Basic Programming & Website Design

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BASIC PROGRAMMING & WEBSITE DESIGN

Computers and websites are part of our everyday lives, but have you ever wondered how they actually work? Every website, mobile application, and software program is created using programming languages and design principles. While becoming a professional programmer requires time and practice, understanding the basics helps you better understand the digital world and opens the door to many career opportunities.

In this module, you will learn the basic concepts of programming and website design. You will discover how websites are built, how programmers solve problems by writing code, and how good design improves the user experience. These skills provide a strong foundation for further learning in web development, software development, and digital technologies.

💡 **Tip:** Programming is not only about writing code - it is about solving problems step by step.

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WHAT IS PROGRAMMING?

Programming is the process of writing instructions that tell a computer what to do. These instructions are written using programming languages that computers can interpret and execute. Every application, website, game, and digital device relies on programming to perform its functions. Unlike people, computers do not make assumptions or guesses. They follow instructions exactly as they are written. For this reason, programmers must think carefully, break problems into smaller steps, and write clear, logical instructions. Even a small mistake can cause a program to behave differently than expected.

Example: A cooking recipe is similar to a computer program. If the instructions are clear and followed in the correct order, the result is successful. If a step is missing or incorrect, the outcome may not be what you expected.

💡 **Tip:** Learning programming develops logical thinking and problem-solving skills that are useful in many careers.

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COMMUNICATING WITH COMPUTERS

A programming language is a structured way of writing instructions that computers can understand. Different programming languages are designed for different purposes. Some are used to create websites, while others are used for mobile applications, games, artificial intelligence, or data analysis.

Popular programming languages include **Python**, **JavaScript**, **Java**, **C#**, **C++**, and **PHP**. Although their syntax differs, they all use similar concepts such as variables, conditions, loops, and functions. Once you understand the basic principles, learning additional programming languages becomes much easier.

💡 **Tip:** Don't worry about learning many programming languages at once. Understanding the core concepts is far more important.
Did You Know? Python is one of the world's most popular beginner programming languages because its syntax is simple and easy to read.

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HOW WEBSITES WORK

When you type a website address into your browser, several things happen within seconds. Your browser sends a request over the Internet to a web server. The server responds by sending files that contain the website's content, structure, design, and interactive features. Your browser then displays these files as the webpage you see on your screen.

Most websites are built using three main technologies:

- **HTML** provides the structure and content.
- **CSS** controls the appearance and layout.
- **JavaScript** adds interactivity and dynamic behaviour.

Together, these technologies create the modern websites we use every day.

💡 **Tip:** Think of a website as a house - HTML builds the structure, CSS paints and decorates it, and JavaScript adds electricity and moving parts.

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HTML: THE STRUCTURE OF A WEBSITE

HTML (**HyperText Markup Language**) is the standard language used to create the structure of a webpage. It defines elements such as headings, paragraphs, images, links, lists, buttons, and tables. Every webpage begins with HTML because it provides the basic framework that browsers display. HTML uses **tags**, which tell the browser how each piece of content should appear. For example, headings, paragraphs, and images each have their own tags. Although HTML is often called a programming language, it is technically a **markup language** because it describes the structure rather than performing calculations or making decisions.

Example

```
<h1>Welcome to My Website</h1>
<p>This is my first webpage.</p>
```

💡 **Tip:** HTML creates the content of a webpage, but it does not control its appearance.

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SLIDE 7 – CSS: MAKING WEBSITES ATTRACTIVE

CSS (**Cascading Style Sheets**) controls how HTML elements look. It allows developers to change colours, fonts, spacing, layouts, backgrounds, and animations without changing the HTML structure. Good CSS makes websites visually appealing and easier to use.

Instead of manually formatting every heading or paragraph, CSS allows developers to define styles once and apply them consistently across the entire website. This makes websites easier to maintain and gives them a professional appearance.

Example

```
h1 {
   color: blue;
   font-size: 36px;
}
```

💡 **Tip:** Good design improves readability and helps visitors find information quickly.

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BRINGING WEBSITES TO LIFE

JavaScript is the programming language that makes websites interactive. It allows webpages to respond to user actions such as clicking buttons, filling in forms, playing videos, displaying animations, or updating content without reloading the page. Without JavaScript, most websites would be static and unable to provide the interactive experiences users expect today. It works together with HTML and CSS to create modern, dynamic web applications.

