Objects and classes

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Classes

1. Definition of object/class

An object is an entity that you can request to do certain things. These actions are the *methods*, and to make these possible the object probably stores data, the *members*.

When designing a class, first ask yourself:
'what functionality should the objects support'.

A class is a user-defined type; an object is an instance of that type.

2. Running example

We are going to build classes for points/lines/shapes in the plane.

```
class Point {
    /* stuff */
};
int main () {
  Point p; /* stuff */
}
```

Exercise 1

Thought exercise: what are some of the actions that a point object should be capable of?

3. Object functionality

Small illustration: point objects.

Code:

```
// /functionality.cpp
  Point p(1.,2.);
  cout << "distance to origin "
       << p.distance_to_origin()
       << '\n';
  p.scaleby(2.);
  cout << "distance to origin "
       << p.distance_to_origin()
       << '\n'
       << "and angle " << p.angle()
       << '\n';
```

Output:

```
distance to origin
     2.23607
distance to origin
     4.47214
and angle 1.10715
```

Note the ‘dot’ notation.

Exercise 2

Thought exercise:
What data does the object need to store to be able to calculate angle and distance to the origin?
Is there more than one possibility?

4. The object workflow

- First define the class, with data and function members:

```
class MyObject {
  // define class members
  // define class methods
};
```

(details later) typically before the `main`.

- You create specific objects with a declaration

```
MyObject
  object1( /* .. */ ),
  object2( /* .. */ );
```

- You let the objects do things:

```
object1.do_this();
x = object2.do_that( /* ... */ );
```

5. Construct an object

The declaration of an object `x` of class `Point`; the coordinates of the point are initially set to `1.5`,`2.5`.

```
Point x(1.5, 2.5);
```

```
class Point {
private: // data members
  double x,y;
public: // function members
  Point
    (double x_in,double y_in){
      x = x_in; y = y_in;
  };
  /* ... */
};
```

Use the constructor to create an object of a class:
function with same name as the class.
(but no return type!)

6. Private and public

Best practice we will use:

```
class MyClass {
private:
  // data members
public:
  // methods
}
```

- Data is private: not visible outside of the objects.
- Methods are public: can be used in the code that uses objects.
- You can have multiple private/public sections, in any order.

Methods

7. Class methods

Definition and use of the *distance* function:

Code:

```
// /pointclass.cpp
class Point {
private:
  float x,y;
public:
  Point(float in_x,float in_y) {
    x = in_x; y = in_y; };
  float distance_to_origin() {
    return sqrt( x*x + y*y );
  };
};
    /* ... */
  Point p1(1.0,1.0);
  float d = p1.distance_to_origin();
  cout << "Distance to origin: "
       << d << '\n';
```

Output:

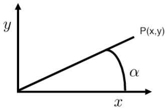
```
Distance to origin:
     1.41421
```

8. Class methods

- Methods look like ordinary functions,
- except that they can use the data members of the class, for instance x, y;
- Methods can only be used on an object with the 'dot' notation. They are not independently defined.

Exercise 3

Add a method *angle* to the *Point* class. How many parameters does it need?



Hint: use the function *atan* or *atan2*.

You can base this off the file `pointclass.cxx` *in the repository*

Exercise 4

Make a class *GridPoint* for points that have only integer coordinates. Implement a function *manhattan_distance* which gives the distance to the origin counting how many steps horizontal plus vertical it takes to reach that point.

9. Food for thought: constructor vs data

The arguments of the constructor imply nothing about what data members are stored!

Example: create a point in `x,y` Cartesian coordinates, but store `r,theta` polar coordinates:

```
#include <cmath>
class Point {
private: // members
  double r,theta;
public: // methods
  Point( double x,double y ) {
    r = sqrt(x*x+y*y);
    theta = atan2(y/x);
  }
```

Note: no change to outward API.

