

Arrays

“to get a deeper understanding of the language”

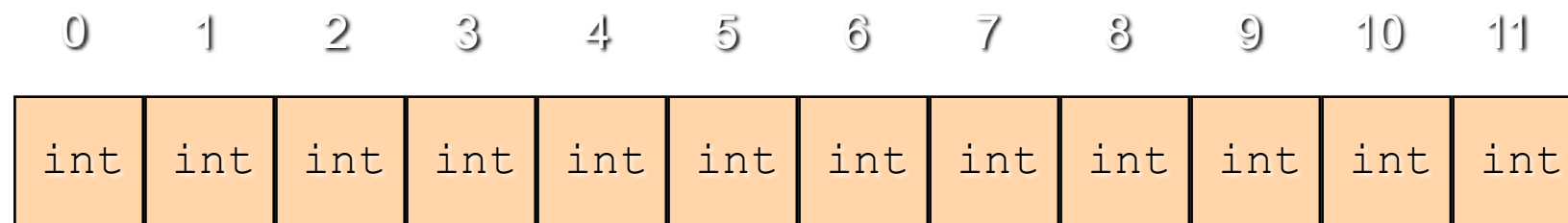


Deep C - a 3 day course
Jon Jagger & Olve Maudal

arrays

- an array is a fixed-size contiguous sequence of elements
- all elements have the same type
- default initialization when `static` storage class
- no default initialization when `auto` storage class

```
int days_in_month[12];
```



the type of `days_in_month` is `int[12]`

array initialization

- arrays support `= {...}` aggregate initialization
- syntax not permitted for assignment
- any missing elements are default initialized
- arrays cannot be initialized/assigned from another array

```
const int days_in_month[12] =  
{  
    31, // January  
    28, // February  
    31, // March  
    ...  
    31, // October  
    30, // November  
    31  // December  
};
```

size is
optional



- a trailing comma is allowed
- an empty list is not allowed (it is in C++)

[designators]

c99

- arrays support [int] designators
- int must be a constant-expression

```
enum { january, february, march, ...  
      october, november, december };
```

```
const int days_in_month[] =  
{  
    [january] = 31,  
    [february] = 28,  
    [march] = 31,  
    ...  
    [october] = 31,  
    [november] = 30,  
    [december] = 31  
};
```

these initializer list elements can now appear in any order

array indexing

- indexing is zero based
- indexing is not bounds-checked
- out of bounds access is undefined

```
int days_in_month[12];
```

```
printf("%d", days_in_month[january]);
```



```
printf("%d", days_in_month[-1]);  
printf("%d", days_in_month[12]);
```



one beyond the end

- a pointer can point just beyond an array
- can't be dereferenced
- can be compared with
- can be used in pointer arithmetic

```
int array[42];
```

undefined

```
array[42]
```



not undefined

```
&array[42]
```

```
int * search(int * begin, int * end, int find)
{
    int * at = begin;
    while (at != end && *at != find) {
        at++;
    }
    return at;
}
```

array decay

- in an expression the name of an array "decays" into a pointer to element zero†
- arrays are not passed by copy as function arguments



these two declarations are equivalent

```
void display(size_t size, wibble * first);  
void display(size_t size, wibble first[]);
```

```
wibble table[42] = { ... };
```

these two statements are equivalent

```
display(42, table);  
display(42, &table[0]);
```

