



North Texas FLL Coaches' Clinics

Beginning FLL Programming

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Goals

Learn basics of Mindstorms programming

Be able to accomplish some missions

Provide tips that have helped our team

Point out traps that cause frustration

Topics

EV3 programming environment

Programming basics

Motor blocks – moving forward and backward

Detecting lines, borders, colors

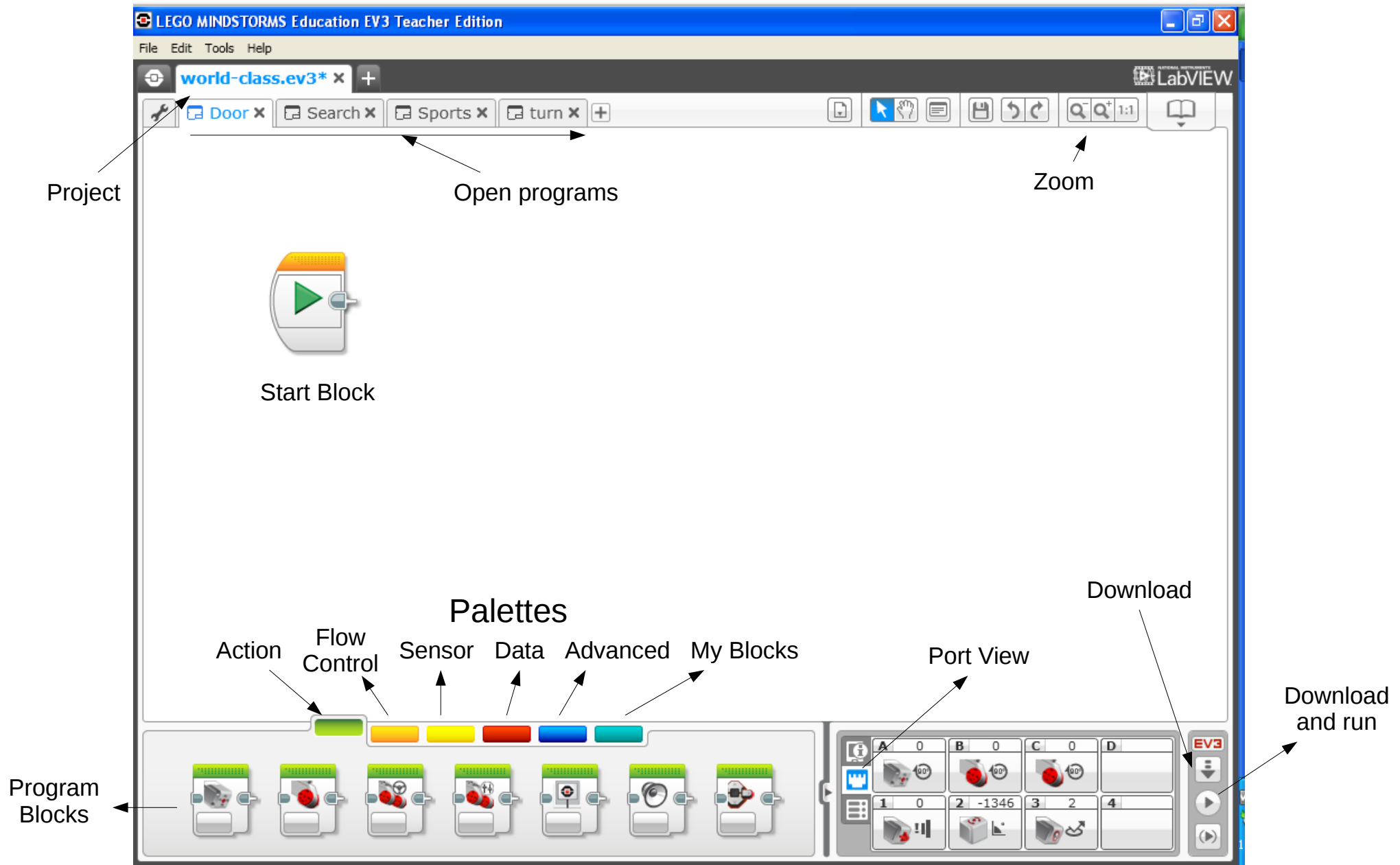
Port view and view mode

Turning basics

Turns using gyro sensor

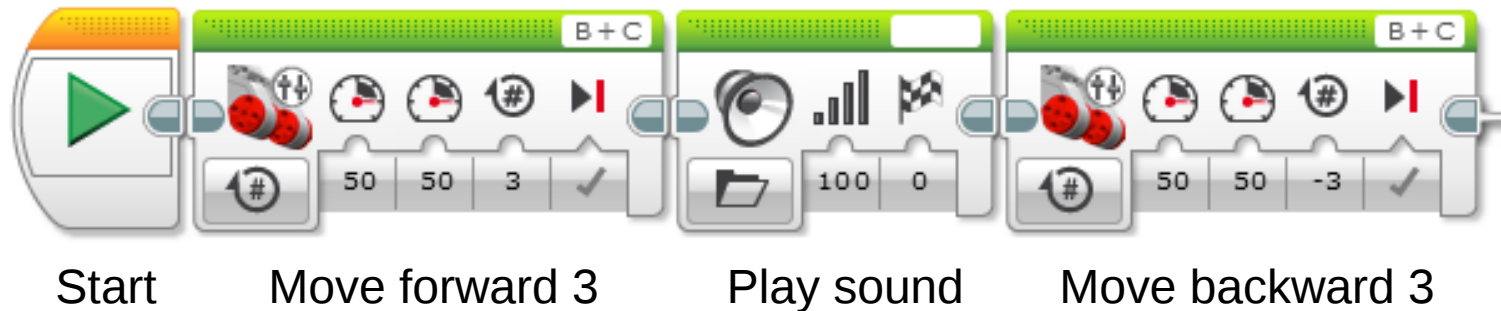
Simple My Blocks

EV3 Programming Environment



Programming basics

A program is a sequence of actions to perform



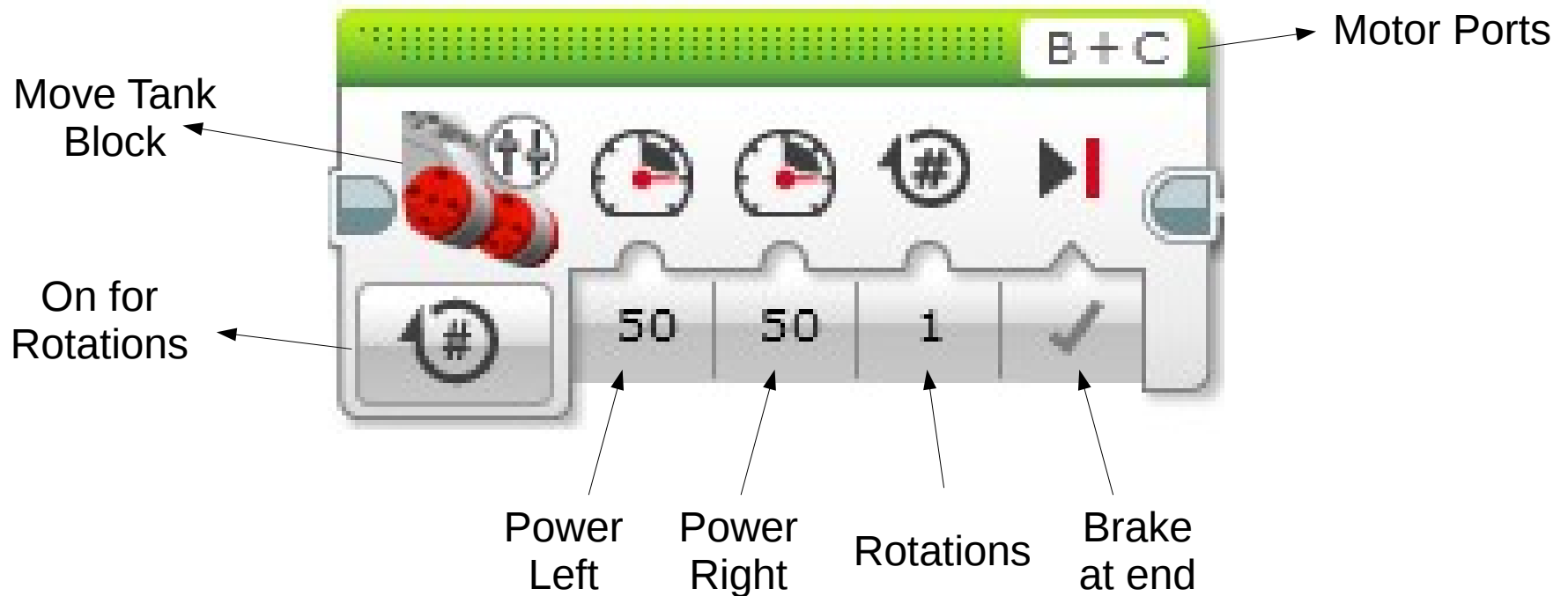
Each action is represented by a “block”

