

Algorithm, Pseudocode and Flowchart

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Introduction

Introduction

- Algorithms, flowcharts, and pseudocode are essential tools for problem - solving
- They provide a bridge between problem analysis and actual programming
- This lecture introduces their concepts, notations, and best practices

Algorithms

What is an Algorithm?

- A step-by-step procedure to solve a problem
- Unambiguous and finite sequence of instructions
- Example: A recipe for cooking is an algorithm in real life

Characteristics of a Good Algorithm

- Finiteness: must terminate after finite steps
- Definiteness: each step is clearly defined
- Input: specified set of inputs
- Output: specified set of outputs
- Effectiveness: steps can be performed with available resources

Examples of Simple Algorithms

- Finding the maximum of three numbers
- Calculating factorial of a number
- Linear search in an array

Example Algorithm: Factorial of a Number

- Input an integer, n
- Set $\text{result} = 1$
- While n is larger than 1:
 - $\text{result} = \text{result} \times n$
 - $n = n - 1$
- Output the result

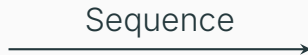
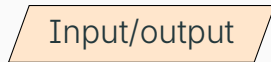
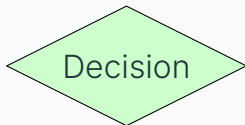
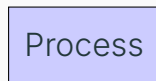
Flowcharts

Definition and Purpose

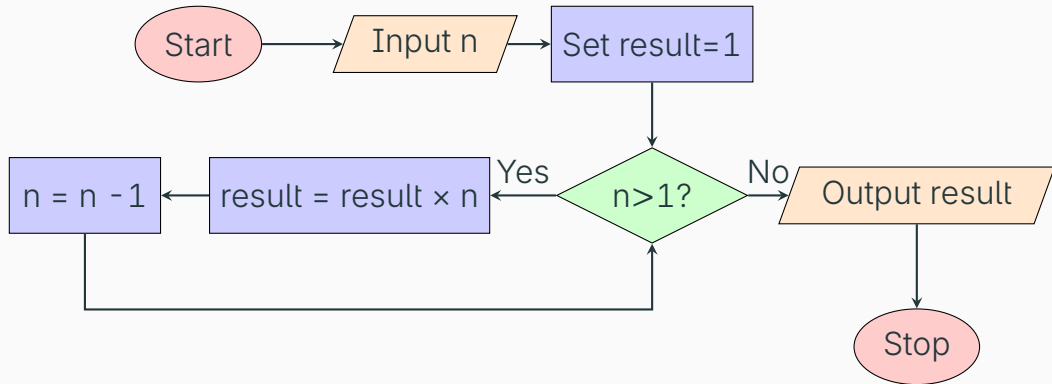
- Flowchart: graphical representation of an algorithm
- Uses standard symbols to show the flow of control
- Helps visualize program logic before coding

Flowchart Shapes

- **Start/Stop:** ellipse
- **Process:** rectangle
- **Decision:** diamond
- **Input/Output:** parallelogram
- **Sequence:** arrow



Example Flowchart: Factorial of a Number



Pseudocode

Purpose of Pseudocode

- Represents algorithms in structured, human-readable code
- Independent of programming language, but may include programming key - words
- Easier to understand and refine before coding

Conventions

- Indentation to show structure
- Keywords like IF, WHILE, FOR
- Use natural language mixed with structured logic

Example pseudocode: Factorial of a Number

```
Input n
Set result = 1
While n>1:
    result = result * n
    n = n - 1
EndWhile
Output result
```

Control Structures

Sequence

- Default mode of execution: step by step
- Example: Read number, calculate square, print result

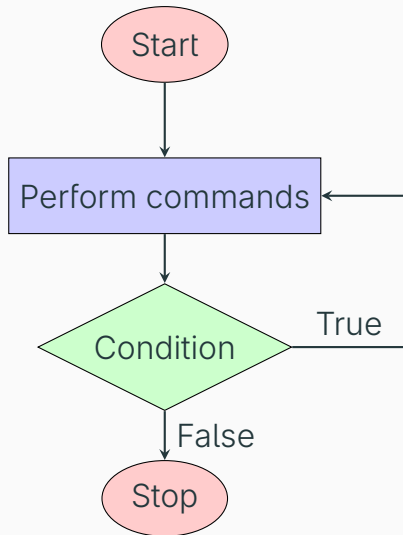
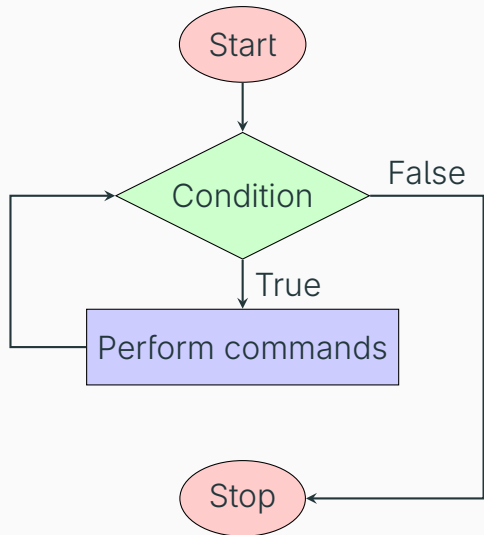
Selection

