

Inferred Return Types

Rather than having the caller explicitly instantiate the template and supply a return type, C++ 11 allows a template to **infer** the return type like this:

```
template <typename T, typename U>
auto addem(const T& a, const U& b)->decltype(a + b)
{
    return a + b;
}
```

Using **auto** as the formal template return type, and moving the **deduced** return type so it **follows** the argument list allows the compiler to replace the return type with the **declared type** of the expression **a+b**. (That's what the **decltype** keyword calculates at compile time.

In C++14 this was further simplified. We can now write the **addem** template like this. We **don't** need the trailing return type or **decltype**.

```
template <typename T, typename U>
auto addem(const T& a, const U& b)
{
    return a + b;
}
```

That doesn't mean, however, that you can write a template where only the return type differs. For instance, the following template will not compile because it can't determine whether to use **int** or **double** for the return type when called like **mybad(3, 4.5)**:



```
template <typename T, typename U>
auto mybad(const T& a, const U& b)
{
    if (a > 0) return a;
    return b;
}
```



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