

Course introduction

COMS20010 2021, Video lecture 1-1

John Lapinskas, University of Bristol

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- One day you might need to implement these algorithms.
- One day you might need to understand how these algorithms work.
- One day you might need to come up with your own algorithms.
(Much more likely than the above two!)

Course ethos



Kat Maddox

@ctrlshifti



God I wish there was an easier way to do this

```
private bool IsEven(int number){  
    if (number == 1) return false;  
    else if (number == 2) return true;  
    else if (number == 3) return false;  
    else if (number == 4) return true;  
    else if (number == 5) return false;  
    else if (number == 6) return true;  
    else if (number == 7) return false;  
    else if (number == 8) return true;  
    else if (number == 9) return false;  
    else if (number == 10) return true;  
    else if (number == 11) return false;  
    else if (number == 12) return true;  
    else if (number == 13) return false;  
    else if (number == 14) return true;  
    else if (number == 15) return false;  
    else if (number == 16) return true;  
    else if (number == 17) return false;  
    else if (number == 18) return true;  
    else if (number == 19) return false;  
    else if (number == 20) return true;  
    else if (number == 21) return false;  
    else if (number == ?? return true;
```

Course ethos



Kat Maddox @ctrlshifti · 30 Jul

Replying to @ctrlshifti

I figured it out! Thanks everyone

```
private bool IsEven(int number)
{
    string numberString = number.ToString();
    string lastChar = numberString.Substring(numberString.Length - 1);

    if (lastChar == '0' || lastChar == '2' || lastChar == '4' ||
        lastChar == '6' || lastChar == '8')
    {
        return true;
    }

    return false;
}
```

💬 329

↺↻ 1.5K

❤️ 19K



Kat Maddox @ctrlshifti · 30 Jul

Why are people talking about %?

I'm trying to determine parity not get percentages

💬 368

↺↻ 550

❤️ 11.8K



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- One day you might need to understand how these algorithms work.
- One day you might need to come up with your own algorithms.
(Much more likely than the above two!)
- One day you might have to go through a job interview...

Assessment and expectations

Bad news: This unit is hard. Getting a 2.i is something to be proud of. Last year less than half of students got a 2.i or better.

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- **90%** from the final exam.
- **10%** from weekly Blackboard quizzes.

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More good news: The quizzes are free marks!

Blackboard quizzes

These are auto-marked questions worth **10%** of your final grade:

- One per week, due at noon on Mondays. (**Including next week!**)
- They should take roughly 1 hour each, but no time limit.
- You can start a quiz and then finish it later.
- Collaboration, online resources etc. are all fine. Study together!
- The usual late policy for coursework applies, so don't miss the deadline or you'll lose a lot of marks very quickly.

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After a quiz, you get immediate answers and feedback. Don't abuse this. They're important exam prep, so you'd only be cheating yourselves...

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 - Alternatively, ask questions on the unit team (1 working day response).

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- In-person problem class: 90 minutes Friday mornings, week $n + 1$.
 - These will be half-lab, half-lecture, all-important.
 - You don't have to do the sheet first! (See unit page...)
 - You **do** have to have tried your best to understand the week's material.
- Problem sheet answers release: End of Friday, week $n + 1$.

Planning your time

During term, aim to spend about **7 hours per week** on this unit:

- 2 hours watching the week's lecture videos.
- 2.5 hours *understanding* the week's lecture videos. This could, but doesn't have to, include:
 - Attending the one-hour Q&A session;
 - Asking questions on the unit Team;
 - Reading textbooks and other sources;
 - Working together with other students;
 - Trying the problem sheet.
- 1 hour finishing the week's Blackboard quiz.
- 1.5 hours attending the week's problem class.

Further details about unit organisation are on the unit page.

Useful references

Proofs on slides are hard, so I provide recommended readings each week on the unit page as an alternative source.

These are all available **as free eBooks** from the university library at <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/library/>. The most common three will be:

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- **The Algorithm Design Manual (Skiena)**
 - For engineers, by an engineer.
 - The least technical option — great if you're having trouble with proofs.

On COVID and masks

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[This](#) is a pretty neutral comparison site.

Mindset for the unit

This unit is hard, because solving problems is hard.

But like most things, you get **much** better at it with practice.

Case in point...

Mindset for the unit

PROGRESS

PROGRESS								
Forsaken City				21/20	75	153	45	1:40:07.528
Old Site				19/18	81	93	96	1:47:35.580
Celestial Resort				25/25	317	259	274	5:09:51.574
Golden Ridge				29/29	224	287	96	2:35:43.489
Mirror Temple				31/31	215	171	206	3:10:45.301
Reflection				-	137	407	132	2:28:07.107
The Summit				47/47	652	615	718	7:29:16.628
Core				5/5	216	366	545	3:12:11.389
Farewell				1/0		3043		9:45:05.306
TOTALS				178		9423		37:20:54.377



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So keep at it, and climb the mountain. ;-)