

# Modern C++ Programming

## 5. BASIC CONCEPTS IV

- FUNCTIONS AND PREPROCESSING

---

*Federico Busato*

University of Verona, Dept. of Computer Science  
2021, v3.06



## **1** Declaration and Definition

## **2** Functions

- Pass by-Value
- Pass by-Pointer
- Pass by-Reference
- Overloading
- Default Parameters
- `inline` Declaration
- Attributes

### **3** Function Objects and Lambda Expressions

- Function Pointer
- Function Object (or Functor)
- Capture List
- Other Features
- Capture List and Classes

## 4 Preprocessing

- Preprocessors
- Common Errors
- Useful Macro
- Stringizing Operator (#)
- #pragma and #error
- Token-Pasting Operator (##)
- Variadic Macro

# Declaration and Definition

---

# Declaration/Definition

## Declaration/Prototype

A **declaration** (or prototype) of an entity is an identifier describing its type

A declaration is what the compiler and the linker needs to accept references to that identifier

## Definition/Implementation

An entity **definition** is the implementation of a declaration

# Declaration/Definition Example

A declaration without a concrete implementation is an incomplete type (as void)

C++ entities (class, functions, etc.) can be declared multiple times (with the same signature)

```
struct A;    // declaration 1
struct A;    // declaration 2 (ok)

struct B {   // declaration and definition
    int b;
// A    x; // compile error incomplete type
    A* y; // ok, pointer to incomplete type
};

struct A {   // definition
    char c;
}
```

# Functions

---



A **function** (**procedure** or **routine**) is a piece of code that performs a *specific task*

Purpose:

- **Avoiding Code Duplication** less code for the same functionality → less bugs
- **Readability** better express what the code does
- **Organization** break the code in separate modules

## Signature

**Type signature** defines the *inputs* and *outputs*\* for a function. A type signature includes the number of arguments, the types of arguments and the order of the arguments contained by a function

## Function Parameter [formal]

A **parameter** is the variable which is part of the method's signature

## Function Argument [actual]

An **argument** is the actual value (instance) of the variable that gets passed to the function

\* (return type) if the function is generated from a function template

<https://stackoverflow.com/a/292390>

```
void f(int a, char* b); // function declaration
                        // signature: (int, char*)
                        // parameters: int a, char* b

void f(int a, char*) {} // function definition
                        // b can be omitted if not used

// char f(int a, char* b); // compile error same signature
                        // but different return types

// void f(const int a, char* b); // invalid conflict
                        // const int == int

void f(int a, const char* b); // ok

f(3, "abc"); // function arguments: 3, "abc"
            // "f" calls f(int, const char*)
```

# Pass by-Value

## Call-by-value

The object is copied and assigned to input arguments of the method `f(T x)`

### Advantages:

- Changes made to the parameter inside the function have no effect on the argument

### Disadvantages:

- Performance penalty if the copied arguments are large (e.g. a structure with a large array)

### *When to use:*

- Built-in data type and small objects ( $\leq 8$  bytes)

### *When not to use:*

- Fixed size arrays which decay into pointers
- Large objects

# Pass by-Pointer

## Call-by-pointer

The address of a variable is copied and assigned to input arguments of the method `f(T* x)`

### Advantages:

- Allows a function to change the value of the argument
- Copy of the argument is not made (fast)

### Disadvantages:

- The argument may be null pointer
- Dereferencing a pointer is slower than accessing a value directly

### When to use:

- When passing *raw* arrays (use `const T*` if read-only)

### When not to use:

- All other cases

# Pass by-Reference

## Call-by-reference

The reference of a variable is copied and assigned to input arguments of the method `f(T& x)`

### Advantages:

- Allows a function to change the value of the argument (better readability compared with pointers)
- Copy of the argument is not made (fast)
- References must be initialized (no null pointer)
- Avoid implicit conversion (without `const T&`)

### When to use:

- All cases except raw pointers

### When not to use:

- Pass by-value *could* give performance advantages and improve the readability with built-in data type and small objects

# Examples

```
struct MyStruct;

void f1(int a);           // pass by-value
void f2(int& a);          // pass by-reference
void f3(const int& a);     // pass by-const reference
void f4(MyStruct& a);      // pass by-reference

void f5(int* a);           // pass by-pointer
void f6(const int* a);     // pass by-const pointer
void f7(MyStruct* a);      // pass by-pointer

void f8(int*& a);          // pass a pointer by-reference
//-----
char c = 'a';
f1(c);    // ok, pass by-value (implicit conversion)
// f2(c); // compile error different types
f3(c);    // ok, pass by-value (implicit conversion)
```

