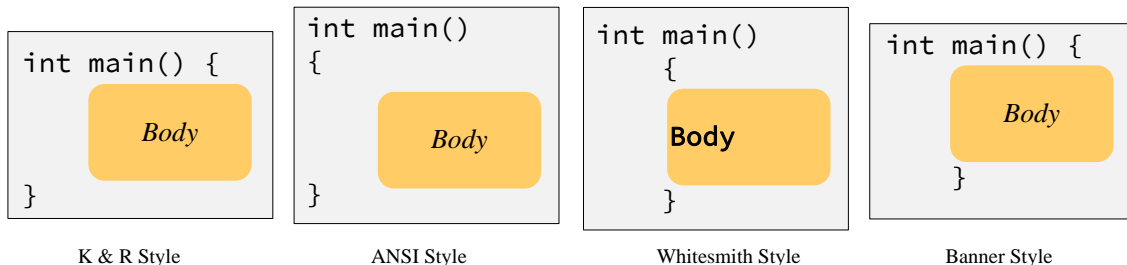


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**Figure 4.3** The most common C++ coding styles.

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Even if you are not forced to use a particular style, it is important to use a consistent style throughout the code you write. As our programs become more complex we will need to use additional curly braces and various levels of indentation to organize the code we write. A consistent style (especially one of the standard styles shown in Figure 4.3) makes it easier to read and verify that the code actually expresses our intent. It also makes it easier to find and fix errors. Said another way, haphazard formatting increases the time it takes to develop correct software because programmer's mistakes hide better in poorly formatted code.

Good software development tools can boost programmer productivity, and many programming editors have the ability to automatically format source code according to a standard style. Some of these editors can correct the code's style as the programmer types in the text. A standalone program known as a *pretty printer* can transform an arbitrarily formatted C++ source file into a properly formatted one.