Benchmark Design Concepts

Contents

- Basic concepts of benchmarking
- Processor benchmarks
- Disk benchmarks

Conditions that benchmark programs must satisfy

- Reliable work in all environments
- Same workload in all environments
- Reproducibility of results
- No machine dependent components

Reliable work in various environments

- Use algorithms that are sufficiently tested, reliable and generate stable results
- Benchmark programs must satisfy highest portability standards
- Benchmark programs should perform same operations in all hardware and software environments

Stability of workload

- Benchmark workload must be the same for all competitive systems:
 - All systems must use the same algorithms
 - All systems must use the same data
- Benchmark programs should not use machine-dependent or OS-dependent components

Reproducibility of results

- Benchmark programs are regularly executed multiple times to compute the average run time, or to adjust desired run time
- In each execution benchmark program must generate same results, i.e. results must be reproducible

Compilation of benchmark programs

- Avoid using different compilers for different computer systems or different operating systems.
- Make sure to always compile benchmark programs using the same (highest) level of optimization
- Avoid using debug versions of programs for benchmarking

Selection of benchmark workloads

- In the case of specific natural workload that benchmarks must simulate, benchmark workload is selected to be as similar to the natural workload as possible
- If information about natural workload is not available, we use default workload that includes operations that are frequent in all cases of data processing

Default workloads

- Default processor workload contains two groups of operations:
 - Floating-point operations
 - Integer and combinatorial operations
- Default disk workload includes two groups of operations
 - Sequential write/read of a disk file
 - Random write/read of a disk file

Speed indicators

- If n benchmark programs B1,...,Bn run for T1,...,Tn seconds, then the computer speed in operations per minute can be defined as V1=60/T1,..., Vn=60/Tn
- The overall (average) speed indicator V is computed as the harmonic mean of individual speed indicators:

$$V = n/(1/V1 + ... + 1/Vn)$$

= $60n/(T1 + ... + Tn)$

Processor benchmarks

The size of benchmark

- If a benchmark program is large and/or processes large data sets, then it will use processor, cache memories, bus, and the main memory
- Small benchmark programs that can fit in cache memory may execute from a cache memory with negligible use of bus and main memory

Typical floating point benchmarks

- Matrix inversion and other matrix operations
- Solution of linear algebraic equations
- Roots of polynomials
- Numeric integration
- Computation of functions

Matrix inversion benchmark

- Rule #1: Avoid using matrices that contain random numbers – such matrices are frequently singular or can cause other numerical problems
- Use matrices that are proved to be regular.
- Strictly diagonally dominant matrices are non-singular

Strictly diagonally dominant matrix

Strictly diagonally dominant matrix satisfies the condition

$$|a_{ii}| > \sum_{i \neq j} |a_{ij}|, \quad i = 1, ..., n, \quad j = 1, ..., n$$

- This matrix is nonsingular (invertible), and therefore it is convenient for benchmarking
- There are other matrices that are also known as nonsingular

Invertible matrices that can cause numeric problems in benchmarking

Cauchy's matrix

$$a[i][j] = 1/(i+j)$$

Hilbert's matrix

$$a[i][j] = 1/(i+j-1)$$

Vandermonde's matrix

$$a[i][j] = j**i$$

An invertible combinatorial matrix that is suitable for benchmarking

```
a[i][j] = 1.0001, i \neq j
= 2.0001, i=j (any size)
```

```
      2.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
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      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
      1.0001
```

Sample matrix of size n=8

Single index matrices

- In benchmarking it is frequently necessary to adjust the size of matrix to achieve a desired run time or other properties
- Matrices with 2 indices are not suitable for frequent changes of size
- Single-index matrices are just a single array and their size is easily adjusted. They are convenient for benchmarking.

