

CHAPTER

1

INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTERS, PROGRAMS, AND JAVA

Objectives

- To understand computer basics, programs, and operating systems (§§1.2–1.4).
- To describe the relationship between Java and the World Wide Web (§1.5).
- To understand the meaning of Java language specification, API, JDK, and IDE (§1.6).
- To write a simple Java program (§1.7).
- To display output on the console (§1.7).
- To explain the basic syntax of a Java program (§1.7).
- To create, compile, and run Java programs (§1.8).
- To display output using the `JOptionPane` message dialog boxes (§1.9).
- To become familiar with Java programming style and documentation (§1.10).
- To explain the differences between syntax errors, runtime errors, and logic errors (§1.11).



2 Chapter 1 Introduction to Computers, Programs, and Java

1.1 Introduction



what is programming?
programming
program

The central theme of this book is to learn how to solve problems by writing a program.

This book is about programming. So, what is programming? The term *programming* means to create (or develop) software, which is also called a *program*. In basic terms, software contains the instructions that tell a computer—or a computerized device—what to do.

Software is all around you, even in devices that you might not think would need it. Of course, you expect to find and use software on a personal computer, but software also plays a role in running airplanes, cars, cell phones, and even toasters. On a personal computer, you use word processors to write documents, Web browsers to explore the Internet, and e-mail programs to send messages. These programs are all examples of software. Software developers create software with the help of powerful tools called *programming languages*.

This book teaches you how to create programs by using the Java programming language. There are many programming languages, some of which are decades old. Each language was invented for a specific purpose—to build on the strengths of a previous language, for example, or to give the programmer a new and unique set of tools. Knowing that there are so many programming languages available, it would be natural for you to wonder which one is best. But, in truth, there is no “best” language. Each one has its own strengths and weaknesses. Experienced programmers know that one language might work well in some situations, whereas a different language may be more appropriate in other situations. For this reason, seasoned programmers try to master as many different programming languages as they can, giving them access to a vast arsenal of software-development tools.

If you learn to program using one language, you should find it easy to pick up other languages. The key is to learn how to solve problems using a programming approach. That is the main theme of this book.

You are about to begin an exciting journey: learning how to program. At the outset, it is helpful to review computer basics, programs, and operating systems. If you are already familiar with such terms as CPU, memory, disks, operating systems, and programming languages, you may skip the review in Sections 1.2–1.4.

1.2 What Is a Computer?



hardware
software

A computer is an electronic device that stores and processes data.

A computer includes both *hardware* and *software*. In general, hardware comprises the visible, physical elements of the computer, and software provides the invisible instructions that control the hardware and make it perform specific tasks. Knowing computer hardware isn't essential to learning a programming language, but it can help you better understand the effects that a program's instructions have on the computer and its components. This section introduces computer hardware components and their functions.

A computer consists of the following major hardware components (Figure 1.1):

- A central processing unit (CPU)
- Memory (main memory)
- Storage devices (such as disks and CDs)
- Input devices (such as the mouse and keyboard)
- Output devices (such as monitors and printers)
- Communication devices (such as modems and network interface cards)

bus

A computer's components are interconnected by a subsystem called a *bus*. You can think of a bus as a sort of system of roads running among the computer's components; data and