- **IF**: execute a block if condition is true
- **IF-ELSE**: choose between two alternatives
- **ELSE IF ladder**: multiple conditions

Iteration

- **FOR loop** – fixed number of iterations
- **WHILE loop** – repeat while condition is true
- **DO-WHILE loop** – run at least once, then repeat if condition holds

While vs Do-While



Break and Continue

- **BREAK**: exit the nearest loop immediately (`exit` in Fortran)
- **CONTINUE**: skip rest of current iteration, proceed to next (`cycle` in Fortran)

Recursion

- Function calling itself to solve smaller subproblems
- Example: factorial, Fibonacci
- Must have a base case to terminate

Recursion Example: Factorial of a Number

```
Function Factorial(n):  
    If (n==0):  
        Return 1  
    Else:  
        Return n * Factorial(n-1)  
    EndIf  
EndFunction
```

Best Practices

- Keep flowcharts clean and uncluttered
- Use consistent symbols and indentation
- Pseudocode should be language-independent
- Algorithms should be logically ordered and unambiguous

Common Pitfalls

- Overcomplicating flowcharts with too many details
- Ambiguous pseudocode (mixing multiple languages)
- Ignoring edge cases in algorithms
- Writing unstructured logic

Putting It All Together

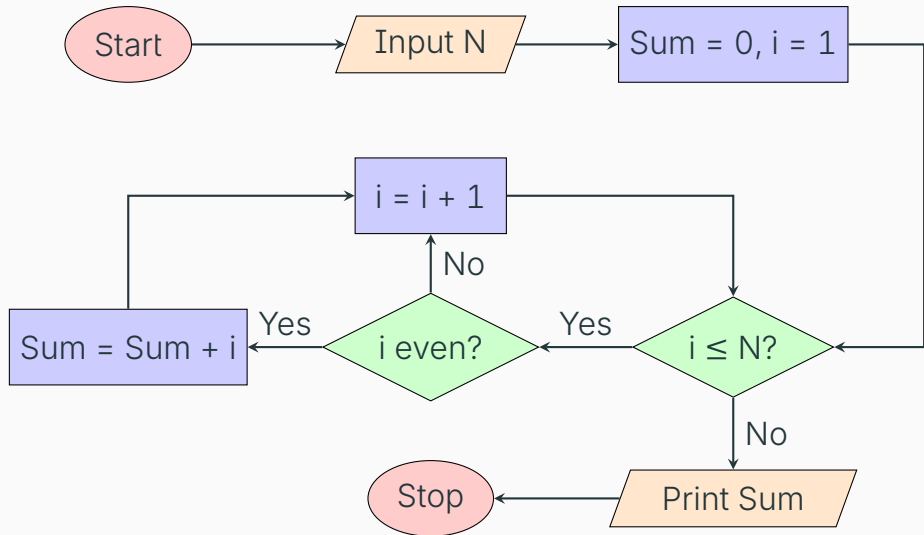
Example task

Compute the sum of all even numbers from 1 to N

Algorithm

- ① Read n
- ② Set $\text{sum} = 0, i = 1$
- ③ While $i \leq n$:
 - If i is even, add i to Sum, else do nothing
 - Add 1 to i
- ④ Print sum.

Flowchart



Pseudocode

```
Input n
sum = 0
i = 1
While (i <= n):
    If (i is even):
        sum = sum + i
    EndIf
    i = i + 1
EndWhile
Output sum
```

Exercises

Exercises

- ① Design an algorithm and flow chart to find the largest of the three numbers
- ② Develop pseudocode for computing the sum of the digits of a given integer
- ③ Write an algorithm and pseudocode to check whether a number is prime

Questions?