Avoid using library functions

- Library functions from math.h, such as sin, cos, exp, log, etc. differ from compiler to compiler, and therefore may be a source of differences in seemingly equal workloads
- Another function that is also machinedependent is rand() from stdlib.h
- Library functions should be used in benchmarking only when natural workloads use library functions with high frequency

Typical integer/combinatorial benchmarks

- Sorting arrays
- Search algorithms
- Random number generation and testing
- Combinatorial optimization
- Puzzles (e.g. 8 queens)
- Recursive algorithms

What data are convenient for sorting in benchmark programs?

- Random numbers can be convenient for sorting provided that they are fully reproducible on all machines starting with those having 16 bit integers.
- Deterministic arrays can also be suitable provided that they contain some regular nontrivial pattern

Random number generators for benchmarking

- Random number generators for benchmarking must satisfy the following conditions:
 - Same behavior on machines having the word size of 16 bits and more
 - Long cycle of random numbers
 - Simplicity and speed
 - Quality of distribution of random numbers is not important

Fibonacci-style generators

- $N(i) = (N(i-1) + N(i-2)) \mod M$, i=2,3,...
- Very simple and fast
- We must select N(0), N(1), and M
- Cycle repeats when
 N(c)=N(1) and N(c-1)=N(0)
 The cycle size is c.
- If working with 16-bit integers the condition for avoiding overflow is N(i-1) + N(i-2) < 2^14 = 16384

What are the best values for N(0), N(1), and M?

- Theoretical answer to this question is not simple [Knuth, Vol. 2]
- Empirical answer to this question is rather simple and based on experiments with a program that computes the maximum cycle length for various values of N(0) and N(1)
- In the following program we use p=N(i-2), q=N(i-1), r=N(i)

```
#include<iostream.h>
#include<stdlib.h>
#include<iomanip.h>
void main(void) // Finding maximum cycle of a Fibonacci-style random number generator
         unsigned long int cycle=0, cycle max=0;
         unsigned int M init=10000, M, N0=1, N1=2, M opt, p, q, r;
         for (int k=0; k<20; k++)
                   for (M=M init; M<16384; M++) // 2^14=16384 or 2^15=32768
                            p=N0; q=N1; cycle=0;
                             do
                                    r = (p+q) % M; cycle++;
                                       p = q; q = r;
                             \{ while (!((p == N0) && (q == N1))) \};
                             if(cycle>cycle max) {cycle max = cycle; M opt = M;}
                   cout << "N0=" << setw(5) << N0 <<" N1=" << setw(5) << N1
                        <<" M opt="<< setw(6) <<M opt
                        <<" Max cycle="<< setw(6) << cycle max <<"\n";
                   N0=rand()%M init; N1=rand()%M init;
```

N0=	1	N1=	2	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	41	N1= 84	167	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	6334	N1= 65	500	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	9169	N1= 57	724	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	1478	N1= 93	358	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	6962	N1= 44	164	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	5705	N1= 81	L45	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	3281	N1= 68	327	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	9961	N1= 4	191	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	2995	N1= 19	942	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	4827	N1= 54	136	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	2391	N1= 46	504	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	3902	N1= 1	L53	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	292	N1= 23	382	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	7421	N1= 87	716	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	9718	N1= 98	395	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	5447	N1= 17	726	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	4771	N1= 15	538	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
N0=	1869	N1= 99	912	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500
И0=	5667	N1= 62	299	M_opt=	15625	Max_cycle=	62500

Optimum modulus and maximum cycle size for 20 random seeds in the case of integers where M<16384

N0=	1	N1=	2	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	41	N1=	8467	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	6334	N1=	6500	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
И0=	9169	N1=	5724	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
И0=	1478	N1=	9358	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
И0=	6962	N1=	4464	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
И0=	5705	N1=	8145	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
И0=	3281	N1=	6827	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	9961	N1=	491	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	2995	N1=	1942	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	4827	N1=	5436	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	2391	N1=	4604	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	3902	N1=	153	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	292	N1=	2382	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	7421	N1=	8716	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	9718	N1=	9895	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	5447	N1=	1726	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	4771	N1=	1538	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	1869	N1=	9912	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500
N0=	5667	N1=	6299	M_opt=	31250	Max_cycle=187500