Examples of JavaScript in action:

- Online forms
- Image sliders
- Interactive maps
- Shopping carts
- Online games
- Live chat windows

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THE FRONT-END AND BACK-END

Web development is usually divided into **front-end** and **back-end** development. The **front-end** is everything users see and interact with in their browser, including the layout, colours, menus, and buttons. Front-end developers mainly work with HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.

The **back-end** works behind the scenes. It manages databases, user accounts, online payments, and business logic. Back-end developers use languages such as Python, PHP, Java, or C# to process information and communicate with databases.

Together, the front-end and back-end create complete, fully functional websites.

💡 **Tip:** Every website you use combines both front-end and back-end technologies, even though users only see the front-end.

Did You Know? Large websites such as Amazon, Facebook, and YouTube use thousands of servers and millions of lines of code to serve users around the world.

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THINKING LIKE A PROGRAMMER

Programming is more than writing code - it is a way of thinking. Programmers solve problems by breaking them down into smaller, manageable steps. This process is called **computational thinking** and is useful not only in programming but also in everyday life. Before writing any code, programmers usually analyse the problem, identify the required inputs and outputs, and create a plan for the solution. This structured approach makes complex tasks easier to understand and reduces mistakes during development.

Example

Imagine you want to make a cup of tea. Instead of saying "Make tea," you would list each step: boil water, place a tea bag in a cup, pour the hot water, wait a few minutes, and remove the tea bag. Programming works in exactly the same way - the computer needs clear, step-by-step instructions.

💡 **Tip:** Breaking a large problem into smaller tasks is one of the most valuable skills in programming.

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WHAT IS AN ALGORITHM?

An **algorithm** is a sequence of instructions used to solve a problem or complete a task. Every computer program follows one or more algorithms. They help programmers organise their ideas before writing code and ensure that tasks are completed in the correct order.

Algorithms are used everywhere, even outside computing. Following a recipe, assembling furniture, or following directions on a map all involve completing steps in a logical sequence.

Example: Algorithm for logging into an email account:

1. Open the web browser.
2. Visit the email website.
3. Enter your email address.
4. Enter your password.
5. Click **Sign In**.

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HOW PROGRAMS REMEMBER DATA

Programs need to store information while they are running. This information is stored in **variables**. A variable is like a labelled container that holds a value, such as a name, age, number, or piece of text.

Variables allow programs to work with changing information. For example, when you enter your name while creating an account, the program stores it in a variable so it can display it later or save it in a database.

Example

Instead of always displaying the text **"Hello, Maria!"**, a program can display **"Hello, [User Name]!"**, where the name changes depending on who is using the application.

💡 **Tip:** Think of a variable as a storage box with a label that tells the program what information it contains.

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CONDITIONS IN PROGRAMMING

Programs often need to make decisions based on certain conditions. For example, an online shop may display **"Free Delivery"** only if the order value is above a specific amount. These decisions are usually based on **if...then** logic.

Conditions help programs respond differently depending on the situation. They are used in websites, games, banking applications, and many other digital services that people use every day.

Example

If the password is correct → Allow the user to log in.

If the password is incorrect → Display an error message.

💡 **Tip:** Almost every website you use makes thousands of small decisions every second.

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REPEATING TASKS

Sometimes a program needs to perform the same action many times. Instead of writing the same instructions repeatedly, programmers use **loops**. A loop tells the computer to repeat a task until a condition changes or a specific number of repetitions has been completed.

Loops make programs shorter, easier to read, and more efficient. They are commonly used to display lists of products, process large amounts of data, or perform calculations.

Example

A shopping website may use a loop to display every product in a category without needing separate code for each item.

💡 **Tip:** Loops save time for both programmers and computers.

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WHAT MAKES A GOOD WEBSITE?

A successful website is more than just attractive colours and images. It should also be easy to use, well organised, and accessible to different types of users. Visitors should be able to find the information they need quickly without feeling confused or overwhelmed.

Good website design combines attractive visuals with clear navigation, readable text, and consistent layouts. The goal is to create a positive experience that encourages visitors to stay longer and return in the future.

💡 **Tip:** The best websites are simple, organised, and easy to navigate.

Did You Know? Many visitors decide whether to stay on a website within the first few seconds.

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USER INTERFACE (UI)

The **User Interface (UI)** includes all the visual elements that people interact with on a website or application. Buttons, menus, icons, forms, images, colours, and typography are all part of the interface.

