Modern C++ Programming

20. Advanced Topics I

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Move Semantic

Overview

Move semantics refers in transferring ownership of resources from one object to another

Differently from *copy semantic*, *move semantic* does not duplicate the original resource

In C++ every expression is either an **rvalue** or an **Ivalue**

- a Ivalue (left) represents an expression that occupies some identifiable location in memory
- a rvalue (right) is an expression that does not represent an object occupying some identifiable location in memory

C++11 introduces a new kind of reference called rvalue reference X&&

- An **rvalue reference** only binds to an **rvalue**, that is a temporary
- An Ivalue reference only binds to an Ivalue
- A const Ivalue reference binds to both Ivalue and rvalue

```
struct A {}:
void f(A& a) {}
// lvalue reference
void g(const A& a) {} // const lvalue reference
void h(A&& a) {} // rvalue reference
A a:
f(a): // ok. f() can modify "a"
g(a); // ok, f() cannot modify "a"
// h(a); // compile error f() does not accept lvalues
// f(A{}); // compile error f() does not accept rvalues
g(A\{\}); // ok, f() cannot modify the object A\{\}
h(A\{\}); // ok, f() can modify the object A\{\}
```

```
#include <algorithm>
class Array { // Array Wrapper
public:
    Array() = default;
    Array(int size) : _size{size}, _array{new int[size]} {}
    Array(const Array& obj) : _size{obj._size}, _array{new int[obj._size]} {
        // EXPENSIVE COPY (deep copy)
        std::copy(obj._array, obj._array + size, array);
    }
    ~Array() { delete[] _array; }
private:
    int _size;
    int* array;
};
```

```
#include <vector>
int main() {
    std::vector<Array> vector;
    vector.push_back( Array{1000} ); // call push_back(const Array&)
}
    // expensive copy
```

Before C++11: Array $\{1000\}$ is created, passed by const-reference, <u>copied</u>, and then destroyed

Note: Array{1000} is no more used outside push_back

After C++11: Array{1000} is created, and moved to vector (fast!)

Class prototype with support for move semantic:

```
class X {
public:
    X();
                                // default constructor
    X(const X& obj);
                               // copy constructor
    X(X&& obj);
                                // move constructor
    X& operator=(const X& obj); // copy assign operator
    X& operator=(X&& obj); // move assign operator
    \sim X();
                               // destructor
};
```

Move constructor semantic

```
X(X&& obj);
```

- (1) Shallow copy of obj data members (in contrast to deep copy)
- (2) Release any obj resources and reset all data members (pointer to nullptr, size to 0, etc.)

Move assignment semantic

```
X& operator=(X&& obj);
```

- (1) Release any resources of this
- (2) Shallow copy of obj data members (in contrast to deep copy)
- (3) Release any obj resources and reset all data members (pointer to nullptr, size to 0, etc.)
- (4) Return *this

Move constructor

```
Array(Array&& obj) {
    _size = obj._size; // (1) shallow copy
    _array = obj._array; // (1) shallow copy
    obj._size = 0; // (2) release obj (no more valid)
    obj._array = nullptr; // (2) release obj
}
```

Move assignment

C++11 provides the method std::move (<utility>) to indicate that an object may be "moved from"

It allows to efficient transfer resources from an object to another one

```
#include <vector>
int main() {
   std::vector<Array> vector;
   vector.push back(Array{1000}); // call "push back(Array&&)"
   Array arr{1000}:
   vector.push back( arr );
                                       // call "push back(const Array&)"
   vector.push_back( std::move(arr) ); // call "push_back(Array&&)"
                                       // efficient!!
    "arr" is not more valid here
```

Move Semantic Notes

If an object requires the *copy constructor/assignment*, then it should also define the *move constructor/assignment*. The opposite could not be true

The defaulted move constructor/assignment =default recursively applies the move semantic to its base class and data members.