Icons indicate the type and values of block

Robot does *exactly* what you tell it to do
and *only* what you tell it to do

Programmer determines what actions to perform

Motor blocks – moving the robot



Motor ports: which motors to turn

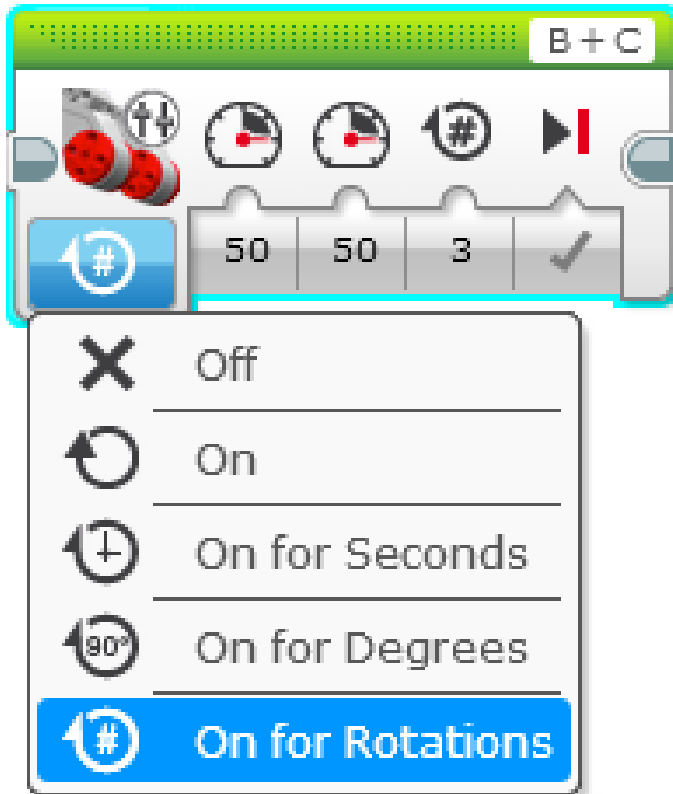
Power left/right: how fast to turn each motor

Rotations: how far to turn each motor

Brake at end: whether to apply brakes when done

Motor blocks

Motor commands



Types of moves

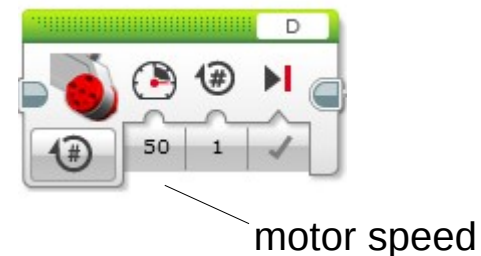
Move tank



Move steering



Large motor (one)





Programming Tasks

Fundamentals of turns

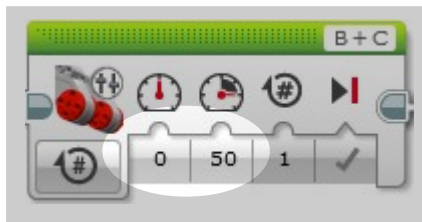
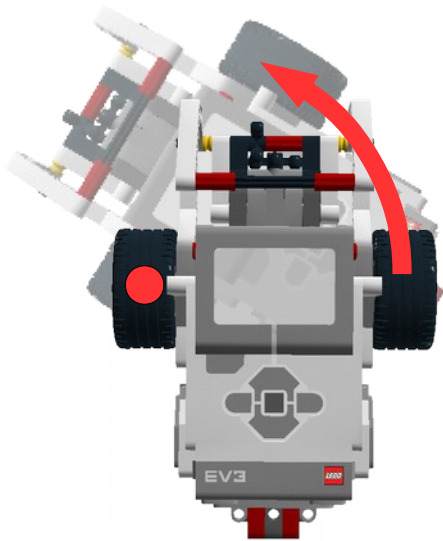
The robot turns when driving wheels move at different speeds

The robot turns towards the *slower* wheel

The greater the difference in speeds,
the tighter the turn

Turning basics – types of turns

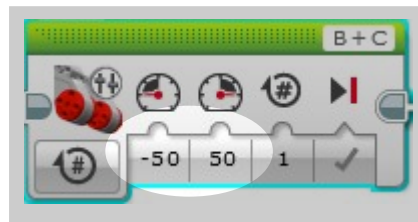
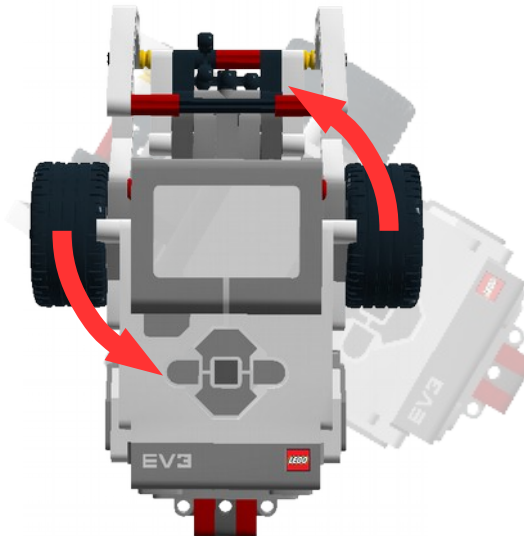
Pivot turn



One wheel moves,
other wheel brakes

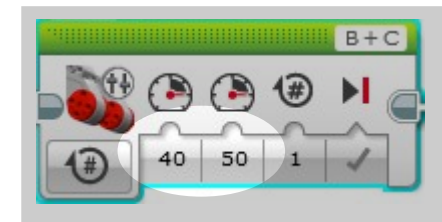
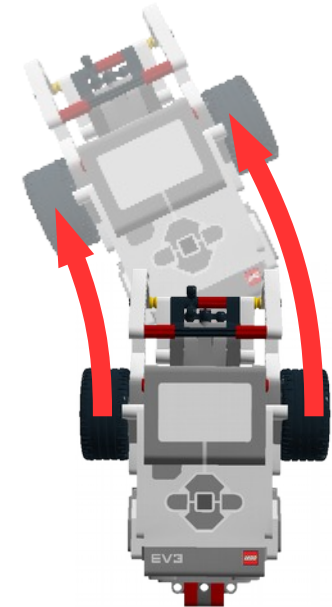
we use this,
most consistent

