

Swap Two Numbers Without Using Third Variable - GeeksforGeeks

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Courses Tutorials Practice Jobs DSA Tutorial Interview Questions Quizzes Must Do Advanced DSA System Design Aptitude Puzzles Interview Corner DSA Python Technical Scripter 2026 Explore DSA Fundamentals Logic Building Problems Analysis of Algorithms Data Structures Array Data Structure String in Data Structure Hashing in Data Structure Linked List Data Structure Stack Data Structure Queue Data Structure Tree Data Structure Graph Data Structure Trie Data Structure Algorithms Searching Algorithms Sorting Algorithms Introduction to Recursion Greedy Algorithms Tutorial Graph Algorithms Dynamic Programming or DP Bitwise Algorithms Advanced Segment Tree Binary Indexed Tree or Fenwick Tree Square Root (Sqrt) Decomposition Algorithm Binary Lifting Geometry Interview Preparation Interview Corner GfG160 Practice Problem GeeksforGeeks Practice - Leading Online Coding Platform Problem of The Day - Develop the Habit of Coding DSA Course 90% Refund Swap Two Numbers Without Using Third Variable Last Updated : 23 Jul, 2025 Given two variables a and y , swap two variables without using a third variable. Examples: Input: $a = 2$, $b = 3$ Output: $a = 3$, $b = 2$ Input: $a = 20$, $b = 0$ Output: $a = 0$, $b = 20$ Input: $a = 10$, $b = 10$ Output: $a = 10$, $b = 10$ Try it on GfG Practice Table of Content Using Arithmetic Operators Using Bitwise XOR Built-in Swap Using Arithmetic Operators Store the sum of a and b in a ($a = a + b$). Get the original value of a , that is (sum - original value of b)and store it in b ($b = a - b$). Get the original value of b , that is (sum - original value of a)and store it in a ($a = a - b$). C++ // C++ Code to swap two numbers using arithmetic operators #include <iostream> using namespace std ; int main () { int a = 2 , b = 3 ; cout << "a = " << a << " b = " << b << endl ; a = a + b ; b = a - b ; a = a - b ; cout << "a = " << a << " b = " << b << endl ; return 0 ; } C // C Code to swap two numbers using arithmetic operators #include <stdio.h> int main () { int a = 2 , b = 3 ; printf ("a = %d b = %d \n" , a , b); a = a + b ; b = a - b ; a = a - b ; printf ("a = %d b = %d \n" , a , b); return 0 ; } Java // Java Code to swap two numbers using arithmetic operators class GfG { public static void main (String [] args) { int a = 2 , b = 3 ; System . out . println ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); a = a + b ; b = a - b ; a = a - b ; System . out . println ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); } } Python # Python Code to swap two numbers using arithmetic operators if __name__ == "__main__" : a = 2 b = 3 print ("a = " , a , " b = " , b) a = a + b b = a - b a = a - b print ("a = " , a , " b = " , b) C# // C# Code to swap two numbers using arithmetic operators using System ; class GfG { static void Main () { int a = 2 , b = 3 ; Console . WriteLine ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); // Swap a and b using arithmetic operators a = a + b ; b = a - b ; a = a - b ; Console . WriteLine ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); } } JavaScript // JavaScript Code to swap two numbers using arithmetic operators let a = 2 , b = 3 ; console . log ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); a = a + b ; b = a - b ; a = a - b ; console . log ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); Output a = 2 b = 3 a = 3 b = 2 Time Complexity: O(1) Auxiliary Space: O(1) Using Bitwise XOR The idea is to use the properties of XOR to swap the two variables. $a = a \wedge b$: Store the Bitwise XOR of a and b in a . Now, a holds the result of ($a \wedge b$) . $b = a \wedge b$: Bitwise XOR the new value of a with b to get the original value of a . This gives us, $b = (a \wedge b) \wedge b = a$. $a = a \wedge b$: Bitwise XOR the new value of a with the new value of b (which is the original a) to get the original value of b . This gives us, $a = (a \wedge b) \wedge a = b$. Finally, a and b hold the swapped values. C++ // C++ Code to swap two numbers using bitwise XOR #include <iostream> using namespace std ; int main () { int a = 2 , b = 3 ; cout << "a = " << a << " b = " << b << endl ; a = a ^ b ; b = a ^ b ; a = a ^ b ; cout << "a = " << a << " b = " << b << endl ; return 0 ; } C // C Code to swap two numbers using bitwise XOR #include <stdio.h> int main () { int a = 2 , b = 3 ; printf ("a = %d b = %d \n" , a , b); a = a ^ b ; b = a ^ b ; a = a ^ b ; printf ("a = %d b = %d \n" , a , b); return 0 ; } Java // Java Code to swap two numbers using bitwise XOR class GfG { public static void main (String [] args) { int a = 2 , b = 3 ; System . out . println ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); a = a ^ b ; b = a ^ b ; a = a ^ b ; System . out . println ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); } } Python # Python Code to swap two numbers using bitwise XOR if __name__ == "__main__" : a = 2 b = 3 print ("a = " , a , " b = " , b) a = a ^ b b = a ^ b a = a ^ b print ("a = " , a , " b = " , b) C# // C# Code to swap two numbers using bitwise XOR using System ; class GfG { static void Main () { int a = 2 , b = 3 ; Console . WriteLine ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); // Swap a and b using arithmetic operators a = a ^ b ; b = a ^ b ; a = a ^ b ; Console . WriteLine ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); } } JavaScript // JavaScript Code to swap two numbers using bitwise XOR let a = 2 , b = 3 ; console . log

("a = " + a + " b = " + b); a = a ^ b ; b = a ^ b ; a = a ^ b ; console . log ("a = " + a + " b = " + b); Output
a = 2 b = 3 a = 3 b = 2 Time Complexity: O(1) Auxiliary Space: O(1) Built-in Swap We can also swap using built-in functionalities like swap method in C++, tuple unpacking in Python, destructuring assignment in JavaScript. To know more about the implementation, please refer Swap Two Numbers .
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