Introduction to Mutexes

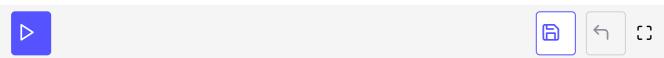
This lesson gives an introduction to mutexes, which are used in C++ for concurrency.

we'll cover the following △
• Further information

Mutex stands for **mut**ual **ex**clusion. It ensures that only one thread can access a critical section at any one time. By using a mutex, the mess of the workflow turns into harmony.

```
// coutSynchronised.cpp
#include <chrono>
#include <iostream>
#include <mutex>
#include <thread>
std::mutex coutMutex;
class Worker{
public:
  Worker(std::string n):name(n){};
    void operator() (){
      for (int i = 1; i <= 3; ++i){
        // begin work
        std::this_thread::sleep_for(std::chrono::milliseconds(200));
        // end work
        coutMutex.lock();
        std::cout << name << ": " << "Work " << i << " done !!!" << std::endl;</pre>
        coutMutex.unlock();
private:
  std::string name;
};
int main(){
  std::cout << std::endl;</pre>
  std::cout << "Boss: Let's start working." << "\n\n";</pre>
```

```
std::thread herb= std::thread(Worker("Herb"));
std::thread andrei= std::thread(Worker("
                                            Andrei"));
std::thread scott= std::thread(Worker("
                                             Scott"));
std::thread bjarne= std::thread(Worker("
                                                Bjarne"));
std::thread bart= std::thread(Worker("
                                                Bart"));
std::thread jenne= std::thread(Worker("
                                                   Jenne"));
herb.join();
andrei.join();
scott.join();
bjarne.join();
bart.join();
jenne.join();
std::cout << "\n" << "Boss: Let's go home." << std::endl;</pre>
std::cout << std::endl;</pre>
```



Essentially, when the lock is set on a mutex, no other thread can access the locked region of code. In other words, lines between <code>lock()</code> and <code>unlock()</code> can only be accessed by one thread at a time. <code>std::cout</code> is protected by the <code>coutMutex</code> in line 8. A simple <code>lock()</code> in line 19 and the corresponding <code>unlock()</code> call in line 21 ensure that the workers won't scream all at once.



The C++11 standard guarantees that we won't protect std::cout. Each
character will be written atomically. It is possible that more output
statements like those in the example will interleave. This is only a visual
issue; the program is well-defined. This remark is valid for all global
stream objects. Insertion to and extraction from global stream objects
(std::cout, std::cin, std::cerr, and std::clog) is thread-safe.

Let's put it more formally: writing to std::cout is not a data race, but it's
a race condition which means that the result depends on the interleaving
of threads.

Further information

critical section

• race condition

Different locking methods will be discussed in the next lesson.