# Function Overloading

## Overloading

An **overloaded declaration** is a declaration with the same name as a previously declared identifier which have different number of arguments and types

### Overload resolution rules:

- An exact match
- A promotion (e.g. `char` to `int`)
- A standard type conversion (e.g. `float` and `int`)
- A constructor or user-defined type conversion



# Function Overloading + Ambiguous Matches

```
void f(int a);  
void f(float b);           // overload  
void f(float b, char c);  // overload
```

```
void g(int a);
```

```
//-----
```

```
    f(0);           // ok  
// f('a');         // compile error ambiguous match  
    f(2.3f);        // ok  
// f(2.3);         // compile error ambiguous match  
    f(2.3, 'a');    // ok
```

```
    g(2.3);         // ok, standard type conversion
```

# Function Default Parameters

## Default/Optional parameter

A **default parameter** is a function parameter that has a default value provided to it

- If the user does not supply a value for this parameter, the default value will be used
- All default parameters must be the rightmost parameters
- Default parameters can only be declared once
- Default parameters can improve compile time and avoid redundant code because they avoid defining other overloaded functions

```
void f(int a, int b = 20);    // declaration
// void g(int a = 10, int b); // compile error
                             // it is not the rightmost
//void f(int a, int b = 10) { ... } // default value of "b"
                             // already set in the declaration
void f(int a, int b) { ... } // default value of "b" is already set

f(5);    // b is 20
```

**inline**

`inline` specifier allows a function to be defined identically (not only declared) in multiple translation units (source file + headers) [see “Translation Units” slides]

- `inline` is one of the most misunderstood features of C++
- `inline` is a hint for the linker. Without it, the linker can emit “multiple definitions” error
- It can be applied for optimization purposes only if the function has *internal* linkage ( `static` or inside an `anonymous namespace` )
- C++17 `inline` can be also applied to variables

```
inline      void f() { ... } // external linkage
static      void g1() { ... } // internal linkage
static inline void g2() { ... } // internal linkage
namespace {
    inline void g3() { ... } // internal linkage
} // anonymous namespace -> same as static
```

`f()` :

- Can be defined in a header and included in multiple source files
- The linker removes all definitions except one
- Declaring `void f();` in a file that does not include the header is still valid because the function has *external* linkage

`g1(), g2(), g3()` :

- Can be defined in a header included in multiple source files
- The compiler replicates the code in each translation unit (the linker does not see these functions)
- Declaring `void g1();` in a file that does not include the header is no more valid because the function has *internal* linkage

## inline (internal linkage)

`inline` specifier is a hint for the compiler. The code of the function can be copied where it is called (inlining)

```
inline void f(int a) { ... }
```

- It is just a hint for the compiler that can ignore it ( `inline` increases the compiler heuristic threshold)
- `inline` functions increase the binary size because they are expanded in-place for every function call

GCC/Clang extensions allow to *force* inline/non-inline functions:

```
__attribute__((always_inline)) void f(int a) { ... }  
__attribute__((noinline))      void f(int a) { ... }
```

C++ allows marking functions with standard properties to better express their intent:

- **C++11** `[[noreturn]]` indicates that the function does not return
- **C++14** `[[deprecated]]`, `[[deprecated("reason")]]` indicates the use of a function is discouraged (for some reason). It issues a warning if used
- **C++17** `[[nodiscard]]`  
**C++20** `[[nodiscard("reason")]]` issues a warning if the return value is discarded
- **C++17** `[[maybe_unused]]` suppresses compiler warnings on unused functions, if any (it applies also to other entities)

```
[[noreturn]] void f() {  
    std::exit(0);  
}  
  
[[deprecated]] void my_rand() {  
    rand();  
}  
  
[[nodiscard]] int g() {  
    return 3;  
}  
  
[[maybe_unused]] void h() {}  
  
//-----  
my_rand();    // WARNING "deprecated"  
g();          // WARNING "discard return value"  
int x = g();  // no warning
```

# Function Objects and Lambda Expressions

---



Standard C achieves generic programming capabilities and composability through the concept of **function pointer**

