The equality operators associate from left to right.



Common Programming Error 6.7

Confusing the equality operator, `==`, with the assignment operator, `=`, is a logic error. The equality operator should be read as “is equal to,” and the assignment operator should be read as “gets” or “gets the value of.” Some people prefer to read the equality operator as “double equals” or “equals equals.”



| Standard algebraic equality operator or relational operator | JavaScript equality or relational operator | Sample JavaScript condition | Meaning of JavaScript condition |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Equality operators</i> | | | |
| = | == | x == y | x is equal to y |
| ≠ | != | x != y | x is not equal to y |
| <i>Relational operators</i> | | | |
| > | > | x > y | x is greater than y |
| < | < | x < y | x is less than y |
| ≥ | ≥= | x ≥ y | x is greater than or equal to y |
| ≤ | ≤= | x ≤ y | x is less than or equal to y |

Fig. 6.13 | Equality and relational operators.



6.7 Decision Making: Equality and Relational Operators (Cont.)

- ▶ The script in Fig. 6.14 uses four if statements to display a time-sensitive greeting on a welcome page.



```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2
3 <!-- Fig. 6.14: welcome5.html -->
4 <!-- Using equality and relational operators. -->
5 <html>
6   <head>
7     <meta charset = "utf-8">
8     <title>Using Relational Operators</title>
9     <script type = "text/javascript">
10    <!--
11      var name; // string entered by the user
12      var now = new Date(); // current date and time
13      var hour = now.getHours(); // current hour (0-23)
14
15      // read the name from the prompt box as a string
16      name = window.prompt( "Please enter your name" );
17
18      // determine whether it's morning
19      if ( hour < 12 )
20        document.write( "<h1>Good Morning, " );
21
```

Fig. 6.14 | Using equality and relational operators. (Part I of 3.)



```
22 // determine whether the time is PM
23 if ( hour >= 12 )
24 {
25     // convert to a 12-hour clock
26     hour = hour - 12;
27
28     // determine whether it is before 6 PM
29     if ( hour < 6 )
30         document.write( "<h1>Good Afternoon, " );
31
32     // determine whether it is after 6 PM
33     if ( hour >= 6 )
34         document.write( "<h1>Good Evening, " );
35 } // end if
36
37 document.writeln( name +
38     ", welcome to JavaScript programming!</h1>" );
39 // -->
40 </script>
41 </head><body></body>
42 </html>
```

Fig. 6.14 | Using equality and relational operators. (Part 2 of 3.)

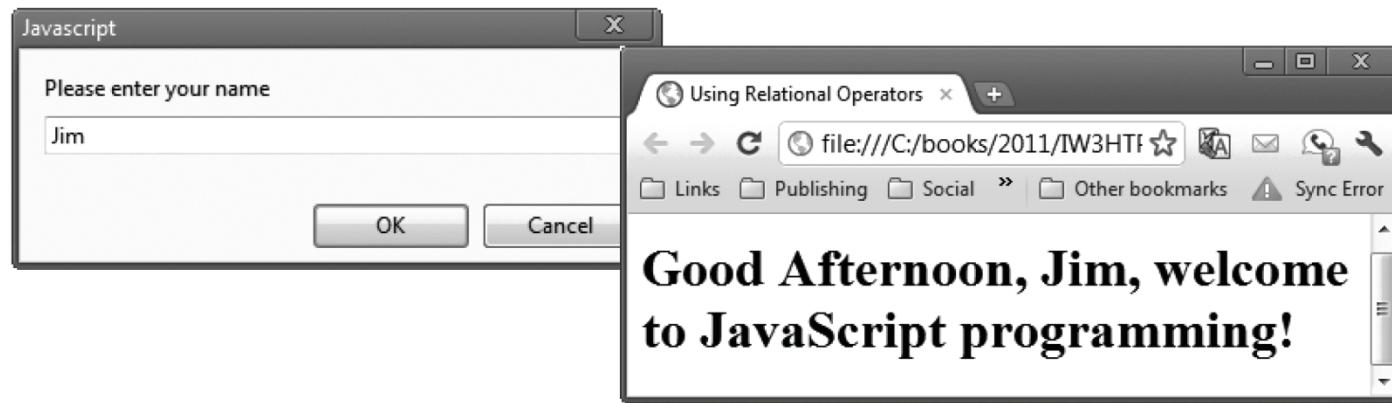


Fig. 6.14 | Using equality and relational operators. (Part 3 of 3.)



6.7 Decision Making: Equality and Relational Operators (Cont.)

- ▶ Date object
 - Used acquire the current local time
 - Create a new instance of an object by using the new operator followed by the type of the object, Date, and a pair of parentheses



Good Programming Practice 6.6

Include comments after the closing curly brace of control statements (such as `if` statements) to indicate where the statements end, as in line 35 of Fig. 6.14.



Good Programming Practice 6.7

Indent the statement in the body of an `if` statement to make the body of the statement stand out and to enhance script readability.



Error-Prevention Tip 6.2

A lengthy statement may be spread over several lines. If a single statement must be split across lines, choose breaking points that make sense, such as after a comma in a comma-separated list or after an operator in a lengthy expression. If a statement is split across two or more lines, indent all subsequent lines.



Good Programming Practice 6.8

Refer to the operator precedence chart when writing expressions containing many operators. Confirm that the operations are performed in the order in which you expect them to be performed. If you're uncertain about the order of evaluation, use parentheses to force the order, exactly as you would do in algebraic expressions. Be sure to observe that some operators, such as assignment (=), associate from right to left rather than from left to right.



| Operators | Associativity | Type |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| * | left to right | multiplicative |
| / % | | |
| + | left to right | additive |
| - | | |
| < <= > >= | left to right | relational |
| == != === !=== | left to right | equality |
| = | right to left | assignment |

Fig. 6.15 | Precedence and associativity of the operators discussed so far.