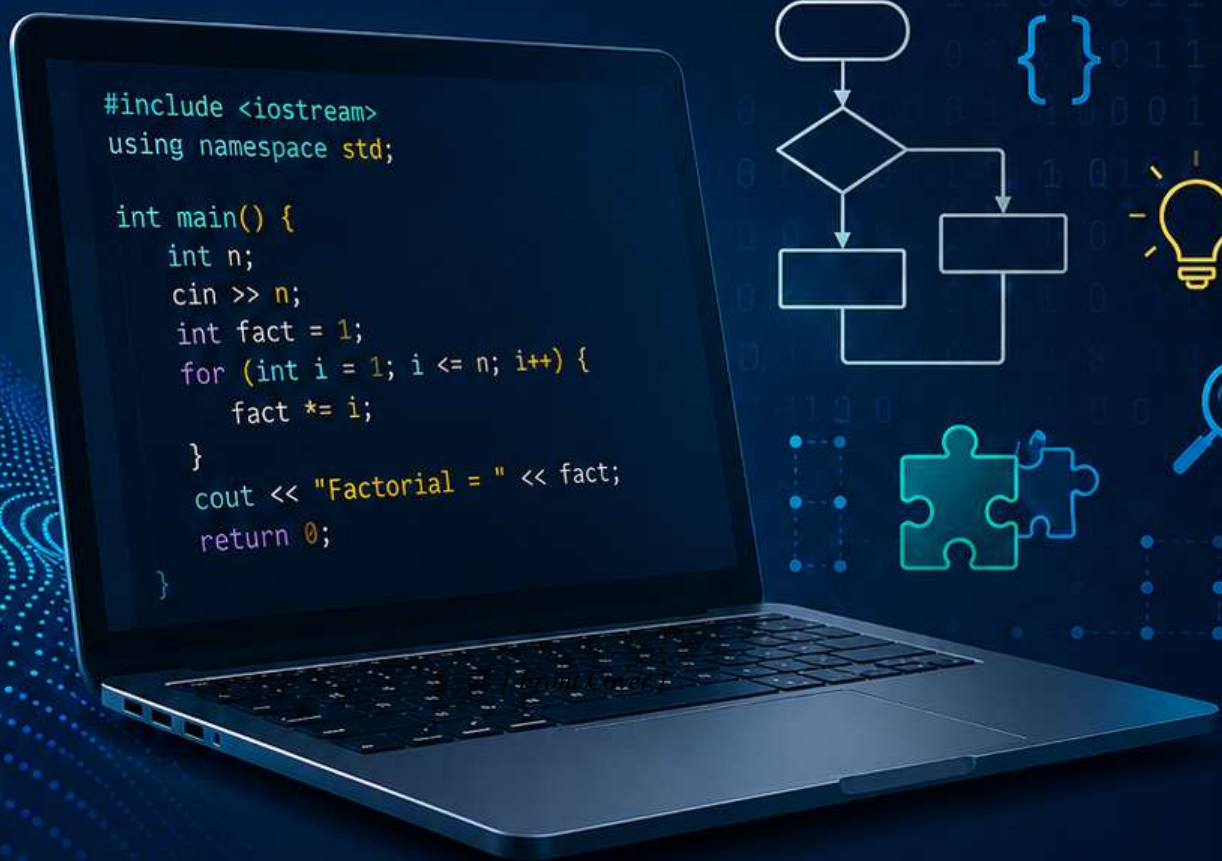


PROGRAMMING

FOR

PROBLEM SOLVING



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ISBN No.: 978-81-686149-9-4 (Digital)

First published in June, 2026 by

Learnet Publishing

19/B, Kali Kumar Majumder Road, P.O. Santoshpur Avenue, P.S. Survey Park, Kolkata – 700075, West Bengal, India

