

C: an introduction

10

1

Types of IO

- The C language provides no direct facilities for input and output. This
 functionality is provided by the standard library.
 In particular: <stdio.h>.
- Various ways of input and output.
 - input from the keyboard and output to the screen.
 - file IO.

Files are a general concept. They include keyboard, screen, and other peripheral devices, as well as conventional files.

- · Various formats of IO:
 - · Formatted.
 - · Character by character.
 - Line by line.
 - Binary.

Command summary

Function	Purpose	Use Case	Safety/Notes
printf	Formatted output to stdout	Displaying formatted data	Safe
scanf	Formatted input from stdin	Reading formatted data	Use width specifiers for safety
fprintf	Formatted output to stream	Displaying formatted data	Safe
fscanf	Formatted input from stream	Reading formatted data	Use width specifiers for safety
fgets	Reading strings	Safe string input	Safe, specify buffer size
fputs	Writing strings	Outputting strings	Safe
gets	Reading strings (deprecated)	Simple string input (unsafe)	Unsafe, use fgets instead
puts	Writing strings	Simple string output	Safe
fgetc	Reading single characters	Character-by-character input	Safe
fputc	Writing single characters	Character-by-character output	Safe
fread	Reading blocks of data	Binary file input	Safe, specify size and count
fwrite	Writing blocks of data	Binary file output	Safe, specify size and count

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3

File IO

- Use the cycle:
- Opening a File: Use fopen with appropriate mode ("r", "w", "a", "rb", "wb", etc.).
- Writing to a File: Use fprintf, fputs, or fwrite.
- \bullet Reading from a File: Use ${\tt fscanf}$, ${\tt fgets}, {\tt or} {\tt fread}.$
- Closing a File: Use fclose to close the file.

File IO

- The C language is closely tied to the UNIX operating system. They were initially developed in parallel and UNIX was implemented in C.
- Much of the C standard library is modelled on UNIX facilities, in particular the UNIX IO model, which treats everything as files.
- Communication with peripheral devices keyboard, screen, etc performed by reading and writing to files.
- Provides a single common interface for all IO operations.

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5

Data streams

- The input and output functions in C are built around the concept of a set of standard data streams
- The standard data streams or files are opened by the operating system and are available:
 - stdin: connected to the keyboard
 - stdout: connected to the screen
 - stderr: connected to the screen
 - Can use redirection (> and <) to change this (linux)

Standard output commands

• Always check the return values to handle potential errors, such as file not being opened successfully.

Function	Purpose	Return value success	Return value error
printf	Formatted output to stdout	number of characters printed	EOF on error
fprintf	Formatted output to stream	number of characters printed	EOF on error
sprintf	Formatted output to string	number of characters printed	EOF on error
fputs	Writing strings	non-negative number on success	EOF on error
fputc	Writing single characters	unsigned char cast to an int	EOF on error
fwrite	Writing blocks of data		

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7

Formatted IO: printf()

- printf() is a general purpose print function that sends its output to standard output (typically screen).
- General form:

```
printf("format string", item, item, ...)
int i = 10;
printf("The value of variable i is: %d", i);
```

- First argument is a format string.
 - Defines the layout of the printed text.
- •printf() returns
 - On success: the number of characters printed.
 - On failure (output error): the symbolic constant EOF

Formatted IO: printf()

- format string: conversion specifications will print the arguments passed to the print command
- conversion specification starts with % + conversion sign
 - %c character
 - %d decimal number
 - %s string
 - %f floating point
 - ...
- between %-sign and conversion more data on precision, number of characters are set.

