CL01: An Introduction to Coding

Today’s Format is A Little Different…

- Little more lecture-y
- A little more vague

Why?

- A gentler introduction
- Want you to get a bigger picture of the little things we’re going to talk about later
- **I don’t expect you to be able to do all of these things tomorrow… that’s what this class is for!**

Computational Thinking

- Strategic thought and problem-solving
- Can help perform a task better, faster, cheaper, etc.
- Examples:
  - Meal prepping
  - Making your class schedule
  - “Life Hacks”

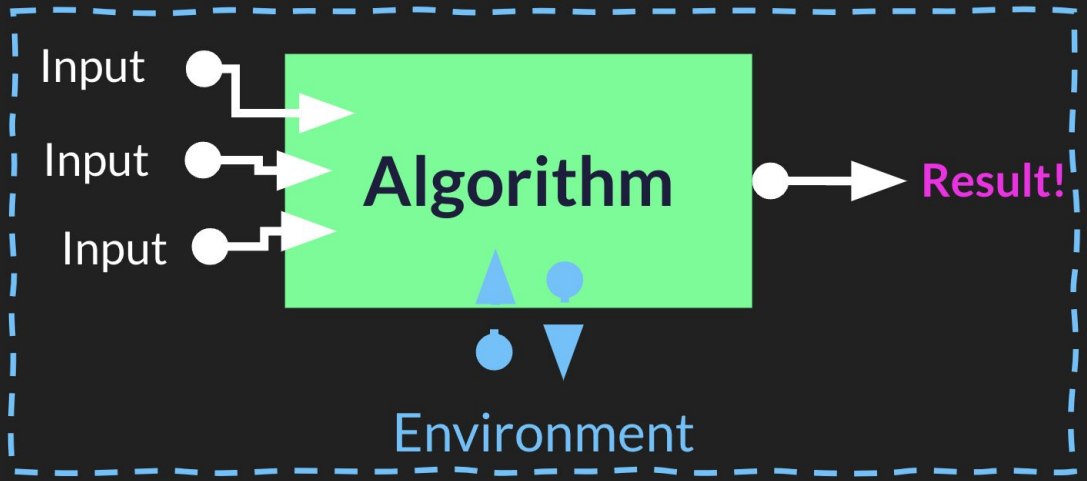
Algorithms

Input is data given to an algorithm

An **algorithm** is a series of steps

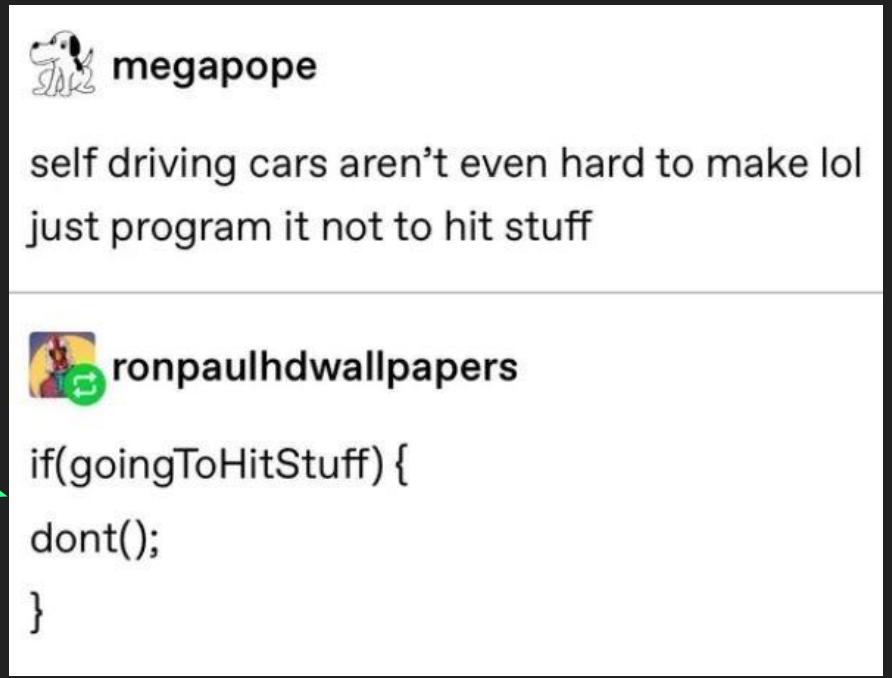
An algorithm **returns** some **result**

An algorithm *may* be influenced by its **environment** and it *may* produce side-effects which influence its environment.



