

Getting Input from the User

The Input Command

If we return to our `DateOfBirth` program again:

```
DateOfBirth = 1985

if (DateOfBirth > 1967):
    print("Date of birth is after 1967")
else:
    print("Date of birth is not after 1967")
```

We can see that one drawback with this program is that the programmer has to set the `DateOfBirth` variable at the start of the program, but it would be better if we could ask the user to input their Year of Birth and the program could calculate whether or not that year was after 1967 or not.

In Python to get input from the user we use the `input()` function. So that function reads in whatever the user types, but it doesn't know whether the input is a number or a word, so if we are reading in a number we call tell Python by saying `int(input())`, and this converts whatever is being typed into an integer.

So to see it in action, we could do something as follows:

```
print("What is your Year of Birth:")
DateOfBirth = int(input())
```

So the first line is simply a message to the user telling them what to do, and the second line says to take whatever input the user types in, convert it into an integer, and store the result in the variable `DateOfBirth`. It's important to name a variable to store the value that was input from the user, it has to go somewhere.

We can do those two commands in one line as follows:

```
DateOfBirth = int(input("What is your Year of Birth:\n"))
```

And that will work in the exact same way

So to revisit our `DateOfBirth` program, this time using the `input()` command:

```
DateOfBirth = int(input("What is your Year of Birth:\n"))

if (DateOfBirth > 1967):
    print("Date of birth is after 1967")
else:
    print("Date of birth is not after 1967")
```

As we see, the only change needed is the manner in which the variable is read in, otherwise the code stays exactly the same. The difference is that in the original program it was the programmer who set the year, whereas in the new version of the program the user has the power to choose the year to be input, thus empowering the user, and giving them control of the system.