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format specifiers

Туре		Example		
%d	print as integer	format_specifier_1.c		
%xd	print as integer, at least x characters			
%u	unsigned integer			
%o	octal (unsigned integer base 8)			
%x	hexadecimal (unsigned integer base 16)			
%f	print as floating-point			
%xf	print as floating-point, at least x characters			
%.yf	print as floating-point, y characters after decimal			
%x.yf	print as floating-point, at least x characters, y characters after decimal .			
%e	float or double in exponential format			
%g	shortest form form of %e or %f			
%с	character ('A')			
%s	character string ("ABC")	y.		

```
2 file: printf_versions.c
3 printf
4 fprintf
5 sprintf
                                                                                         frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ gcc printf_versions.c
frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ ./a.out
6 */
                                                                                         This is a number: 42
# #include <stdio.h>
                                                                                         This is written to stdout, value: 3.140000
                                                                                        This is a string: example frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$
10 int main() {
        // Using printf
printf("This is a number: %d\n", 42);
11
12
13
        // Using fprintf writing to stdout fprintf(stdout, "This is written to stdout, value: f^n, 3.14);
14
15
16
17
         // Using fprintf
        FILE *file = fopen("example.txt", "w");
if (file != NULL) {
   fprintf(file, "This is written to a file: %f\n", 3.14);
18
19
20
21
               fclose(file);
        }
22
23
        // Using sprintf
char buffer[100];
sprintf(buffer, "This is a string: %s", "example");
printf("%s\n", buffer);
24
25
26
27
28
29
         return 0:
30 }
                                                                                                                                                                 KU LEUVEN
```

```
2 file: output returns.c
return from output commands
4 */
6 #include <stdio.h>
8 int main()
10
          char st[] = "myString";
          char buffer[100]
          char buffersmall[2];
13
          int intreturned;
14
15
          intreturned = printf("%s \n", st);
         printf("the value returned by printf() is : %d \n", intreturned);
intreturned = fprintf(stdout, "%s \n", st);
printf("the value returned by fprintf() is : %d \n",intreturned);
intreturned = sprintf(buffer, "%s", st);
16
17
18
19
         printf("the value returned by sprintf() is : %d \n",intreturned);
intreturned = sprintf(buffersmall, "%s", st);
printf("the value returned by sprintf() is : %d \n",intreturned);
20
21
22
23
                                                          24
          return 0;
25 }
                                                          frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ ./a.out myString the value returned by printf() is : 10 myString the value returned by frintf() is : 10 the value returned by sprintf() is : 8 the value returned by sprintf() is : 8 frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$
```

puts / fputs

- puts
 - Purpose: Writes a string to the standard output followed by a newline character.
 - Syntax: int puts(const char *str);
- fputs
 - Purpose: Writes a string to a specified file stream.
 - Syntax: int fputs (const char *str, FILE *stream);
 - Functionality: Writes a string as-is to the file without any formatting. It does not support format specifiers.

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15

Line Output

- Character strings may be written to file using int fputs(const char *str, FILE *fp);
- Not actually line output. It does not automatically append a \n and consecutive calls may print strings on the same line.
- Return values:
 - · On success: zero.
 - On error: **EOF**.
- File: demo_fputs.c

```
frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ gcc output_strings.c
frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ ./a.out
This is a message using puts.
2 file: output_strings.c
                                                                  This is a formatted number using printf: 42
                                                                  frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ cat output.txt
                                                                  This is a message using fputs. frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$
5 fputs
6 printf
                                                                                                                                    Ι
8 */
10 #include <stdio.h>
12 int main() {
        // Using puts to print to the standard output
13
        puts("This is a message using puts.");
15
16
        // Using printf to print to the standard output with formatting
17
       int number = 42;
printf("This is a formatted number using printf: %d\n", number);
18
19
       // Using fputs to write to a file
FILE *file = fopen("output.txt", "w");
       if (file != NULL) {
    fputs("This is a message using fputs.\n", file);
             fclose(file);
       } else {
             printf("Failed to open file.\n");
29 30 }
        return 0;
                                                                                                                                             KU LEUVEN
```

putc / fputc

- Functionality: Both putc and fputc perform the same function and are often interchangeable. The difference is mostly historical and related to how they are implemented in different standard libraries.
- fputc
- Purpose: Writes a single character to a specified file stream.
- Syntax: int fputc(int char, FILE *stream);

Character Output

Character output functions:

```
int fputc(int c, FILE *fp);
int putc(int c, FILE *fp);
int putchar(int c);
```

- putchar (c) is equivalent to putc (c, stdout).
- putc () and fputc () are essentially identical, implementation is different. (fputc is preferred https://stackoverflow.com/questions/14008907/fputc-vs-putc-in-c)
- Return values:
 - · On success: the character that was written.
 - On error: **EOF**.
- File: fputcchar.c