Important: it does not release the resources. It is very dangerous for classes with manual resource management

```
// Suppose: Array(Array&&) = default;
Array x{10};
Array y = std::move(x); // call the move constructor
// "x" calls ~Array() when it is out of scope, but now the internal pointer
// "_array" is NOT nullptr -> double free or corruption!!
```

Move Semantic and Code Reuse

Some operations can be expressed as a function of the move semantic

```
A& operator=(const A& other) {
    *this = A{other}; // copy constructor + move assignment
    return *this;
}
```

```
void init(... /* any paramters */) {
   *this = A{...}; // user-declared constructor + move assignment
}
```

Class Declaration Semantic - Compiler Implicit



Class Declaration Semantic

User-declared Entity	Meaning / Implications	
non- static const members	Copy/Move constructors are not trivial (not provided by the compiler). Copy/move assignment is not supported	
reference members	Copy/Move constructors/assignment are not trivial (not provided by the compiler)	
destructor	The resource management is not trivial. <i>Copy</i> constructor/assignment is very likely to be implemented	
copy constructor/assignment	Resource management is not trivial. <i>Move</i> constructors/assignment need to be implemented by the user	
move constructor/assignment	There is an efficient way to move the object. <i>Copy constructor/assignment</i> cannot fall back safely to <i>copy constructors/assignment</i> , so they are deleted	

Universal Reference and Perfect

Forwarding

The && syntax has two different meanings depending on the context it is used

- rvalue reference
- Universal reference: Either rvalue reference or Ivalue reference

Universal references (also called forwarding references) are rvalues that appear in a type-deducing context. T&&, auto&& accept any expression regardless it is an lvalue or rvalue and preserve the const property

```
void f1(int&& t) {} // rvalue reference

template<typename T>
void f2(T&& t) {} // universal reference

int&& v1 = ...; // rvalue reference
auto&& v2 = ...; // universal reference
```

```
int
          f copy()
                                   { return x; }
          f_ref(int& x) { return x; }
int&
const int& f_const_ref(const int& x) { return x; }
            v1 = \dots : // f copy(), f const ref(), only lvalues
auto
      v2 = \dots; // f ref(), only lvalue ref
auto&
const auto\u00e9 v3 = ...; // f copy(), f ref(), f const ref()
                      // only const lvalue ref (decay), cannot be modified
const auto&& v4 = ...; // f copy(), only rvalues, cannot be modified
auto&& v5 = ...: // everything
```

```
struct A {}:
void f1(A&& a) {} // rvalue only
template<typename T>
void f2(T&& t) {} // universal reference
Aa;
f1(A{}); // ok
// f1(a); // compile error (only rvalue)
f2(A{}): // universal reference
f2(a); // universal reference
A\&\& a2 = A{}: // ok
// A&& a3 = a; // compile error (only rvalue)
auto&& a4 = A{}; // universal reference
auto&& a5 = a; // universal reference
```

Universal Reference - Misleading Cases

```
template<typename T>
void f(std::vector<T>&&) {} // rvalue reference

template<typename T>
void f(const T&&) {} // rvalue reference (const)

const auto&& v = ...; // const rvalue reference
```

Reference Collapsing Rules

Before C++11 (C++98, C++03), it was not allowed to take a reference to a reference (A&& causes a compile error)

C++11, by contrast, introduces the following **reference collapsing rules**:

Туре	Reference		Result
A&	&	\rightarrow	A&
A&	&&	\rightarrow	A&
A&&	&	\rightarrow	A&
A&&	&&	\rightarrow	A&&

Perfect Forwarding

Perfect forwarding allows preserving argument value category and const/volatile modifiers

std::forward (<utility>) forwards the argument to another function with the
value category it had when passed to the calling function (perfect forwarding)

```
#include <utility> // std::forward
template<typename T> void f(T& t) { cout << "lvalue"; }
template<typename T> void f(T&& t) { cout << "rvalue"; } // overloading

template<typename T> void g1(T&& obj) { f(obj); } // call only f(T&)
template<typename T> void g2(T&& obj) { f(std::forward<T>(obj)); }

struct A{};
f ( A{10} ); // print "rvalue"
g1( A{10} ); // print "lvalue"!!
g2( A{10} ); // print "rvalue"
```

Value Categories

Taxonomy (simplified)

Every expression is either an rvalue or an Ivalue

- An Ivalue (left value of an assignment for historical reason or locator value) represents an expression that occupies an identity, namely a memory location (it has an address)
- An rvalue is movable; an Ivalue is not

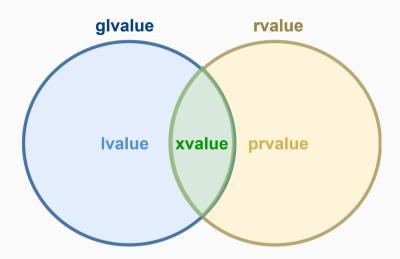
glvalue (generalized lvalue) is an expression that has an identity

