Chapter 6

Loops

Iteration Statements

- C's iteration statements are used to set up loops.
- A ***loop*** is a statement whose job is to repeatedly execute some other statement (the ***loop body***).
- In C, every loop has a ***controlling expression***.
- Each time the loop body is executed (an ***iteration*** of the loop), the controlling expression is evaluated.
  - If the expression is true (has a value that's not zero) the loop continues to execute.

Iteration Statements

- C provides three iteration statements:
  - The `while` statement is used for loops whose controlling expression is tested *before* the loop body is executed.
  - The `do` statement is used if the expression is tested *after* the loop body is executed.
  - The `for` statement is convenient for loops that increment or decrement a counting variable.

The `while` Statement

- Using a `while` statement is the easiest way to set up a loop.
- The `while` statement has the form

  `while (` *expression* `)` *statement*

- *expression* is the controlling expression; *statement* is the loop body.

The **`while`** Statement

- Example of a `while` statement:

```
while (i < n)  /* controlling expression */
  i = i * 2;   /* loop body */
```

- When a `while` statement is executed, the controlling expression is evaluated first.
- If its value is nonzero (true), the loop body is executed and the expression is tested again.
- The process continues until the controlling expression eventually has the value zero.

The `while` Statement

- A `while` statement that computes the smallest power of 2 that is greater than or equal to a number `n`:

```
i = 1;
while (i < n)
  i = i * 2;
```

- A trace of the loop when `n` has the value 10:

`i = 1;`	`i` is now 1.
Is `i` < `n`?	Yes; continue.
`i = i * 2;`	`i` is now 2.
Is `i` < `n`?	Yes; continue.
`i = i * 2;`	`i` is now 4.
Is `i` < `n`?	Yes; continue.
`i = i * 2;`	`i` is now 8.
Is `i` < `n`?	Yes; continue.
`i = i * 2;`	`i` is now 16.
Is `i` < `n`?	No; exit from loop.

The **while** Statement

- Although the loop body must be a single statement, that's merely a technicality.
- If multiple statements are needed, use braces to create a single compound statement:

```
while (i > 0) {
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
  i--;
}
```

- Some programmers always use braces, even when they're not strictly necessary:

```
while (i < n) {
  i = i * 2;
}
```

The **while** Statement

- The following statements display a series of "countdown" messages:

```
i = 10;
while (i > 0) {
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
  i--;
}
```

- The final message printed is `T minus 1 and counting`.

The `while` Statement

- Observations about the `while` statement:
  - The controlling expression is false when a `while` loop terminates. Thus, when a loop controlled by `i > 0` terminates, `i` must be less than or equal to 0.
  - The body of a `while` loop may not be executed at all, because the controlling expression is tested *before* the body is executed.
  - A `while` statement can often be written in a variety of ways. A more concise version of the countdown loop:

```
while (i > 0)
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i--);
```

Infinite Loops

- A `while` statement won't terminate if the controlling expression always has a nonzero value.
- C programmers sometimes deliberately create an ***infinite loop*** by using a nonzero constant as the controlling expression:

  ```
  while (1) …
  ```
- A `while` statement of this form will execute forever unless its body contains a statement that transfers control out of the loop (`break`, `goto`, `return`) or calls a function that causes the program to terminate.

Program: Printing a Table of Squares

- The `square.c` program uses a while statement to print a table of squares.
- The user specifies the number of entries in the table:

```
This program prints a table of squares.
Enter number of entries in table: 5
         1         1
         2         4
         3         9
         4        16
         5        25
```

square.c

```
/* Prints a table of squares using a while statement */

#include <stdio.h>

int main(void)
{
  int i, n;

  printf("This program prints a table of squares.\n");
  printf("Enter number of entries in table: ");
  scanf("%d", &n);

  i = 1;
  while (i <= n) {
    printf("%10d%10d\n", i, i * i);
    i++;
  }

  return 0;
}
```

Program: Summing a Series of Numbers

- The `sum.c` program sums a series of integers entered by the user:

```
This program sums a series of integers.
Enter integers (0 to terminate): 8 23 71 5 0
The sum is: 107
```

- The program will need a loop that uses `scanf` to read a number and then adds the number to a running total.

sum.c

```
/* Sums a series of numbers */

#include <stdio.h>

int main(void)
{
  int n, sum = 0;

  printf("This program sums a series of integers.\n");
  printf("Enter integers (0 to terminate): ");

  scanf("%d", &n);
  while (n != 0) {
    sum += n;
    scanf("%d", &n);
  }
  printf("The sum is: %d\n", sum);

  return 0;
}
```

The **do** Statement

- General form of the `do` statement:

  `do` *statement* `while (` *expression* `) ;`

- When a `do` statement is executed, the loop body is executed first, then the controlling expression is evaluated.
- If the value of the expression is nonzero, the loop body is executed again and then the expression is evaluated once more.