Point turn



Wheels move in
opposite directions

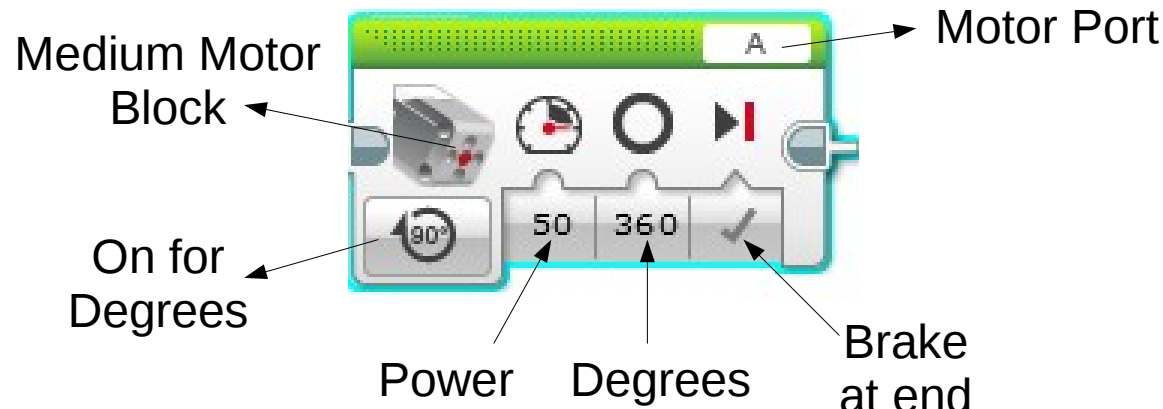
Wide turn



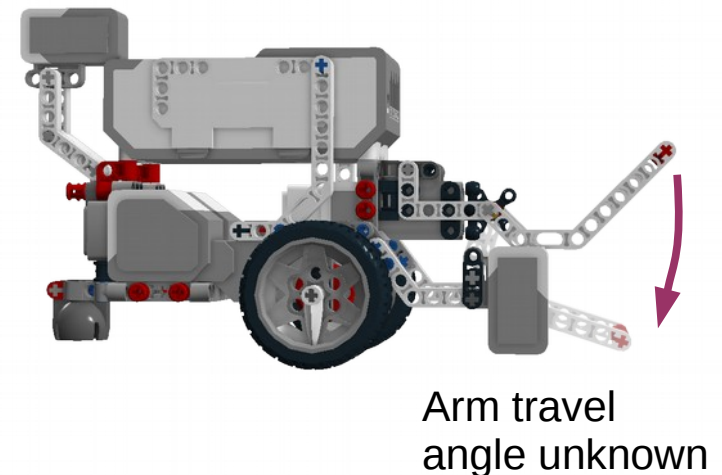
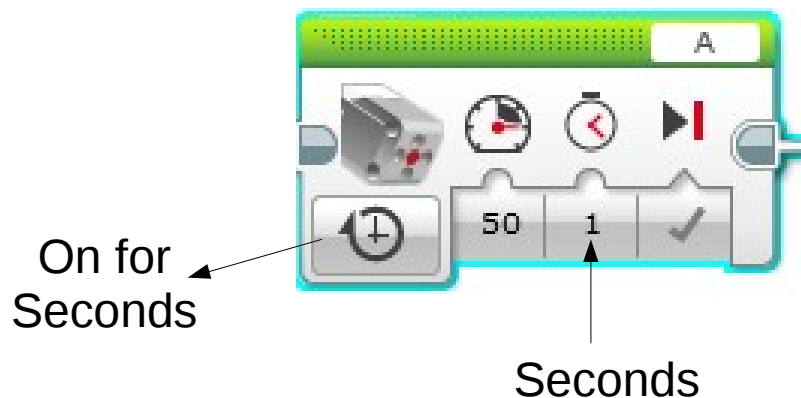
One wheel moves
slower than other

Using the medium motor

The medium motor has a different block

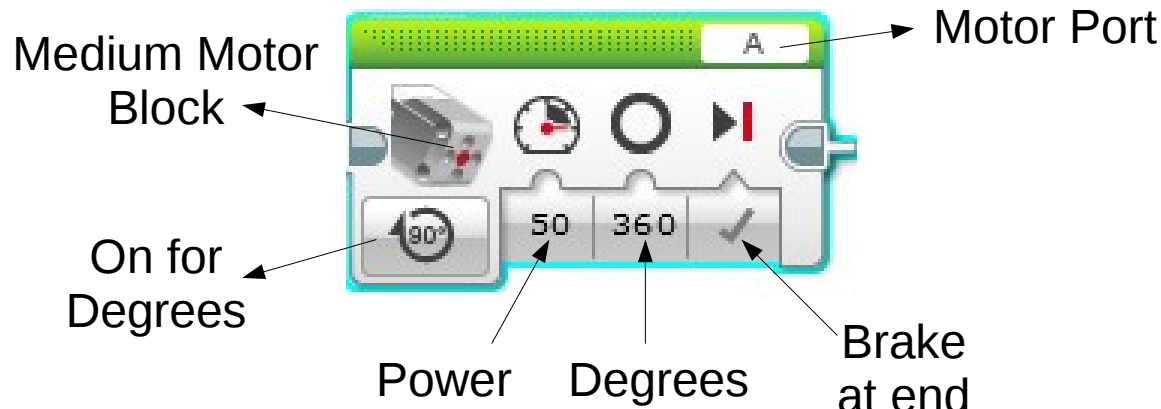


Use “On for Seconds” when you want to go to a limit (avoid stalls)

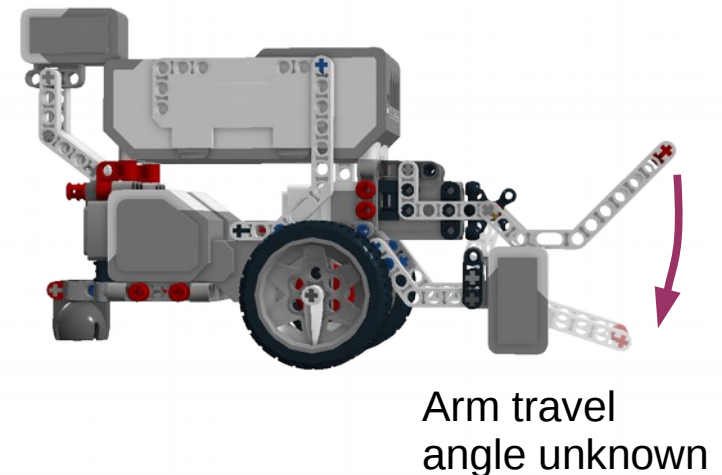
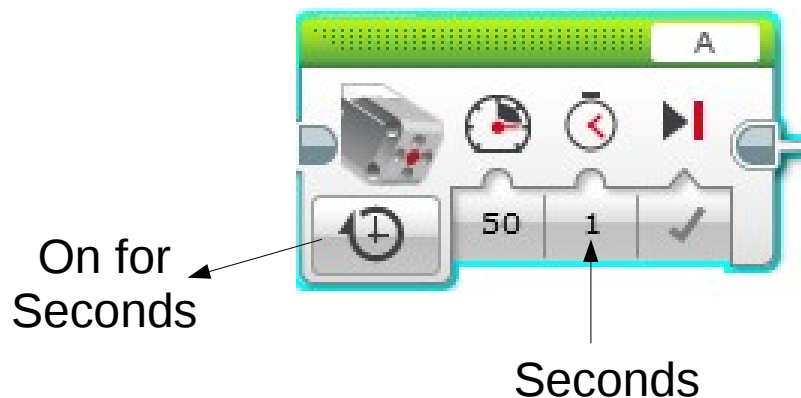


Using the medium motor

The medium motor has a different block



Use “On for Seconds” when you want to go to a limit (avoid stalls)



Wait blocks

Program executes blocks in sequence

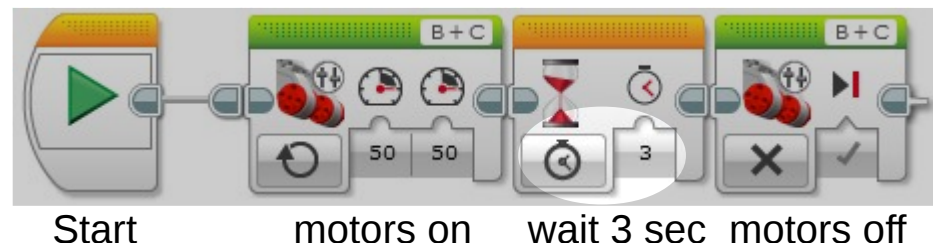
Wait blocks makes program wait for something to happen before continuing to next block

