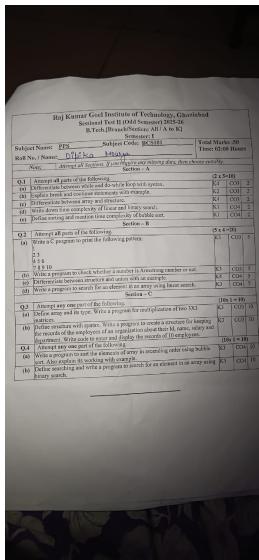


## Session A 13

Monday, 17 November 2025 9:13 AM



## Pointers in C – Simple Notes

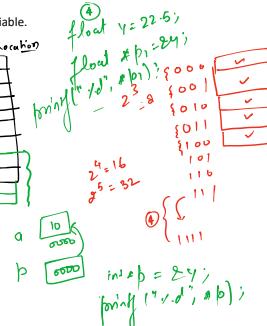
### 1. What is a Pointer?

A pointer is a variable that stores the **memory address** of another variable.

**Example:**

```
int a = 10;
int *p = &a;
```

- a → stores value 10
- p → stores address of a



### 2. Why Use Pointers?

Pointers help in:

- Accessing memory directly
- Passing large data structures to functions efficiently
- Dynamic memory allocation
- Creating data structures (linked list, trees, graphs)

### 3. Pointer Declaration

```
int *p;
float *q;
char *c;
```

### 4. Address-of Operator (&)

Gives the address of a variable.

```
int x = 5;
printf("%p", &x);
```

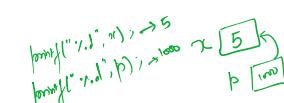
### 5. Dereferencing Operator (\*)

Gives the value stored in the address the pointer is pointing to.

```
int x = 5;
int *p = &x;
printf("%d", *p); // prints 5
```

### 6. Pointer Example

```
#include <stdio.h>
int main() {
    int a = 10;
    int *p = &a;
    printf("Value of a = %d\n", a);
    printf("Address of a = %p\n", &a);
    printf("Pointer p stores = %p\n", p);
    printf("Value at address p = %d\n", *p);
    return 0;
}
```

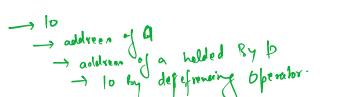


### 7. Pointer to Pointer

A pointer can store the address of another pointer.

```
int x = 20;
int *p = &x;
int **pp = &p;
```

- pp stores address of p
- \*pp gives address of x
- \*\*pp gives value of x

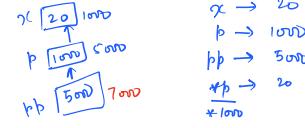


### 8. Pointer Arithmetic

Valid operations:

- p → next memory block
- p → previous memory block
- p → n

Example:

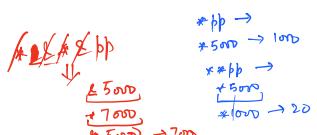


```
int arr[5] = {1,2,3,4,5};
int *p = arr;
p++; // moves to next integer location
```

## 9. Pointers and Arrays

Array name is itself a pointer.

```
int arr[3] = {10,20,30};
int *p = arr;
printf("%d", *(p+1)); // prints 20
```



## 10. Pointers and Functions

Passing variable by reference using pointers.

```
void change(int *x) {
    *x = 100;
}
int main() {
    int a = 10;
    change(&a);
    printf("%d", a); // prints 100
}
```

## 11. Dangling Pointer

Pointer that points to unavailable/freed memory.

```
int *p = malloc(sizeof(int));
free(p);
printf("%d", *p); // dangerous
```

## 12. NULL Pointer

Pointer that points to nothing.

```
int *p = NULL;
Useful for checking:
```

## 13. Void Pointer

A pointer that can store address of any data type.

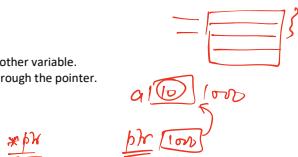
```
void *ptr;
int a = 10;
ptr = &a;
```

## 2 Constant Pointer (pointer is constant, data is not)

Syntax:

```
int * const p = &a;
```

- Meaning:
  - The pointer cannot move to another variable.
  - But the data can be changed through the pointer.



An Array  $\Rightarrow$  Name is a Constant pointer;

```
int a[]; X
int a[5];
int a[0];
```

```
int a[] = { 2, 3, 4, 5 };
```

```
int a[] = { 4, 7, 2, 6, 7 };
```

```
int a[] = { 4, 7, 2, 6, 8 };
a[0];
```

```
scanf("%d", &a[0]);
```

```
for(i=0; i<5; i++)
```

int b=12;

i      int x = 10;

Constant Pointer      int \* p = &x;

int \* const p = &x;

pointers to constant      int const \*p = &x;

const int \*p = &x;

Through pointer you can't change the value which address is held by pointer variable.

$x = 40;$       \*p = 40;      \*p allowed incase of pointer to constant.

```
a++;
```

```
a+=1;
```

```
for(i=0; i<5; i++)
```

```

printf(" %d ", *(a+1));
printf(" %d ", *(a+2));
printf(" %d ", *(a+1));

```

## Function Pointer in C

A function pointer is a pointer that stores the address of a function.  
Just like pointers to variables store memory addresses of variables, a function pointer stores the address of code (a function).

### Why use Function Pointers?

- To call functions dynamically
- To implement callback functions
- To build menus / event-driven programs
- To pass functions as arguments

## Syntax

`return_type (*pointer_name)(parameter_list);`  
Example: pointer to a function returning int and taking two int arguments:

`int (*ptr)(int, int);`

### Example 1: Basic Function Pointer

```

#include <stdio.h>
int add(int a, int b) {
    return a + b;
}
int main() {
    int (*ptr)(int, int); // declare function pointer
    ptr = add; // assign function address
    int result = ptr(5, 7); // calling function using pointer
    printf("Result = %d", result);
    return 0;
}
Output:
Result = 12

```

### Example 2: Passing Function Pointer to a Function

```

#include <stdio.h>
void operation(int a, int b, int (*fun)(int, int)) {
    printf("Result = %d\n", fun(a, b));
}
int multiply(int x, int y) {
    return x * y;
}
int main() {
    operation(5, 6, multiply); // pass function as argument
    return 0;
}

```

### Example 3: Array of Function Pointers (Menu System)

```

#include <stdio.h>
int add(int a, int b) { return a + b; }
int sub(int a, int b) { return a - b; }
int mul(int a, int b) { return a * b; }
int main() {
    int (*menu[3])(int, int) = { add, sub, mul };
    int choice = 2;
    printf("Result = %d", menu[choice](10, 4));
    return 0;
}
If choice is 2 → multiplication → prints 40.

```

### Example 4: Function Pointer with typedef (Easy & Clean)

```

typedef int (*funptr)(int, int);
int add(int a, int b) { return a + b; }
int main() {
    funptr ptr = add;
    printf("%d", ptr(3, 4));
    return 0;
}

```

## Summary Table

Concept	Meaning
Function Pointer	Stores address of function
Syntax	<code>return_type (*ptr)(parameters)</code>
Calling	<code>ptr(a, b)</code>
Uses	callbacks, menus, dynamic calling