Ivalue is a **glvalue** but it is <u>not movable</u> (it is not an **xvalue**). An *named rvalue* reference is a **Ivalue**

xvalue (eXpiring) has an identity and it is movable. It is a glvalue that denotes an object whose resources can be reused. An unnamed rvalue reference is a xvalue

prvalue (*pure rvalue*) doesn't have identity, but is movable. It is an expression whose evaluation initializes an object or computes the value of an operand of an operator

rvalue is movable. It is a prvalue or an xvalue



Examples

```
struct A {
   int x;
};
void f(A&&) {}
A&& g();
f(A\{4\}): // "A{4}" is a prvalue
A&& b = A{3}; // "A&& b" is a named revalue reference \rightarrow levalue
A c{4}:
f(std::move(c)); // "std::move(c)" is a xvalue
f(A\{\}.x); // "A\{\}.x" is a xvalue
g();
          // "A&&" is a xvalue
```

&, && Ref-qualifiers

Overloading

and volatile

C++11 allows overloading member functions depending on the **lvalue/rvalue** property of their object. This is also known as **ref-qualifiers overloading** and can be useful for optimization purposes, namely, moving a variable instead of copying it

```
struct A {
// void f() {} // already covered by "f() &"
   void f() & {}
   void f() && {}
};
A a1:
a1.f():
           // call "f() &"
A{}.f(); // call "f() &&"
std::move(a1).f(); // call "f() &&"
```

Ref-qualifiers overloading can be also combined with const methods

```
struct A {
// void f() const {} // already covered by "f() const &"
   void f() const & {}
   void f() const && {}
};
const A a1;
a1.f(): // call "f() const &"
std::move(a1).f(); // call "f() const &&"
```

A simple example where ref-qualifiers overloading is useful

```
struct ArrayWrapper {
    ArrayWrapper(/*params*/) { /* something expensive */ }

ArrayWrapper copy() const & { /* expensive copy with std::copy() */ }

ArrayWrapper copy() const && { /* just move the pointer as the original object is no more used */ }
};
```

volatile Overloading

```
struct A {
                             {}
    void f()
   void f() volatile
                        {} // e.g. propagate volatile to data members
    void f() const volatile {}
// void f() volatile & {} // combining ref-qualifier and volatile
// void f() const volatile & {} // overloading is also fine
// void f() volatile && {}
// void f() const volatile && {}
};
volatile A a1;
a1.f(); // call "f() volatile"
const volatile A a2:
a2.f(); // call "f() const volatile"
```

RVO/NVRO

Copy Elision and

Copy Elision and RVO/NVRO

Copy elision is a compiler optimization technique that eliminates unnecessary *creation, destruction, copying, moving* of temporary objects

Copy elision can be also applied to avoid *unnecessary object copies* when returning from functions. Such optimizations are:

- RVO (Return Value Optimization) means the compiler is allowed to avoid creating temporary objects for return values
- NRVO (Named Return Value Optimization) means the compiler is allowed to return an object (with automatic storage duration) without invoking copy/move constructors

RVO Example

Returning an object from a function is *very expensive* without RVO/NVRO:

```
struct Obj {
    Obj() = default;
    Obj(const Obj&) { // non-trivial
        cout << "copy constructor\n";</pre>
};
Obj f() { return Obj{}; } // first copy
auto x1 = f(): // second copy (create "x")
```

If provided, the compiler uses the *move constructor* instead of *copy constructor*

RVO - Where it works

RVO Copy elision is always guaranteed if the operand is a prvalue of the same class type and the copy constructor is trivial and non-deleted

```
struct Trivial {
    Trivial()
                   = default:
    Trivial(const Trivial&) = default;
};
// sigle instance
Trivial f1() {
   return Trivial{}: // Guarantee RVO
// distinct instances and run-time selection
Trivial f2(bool b) {
    return b ? Trivial{} : Trivial{}; // Guarantee RVO
```

Guaranteed Copy Elision (C++17)

In C++17, RVO Copy elision is always guaranteed if the operand is a prvalue of the same class type, even if the copy constructor is not trivial or deleted

```
struct S1 {
  S1() = default;
  S1(const S1&) = delete; // deleted
};
struct S2 {
  S2() = default:
  S2(const S2&) {} // non-trivial
}:
S1 f() { return S1{}: }
S2 g() { return S2{}; }
auto x1 = f(); // compile error in C++14
                                                                              35/59
auto x2 = g(): // RVO only in C++17
```

