

JavaScript Tutorial

From Basics to Real Applications

Introduction

- As we learned from Sarah's journey, JavaScript transformed web development by providing a high-level language that makes programming accessible and productive.
- This tutorial will teach you JavaScript fundamentals through practical examples.

What is JavaScript?

JavaScript is a **high-level, interpreted** programming language that runs in web browsers and servers (Node.js).

Unlike C (which Sarah struggled with), JavaScript provides:

- **Automatic memory management** - No malloc/free!
- **Dynamic typing** - Variables can hold any type
- **First-class functions** - Functions are values
- **Event-driven programming** - Perfect for user interfaces

Why JavaScript was invented?

- To make web pages interactive
- To enable this, the DOM (Document Object Model) should be manipulatable.
- In other words, we needed a programming language to change the web page on the client side, not the server side.

Who and How?

- JavaScript was invented by Brendan Eich in 1995 while working at Netscape Communications Corporation.
- He used Scheme (a Lisp dialect) and Self (a prototype-based language) as inspirations.
- He invented the programming language to manipulate the DOM in 10 days.
- This is why JavaScript has many functional programming language features (with some twists).

Your First JavaScript Program

```
// This is a comment
console.log("Hello, World!");

// Let's see why JavaScript is "high-level"
const message = "Welcome to JavaScript!";
console.log(message);
```

Your Chrome Browser is JavaScript IDE

Try it:

1. Use Chrome as your main browser.
2. Open your browser's console
 - i. View -> Developer -> View Console
 - ii. F12 or Cmd-option-i (Mac)
3. ype these lines!



Also, consider using BraveBrowser (<https://brave.com>) that is invented by Brendan Eich.

The Real JavaScript IDE

- Use VSCode with extensions
- Use WebStorm (<https://www.jetbrains.com/webstorm/>)

Basic Syntax and Variables

Variables: Three Ways to Declare

```
// 1. const – for values that won't change (preferred)
const pi = 3.14159;
const universityName = "CSC640 University";

// 2. let – for values that will change
let score = 0;
let currentUser = "Student";

// 3. var – old way (avoid in modern code)
var oldStyle = "Don't use me!";
```

Why const and let over var?

```
// Problem with var – no block scope
if (true) {
  var leaked = "I'm visible outside!";
  let contained = "I'm only visible inside";
  const alsoContained = "Me too!";
}

console.log(leaked); // Works (bad!)
console.log(contained); // Error (good!)
console.log(alsoContained); // Error (good!)
```

Data Types

JavaScript has **dynamic typing** - variables can hold any type:

Primitive Types

```
// 1. Number (integers and decimals)
const age = 25;
const gpa = 3.85;
const negative = -42;

// 2. String (text)
const firstName = "Sarah";
const lastName = "Johnson"; // Single or double quotes
const fullName = `${firstName} ${lastName}`; // Template literal
```

```
// 3. Boolean
const isStudent = true;
const hasGraduated = false;

// 4. Undefined (no value assigned)
let futureValue;
console.log(futureValue); // undefined

// 5. Null (intentionally empty)
let emptyOnPurpose = null;

// 6. Symbol (unique identifier)
const uniqueId = Symbol("id");
```

Type Checking

```
console.log(typeof 42); // "number"
console.log(typeof "Hello"); // "string"
console.log(typeof true); // "boolean"
console.log(typeof undefined); // "undefined"
console.log(typeof null); // "object" (historical bug!)
console.log(typeof {}); // "object"
console.log(typeof []); // "object" (arrays are objects)
```

Functions

Functions are the building blocks of JavaScript programs:

Function Declaration

```
// Traditional function
function greetStudent(name) {
    return "Hello, " + name + "!";
}

console.log(greetStudent("Alice")); // "Hello, Alice!"
```

Function Expression

```
// Function stored in a variable
const calculateGrade = function (score, total) {
  const percentage = (score / total) * 100;
  return percentage;
};

console.log(calculateGrade(85, 100)); // 85
```

Arrow Functions (Modern Way)

```
// Short syntax for functions
const add = (a, b) => a + b;

// With multiple lines
const getLetterGrade = (percentage) => {
  if (percentage >= 90) return "A";
  if (percentage >= 80) return "B";
  if (percentage >= 70) return "C";
  if (percentage >= 60) return "D";
  return "F";
};

console.log(add(5, 3)); // 8
console.log(getLetterGrade(85)); // 'B'
```


