

# The C Programming Language

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In 1970, two researchers at Bell Labs in New Jersey (**Ken Thompson** and **Dennis Ritchie**) developed a **portable operating system** for the new wave of **mini-computers** just coming on the market. They named their operating system Unix (or **UNIX** if you like).



**Unix** was originally written in assembly language. Later was converted, (or ported), to a high-level language named **B**. Then, to simplify the development of Unix, Dennis Ritchie modified the **B** language and created the programming language named C.

Both Unix and C have had enormous impacts on the field of computing. Many of today's most important language are based on C, including C++, Java and C#, which still use much of the original syntax designed by Ritchie.

*Unlike the other technologies we have discussed, UNIX is not acronymic (like FORTRAN). The original 1974 CACM paper— The UNIX Time-Sharing System —used all caps because, in Ritchie's words, “ we had a new typesetter and troff had just been invented and we were intoxicated by being able to produce small caps. ” Later Ritchie tried to change the spelling to 'Unix' in a few of his papers. He failed and eventually gave up. See the Jargon file.*



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