Optimum modulus and maximum cycle size for 20 random seeds in the case of unsigned integers where M<32768

Machine-independent random number generator working with integers

```
int rng_i()
                       // Random integers
                       // Cycle size = 62500
      static int p=1, q=2, r;
      r = (p+q) \% 15625; p=q; q=r;
      return r;
```

Machine-independent random number generator working with unsigned integers

```
unsigned int rng_ui() // Unsigned random integers 
 // Cycle size = 187500 
 static unsigned int p=1, q=2, r; 
 r = (p+q) \% 31250; p=q; q=r; 
 return r;
```

Properties of rng_i() and rng_ui()

- Portable generator
- Reproducible Fibonacci-style random sequence
- Sequence length = 62500 or 187500
- No overflow even with 16-bit machines
- Suitable for sort benchmarks

Testing rng_ui and rng_i

- Generate 62500 random numbers with rng_i
- Generate 187500 random numbers with rng_i
- In both cases the last two numbers must be 1 and 2

```
int rng_i( ) // Random integers: cycle size = 62500
{
        static int p=1, q=2, r;
        r = (p+q)%15625; p=q; q=r;
        return r;
unsigned int rng_ui( ) // Unsigned random integers: cycle size = 187500
        static unsigned int p=1, q=2, r;
        r = (p+q)%31250; p=q; q=r;
        return r;
}
void main(void) // Testing rng i and rng ui
{
        for(int i=0; i<62498; i++) rng_i();
        cout << rng_i(); cout << ' ' << rng_i() << endl;</pre>
          for(i=0; i<187498; i++) rng ui();
        cout << rng_ui(); cout << ' ' << rng_ui() << endl;</pre>
1 2
1 2
```

Deterministic sequences

 Deterministic sequences can be generated by repeating the integer expression n = n+1 - n/M*M. The resulting sequence is:

Sample generator loop:

```
for(k=0; k< kmax; k++) a[k]=n=n+1-n/M*M;
```

 Such sequences can be sorted in decreasing order

Some simple algorithms that can be used as small CPU benchmarks

Linear Algorithm: Factorial

```
int f(int n)
 return (n<1) ? 1 : (n*f(n-1));
int F(int n)
\{ int f=1, i;
    for (i=2; i \le n; i++) f *= i;
    return f;
                                Useful for very short run
                                times
```

T(n) = O(n) (both iterative and recursive)

Linear Algorithm: Two Variables

```
void merge (int a[], int na, int b[], int nb, int c[], int& nc)
{ int i,j;
 nc=i=j=0;
 while (i<na && j<nb) c[nc++] = (a[i] < b[j]) ? a[i++] : b[j++];
 while (i<na) c[nc++] = a[i++];
 while (j < nb) c[nc++] = b[j++];
                                              Useful for very short run
                                              times
```

Run time: $T(na, nb) = c \cdot nc = c(na+nb)$

Logarithmic Algorithm: Binary Search

```
int bsearch(int v[], int n, int x)
{ int low, high, mid;
  low=0; high = n-1;
  while (low <= high)
  \{ mid = (low + high) / 2 ;
     if (x < v[mid]) high = mid-1;
     else if (x > v[mid]) low = mid+1;
     else return mid;
                                     Useful for very short run
                                     times: O(log n). One of the
                                     most popular algorithms in
  return -1; /* no match */
                                     Computer Science
```

Recursive Binary Search

```
int bsearch(int v[], int low, int high, int x)
{int mid = (low + high) / 2;
  if(low>high) return -1;
  if(x<v[mid]) return bsearch(v, low, mid-1, x);
  if(x>v[mid]) return bsearch(v, mid+1, high, x);
  return mid;
```

Useful for testing recursion. Very short run times: O(log n).

