Algorithms and Analysis

Lesson 5: *Use Arrays*

Variable length arrays, implementing stacks

Outline

1. **Why Arrays?**
2. Variable Length Arrays
3. Programming Language
4. Implementing Stacks

Use Arrays

- An array is a contiguous chunk of memory
- In C we can create arrays using
  ```
  int *array = new int[20]
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- The array has an access time of $\Theta(1)$
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- Arrays provide a very efficient use of memory
- 95% of the time using arrays is going to give you the best performance, although never use raw arrays!

Disadvantages of Arrays

- Arrays have a fixed length
- Very often we don't know how big an array we want
  - ⋆ E.g. reading words from a file
- Adding or deleting elements from the middle of an array is costly
- Sorted arrays are expensive to maintain
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Variable Length Arrays

- We want a variable length array
- Initially a variable length array would have length zero
- We should be able to
  - Add an element to an array
  - Access any element in the array
  - Change an element
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  - `void push_back(int value)`
  - random access `array[i]`
  - `int size()`
- It would be useful if it resized
- It would be great to have some algorithms (e.g. sort) that can be run on a list

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- We need to distinguish between
  - ⋆ the number of elements in the list `size()`
  - ⋆ the number of elements in the array `capacity()`
- If the number of elements grows larger than the capacity then we need to increase the capacity

Initial Capacity

- We could prevent resizing arrays by using a huge initial capacity
- However, how big is big enough?
- What happens when we have an array of arrays?
- Memory like time is resource we should care about
- In an analogy with **time complexity** we also care about **space complexity** (i.e. how much memory we need)
- If we want to store n elements it is reasonable to expect that we use $c\,n$ bits of memory where we want to keep c small

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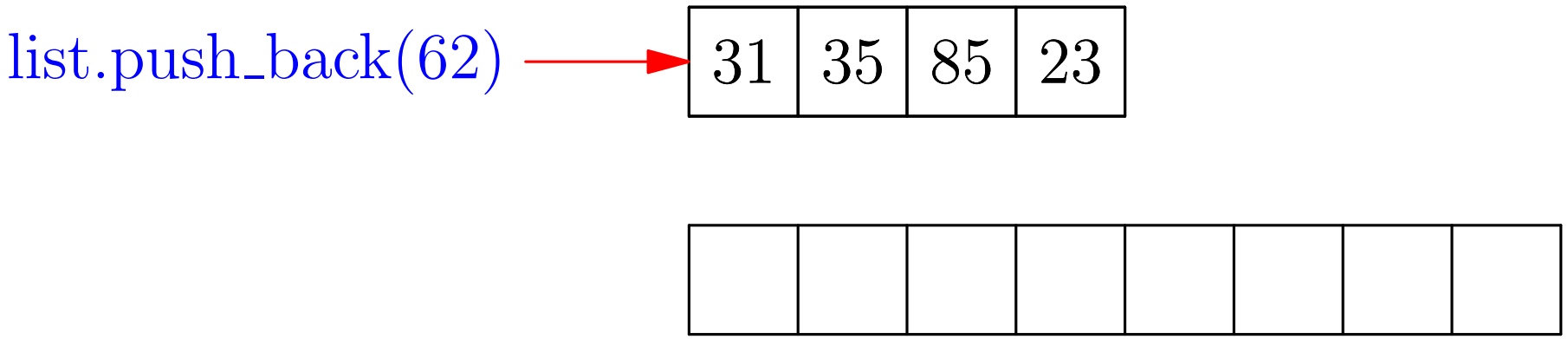