Functions as First-Class Citizens

```
// Functions can be passed as arguments
const numbers = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5];

// Using a function as an argument to map
const doubled = numbers.map((num) => num * 2);
console.log(doubled); // [2, 4, 6, 8, 10]

// Functions can return functions
const createMultiplier = (factor) => {
  return (number) => number * factor;
};

const double = createMultiplier(2);
const triple = createMultiplier(3);

console.log(double(5)); // 10
console.log(triple(5)); // 15
```

Arrays and Objects

Arrays - Ordered Collections

```
// Creating arrays
const courses = ["Math", "Physics", "JavaScript"];
const scores = [95, 87, 92, 88];
const mixed = [42, "Hello", true, null]; // Can mix types!

// Accessing elements (0-indexed)
console.log(courses[0]); // "Math"
console.log(courses[2]); // "JavaScript"
console.log(courses.length); // 3
```

```
// Common array methods
courses.push("React"); // Add to end
courses.pop(); // Remove from end
courses.unshift("HTML"); // Add to beginning
courses.shift(); // Remove from beginning

// Array methods that don't modify original
const upperCourses = courses.map((course) => course.toUpperCase());
const longCourses = courses.filter((course) => course.length > 5);
const totalScore = scores.reduce((sum, score) => sum + score, 0);
```

JavaScript filter function filters out the input array from the filter function.

```
const scores = [95, 87, 92, 88];  
const longCourses = courses.filter((course) => course.length > 90);  
// [95, 92]
```

JavaScript reduce function reduces its input argument

```
const scores = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5];  
const totalScore = scores.reduce((sum, score) => sum + score, 0);  
// initial sum is 0, and score is the first value of scores  
// (0, 1) => 0 + 1 : this becomes sum  
// (1, 2) => 3: (3, 3) => 6: (6, 4) => 10, (10, 5) => 15
```

Objects - Key-Value Pairs

```
// Creating objects
const student = {
  name: "Sarah Johnson",
  age: 22,
  major: "Computer Science",
  gpa: 3.85,
  courses: ["CSC640", "MAT201", "PHY101"]
};

// Accessing properties
console.log(student.name); // Dot notation
console.log(student["age"]); // Bracket notation

// Modifying objects
student.gpa = 3.9; // Update
student.email = "sarah@uni.edu"; // Add new property
delete student.age; // Remove property
```

- JSON is JavaScript Object Notation, and it is based on a JavaScript Object.
- In JavaScript, we don't need the double quotation for the key.
- However, when we use JSON string, we must use quotation.

```
// JavaScript Object
const student = {"name": "Sarah Johnson"};
const student = {name: "Sarah Johnson"};

// JSON string
const student = '{"name": "Sarah Johnson"}';
```

- JavaScript object can have methods.
- The `this` in a JavaScript object means the object that the method is accessing.

```
// Object methods
const calculator = {
  add: (a, b) => a + b,
  multiply: (a, b) => a * b,

  // Method using 'this'
  numbers: [1, 2, 3],
  sum: function () {
    return this.numbers.reduce((a, b) => a + b, 0);
  }
};

console.log(calculator.add(5, 3)); // 8
console.log(calculator.sum()); // 6
```

This feature is similar to the class of OOP languages.

```
# Python code
class Calculator:
    def __init__(self):
        self.numbers = [1,2,3]
    def add(self, a, b):
        return a + b
    def multiply(self, a, b):
        return a * b
    def sum(self):
        return sum(self.numbers)

print(Calculator().add(5,3))
print(Calculator().sum())
```


Destructuring (Modern Feature)

```
// Array destructuring
const rgb = [255, 128, 0];
const [red, green, blue] = rgb;
console.log(red); // 255

// Object destructuring
// JavaScript matches corresponding values
const { name, gpa, major } = student;
console.log(name); // "Sarah Johnson"

// In function parameters
const displayStudent = ({ name, major }) => {
  console.log(`${name} studies ${major}`);
};

displayStudent(student);
// "Sarah Johnson studies Computer Science"
```

Control Flow

If/Else Statements

```
const score = 85;

if (score >= 90) {
  console.log("Excellent! Grade: A");
} else if (score >= 80) {
  console.log("Good job! Grade: B");
} else if (score >= 70) {
  console.log("Not bad! Grade: C");
} else {
  console.log("Need improvement");
}

// Ternary operator (short if/else)
const passed = score >= 60 ? "Passed" : "Failed";
console.log(passed); // "Passed"
```

