

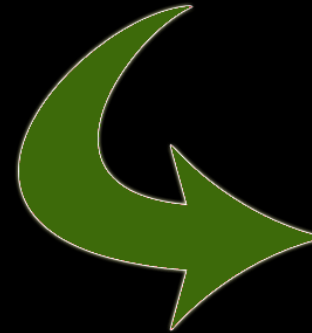


C Pointers

Pointers to Data, Pointer to Pointer,
Passing Pointers, Function Pointers



SoftUni Team
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```
char *name  
    &number
```

```
int (*compare)  
    (int, int)
```

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`char *name`




0	1	2	3	4	5
'p'	'e'	's'	'h'	'o'	'\0'

Pointers

Pointers

- **Pointers** are special types that point to an **address** in memory
 - Do not hold actual data (i.e. '**a**', **3.14**, etc.)
 - Hold the address of another piece of memory

0x0d0	00	00	00	e2	...	...
0x0d5	...	...	...	...	...	...
0x0da	...	...	...	...	...	...
0x0df	...	...	...	111	97	2d
0x1be	...	...	...	...	...	...
0x1c3	...	...	...	...	...	03



Declaring Pointers

- Pointers are declared with the ***** operator:

Pointer name

```
{type} *{name} = {address};
```

The type of the variable it points to

Memory address it will point to

- Examples:

```
int *intPtr;  
float *floatPtr;  
char *name;
```

Initializing Pointers

- Pointers are initialized with the **&** operator
 - **&{identifier}** returns a pointer to the variable

```
int a = 5;  
int *aPtr = &a; // aPtr now points to the memory of a  
  
float f = 3.14;  
float *fPtr = &f; // fPtr points to the memory of f  
float *ptrPtr = fPtr; // ptrPtr points to where fPtr points
```

- By default **uninitialized pointers** point to junk memory

Dereferencing Pointers

- Pointers can be dereferenced
 - i.e. return the memory they point to
 - Done with the `*` operator

```
int a = 5;
int *aPtr = &a;
int value = *aPtr; // Dereference the pointer
printf("%d == %d", a, value);

*aPtr += 10; // Modify memory where it points to
printf("%d", a); // 15
```

Pointer Address

- A Pointer holds the **address** it points to
 - Address is **unsigned long** on 64-bit hardware
 - The pointer itself also takes up memory
 - 4 bytes on 32-bit and 8 bytes on 64-bit systems

```
char sign = '+';  
char *signPtr = &sign;
```

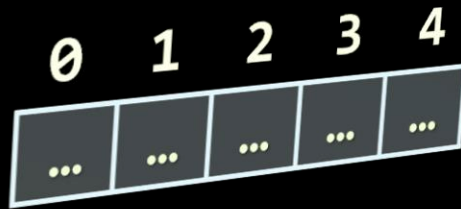
```
printf("%lu\n", signPtr); // 140732033241279  
printf("%d\n", sizeof(signPtr)); // 4 or 8  
printf("%c\n", *signPtr); // +
```

Memory address
varies every time



Pointers

Live Demo

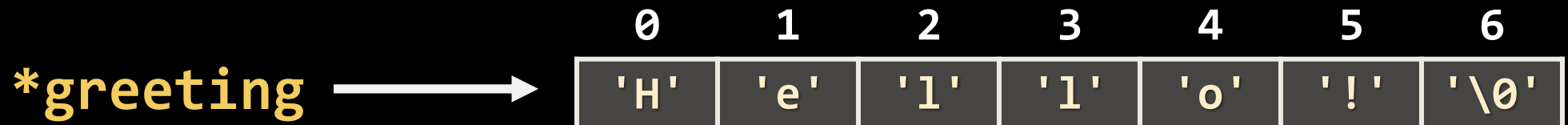


Arrays are Pointers?

Arrays are Pointers

- All arrays are **pointers**, in a sense
 - **char***, **char[]**, **int[]**, **float[][]**, etc.
 - They do not hold the data
 - They point to a memory address where the elements reside
 - Example:

```
char greeting[] = "Hello!";
```



Dereferencing Arrays

- Dereferencing arrays will return the memory at the address
 - It will return bytes equal to the size of the **pointed type**
 - E.g. for **int** 4 bytes, **char** 1 byte, etc.