- Wait for seconds

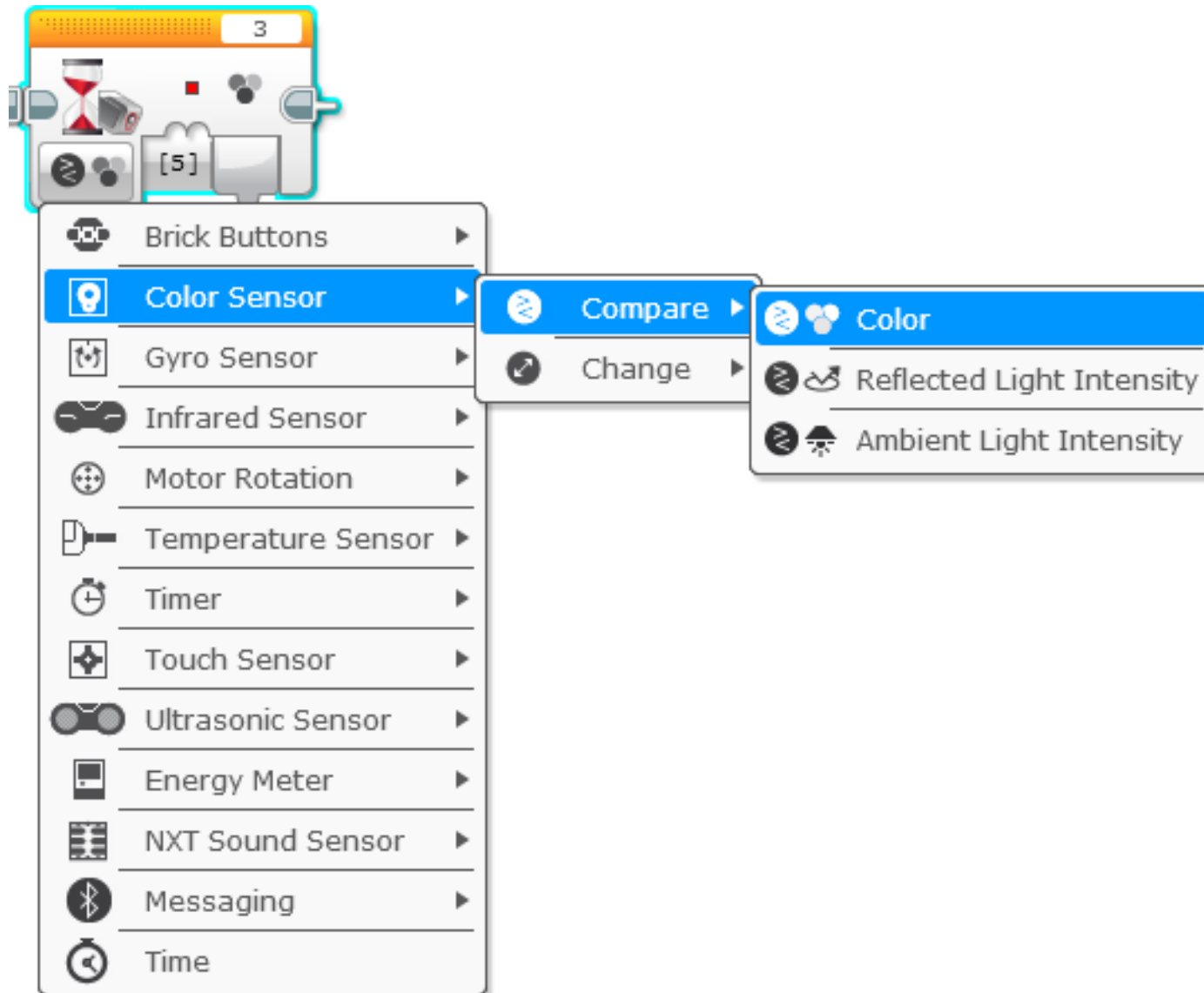
- Wait for sensor to read a certain value

- Wait for sensor to change

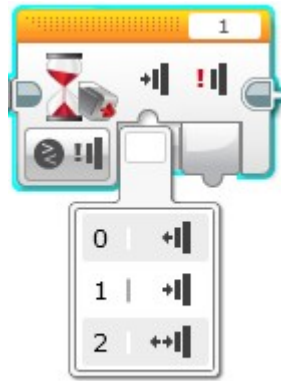
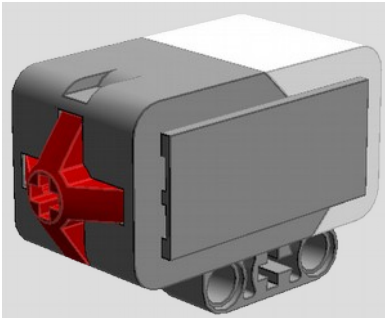
Example:



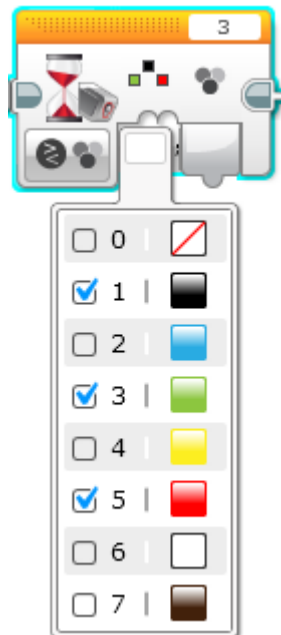
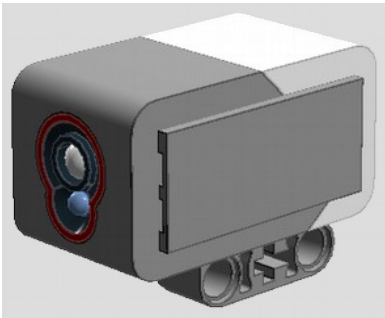
Wait block options



Touch and color sensors



Touch sensor detects pressure

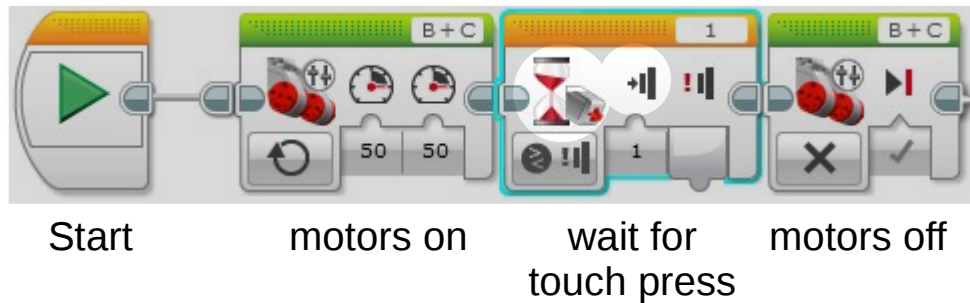


Color sensor can detect selected colors

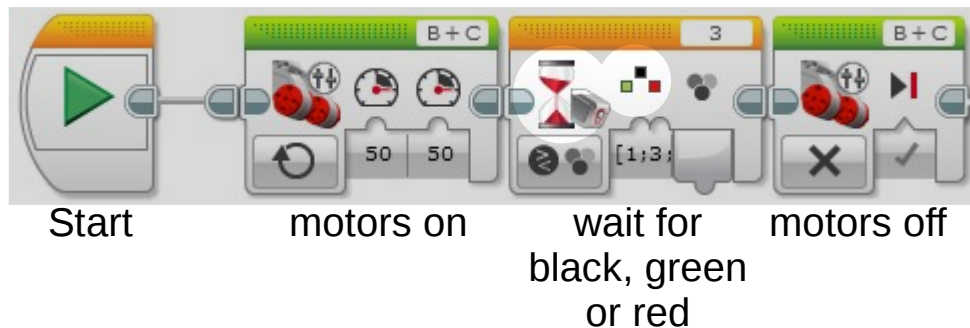
Sensor should be 0.5 to 2.0 cm from color to be detected

