Functions

CSC100 / Introduction to programming in C/C++

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README

- This script introduces C functions.
- Practice workbooks and input files in GDrive.
- PDF version of this file and of the completed practice workbooks is available in GitHub.
- This section, including some sample code, is based on chapter 9 in King (2008).

Overview

- C functions do not always resemble math functions `f(x)`
  - C functions don't need to have arguments (e.g. `main(void)`)
  - C functions need not compute a value (e.g. `void hello()`)
- A function is a small program with its own declarations and statements
- Functions allow us to
  - **reuse** functions in other programs
  - **recall** functions instead of duplicating code
  - **modularize**, and easier understand and modify programs

- Once upon a time, programs didn't use to have functions!

```
230 IF EOF(1) THEN 210
240 IF LOC(1)>128 THEN PAUSE=TRUE:PRINT #1,XOFF$;
250 A$=INPUT$(LOC(1),#1)
260 PRINT #3,A$;:IF LOC(1)>0 THEN 240
270 IF PAUSE THEN PAUSE=FALSE:PRINT #1,XON$;
280 GOTO 210
300 LOCATE 1,1:PRINT STRING$(30,32):LOCATE 1,1
310 LINE INPUT "FILE?";DSKFIL$
400 LOCATE 1,1:PRINT STRING$(30,32):LOCATE 1,1
410 LINE INPUT"(T)ransmit or (R)eceive?";TXRX$
420 IF TXRX$="T" THEN OPEN DSKFIL$ FOR INPUT AS #2:GOTO 1000
430 OPEN DSKFIL$ FOR OUTPUT AS #2
440 PRINT #1,CHR$(13);
500 IF EOF(1) THEN GOSUB 600
510 IF LOC(1)>128 THEN PAUSE=TRUE:PRINT #1,XOFF$;
520 A$=INPUT$(LOC(1),#1)
530 PRINT #2,A$;:IF LOC(1)>0 THEN 510
540 IF PAUSE THEN PAUSE=FALSE:PRINT #1,XON$;
```

Figure 1: BASIC program snippet (Source: Collingbourne, 2022).

Recap: `hello_world` function: mostly `void`

```
// reusable function definition
void hello_world(void)
{
  printf("Hello world\n");
}
// reusable function call
hello_world();
hello_world();
hello_world();
```

```
Hello world
Hello world
Hello world
```

- doubly `void`: no return value, no argument
- function code can be reused elsewhere
- function can be recalled at will

Functions are everywhere in C!

How many functions do you see in this code block?

```
#include <math.h>
#include <stdio.h>
```

```
int main(void)
{
  const double E=2.7182818;

  printf("%g\n", log(E));
  return 0;
}
```

```
1
```

Answer:

FUNCTION	DEFINITION
`main()`	main function
`printf()`	printing function
`log()`	logarithmic function

Example program: computing averages

Function definition

- We want to compute the average of two `double` values, we can define a function to do it:

```
double average ( double a, double b)
{
  return (a + b) / 2;
}
```

- Here, `double` is *return type* and *argument data type*.
- `a` and `b` are *function parameters* - their values are supplied when the function is called
- The *function body* is the executable part, enclosed in `{...}`
- `[ ]`

  What's being executed in the body of the function `average`?

  Answer:

  1. computing the average of two `double` numbers
  2. returning the result as a `double` number

Function call

- To call a function, write the *function name* followed by a list of *function arguments*.
- The arguments are assigned to the function parameters.
- The argument can be any *expression*.

- Functions can be called by other functions.

```
// function definition
double average (double a,double b){return (a+b)/2;}

// function call
average(5.1, 8.9);

// function call with expression
double x=5.1, y=8.9;
average(x/2, y/2);

// function call inside function
printf("Average: %g\n", average(x,y));
```

```
Average: 7
```

- What's happening in the last line exactly?
  1. The `average` function is called with `x` and `y` as arguments.
  2. `average` executes its `return` statement, returning `(a+b)/2`.
  3. `printf` prints the value that `average` returns.
  4. The `return` value of `average` becomes an argument of `printf`.
- The value of `average` is not saved anywhere. It is printed and then discarded.
- If we had needed to keep the value, we'd have to capture it in a variable.

Using a function in a program

- The following program reads three numbers and computes their averages, one pair at a time.

  Sample input:

```
echo 3.5 9.6 10.2 > input
```

  Sample output:

```
: Enter three numbers: 3.5 9.6 10.2
: Average of 3.5 and 9.6: 6.55
: Average of 9.6 and 10.2: 9.9
: Average of 3.5 and 10.2: 6.85
```

  Code:

```
// function definition
double average (double a,double b){return (a+b)/2;}

int main (void)
{
  double x, y, z;
  printf("Enter three numbers: \n");
  scanf("%lf %lf %lf", &x, &y, &z);  // input

  // print averages
  printf("Average of %g and %g: %g\n", x, y, average(x,y));
  printf("Average of %g and %g: %g\n", y, z, average(y,z));
  printf("Average of %g and %g: %g\n", x, z, average(x,z));
```

```
  return 0;
}
```

```
Enter three numbers:
Average of 3.5 and 9.6: 6.55
Average of 9.6 and 10.2: 9.9
Average of 3.5 and 10.2: 6.85
```

- Note: the definition of `average` needs to be put before `main` - otherwise the function needs to be declared.

Let's practice!

- [ ] Head over to GDrive for the first workbook `array1.org`.

References

- Kernighan/Ritchie (1978). The C Programming Language (1st). Prentice Hall.
- King (2008). C Programming - A modern approach (2e). W A Norton.
- Orgmode.org (n.d.). 16 Working with Source Code [website]. URL: orgmode.org

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