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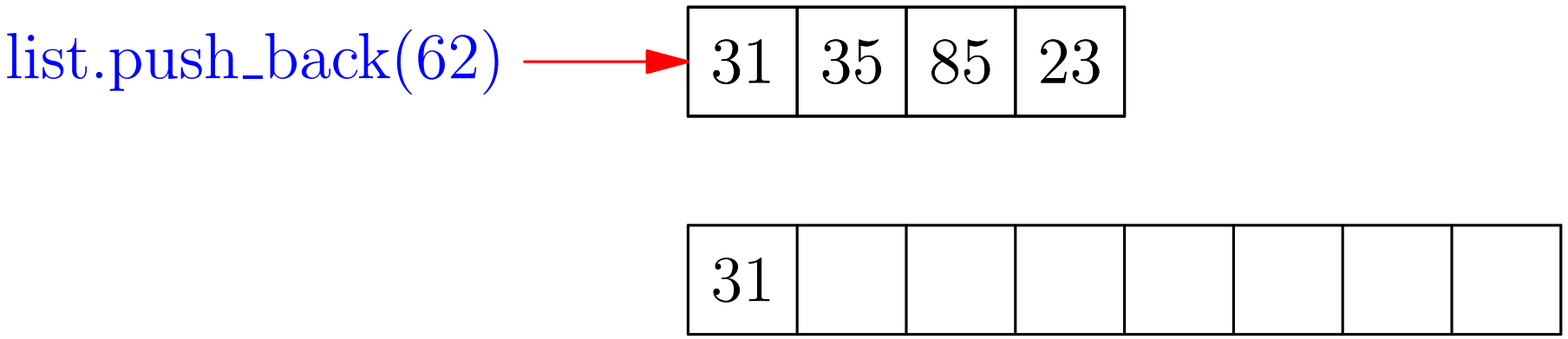

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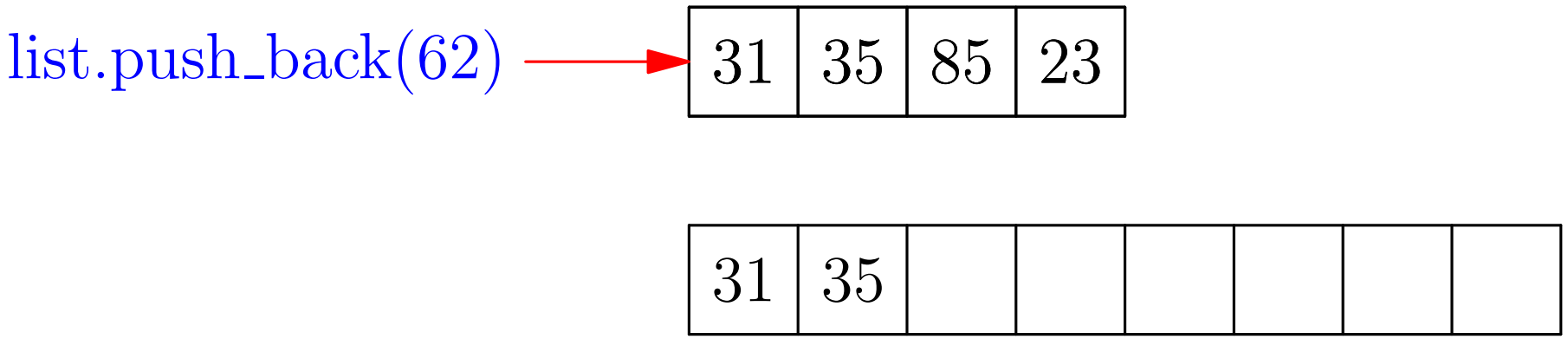

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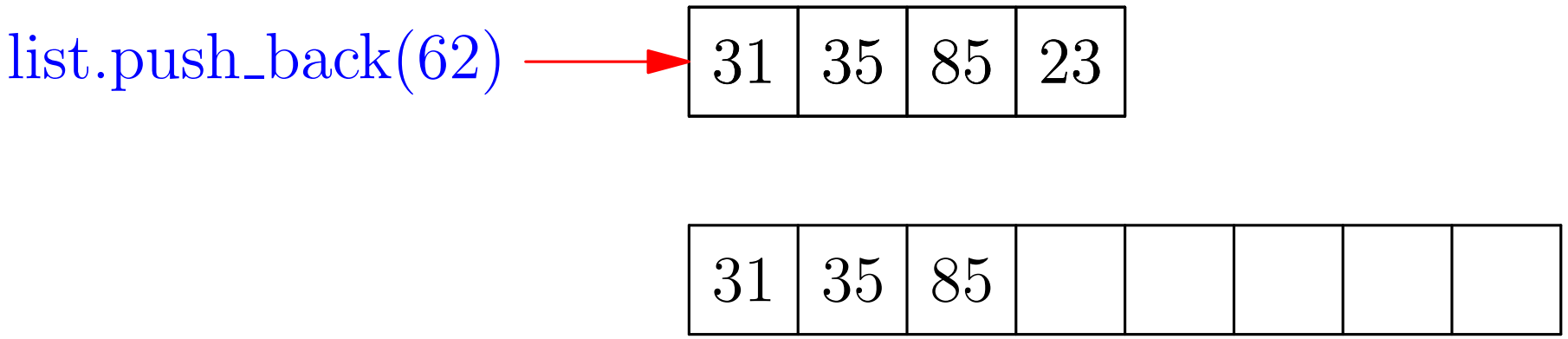

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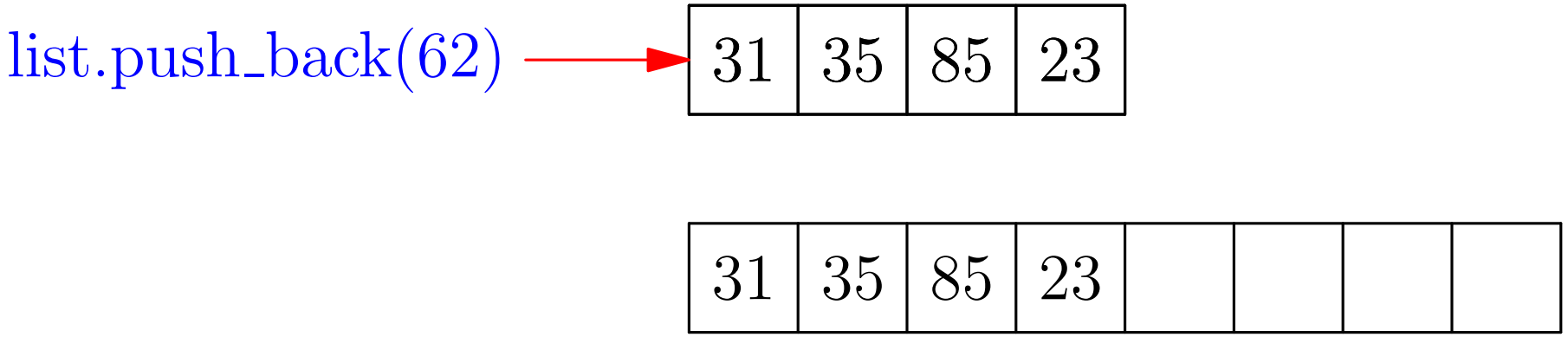

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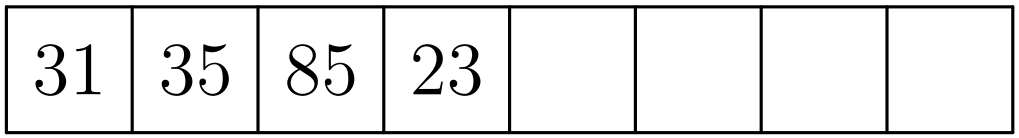
list.push_back(62) ⟶



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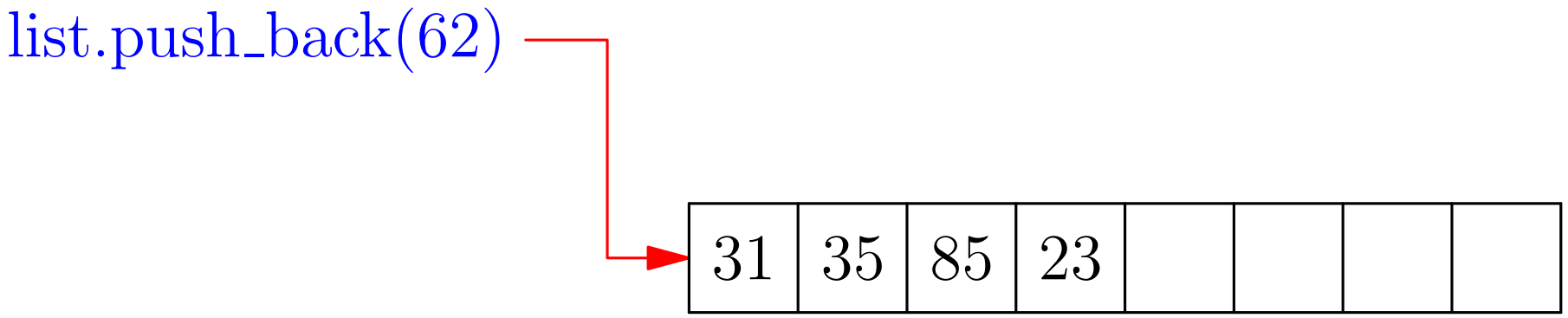

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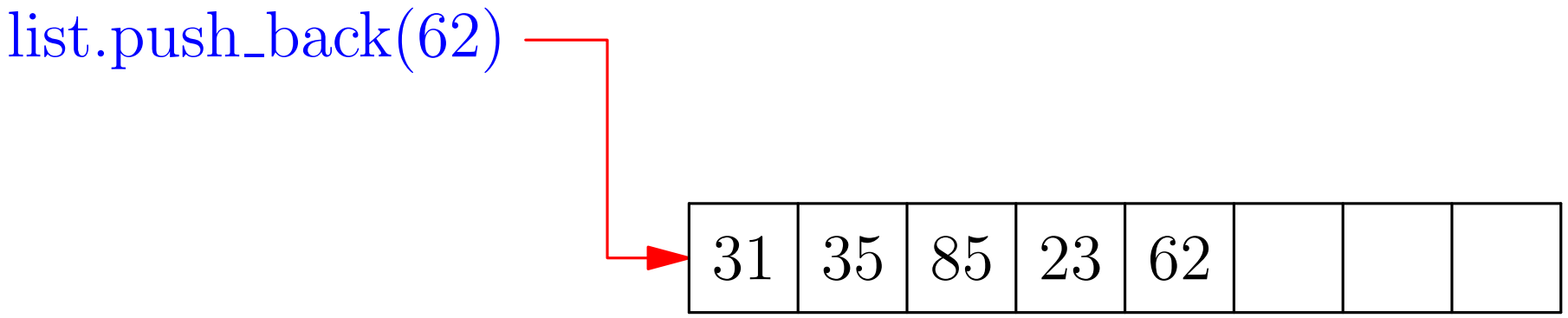

Amortised Time Analysis

- How efficient is resizing?
- Most `push_back(elem)` operations are $\Theta(1)$
- When we are at full capacity we have to copy all elements
- Adding to a full array is slow but it is **amortised** by other quick adds

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  - ⋆ adds: 100
  - ⋆ copies: 10+20+40+80=150
  - ⋆ `new int[]`: 4
- 250 adds and copies operations + 4 **`new`** operations

