```
3.14159     // 3.14159
6.02e23     // 6.02 x 10^23
1.6e-19     // 1.6 x 10^-19
3.0         // 3.0
```

These are four valid numbers with decimals expressed in C++. The first number is PI, the second one is the number of Avogadro, the third is the electric charge of an electron (an extremely small number) -all of them approximated- and the last one is the number three expressed as a floating-point numeric literal.

The default type for floating point literals is `double`. If you explicitly want to express a `float` or `long double` numerical literal, you can use the `f` or `l` suffixes respectively:

```
3.14159L   // long double
6.02e23f   // float
```

Any of the letters that can be part of a floating-point numerical constant (`e`, `f`, `l`) can be written using either lower or uppercase letters without any difference in their meanings.

Character and string literals

There also exist non-numerical constants, like:

```
'z'
'p'
"Hello world"
"How do you do?"
```

The first two expressions represent single character constants, and the following two represent string literals composed of several characters. Notice that to represent a single character we enclose it between single quotes (`'`) and to express a string (which generally consists of more than one character) we enclose it between double quotes (`"`).

When writing both single character and string literals, it is necessary to put the quotation marks surrounding them to distinguish them from possible variable identifiers or reserved keywords. Notice the difference between these two expressions:

```
x
'x'
```

`x` alone would refer to a variable whose identifier is `x`, whereas `'x'` (enclosed within single quotation marks) would refer to the character constant `'x'`.

Character and string literals have certain peculiarities, like the escape codes. These are special characters that are difficult or impossible to express otherwise in the source code of a program, like newline (`\n`) or tab (`\t`). All of them are preceded by a backslash (`\`). Here you have a list of some of such escape codes:

\n	newline
\r	carriage return
\t	tab
\v	vertical tab
\b	backspace
\f	form feed (page feed)
\a	alert (beep)
\'	single quote (')
\"	double quote (")
\?	question mark (?)
\\	backslash (\)

For example:

```
'\n'
'\t'
"Left \t Right"
"one\ntwo\nthree"
```

Additionally, you can express any character by its numerical ASCII code by writing a backslash character (\) followed by the ASCII code expressed as an octal (base-8) or hexadecimal (base-16) number. In the first case (octal) the digits must immediately follow the backslash (for example \23 or \40), in the second case (hexadecimal), an x character must be written before the digits themselves (for example \x20 or \x4A).

String literals can extend to more than a single line of code by putting a backslash sign (\) at the end of each unfinished line.

```
"string expressed in \
two lines"
```

You can also concatenate several string constants separating them by one or several blank spaces, tabulators, newline or any other valid blank character:

```
"this forms" "a single" "string" "of characters"
```

Finally, if we want the string literal to be explicitly made of wide characters (wchar_t), instead of narrow characters (char), we can precede the constant with the L prefix:

```
L"This is a wide character string"
```

Wide characters are used mainly to represent non-English or exotic character sets.

Boolean literals

There are only two valid Boolean values: true and false. These can be expressed in C++ as values of type bool by using the Boolean literals true and false.

Defined constants (#define)

You can define your own names for constants that you use very often without having to resort to memory-consuming variables, simply by using the #define preprocessor directive. Its format is:

```
#define identifier value
```

For example:

```
#define PI 3.14159
#define NEWLINE '\n'
```

This defines two new constants: `PI` and `NEWLINE`. Once they are defined, you can use them in the rest of the code as if they were any other regular constant, for example:

```
// defined constants: calculate circumference

#include <iostream>
using namespace std;

#define PI 3.14159
#define NEWLINE '\n'

int main ()
{
  double r=5.0;               // radius
  double circle;

  circle = 2 * PI * r;
  cout << circle;
  cout << NEWLINE;

  return 0;
}
```

```
31.4159
```

In fact the only thing that the compiler preprocessor does when it encounters `#define` directives is to literally replace any occurrence of their identifier (in the previous example, these were `PI` and `NEWLINE`) by the code to which they have been defined (`3.14159` and `'\n'` respectively).

The `#define` directive is not a C++ statement but a directive for the preprocessor; therefore it assumes the entire line as the directive and does not require a semicolon (`;`) at its end. If you append a semicolon character (`;`) at the end, it will also be appended in all occurrences within the body of the program that the preprocessor replaces.

Declared constants (const)

With the `const` prefix you can declare constants with a specific type in the same way as you would do with a variable:

```
const int pathwidth = 100;
const char tabulator = '\t';
```

Here, `pathwidth` and `tabulator` are two typed constants. They are treated just like regular variables except that their values cannot be modified after their definition.

Operators

Once we know of the existence of variables and constants, we can begin to operate with them. For that purpose, C++ integrates operators. Unlike other languages whose operators are mainly keywords, operators in C++ are mostly made of signs that are not part of the alphabet but are available in all keyboards. This makes C++ code shorter and more international, since it relies less on English words, but requires a little of learning effort in the beginning.

You do not have to memorize all the content of this page. Most details are only provided to serve as alater reference in case you need it.