Moving to a border, line, or color

Move until touch sensor pressed

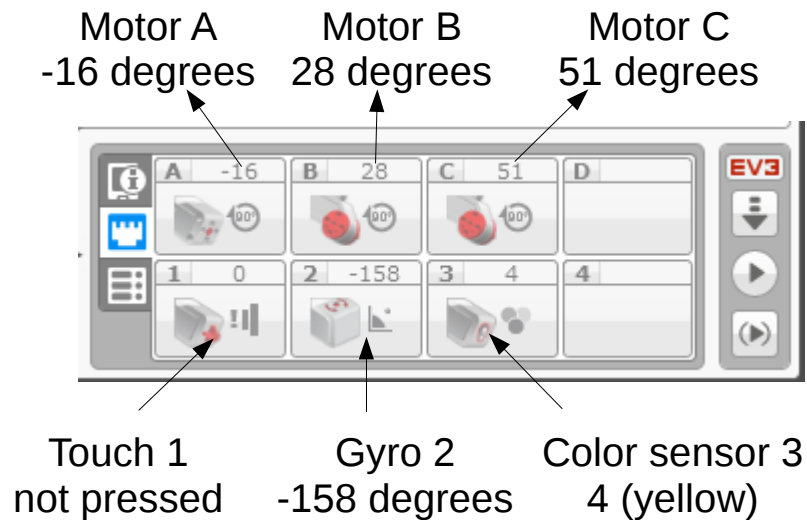


Move until black, green, or red detected



Use “port view” to see sensor changes

Software view:

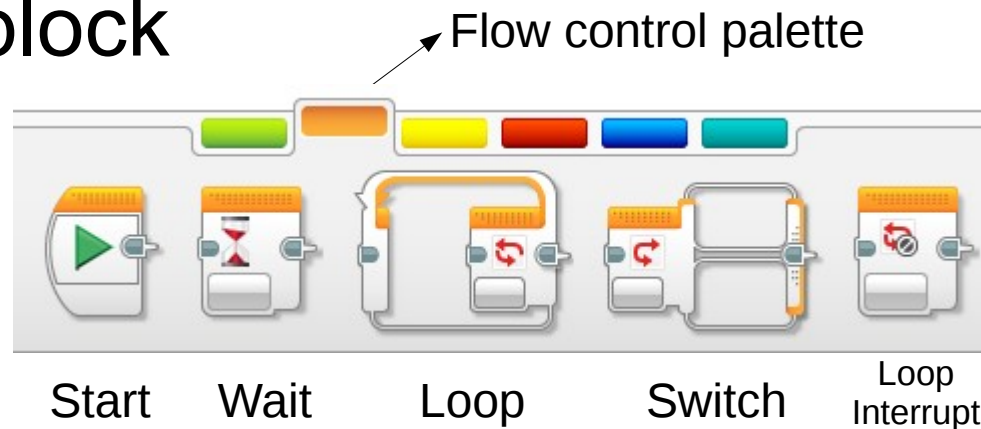


EV3 view:

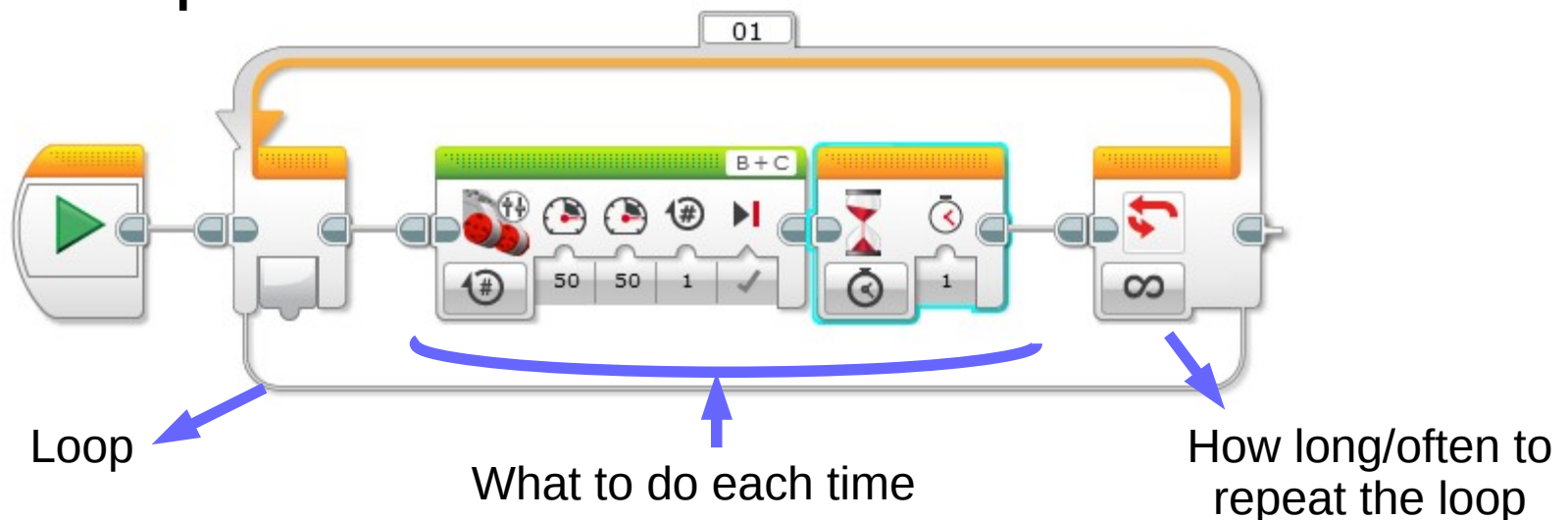


Loops

To do something repeatedly (like steering),
use a “loop” block



A basic loop block





Programming Tasks

More about turning

Quiz: If a wheel turns 90 degrees, does the robot turn 90 degrees?

Answer: No

There *is* a formula to convert wheel turn angles to robot turn angles (advanced programming)

But many teams just use trial and error

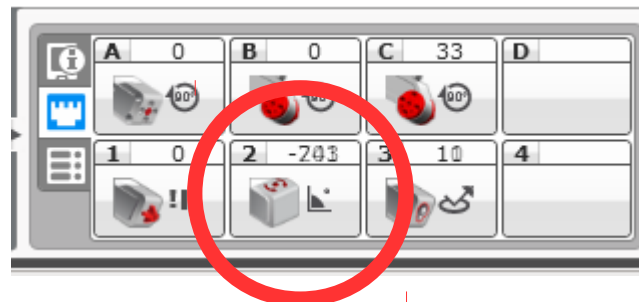
Or, use a gyro sensor

Gyro sensor

Gyro sensor detects rotation about an axis

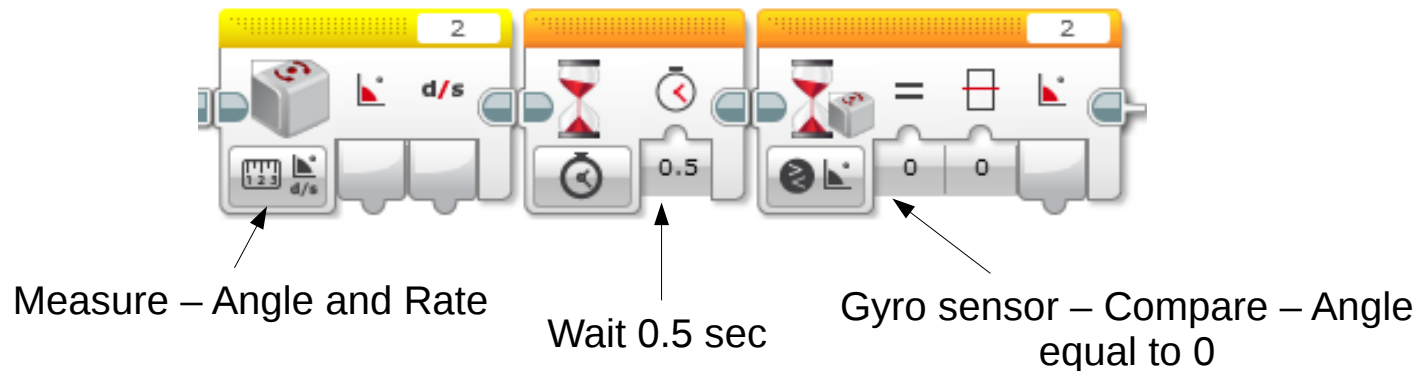
Can measure rotation rate or rotation angle