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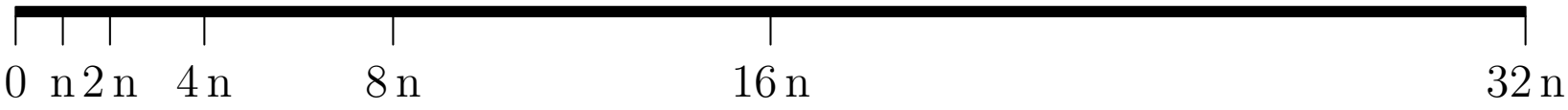
- We must perform m copies where



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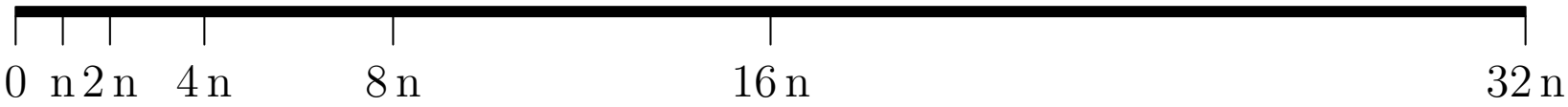

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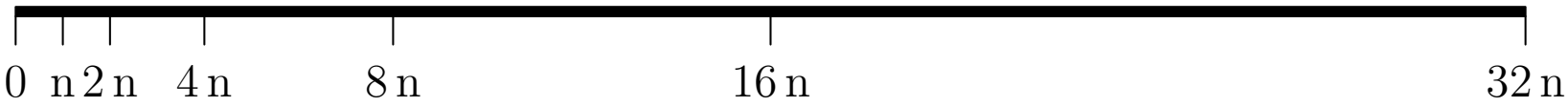

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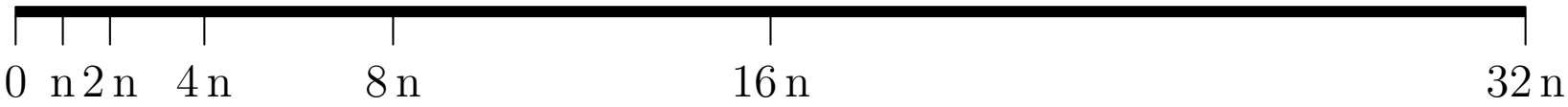

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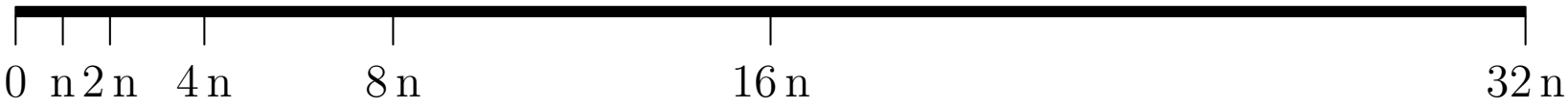

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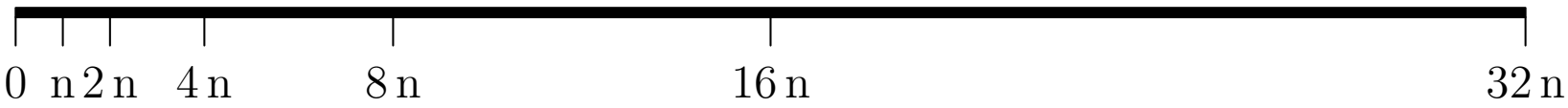

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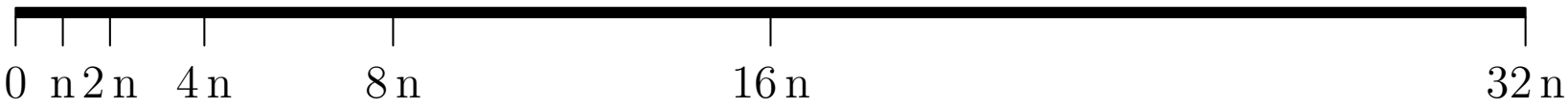

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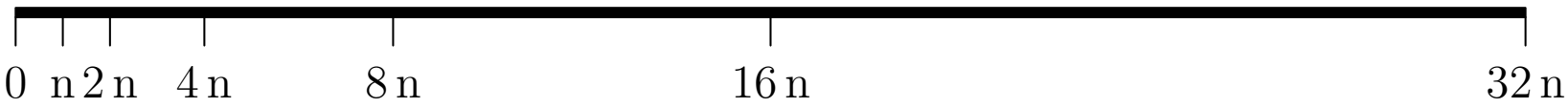

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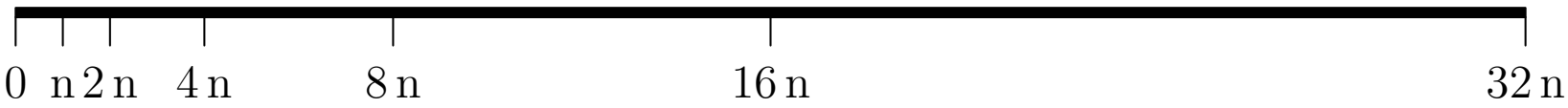

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Insertion and Deletion

- `vector<T>` is very useful and very fast for lots of things
- But if you try to insert or delete an element anywhere other than the end then you have to shove all the subsequent elements one space forward
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- Linked lists allow you to splice in a sublist into a list in constant time although linked lists have a lot of drawbacks

Outline

1. Why Arrays?
2. Variable Length Arrays
3. **Programming Language**
4. Implementing Stacks

Computer Languages

- Different computer languages are designed for different roles and have different advantages and disadvantages
- **C++** was designed to be fast (as fast as C)
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Problems with C++

- Amongst a number of issues that make C++ dangerous are
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delete[] storage;
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- In C++ this is your responsibility
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template <typename T>
class container {
  private:
    T* data;

  public:
    container(unsigned n) {data = new T[n];}

};


  main() {

    for (int i=0; i<1000; ++i) {
      container<int> my_container(10000);
      // do something
    }

  }
```