The **do** Statement

- The countdown example rewritten as a `do` statement:

```
i = 10;
do {
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
  --i;
} while (i > 0);
```

- The `do` statement is often indistinguishable from the `while` statement.
- The only difference is that the body of a `do` statement is always executed at least once.

The **do** Statement

- It's a good idea to use braces in *all* `do` statements, whether or not they're needed, because a `do` statement without braces can easily be mistaken for a `while` statement:

```
do
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i--);
while (i > 0);
```

- A careless reader might think that the word `while` was the beginning of a `while` statement.

Program: Calculating the Number of Digits in an Integer

- The `numdigits.c` program calculates the number of digits in an integer entered by the user:

```
Enter a nonnegative integer: 60
The number has 2 digit(s).
```

- The program will divide the user's input by 10 repeatedly until it becomes 0; the number of divisions performed is the number of digits.
- Writing this loop as a `do` statement is better than using a `while` statement, because every integer—even 0—has at least one digit.

numdigits.c

```
/* Calculates the number of digits in an integer */

#include <stdio.h>

int main(void)
{
  int digits = 0, n;

  printf("Enter a nonnegative integer: ");
  scanf("%d", &n);

  do {
    n /= 10;
    digits++;
  } while (n > 0);

  printf("The number has %d digit(s).\n", digits);

  return 0;
}
```

The `for` Statement

- The `for` statement is ideal for loops that have a "counting" variable, but it's versatile enough to be used for other kinds of loops as well.
- General form of the `for` statement:

  `for (` *expr1* `;` *expr2* `;` *expr3* `)` *statement*

  expr1, *expr2*, and *expr3* are expressions.
- Example:

```
for (i = 10; i > 0; i--)
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
```

The `for` Statement

- The `for` statement is closely related to the `while` statement.
- Except in a few rare cases, a `for` loop can always be replaced by an equivalent `while` loop:

  expr1;
  `while (` *expr2* `) {`
      statement
      expr3`;`
  `}`

- *expr1* is an initialization step that's performed only once, before the loop begins to execute.

The `for` Statement

- *expr2* controls loop termination (the loop continues executing as long as the value of *expr2* is nonzero).
- *expr3* is an operation to be performed at the end of each loop iteration.
- The result when this pattern is applied to the previous `for` loop:

```
i = 10;
while (i > 0) {
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
  i--;
}
```

The `for` Statement

- Studying the equivalent `while` statement can help clarify the fine points of a `for` statement.
- For example, what if `i--` is replaced by `--i`?

```
for (i = 10; i > 0; --i)
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
```

- The equivalent `while` loop shows that the change has no effect on the behavior of the loop:

```
i = 10;
while (i > 0) {
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
  --i;
}
```

The `for` Statement

- Since the first and third expressions in a `for` statement are executed as statements, their values are irrelevant—they're useful only for their side effects.
- Consequently, these two expressions are usually assignments or increment/decrement expressions.

`for` Statement Idioms

- The `for` statement is usually the best choice for loops that "count up" (increment a variable) or "count down" (decrement a variable).
- A `for` statement that counts up or down a total of `n` times will usually have one of the following forms:

***Counting up from* 0 *to* `n`–1:**	`for (i = 0; i < n; i++) …`
***Counting up from* 1 *to* `n`:**	`for (i = 1; i <= n; i++) …`
***Counting down from* `n`–1 *to* 0:**	`for (i = n - 1; i >= 0; i--) …`
***Counting down from* `n` *to* 1:**	`for (i = n; i > 0; i--) …`

`for` Statement Idioms

- Common `for` statement errors:
  - Using `<` instead of `>` (or vice versa) in the controlling expression. "Counting up" loops should use the `<` or `<=` operator. "Counting down" loops should use `>` or `>=`.
  - Using `==` in the controlling expression instead of `<`, `<=`, `>`, or `>=`.
  - "Off-by-one" errors such as writing the controlling expression as `i <= n` instead of `i < n`.

