

Number System

Number systems are basically of two types:

1. Non-positional
2. Positional

In early days, human being counted on fingers. When ten fingers were not adequate then stones or sticks were used to indicate values. This method of counting uses an additive approach or the Nonpositional number systems.

In a Positional number system, there are only a few symbols, called digits and these symbols represent different values, depending on the position, they occupy in the number. The value of each digit in such a number is determined by three considerations:

1. The digit itself
2. The position of the digit in the number
3. The base of number system (where base is defined as the total numbers of digits available in the number system.)

Decimal Number System

The number system, which we use in our day-to-day life is called the Decimal Number System. In this system the base is equal to 10, because there are altogether ten symbols or digits (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9). In the decimal system, the successive positions to the left of the decimal point represent units, tens, hundreds, thousands, etc. However each position represents a specific power of the base (10). For example, the decimal number 2586 (2586_{10}) consists of the digit 6 in the units position, 8 in the tens position, 5 in the hundreds position and 2 in the thousands position and its value can be written as:

$$(2 \times 1000) + (5 \times 100) + (8 \times 10) + (6 \times 1) = 2000 + 500 + 80 + 6 = 2586$$

Hence, any number can be represented by using the available digits and arranging them in various positions.

Binary Number System :

The binary system is exactly like the decimal number system, except that base is 2, instead of 10. We have only two symbols or digits (0 and 1) which can be used in this number system.

Note that the largest single digit is 1 (one less than the base)

Each position in a binary number represents a power of the base (2). Hence in this system, the rightmost position is the units (2^0) position, the second position from the right is the 2's (2^1) position and proceeding in this way, we have 4's (2^2) position, 8's (2^3) position, 16's (2^4) position and so on. Therefore, the decimal equivalent of the binary number $10101(10101_2)$ is:

$$(1 \times 2^4) + (0 \times 2^3) + (1 \times 2^2) + (0 \times 2^1) + (1 \times 2^0) = 16 + 0 + 4 + 0 + 1 = 21$$

In order to be specific about which system we are referring to, it is common practice to indicate the base as a subscript. Hence

$$10101_2 = 21_{10}$$

Every computer stores numbers, letters and other special characters in binary form. When computer professionals need to know the raw data contained in a computer's memory. A commonly used way of doing this is to print out the memory contents on a printer. This printout is called Memory dump. Memory dumps, which use binary numbers, would have many pages of 0s and 1s. Hence, two number systems, Octal and Hexadecimal are often used as shortcut notations for binary.

Octal Number System

In the Octal Number System, the base is 8. Here, there are only eight symbols or digits: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 (8 and 9 do not exist in the system). The largest single digit is 7 (One less than the base). Each position in an octal number represents a power of the base (8). Therefore, the decimal equivalent of the octal number **2057** (2057_8) is:

$$(2 \times 8^3) + (0 \times 8^2) + (5 \times 8^1) + (7 \times 8^0) = 1024 + 0 + 40 + 7 \\ = 1071$$

$$\text{Hence } 2057_8 = 1071_{10}$$

Observe that there are only 8 digits in the Octal number System, 3 bits ($2^3 = 8$) are sufficient to represent any octal number in binary.

Hexadecimal Number System

In this number system One with a base of 16, having 16 single-character digits or symbols. The first 10 digits are the digits of the decimal number system - 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. The remaining six digits are denoted by the symbols A, B, C, D, E and F, representing the decimal values 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 respectively. Hence the largest single digit is F or 15 (one less than the base). Each position in the hexadecimal system represents a power of the base (16). Therefore, the decimal equivalent of the hexadecimal number 1AF ($1AF_{16}$) is:

$$(1 \times 16^2) + (A \times 16^1) + (F \times 16^0) = (1 \times 256) + (10 \times 16) + (15 \times 16^0) \\ = 256 + 160 + 15 = 431$$

$$\text{Hence } 1AF_{16} = 431_{10}$$

observe that there are only 16 digits in the hexadecimal number system, 4 bits ($2^4 = 16$) are sufficient to represent any hexadecimal number in binary.

Converting from One Number System to Another

(A) Converting to Decimal from Another Base

The following steps are used to convert a number to a base 10 value from any other number system:

Step 1: Determine the Column (positional) value of each digit (this depends on the position of the digit and the base of the number system)

Step 2: Multiply the obtained Column values (In Step 1) by the digits in the corresponding Columns.

Step 3: Sum the products calculated in Step 2. The Total is the equivalent value in decimals.

