

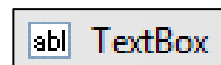
# TAKING INPUT FROM THE USER: THE TEXTBOX CONTROL

Many applications require input from the user. One common way of obtaining input from the user is through the user of a **TextBox** control (there is also something called an **InputBox**, but we will learn about that in a later lesson).

## TEXTBOX

A TextBox control is one useful way to allow the user to enter information. A TextBox includes the following important properties:

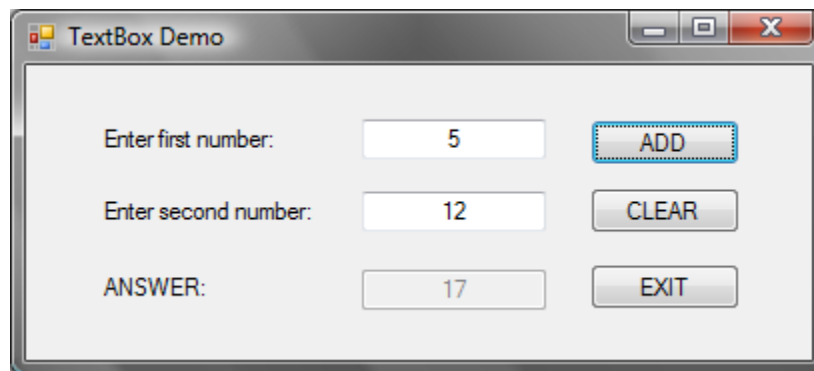
NAME	Identifies the name of the TextBox control.
TEXT	Sets what is displayed in the text box.
TEXTALIGN	Sets the alignment of the text relative to the text box.



## THE VAL() FUNCTION

The **Val()** function is often used to convert text box data into a numeric value. The **Val()** function requires a String value and then returns a number corresponding to the string. If the first character of the string is not a numeric character, **Val()** returns a 0.

Say, for example, you want to add a value that the user enters into **txtNum1** to a number that the user enters into **txtNum2**, and output the result into a TextBox called **txtSum**.



In order for the program to perform the calculation, you will need to include the following line of code in your program:

```
txtSum.Text = Val (txtNum1.Text) + Val (txtNum2.Text)
```

The program takes the value that the user enters into the first text box and converts it from a string to a number, does the same for the second text box, adds the values together, and outputs the answer in the third text box.

## CLEARING A TEXT BOX

A **TextBox** control has a variety of methods that perform operations on the text box or its contents. One of these methods is **Clear()**, which clears the contents of the text box's **Text** property. The general format of the **Clear()** method is:

```
TextBox.Clear()
```

So, for example, if I have a text box named **txtSum**, I can clear the text box by entering the following line of code:

```
txtSum.Clear()
```

Another way of clearing a text box is by making the **Text** property of the text box equal to an empty string as follows:

```
txtSum.Text = ""
```

Finally, you can also clear a text box by assigning the predefined constant **String.Empty** to its **Text** property:

```
txtSum.Text = String.Empty
```

## THE FOCUS() METHOD

When an application is running and a form is displayed, one of the form's controls always has the **focus**. The control having the focus is the one that receives the user's keyboard input or mouse clicks. For example, when a text box has the focus, it receives the characters that the user enters on the keyboard. When a button has the focus, pressing the ENTER key executes the button's **Click** event procedure.

Oftentimes, you will want to make sure a particular control has focus. For example, when the user clicks the CLEAR button in the above application, I want the focus to return to the first text box so that the user can enter a new number; this way the user doesn't have to click the text box in order to start entering a new number.

In order to set the focus to a control, you will need to use the **Focus()** method as follows:

```
ControlName.Focus()
```

So, for example, if I wanted to set the focus back to a text box which I have named **txtNum**, I would use the statement:

```
txtNum.Focus()
```