Sensor has *bias* and *drift*
sometimes shows movement even when still



Reducing gyro drift

The following block sequence recalibrates the gyro sensor to eliminate drift:

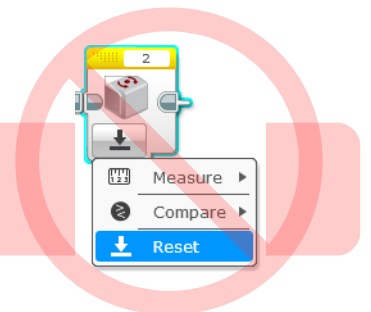


Perform this once at beginning of program

Requires 2-3 seconds to complete

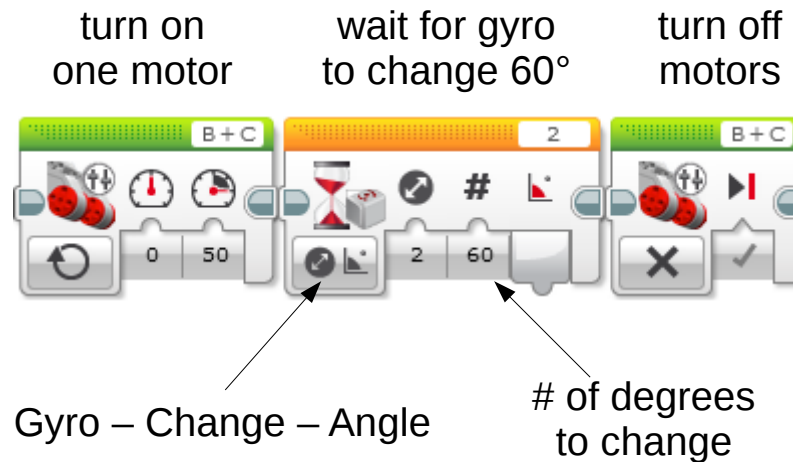
Gyro must be stationary while calibrating

Trap: “Gyro reset” block doesn't recalibrate gyro!



Turns using gyro sensor

Once gyro reads correctly, turning an angle is:

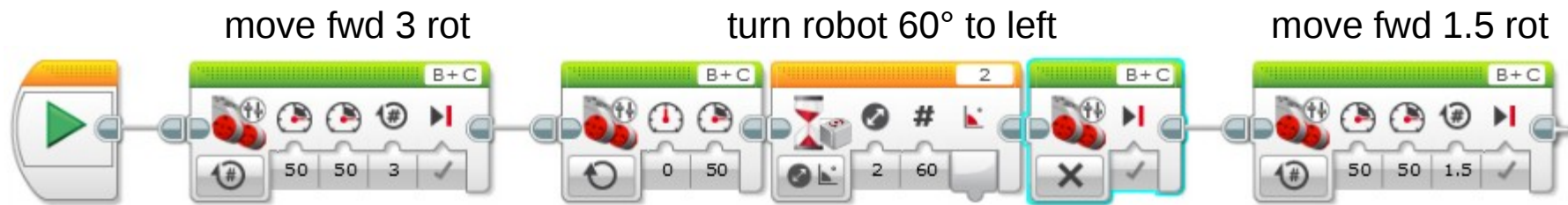


Gyro sensor is *not* precise

Robot may turn slightly more or less than 60°

Simple My Blocks - turning

A program to move, turn, then move:

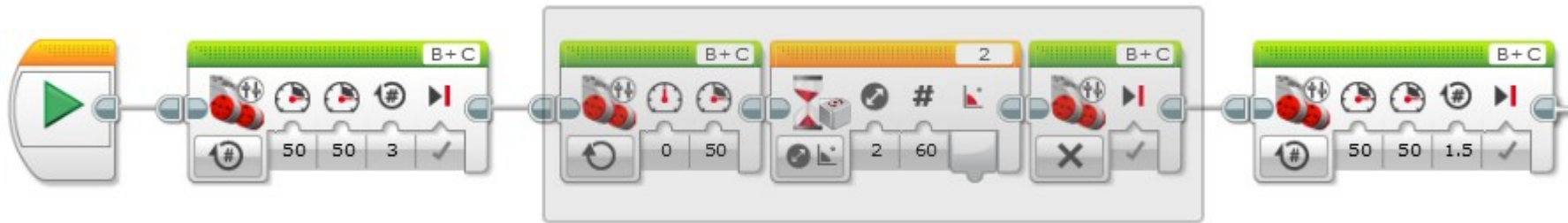


Adding three blocks for every turn will get tedious

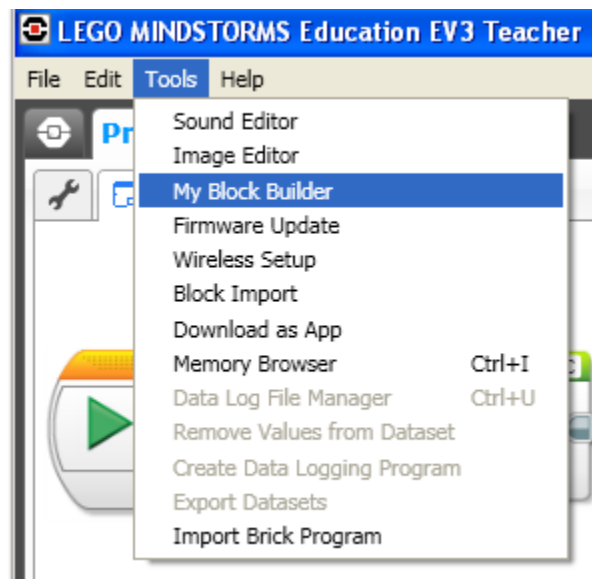
We can create custom blocks called “My Blocks”