Examples. 1. $4052_6 = ?_{10}$

Solution: $4052_6 = 4 \times 6^3 + 0 \times 6^2 + 5 \times 6^1 + 2 \times 6^0$
 $= 4 \times 216 + 0 \times 36 + 5 \times 6 + 2 \times 1$
 $= 864 + 0 + 30 + 2 = 896_{10}$

6. Answer: - $4052_6 = 896_{10}$

6.

$$2. \quad 1AC_{13} = ?_{10}$$

Solution: $1AC_{13} = 1 \times 13^2 + A \times 13^1 + C \times 13^0$
 $= 1 \times 169 + 10 \times 13 + 12 \times 1$
 $= 169 + 130 + 12$
 $= 311_{10}$

$$3. \quad 11001_2 = ?_{10}$$

Solution: ^{Step 1:} Determine column values

Column Number (from right)	Column value
1	$2^0 = 1$
2	$2^1 = 2$
3	$2^2 = 4$
4	$2^3 = 8$
5	$2^4 = 16$

Step 2:

Multiply column values by corresponding column digits

$$\begin{array}{r} 16 \quad 8 \quad 4 \quad 2 \quad 1 \\ \times 1 \quad \times 1 \quad \times 0 \quad \times 0 \quad \times 1 \\ \hline 16 \quad 8 \quad 0 \quad 0 \quad 1 \end{array}$$

Step 3: Sum the product $16 + 8 + 0 + 0 + 1 = 25$

$$\text{Hence } 11001_2 = 25_{10}$$

4. $4706_8 = ?_{10}$

Solution: Step 1: Determine Column values

Column Number (from right)	Column value
1	$8^0 = 1$
2	$8^1 = 8$
3	$8^2 = 64$
4	$8^3 = 512$

Step 2: Multiply column values by corresponding Column digits

$$\begin{array}{r} 512 \\ \times 4 \\ \hline 2048 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 64 \\ \times 7 \\ \hline 448 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 8 \\ \times 0 \\ \hline 0 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 1 \\ \times 6 \\ \hline 6 \end{array}$$

Step 3: Sum the products: $2048 + 448 + 0 + 6$
 $= 2502$

Hence $4706_8 = 2502_{10}$

5. $1AC_{16} = ?_{10}$

Solution: $1AC_{16} = 1 \times 16^2 + A \times 16^1 + C \times 16^0$
 $= 1 \times 256 + 10 \times 16 + 12 \times 1 = 256 + 160 + 12$
 $= 428_{10}$

6. $11001_4 = ?_{10}$

Solution: $11001_4 = 1 \times 4^4 + 1 \times 4^3 + 0 \times 4^2 + 0 \times 4^1 + 1 \times 4^0$
 $= 1 \times 256 + 1 \times 64 + 0 \times 16 + 0 \times 4 + 1 \times 1$
 $= 256 + 64 + 0 + 0 + 1$
 $= 321_{10}$

(B) Converting from Decimal to Another Base (Division-Remainder Technique)

The following steps are used to convert a number from decimal to another base:

Step 1: Divide the decimal number to be converted by the value of the new base

Step 2: Record the Remainder from Step 1 as the rightmost digit (least significant digit) of the new base number.

Step 3: Divide the quotient of the previous divide by the new base

Step 4: Record the remainder from step 3 as the next digit (to the left) of the new base number.

Repeat Steps 3 and 4, recording remainder from right to left until the quotient becomes zero in Step 3

Note that the last remainder, thus obtained, will be the most significant digit of the new base number.

Example
1. $952_{10} = ?_8$

Solution:

8	952	Remainders in base 8
	119	0
	14	7
	1	6
	0	1

Hence $952_{10} = 1670_8$

2. $25_{10} = ?_2$

Solution: Step 1 and 2: $25/2 = 12$ and remainder 1
Step 3 and 4: $12/2 = 6$ and remainder 0
Step 3 and 4: $6/2 = 3$ and remainder 0
Step 3 and 4: $3/2 = 1$ and remainder 1
Step 3 and 4: $1/2 = 0$ and remainder 1

As mentioned in steps 2 and 4, the remainders have to be arranged in the reverse order, making the first remainder the least significant digit (LSD) and the last remainder the most significant digit (MSD)

Hence $25_{10} = 11001_2$

$$3. \quad 1715_{10} = ?_{12}$$

Solution:

12	1715	Remainders in base 12
	142	11 = B
	11	10 = A
	0	11 = B

Hence $1715_{10} = BAB_{12}$

$$4. \quad 428_{10} = ?_{16}$$

Solution:

16	428	Remainders in hexadecimal
	26	12 = C
	1	10 = A
	0	1 = 1

Hence $428_{10} = 1AC_{16}$

$$5. \quad 42_{10} = ?_2$$

Solution:

2	42	Remainders
	21	0
	10	1
	5	0
	2	1
	1	0
	0	1

Hence $42_{10} = 101010_2$

Convert from a Base other than 10 to a Base other than 10

The following steps are used to convert a number from a base other than 10, to a base other than 10

Step 1: Convert the original number to a decimal number (base 10)

Step 2: Convert the decimal number obtained in Step 1 to the new base number.