A function can be passed as a pointer to another function and behaves as an *“indirect call”*

```
#include <stdlib.h>

int descending(const void* a, const void* b) {
    return *((const int*) a) > *((const int*) b);
}

int array[] = { 7, 2, 5, 1 };
qsort(array, 4, sizeof(int), descending);
// array: { 7, 5, 2, 1 }
```

```
int eval(int a, int b, int (*f)(int, int)) {  
    return f(a, b);  
}  
  
// type: int (*)(int, int)  
int add(int a, int b) { return a + b; }  
int sub(int a, int b) { return a - b; }  
  
cout << eval(4, 3, add); // print 7  
cout << eval(4, 3, sub); // print 1
```

## Problems:

**safety** There is no check of the argument type in the generic case (e.g. `qsort`)

**performance** Any operation requires an indirect call to the original function. Function inlining is not possible

## Function Object

A **function object**, or **functor**, is a *callable* object that can be treated as a parameter

C++ provides a more efficient and convenience way to pass “*procedure*” to other functions called **function object**

```
#include <algorithm> // for std::sort

struct Descending { // <-- function object
    bool operator()(int a, int b) {
        return a > b;
    }
};

int array[] = { 7, 2, 5, 1 };
std::sort(array, array + 4, Descending{});
// array: { 7, 5, 2, 1 }
```

## Advantages:

**safety** Argument type checking is always possible. It could involve templates

**performance** The compiler injects `operator()` in the code of the destination function and then compiles the routine. Operator inlining is the standard behavior

**C++11** simplifies the concept by providing less verbose function objects called **lambda expressions**

# Lambda Expression

## Lambda Expression

A **lambda expression** is an *inline local-scope* function object

```
auto x = [capture clause] (parameters) { body }
```

- The **[capture clause]** marks the declaration of the lambda and how the local scope arguments are captured (by-value, by-reference, etc.)
- The **parameters** of the lambda are normal function parameters (optional)
- The **body** of the lambda is a normal function body

*The expression to the right of the **=** is the **lambda expression**, and the runtime object **x** created by that expression is the **closure***

# Lambda Expression

```
#include <algorithm> // for std::sort

int array[] = { 7, 2, 5, 1 };
auto lambda = [](int a, int b){ return a > b; }; // named lambda

std::sort(array, array + 4, lambda);
// array: { 7, 5, 2, 1 }

// in alternative, in one line of code:           // unnamed lambda
std::sort(array, array + 4, [](int a, int b){ return a > b; });
// array: { 7, 5, 2, 1 }
```

# Capture List

Lambda expressions *capture* external variables used in the body of the lambda in two ways:

- Capture *by-copy*
- Capture *by-reference* (can modify external variable values)

**Capture list** can be passed as follows

- `[]` no capture
- `[=]` captures all variables *by-copy*
- `[&]` captures all variables *by-reference*
- `[var1]` captures only `var1` *by-copy*
- `[&var2]` captures only `var2` *by-reference*
- `[var1, &var2]` captures `var1` *by-copy* and `var2` *by-reference*

# Capture List Examples

```
// GOAL: find the first element greater than "limit"
#include <algorithm> // for std::find_if
int limit = ...

// capture by-value
auto lambda1 = [=](int value)      { return value > limit; };
// capture by-reference
auto lambda2 = [&](int value)      { return value > limit; };
// capture "limit" by-value
auto lambda3 = [limit](int value) { return value > limit; };
// capture "limit" by-reference
auto lambda4 = [&limit](int value) { return value > limit; };
// no capture
// auto lambda5 = [](int value)    { return value > limit; }; // error

int array[] = { 7, 2, 5, 1 };
std::find_if(array, array + 4, lambda1);
```



## Capture List - Other Cases

- `[=, &var1]` captures all variables used in the body of the lambda **by-copy**, except `var1` that is captured **by-reference**
- `[&, var1]` captures all variables used in the body of the lambda **by-reference**, except `var1` that is captured **by-value**
- A lambda expression can read a variable without capturing it if the variable is a `constexpr`

```
constexpr int limit = 5;
int var1 = 3, var2 = 4;

auto lambda1 = [](int value) { return value > limit; };

auto lambda2 = [=, &var2]() { return var1 > var2; };
```

C++14 Lambda expression parameters can be automatically deduced

```
auto x = [](auto value) { return value + 4; };
```

C++14 Lambda expression parameters can be initialized

```
auto x = [](int i = 6) { return i + 4; };
```

Lambda expressions can be composed

```
auto lambda1 = [](int value) { return value + 4; };  
auto lambda2 = [](int value) { return value * 2; };  
  
auto lambda3 = [&](int value) { return lambda2(lambda1(value)); };  
// returns (value + 4) * 2
```