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```
1 /*
3 file: output_character.c
                                                                            ankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ gcc output_character.c
4 putc
                                                                         frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ ./a.out
frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ cat output_fputc.txt
5 fputc
7 */
                                                                         frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/IO$ cat output_putc.txt
9 #include <stdio.h>
                                                                         frankvp@CRD-L-10275:~/training-c/I0$
int main() {
        // Using putc to write to a file
FILE *file1 = fopen("output_putc.txt", "w");
        if (file1 != NULL)
             putc('A', file1)
putc('\n', file1
                            file1); // Writing a newline character
              fclose(file1);
             printf("Failed to open file for putc.\n");
       // Using fputc to write to a file
FILE *file2 = fopen("output_fputc.txt", "w");
if (file2 != NULL) {
   fputc('B', file2);
   fputc('\n', file2);
   // Writing a newline
                             file2); // Writing a newline character
             fclose(file2);
             printf("Failed to open file for fputc.\n");
30
31
                                                                                                                                                   KU LEUVEN
        return 0;
```

Formatted IO: scanf()

- function scanf ends when:
 - end of format string is reached
 - · format specification does not match the input
- · result is
 - · number of arguments successfully read
 - · EOF at the end of the file
- conversion specification 1 field is read
 - 1 field is a sequence of non-white characters
 - Separator: blanc, tab, newline

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21

Warnings about scanf()

- Note, the above string (%s) input is not robust.
 - String read until first white-space character.
 - User can type in over-long sequence and overflow buffer.
- Include a width field.

```
char s1[10], s2[10], s3[10];
scanf("%9s %9s %9s", s1, s2, s3);
```

• scanf () is a good choice if the input format is exactly known, but not if the format may vary. Better to use:

```
fgets(buf, sizeof(buf), stdin);
sscanf(buf, "%lf", &dval);
```

String Formatting

- sprintf() and sscanf() are identical to printf() and scanf()
- except that they take IO from a string and not stdout or stdin.
- · General forms:

```
int sprintf(char *buf, const char *format, ...);
int sscanf(char *buf, const char *format, ...);
```

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```
i#include <stdio.h>
2 #include <string.h>
3 /*
4 sacanf_1.c
* skttp://www.tutorialspoint.com/c_standard_library/c_function_sscanf.htm */
6 int main()
8 {
10 char weekday[28], month[28], dtm[188];
11 strcpy( dtm, "saturday March 25 1989" );
12 printf("%s \n", dtm);
13 sscanf (dtm, "%s %s %d %d", weekday, month, &day, &year );
15 printf("%s \n", dtm);
16 printf("%s \n", dtm);
17 printf("%s \n", dtm);
18 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
19 printf("%s \n", dtm);
10 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
10 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
11 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
12 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
13 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
14 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
15 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
16 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
17 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
18 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
19 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
10 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
11 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
12 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
13 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
14 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
15 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
16 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
17 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
18 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
19 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
19 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
10 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
11 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
12 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
13 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
14 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
15 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
16 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
17 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
18 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
19 printf("%s \n", month, day, year, weekday );
19 printf("%s \n", month, day,
```

Character Input

Character input functions:

```
int fgetc(FILE *fp);
int getc(FILE *fp);
int getchar(void);
```

- getchar() is equivalent to getc(stdin).
- getc() and fgetc() are essentially identical.
- Return values:
 - On success: the next character in the input stream.
 - On error: EOF.
 - On end-of-file: EOF.
- · File: fgetcchar.c

Line Input

· Read a line from a file:

```
char *fgets(char *buf, int max, FILE *fp);
```

- Returns after one of the following:
 - Reads (at most) max-1 characters from the file.
 - Reads a \n character.
 - · Reaches end-of-file.
 - · Encounters an error.
- · Return values:
 - On success: pointer to buf. Note, fgets() automatically appends a \0 to the end of the string.
 - On end-of-file: NULL.
 - On error: NULL.

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```
2 input_fgets.c
3 https://csijh.gitlab.io/COMS10008/lectures/io/
 4 Echos back what you type. Use CTRL/D (or CTRL/C) to end. */
 6 #include <stdio.h>
 7 #include <stdbool.h>
                                                                                                                        frankvp@CRD-L-08004:.../io$ gcc input_fgets.c -o input_fgets
frankvp@CRD-L-08004:.../io$ ./input_fgets
 9 // Prompt the use and read in one line
10 // (saves repeating three lines twice in main)
11 void get(int max, char line[max]) {
12    printf("Type: ");
13    fgets(line, max, stdin);
                                                                                                                       Type: help on this topic
Line: help on this topic
                                                                                                                       Type: more info
Line: more info
Type: stop
Line: stop
13
14 }
int main() {
                                                                                                                        Type: exit
         const int max = 100;
         const line max = loo,
char line[max];
get(max, line);
while (! feof(stdin)) {
    printf("Line: %s", line);
    get(max, line);
                                                                                                                        Type: frankvp@CRD-L-08004:.../io$
21
                                                                                                                                                                                                                      KU LEUVEN
```

```
demo_fgets.c

based on www.cs.colstate.edu/~cs156

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

- Use fgets when you need to read a line or a string of characters safely, with protection against buffer overflows.
- Use fgetc when you need to read characters one at a time, such as when processing input character by character.

