

Introduction

The C programming language is a computer programming language that was developed to do system programming for the operating system UNIX and is an imperative programming language. C was developed in the early 1970s by Ken Thompson and Dennis Ritchie at Bell Labs. It is a procedural language, which means that people can write their programs as a series of step-by-step instructions. C is a compiled language.

C is not a high-level language, instead, it is a mid-level language with the simplicity of high-level language and power of low-level language. As a result, programs written in C are very fast. C is a small language with only 32 keywords (keywords are reserved words used by the language for doing specific tasks). Consequently, it can be learned easily.

Every full C program begins inside a function called "main". A function is simply a collection of commands that do "something". The main function is always called when the program first executes. From main, we can call other functions, whether they be written by us or by others or use built-in language features. To access the standard functions that comes with your compiler, you need to include a header with the #include directive. What this does is effectively take everything in the header and paste it into your program. Let's look at a working program:

```
#include <stdio.h>
int main()
{
    printf( "I am alive! Beware.\n" );
    getchar();
    return 0;
}
```