

John Romero Programming Proverbs

- 3. “Keep your code absolutely simple. Keep looking at your functions and figure out how you can simplify further.”
- John Romero, “The Early Days of Id Software - John Romero @ WeAreDevelopers Conference 2017”

C compound data structures

- in C we can declare a `struct` using the following mechanism:

```
struct name {  
    int x;  
    int y;  
}  
  
main ()  
{  
    struct name foo;  
  
    foo.x = 1;  
    foo.y = 2;  
}
```

Using typedefs

- we can introduce a `typedef` to clean up the previous code:

- ```
typedef struct name_s {
 int x;
 int y;
} name;

main ()
{
 name foo;

 foo.x = 1;
 foo.y = 2;
}
```

- notice how we still declare the `struct`, but wrap it in a `typedef`.

## Forward declaring structs

- sometimes a data structure needs to refer to itself
  - such as a binary tree
  - linked list etc
- consider a single linked list with a `value` and a `next` field
- this could be declared as follows

## Forward declaring structs

```
#include <stdlib.h>


typedef struct node_s node_t;
typedef node_t *node;

struct node_s {
 int value;
 node next;
};

static node n;

main ()
{
 node foo = (node) malloc (sizeof (*foo));
 foo->value = 1;
 foo->next = foo;
}
```

## Simplified node declaration



```
#include <stdlib.h>

typedef struct node_s *node;

struct node_s {
 int value;
 node next;
};

static node n;

main ()
{
 node foo = (node) malloc (sizeof (*foo));

 foo->value = 1;
 foo->next = foo;
}
```

## Simplified node declaration

- notice how we have re factored

```
typedef struct node_s node_t;
typedef node_t *node;
```

## Simplified node declaration

■ to

■ 

```
typedef struct node_s *node;

struct node_s {
 int value;
 node next;
};
```

■ also note that the typedef is using a forward declaration of struct  
■ which is completed in the next code line



## struct's

- are the only data type in C which can be partially declared (or forward declared)
- they must be completed though at some later point
- `structs` can be used to wrap up other data types
  - which can be useful if these other data types are self referential

## Example 1: declare a pointer to an array of 10 elements to itself

```
#include <stdlib.h>

typedef struct mydecl_a *mydecl;

struct mydecl_a { mydecl array[10+1]; };
static mydecl a;

main ()
{
 a = (mydecl) malloc (sizeof *a);
 a->array[0] = a;
}
```

■ of course this is a pedalogical example as it does not reference anything else!

## Example 1: declare a pointer to an array of 10 elements to itself

- notice that we cannot join the `typedef` with the `struct` declaration like this:

```
typedef struct mydecl_a { mydecl array[10+1]; } *mydecl;

/* this will not work. */
```

- as the definition for `mydecl` involves a use of `mydecl`

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