Omitting Expressions in a `for` Statement

- C allows any or all of the expressions that control a `for` statement to be omitted.
- If the *first* expression is omitted, no initialization is performed before the loop is executed:

```
i = 10;
for (; i > 0; --i)
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
```

- If the *third* expression is omitted, the loop body is responsible for ensuring that the value of the second expression eventually becomes false:

```
for (i = 10; i > 0;)
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i--);
```

Omitting Expressions in a **`for`** Statement

- When the *first* and *third* expressions are both omitted, the resulting loop is nothing more than a while statement in disguise:

```
for (; i > 0;)
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i--);
```

is the same as

```
while (i > 0)
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i--);
```

- The `while` version is clearer and therefore preferable.

Omitting Expressions in a `for` Statement

- If the *second* expression is missing, it defaults to a true value, so the `for` statement doesn't terminate (unless stopped in some other fashion).
- For example, some programmers use the following `for` statement to establish an infinite loop:

```
for (;;) …
```

`for` Statements in C99

- In C99, **the first expression** in a `for` statement can be **replaced by a declaration**.
- This feature allows the programmer to declare a variable for use by the loop:

```
for (int i = 0; i < n; i++)
  …
```

- The variable `i` need not have been declared prior to this statement.

`for` Statements in C99

- A variable declared by a `for` statement can't be accessed outside the body of the loop (we say that it's not ***visible*** outside the loop):

```
for (int i = 0; i < n; i++) {
  …
  printf("%d", i);
  /* legal; i is visible inside loop */
  …
}
printf("%d", i);   /*** WRONG ***/
```

`for` Statements in C99

- Having a `for` statement declare its own control variable is usually a good idea: it's convenient and it can make programs easier to understand.
- However, if the program needs to access the variable after loop termination, it's necessary to use the older form of the `for` statement.
- A `for` statement may declare more than one variable, provided that all variables have the same type:

```
for (int i = 0, j = 0; i < n; i++)
  …
```

The Comma Operator

- On occasion, a `for` statement may need to have two (or more) initialization expressions or one that increments several variables each time through the loop.
- This effect can be accomplished by using a ***comma expression*** as the first or third expression in the `for` statement.
- A comma expression has the form

  expr1 `,` *expr2*

  where *expr1* and *expr2* are any two expressions.

The Comma Operator

- A comma expression is evaluated in two steps:
  - First, *expr1* is evaluated and its value discarded.
  - Second, *expr2* is evaluated; its value is the value of the entire expression. ***Left associative***
- Evaluating *expr1* should always have a side effect; if it doesn't, then *expr1* serves no purpose.
- When the comma expression `++i, i + j` is evaluated, `i` is first incremented, then `i + j` is evaluated.
  - If `i` and `j` have the values 1 and 5, respectively, the value of the expression will be 7, and `i` will be incremented to 2.

The Comma Operator

- The comma operator is **left associative**, so the compiler interprets

```
i = 1, j = 2, k = i + j
```

as

```
((i = 1), (j = 2)), (k = (i + j))
```

- Since the left operand in a comma expression is evaluated before the right operand, the assignments `i = 1`, `j = 2`, and `k = i + j` will be performed from left to right.

The Comma Operator

- The comma operator makes it possible to “glue” two expressions together to form a single expression.
- Certain macro definitions can benefit from the comma operator.
- The `for` statement is the only other place where the comma operator is likely to be found.
- Example:

```
for (sum = 0, i = 1; i <= N; i++)
  sum += i;
```

- With additional commas, the `for` statement could **initialize** more than two variables.

Program: Printing a Table of Squares (Revisited)

- The `square.c` program (Section 6.1) can be improved by converting its `while` loop to a `for` loop.

square2.c

```
/* Prints a table of squares using a for statement */

#include <stdio.h>

int main(void)
{
  int i, n;

  printf("This program prints a table of squares.\n");
  printf("Enter number of entries in table: ");
  scanf("%d", &n);

  for (i = 1; i <= n; i++)
    printf("%10d%10d\n", i, i * i);

  return 0;
}
```

Program: Printing a Table of Squares (Revisited)

- C places **no restrictions** on the **three expressions** that control the behavior of a `for` statement.
- Although these expressions usually initialize, test, and update the same variable, there's no requirement that they be related in any way.
- The `square3.c` program is equivalent to `square2.c`, but contains a `for` statement that initializes one variable (`square`), tests another (`i`), and increments a third (`odd`).
- The flexibility of the `for` statement can sometimes be useful, but in this case the original program was clearer.