A function can return a lambda

```
auto f() {  
    return [](int value) { return value + 4; };  
}  
  
auto lambda = f();  
cout << lambda(2); // print "6"
```

# constexpr/consteval Lambda Expression

C++17 Lambda expression supports `constexpr`

C++20 Lambda expression supports `consteval`

```
// constexpr lambda  
constexpr auto factorial = [](int value) constexpr {  
    int ret = 1;  
    for (int i = 2; i <= value; i++)  
        ret *= i;  
    return ret;  
};  
  
constexpr int v1 = factorial(4); // '24'  
  
constexpr int f() {  
    return factorial(3); // 6  
}
```

# template Lambda Expression

C++20 Lambda expression supports `template` and `requires` clause

```
auto lambda = []<typename T>(T value)
    requires std::is_arithmetic<T> {
    return value * 2;
};

auto v = lambda(3.4); // v: 6.8 (double)

struct A{} a;
// auto v = lambda(a); // compiler error
```

# mutable Lambda Expression

Lambda capture is *by-const-value*

**mutable** specifier allows the lambda to modify the parameters captured *by-value*

```
int var = 1;

auto lambda1 = [&]() { var = 4; };           // ok
lambda1();
cout << var; // print '4'

// auto lambda2 = [=]() { var = 3; };      // compile error
// lambda operator() is const

auto lambda3 = [=]() mutable { var = 3; }; // ok
lambda3();
cout << var; // print '4', lambda3 captures by-value
```

# Capture List and Classes ★

- `[this]` captures the current object `(*this)` *by-reference*
- `[x = x]` captures the current object member `x` *by-copy* C++14
- `[&x = x]` captures the current object member `x` *by-reference* C++14
- `[=]` default capture of `this` pointer by value has been deprecated C++20

```
class A {  
    int data = 1;  
  
    void f() {  
        int var = 2; // <--  
        // return 3 (nearest scope)  
        auto lambda1 = [=]() { int var = 3; return var; };  
        // return 2 (nearest scope)  
        auto lambda2 = [=]() { return var; }; // copy by-value  
        auto lambda3 = [this]() { return data; }; // copy by-reference  
        auto lambda3 = [*this]() { return data; }; // copy by-value, only C++17  
        // auto lambda4 = [data]() { return data; }; // compile error not visible  
        auto lambda5 = [data = data]() { return data; }; // return 1  
    }  
};
```

# Preprocessing

---



# Preprocessing and Macro

**Preprocessor directives** are lines preceded by a *hash* symbol (#) which tell the compiler how to interpret the source code before compiling

**Macro** are preprocessor directives which replace any occurrence of an *identifier* in the rest of the code by replacement

**Macro are evil:**

**Do not use macro expansion!!**

...or use as little as possible

- Macro cannot be debugged
- Macro expansions can have strange side effects
- Macro have no namespace or scope

## All statements starting with #

- `#include "my_file.h"`

Inject the code in the current file

- `#define MACRO <expression>`

Define a new macro

- `#undef MACRO`

Undefine a macro

(a macro should be undefined as early as possible for safety reasons)

**Multi-line Preprocessing:** `\` at the end of the line

**Indent:** `#` `define`

# Conditional Compiling

- `#if <condition>`

`code`

`#elif <condition>`

`code`

`#else`

`code`

`#endif`

- `#if defined(MACRO)` equal to `#ifdef MACRO`

Check if a macro is defined

- `#if !defined(MACRO)` equal to `#ifndef MACRO`

Check if a macro is not defined

# Macro (Common Error 1)

## A Do not define macro in header files and before includes!!

```
#include <iostream>

#define value    // very dangerous!!
#include "big_lib.hpp"

int main() {
    std::cout << f(4); // should print 7, but it prints always 3
}
```

big\_lib.hpp:

```
int f(int value) {    // 'value' disappear
    return value + 3;
}
```

*It is very hard to see this problem when the macro is in a header*

## Macro (Common Error 2)

### Use parenthesis in macro definition!!

```
#include <iostream>

#define SUB1(a, b)  a - b           // WRONG
#define SUB2(a, b) (a - b)         // WRONG
#define SUB3(a, b) ((a) - (b))     // correct

int main() {
    std::cout << (5 * SUB1(2, 1));  // print 9 not 5!!
    std::cout << SUB2(3 + 3, 2 + 2); // print 6 not 2!!
    std::cout << SUB3(3 + 3, 2 + 2); // print 2
}
```