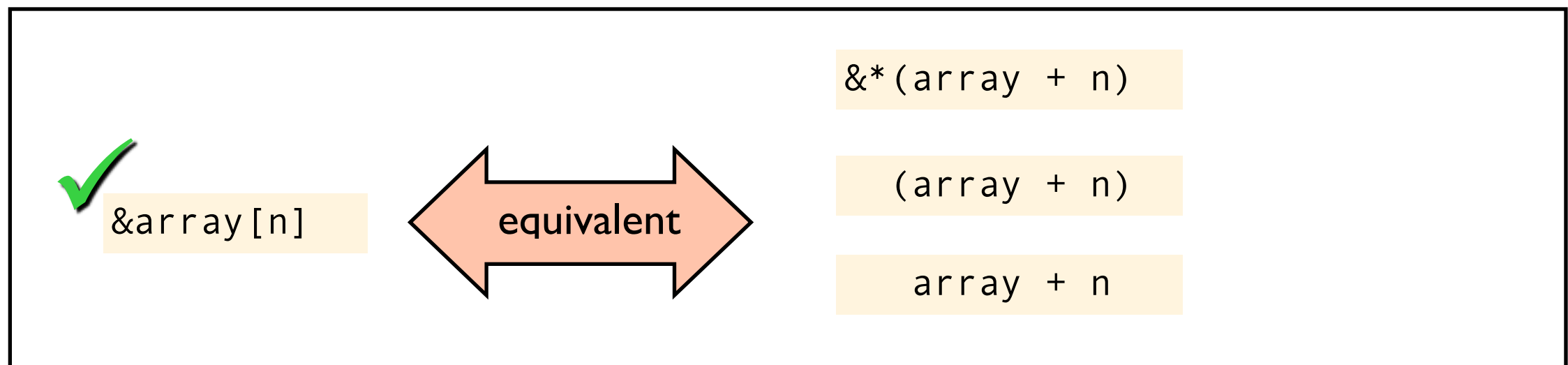
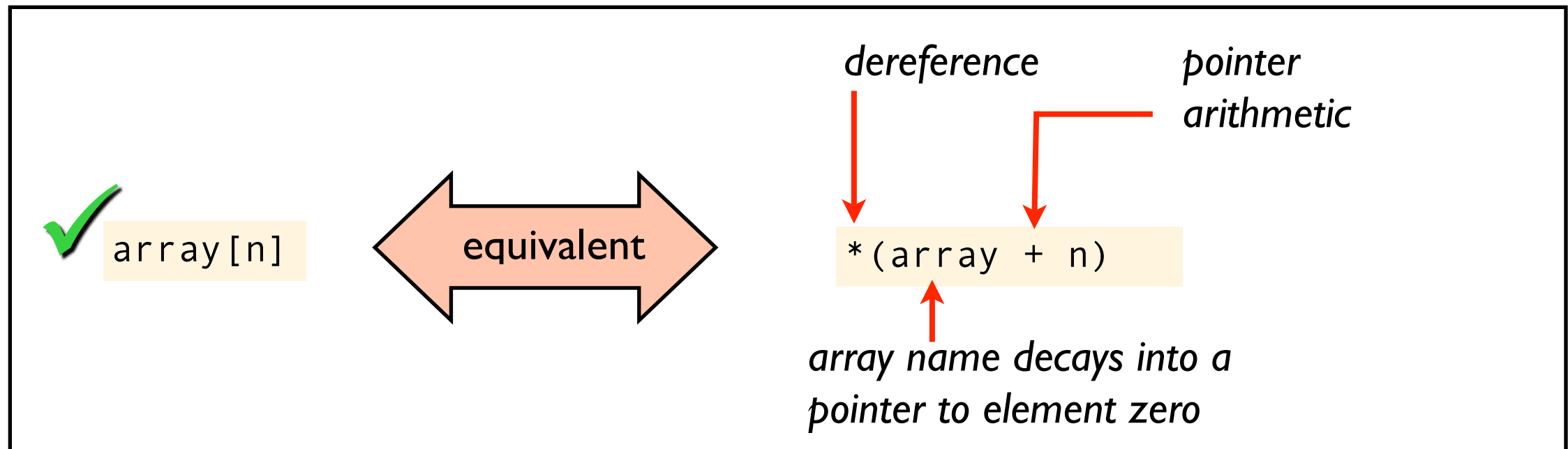


```
const size_t size =  
    sizeof array / sizeof array[0];
```

†except in a sizeof expression

pointers \longleftrightarrow arrays

- array indexing is syntactic sugar
- the compiler converts $a[i]$ into $*(a + i)$

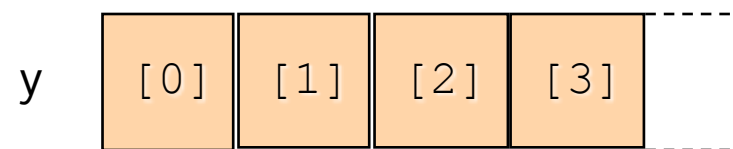


pointers != arrays

- very closely related but not the same
- declare as a pointer → define as a pointer
- declare as an array → define as an array

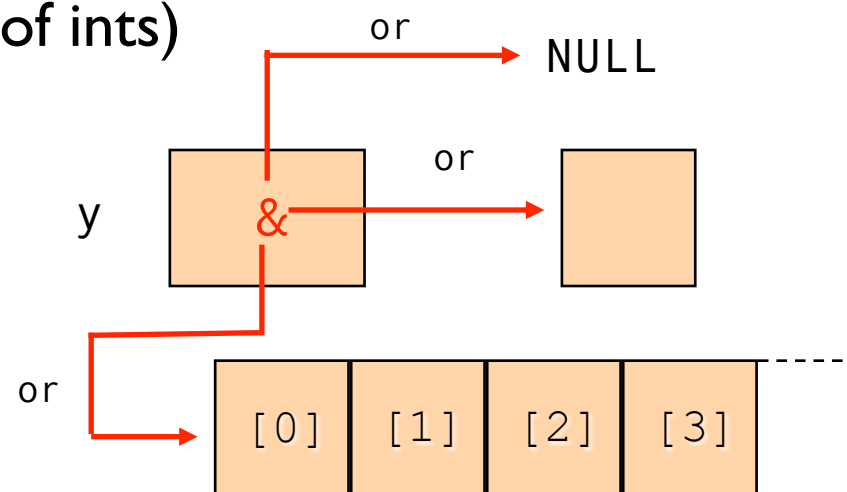
y is an array of int (of unspecified size)

```
extern int y[];  
y[n]
```



y is a pointer to an int (or to an array of ints)