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Writing over Memory

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int *array = new int[4];
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double *darray = new double[4];
array[4] = 4;
```

- However `array[4]` has not been assigned (unlike `array[0]`, `array[1]`, `array[2]` and `array[3]`)

- The memory on the heap corresponding to the address of `array[4]` might have been assigned to `a[0]` in which case you may inadvertently have set `a[0]` to 4 leading to the program not doing what you want

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Guarding Against Mistakes

- These are really hard problems to debug because where the program goes wrong or crashes can be very far from the assignment that caused the error
- Java takes the approach that it always tests whether you are writing in valid memory
- By default C++ doesn't even for data structures—making this check slows down random access
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Follow Programming Idioms

- Using common data structures and following common idioms will prevent most errors

```
int n = 5;
vector<int> array(n);

for(int i=0; i<array.size(); ++i) {
  array[i] = i;
}

for(auto pt=array.begin(); pt != array.end(); ++pt){
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3. Programming Language
4. **Implementing Stacks**

Stacks

- Lets look at implementing a stack
- Remember a stack has methods
  - `push(Object )`
  - `pop()`
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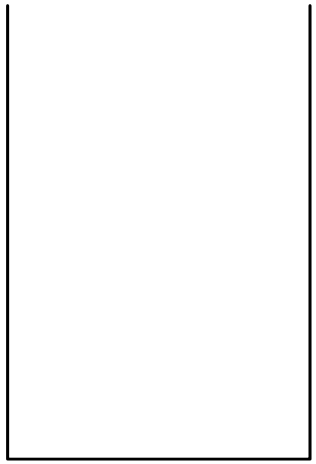

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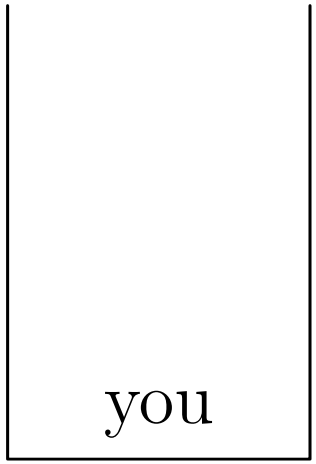

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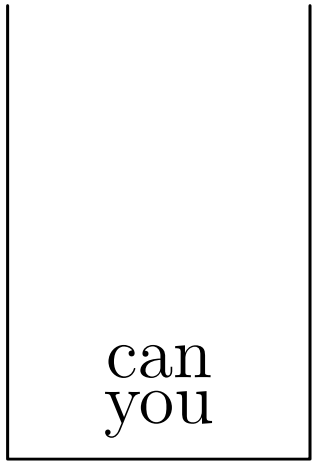

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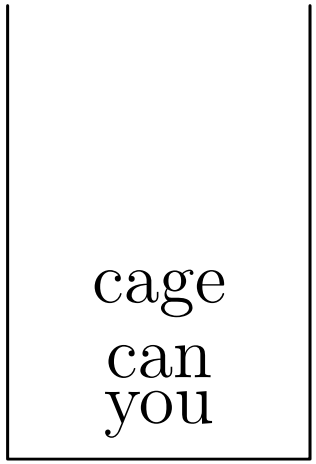