NRVO is not always guaranteed even in C++17

```
Obj f1() {
    Obi a:
    return a; // most compilers apply NRVO
Obj f2(bool v) {
    Obj a;
    if(v)
       return a; // copy/move constructor
    return Obj{}; // RVO
```

GCC 14 adds the flag -Wnvro to diagnose when NVRO is not possible

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```
Obj f3(bool v) {
   Obj a, b;
   return v ? a : b; // copy/move constructor
Obj f4() {
   Obj a;
   return std::move(a); // force move constructor
Obj f5() {
   static Obj a;
   return a; // only copy constructor is possible
```

```
Obj f6(Obj& a) {
    return a; // copy constructor (a reference cannot be elided)
}
Obj f7(const Obj& a) {
    return a; // copy constructor (a reference cannot be elided)
Obi f8(const Obi a) {
    return a: // copy constructor (a const object cannot be elided)
Obi f9(Obi&& a) {
    return a; // copy constructor (the object is instantiated in the function)
```

Type Deduction

Type Deduction

When you call a template function, you may omit any template argument that the compiler can determine or deduce (inferred) by the usage and context of that template function call [IBM]

- The compiler tries to deduce a template argument by comparing the type of the corresponding template parameter with the type of the argument used in the function call
- Similar to function default parameters, (any) template parameters can be deduced only if they are at end of the parameter list

Full Story: IBM Knowledge Center

Example

```
template<typename T>
int add1(T a, T b) { return a + b; }
template<typename T, typename R>
int add2(T a, R b) { return a + b; }
template<typename T, int B>
int add3(T a) { return a + B; }
template<int B, typename T>
int add4(T a) { return a + B; }
add1(1, 2); // ok
// add1(1, 2u); // the compiler expects the same type
add2(1, 2u); // ok (add2 is more generic)
add3<int, 2>(1); // "int" cannot be deduced
add4<2>(1); // ok
```

Type Deduction - Pass by-Reference

Type deduction with references

```
template<typename T>
void f(T& a) {}
template<tvpename T>
void g(const T& a) {}
int x = 3;
int % y = x;
const int \& z = x;
f(x): // T: int
f(y); // T: int
f(z); // T: const int // <-- !! it works...but it does not
g(x); // T: int // for "f(int& a)"!!
g(y); // T: int // (only non-const references)
g(z); // T: int // <-- note the difference
```

Type deduction with pointers

```
template<typename T>
void f(T* a) {}
template<tvpename T>
void g(const T* a) {}
int* x = nullptr:
const int* y = nullptr;
auto z = nullptr;
f(x); // T: int
f(y); // T: const int
// f(z); // compile error!! z: "nullptr t != T*"
g(x); // T: int
g(y); // T: int <-- note the difference
```

```
template<typename T>
void f(const T* a) {} // pointer to const-values
template<typename T>
void g(T* const a) {} // const pointer
int* x = nullptr;
const int* y = nullptr;
int* const z = nullptr;
const int* const w = nullptr;
f(x); // T: int
f(y); // T: int
f(z); // T: int
g(x); // T: int
g(y); // T: const int
g(z); // T: int
g(w); // T: const int
```

Type deduction with values

```
template<typename T>
void f(T a) {}
template<tvpename T>
void g(const T a) {}
int x = 2;
const int v = 3:
const int \& z = y;
f(x): // T: int
f(y); // T: int!! (drop const)
f(z); // T: int!! (drop const&)
g(x); // T: int
g(y); // T: int
                                                                               44/59
g(z); // T: int!! (drop reference)
```

```
template<typename T>
void f(T a) {}
int* x = nullptr;
const int* y = nullptr;
int* const z = x;
f(x); //T = int*
f(y); // T = const int*
f(z); // T = int*!! (const drop)
```

Type Deduction - Array

Type deduction with arrays

```
template<typename T, int N>
void f(T (&array)[N]) {} // type and size deduced
template<typename T>
void g(T array) {}
int x[3] = {};
const int v[3] = \{\};
f(x); // T: int, N: 3
f(y); // T: const int, N: 3
g(x); // T: int*
g(y); // T: const int*
```

```
template<typename T>
void add(T a, T b) {}
template<typename T, typename R>
void add(T a, R b) {}
template<typename T>
void add(T a, char b) {}
add(2, 3.0f): // call add(T, R)
add(2, 3): // call add(T, T)
add<int>(2, 3): // call add(T, T)
add<int, int>(2, 3); // call add(T, R)
add(2, 'b'); // call add(T, char) \rightarrow nearest match
```