Switch Statement

```
const day = "Monday";

switch (day) {
  case "Monday":
  case "Tuesday":
    console.log("Regular classes");
    break;
  case "Wednesday":
    console.log("Lab day");
    break;
  case "Saturday":
  case "Sunday":
    console.log("Weekend!");
    break;
  default:
    console.log("Study day");
}
```

Loops

```
// For loop
for (let i = 0; i < 5; i++) {
  console.log(`Count: ${i}`);
}

// While loop
let countdown = 5;
while (countdown > 0) {
  console.log(`${countdown}...`);
  countdown--;
}
```

We have high-level JavaScript loops:

- for ... of is for iterating over values.
- for ... in is for iterating over keys
- forEach is functional style code

```
// For...of (iterate over values)
const grades = [85, 92, 78, 95];
for (const grade of grades) {
  console.log(`Grade: ${grade}`);
}
// For...in (iterate over keys)
const studentInfo = { name: "Alice", age: 20, major: "CS" };
for (const key in studentInfo) {
  console.log(`${key}: ${studentInfo[key]}`);
}
// Array iteration methods (functional style)
grades.forEach((grade, index) => {
  console.log(`Test ${index + 1}: ${grade}`);
});
```

DOM (Document Object Model)

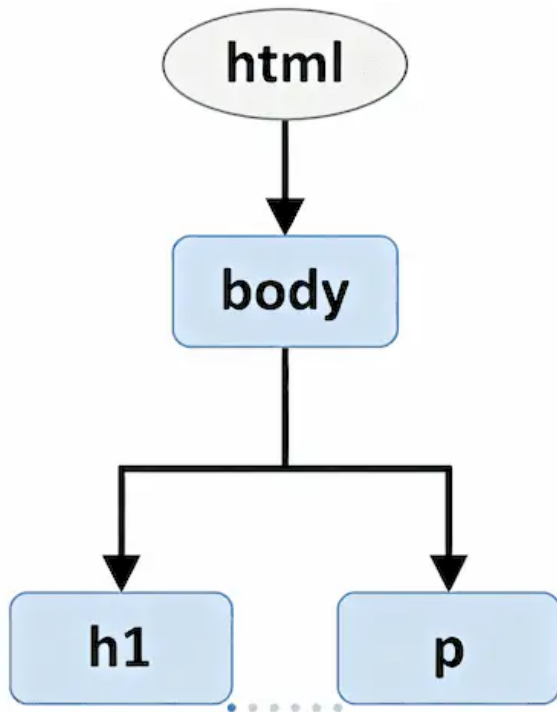
- The **DOM (Document Object Model)** is a **tree-like structure** that represents everything in an HTML page.
- Each part of your webpage — text, images, buttons — becomes a **node** (object) that JavaScript can access or change.

Real-World Analogy

Imagine a **house blueprint**:

- The house = the web page
- Rooms, doors, windows = HTML elements
- The **DOM** = digital version of that blueprint — you can **inspect** or **change** any part (move a door, paint a wall) via **JavaScript**

HTML Example



```
<!DOCTYPE html>  
<html>  
  <body>  
    <h1>Hello World</h1>  
    <p>Welcome to DOM!</p>  
  </body>  
</html>
```

Each element (like `<h1>` or `<p>`) is a node in the DOM tree.

Accessing Nodes with JavaScript

DOM Tree Representation:

```
Document
├── html
│   └── body
│       ├── h1
│       │   └── "Hello World"
│       └── p
│           └── "Welcome to DOM!"
```

```
document.querySelector("h1").innerText = "Hi from DOM!";
```

Before: Hello World

After (DOM updated dynamically): Hi from DOM!

DOM Manipulation

This is why JavaScript was invented - interacting with web pages!

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<head>
  <title>DOM Selector Example</title>
</head>
<body>
  <h1 id="page-title">Welcome to My Page</h1>
  <p>Here are some buttons to test DOM selection:</p>
  <!-- Buttons with class "btn" -->
  <button class="btn">Button 1</button>
  <button class="btn">Button 2</button>
  <!-- A form with a submit button -->
  <form id="form">
    <input type="text" placeholder="Enter name" />
    <button type="submit" class="btn">Submit</button>
  </form>
</body>
```

Selecting Elements

```
<h1 id="page-title">Welcome to My Page</h1>
```

id attribute is used to identify a unique element.

