

Default Arguments

In your function declaration, you may indicate that **certain arguments are optional** by providing the parameter with a value to be used when no argument is passed in the call. These are called **default arguments**.

To indicate that an argument is optional, include an initial value **in the declaration** of that parameter in the function prototype. For example, you might define a procedure with the following prototype:

```
void formatInColumns(int nColumns = 2);
```

The **= 2** in the prototype declaration means that this **argument** may be omitted when calling the function. You can now call the function in two different ways:

```
formatInColumns();    // use 2 (default) for nColumns
formatInColumns(3);   // use 3 for nColumns
```

The **getline()** function which you have been using, actually has a third parameter, the terminating character, which is given the default value **'\n'** in its declaration.

Since most of the time you want to read an entire line, ending in a newline, that makes sense. However, if you supply a third argument, say **';'** , then **getline** will only read up to a **';'** instead of the entire line. This way you can use **getline** to read a series of delimited fields inside a single line.



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