Example: My dissertation

Algorithm



Discussion

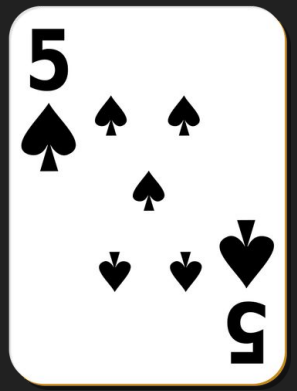
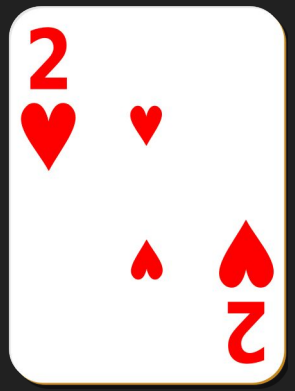
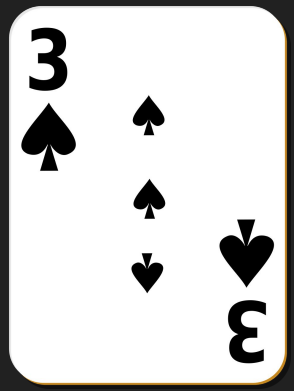
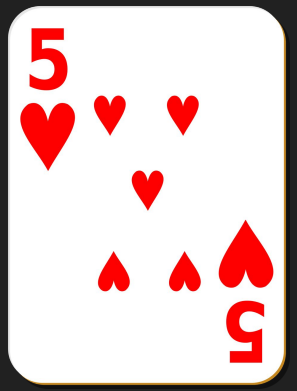
What are examples of computational thinking that you use day to day?

What kind of algorithms do you use to implement these ideas?

What is an algorithm?

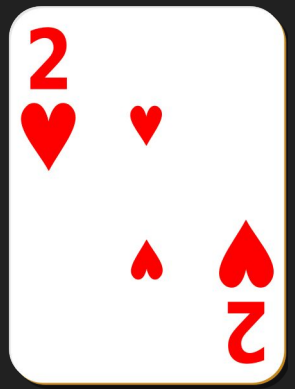
- A set of steps to solve a general problem
- Finite
- Can handle a problem of arbitrary size

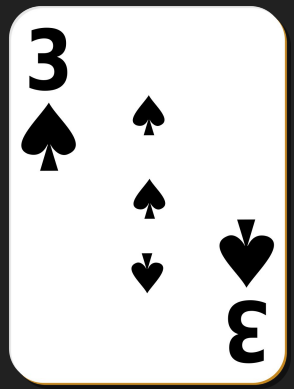
Finding the Lowest Card in a Deck

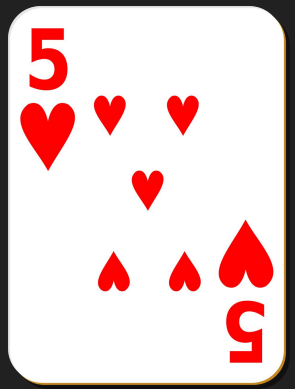





- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

Finding the Lowest Card







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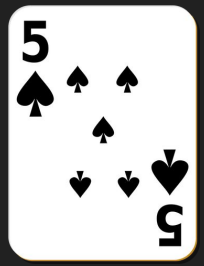

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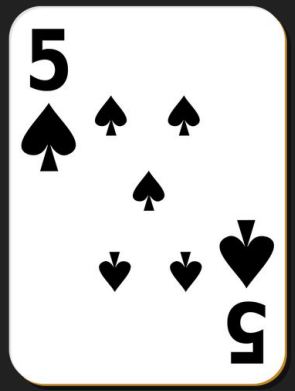