Exercise 5

Discuss the pros and cons of this design:

```
class Point {
private:
  double x,y,r,theta;
public:
  Point(double xx,double yy) {
    x = xx; y = yy;
    r = // sqrt something
    theta = // something trig
  };
  double angle() { return alpha; };
};
```

10. Data access in methods

You can access data members of other objects of the same type:

```
class Point {
private:
  double x,y;
public:
 void flip() {
    Point flipped;
    flipped.x = y; flipped.y = x;
    // more
  };
};
```

(Normally, data members should not be accessed directly from outside an object)

Exercise 6

Extend the `Point` class of the previous exercise with a method: `distance` that computes the distance between this point and another: if `p,q` are `Point` objects,

```
p.distance(q)
```

computes the distance between them.

Review quiz 1

T/F?

- A class is primarily determined by the data it stores.
  `/poll "Class determined by its data" "T" "F"`
- A class is primarily determined by its methods.
  `/poll "Class determined by its methods" "T" "F"`
- If you change the design of the class data, you need to change the constructor call.
  `/poll "Change data, change constructor proto too" "T" "F"`

11. Methods that alter the object

For instance, you may want to scale a vector by some amount:

Code:

```
// /pointscaleby.cpp
class Point {
    /* ... */
  void scaleby( double a ) {
    x *= a; y *= a; };
    /* ... */
};
    /* ... */
  Point p1(1.,2.);
  cout << "p1 to origin "
       << p1.length() << '\n';
  p1.scaleby(2.);
  cout << "p1 to origin "
       << p1.length() << '\n';
```

Output:

```
p1 to origin 2.23607
p1 to origin 4.47214
```

Data initialization

12. Member default values

Class members can have default values, just like ordinary variables:

```
class Point {
private:
  float x=3., y=.14;
public:
  // et cetera
}
```

Each object will have its members initialized to these values.

13. Data initialization

The naive way:

```
class Point {
private:
  double x,y;
public:
  Point( double in_x,
         double in_y ) {
    x = in_x; y = in_y;
  };
```

The preferred way:

```
// /pointinit.cpp
class Point {
private:
  double x,y;
public:
  Point( double in_x,
         double in_y )
    : x(in_x),y(in_y) {
  }
```

Explanation later. It's technical.

Interaction between objects

14. Methods that create a new object

Code:

```
// /pointscale.cpp
class Point {
    /* ... */
  Point scale( double a ) {
    auto scaledpoint =
        Point( x*a, y*a );
    return scaledpoint;
  };
    /* ... */
  cout << "p1 to origin "
       << p1.dist_to_origin()
       << '\n';
  Point p2 = p1.scale(2.);
  cout << "p2 to origin "
       << p2.dist_to_origin()
       << '\n';
```

Output:

```
p1 to origin 2.23607
p2 to origin 4.47214
```

Note the ‘anonymous `Point` object’ in the `scale` method.

15. Anonymous objects

Create a point by scaling another point:

```
new_point = old_point.scale(2.81);
```

Two ways of handling the `return` statement:

Naive:

```
// /pointscale.cpp
Point Point::scale( double a ) {
  Point scaledpoint =
    Point( x*a, y*a );
  return scaledpoint;
};
```

Creates point, copies it to *new_point*

Better:

```
// /pointscale.cpp
Point Point::scale( double a ) {
  return Point( x*a, y*a );
};
```

Creates point, moves it directly to *new_point*

'move semantics' and 'copy elision':
compiler is pretty good at avoiding copies

Exercise 7

Write a method *halfway* that, given two `Point` objects `p,q`, construct the `Point` halfway, that is, $(p+q)/2$:

```
Point p(1,2.2), q(3.4,5.6);
Point h = p.halfway(q);
```

You can write this function directly, or you could write functions `Add` and `Scale` and combine these.
(Later you will learn about operator overloading.)

How would you print out a *Point* to make sure you compute the halfway point correctly?

16. Constructor/destructor

Constructor: function that gets called when you create an object.

```
MyClass {
public:
  MyClass( /* args */ ) { /* construction */ }
  /* more */
};
```

If you don't define it, you get a default.

Destructor (rarely used):
function that gets called when the object goes away, for instance when you leave a scope.

