Data Structure

Introduction

Data Structure can be defined as the group of data elements which provides an efficient way of storing and organising data in the computer so that it can be used efficiently. Some examples of Data Structures are arrays, Linked List, Stack, Queue, etc. Data Structures are widely used in almost every aspect of Computer Science i.e. Operating System, Compiler Design, Artifical intelligence, Graphics and many more.

Data Structures are the main part of many computer science algorithms as they enable the programmers to handle the data in an efficient way.

Basic Terminology

Data structures are the building blocks of any program or the software. Choosing the appropriate data structure for a program is the most difficult task for a programmer. Following terminology is used as far as data structures are concerned

Data: Data can be defined as an elementary value or the collection of values, for example, student's name and its id are the data about the student.

Group Items: Data items which have subordinate data items are called Group item, for example, name of a student can have first name and the last name.

Record: Record can be defined as the collection of various data items, for example, if we talk about the student entity, then its name, address, course and marks can be grouped together to form the record for the student.

File: A File is a collection of various records of one type of entity, for example, if there are 60 employees in the class, then there

will be 20 records in the related file where each record contains the data about each employee.

Attribute and Entity: An entity represents the class of certain objects. it contains various attributes. Each attribute represents the particular property of that entity.

Field: Field is a single elementary unit of information representing the attribute of an entity.

Data Structure Classification
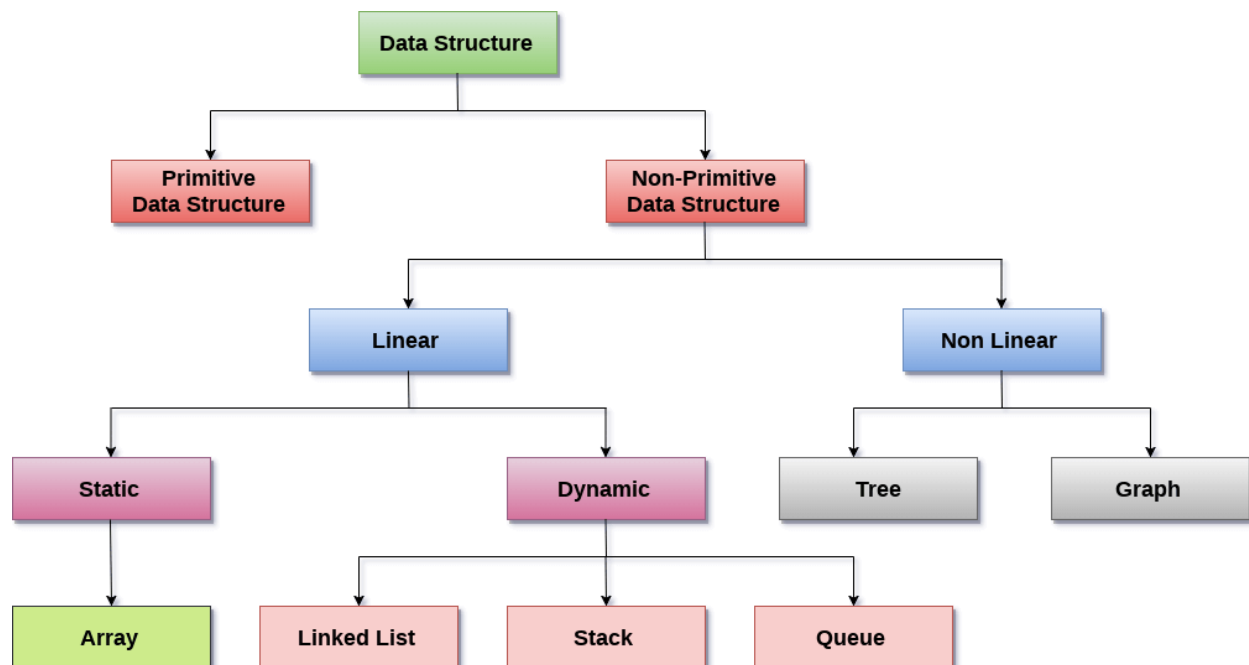
Operations on data structure

1) **Traversing:** Every data structure contains the set of data elements. Traversing the data structure means visiting each element of the data structure in order to perform some specific operation like searching or sorting.

2) **Insertion:** Insertion can be defined as the process of adding the elements to the data structure at any location.

If the size of data structure is **n** then we can only insert **n-1** data elements into it.

3) **Deletion:**The process of removing an element from the data structure is called Deletion. We can delete an element from the data structure at any random location.

4) **Searching:** The process of finding the location of an element within the data structure is called Searching. There are two algorithms to perform searching, Linear Search and Binary Search.

5) **Sorting:** The process of arranging the data structure in a specific order is known as Sorting. There are many algorithms that can be used to perform sorting, for example, insertion sort, selection sort, bubble sort, etc.

6) **Merging:** When two lists List A and List B of size M and N respectively, of similar type of elements, clubbed or joined to produce the third list, List C of size (M+N), then this process is called merging