1.8 Java

The microprocessor revolution's most important contribution to date is that it enabled the development of personal computers. Microprocessors also have had a profound impact in intelligent consumer-electronic devices, including the recent explosion in the "Internet of Things." Recognizing this early on, Sun Microsystems in 1991 funded an internal corporate research project led by James Gosling, which resulted in a C++-based object-oriented programming language that Sun called Java. Using Java, you can write programs that will run on a great variety of computer systems and computer-controlled devices. This is sometimes called "write once, run anywhere."

Java drew the attention of the business community because of the phenomenal interest in the Internet. It's now used to develop large-scale enterprise applications, to enhance the functionality of web servers (the computers that provide the content we see in our web browsers), to provide applications for consumer devices (cell phones, smart-phones, television set-top boxes and more), to develop robotics software and for many other purposes. It's also the key language for developing Android smartphone and tablet apps. Sun Microsystems was acquired by Oracle in 2010.

Java has become the most widely used general-purpose programming language with more than 10 million developers.

In this textbook, you'll learn the two most recent versions of Java—Java Standard Edition 8 (Java SE 8) and Java Standard Edition 9 (Java SE 9).

Java Class Libraries

You can create each class and method you need to form your programs. However, most Java programmers take advantage of the rich collections of existing classes and methods in the **Java class libraries**, also known as the **Java APIs (Application Programming Interfaces)**.

Performance Tip 1.1

Using Java API classes and methods instead of writing your own versions can improve program performance, because they're carefully written to perform efficiently. This also shortens program development time.