Quicksort: O(n $log_2(n)$)

```
void sort(int a[], int left, int right)
{ int i, mid;
  if(left >= right) return;
  for (mid=left, i=left+1; i <= right; i++)
    if(a[i] < a[left]) swap(a, ++mid, i);
  Swap(v, left, mid);
                                 One of the most popular
  sort(v,left, mid-1);
                                 algorithms in Computer
                                 Science. Frequently used
  sort(a, mid+1, right);
                                 and useful for benchmarking
```

Quadratic Algorithms: O(n²)

For each component of data set process all components of the data set:

These algorithms may be useful for easy increase of run time by increasing n.

$$T(n) = c \cdot n \cdot n = O(n^2)$$
; $c = const.$

Simple Select Sort

```
Inefficient but extremely
 void sort( int a[], int n )
                                            simple algorithm.
                                            Sometimes used for
 { int i, j;
                                            simplistic benchmarking.
     for ( i=0 ; i< n-1 ; i++ )
       for (j=i+1; j < n; j++)
            if(a[i] > a[j]) swap(a[i], a[j]);
T(n) \approx c(number of executed if statements) = c(1 + 2 + ... + n-1)
    = cn(n-1)/2 = c(n^2-n)/2
T(n) = O(n^2)
```

Quadratic algorithm: Matrix Initialization

```
for(i=0; i<n; i++)
  for(j=0; j<n; j++)
    a[i][j] = rand();</pre>
```

$$T(n) = c n^2 = O(n^2)$$

Quadratic algorithm: Matrix Transposition

```
for(i=0; i<n-1; i++)

for(j=i+1; j<n; j++)

swap(a[i][j] , a[j][i]);</pre>
```

$$T(n) = c(1+2+...+n-1) = c(n^2 - n) / 2 = O(n^2)$$

Matrix Multiplication

The most frequent matrix

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

for (j=0; j<n; j++) 

for (c[i][j] = k = 0; k<n; k++) 

c[i][j] += a[i][k]*b[k][j];
```

$$T(n) = c \cdot n \cdot n \cdot n = O(n^3)$$
; $c = const.$

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Exponential Algorithm: Fibonacci Numbers: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, ...

```
int f(int n)
{
```

Extremely inefficient and almost illegal in programming practice. Can be used for testing recursion only.

```
return (n<2) ? n : f(n-1)+f(n-2) ;
```

```
T(n) = t + T(n-1) + T(n-2) \approx T(n-1) + T(n-2), \quad n > 1
= 1, n = 1
= 0, n = 0
```

Solving T(n) = T(n-1) + T(n-2)

Suppose that
$$T(n) = cg^n$$
, $g > 0$

$$cg^n = cg^{n-1} + cg^{n-2}$$

$$1 = g^{-1} + g^{-2}$$

$$g^2 - g - 1 = 0$$

$$g = \frac{1 \pm \sqrt{1+4}}{2}; \quad g = \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} = 1.618$$

$$T(n) = c \cdot 1.618^n = O(1.618^n)$$

Linear Fibonacci Numbers

```
int f(int n)
{ int i, zero=0, first=1, second=n;
  for (i=2; i \le n); i++)
  { second = first + zero;
      zero = first; first = second;
                                 This is a proper way to compute
                                 Fibonacci numbers. Insufficient
  return second;
                                 complexity and too short run time
                                 make this program unsuitable for
```

$$T(n) = c \cdot n = O(n)$$
; $c = const.$

benchmarking.

How to make a SpeedMark benchmark

```
// Pseudocode of Speedmark benchmark (HW#1)
// 1. Run 10 seconds matrix inversion (or similar workload)
// 2. Compute matrix inversion (floating point) speed
// 3. Run 10 seconds quicksort (or similar workload)
// 4. Compute quicksort (integer) speed
// 5. Compute and display the average speed in operations/min
 int NINT=0. NFLOAT=0:
 double START, VINT, VFLOAT, AverageSpeed;
 START = sec():
 while(sec() < START+10) {Minv(); NFLOAT++;}</pre>
 VFLOAT = 60*NFLOAT/(sec()-START);
 START = sec():
 while(sec() < START+10) {Qsort(); NINT++;}
 VINT = 60*NINT/(sec()-START);
 AverageSpeed = 2*VFLOAT*VINT/(VFLOAT+VINT);
 Display VFLOAT, VINT, AverageSpeed;
// Select Minv() and Qsort() so that they run between 1 and 3 sec
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```