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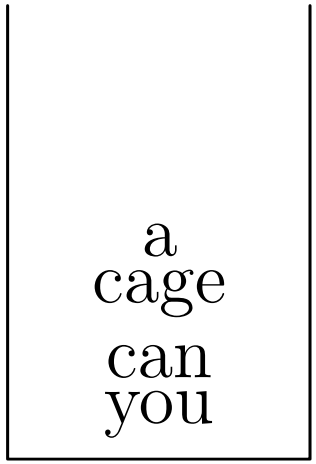

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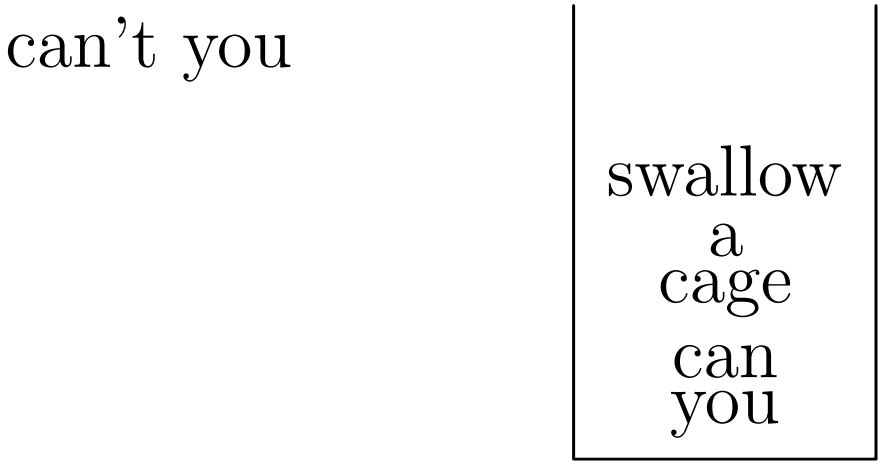

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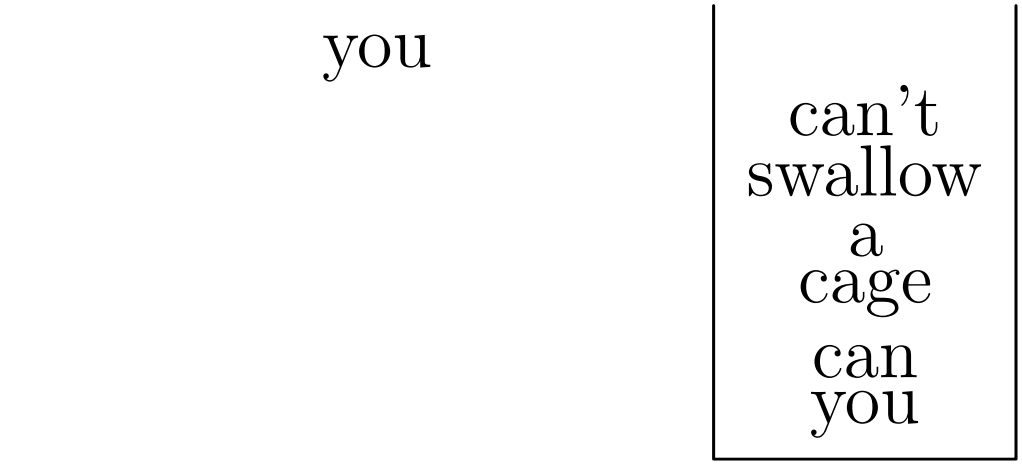

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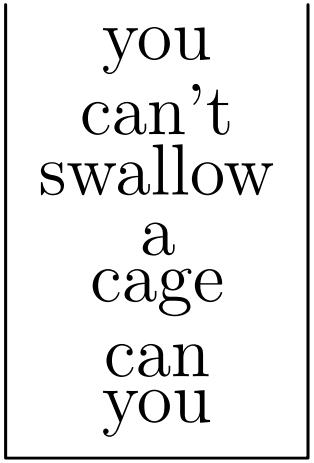