Creating a My Block

Start by drag-selecting the blocks to be used



Select “My Block Builder” from the Tools menu



Creating a My Block

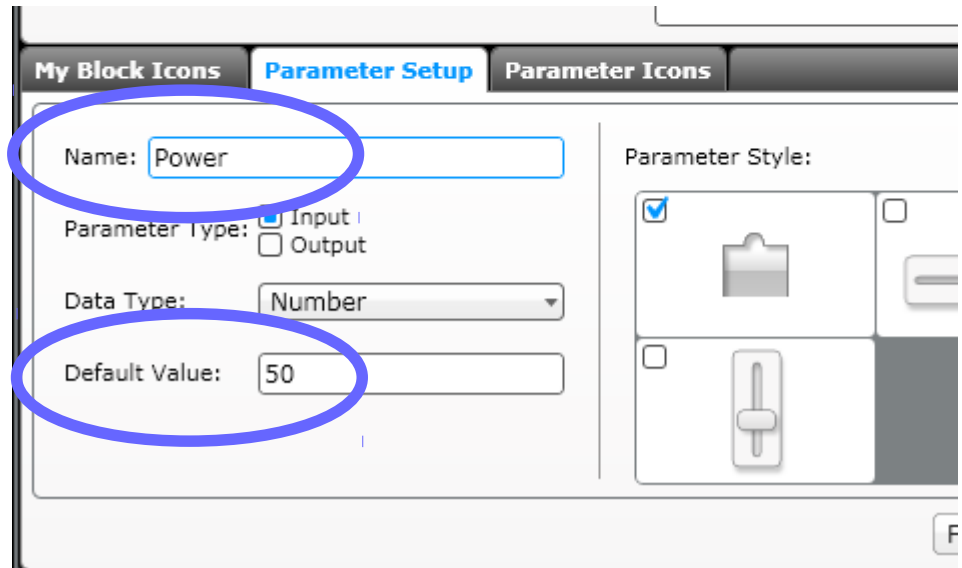
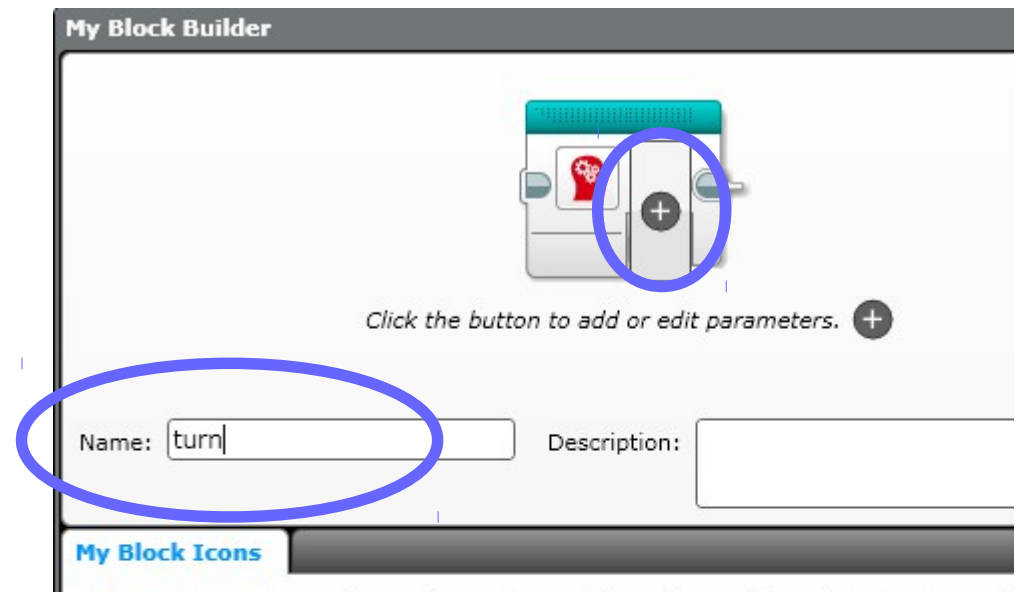
Give the My Block
a name

Click the “+” to add
a parameter

Click “Parameter
Setup”

Name parameter
“Power”

Give it a default of 50

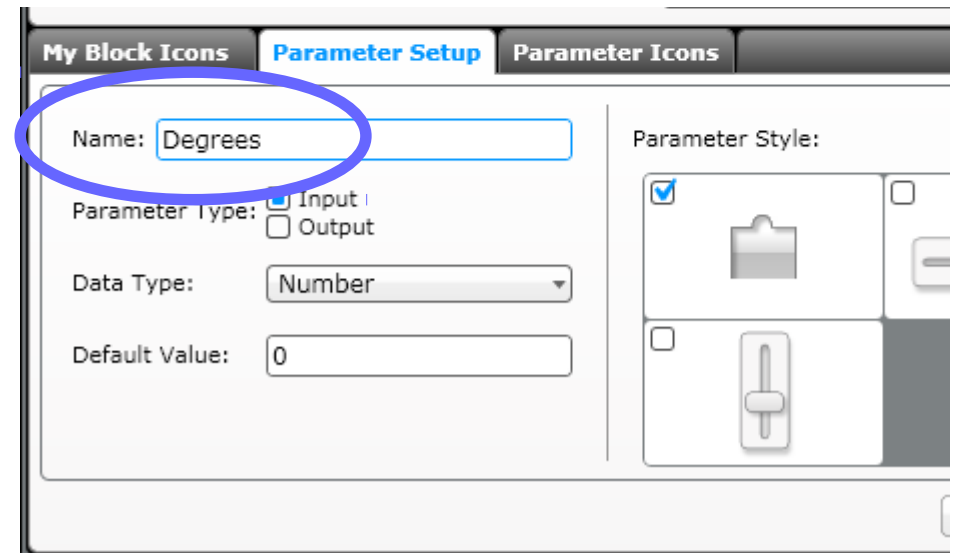


Creating a My Block

Click “+” again to create another Parameter

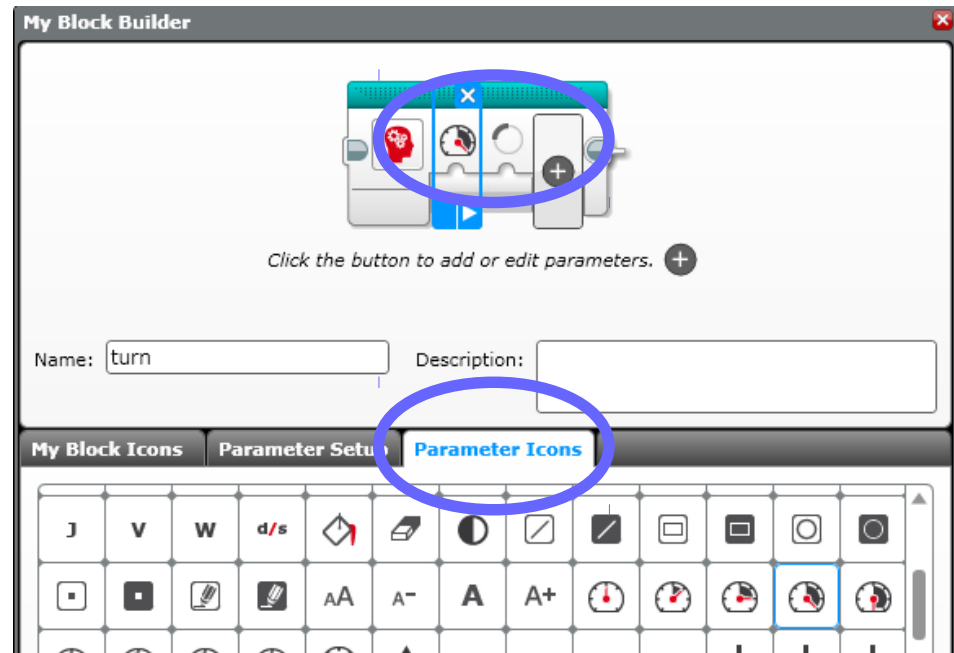
Name it “degrees”

Default value 0



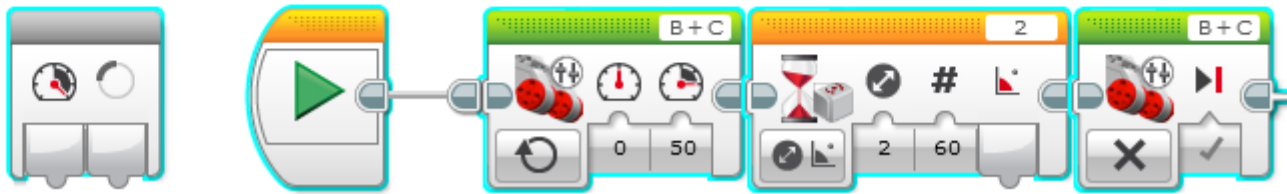
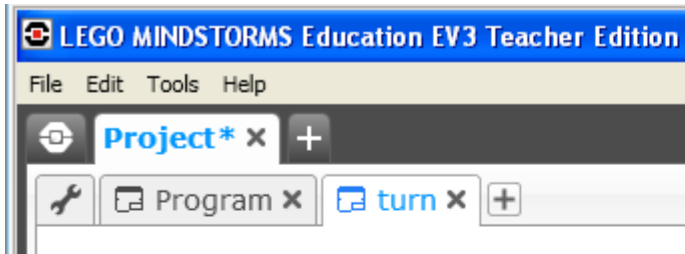
You can change the parameter icons to be more meaningful

Click “Finish”