Average speed as a harmonic mean

VFLOAT = speed of floating point operations VINT = speed of integer operations

$$AVERAGE_SPEED = \frac{2}{\frac{1}{VFLOAT} + \frac{1}{VINT}}$$

$$= \frac{2 \times VFLOAT \times VINT}{VFLOAT + VINT}$$

Disk benchmarks

Default workloads

- Writing a sequential file
- Reading a sequential file
- Random writing in a relative file
- Random reading from a relative file

Problems

- What is the available space on disk?
- How big should be the file?
- Contiguous or fragmented files?
- How to compare disks that have different capacities?

Disk speed as a harmonic mean

VSEQ = speed of sequential read operations VRAN = speed of random read operations

$$AVERAGE_SPEED = \frac{2}{\frac{1}{VSEQ} + \frac{1}{VRAN}}$$
$$= \frac{2 \times VSEQ \times VRAN}{VSEQ + VRAN}$$

Other disk operations

- Disk sequential write (SEQW)
- Disk sequential read (SEQR)
- Disk random write (RANW)
- Disk random read (RANR)

Disk speed as a harmonic mean (a) The case of equal weights

VSEQW = speed of sequential write operations

VRANW = speed of random write operations

VSEQR = speed of sequential read operations

VRANR = speed of random read operations

$$AVERAGE_SPEED = \frac{4}{\frac{1}{VSEQR} + \frac{1}{VRANR} + \frac{1}{VSEQW} + \frac{1}{VRANW}}$$

Disk speed as a harmonic mean (b) The case of different weights

VSEQW = speed of sequential write operations

VRANW = speed of random write operations

VSEQR = speed of sequential read operations

VRANR = speed of random read operations

$$AVERAGE_SPEED = \frac{1}{\frac{WSEQR}{VSEQR} + \frac{WRANR}{VRANR} + \frac{WSEQW}{VSEQW} + \frac{WRANW}{VRANW}}$$

WSEQR > 0, WRANR > 0, WSEQW > 0, WRANW > 0

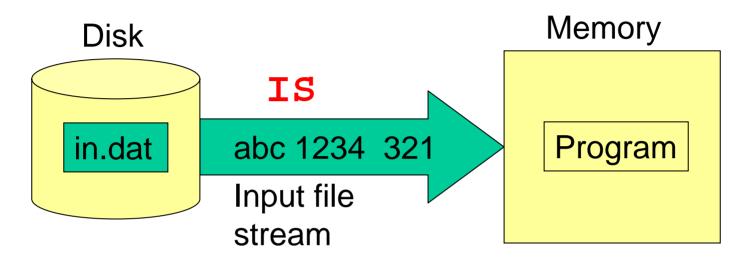
WSEQR + WRANR + WSEQW + WRANW = 1

Using different weights

- Weights determine relative importance
- Generally, the frequency of sequential and random disk operations is not the same
- Generally, the frequency of read and write disk operations is not the same
- Different weights can be used to take into account the different frequency of use

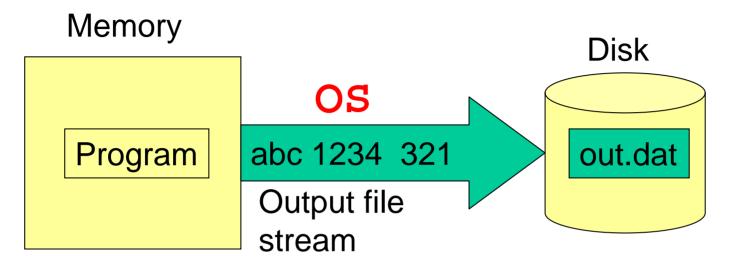
Review of basic disk operations in C++

Input File Stream



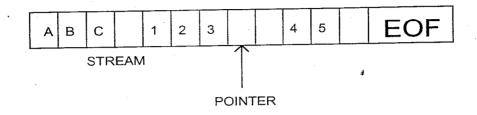
Input file stream is a sequence of bytes (characters) generated when we read data from a disk file. In C++ the input file stream can have any name: e.g., IS.