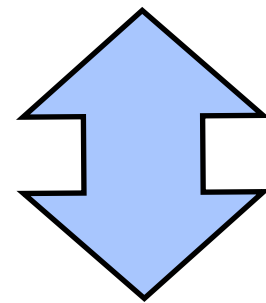
```
extern int * y;  
y[n]
```



string literals

- strings are arrays of char
- automatically terminated with a nul character, ' \0 '
- a convenient string literal syntax

```
char greeting[] = "Bonjour";
```



equivalent

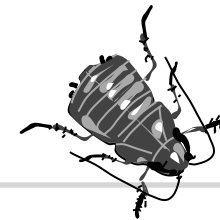
```
char greeting[] =  
    { 'B', 'o', 'n', 'j', 'o', 'u', 'r', '\0' };
```



terminating nul character



const string literals

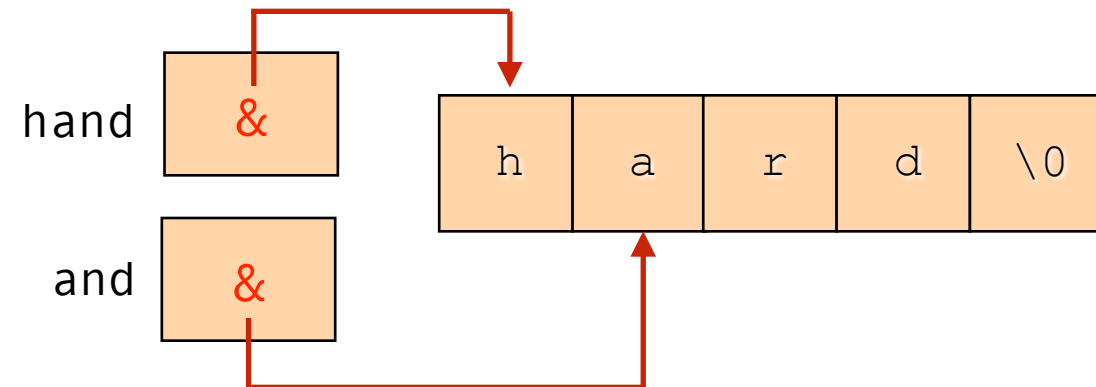
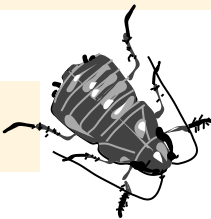


string literals are allowed to 'overlap'

```
char * hand = "hand";
```

```
char * and = "and";
```

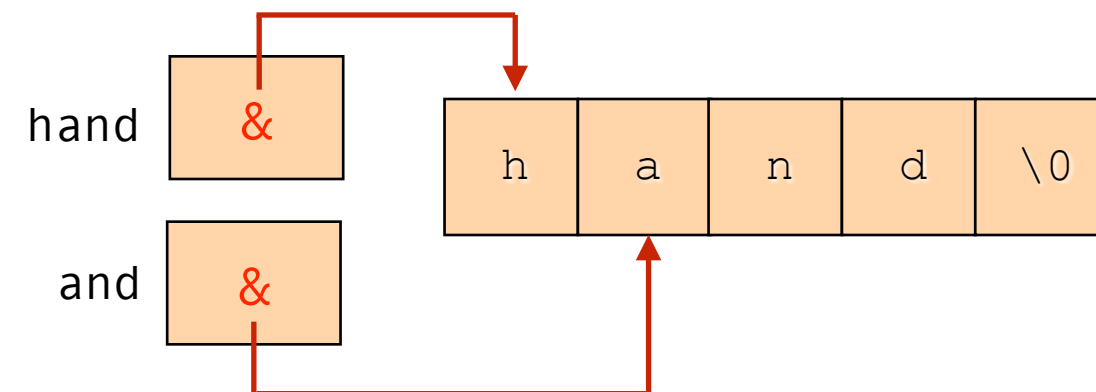
```
hand[2] = 'r';
```



```
const char * hand = "hand";
```

```
const char * and = "and";
```