```
// Get element by ID  
const title = document.getElementById("page-title");
```

```
<button class="btn">Button 1</button> <button class="btn">Button 2</button>
```

class is used to specify multiple elements with the same attribute.

```
// Get elements by class name
const buttons = document.getElementsByClassName("btn");

// Modern way: querySelector
const firstButton = document.querySelector(".btn"); // First match
const allButtons = document.querySelectorAll(".btn"); // All matches
```

```
<!-- A form with a submit button -->
<form id="form">
  <input type="text" placeholder="Enter name" />
  <button type="submit" class="btn">Submit</button>
</form>
```

We can specify using a multiple selector.

```
// CSS-style selectors
const submitBtn = document.querySelector('#form button[type="submit"]');
```

Modifying Elements

```
// Change text content
const heading = document.querySelector("h1");
heading.textContent = "Welcome to JavaScript!";

// Change HTML content
const container = document.querySelector(".content");
container.innerHTML = "<p>New <strong>HTML</strong> content</p>";

// Modify styles
heading.style.color = "blue";
heading.style.fontSize = "24px";

// Add/remove CSS classes
heading.classList.add("highlight");
heading.classList.remove("old-style");
heading.classList.toggle("active");
```

Creating Elements

```
// Create new elements
const newTask = document.createElement("li");
newTask.textContent = "Learn JavaScript";
newTask.classList.add("task-item");

// Add to the page
const taskList = document.querySelector("#task-list");
taskList.appendChild(newTask);

// Or insert at specific position
const firstTask = taskList.firstChild;
taskList.insertBefore(newTask, firstTask);
```

Event Handling

```
// Click event
const button = document.querySelector("#myButton");
button.addEventListener("click", () => {
  console.log("Button clicked!");
});

// Form submission
const form = document.querySelector("#myForm");
form.addEventListener("submit", (event) => {
  event.preventDefault(); // Stop default form submission
  console.log("Form submitted!");
});

// Input events
const input = document.querySelector("#name-input");
input.addEventListener("input", (event) => {
  console.log("Current value:", event.target.value);
});

// Keyboard events
document.addEventListener("keydown", (event) => {
  if (event.key === "Enter") {
    console.log("Enter pressed!");
  }
});
```


Modern JavaScript Features

Template Literals

```
// Old way
const name = "Sarah";
const age = 25;
const message = "Hello, " + name + "! You are " + age + " years old.";

// Modern way with template literals
const modernMessage = `Hello, ${name}! You are ${age} years old.`;

// Multi-line strings
const html = `
  <div class="card">
    <h2>${name}</h2>
    <p>Age: ${age}</p>
  </div>
`;
```

Spread Operator

```
// Array spread
const numbers = [1, 2, 3];
const moreNumbers = [...numbers, 4, 5]; // [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

// Copy array
const copy = [...numbers]; // [1, 2, 3]

// Object spread
const person = { name: "Alice", age: 20 };
const student = { ...person, major: "CS", gpa: 3.8 };
// { name: "Alice", age: 20, major: "CS", gpa: 3.8 }

// Function arguments
const scores = [95, 87, 92];
console.log(Math.max(...scores)); // 95
```

Default Parameters

```
// Old way
function greet(name) {
  name = name || "Guest";
  return `Hello, ${name}!`;
}

// Modern way
const modernGreet = (name = "Guest") => {
  return `Hello, ${name}!`;
};

console.log(modernGreet()); // "Hello, Guest!"
console.log(modernGreet("Sarah")); // "Hello, Sarah!"
```

Array Methods for Functional Programming

```
const students = [
  { name: "Alice", gpa: 3.8, major: "CS" },
  { name: "Bob", gpa: 3.2, major: "Math" },
  { name: "Carol", gpa: 3.9, major: "CS" },
  { name: "Dave", gpa: 3.5, major: "Physics" }
];

// Filter CS students
const csStudents = students.filter((student) => student.major === "CS");

// Get all GPAs
const gpas = students.map((student) => student.gpa);

// Find honor roll students (GPA >= 3.5)
const honorRoll = students
  .filter((student) => student.gpa >= 3.5)
  .map((student) => student.name);