Feature	fgets	fgetc
Reads	A line (up to n-1 characters)	A single character
Returns	Pointer to the string or NULL on error	Character read or EOF on error
Buffer Overflow	Prevents by specifying maximum characters	Does not handle
Newline Handling	Includes newline character in the string	Reads newline as a character
Use Case	Reading lines or strings	Reading characters one by one

Input and Output

• en.wikibooks.org/wiki/C_Programming/File_IO

```
32
```

```
3 demo_stderr.c
  4 https://www.cs.bu.edu/teaching/c/file-io/intro/
 7 int
 8 main (void)
11 FILE *ifp;
12 FILE *ofp;
13 char *mode = "r";
                                                                                          test with both files
14 char outputFilename[] = "out.list";
16 ifp = fopen("in.list", mode); // in.list does not exist
17 //ifp = fopen("temp3city.txt", mode); // temp3city.txt exist
19 if (ifp == NULL) {
20 fprintf(stderr, "Can't open input file in.list!\n");
21
       return 1;
22 }
23
                                                                                      out.list will be created
24 ofp = fopen(outputFilename, "w");
frankvp@CRD-L-08004:../io$ gcc demo_stderr.c -o demo_stderr frankvp@CRD-L-08004:../io$ ./demo_stderr Can't open input file in.list! frankvp@CRD-L-08004:../io$ gcc demo_stderr.c -o demo_stderr frankvp@CRD-L-08004:../io$ ./demo_stderr frankvp@CRD-L-08004:../io$ s-alt
29
30 }
31 }
       return 1;
                                                                                                     total 64
                                                                                                    -rwxrwxrwx 1 frankvp frankvp 16888 Jan 26 11:27 out.list
-rwxrwxrwx 1 frankvp frankvp 16888 Jan 26 11:27 demo_stderr
drwxrwxrwx 1 frankvp frankvp 4096 Jan 26 11:27 .
-rwxrwxrwx 1 frankvp frankvp 574 Jan 26 10:22 ...
drwxrwxrwx 1 frankvp frankvp 4096 Jan 26 10:22 ...
```

```
1 #include <stdio.h>
 2 #include <stdlib.h>
 3 #include <string.h>
                                                           frankvp@CRD-L-08004:.../io$ gcc demo_interactive_input.c -o demo_interactive_input
frankvp@CRD-L-08004:.../io$ ./demo_interactive_input
 5 demo_interactive_input.c
 6 input until 'quit'
                                                           hello help!
 8 int isQuit(char str[]);
                                                           more
hello more!
 9 int main(void) {
       for (
           char str[80];
scanf("%s", str);
                                                           information please
hello information!
11
            if (isQuit(str))
                                                           hello please!
           break;
printf("hello %s!\n", str);
                                                           qklm kmqdfk qsmd kfqmkf mqsdfmqsdfq
                                                           hello qklm!
hello kmqdfk!
15
17
       return 0;
                                                           hello qsmd!
18 }
                                                           hello kfqmkf!
int isQuit(char str[]){
                                                           hello mqsdfmqsdfq!
20 int ival;
                                                           quit
21 ival = strcmp(str, "quit");
                                                            frankvp@CRD-L-08004:.../io$
22 if (ival == 0)
23 return 1:
25 return 0;
26 }
                                                                                                                                                         KU LEUVEN
```

fopen()

- A file is referred to by a file-pointer. This is a pointer to a structure typedef called FILE.
- The file open function (fopen) serves two purposes:
 - It makes the connection between the physical file and the stream.
 - It creates "a program file structure to store the information" C needs to process the file.
- Syntax:

```
fopen("filename", "mode");
```

- Two arguments:
 - 1. The file name. eg, myfile.txt
 - 2. The file mode. "r", "w", "a"
- · Return value: Pointer to file if successful. NULL if unsuccessful.
- · Always check return value for NULL!