square3.c

```
/* Prints a table of squares using an odd method */

#include <stdio.h>

int main(void)
{
  int i, n, odd, square;

  printf("This program prints a table of squares.\n");
  printf("Enter number of entries in table: ");
  scanf("%d", &n);

  i = 1;
  odd = 3;
  for (square = 1; i <= n; odd += 2) {
    printf("%10d%10d\n", i, square);
    ++i;
    square += odd;
  }

  return 0;
}
```

Exiting from a Loop

- The normal exit point for a loop is at the beginning (as in a `while` or `for` statement) or at the end (the `do` statement).
- Using the `break` statement, it's possible to write a loop with an exit point in the middle or a loop with more than one exit point.

The **`break`** Statement

- The `break` statement can transfer control out of a switch statement, but it can also be used to jump out of a `while`, `do`, or `for` loop.
- A loop that checks whether a number `n` is prime can use a `break` statement to terminate the loop as soon as a divisor is found:

```
for (d = 2; d < n; d++)
  if (n % d == 0)
    break;
```

The **break** Statement

- After the loop has terminated, an `if` statement can be use to determine whether termination was premature (hence `n` isn't prime) or normal (`n` is prime):

```
if (d < n)
  printf("%d is divisible by %d\n", n, d);
else
  printf("%d is prime\n", n);
```

The **break** Statement

- The `break` statement is particularly useful for writing loops in which the exit point is in the middle of the body rather than at the beginning or end.
- Loops that read user input, terminating when a particular value is entered, often fall into this category:

```
for (;;) {
  printf("Enter a number (enter 0 to stop): ");
  scanf("%d", &n);
  if (n == 0)
    break;
  printf("%d cubed is %d\n", n, n * n * n);
}
```

The **break** Statement

- A `break` statement transfers control out of the innermost enclosing `while`, `do`, `for`, or `switch`.
- When these statements are nested, the `break` statement can escape only one level of nesting.
- Example:

```
while (…) {
  switch (…) {
    …
    break;
    …
  }
}
```

- `break` transfers control out of the `switch` statement, but not out of the `while` loop.

The `continue` Statement

- The `continue` statement is similar to `break`:
  - `break` transfers control just past the end of a loop.
  - `continue` transfers control to a point just before the end of the loop body.
- With `break`, control leaves the loop; with `continue`, control remains inside the loop.
- There's another **difference** between `break` and `continue`: `break` can be used in `switch` statements and loops (`while`, `do`, and `for`), whereas **`continue` is limited to loops**.

The **continue** Statement

- A loop that uses the `continue` statement:

```
n = 0;
sum = 0;
while (n < 10) {
  scanf("%d", &i);
  if (i == 0)
    continue;
  sum += i;
  n++;
  /* continue jumps to here */
}
```

The **continue** Statement

- The same loop written without using `continue`:

```
n = 0;
sum = 0;
while (n < 10) {
  scanf("%d", &i);
  if (i != 0) {
    sum += i;
    n++;
  }
}
```

The `goto` Statement

- The `goto` statement is capable of jumping to any statement in a function, provided that the statement has a ***label.***
- A label is just an identifier placed at the beginning of a statement:

  identifier `:` *statement*
- A statement may have more than one label.
- The `goto` statement itself has the form

  `goto` *identifier* `;`
- Executing the statement `goto` *L*`;` transfers control to the statement that follows the label *L*, which must be in the same function as the `goto` statement itself.

The **goto** Statement

- If C didn't have a `break` statement, a `goto` statement could be used to exit from a loop:

```
for (d = 2; d < n; d++)
  if (n % d == 0)
    goto done;
done:
if (d < n)
  printf("%d is divisible by %d\n", n, d);
else
  printf("%d is prime\n", n);
```

The `goto` Statement

- The `goto` statement is rarely needed in everyday C programming.
- The `break`, `continue`, and `return` statements—which are essentially restricted `goto` statements—and the `exit` function are sufficient to handle most situations that might require a `goto` in other languages.
- Nonetheless, the `goto` statement can be helpful once in a while.