Example

$$1. 11010011_2 = ?_{16}$$

Solution: Step 1: Convert 11010011_2 to base 10

$$11010011_2 = 1 \times 2^7 + 1 \times 2^6 + 0 \times 2^5 + 1 \times 2^4 + 0 \times 2^3 + 0 \times 2^2 + 1 \times 2^1 + 1 \times 2^0$$

$$= 1 \times 128 + 1 \times 64 + 0 \times 32 + 1 \times 16 + 0 \times 8 + 0 \times 4 + 1 \times 2 + 1 \times 1$$

$$= 128 + 64 + 0 + 16 + 0 + 0 + 2 + 1 = 211_{10}$$

Step 2: Convert 211_{10} to base 16

16	211	Remainder
	13	3 = 3
	0	13 = D

Therefore, $11010011_2 = 211_{10} = D3_{16}$

$$2. \quad 545_6 = ?_4$$

Solution:

Step 1: Convert from base 6 to base 10

$$\begin{aligned} 545_6 &= 5 \times 6^2 + 4 \times 6^1 + 5 \times 6^0 \\ &= 5 \times 36 + 4 \times 6 + 5 \times 1 = 180 + 24 + 5 = 209_{10} \end{aligned}$$

Step 2: Convert 209_{10} to base 4

$4 \overline{) 209}$	Remainder
$\underline{52}$	1
$\underline{13}$	0
$\underline{3}$	1
$\underline{0}$	3

$$209_{10} = 3101_4$$

$$\text{Therefore, } 545_6 = 209_{10} = 3101_4$$

$$\text{Hence } 545_6 = 3101_4$$

Shortcut Method for Binary to Octal Conversion

The following steps are used in this method.

Step 1: Divide the binary digits into groups for three (starting from the right)

Step 2: Convert each group of three binary digits to one Octal digit. Since there are only 8 digits (0 to 7) in the Octal number system, 3 bits ($2^3 = 8$) are sufficient to represent any Octal number in binary. Moreover, decimal digits 0 to 7 are equal to Octal digits 0 to 7, binary to decimal conversion can be used in this step.

Example

$$1. \quad 1101010_2 = ?_8$$

Solution.

$$1101010_2 = \underline{001} \ \underline{101} \ \underline{010} \text{ (Group of 3 digit from right)}$$

$$= 152_8 \text{ (Convert each group to an Octal digit)}$$

$$\text{Hence } 1101010_2 = 152_8$$

$$2. 101110_2 = ?_{10}$$

Solution: Step 1: Divide the binary digits into groups of 3, starting from right (LSB)

$$\underline{101} \ \underline{110}$$

Step 2: Convert each group into one digit of Octal (use binary-to-decimal conversion)

$$\begin{aligned} 101_2 &= 1 \times 2^2 + 0 \times 2^1 + 1 \times 2^0 \\ &= 4 + 0 + 1 = 5_{10} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} 110_2 &= 1 \times 2^2 + 1 \times 2^1 + 0 \times 2^0 \\ &= 4 + 2 + 0 = 6_{10} \end{aligned}$$

Hence

$$101110_2 = 56_{10}$$

Shortcut Method for Octal to Binary Conversion

The following steps are used in this method.

Step 1: Convert each octal digit to a 3 digit binary number (the octal digits may be treated as decimal for the conversion)

Step 2: Combine all the resulting binary groups (of 3 digits each) into a single binary number.

Example

1. $6751_8 = ?_2$

Solution: $6751_8 = \frac{110}{6} \frac{111}{7} \frac{101}{5} \frac{001}{1}$
 $= 110111101001_2$

2. $562_8 = ?_2$

Solution. Step 1: Convert each octal digit to 3 binary digits

$$5_8 = 101_2 \quad 6_8 = 110_2 \quad 2_8 = 010_2$$

Step 2: Combine the binary group

$$562_8 = \frac{101}{5} \frac{110}{6} \frac{010}{2}$$
$$562_8 = 101110010_2$$

Shortcut Method for Binary to Hexadecimal Conversion

The following steps are used in this method:

Step 1: Divide the binary digits into groups of four (Starting from the right)

Step 2: Convert each group of four binary digits to one hexadecimal digit. Remember that hexadecimal digits 0 to 9 are equal to decimal digit 0 to 9, and hexadecimal digits A to F are equal to decimal values 10 to 15.

Example

1. $10110101100_2 = ?_{16}$

Solution $10110101100_2 = \underline{0101} \underline{1010} \underline{1100}$ (Group 4 digits from right.)
 $= 5AC$ (Convert each group to a hexadecimal digit.)