A well-designed interface helps users understand how to navigate the website without needing instructions. Consistent colours, clear labels, and well-organised layouts improve usability and make websites more enjoyable to use.

Example

The search bar on an online store, the navigation menu, and the "Add to Cart" button are all elements of the user interface.

💡 **Tip:** A clean interface helps users complete tasks faster and with fewer mistakes.

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USER EXPERIENCE (UX)

While UI focuses on appearance, **User Experience (UX)** focuses on how easy and enjoyable a website is to use. A website with good UX loads quickly, works on different devices, has logical navigation, and helps visitors achieve their goals with minimal effort.

Designers improve user experience by understanding users' needs and removing unnecessary obstacles. Good UX encourages visitors to stay longer and return to the website in the future.

💡 **Tip:** Good design is not only about how a website looks—it is also about how well it works.

Did You Know? Many companies test their websites with real users before launching them to identify areas for improvement.

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COLOURS AND TYPOGRAPHY

Colours and fonts have a significant impact on how people experience a website. Good colour choices improve readability and help visitors identify important information. Fonts should be easy to read on both computers and mobile devices.

Too many colours or decorative fonts can make a website difficult to understand. Most professional websites use a limited colour palette and only two or three font styles to create a consistent appearance.

💡 **Tip:** Choose colours with good contrast so that text is easy to read against the background.

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IMAGES AND MULTIMEDIA

Images, icons, videos, and illustrations help explain information and make websites more engaging. High-quality visuals can improve the user experience, attract attention, and support the message you want to communicate.

However, large image files can slow down a website. Optimising images before uploading them helps improve loading speed without significantly reducing quality. Every image should also include descriptive alternative text (alt text) to improve accessibility for users who rely on screen readers.

💡 **Tip:** Use images that support your content rather than decorate the page unnecessarily.

⚠️ **Remember:** Fast-loading websites provide a better experience for all users.

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WEBSITE NAVIGATION

Navigation is one of the most important parts of a website. It allows visitors to move between pages quickly and find the information they need without confusion. A well-organised navigation menu improves usability and encourages users to stay on the website longer.

Menus should be simple, clearly labelled, and consistent across all pages. Visitors should always know where they are on the website and how to return to the homepage or previous sections. Too many menu options can make navigation more difficult instead of more helpful.

💡 **Tip:** Keep navigation simple and place the most important links where users can easily find them.

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RESPONSIVE WEB DESIGN

Today, people browse the Internet using computers, tablets, and smartphones with different screen sizes. **Responsive web design** ensures that a website automatically adjusts its layout and content to provide a good user experience on any device.

Responsive websites use flexible layouts, scalable images, and adaptable text sizes. This means visitors can easily read content, click buttons, and navigate the website without zooming or scrolling horizontally.

💡 **Tip:** Always design websites with mobile users in mind, as many people browse primarily on their phones.

Did You Know? More than half of global website traffic now comes from mobile devices.

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WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility means creating websites that everyone can use, including people with disabilities. Accessible websites help users who rely on screen readers, keyboard navigation, captions, or other assistive technologies.

Simple improvements such as adding alternative text to images, using clear headings, providing sufficient colour contrast, and making buttons easy to click improve accessibility for all users - not just those with disabilities.

Designing with accessibility in mind creates a more inclusive online experience and often improves usability for everyone.

💡 **Tip:** Good accessibility benefits all users by making websites easier to read and navigate.

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WEBSITE PLANNING

Successful websites begin with careful planning. Before creating a website, developers identify its purpose, target audience, content, and desired user experience. Planning helps avoid unnecessary changes later and ensures the website meets users' needs.

A simple website plan may include a list of pages, a navigation structure, colour ideas, and sketches of the layout, often called **wireframes**. Good planning saves time and helps create a more organised final product.

💡 **Tip:** Spend time planning before building. A good plan often leads to a better website.

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WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

There are many ways to build a website. Beginners often use website builders such as **Wix**, **Squarespace**, or **WordPress**, which allow websites to be created with little or no coding. These platforms provide ready-made templates and easy-to-use editing tools.

People who want more flexibility often use professional development tools such as **Visual Studio Code** for writing code and **GitHub** for storing and sharing projects. The best tool depends on your goals, experience, and the type of website you want to create.

💡 **Tip:** Start with beginner-friendly tools and gradually learn more advanced techniques as your skills improve.

Did You Know? Millions of websites around the world are built using WordPress.