```
template<typename T, int N>
void f(T& array) {}

template<typename T>
void f(T* array) {}

int x[3];
f(x); // call f(T*) not f(T&) !!
```

```
template<typename T, int N>
void g(T& array) {}

template<typename T>
void g(T array) {}

int x[3];
g(x); // call g(T) not g(T&) !!
```

auto Deduction

- auto x = copy by-value/by-const value
- auto& x = copy by-reference/by-const-reference
- auto* x = copy by-pointer/by-const-pointer
- auto&& x = copy by-universal reference
- decltype(auto) x = automatic type deduction

```
int
               f1(int& x) { return x; }
int&
               f2(int& x) { return x; }
              f3(int& x) { return x; }
auto
decltype(auto) f4(int& x) { return x; }
int v = 3:
int x1 = f1(v);
int \& x2 = f2(v);
// int& x3 = f3(v); // compile error 'x' is copied by-value
int \& x4 = f4(v);
```

The problem: implement a function to remove the first element of a container

```
template<typename T>
void pop_v1(T& x) {
    std::remove(x.begin(), x.end(), x.front()); // undefined behavior!!
}
```

This is undefined behavior because

- x.front() returns a reference
- std::remove takes the element to remove by-const-reference
- std::remove modifies the container, invalidating iterators and references. The reference must not be an element of the range [first, last)

Sub-optimal solutions:

```
template<typename T>
void pop_v3(T& x) {
    using R = std::decay_t<decltype(x.front())>; // verbose/non-trivial solution
    std::remove(x.begin(), x.end(), R(x)); // ok, create a temporary (rvalue)
} // copy
// decltype(x.front()) -> retrieve the type of x.front()
// std::decay_t -> get the 'decay' type as pass by-value,
// e.g. 'const int' to 'int'
```

C++23 introduces auto(x) decay-copy utility to express the rvalue copy in a clear way

```
template<typename T>
void pop_v4(T& x) {
    std::remove(x.begin(), x.end(), auto(x.front())); // ok, rvalue copy
}
// equivalent to R(x)
```

const Correctness

const Correctness

const correctness refers to guarantee object/variable const consistency throughout its lifetime and ensuring safety from unintentional modifications

References:

- Isocpp: const-correctness
- GotW: Const-Correctness
- Abseil: Meaningful 'const' in Function Declarations
- const is a contract
- Why const Doesn't Make C Code Faster
- Constant Optimization?

- const entities do not change their values at run-time. This does not imply that they are evaluated at compile-time
- const T* is different from T* const. The first case means "the content does not change", while the later "the value of the pointer does not change"
- Pass by-const-value and by-value parameters imply the same function signature
- Return by-const-value and by-value have different meaning
- const_cast can break const-correctness

const and member functions:

- const member functions do not change the internal status of an object
- mutable fields can be modified by a const member function (they should not change the external view)

const and code optimization:

- const keyword purpose is for correctness (type safety), not for performance
- const may provide performance advantages in a few cases, e.g. non-trivial copy semantic

Function Declarations Example

```
int f();
// const int f(); // compile error conflicting declaration
```

const Return Example

```
const int const_value = 3;

const int& f2() { return const_value; }

// int& f1() { return const_value; } // WRONG
int f3() { return const_value; } // ok
```

```
struct A {
   void f() { cout << "non-const"; }</pre>
   void f() const { cout << "const": }</pre>
};
const A getA() { return A{}; }
auto a = getA(); // "a" is a copy
a.f(): // print "non-const"
getA().f(); // print "const"
```

struct Example

```
int* ptr; // int* const ptr;
   int value; // const int value;
};
      // }:
void f(A a) {
   a.value = 3:
   a.ptr[0] = 3;
void g(const A a) { // the same with g(const A\&)
// a.value = 3; // compile error
   a.ptr[0] = 3; // "const" does not apply to "ptr" content!!
A a{new int[10]}:
f(a);
g(a);
```

Member Functions Example

```
struct A {
   int value = 0;
   int& f1() { return value; }
   const int& f2() { return value; }
// int& f3() const { return value; } // WRONG
   const int& f4() const { return value; }
   int f5() const { return value; } // ok
   const int f6() const { return value; }
};
```