

# ECE471: Embedded Systems – Homework 2

Raspberry Pi and Linux

**Due: Friday, 18 September 2026, 5:00pm**

This Homework is meant to get you started with the Raspberry Pi so that you will be prepared for future homework assignments.

## 1. Get Linux Working

- Install some form of Linux onto your Raspberry Pi. I recommend “Raspberry Pi OS” (formerly known as Raspbian).
  - If you have an SD card with Linux already installed, you are all set.
  - If you need to install Linux on an SD card you can find instructions here:  
<https://www.raspberrypi.com/software/>  
You can get a raw image and install it, but they also have some imaging software there that can do advanced things like pre-configure the image before installing it. Note for this class either 32-bit or 64-bit are fine.
- Power up the Pi and ensure you can login.
  - To power it up, hook up power via the USB power port on the pi (it’s usb-micro on older Pis, usb-c on pi4/pi5). Usually a phone-charger type supply is recommended, though on older systems you can get away with just plugging it in via USB cable to a laptop/desktop.
  - As described in the class notes there are many ways to use the Pi. The most straightforward is to have a USB keyboard and a TV/monitor connected via HDMI.
  - Be sure the SD card with Linux is in the SD slot, plug in the power supply/connector, and it should boot up.
  - If you run into trouble there should be many tutorials on this online, or feel free to ask someone (including me) for help.
- The first boot it might ask you to configure things, see the lecture notes if you have any issues with that.
- Once you are configured, you might want to reboot the system.
- Now it will boot up into either a GUI or text interface (you can configure that and other things with the *raspi-config* tool).
- Use the username/password you picked to login. If it’s an old version of Linux instead you might have to use the default `pi` / `raspberry` login. If that’s the case, change the password as soon as possible with the `passwd` command.
- If the GUI doesn’t start by default, often you can use `startx` after logging in to get a graphics interface.
- If you have trouble with any of these steps and need help, let me know as soon as possible!

## 2. Copy the Assignment to your Raspberry Pi

- Download the code from:  
[https://web.eece.maine.edu/~vweaver/classes/ece471/ece471\\_hw2\\_code.tar.gz](https://web.eece.maine.edu/~vweaver/classes/ece471/ece471_hw2_code.tar.gz)
- There are various ways you can do this.
  - If your pi is hooked up to the internet

- \* At a command prompt you can use *wget* or *curl* to download the file. Just type the command and then type or paste the URL above after it.
- \* Instead if you are running the GUI you can just use a web-browser to download it
- \* You can also download the file on your desktop/laptop and copy it to your Pi using *scp*. This is part of the *ssh* remote login utils.  
There are also a number of GUI *scp* or *sftp* clients you can use to connect if you don't like the command line.
- Using a USB key
  - Ideally you just plug the USB key in and if you are running the GUI it will pop up a window and let you find the file that way.
  - If you are in text mode the USB key will appear somewhere in the `/media` directory tree.
  - If you're really unlucky you might have to mount the USB key by hand, something like  
`sudo mount /dev/sda1 -o rw /media/usbkey`
  - To copy `ece471_hw2_code.tar.gz` to your home directory type something like the following (it will vary based on exactly where the USB key got mounted)  
`cp /media/usbkey/ece471_hw2_code.tar.gz ~`
  - When you are done with the usbkey, **before** removing it you have to unmount it; you should be able to do this from the GUI, or else you can manually  
`sudo umount /media/usbkey`

### 3. Unpack the homework files

Uncompress/unpack it with the command

```
tar -xzvf ece471_hw2_code.tar.gz
```

### 4. Build the C files

- Change into the `ece471_hw2_code` directory  
`cd ece471_hw2_code`
- Run `make` to build the code.
- Run `./hello_world` and it should run!

### 5. Modify the `hello_world.c` file (5 pts)

- Change the file so the output is 12 lines, each line looking something like this:  
`#1: ECE471 MY_MESSAGE`  
Where the number after the `#` increments each line, `ECE471` is always printed, and `MY_MESSAGE` is any message you want to print. Start numbering from 1. Full credit requires using some sort of loop (not just copy/paste).
- You can use any text editor you want to do this coding. A simple one that is available on the Pi is `nano`, you can start it by running `nano hello_world.c`
- Once you have updated the code, you can simply run `make` and it should recompile your code. Then test by running `./hello_world`
- Be sure to comment your code! Also fix all compiler warnings!

## 6. “Something Cool” (1 pt)

Copy your working code on top of the `something_cool.c` file.

```
cp hello_world.c something_cool.c
```

Then do one of the following.

- Change the number of times your printing code loops based on a command line argument. The `atoi()` or `strtod()` functions might be useful for this.
- Modify your `hello_world.c` file further to print the lines in different colors.  
HINT: Look up “ANSI escape codes”
- (harder) Instead of printing everything one color, print each line a different color.
- (even harder) Print each individual letter of the output a different color.

## 7. Answer the following questions (4pts total)

Short answers are fine. Put your answers in the `README` file using a text editor, it will be automatically included in the submission process.

- (a) If you want to know more about the `ls` program, what command can you run?
- (b) What does the `-a` option to the `ls` program do?
- (c) List one reason why C is often used on embedded systems.
- (d) What method are you using to connect to your pi? (monitor/keyboard, network, serial, etc.?)  
How are you copying files back and forth?

## 8. Submit your work

- Be sure your name and answers to questions are in the `README` file.
- Run `make submit` which will create a `hw2_submit.tar.gz` file containing `README`, `Makefile`, `hello_world.c` and `something_cool.c`.  
You can verify the contents with `tar -tzvf hw2_submit.tar.gz`
- e-mail the `hw2_submit.tar.gz` file to me by the homework deadline. Be sure to send the proper file!