The **goto** Statement

- Consider the problem of exiting a loop from within a `switch` statement.
- The `break` statement doesn't have the desired effect: it exits from the `switch`, but not from the loop.
- A `goto` statement solves the problem:

```
while (…) {
  switch (…) {
    …
    goto loop_done;   /* break won't work here */
    …
  }
}
loop_done: …
```

- The `goto` statement is also useful for exiting from nested loops.

Program: Balancing a Checkbook

- Many simple interactive programs present the user with a list of commands to choose from.
- Once a command is entered, the program performs the desired action, then prompts the user for another command.
- This process continues until the user selects an "exit" or "quit" command.
- The heart of such a program will be a loop:

```
for (;;) {
  prompt user to enter command;
  read command;
  execute command;
}
```

Program: Balancing a Checkbook

- Executing the command will require a `switch` statement (or cascaded `if` statement):

```
for (;;) {
  prompt user to enter command;
  read command;
  switch (command) {
    case command1:  perform operation1; break;
    case command2:  perform operation2; break;
      .
      .
      .
    case commandn:  perform operationn; break;
    default:  print error message; break;
  }
}
```

Program: Balancing a Checkbook

- The `checking.c` program, which maintains a checkbook balance, uses a loop of this type.
- The user is allowed to clear the account balance, credit money to the account, debit money from the account, display the current balance, and exit the program.

Program: Balancing a Checkbook

```
*** ACME checkbook-balancing program ***
Commands: 0=clear, 1=credit, 2=debit, 3=balance, 4=exit

Enter command: 1
Enter amount of credit: 1042.56
Enter command: 2
Enter amount of debit: 133.79
Enter command: 1
Enter amount of credit: 1754.32
Enter command: 2
Enter amount of debit: 1400
Enter command: 2
Enter amount of debit: 68
Enter command: 2
Enter amount of debit: 50
Enter command: 3
Current balance: $1145.09
Enter command: 4
```

checking.c

```
/* Balances a checkbook */

#include <stdio.h>

int main(void)
{
  int cmd;
  float balance = 0.0f, credit, debit;

  printf("*** ACME checkbook-balancing program ***\n");
  printf("Commands: 0=clear, 1=credit, 2=debit, ");
  printf("3=balance, 4=exit\n\n");
  for (;;) {
    printf("Enter command: ");
    scanf("%d", &cmd);
    switch (cmd) {
      case 0:
        balance = 0.0f;
        break;
```

```
      case 1:
        printf("Enter amount of credit: ");
        scanf("%f", &credit);
        balance += credit;
        break;
      case 2:
        printf("Enter amount of debit: ");
        scanf("%f", &debit);
        balance -= debit;
        break;
      case 3:
        printf("Current balance: $%.2f\n", balance);
        break;
      case 4:
        return 0;
      default:
        printf("Commands: 0=clear, 1=credit, 2=debit, ");
        printf("3=balance, 4=exit\n\n");
        break;
    }
  }
}
```

The Null Statement

- A statement can be ***null***—devoid of symbols except for the semicolon at the end.
- The following line contains three statements:

```
i = 0; ; j = 1;
```

- The null statement is primarily good for one thing: writing loops whose bodies are empty.

The Null Statement

- Consider the following prime-finding loop:

```
for (d = 2; d < n; d++)
  if (n % d == 0)
    break;
```

- If the `n % d == 0` condition is moved into the loop's controlling expression, the body of the loop becomes empty:

```
for (d = 2; d < n && n % d != 0; d++)
  /* empty loop body */ ;
```

- To avoid confusion, C programmers customarily put the null statement on a line by itself.

The Null Statement

- Accidentally putting a semicolon after the parentheses in an `if`, `while`, or `for` statement creates a null statement.
- Example 1:

```
if (d == 0);                          /*** WRONG ***/
  printf("Error: Division by zero\n");
```

The call of `printf` isn't inside the `if` statement, so it's performed regardless of whether `d` is equal to 0.

- Example 2:

```
i = 10;
while (i > 0);                        /*** WRONG ***/
{
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
  --i;
}
```

The extra semicolon creates an infinite loop.

The Null Statement

- Example 3:

```
i = 11;
while (--i > 0);                          /*** WRONG ***/
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
```

  The loop body is executed only once; the message printed is:

```
T minus 0 and counting
```

- Example 4:

```
for (i = 10; i > 0; i--);                 /*** WRONG ***/
  printf("T minus %d and counting\n", i);
```

  Again, the loop body is executed only once, and the same message is printed as in Example 3.