## Macro (Common Error 3)

Macros make hard to find compile errors!!

```
1: #include <iostream>
2:
3: #define F(a) {      \
4:     ...             \
5:     ...             \
6:     return v;
7:
8: int main() {
9:     F(3);           // compile error at line 9!!
10: }
```

- In which line is the error??!\*

---

\*modern compilers are able to roll out the macro

## Macro (Common Error 4)

Use curly brackets in multi-lines macros!!

```
#include <iostream>
#include <nuclear_explosion.hpp>

#define NUCLEAR_EXPLOSION \ // {
    std::cout << "start nuclear explosion"; \
    nuclear_explosion();
                                     // }

int main() {
    bool never_happen = false;
    if (never_happen)
        NUCLEAR_EXPLOSION
} // BOOM!! 💀
```

The second line is executed!!

### Macros do not have scope!!

```
#include <iostream>

void f() {
    #define value 4
    std::cout << value;
}

int main() {
    f();                // 4
    std::cout << value; // 4
    #define value 3
    f();                // 4
    std::cout << value; // 3
}
```



### Macros can have side effect!!

```
#define MIN(a, b) ((a) < (b) ? (a) : (b))

int main() {
    int array1[] = { 1, 5, 2 };
    int array2[] = { 6, 2, 4 };
    int i = 0;
    int j = 0;
    int v1 = MIN(array1[i++], array2[j++]); // v1 = 5!!
    int v2 = MIN(array1[i++], array2[j++]); // segfault 💀
}
```

# When Preprocessors are Necessary

- **Conditional compiling:** different architectures, compiler features, etc.
- **Mixing different languages:** code generation (example: asm assembly)
- **Complex name replacing:** see template programming

Otherwise, prefer `const` and `constexpr` for constant values and functions

```
#define SIZE 3           // replaced with
const int SIZE = 3;    // only C++11 at global scope

#define SUB(a, b) ((a) - (b)) // replaced with
constexpr int sub(int a, int b) {
    return a - b;
}
```

## Commonly used macros:

`__LINE__` Integer value representing the current line in the source code file being compiled

`__FILE__` A string literal containing the presumed name of the source file being compiled

`__DATE__` A string literal in the form "MMM DD YYYY" containing the date in which the compilation process began

`__TIME__` A string literal in the form "hh:mm:ss" containing the time at which the compilation process began

main.cpp:

```
#include <iostream>
int main() {
    std::cout << __FILE__ << ":" << __LINE__; // print main.cpp:2
}
```

C++20 provides source location utilities for replacing macro-based approach

```
#include <source_location >
```

```
current()  get source location info (static)
```

```
line()    source code line
```

```
column()  line column
```

```
file_name() current file name
```

```
function_name() current function name
```

```
#include <source_location>
```

```
void f(std::source_location s = std::source_location::current()) {  
    std::cout << "line " << s.line();  
}
```

```
f(); // print: "line 6"
```

## Select code depending on the C/C++ version

- `#if defined(__cplusplus)` C++ code
- `#if __cplusplus == 199711L` ISO C++ 1998/2003
- `#if __cplusplus == 201103L` ISO C++ 2011\*
- `#if __cplusplus == 201402L` ISO C++ 2014\*
- `#if __cplusplus == 201703L` ISO C++ 2017\*

## Select code depending on the compiler

- `#if defined(__GNUG__)` The compiler is gcc/g++ †
- `#if defined(__clang__)` The compiler is clang/clang++
- `#if defined(_MSC_VER)` The compiler is Microsoft Visual C++

---

\* MSVC defines `__cplusplus == 199711L` even for C++11/14. Link: [MSVC now correctly reports \\_\\_cplusplus](#) Avatar

† `__GNUG__` is defined by many compilers. Link: [GCC \\_\\_GNUG\\_\\_ Meaning](#)

## Select code depending on the operation system or environment

- `#if defined(_WIN64)` OS is Windows 64-bit
- `#if defined(__linux__)` OS is Linux
- `#if defined(__APPLE__)` OS is Mac OS
- `#if defined(__MINGW32__)` OS is MinGW 32-bit
- ...and many others

## Very Comprehensive Macro list:

- [sourceforge.net/p/predef/wiki/Home/](http://sourceforge.net/p/predef/wiki/Home/)
- Compiler predefined macros
- Abseil platform macros

