**Stack:**

A stack is an Abstract Data Type (ADT), commonly used in most programming languages. It is named stack as it behaves like a real-world stack, for example – a deck of cards or a pile of plates, etc.



A real-world stack allows operations at one end only. For example, we can place or remove a card or plate from the top of the stack only. Likewise, Stack ADT allows all data operations at one end only. At any given time, we can only access the top element of a stack.

This feature makes it LIFO data structure. LIFO stands for Last-in-first-out. Here, the element which is placed (inserted or added) last, is accessed first. In stack terminology, insertion operation is called PUSH operation and removal operation is called POP operation.

**Stack Representation:**

The following diagram depicts a stack and its operations −



A stack can be implemented by means of Array, Structure, Pointer, and Linked List. Stack can either be a fixed size one or it may have a sense of dynamic resizing. Here, we are going to implement stack using arrays, which makes it a fixed size stack implementation.

## Basic Operations:

Stack operations may involve initializing the stack, using it and then de-initializing it. Apart from these basic stuffs, a stack is used for the following two primary operations −

* **push()** − Pushing (storing) an element on the stack.
* **pop()** − Removing (accessing) an element from the stack.

When data is PUSHed onto stack.

To use a stack efficiently, we need to check the status of stack as well. For the same purpose, the following functionality is added to stacks −

* **peek()** − get the top data element of the stack, without removing it.
* **isFull()** − check if stack is full.
* **isEmpty()** − check if stack is empty.

At all times, we maintain a pointer to the last PUSHed data on the stack. As this pointer always represents the top of the stack, hence named **top**. The **top** pointer provides top value of the stack without actually removing it.

First we should learn about procedures to support stack functions −