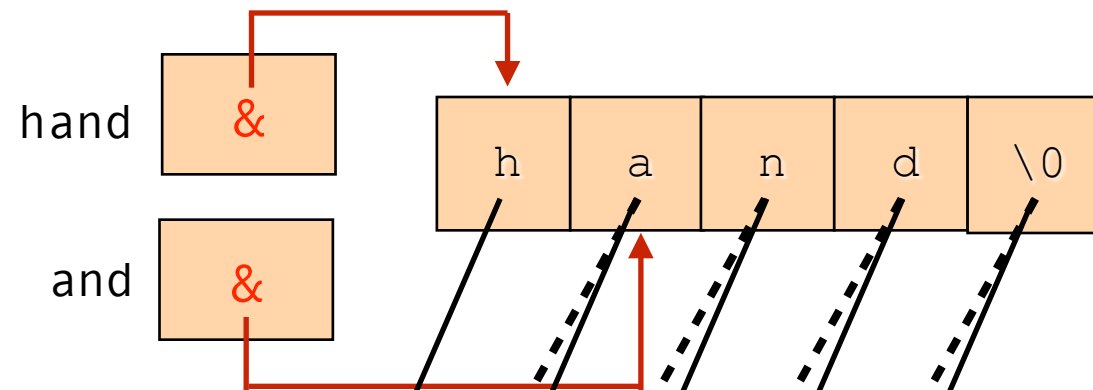
```
hand[2] = 'r';
```



pointers != arrays

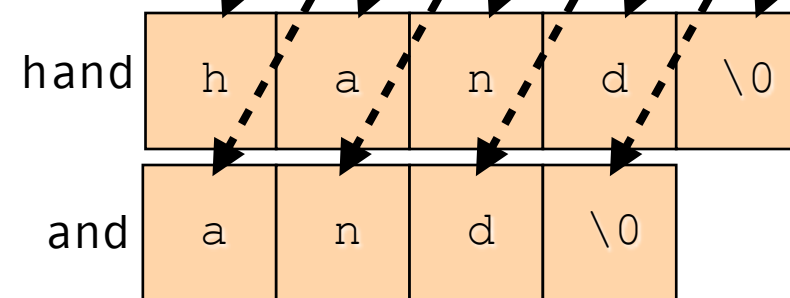
```
char * hand = "hand";
```

```
char * and = "and";
```



```
char hand[] = "hand";
```

```
char and[] = "and";
```

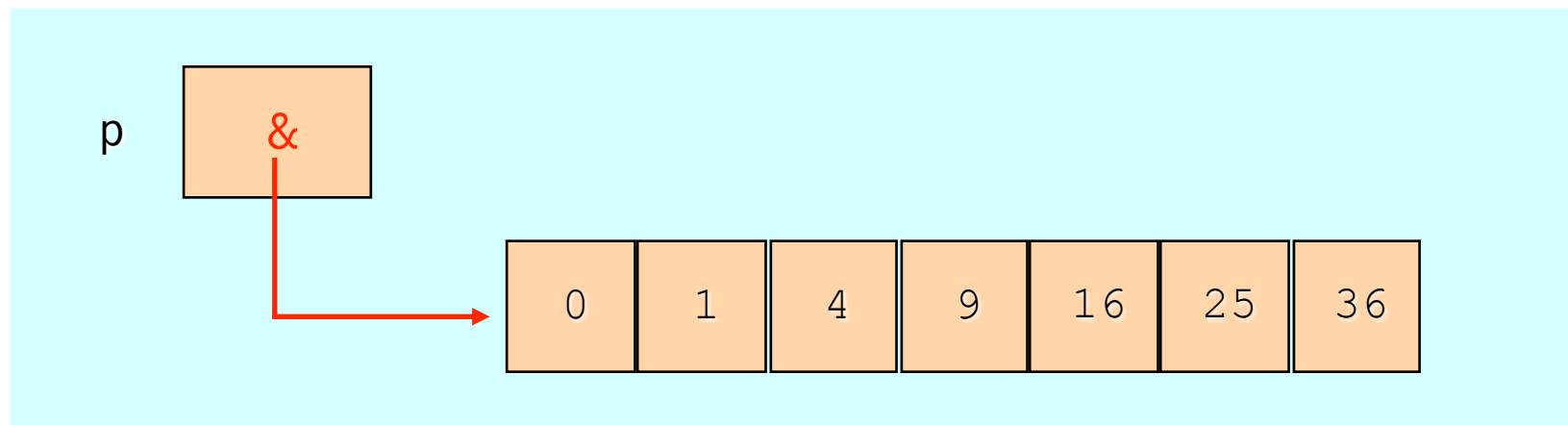


array literal

- an aggregate initializer list can be "cast" to an array type
- known as a compound literal
- can be useful in both testing and production code

c99

```
int * p = (int []){ 0,1,4,9,16,25,36 };
```



summary

- an array is a contiguous block of memory
- designators (c99), eg [constant] = value
- array indexing is not checked
- out of bounds access caused undefined behaviour
- arrays and pointers closely related but are not the same
- in an expression the name of an array "decays" into a pointer to the first element
- compound literals, eg (type[]){...}