```
char greeting[] = "Hello!";  
  
char letter1 = *greeting;           // same as greeting[0]  
char letter2 = *(greeting + 1);    // same as greeting[1]
```

- The pointer can be **incremented** to access consequent elements
- Similar to using the **[]** operator

Pointer Arithmetic

- **pointer+1** does not always increment the pointer by 1
 - The actual result is **pointer+(1*sizeof(type))**

```
int array[] = { 5, 13, 2035 };
```

bytes	5				13				2035			
	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000	0000	1111
	0000	0000	0000	0101	0000	0000	0000	1101	0000	0000	0111	0011

```
printf("Address of *arr: %d\n", arr);           // 1758749584
printf("Value of arr[0]: %d\n", *arr);         // 5
printf("Address of arr[1]: %d\n", arr + 1);    // 1758749588
printf("Value of arr[1]: %d\n", *(arr + 1));   // 13
```

Printing Array without Indexer – Example

```
#define TABLE_HEADER_FORMAT "%-10s|%-15s\n"
#define TABLE_ROW_FORMAT "%-10d|%-15lu\n"

int main()
{
    int arr[] = { 5, 3, 8, 7, 3, 2 };
    int length = sizeof(arr) / sizeof(int);

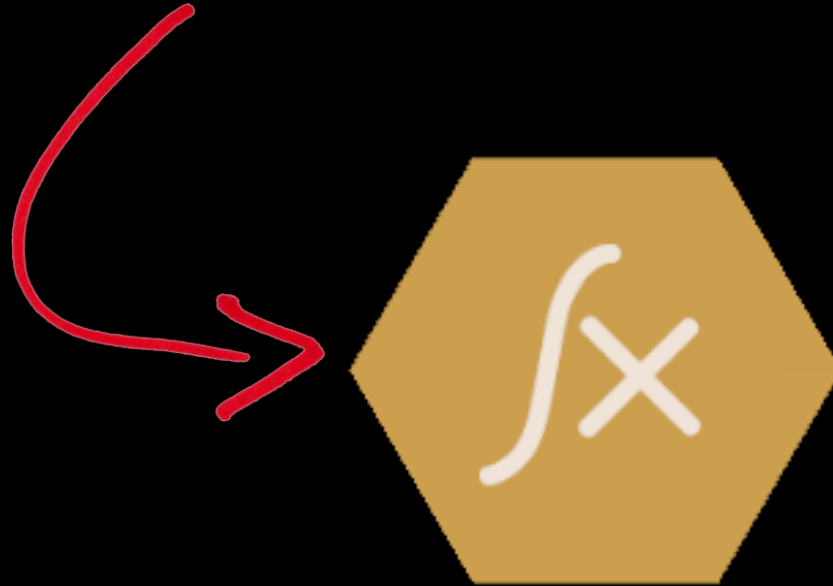
    printf(TABLE_HEADER_FORMAT, "Value", "Address");
    for (int i = 0; i < length; i++)
    {
        int *address = arr + i;
        int value = *(arr + i);
        printf(TABLE_ROW_FORMAT, value, address);
    }
    return 0;
}
```

Passing Pointers to Functions – Example

```
#include <ctype.h>
void convert_to_uppercase(char *stringPtr)
{
    while (*stringPtr != '\0')
    {
        *stringPtr = toupper(*stringPtr);
        stringPtr++;
    }
}

int main()
{
    char text[] = "HeLlO 123!";
    convert_to_uppercase(text);
    printf("%s\n", text);
    return 0;
}
```

`int array[]`



Passing Pointers to Functions

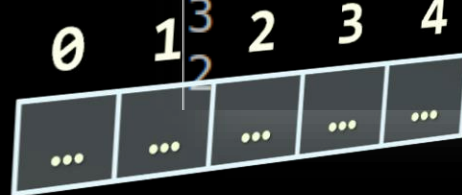
Live Demo



Exercises in Class

Bubble Sort with Pointers