Output File Stream



Output file stream is a sequence of bytes (characters) generated when we write data to a disk file. In C++ the output file stream can have any name: e.g., OS.

FILES



Stream = sequence of bytes and a pointer showing the current byte (where insert/extract can start)

FILE = stream of characters terminated by the End Of File (EOF) record; also called *file stream*

Location: Disk, Floppy disk, tape, CD ROM, (sometimes even in memory), etc.

Size: Limited only by medium capacity

C++ FILE OPERATIONS

Library: #include <fstream.h> // Support for

file stream operations

Declaration: ifstream IS; // Input file stream

ofstream OS; // Output file stream

File name: (1) internal, and (2) external

Internal name: IS, and OS are **internal names**used inside a C++ program to refer
to file streams. Same rules as for
any variable name.

External name: depends on rules for file names used by the operating system

char EFname[] = "data.txt";

OPEN FILE: includes several operations:

- connect internal name IS and external name "data.txt"
- check access right of the user
- create buffer areas in memory
- transfer directory record from directory file to operating system

CLOSE FILE: includes several operations:

- disconnect internal name IS and external name "data.txt" (IS becomes an undefined variable)
- release buffer areas in memory
- transfer updated directory record from the OS to the directory file

General rule: OPEN as late as possible, and CLOSE as soon as possible, but do not exagerate! Power failure or OS crash when a file is open can cause some data to be lost.

File can be open for three purposes Purpose:

defined using input/output stream (ios)

class member functions:

- read

ios::in

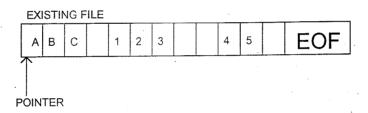
- write

ios;:out

- append

ios::app

READ:

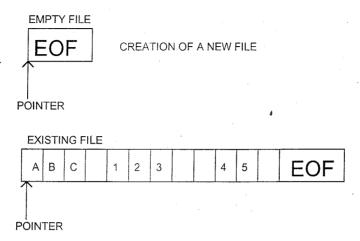


IS.open(EFname, ios::in); // open for read

Declaration with initialization:

ifstream IS = EFname; // shortest form, but ifstream IS(EFname, ios::in);

WRITE:



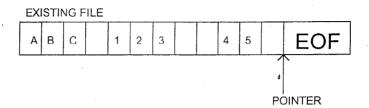
OS.open(EFname, ios::out); // open for write

If the file **EFname** exists prior to execution of the **open()** function, then its contents is lost because EOF will be moved at the beginning of the file (**ios::out** is destructive!)

Declaration with initialization:

ofstream OS = EFname; (NOT STANDARD !)
ofstream OS(EFname, ios::out);

APPEND:



OS.open(EFname, ios::app); // open for append

EFname exists prior to execution of the **open()** function, and its contents is preserved

Declaration with initialization:

ofstream OS(EFname, ios::app);

EXTRACT (READ) DATA

int data;
char c, s[80];
IS >> data;
IS.getline(s, 80);

IS.get(c);

- (1) Skip white spaces (blanks, tabs, newlines, formfeeds, etc.)
- (2) Extract (and convert) data as long as possible
- (3) Stop conversion when a white space or non-convertible character is encountered (this also includes the EOF record)

CLOSE FILE:

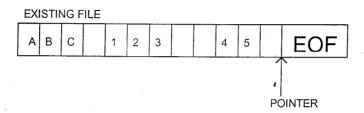
```
IS.close(); // IS becomes undefined
OS.close(); // OS becomes undefined
```

DETECT EOF:

```
IS >> data;
while(! IS.eof())
{
    // Process data
    IS >> data;
}
```

Function **eof()** returns true (1) if EOF is detected

INSERT (WRITE) DATA



OS << data;