Assignment (=)

The assignment operator assigns a value to a variable.

```
a = 5;
```

This statement assigns the integer value 5 to the variable `a`. The part at the left of the assignment operator (`=`) is known as the *lvalue* (left value) and the right one as the *rvalue* (right value). The lvalue has to be a variable whereas the rvalue can be either a constant, a variable, the result of an operation or any combination of these. The most important rule when assigning is the *right-to-left* rule: The assignment operation always takes place from right to left, and never the other way:

```
a = b;
```

This statement assigns to variable `a` (the lvalue) the value contained in variable `b` (the rvalue). The value that was stored until this moment in `a` is not considered at all in this operation, and in fact that value is lost.

Consider also that we are only assigning the value of `b` to `a` at the moment of the assignment operation. Therefore a later change of `b` will not affect the new value of `a`.

For example, let us have a look at the following code - I have included the evolution of the content stored in the variables as comments:

```
// assignment operator

#include <iostream>
using namespace std;

int main ()
{
  int a, b;         // a:?,  b:?
  a = 10;           // a:10, b:?
  b = 4;            // a:10, b:4
  a = b;            // a:4,  b:4
  b = 7;            // a:4,  b:7

  cout << "a:";
  cout << a;
  cout << " b:";
  cout << b;

  return 0;
}
```

```
a:4 b:7
```

This code will give us as result that the value contained in `a` is `4` and the one contained in `b` is `7`. Notice how `a` was not affected by the final modification of `b`, even though we declared `a = b` earlier (that is because of the *right-to-left rule*).

A property that C++ has over other programming languages is that the assignment operation can be used as the rvalue (or part of an rvalue) for another assignment operation. For example:

```
a = 2 + (b = 5);
```

is equivalent to:

```
b = 5;
a = 2 + b;
```

that means: first assign `5` to variable `b` and then assign to `a` the value `2` plus the result of the previous assignment of `b` (i.e. 5), leaving `a` with a final value of `7`.

The following expression is also valid in C++:

```
a = b = c = 5;
```

It assigns `5` to the all the three variables: `a`, `b` and `c`.

Arithmetic operators (+, -, *, /, %)

The five arithmetical operations supported by the C++ language are:

+	addition
-	subtraction
*	multiplication
/	division
%	modulo

Operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division literally correspond with their respective mathematical operators. The only one that you might not be so used to see is *modulo*; whose operator is the percentage sign (`%`). Modulo is the operation that gives the remainder of a division of two values. For example, if we write:

```
a = 11 % 3;
```

the variable `a` will contain the value `2`, since `2` is the remainder from dividing `11` between `3`.

Compound assignment (+=, -=, *=, /=, %=, >>=, <<=, &=, ^=, |=)

When we want to modify the value of a variable by performing an operation on the value currently stored in that variable we can use compound assignment operators:

expression	is equivalent to
`value += increase;`	`value = value + increase;`
`a -= 5;`	`a = a - 5;`
`a /= b;`	`a = a / b;`
`price *= units + 1;`	`price = price * (units + 1);`

and the same for all other operators. For example:

```
// compound assignment operators

#include <iostream>
using namespace std;

int main ()
{
  int a, b=3;
  a = b;
  a+=2;              // equivalent to a=a+2
  cout << a;
  return 0;
}
```

```
5
```

Increase and decrease (++, --)

Shortening even more some expressions, the increase operator (`++`) and the decrease operator (`--`) increase or reduce by one the value stored in a variable. They are equivalent to `+=1` and to `-=1`, respectively. Thus:

```
c++;
c+=1;
c=c+1;
```

are all equivalent in its functionality: the three of them increase by one the value of c.

In the early C compilers, the three previous expressions probably produced different executable code depending on which one was used. Nowadays, this type of code optimization is generally done automatically by the compiler, thus the three expressions should produce exactly the same executable code.

A characteristic of this operator is that it can be used both as a prefix and as a suffix. That means that it can be written either before the variable identifier (`++a`) or after it (`a++`). Although in simple expressions like `a++` or `++a` both have exactly the same meaning, in other expressions in which the result of the increase or decrease operation is evaluated as a value in an outer expression they may have an important difference in their meaning: In the case that the increase operator is used as a prefix (++a) the value is increased before the result of the expression is evaluated and therefore the increased value is considered in the outer expression; in case that it is used as a suffix (`a++`) the value stored in a is increased after being evaluated and therefore the value stored before the increase operation is evaluated in the outer expression. Notice the difference:

Example 1	Example 2

`B=3;`
`A=++B;`
`// A contains 4, B contains 4`
	`B=3;`
	`A=B++;`
	`// A contains 3, B contains 4`

In Example 1, `B` is increased before its value is copied to `A`. While in Example 2, the value of `B` is copied to `A` and then `B` is increased.

Relational and equality operators (==, !=, >, <, >=, <=)

In order to evaluate a comparison between two expressions we can use the relational and equality operators. The result of a relational operation is a Boolean value that can only be true or false, according to its Boolean result.

We may want to compare two expressions, for example, to know if they are equal or if one is greater than the other is. Here is a list of the relational and equality operators that can be used in C++: