

# C++ strings vs C-Strings

C-strings are **not first-class types** like the C++ **string** type. They do not work like the built-in types. Look at this example, which tries to **assign**, **compare** and **concatenate** two strings:

```
string str1 = "Hello", str2 = "World";
char cstr1[] = "Hello", cstr2[] = "World";

str1 = "Goodbye";           // assignment OK
cstr1 = "Goodbye";          // ILLEGAL
if (str1 < str2) ...         // comparison OK
if (cstr1 < cstr2) ...       // INCORRECT
str1 += ", ";               // OK
cstr1 += ", ";              // ILLEGAL
```

For the C++ **string** class, assignment, comparison and concatenation work in the same manner as the built-in types. Use the **assignment operator**, the **relational operators**, and the **+=**. **Not so** for C-strings, where you must use functions from the **<cstring>** header to perform the same functionality.

- **strcpy(dest, src)** is used instead of assignment
- **strcat(dest, src)** is used instead of **+=**
- **strcmp(cstr1, cstr2)** is used instead of the relational operators

In addition, in place of the member function **size()**, you use the **strlen(cstr)** function which counts the number of characters before the **'\0'**.



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