

How to Shoot Yourself in the Foot:

A Comparative Guide to
Programming Languages

1 - Sources

- Main source: www.google.com, searching for various permutations of:
 - programming
 - language
 - foot
 - shoot
- This search is guaranteed to ~~waste~~ consume a large quantity of time

2 - Sources (continued)

Sources that are still reachable as of 5-05-10:

- <http://www.espy.ca/rants.php?id=337>
- <http://www.cs.bgu.ac.il/~omri/Humor/shoot.html>
- <http://santiago.mapache.org/humor/shootfoot.html>
- http://www.baetzler.de/humor/shoot_foot.html
- <http://burks.bton.ac.uk/burks/language/shoot.htm>

3 - Sources (cont'd)

- <http://lincoln.midcoast.com/~del/task.html>
- <http://www.netjeff.com/humor/item.cgi?file=shootfoot>
- <http://www.energymech.net/emech/programming.html>
- http://www.csd.uwo.ca/staff/magi/personal/humour/Computer_Audience/The%20Feet%20First%20Guide%20to%20Programming%20Languages.html
- <http://www.menlo.com/folks/adamm/lang-shoot.html>
- <http://home.tiac.net/~cri/1996/language.html>

4 - Sources (cont'd)

- <http://ifaq.wap.org/computers/proglang.html>
- <http://web.mit.edu/afs/athena/user/h/e/hershey/www/humor/computer/cptrhmr8.html>
- <http://alcor.concordia.ca/~smw/home/languages.html>
- ...that's when I finally stopped
 - (and I've only pulled out my favorite subset...)
 - (although a number of sites that are no-longer-available HAVE been removed from my "original" favorite-subset list...)

5 - Assembly

LDA BULLET

SDA FOOT

- the whole process takes a lot longer to plan, because you need to build your own gun, starting with smelting the iron from the ore. On the plus side, it shoots five percent faster than the other guns, and you now know everything there is to know about guns and feet. However, if you want to use a different caliber gun, you'll have to start over from scratch...

6 - FORTRAN

- You shoot yourself in each toe, iteratively, until you run out of toes. You shoot the sixth bullet anyway, since no exception processing was anticipated.

EQUIVALENCE (BULLET, FOOT)

7 - COBOL

```
USEing a COLT45  
HANDGUN, AIM gun at LEG.FOOT, THEN place  
ARM.HAND.FINGER on  
HAND.GUN.TRIGGER and  
SQUEEZE. THEN return  
HANDGUN to HOLSTER. CHECK  
whether shoelace needs to be retied.
```

- You try to shoot yourself in the foot, but the gun won't fire unless it's aligned in column 8.

8 - Algol-60

- You shoot yourself in the foot with a musket. The musket is aesthetically fascinating, and the wound baffles the adolescent medic in the emergency room.
- You spend hours trying to figure out how to fire the gun since it has no provision for input or output.

9 - LISP

```
(You (shoot yourself in the)
      (appendage which holds
        (the gun with which
          (you shoot yourself in the
            (appendage which holds
              (the gun with which
                (you shoot yourself in
the (appendage which holds
      (the gun with which
        (you shoot yourself in the
          (appendage which holds
            (the gun with which you
.. )))))))
```

10 - LISP (cont'd)

- You try to shoot yourself in the foot, but the gun jams on a stray parenthesis.
- You need to put the gun, the bullet, and your foot in a list, then invoke the shoot function on it.

11 - APL

@#&^\$%&%^ foot

GN (* Upside down triangle *) FT ^ BLT

- You heard a gunshot, and there's a hole in your foot, but you don't remember enough linear algebra to understand what the he[ck] happened.
- You shoot yourself in the foot, then spend all day trying to figure out how to do it in fewer characters.

12 - PL/I

- Since the bullet is a different type from your foot, the bullet automatically gets converted to another foot on arrival. It's still difficult to walk afterwards.
- You consume all available system resources, including all the offline bullets. The Data Processing and Payroll Department doubles its size, triples its budget, acquires four new mainframes, and drops the original one on your foot.

13 - Algol-68

- You mildly deprocedure the gun, the bullet gets firmly dereferenced, and your foot is strongly coerced to void.

14 - C

- [probably the language that started this whole metaphor! comparing C to Pascal...]
- Makes it easy to shoot yourself in the foot.
- You shoot yourself in the foot and then no one else can figure out what you did.
- `*foot = bullet`
- You just assign the gun a pointer to your foot, and pull the trigger.

15 - BASIC

- You shoot yourself in the foot with a water pistol until your foot is waterlogged and rots off.
- Shoot yourself in foot with water pistol. On big systems, continue until entire lower body is waterlogged.
- Lacking a gun, you hold the bullet in your hand and throw it at your foot....and miss.

16 - Pascal

- The compiler won't let you shoot yourself in the foot, because it's not proper technique.
- You try to shoot yourself in the foot, but it tells you that your foot is the wrong type and out of range as well!

17 - Ada

- Sorry, this gun is the wrong type for your foot. Please put your foot in front of this cannon instead. Thank you.
- After correctly packing your foot, you attempt to concurrently load the gun, pull the trigger, scream, and shoot yourself in the foot. When you try, however, you discover that you can't because your foot is of the wrong type.
- You scour all 154e56 pages of the manuals, looking for references to "foot", "leg", or "toes"; then get hopelessly confused and give up. You sneak in when the boss isn't around and actually write the stinkin' thing in C, and turn 7689 pages of source code in to the review committee, knowing that they'll never look at it. When the program needs maintenance, you resign.