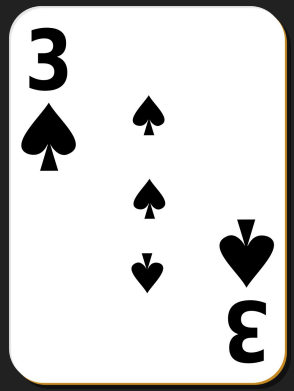

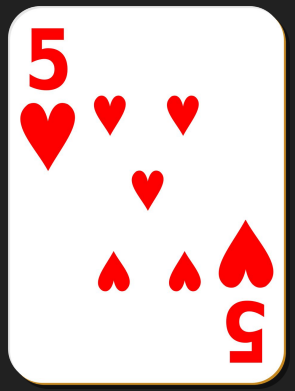

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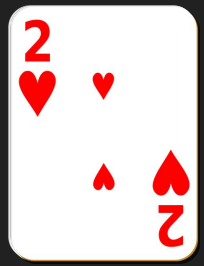

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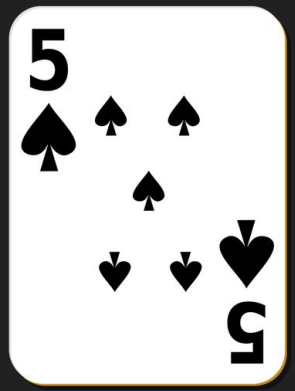

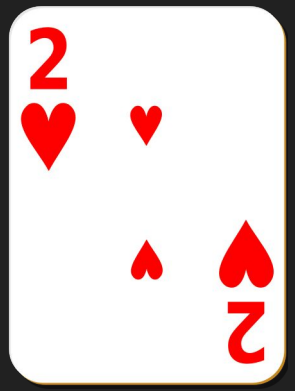

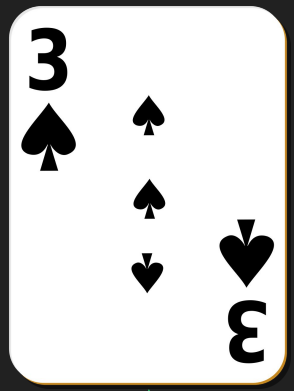

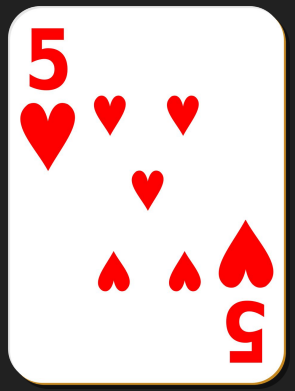

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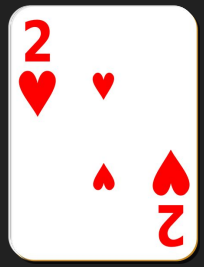

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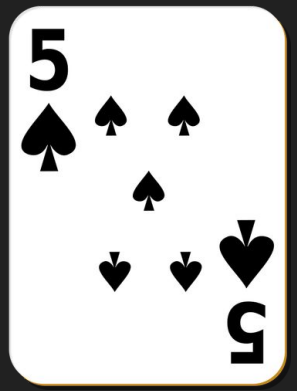

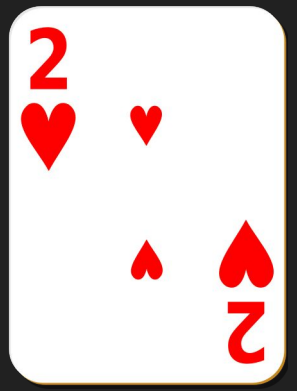

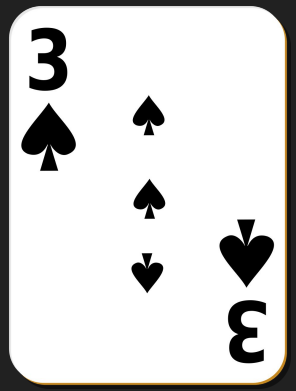

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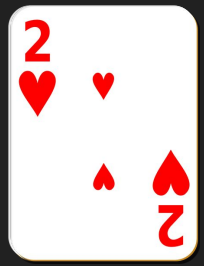