```
Terminal - nasko@nasko-VirtualBox: ~/NetBeansProje - + x
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
nasko@nasko-VirtualBox:~/NetBe
Value | Address
5 | 140732799787936
3 | 140732799787940
8 | 140732799787944
7 | 140732799787948
3 | 140732799787952
2 | 140732799787956
```



Printing Array Without Indexer

Live Demo

void Pointers

void Pointers

- **Void pointers** point to a memory address holding data of unknown type
 - All pointer types can be assigned a void pointer
 - A void pointer can be assigned a pointer of any type

```
char *text = "These pointers are very strange";  
void *voidPtr = text;  
char *charPtr = voidPtr;
```

- **Note:** Void pointers cannot be dereferenced

```
char letter = *voidPtr; // Error, cannot dereference void pointer
```


Generic Swap Function – Example

```
void swap(void *a, void *b, size_t size)
{
    char *aPtr = a;
    char *bPtr = b;
    for (int i = 0; i < size; i++)
    {
        char tempByte = aPtr[i];
        aPtr[i] = bPtr[i];
        bPtr[i] = tempByte;
    }
}

int main()
{
    char name[] = "Pesho";
    int array[] = { 1, 3, 10, 15, 2 };
    swap(&array[1], &array[3], sizeof(int));
    swap(&name[0], &name[4], sizeof(char));
}
```



Generic Swap Function

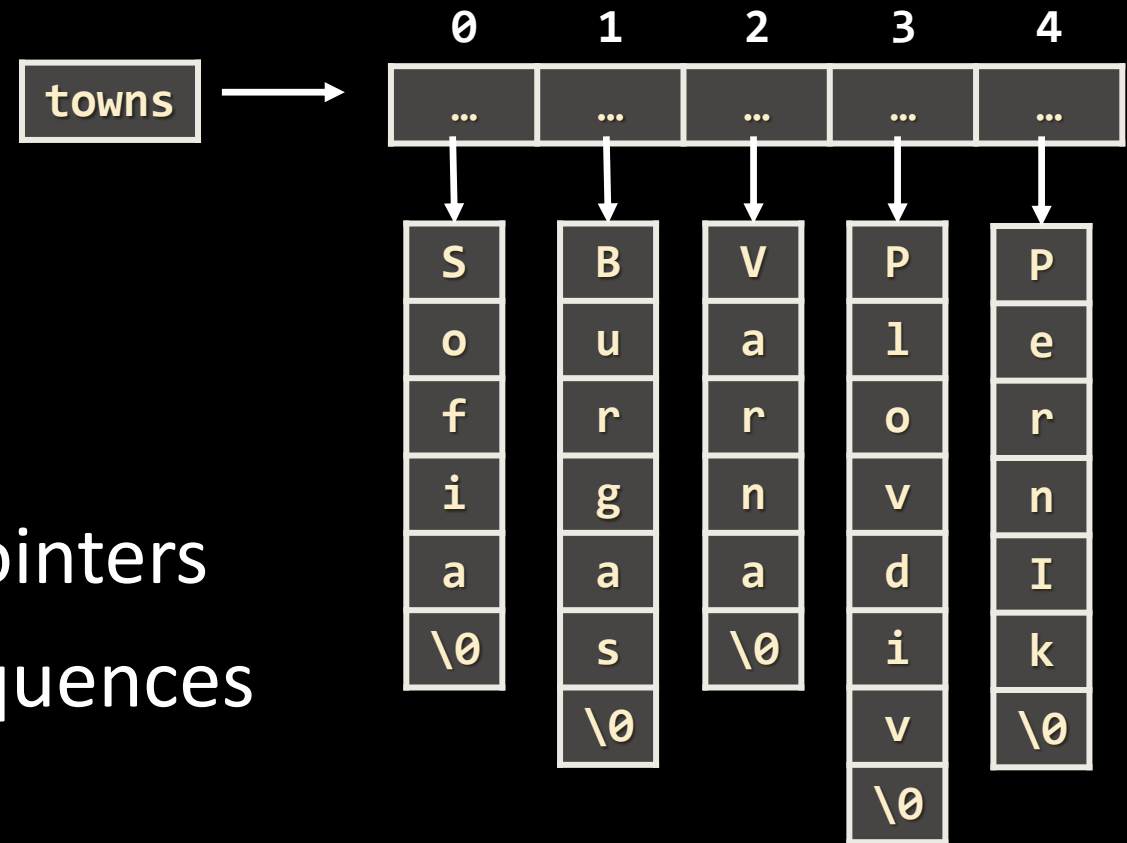
Live Demo

Pointers to Pointers

Pointers to Pointers

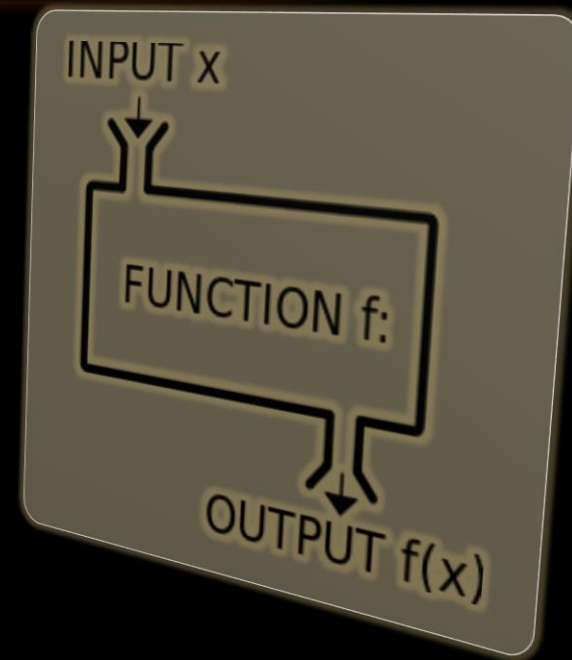
- Pointers can point to other pointers