18 - Modula-2

- You perform a shooting on what might currently be a foot with what might currently be a bullet shot by what might currently be a gun.
- After realizing that you can't accomplish anything in this language, you shoot yourself in the head.

19 - Smalltalk

- Please come back when you've told the bullets how to fly. Ah, thank you. *BANG*
- You send the message shoot to gun, with selectors bullet and myFoot. A window pops up saying Gunpowder doesNotUnderstand: spark. After several fruitless hours spent browsing the methods for Trigger, FiringPin and IdealGas, you take the easy way out and create ShotFoot, a subclass of Foot with an additional instance variable bullet hole.

20 - Smalltalk (cont'd)

- You shoot yourself in the foot, and your foot sends "doesNotUnderstand: Pain" to your brain.
- You spend so much time playing with the graphics and windowing system that your boss shoots you in the foot, takes away your workstation, and makes you develop in COBOL on a character terminal.

21 - C++

- C++ makes it harder to shoot yourself in the foot [than C does], but when you do, you blow away your whole leg! [heavily paraphrased from Stroustrup!]
- You can still do it the C way, but it's much easier to just supply your foot as the parameter of the gun's shoot() method.
- You accidentally create a dozen instances of yourself and shoot them all in the foot. Providing emergency medical care is impossible since you can't tell which are bitwise copies and which are just pointing at others and saying, "That's me, over there."

22 - Scheme

```
(You (shoot yourself in the)
      (appendage which holds
        (the gun with which
          (you shoot yourself in the
            (appendage which holds
              (the gun with which
                (you shoot yourself in
the (appendage which holds
      (the gun with which
        (you shoot yourself in the
          (appendage which holds
            (the gun with which you
.. )))))))
```

..... but none of the other appendages are aware of this happening.

23 - ML

- You aim the gun, then supply it with a foot to shoot. If this is impossible, supply it with a phone directory, and let it hunt you down. Note that even if you are a centipede, it will *still only need one bullet*.
- It refuses, as your foot and the bullet are of different types.

24 - Prolog

- You tell your program that you want to be shot in the foot. The program figures out how to do it, but the syntax doesn't allow it to explain.
- You attempt to shoot yourself in the foot, but the bullet, failing to find its mark, backtracks to the gun which then explodes in your face.
- The facts are against you. You try to stop the gun from shooting you in the foot, but it replies "No."

26 - Java

- You can load the gun, but you can't actually point it at your foot.
- You have to do it the C++ way, though the makers claim that you'll be able to shoot yourself with any kind of gun anywhere you want. Unfortunately, it shoots real slowly and misses sometimes, especially when shooting at windows.
- You write a program to shoot yourself in the foot and put it on the Internet. People all over the world shoot themselves in the foot.

27 - Java (cont'd)

- You can't shoot yourself in the foot. There must be a virtual foot around here somewhere, though..
- You shoot yourself in the foot. Everyone else who accesses your website leaves hobbling and cursing.
- You can do it with a standalone interpreter, but a Java applet will not let you access your foot.

28 - Haskell

- All you have to do is calculate the value of the shoot function on foot. (You did define shoot, didn't you?)

29 - 370 JCL

- [Wikipedia mentions JCL as an early example of a scripting language...]
- You send your foot down to the MIS department with a 4000 page document explaining how you want it to be shot. Three years later, your foot comes back deep fried with a bill for \$375,000.00.

30 - sh, csh, etc.

- After searching the manual until your foot falls asleep, you shoot the computer and switch to C.
- You can't remember the syntax for anything, so you spend five hours reading man pages before giving up. You then shoot the computer and switch to C.

31 - Perl

```
! ($foot =-/left/) # ! read as "Bang!"
```

- You shoot at your foot. Or you could put your foot in the way of a bullet. Or shoot up in the air and have the bullet land on your foot. Any way you choose to do it, you've shot yourself in the foot.
- You shoot yourself in the foot. You then decide it was so much fun that you invent another six completely different ways to do it.
- If you want to shoot yourself in the foot, Perl will give you ten bullets and a laser scope, then stand by and cheer you on.

32 - Perl (cont'd)

- There are so many ways to shoot yourself in the foot that you post a query to `comp.lang.perl.misc` to determine the optimal approach. After sifting through 500 replies (which you accomplish with a short perl script), not to mention the cross-posts to the `perl5-porters` mailing list (for which you upgraded your first sifter into a package, which of course you uploaded to CPAN for others who might have a similar problem, which, of course, is the problem of sorting out email and news, not the problem of shooting yourself in the foot), you set to the task of simply and elegantly shooting yourself in the foot, until you discover that, while it works fine in most cases, NT, VMS, and various flavors of Linux, AIX, and Irix all shoot you in the foot sooner than your perl script could.

Then you decide you can do it better with the new, threaded version...

33 - Perl (cont'd)

```
while ($_ = )
{
    for ($i = 0; $i < $#toes; $i++)
    {
        s/[ \t]*($toes[$i])/blood/g;
    }
}
```

- You stab yourself in the foot repeatedly with an incredibly large and very heavy Swiss Army knife.

34 - Python

- You try to shoot yourself in the foot, but the number of tabs is wrong, so you shoot yourself in the [ahem] instead.