Fil	е	0	pe	en	m	100	les
			_				

r	Open text file for reading	 If file exists, marker is positioned at beginning If file does not exist, an error is generated
W	Open text file for writing	If file exists, the file is erased (overwritten)If file does not exist, it is created
а	Open text file for appending	If file exists, marker is positioned at endIf file does not exist, it is created
rb	Open binary file for reading	
wb	Open binary file for writing	
ab	Open binary file for appending	
+	File is to be opened for reading and writing	

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37

fclose()

- To close a file, pass the file pointer to fclose().
- General form:

```
int fclose(FILE *fp);
```

- fclose() breaks the connection with the file and frees the file pointer.
- Good practice to free file pointers when a file is no longer needed as most OSs have a limit on the number of files a program may have open at any given time.
- Note, fclose() is called automatically for each open file when the program terminates.

```
1 #include "stdio.h"
 3 fopen_fclose.c
 4 http://www.fcet.staffs.ac.uk/rgh1/ */
 7 main (void)
init a, b, c;

char filename[21]; // string file name

FILE *out_file; // file pointer for output
                                                                                 14 printf ("\ntype name of output file: "); // prompt on screen
15 scanf("%s",filename); // input from keyboard
                                                                                 type name of output file: myfile
                                                                                 frankvp@CRD-L-08004:.../io$ cat myfile
                                                                                 type 2 integers25 89
17 out_file = fopen (filename, "w"); // open file for output
    if (out_file == NULL) {
    printf ("\ncannot open: %s", filename);
    return 1; // abnormal program exit
19
                                                                                  frankvp@CRD-L-08004:.../io$
23 printf ("\ntype 2 integers"); // prompt
24 scanf ("%d %d", &a, &b); // from keyboard
25 c = a + b;
27 fprintf (out_file, "%d\n", c);
29 // output to file
30 fclose (out_file);
32 return 0;
                  // normal program exit
33 }
                                                                                                                                                         KU LEUVEN
```

Sequential File Operations

- Once a file is open, operations on the file (reading and writing) usually work through the file sequentially from the beginning to the end.
- File: read_temp3city.c

```
1 #include <stdio.h
2 // read_temp3city.c
3 int main()
10
12
13
16
17
19
20 // search for the maximum at each city
21 for (count = 0; count <= 30; ++count){</pre>
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
```

- These functions are generalisations of printf() and scanf(), respectively.
- In fact, printf() and scanf() are equivalent to

```
fprintf(stdout, format, arg1, arg2, ...);
fscanf(stdin, format, arg1, arg2, ...);
```

```
/io$ cat outfileTemp.txt
                                                                                                                                Celsius Fahrenheit
                 3 http://gribblelab.org/CBootcamp/10_Input_and_Output.html
                                                                                                                                                   14.00
17.60
                                                                                                                                  -10.00
                                                                                                                                   -8.00
                 5 #include <stdio.h>
                6 int main() {
7 FILE *fp;
                                                                                                                                   -4.00
                    double tmpC[11] = {-10.0, -8.0, -6.0, -4.0, -2.0, 0.0, 2.0, 4.0, 6.0, 8.0, 10.0}; double tmpF;
                                                                                                                                   -2.00
0.00
2.00
4.00
6.00
                                                                                                                                                   28.40
                                                                                                                                                   32.00
35.60
                    double temp3c[50][3];
double tmax =
                                                                                                                                                   39.20
                    int i;
                                                                                                                                                   42.80
                                                                                                                                    8.00
                                                                                                                                                   46.40
                                                                                                                                   10.00
                                                                                                                                                   50.00
                                                                                                                                                 ./io$ gcc fprintf_fscanf.c -o fprintf_fscan:
./io$ ./fprintf_fscanf
                      // print a table neader
fprintf(fp, %10s %10s\n", "Celsius", "Fahrenheit");
for (i=0; i:11; i++) {
    tmpF = ((tmpC[i] * (9.0/5.0)) + 32.0);
    fprintf(fp, %10.2f %10.2f\n", tmpC[i], tmpF);}
                    fclose(p),
for (i=0; i<31; i++) {
  printf("%d %5.2f %5.2f \n", i, temp3c[i][1], temp3c[i][2], temp3c[i][3]);}
  printf("\n\n maximum temperature = %5.2f \n", tmax);}</pre>
```

Binary IO

- When reading and writing binary files, may deal with objects directly without first converting them to character strings.
- Direct binary IO provided by

```
size_t fread(void *ptr, size_t size, size_t nobj, FILE *fp);
size t fwrite(const void *ptr, size t size, size t nobj, FILE *fp);
```

Can pass objects of any type. For example,

```
struct Astruct mystruct[10];
fwrite(&mystruct, sizeof(Astruct), 10, fp);
```

File: binary_write.c

File: binary_read.c