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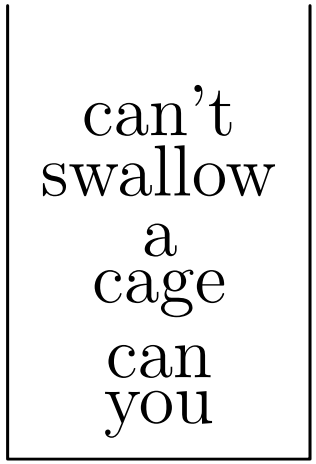

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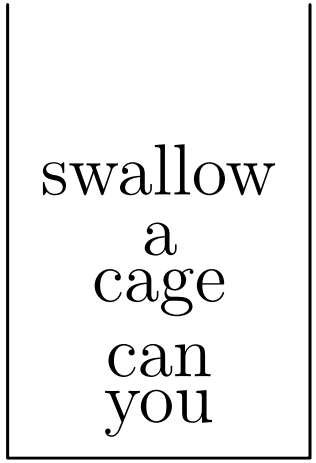

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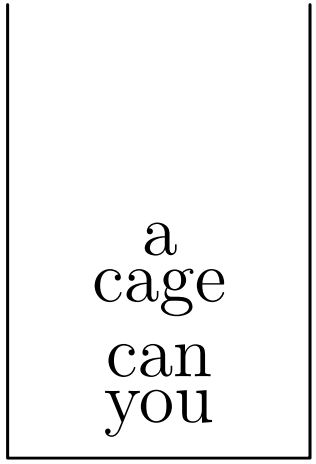

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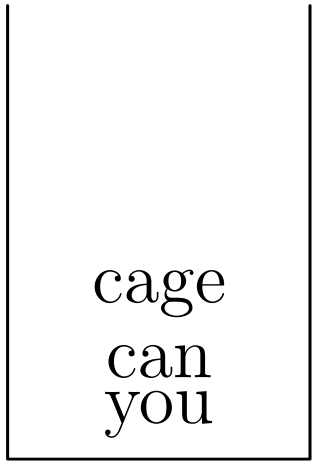

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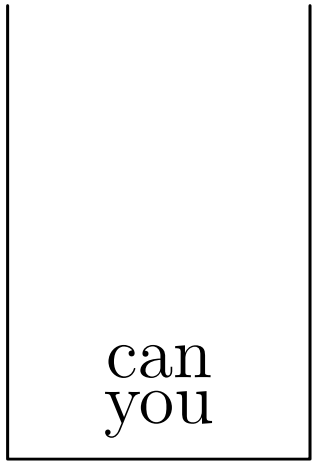

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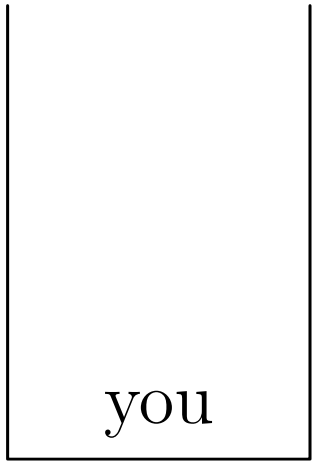

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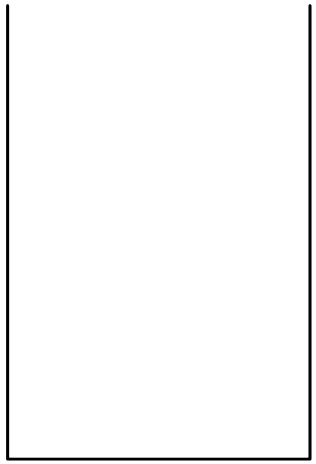

Reversing Strings in File

```
#include <stack>
#include <iostream>
#include <fstream>
using namespace std;

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
  ifstream in(argv[1]);

  stack<string> stack;

  string word;
  while (in >> word)
    stack.push(word);

  while(!stack.empty()) {
      cout << stack.top() << ' ';
      stack.pop();
  }
}
```

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- Resizing an array is not that costly
- insertion and deletion are expensive, $O(n)$
- Arrays are often the simplest way to implement many other data structures, e.g. stacks
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- Stop using raw arrays