



Generic data structures in C

September 30, 2010 (<http://andreinc.net/2010/09/30/generic-data-structures-in-c/>)  Andrei Ciobanu
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Let me know .

In order to prove that generic programming (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generic_programming) (the style of computer programming in which algorithms are written in terms of *to-be-specified-later* types that are then *instantiated* when needed for specific types or parameters) can be achieved in **C**, let's write the implementation of a generic **Stack**

([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stack_\(data_structure\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stack_(data_structure))) data structure

([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stack_\(data_structure\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stack_(data_structure))) . We will follow two possible approaches:

- *Stacking* with the `#preprocessor`;
- Using the flexibility of the void pointer (`void*`);

You can always try both of the approaches and see which one is more suitable for your particular case. Also note th

s approach you will need to be familiar with **C macros**

concepts: *function-like macros*; *macro args*;

([macros.html](#)). If you already know your stuff, you can skip the

with your memory / find errors and correct me :P).

counts it,

```
1 #include <stdio.h>
2 #define HELLO "Hello World Macro!"
3 int main(){
4     printf(HELLO);
5     return 0;
6 }
```

In the above example the label is *HELLO* and the as

```
        ck_##type##_s *next;  
- stack_##type ;void stack_##type##_push(stack_##type **stack, type data);  
type stack_##type##_pop(stack_##type **stack);
```

```
1  /* Expansion if int is supplied as the macro argument : STACK_DECLARE(int) */  
2  typedef struct stack_int_s {  
3      int data;  
4      struct stack_int_s *next;  
5  } stack_int;  
6  void stack_int_push(stack_int **stack, int data);  
7  int stack_int_pop(stack_int **stack);/* Expansion if double is supplied as the macro ar  
8  typedef struct stack_double_s {  
9      double data;  
10     struct stack_double_s *next;  
11 }  
12  
13
```

```
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}  
sta
```

on:

g.generic functions into macros

```

1 #define STACK_TYPE(type)
2 stack_##type#define STACK_DATA(stack)
3 (stack)->data
4
5 #define STACK_PUSH(type, stack, data)
6 stack_##type##_push(stack, data)
7
8 #define STACK_POP(type, stack)
9 stack_##type##_pop(stack)

```

Step 4 - Putting all together

Now let's build an example *against* the newly built generic data structure. We will use two different stacks: one that holds doubles, and another that holds only integers. Then we will push / pop the numbers from [1..100] :

```

1 #include <stdio.h>
2 #include <stdlib.h>#define STACK_DECLARE(type)
3 typedef struct stack_##type##_s {
4     type data;
5     struct stack_##type##_s *next;
6 } stack_##type ;
7
8 void stack_##type##_push(stack_##type **stack, type data);
9
10 type stack_##type##_pop(stack_##type **stack);
11
12 #define STACK_DEFINE(type)
13 void stack_##type##_push(stack_##type **stack, type data) {
14     stack_##type * new_node = malloc(sizeof(*new_node));
15     if (NULL == new_node) {
16         fputs("Couldn't allocate memory\n", stderr);
17         abort();
18     }
19     new_node->data = data;
20     new_node->next = *stack;
21     *stack = new_node;
22 }
23
24 type stack_##type##_pop(stack_##type **stack) {
25     if (NULL == stack || NULL == *stack) {
26         fputs("Stack underflow\n", stderr);
27         abort();
28     }
29     stack_##type *top = *stack;
30     type value = top->data;

```

```

48 /* If you want to work with a stack that holds integers you should
49 * use those macros. They will expand and the associated functions will be
50 * generated .
51 */
52 STACK_DECLARE(int)
53 STACK_DEFINE(int)
54 STACK_DECLARE(double)
55 STACK_DEFINE(double)
56
57 int main(int argc, char** argv) {
58     int i;
59
60     /* New stack . Always assign NULL */
61     STACK_TYPE(int)
62
63
64     for (i = 100; i > 0; --i) {
65         printf("PUSH: %dn", i);
66         STACK_PUSH(int, &&st, i);
67         STACK_PUSH(double, &&st2, i);
68     }
69
70     while (i-- > 0) {
71         printf("POP: %d %2.2fn", STACK_POP(int, &&st),
72             STACK_POP(double, &&st2));
73     }
74     return (0);
75 }

```

```

1 typedef struct stack_s {
2     void *data; /* Can hold any type of pointer */
3     struct stack_s *next; /* The stack is built as a linked list */
4 } stack;

```

```
        printf("%d ", *tmp);  
        free(tmp);  
    }  
  
    return (0);  
}
```

```

1  #include <stdio.h>
2  #include <stdlib.h>typedef struct stack_s {
3  void *data; /* Can hold any type of pointer */
4  struct stack_s *next; /* The stack is built as a linked list */
5  } stack;
6
7  void stack_push(stack **head, void *data);
8  void *stack_pop(stack **head);
9
10 void stack_push(stack **head, void *data) {
11 stack *new_node = malloc(sizeof (*new_node));
12 if (NULL == new_node) {
13 fputs("Couldn't allocate memoryn", stderr);
14 abort();
15 }
16 new_node->data = data;
17 new_node->next = *head;
18 *head = new_node;
19 }
20
21 void *stack_pop(stack **head) {
22 stack *top;
23 void *value;
24 if (NULL == head || NULL == *head) {
25 fputs("Stack underflow.n", stderr);
26 abort();
27 }
28 top = *head;
29 value = top->data;
30 *head = top->next;
31 free(top);
32 return value;
33 }
34
35 int main() {
36 stack *s = NULL;
37 int i, *tmp;
38
39 /* Add values from [1..100] into the stack */
40 printf("Pushing: n");
41 for (i = 0; i < 100; ++i) {
42 tmp = _malloc(sizeof (*tmp))
43
44
45
46
47
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```



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