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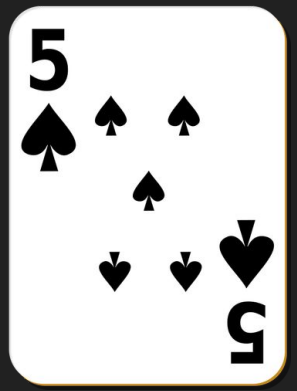

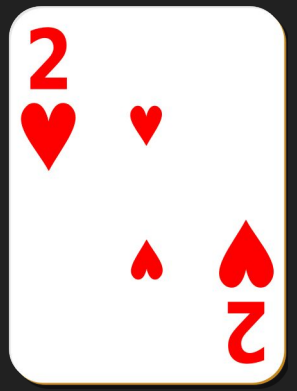

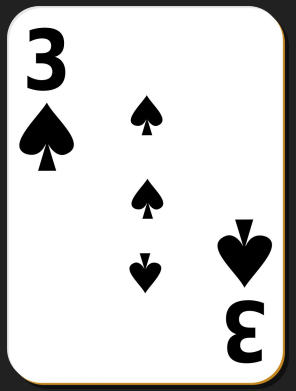

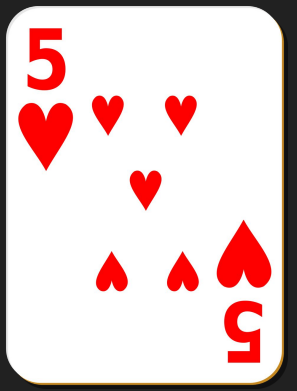

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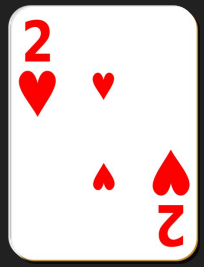

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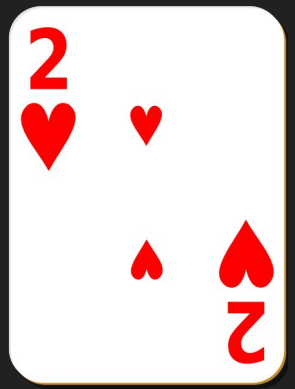

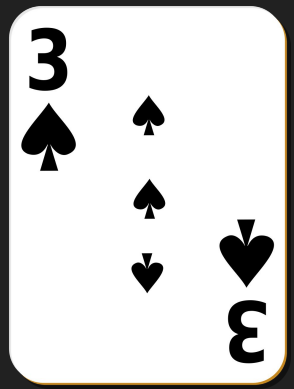

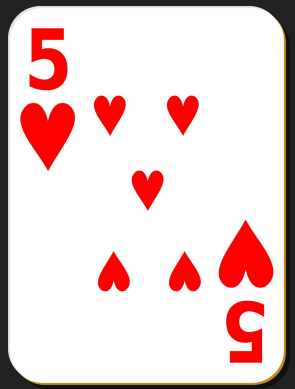

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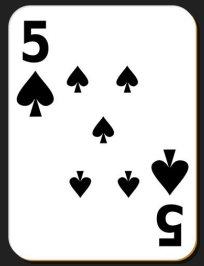

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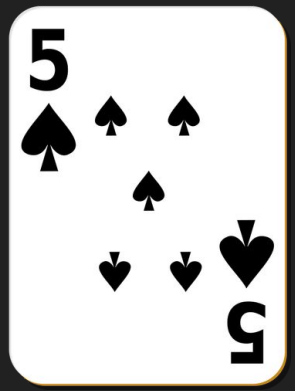
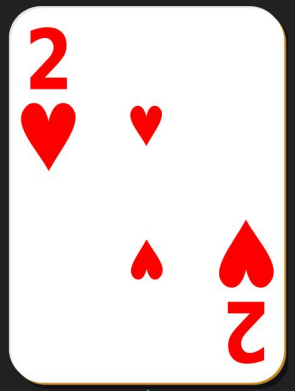
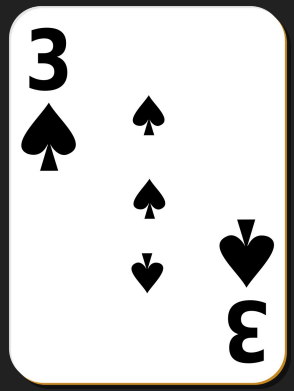
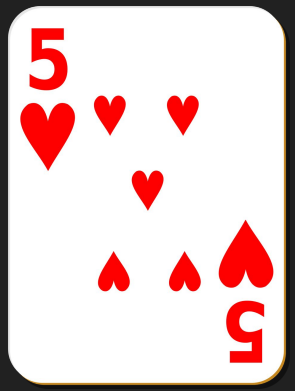