17. Using the default constructor

No constructor explicitly defined;

You recognize the default constructor in the main by the fact that an object is defined without any parameters.

Code:

```
// /default.cpp
class IamOne {
private:
  int i=1;
public:
  void print() {
    cout << i << '\n';
  };
};
    /* ... */
  IamOne one;
  one.print();
```

Output:

```
1
```

18. Default constructor

Refer to *Point* definition above.
Consider this code that looks like variable declaration, but for objects:

```
Point p1(1.5, 2.3);
Point p2;
p2 = p1.scaleby(3.1);
```

Compiling gives an error (g++; different for intel):

```
pointdefault.cpp: In function 'int main()':
pointdefault.cpp:32:21: error: no matching function for call to
                'Point::Point()'
```

19. Default constructor

The problem is with *p2*:

```
Point p1(1.5, 2.3);
Point p2;
```

- *p1* is created with your explicitly given constructor;
- *p2* uses the default constructor:

  ```
  Point() {};
  ```

- default constructor is there by default, unless you define another constructor.
- you can redefine the default constructor:

  ```
  // /pointdefault.cpp
    Point() {};
    Point( double x,double y )
      : x(x),y(y) {};
  ```

  (but often you can avoid needing it)

Exercise 8

Make a class `LinearFunction` with a constructor:

```
LinearFunction( Point input_p1,Point input_p2 );
```

and a member function

```
float evaluate_at( float x );
```

which you can use as:

```
LinearFunction line(p1,p2);
cout << "Value at 4.0: " << line.evaluate_at(4.0) << endl;
```

20. Classes for abstract objects

Objects can model fairly abstract things:

Code:

```
// /stream.cpp
class Stream {
private:
  int last_result{0};
public:
  int next() {
    return last_result++; };
};

int main() {
  Stream ints;
  cout << "Next: "
       << ints.next() << '\n';
  cout << "Next: "
       << ints.next() << '\n';
  cout << "Next: "
       << ints.next() << '\n';
```

Output:

```
Next: 0
Next: 1
Next: 2
```

21. Preliminary to the following exercise

A prime number generator has:
an API of just one function: `nextprime`

To support this it needs to store:
an integer `last_prime_found`

Programming Project Exercise 9

Write a class *primegenerator* that contains:

- Methods *number_of_primes_found* and *nextprime*;
- Also write a function *isprime* that does not need to be in the class.

Your main program should look as follows:

```
// /6primesbyclass.cpp
  cin >> nprimes;
  primegenerator sequence;
  while (sequence.number_of_primes_found()<nprimes) {
    int number = sequence.nextprime();
    cout << "Number " << number << " is prime" << '\n';
  }
```

Programming Project Exercise 10

The Goldbach conjecture says that every even number, from 4 on, is the sum of two primes $p + q$. Write a program to test this for the even numbers up to a bound that you read in.

This is a great exercise for a top-down approach! First formulate the quantor structure of this statement, then translate that to code:

1. Make an outer loop over the even numbers e.
2. For each e, generate all primes p.
3. From $p + q = e$, it follows that $q = e - p$ is prime: test if that q is prime.

For each even number `e` then print `e,p,q`, for instance:

```
The number 10 is 3+7
```

If multiple possibilities exist, only print the first one you find.

22. A Goldbach corollary

The Goldbach conjecture says that every even number $2n$ (starting at 4), is the sum of two primes $p+q$:

$$2n = p + q.$$

Equivalently, every number n is equidistant from two primes:

$$n = \frac{p+q}{2} \qquad \text{or} \qquad q - n = n - p.$$

In particular this holds for each prime number:

$$\forall_{r\,\mathrm{prime}} \exists_{p,q\,\mathrm{prime}} \colon r = (p+q)/2 \text{ is prime.}$$

Programming Project Exercise 11

Write a program that tests this. You need at least one loop that tests all primes r; for each r you then need to find the primes p, q that are equidistant to it. Do you use two generators for this, or is one enough? Do you need three, for p, q, r?

For each r value, when the program finds the p, q values, print the p, q, r triple and move on to the next r.