Email IDs: learnetpublishing@gmail.com | info@learnetpub.co.in

Mobile No. / WhatsApp: +91-9836423405

Website: www.learnetpub.co.in | www.jctmg.in | www.eolearnet.co.in

MRP: INR 699 (Digital Edition)

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Preface

The twenty-first century has witnessed an unprecedented growth in computing technologies, making programming an essential skill across almost every discipline of science, engineering, and business. In today's digital era, the ability to solve problems systematically and translate solutions into computer programs is no longer confined to computer professionals alone; it has become a fundamental competency for students and practitioners in diverse domains. Programming develops analytical thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving abilities that are indispensable in the modern world. It is with this perspective that the book "Programming for Problem Solving" has been conceived and developed.

The primary objective of this book is to introduce readers to the art and science of problem solving through programming. Rather than merely teaching the syntax of a programming language, this book emphasizes the development of computational thinking and algorithmic approaches to solving real-world problems. The contents have been carefully organized to provide a systematic progression from the fundamental concepts of computing to advanced programming constructs, enabling learners to acquire both conceptual understanding and practical programming skills.

The book begins with *Chapter 1: Introduction to Computing*, which lays the foundation for understanding computer systems and their components. This chapter introduces the basic architecture of computers, including hardware and software systems, program storage and execution mechanisms, and the concept of algorithms. It explains different methods of representing algorithms and demonstrates how algorithms are transformed into executable programs. Furthermore, the chapter familiarizes readers with program errors, object code, and executable code, thereby providing a comprehensive overview of the programming environment and software development process.

Chapter 2: Arithmetic Expressions and Precedence introduces the essential building blocks of programming. Arithmetic operators, assignment operators, unary operators, and operator precedence rules are discussed in detail. Since expressions form the basis of all computational processes, this chapter aims to equip students with the necessary knowledge to construct and evaluate expressions correctly and efficiently. Special attention has been paid to the order of evaluation and the proper use of operators, which are often sources of confusion among beginners. The control flow mechanisms that govern program execution are presented in *Chapter 3: Conditional Branching and Loops*. This chapter explores various decision-making statements, including simple if statements, if-else structures, nested if statements, and switch statements. It also discusses iterative constructs such as for, while, and do-while loops, along with unconditional branching statements. The ability to control the execution flow of a program is fundamental to problem solving, and this chapter provides the necessary tools for implementing complex logical solutions.

Chapter 4: Arrays and Strings focuses on data organization and manipulation techniques. Arrays and strings are indispensable components of programming because they facilitate the storage and processing of large amounts of data efficiently. The chapter introduces one-dimensional and two-dimensional arrays, operations on arrays, character arrays, and string manipulation techniques. Numerous examples have been incorporated to illustrate practical applications of arrays and strings in problem-solving scenarios.

The study of algorithms and their efficiency forms the core of computational problem-solving. Therefore, *Chapter 5: Algorithms and Sorting Techniques* examines various sorting algorithms and introduces numerical methods for solving equations. The chapter also presents the concept of computational complexity and the notion of the order of complexity, enabling readers to evaluate and compare the efficiency of different algorithms. Understanding algorithmic efficiency is particularly important in designing scalable and optimized software solutions.

Chapter 6: Functions introduces modular programming, one of the most powerful techniques for managing complexity in software development. The chapter explains different types of functions, parameter passing mechanisms, and the concepts of call by value and call by reference. It also demonstrates how arrays can be passed to functions and highlights the practical applications of modular design. By decomposing large problems into smaller, manageable components, functions significantly enhance program readability, maintainability, and reusability.

The concept of self-referential computation is explored in *Chapter 7: Recursion*. The chapter discusses the working mechanism of recursion, its advantages and limitations, and compares recursive and iterative approaches to problem solving. Through several illustrative examples, readers gain an appreciation of how recursion can simplify the implementation of certain algorithms, particularly in mathematical computations, searching techniques, and sorting operations.