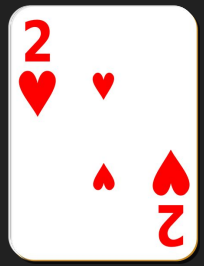






2 < 5? ✓

Low card:



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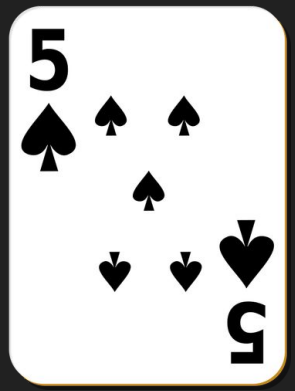
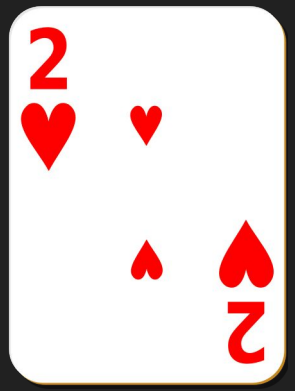
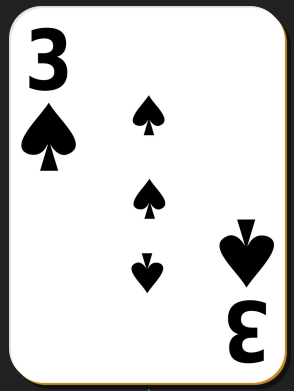
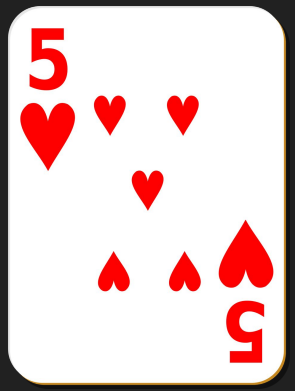


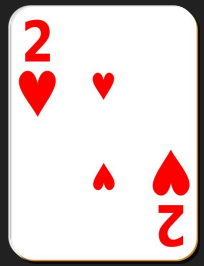






3 < 2?

Low card:



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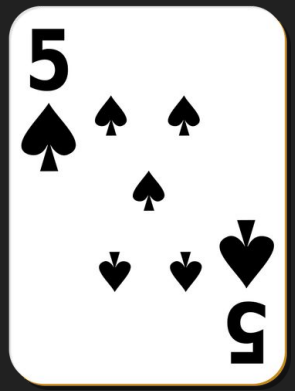
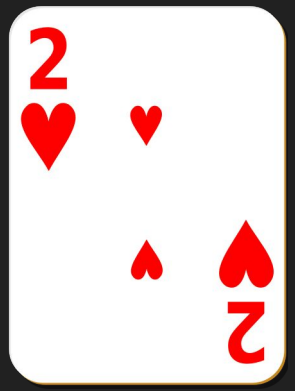
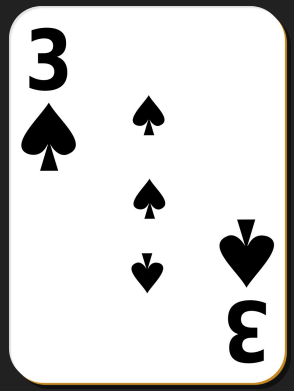
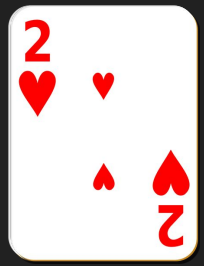






5 < 2? ✗

Low card:



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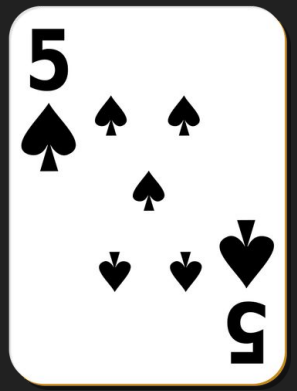
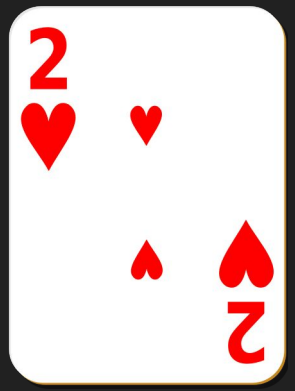
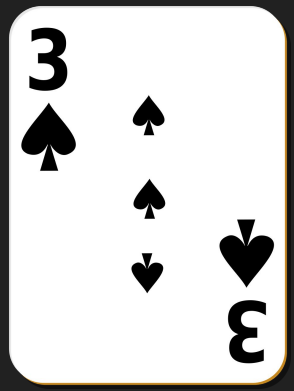
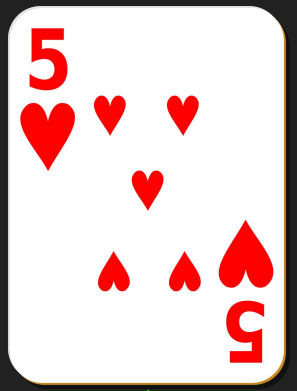




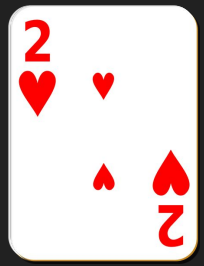




5 < 2?

Relational Operator

Low card:



Pseudocode

Looks like code, but simplified and readable.

Not meant to run on a computer.

Helps you outline what your algorithm is going to look like.

You should be able to expand on your pseudocode to help you write actual code!

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

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lowest_card = first card in deck
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Assignment

(Week 1 concept)

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

Pseudocode:

```
lowest_card = first card in deck

Repeatedly until end of deck:

    if current_card < lowest_card:

        lowest_card = current_card
```

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

Pseudocode:

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lowest_card = first card in deck
Repeatedly until end of deck:
    if current_card < lowest_card:
        lowest_card = current_card
```

Loop

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

Pseudocode:

```
lowest_card = first card in deck
Repeatedly until end of deck:
    if current_card < lowest_card:
        lowest_card = current_card
```

Loop

(Week 3 concept)

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

Pseudocode:

```
lowest_card = first card in deck

Repeatedly until end of deck:

    if current_card < lowest_card:

        lowest_card = current_card
```

Conditional

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

Pseudocode:

```
lowest_card = first card in deck

Repeatedly until end of deck:

    if current_card < lowest_card:

        lowest_card = current_card
```

Conditional

(Week 1 concept)

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

Pseudocode:

```
lowest_card = first card in deck

Repeatedly until end of deck:

    if current_card < lowest_card:

        lowest_card = current_card
```

Relational Operator

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

Pseudocode:

```
lowest_card = first card in deck

Repeatedly until end of deck:

    if current_card < lowest_card:

