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Variables are "containers" for storing information.

Do You Remember Algebra From School?

Do you remember algebra from school? $x=5$, $y=6$, $z=x+y$

Do you remember that a letter (like x) could be used to hold a value (like 5), and that you could use the information above to calculate the value of z to be 11?

These letters are called **variables**, and variables can be used to hold values ($x=5$) or expressions ($z=x+y$).

JavaScript Variables

As with algebra, JavaScript variables are used to hold values or expressions.

A variable can have a short name, like x , or a more descriptive name, like `carname`.

Rules for JavaScript variable names:

- Variable names are case sensitive (y and Y are two different variables)
- Variable names must begin with a letter or the underscore character

Note: Because JavaScript is case-sensitive, variable names are case-sensitive.

Example

A variable's value can change during the execution of a script. You can refer to a variable by its name to display or change its value.

[This example will show you how](#)

Declaring (Creating) JavaScript Variables

Creating variables in JavaScript is most often referred to as "declaring" variables.

You declare JavaScript variables with the **var** keyword:

```
var x;
var carname;
```

After the declaration shown above, the variables are empty (they have no values yet).

However, you can also assign values to the variables when you declare them:

```
var x=5;
var carname="Volvo";
```

After the execution of the statements above, the variable **x** will hold the value **5**, and **carname** will hold the value **Volvo**.

Note: When you assign a text value to a variable, use quotes around the value.

Note: If you redeclare a JavaScript variable, it will not lose its value.

Local JavaScript Variables

A variable declared within a JavaScript function becomes **LOCAL** and can only be accessed within that function. (the variable has local scope).

You can have local variables with the same name in different functions, because local variables are only recognized by the function in which they are declared.

Local variables are destroyed when you exit the function.

You will learn more about functions in a later chapter of this tutorial.

Global JavaScript Variables

Variables declared outside a function become **GLOBAL**, and all scripts and functions on the web page can access it.

Global variables are destroyed when you close the page.

If you declare a variable, without using "var", the variable always becomes **GLOBAL**.

Assigning Values to Undeclared JavaScript Variables

If you assign values to variables that have not yet been declared, the variables will automatically be declared as global variables.

These statements:

```
x=5;
carname="Volvo";
```

will declare the variables `x` and `carname` as global variables (if they don't already exist).

JavaScript Arithmetic

As with algebra, you can do arithmetic operations with JavaScript variables:

```
y=x-5;
z=y+5;
```

You will learn more about the operators that can be used in the next chapter of this tutorial.

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