

# Programming in Visual Basic .NET™

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Once the reader has read the information provided in each chapter, and solved the related programming exercises, he or she should be able to do the following:

## 1. The Basics

- Understand the use of white space, comments, and blocks, and to identify individual source tokens.
- For user-defined names, know the rules regarding their spelling, case sensitivity, and length of significance.
- Know how to use the basic output facilities to write to the screen.
- Understand the need for escape sequences.
- Use the Boolean data type.
- Understand the size and value range of the arithmetic data types.
- Know the operators for performing bit operations on integer values.
- Know how to write simple expressions and statements.
- Know how to define and use enumerations and their members.
- Be able to perform basic string operations.
- Know how to write literals and be able to tell their type.
- Know how to define and initialize local variables.
- Understand and apply operator precedence and associativity.
- Know when and how to use implicit and explicit type conversion.
- Understand how integer overflow checking can be enabled and disabled.
- Have a basic understanding on how to break a program into multiple classes, and how to communicate between them.
- Know how and when to use the public and private modifiers.
- Know how to define const variables.
- Know how to use procedures in the standard library classes, such as Char, Int32, Double, and Math.

## 2. Looping and Branching

- Use the While, For, and Do-While looping constructs.
- Make decisions using If-Else and Select.
- Start to appreciate certain aspects of programming style with respect to white space usage and indenting.
- Know the family of relational and equality operators.
- Know about the basic compound-assignment operators.
- Know and understand the remainder operator.
- Know the family of logical operators.
- Understand when and how to use the branching statements Continue, and GoTo.

### 3. Procedures

- Know the connection between a procedure's return type and return statements in that procedure's definition.
- Know how to pass by value and by reference.
- Know how to return a value from a procedure.
- Understand procedure definitions and their role in allowing the compiler to check procedure calls for correctness and to cause implicit conversion.
- Have a basic understanding of recursion.
- Be able to overload procedures.
- Know the purpose of the optional return value from Main.
- Know the difference between a program and an assembly.
- Understand why an application might have multiple assemblies.
- Know how to write and use a generic procedure.

### 4. References, Strings, and Arrays

- Understand that a reference variable points to an object rather than containing that object's value directly, and that multiple reference variables can point to the same object.
- Understand the purpose of a Nothing reference.
- Know how to pass reference arguments to, and return them from, a procedure.
- Know how to define and perform basic operations using the type string.
- Know how to allocate memory dynamically using New.
- Have a basic understanding of a reference count and that garbage collection is automatic.
- Define, initialize, and use single dimensional, multi-dimensional, and jagged arrays.
- Understand that each dimension's elements start at index 0 and that each dimension has a read-only length field.
- Know how arrays are stored in memory.
- Know how to deal with command-line arguments passed to Main.
- Understand why System.Array.Copy is needed and how to use it.
- Know how to pass variable-length argument lists.
- Have a basic understanding of the StringBuilder class.

### 5. Classes

- Understand the purpose of data hiding and encapsulation.
- Be able to use effectively the modifiers public and private.
- Be able to implement a simple version of Equals and ToString for a class.
- Understand constructors and know how to have one call another for the same class.
- Know the value of providing read, write, and read/write properties.
- Know that the way in which an object is represented internally is not necessarily related to the way in which programmers see it externally.
- Know the type of Me, and what it refers to.
- Understand the difference between instance and class data.
- Know when a Shared constructor might be used.

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- Know when a Private constructor might be used.
- Understand object finalization and resource disposal.
- Be able to define simple user-defined types using object-oriented constructs.
- Know how to write and use a generic class.

### 6. Inheritance

- Know how and why one would want to use inheritance.
- Understand the difference between containment and inheritance.
- At the design stage, be able to study a set of class descriptions and determine if those classes are unrelated, related by inheritance, or related by containment.
- Know how and when to use the keyword base.
- Know how and why classes and procedures should be made abstract.
- Know when and how to use the protected access specifier.
- Understand sealed classes and procedures.
- Understand the advantage of having Object as the ultimate base class.
- Know how finalization works in a class hierarchy.
- Know how to correctly implement an Equals procedure.
- Understand that array types are derived from Array, enums from Enum, and value types from ValueType.
- Understand boxing and unboxing.
- Have a basic understanding of interfaces.

### 7. Exception Handling

- Understand how the traditional approaches to dealing with extraordinary errors are limited and messy in general and even more so in an object-oriented environment.
- Know how to catch system exceptions using try and catch blocks, and how to recover from such exceptions where possible.
- Be able to throw an exception of a given type.
- Understand that an exception type could be a full-blown class using all the facilities we've learned so far.
- Understand the utility of, and issues relating to, a family of derived exception types.

### 8. Operator Overloading

- Know which operators can and cannot be overloaded.
- Understand when it is and isn't useful to overload operators.
- Understand that a thorough knowledge of a built-in operator must be gained before it can be overloaded in an effective and complete manner.
- Be able to overload most unary and binary operators.

### 9. Delegates and Events

- Understand that a delegate can encapsulate one or more procedures, including class and instance procedures.

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- Understand how to define a delegate.
- Understand delegate type compatibility.
- Know the syntax for combining and removing delegates.
- Know that delegate types are derived from Delegate.
- Have a basic understanding of events.

### 10. Structs

- Know that a struct is a class with a few restrictions and differences.
- Understand that memory for structs is not allocated on the heap.
- Understand that the built-in value types really are synonyms for struct types defined in the standard library.
- Know that the procedure Main can be defined inside a struct or a class.

### 11. Namespaces

- Understand how namespace pollution is a problem in projects involving multiple subsystems and development groups.
- Know how to import names from namespaces, and how to use names within those namespaces without importing them.
- Be able to define namespaces.

### 12. Input and Output

- Understand the concept of streams.
- Know how to detect exceptions that occur during I/O.
- Be able to perform basic I/O operations to/from the screen, a file, and a string.
- Understand the difference between formatted and unformatted I/O.
- Know that one can randomly move about a file, saving and restoring file positions at will.
- Know that basic operations can be performed on files and directories.

### 13. The Preprocessor

- Understand the purpose of the preprocessor.
- Know how to define conditional compilation symbols.
- Know how to perform simple and complex tests on one or more conditional compilation symbols.