```
char *towns[5];  
towns[0] = "Sofia";  
towns[1] = "Burgas";  
towns[2] = "Varna";  
towns[3] = "Plovdiv";  
towns[4] = "Pernik";
```



- towns** is a pointer to 5 **char** pointers
- Each **char** pointer points to sequences of characters


```
int sort(int (*order) (int, int))  
{  
    ...  
}
```



Function Pointers

Passing Functions as Arguments

Function Pointers

- **Function pointers** point to a specific function
 - Declared in the following format:

```
{return-type} (*{name}) ({argType1}, {argType2}, ...)
```

- **Example:**

```
int multiply(int a, int b) { return a * b; }

int main()
{
    int (*functionPtr)(int, int) = &multiply;
    return 0;
}
```

Dereferencing Function Pointers

- The function pointer can be **dereferenced**
 - The pointed function can then be called

```
int (*functionPtr)(int, int) = &multiply;  
  
int result1 = (*functionPtr)(5, 5); // 25  
int result2 = functionPtr(10, 20);  // 200
```

- **Note:** Explicit dereferencing can be omitted on some compilers

Calculator – Example

```
int multiply(int a, int b) { return a * b; }
int add(int a, int b) { return a + b; }
int subtract(int a, int b) { return a - b; }

void print_calculations(int a, int b, int (*calcFunc)(int, int))
{
    int result = calcFunc(a, b);
    printf("Result: %d\n", result);
}

int main()
{
    print_calculations(8, 7, &multiply);
    print_calculations(2500, 500, &add);
    print_calculations(3, 11, &subtract);
}
```


Calculator

Live Demo

Bubble Sort Comparator – Example

```
void bubble_sort(int array[], int length, int (*compare)(int, int))
{
    bool hasSwapped = true;
    while (hasSwapped)
    {
        hasSwapped = false;
        for (int i = 0; i < length - 1; i++)
        {
            if (compare(array[i], array[i + 1]))
            {
                swap(&array[i], &array[i + 1]);
                hasSwapped = true;
            }
        }
    }
}
```

Bubble Sort Comparator – Example (2)

```
int ascending(int a, int b)
{
    return a > b; // Evaluates to 1 if true
}

int descending(int a, int b)
{
    return a < b; // Evaluates to 1 if true
}

int main()
{
    int array[] = { 2, 10, 7, 3, 2, 1, 13 };
    int length = sizeof(array) / sizeof(int);
    bubble_sort(array, length, &ascending);    // 1 2 2 3 7 10 13
    bubble_sort(array, length, &descending);    // 13 10 7 3 2 2 1
}
```

Bubble Sort Comparator

Live Demo

Filter Function

Live Demo

C Programming – Pointers



Questions?



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