Chrome V8 is a JavaScript engine, which means that it executes JavaScript code. Originally, JavaScript was written to be executed by web browsers. Chrome V8, or just V8, can execute JavaScript code either within or outside of a browser, which makes [server-side scripting](https://www.cloudflare.com/learning/serverless/glossary/client-side-vs-server-side/) possible.

Like a V8 (eight-cylinder) car engine, Chrome V8 is fast and powerful. V8 translates JavaScript code directly into machine code\* so that computers can actually understand it, then it executes the translated, or compiled, code. V8 optimizes JavaScript execution as well.

\*Machine code is a language that CPUs can understand. It is purely digital, meaning made up of digits.