



Why

We want to associate objects with series of the natural numbers zero and one.¹

Definition

A *bit string* is a finite sequence in the set $\{0, 1\}$.

If the sequence has length one, we refer to it as a *bit*. Using this terminology, it is natural to call the sequence terms *bits*. Other terminology for bit strings includes *binary string*, *bit sequence* and *digital datum*.

If the sequence has length eight, we refer to it as a *byte*. Using this terminology, a *kilobyte* is a length $8 * 2^{10}$ bitstring. In other words, a kilobyte is $2^{10} = 1024$ bytes. So a kilobyte is roughly one thousand bytes. Likewise a *megabyte* is a length $8 * 2^{20} = 1048576$ bytes.

¹This explanation requires one more step, which future editions will discuss.