# Feature Testing Macro

C++17 introduces `__has_include` keyword which return 1 if header or source file with the specified name exists

```
#if __has_include(<iostream>)
#    include <iostream>
#endif
```

C++20 introduces a set of macro to evaluate if a given feature is supported by the compiler

```
#if __cpp_constexpr
constexpr int square(int x) { return x * x; }
#endif
```

Full list: Feature Testing Macros

# Macro (Common Error 7)

## Macros depend on compilers and environment!!

```
struct A {  
    int x; // enable C++11 code  
#if __cplusplus >= 201103  
    A() = default;  
#else  
    A() {}  
#endif  
};
```

```
// should return  $\approx 10.0f$   
float safe_function() {  
    A a{}; // zero-initialization  
    for (int i = 0; i < 10; i++)  
        a.x += 1.0f;  
    return a.x;  
}  
// what is the behavior ???
```

The code works fine on Linux, but not under Windows MSVC. MSVC sets `__cplusplus` to `199711` even if C++11/14/17 flag is set!! in this case the code can return `NaN`

---

see Lecture “Object-Oriented Programming II - Zero Initialization” and MSVC now correctly reports `__cplusplus`



# Stringizing Operator (#)

The **stringizing macro operator** ( `#` ) causes the corresponding actual argument to be enclosed in double quotation marks `"`

```
#define STRING_MACRO(string) #string
```

```
cout << STRING_MACRO(hello); // equivalent to "hello"
```

```
#define INFO_MACRO(my_func) \
{ \
    my_func \
    cout << "call " << #my_func << " at " \
        << __FILE__ << ":" << __LINE__; \
}
```

```
void g(int) {}
```

```
INFO_MACRO( g(3) ) // print: "call g(3) at my_file.cpp:7"
```

## Code injection

```
#include <stdio>

#define CHECK_ERROR(condition) \
{
    if (condition) {
        std::printf("expr: " #condition " failed at line %d\n",
                    __LINE__);
    }
}

int main() {
    int t = 6, s = 3;
    CHECK_ERROR(t > s) // print "expr: t > s failed at line 13"
    CHECK_ERROR(t % s == 0) // segmentation fault!!! 💀
}    // printf interprets "% s" as a format specifier
```

## #error and #pragma

- `#error "text"` The directive emits a user-specified error message at compile time when the compiler parse the related instruction

The `#pragma` directive controls implementation-specific behavior of the compiler. In general, it is not portable

- `#pragma message "text"` Display informational messages at compile time (every time this instruction is parsed)
- `#pragma GCC diagnostic warning "-Wformat"`  
Disable a GCC warning
- `_Pragma(<command>)` (C++11)

It is a keyword and can be embedded in a `#define`

```
#define MY_MESSAGE \  
    _Pragma("message(\"hello\")")
```

# Token-Pasting Operator (##) ★

The **token-concatenation (or pasting) macro operator** ( ## ) allows combining two tokens (without leaving no blank spaces)

```
#define FUNC_GEN_A(tokenA, tokenB) \
    void tokenA##tokenB() {}

#define FUNC_GEN_B(tokenA, tokenB) \
    void tokenA##_##tokenB() {}

FUNC_GEN_A(my, function)
FUNC_GEN_B(my, function)

int main() {
    myfunction(); // ok, from FUNC_GEN_A
    my_function(); // ok, from FUNC_GEN_B
}
```

# Variadic Macro ★

In **C++11**, a **variadic macro** is a special macro accepting a varying number of arguments (separated by comma)

Each occurrence of the special identifier `__VA_ARGS__` in the macro replacement list is replaced by the passed arguments

Example:

```
void f(int a)           { printf("%d", a);           }
void f(int a, int b)    { printf("%d %d", a, b);     }
void f(int a, int b, int c) { printf("%d %d %d", a, b, c); }

#define PRINT(...) \
    f(__VA_ARGS__);

int main() {
    PRINT(1, 2)
    PRINT(1, 2, 3)
}
```

Convert a number literal to a string literal

```
#define TO_LITERAL_AUX(x) #x  
#define TO_LITERAL(x)      TO_LITERAL_AUX(x)
```

Motivation: avoid integer to string conversion (performance)

```
int main() {  
    int  x1   = 3 * 10;  
    int  y1   = __LINE__ + 4;  
    char x2[] = TO_LITERAL(3);  
    char y2[] = TO_LITERAL(__LINE__);  
}
```