// Calculate average GPA
const avgGPA =
  students.reduce((sum, student) => sum + student.gpa, 0) / students.length;
```

Map and forEach

- `map()` → transforms each element and returns a new array
- `forEach()` → just iterates through elements (no return value)

[a, b, c]



`map()` returns
[A, B, C]

[a, b, c]



`forEach()` just
loops (no new array)

map() Example — Transforms and RETURNS a new array

```
const upperNames = students.map(s => s.name.toUpperCase());  
console.log(upperNames);
```

➡ Output:
["ALICE", "BOB", "CAROL", "DAVE"]

forEach() Example — Just Loops (no return)

```
const result = [];  
students.forEach(s => result.push(s.name.toUpperCase()));  
console.log(result);
```

➡ Output:
["ALICE", "BOB", "CAROL", "DAVE"]

Map and reduce

- map is for **processing each element** independently often **parallelizable**, since each operation is separate
- reduce is for **combining all elements**; results in a **single summarized value**

map():

[3.8, 3.2, 3.9, 3.5]



[3.8, 3.2, 3.9, 3.5] → array of values

reduce():

[3.8, 3.2, 3.9, 3.5]



(sum) → 14.4 → average 3.6

map() Example

```
const gpas = students.map((s) => s.gpa);  
console.log(gpas);
```

Output: [3.8, 3.2, 3.9, 3.5];

reduce() Example

```
const avgGPA = students.reduce((sum, s) => sum + s.gpa, 0) / students.length;  
console.log(avgGPA.toFixed(2));
```

Output: 3.6;

Search/Find

- find for finding elements that matches the condition
- every for checking if all elements match the condition
- some for checking if any element matches the condition

```
// Find a specific student
const alice = students.find((student) => student.name === "Alice");

// Check if all students have GPA > 3.0
const allAbove3 = students.every((student) => student.gpa > 3.0);

// Check if any CS student
const hasCSStudent = students.some((student) => student.major === "CS");
```

JavaScript Best Practices

1. Use Descriptive Variable Names

```
// Bad
const x = 3.14;
const arr = [1, 2, 3];

// Good
const piValue = 3.14;
const testScores = [85, 92, 88];
```

2. Use const by Default

```
// Use const for values that don't change
const MAX_SCORE = 100;
const API_URL = "https://api.example.com";

// Use let only when reassignment is needed
let currentScore = 0;
currentScore += 10;
```

3. Avoid Global Variables

```
// Bad – pollutes global scope
var userName = "Alice";

// Good – use function scope or modules
function getUserData() {
  const userName = "Alice";
  return userName;
}
```

4. Handle Errors Gracefully

```
// Check for null/undefined
function displayUser(user) {
  if (!user) {
    console.log("No user provided");
    return;
  }
  console.log(`Hello, ${user.name}`);
}

// Use try-catch for risky operations
try {
  const data = JSON.parse(jsonString);
  processData(data);
} catch (error) {
  console.error("Invalid JSON:", error.message);
}
```

5. Use Array Methods Instead of Loops

```
// Less readable
const doubled = [];
for (let i = 0; i < numbers.length; i++) {
  doubled.push(numbers[i] * 2);
}

// More readable and functional
const doubled = numbers.map((num) => num * 2);
```

6. Comment Your Code Wisely

```
// Bad – obvious comment  
let count = 0; // Set count to 0
```

```
// Good – explains why  
let retryCount = 0; // Track failed API calls for exponential backoff
```

7. Keep Functions Small and Focused

```
// Bad – does too many things
function processStudent(student) {
    // Validate
    // Calculate GPA
    // Send email
    // Update database
    // Generate report
}

// Good – single responsibility
function validateStudent(student) {
    /* ... */
}
function calculateGPA(grades) {
    /* ... */
}
function sendEmail(recipient, content) {
    /* ... */
}
```


Summary

JavaScript is a powerful high-level language that makes web development accessible and enjoyable. Key takeaways:

1. **Dynamic and Flexible** - No compilation, runs everywhere
2. **First-class Functions** - Functions are values
3. **Rich Built-in Methods** - Arrays, strings, objects have powerful methods
4. **Event-Driven** - Perfect for interactive UIs
5. **Modern Features** - Constantly evolving with new conveniences

Remember Sarah's journey - JavaScript transformed her from struggling with low-level details to building applications quickly and efficiently. With practice, you'll experience the same transformation!

Building Your First App

Let's build a Grade Calculator application using everything we've learned.

The example code is in the matching `code` directory.

Open the index.html file using your web browser and check how the JavaScript code.