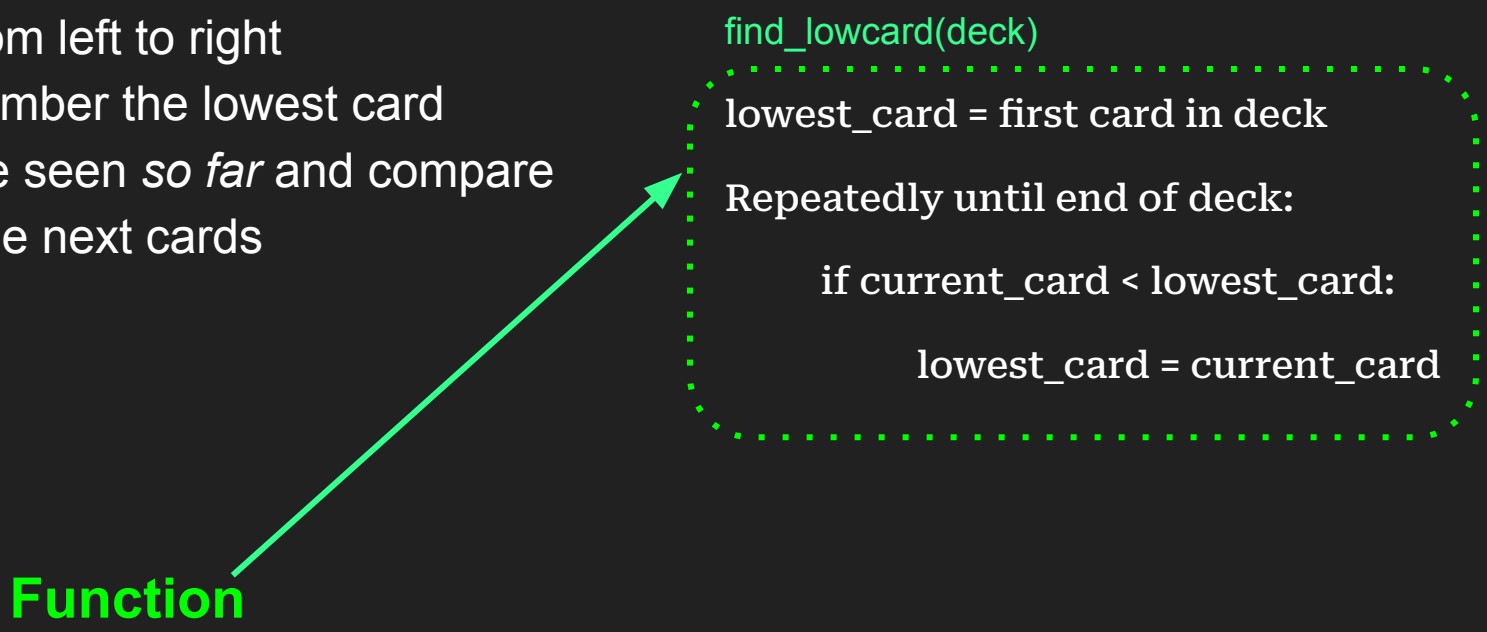
        lowest_card = current_card
```

Relational Operator

(Week 1 concept)

Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards



Finding the Lowest Card Pseudocode

- Go from left to right
- Remember the lowest card you've seen *so far* and compare it to the next cards

find_lowcard(deck)

```
lowest_card = first card in deck

Repeatedly until end of deck:

        if current_card < lowest_card:

                lowest_card = current_card
```

Function

(Week 4 concept)

Takeaways

- Pseudocode: simple and readable version of algorithm that resembles code
- Assignment Operator: Assigns a variable some value
- Loop Statement: Repeatedly performs an action a fixed number of times
- Relational Operator: Compares two values
- Conditional Statement: A statement that only performs an action under certain conditions
- Function: Generalizes code to work for a generic input

Again, you don't need to know these right now, but I want you to have a point of reference when you do learn them!

Now, and introduction to Visual Studio…

Objects and Types

An **object** is *typed* unit of data in memory.

The object's **type** classifies it to help the computer know how it should be interpreted and represented.

Example types of data:

- Numerical
- Textual
- Sequences
- Grouping of different types

Numerical Built-In Types

- Integers
  - int
  - Zero or non-zero digit followed by zero or more integers (e.g. 100 is an int but 0100 is not)

- Decimals (Or floats)
  - float
  - Not the only way to represent decimal numbers, but a very precise way

Textual Built-In Type

- Strings
  - `str`
  - A sequence (or *string*) of characters
  - Can be denoted using “ ”

Indexing

- **Subscription** syntax uses square brackets and allows you to access an item in a sequence
- **Index numbering starts from 0**

Docstrings

- A string written at the top of every file to describe its purpose.
- Denoted with three quotations “““ ”””

Booleans

- bool
- Evaluates to True or False

Check an Object's Type

- type()

Change an Object's Type

- float()
- str()
- int()