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WEBSITE BUILDERS

These platforms allow beginners to create professional websites with little or no coding experience.

WordPress - One of the world's most popular website creation platforms, suitable for blogs, business websites, and online stores.
https://wordpress.com

Wix -A drag-and-drop website builder with ready-made templates, ideal for beginners and small businesses.
https://www.wix.com

Squarespace – A website builder known for its modern templates and professional designs. It is widely used for portfolios, small businesses, restaurants, and online stores.
https://www.squarespace.com

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MAKING YOUR WEBSITE AVAILABLE ONLINE

Once a website has been created, it must be published so that other people can access it through the Internet. This usually requires a **domain name**, which is the website's address, and **web hosting**, which stores the website's files on a server connected to the Internet.

After uploading the website to the hosting service and connecting the domain, visitors can open it in their web browser. Regular updates and maintenance help keep the website secure and functional.

💡 **Tip:** Choose a domain name that is short, easy to remember, and related to your content or business.

One place where you can register your domain and host it is https://www.godaddy.com/en-ph

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SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

Search Engine Optimisation, or **SEO**, is the process of improving a website so that it appears more prominently in search engine results. Good SEO increases the chances of people finding your website when searching for relevant information.

Important SEO practices include using clear page titles, meaningful headings, descriptive image names, quality content, and fast-loading pages. While SEO does not guarantee a top ranking, following good practices improves visibility over time.

💡 **Tip:** Create useful content for people first—search engines reward websites that provide value to users.

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PROTECTING YOUR WEBSITE

Website security helps protect both the website owner and its visitors. Security measures include using strong passwords, keeping software updated, installing security certificates (HTTPS), and regularly backing up website files.

If a website collects personal information, it should also protect that information and comply with relevant privacy regulations. Even small websites benefit from good security practices because cyberattacks can target any website connected to the Internet.

💡 **Tip:** Regular updates are one of the easiest ways to improve website security.

⚠️ **Remember:** A secure website builds trust with visitors.

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MAINTAINING A WEBSITE

A website is not finished once it has been published. Regular maintenance ensures that information remains accurate, links continue to work, and software stays secure. Outdated content may reduce visitors' trust and make a website appear abandoned.

Website maintenance also includes updating images, improving performance, fixing errors, and reviewing user feedback. Small improvements made regularly are often more effective than large updates made only once a year.

💡 **Tip:** Review your website regularly to ensure that all information remains current and relevant.

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CAREERS IN WEB DEVELOPMENT

Learning programming and website design can lead to many exciting career opportunities. Professionals in this field may work as front-end developers, back-end developers, full-stack developers, web designers, UX/UI designers, or digital marketing specialists.

Many businesses also value employees who understand the basics of websites, even if web development is not their primary role. Basic programming knowledge supports problem-solving, automation, and digital literacy across many industries.

💡 **Tip:** Every expert developer started by learning the same basic concepts you are learning today.

Did You Know? Web development is one of the fastest-growing career fields in the digital economy.

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CONTINUING YOUR LEARNING

Programming and website design are practical skills that improve through regular practice. Reading about coding is helpful, but creating small projects is the best way to build confidence and experience.

As your skills grow, you can explore additional technologies such as databases, responsive frameworks, content management systems, and modern programming languages. Every project teaches something new and helps strengthen your understanding.

💡 **Tip:** Start with simple projects such as a personal webpage before attempting more complex websites.

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Programming is about solving problems through logical thinking, while website design focuses on creating attractive, accessible, and user-friendly experiences. Together, these skills form the foundation of modern websites and digital applications.

You do not need to become a professional programmer immediately. By understanding the core concepts, practising regularly, and exploring beginner-friendly tools, you can continue building your confidence and develop valuable digital skills for both personal and professional use.

💡 **Final Tip:** Every successful website begins with a simple idea, careful planning, and a willingness to keep learning.

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RESOURCES

Free learning platforms

- 🌐 freeCodeCamp – https://www.freecodecamp.org
- 🌐 W3Schools – https://www.w3schools.com
- 🌐 MDN Web Docs – https://developer.mozilla.org
- 🌐 Codecademy – https://www.codecademy.com
- 🌐 Khan Academy – https://www.khanacademy.org/computing

Free tools

- 💻 Visual Studio Code (Code Editor)
- 🖥️ GitHub (Store and share code)
- 🎨 Canva (Website & Graphic Design)
- 🎨 Figma (UI/UX Design)

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