Hence

$$10110101100_2 = 5AC_{16}$$

2. $11010011_2 = ?_{16}$

Solution. Step 1: Divide the binary digits into groups of 4, starting from the right (LSB)

$$\underline{1101} \quad \underline{0011}$$

Step 2: Convert each group of 4 binary digits to a hexadecimal digit.

$$1101_2 = 1 \times 2^3 + 1 \times 2^2 + 0 \times 2^1 + 1 \times 2^0$$
$$= 8 + 4 + 0 + 1 = 13_{10} = D_{16}$$

$$0011 = 0 \times 2^3 + 0 \times 2^2 + 1 \times 2^1 + 1 \times 2^0$$
$$= 0 + 0 + 2 + 1 = 3_{16}$$

Hence $11010011_2 = D3_{16}$

Shortcut Method for Hexadecimal to Binary Conversion

The following steps are used in this method.

Step 1: Convert the decimal equivalent of each hexadecimal digit to 4 binary digits.

Step 2: Combine all the resulting binary groups (of 4 digits each) into a single binary number.

Example:

$$1. \ 2ABC_{16} = ?_2$$

Solution: Step 1: Convert the decimal equivalent of each hexadecimal digit to 4 binary digits.

$$2_{16} = 2_{10} = 0010_2 \quad A_{16} = 10_{10} = 1010_2$$

$$B_{16} = 11_{10} = 1011_2 \quad C_{16} = 12_{10} = 1100_2$$

Step 2: Combine the binary groups

$$2ABC_{16} = \frac{0010}{2} \frac{1010}{A} \frac{1011}{B} \frac{1100}{C}$$

$$\text{Hence } 2ABC_{16} = 001010101011100_2$$

$$N_{16} = \frac{1}{16}$$

$$1010_{16} = 1010$$

$$1011_{16} = 1011$$

$$1100_{16} = 1100$$

$$1010 \quad 1011 \quad 1100$$

$\frac{1}{16} \quad \frac{1}{16} \quad \frac{1}{16}$

$$\text{Hence } N_{16} = 10101011100$$

Fractional Numbers

In binary number system, fractional numbers are formed in the same general way as in the decimal number system. For example in the decimal number system:

$$0.235 = (2 \times 10^{-1}) + (3 \times 10^{-2}) + (5 \times 10^{-3})$$

$$0.578 = (5 \times 10^{-1}) + (7 \times 10^{-2}) + (8 \times 10^{-3})$$

Analogously, in the binary system

$$0.101 = (1 \times 2^{-1}) + (0 \times 2^{-2}) + (1 \times 2^{-3})$$

$$10.101 = (1 \times 2^1) + (0 \times 2^0) + (1 \times 2^{-1}) + (0 \times 2^{-2}) + (1 \times 2^{-3})$$

The binary point carries the same purpose as the decimal point. Some of the positional values in the binary number system are given:

Binary Point

Position	4	3	2	1	↓ 0	-1	-2	-3	-4
Positional Value	2^4	2^3	2^2	2^1	2^0	2^{-1}	2^{-2}	2^{-3}	2^{-4}
Quantity Represented	16	8	4	2	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{16}$

In general, a number in a number system with base b would be written as

$$A_n A_{n-1} \dots A_0 A_1 A_2 \dots A_m$$

and would be interpreted to mean

$$A_n \times b^n + A_{n-1} \times b^{n-1} + \dots + A_0 \times b^0 + A_1 \times b^{-1} + A_2 \times b^{-2} + \dots$$

$$\dots + A_m \times b^{-m}$$

$$46.32_8 = 4 \times 8^1 + 6 \times 8^0 + 3 \times 8^{-1} + 2 \times 8^{-2}$$

$$5A3C_{16} = (5 \times 16^1) + (A \times 16^0) + (3 \times 16^{-1}) + (C \times 16^{-2})$$

Example :-

1. Find the decimal equivalent of the Octal Number

127.54

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Solution: } 127.54_8 &= (1 \times 8^2) + (2 \times 8^1) + (7 \times 8^0) + (5 \times 8^{-1}) + (4 \times 8^{-2}) \\ &= 64 + 16 + 7 + \frac{5}{8} + \frac{4}{64} \\ &= 87 + 0.625 + 0.0625 = 87.6875_{10} \end{aligned}$$

2. Find the decimal equivalent of the hexadecimal number

2B.C4

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Solution: } 2B.C4_{16} &= 2 \times 16^1 + B \times 16^0 + C \times 16^{-1} + 4 \times 16^{-2} \\ &= 32 + B + \frac{C}{16} + \frac{4}{256} = 32 + 11 + \frac{12}{16} + \frac{4}{256} \\ &= 43 + 0.75 + 0.015625 = 43.765625_{10} \end{aligned}$$