

## Pointer arithmetic

I was looking at what the ‘+’ and ‘-‘ operators actually performs when applied to pointers and arrays, as well as other tricks, and wrote some programs to test it:

```
#include <stdio.h>

main()
{
    int Arr[16];

    unsigned int a0 = (unsigned int) &Arr[0];

    unsigned int a3 = (unsigned int) &Arr[3];

    printf("%u\n", a3 - a0);

    printf("%u\n", &Arr[3] - &Arr[0]);

}
```

The result is this:

```
12
3
```

This other program explores this feature and some others:

```
#include <stdio.h>

int main()

{
    int Arr[16];

    Arr[0] = 9;

    Arr[3] = 5;
```

```

printf("Arr[3]:      \t%d\n", Arr[3]);

printf("* (Arr + 3):  \t%d\n", *(Arr + 3));

printf("* (3 + Arr):  \t%d\n", *(3 + Arr));

printf("* (&Arr[0] + 3):\t%d\n", *(&Arr[0] + 3)); // &Arr[0] is the same as
Arr

printf("3[Arr]:      \t%d\n", 3[Arr]); // gets converted by compiler to
*(3 + Arr)

printf("\n");

// showing how + operation behaves when used with addresses of pointers
or arrays

printf("Arr:          \t%u\n", Arr);

printf("&Arr[0]:        \t%u\n", &Arr[0]);

printf("&Arr[0] + 1:   \t%u\n", &Arr[0] + 1);

printf("&*(&Arr[0] + 1):%u\n", &*(&Arr[0] + 1));

printf("sizeof(Arr): \t%d\n", sizeof(Arr));

printf("sizeof(Arr[0]):\t%d\n", sizeof(Arr[0]));

printf("sizeof(int): \t%d\n", sizeof(int));

printf("\n");

printf("sizeof(&Arr[0]):%d\n", sizeof(&Arr[0]));

printf("sizeof(unsigned long):%d\n", sizeof(unsigned long));

printf("\n");

unsigned long ArrAddr = (unsigned long)&Arr[0];

printf("ArrAddr: %u\n", ArrAddr);

```

```

int *p;

p = ArrAddr;

printf("*p: %d\n", *p);

printf("* (p+3): %d\n", *(p+3));

printf("\n");

// breaking operator overloading of +
unsigned long ArrAddr3 = ArrAddr + 3;

p = ArrAddr3;

printf("ArrAddr3: %u\n", ArrAddr3);

printf("*p: %d\n", *p);

printf("\n");

// doing manually what overloading of + does automatically

ArrAddr3 = ArrAddr + 3*sizeof(Arr[0]);

p = ArrAddr3;

printf("ArrAddr3: %u\n", ArrAddr3);

printf("*p: %d\n", *p);

printf("\n");

return 0;

}

```

The result is this:

Arr[3] :	5
----------	---

```
* (Arr + 3):      5
* (3 + Arr):      5
* (&Arr[0] + 3): 5
3[Arr]:          5
Arr:             1587159312
&Arr[0]:         1587159312
&Arr[0] + 1:    1587159316
&*(&Arr[0] + 1): 1587159316
sizeof(Arr):    64
sizeof(Arr[0]): 4
sizeof(int):     4
sizeof(&Arr[0]): 8
sizeof(unsigned long): 8
ArrAddr: 1587159312
*p: 9
*(p+3): 5
ArrAddr3: 1587159315
*p: 0
ArrAddr3: 1587159324
*p: 5
```

Posted on April 15, 2013 Tagged C interview questions structures in C unions in C Comments No Comments on Unions and Structures

## Unions and Structures

The main difference between an union and a structure is that for a structure, all the structure members are stored contiguously. However, for an union the members are stored overlapping, i.e. one of top of each other.

```
#include <stdio.h>

int main()

{

    struct ex_struct {

        char element1; // 1 byte

        int element2; // 4 bytes

        long element3; // 8 bytes

    };

    union ex_union {

        char element1;

        int element2;

        long element3;

    };

    struct ex_struct a;

    union ex_union b;

    printf("Size of structure: %d\n", sizeof(a));

    printf("Size of union: %d\n", sizeof(b));

    a.element1 = 'D';
```

```
a.element2 = 59;

b.element1 = 'D';

b.element2 = 59;

printf("a.element1 = %c\n", a.element1);

printf("a.element2 = %d\n", a.element2);

printf("b.element1 = %c\n", b.element1);

printf("b.element2 = %d\n\n", b.element2);

b.element3 = 0x33333333;

b.element1 = 0x11;

printf("b.element3 = 0x%x\n", b.element3);

printf("b.element1 = 0x%x\n", b.element1);

return 0;

}
```

This is the output:

```
Size of structure: 16

Size of union: 8

a.element1 = D

a.element2 = 59

b.element1 = ;

b.element2 = 59
```

```
b.element3 = 0x33333311
```

```
b.element1 = 0x11
```

Unions are useful when a storage location is needed to represent different data types, which is similar to the concept of polymorphism in C++.