Creating a My Block

A new program is created for the My Block

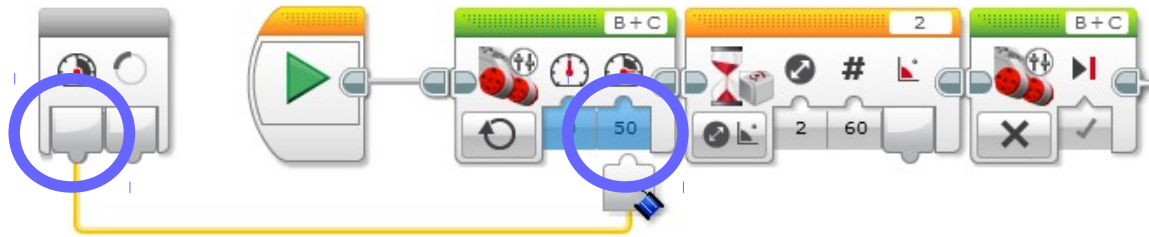


The grey block on the left has our “parameter inputs” for power and degrees

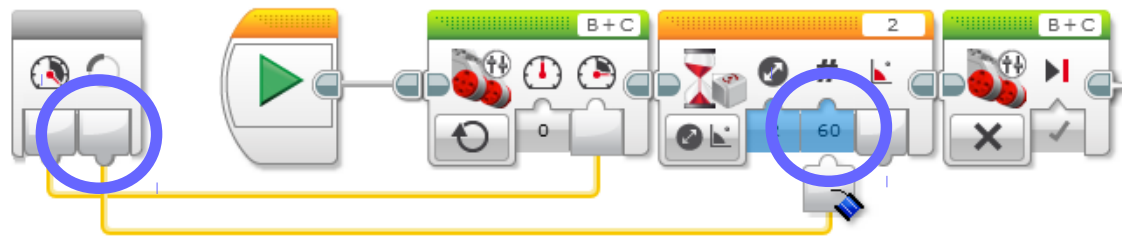
We have to wire them to the appropriate blocks

Creating a My Block

“Drag” a wire from the “Power” parameter to the C motor power input

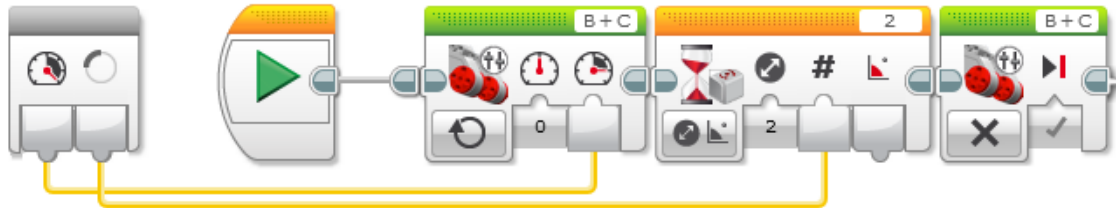


Drag a wire from the “Degrees” parameter to the degrees input of the wait block

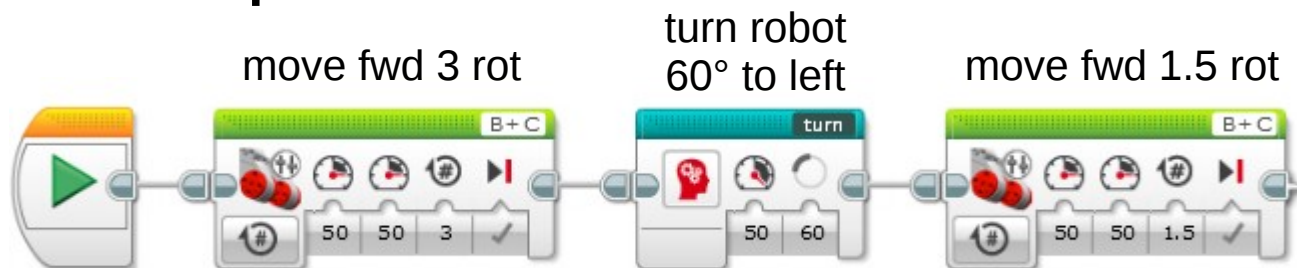


Creating a My Block

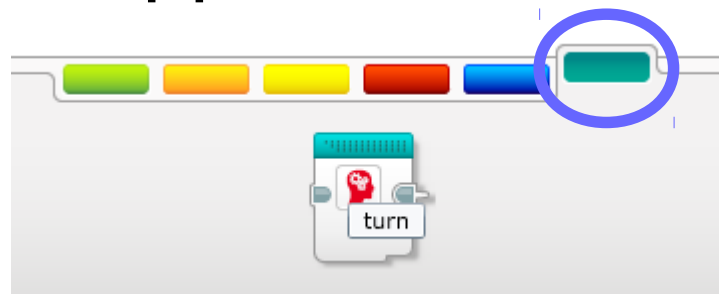
We now have a “My Block” for turns



Our original program has the three-block sequence replaced with our “turn” block

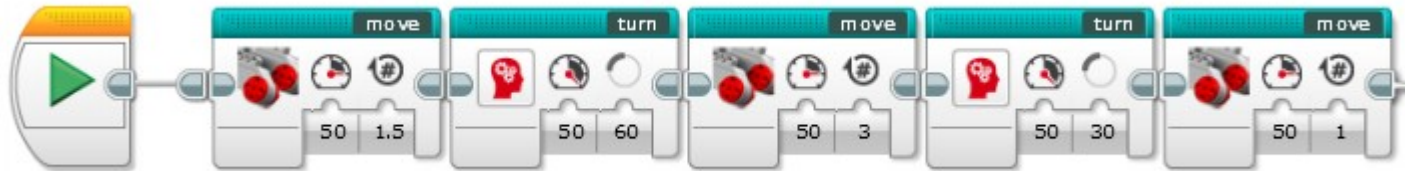


Our turn block appears in the My Blocks palette



My Blocks

Easier to read and build program



Suggestions:

- Create a My Block for each “mission”

- Combine mission My Blocks into “trip” My Blocks

- Create standard My Blocks for

 - Moving forward and backward, turning

 - Stopping

 - Motorized attachments

 - Initialization

Stop stop stop

Trap: Be sure the robot comes to a full stop between moves

When Move blocks complete, they brake the motors

Inertia carries the robot further, so the motors have to back up a bit

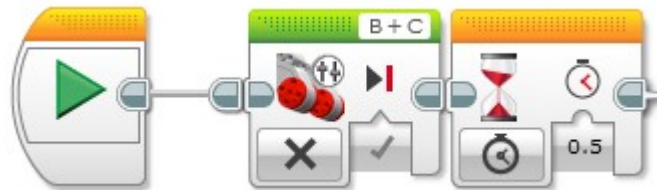
This takes a little time

If your program immediately goes to next action, robot will be inconsistent

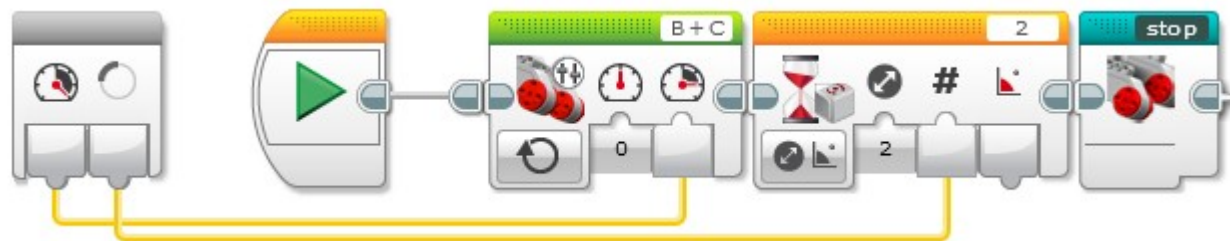
Create a “stop” My Block

Add a short wait after every movement

A simple “stop” My Block:



Can use this whenever you want to be sure the robot is stopped:



Thank you!

Questions?

Patrick R. Michaud
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Join the NorthTexasFLL group!