Chapter 8: Structures introduces user-defined data types that enable programmers to organize related data elements into a single entity. Structures are essential for developing complex data models and form the foundation for advanced concepts in data structures and software engineering. This chapter also explains the interaction of structures with functions, thereby illustrating their practical applications in real-world programming scenarios.

The concepts of memory management and indirect data access are presented in *Chapter 9: Pointers*. Pointers are among the most powerful and challenging features of programming languages such as C. This chapter explains pointer declaration, address manipulation, and the significance of pointers in dynamic memory management and efficient program design. A clear understanding of pointers equips learners with advanced programming techniques that are crucial for systems programming and the implementation of sophisticated data structures.

The final chapter, *Chapter 10: File Handling*, addresses the important aspect of data persistence. It introduces files and their role in storing information permanently beyond program execution. The chapter discusses sequential and random file access methods and explains error handling during input/output operations. Since file processing forms the basis of database systems, operating systems, and real-world software applications, this chapter provides students with practical skills necessary for developing comprehensive applications.

The book has been written with a learner-centric approach and is intended primarily for undergraduate students of Computer Science, Information Technology, Engineering, Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA), Diploma programmes, and other allied disciplines. Each chapter combines theoretical concepts with practical examples to facilitate a deeper understanding of programming principles. The presentation style is simple, systematic, and accompanied by numerous examples and illustrations that encourage self-learning and problem-solving skills.

The authors firmly believe that programming is not merely about writing code; it is about developing a disciplined approach to analyzing problems, designing solutions, and implementing them effectively. This book is an attempt to nurture these essential skills among students and aspiring programmers.

No book can be entirely free from shortcomings, and there is always scope for improvement. The authors would be grateful to receive constructive suggestions and feedback from readers, teachers, and professionals, which will undoubtedly contribute to enhancing future editions of this book. It is our sincere hope that "Programming for Problem Solving" will serve as a valuable companion for students and educators alike, inspiring readers to explore the fascinating world of programming and empowering them to become proficient problem solvers in the ever-evolving field of computing.

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Acknowledgement

Mr. Ghosh expresses his sincere gratitude to **Prof. (Dr.) Mahuya Das**, Ex-Principal of Greater Kolkata College of Engineering and Management, **Prof. (Dr.) Raju Basak**, Principal, and **Dr. Pijush Dutta**, Dean of Academics and Head of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, for their invaluable guidance, encouragement, and constant support. He also extends his heartfelt thanks to his family, friends, colleagues, students, and well-wishers for their unwavering motivation and inspiration.

Ms. Mitra would like to convey her deepest appreciation to her parents, Mr. Bankim Mitra and Mrs. Rina Mitra, and her sister, Prakriti Mitra, for their unconditional love, continuous encouragement, and unwavering support throughout this work. She is also sincerely grateful to Dr. Pijush Dutta, Head of the Department, for his valuable guidance, encouragement, and constant support.

Mrs. Kakali Das would like to express her heartfelt appreciation to everyone who has directly or indirectly contributed to the successful completion of this book. She sincerely thanks her family, colleagues, students, friends, and well-wishers for their continuous encouragement, support, and inspiration throughout this journey.

Mr. Das would like to express his sincere gratitude to his parents, Mr. Bimal Kanti Das and Mrs. Dali Das, his elder brother, Mr. Biplab Das, and his well-wisher for their constant love, encouragement, and support throughout this work. He is also thankful to his guide, Dr. Pijush Dutta, for his valuable guidance and encouragement. He is equally thankful to the Registrar, Mr. Devmalya Banerjee, the Principal, Dr. Jinia Dutta, and the HOD, Mrs. Sohini Banerjee, for their encouragement and support throughout this work.

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19/B, Kali Kumar Majumder Road,
P.O.-Santoshpur Avenue, P.S.-Survey Park,
Kolkata-700075

www.learnetpub.co.in | www.jctmg.in

ISBN 978-81-686149-9-4

