

Before you write one piece of computer code, you have to know what the program is supposed to do. Before you write one line of code in any language, it is a good idea to write it in a simple way first to ensure you have included everything you need. The best way to set this up is by using pseudocode.

Defining Pseudocode

Pseudocode is a simple way of writing programming code in English. Pseudocode is not actual programming language. It uses short phrases to write code for programs before you actually create it in a specific language. Once you know what the program is about and how it will function, then you can use pseudocode to create statements to achieve the required results for your program.

Understanding Pseudocode

Pseudocode makes creating programs easier. Programs can be complex and long; preparation is the key. For years, flowcharts were used to map out programs before writing one line of code in a language. However, they were difficult to modify and with the advancement of programming languages, it was difficult to display all parts of a program with a flowchart. It is challenging to find a mistake without understanding the complete flow of a program. That is where pseudocode becomes more appealing.

To use pseudocode, all you do is write what you want your program to say in English. Pseudocode allows you to translate your statements into any language because there are no special commands and it is not standardized. Writing out programs before you code can enable you to better organize and see where you may have left out needed parts in your programs. All you have to do is write it out in your own words in short statements. Let's look at some examples.

Examples of Pseudocode

Let's review an example of pseudocode to **create a program to add 2 numbers together and then display the result.**

Start Program

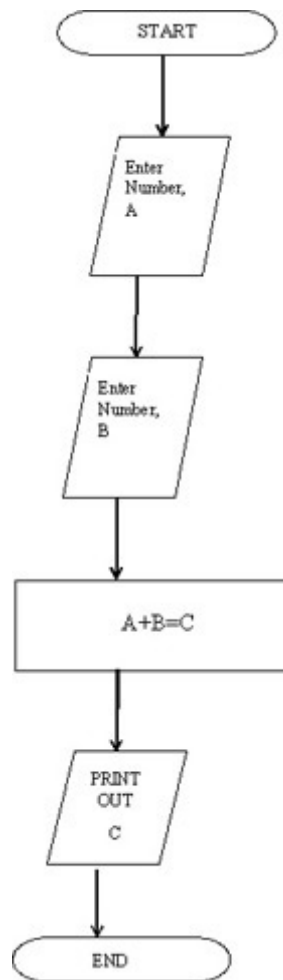
Enter two numbers, A, B

Add the numbers together

Print Sum

End Program

Compare that pseudocode to an example of a flowchart to add two numbers



Now, let's look at a few more simple examples of pseudocode. Here is a pseudocode to **compute the area of a rectangle**:

Get the length, l , and width, w

*Compute the area = $l*w$*

Display the area

Now, let's look at an example of pseudocode to **compute the perimeter of a rectangle**:

Enter length, l

Enter width, w

*Compute Perimeter = $2*l + 2*w$*

Display Perimeter of a rectangle

Remember, writing basic pseudocode is not like writing an actual coding language. It cannot be compiled or run like a regular program. Pseudocode can be written how you want. But some companies use specific pseudocode syntax to keep everyone in the company on the same page. **Syntax** is a set of rules on how to use and organize statements in a programming language. By adhering to specific syntax, everyone in the company can read and understand the flow of a program. This becomes cost effective and there is less time spent finding and correcting errors.