OS << s; // write a line into file OS.put(c); // write one character

TEST OPEN FILE SUCCESS/FAILURE

Reason for failure:

- no file

- wrong directory

- no medium

- hardware error

TEST FUNCTION:

IS.fail()
OS.fail()

0 = successful last operation with IS/OS!0 (usually 1) = last operation with IS/OS failed

PASSING OF FILE STREAM ARGUMENTS (as other compound objects - only by reference)

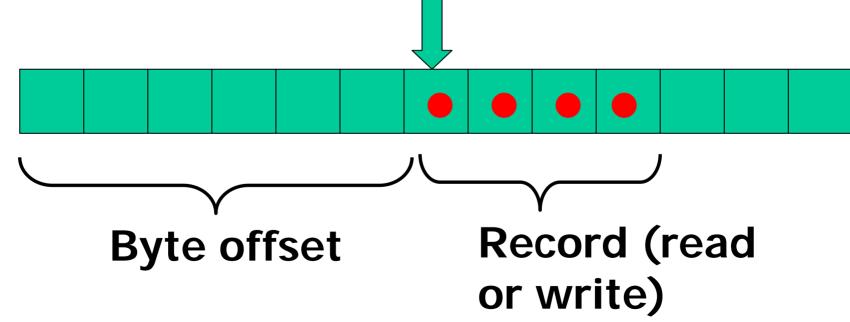
```
void io(ifstream& IS, ofstream& OS, double& data)
 int a, b, c;
 IS \gg a \gg b \gg c; // RÉAD FROM IS
 OS \ll a \ll b; // COPY TO OS
 data = a+b+c:
                       // RETURN VALUE
                  // IS and OS are formal streams
                  (they do not exist as data objects)
void main(void)
 int result:
 ifstream INPUT = "in.dat"; // actual input stream
 ofstream OUTPUT = "out.dat"; // actual out stream
 io(INPUT, OUTPUT, result); // Function call
 INPUT.close(); // if close is omitted, it will
 OUTPUT.close(); // be done automatically at
                     // the end of main program
```

Relative Files

- Relative files consist of indexed records
- Relative files support direct access
 (access according to the byte offset: the position is defined as the distance in bytes from the beginning of file)
- Each record can be designed as a struct

File model: a sequence of bytes

Read/write pointer positioned by seek oper.



Record structure and size

 Size of record is measured in bytes and determined using the sizeof() function: sizeof(client)

Initialization of record

```
client c;
client blank = { 0, "", 0.}
```

```
cin >> c.account
```

>> c.name

>> c.balance;

Basic operations: write

- Opening a relative file for writing: ofstream OS(filename, ios::ate) (ate = positioning "at end")
- Writing records in arbitrary order:
 - Selecting file record (positioning file pointer)OS.seekp(<byte offset>)
 - OS.write(<record pointer>, <record size>)
- seekp: positioning for put operation

Basic operations: read

- Opening a relative file for reading:
 ofstream OS(filename, ios::in) (seq)
 ofstream OS(filename, ios::ate) (random)
- Reading records in arbitrary order:
 - Selecting file record (positioning file pointer)OS.seekg(<byte offset>)
 - OS.read(<record pointer>, <record size>)
- seekg: positioning for get operation

Cast operator (type)

- Conversion to desired data type
- Syntax:

```
(desired data type) expression
```

- Cast is a unary operator and has higher precedence than arithmetic operations
- Example:

```
X = (double) (n + 1)
```

Alternative way:

```
X = double (n + 1)
```

More casting

- int k=1, n=2;
 double x = (double) k/n // x = 0.5
 // The first operation is the higher
 // precedence unary (double)k
 // Then n is automatically promoted to
 // double
- (char *) &<struct record> // address of an arbitrary record converted to a character pointer

Record pointer

- The type of record pointer is char *
- The address &<struct record> has the type different from char *
- Conversion to type char * is performed using cast (char *) &<struct record>
- IS.read((char *) &<rec>, sizeof(rec))
- OS.write((char *) &<rec>, sizeof(rec))