CS107, Lecture 5 More C Strings

Reading: K&R (1.6, 5.5, Appendix B3) or Essential C section 3

Plan For Today

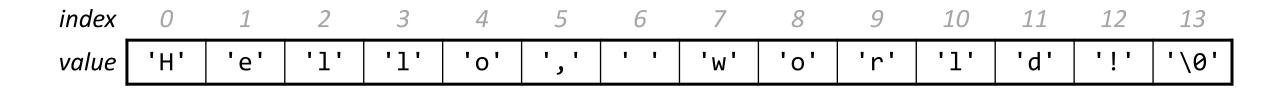
- Recap: String Operations
- Demo: Buffer Overflow and Valgrind
- Arrays of Strings
- **Practice:** Password Verification
- Pointers
- Announcements
- Strings in Memory
- Pointers to Strings

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C Strings

C strings are arrays of characters, ending with a **null-terminating character** '\0'.



String operations use the null-terminating character to find the end of the string. E.g. strlen calculates string length by counting up the characters it sees *before* reaching a null-terminating character.

Common string.h Functions

Function	Description
strlen(<i>str</i>)	returns the # of chars in a C string (before null-terminating character).
<pre>strcmp(str1, str2), strncmp(str1, str2, n)</pre>	compares two strings; returns 0 if identical, <0 if str1 comes before str2 in alphabet, >0 if str1 comes after str2 in alphabet. strncmp stops comparing after at most n characters.
<pre>strchr(str, ch) strrchr(str, ch)</pre>	character search: returns a pointer to the first occurrence of <i>ch</i> in <i>str</i> , or <i>NULL</i> if <i>ch</i> was not found in <i>str</i> . strrchr find the last occurrence.
strstr(<i>haystack</i> , <i>needle</i>)	string search: returns a pointer to the start of the first occurrence of needle in haystack, or NULL if needle was not found in haystack.
<pre>strcpy(dst, src), strncpy(dst, src, n)</pre>	copies characters in src to dst , including null-terminating character. Assumes enough space in dst . Strings must not overlap. strncpy stops after at most n chars, and <u>does not</u> add null-terminating char.
<pre>strcat(dst, src), strncat(dst, src, n)</pre>	concatenate <i>src</i> onto the end of <i>dst</i> . strncat stops concatenating after at most <i>n</i> characters. Always adds a null-terminating character.
<pre>strspn(str, accept), strcspn(str, reject)</pre>	strspn returns the length of the initial part of str which contains only characters in accept. strcspn returns the length of the initial part of str which does not contain any characters in reject.

C Strings As Parameters

Regardless of how you created the string, when you pass a string as a parameter it is always passed as a **char** *. **char** * still lets you use bracket notation to access individual characters (*How? We'll see later today!*).

```
int doSomething(char *str) {
    char secondChar = str[1];
// can also write this, but it is really a pointer
int doSomething(char str[]) { ...
```

Buffer Overflows

- It is your responsibility to ensure that memory operations you perform don't improperly read or write memory.
 - E.g. don't copy a string into a space that is too small!
 - E.g. don't ask for the string length of an uninitialized string!
- The Valgrind tool may be able to help track down memory-related issues.
 - See cs107.stanford.edu/resources/valgrind
 - We'll talk about Valgrind more when we talk about dynamically-allocated memory.

Demo: Memory Errors



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Arrays of Strings

You can make an array of strings to group multiple strings together:

```
char *stringArray[5]; // space to store 5 char *s
```

You can also use the following shorthand to initialize a string array:

```
char *stringArray[] = {
   "my string 1",
   "my string 2",
   "my string 3"
};
```

Arrays of Strings

You can access each string using bracket syntax:

```
printf("%s\n", stringArray[0]); // print out first string
```

When an array of strings is passed as a parameter, it is passed as a pointer to the first element of the string array. This is what argv is in main! This means you write the parameter type as:

```
void myFunction(char **stringArray) {
// equivalent to this, but it is really a double pointer
void myFunction(char *stringArray[]) {
```

Practice: Password Verification

Write a function **verifyPassword** that accepts a candidate password and certain password criteria, and returns whether the password is valid.

```
bool verifyPassword(char *password, char *validChars, char
*badSubstrings[], int numBadSubstrings);
```

password is <u>valid</u> if it contains only letters in **validChars**, and does not contain any substrings in **badSubstrings**.

Practice: Password Verification

```
bool verifyPassword(char *password, char *validChars, char
*badSubstrings[], int numBadSubstrings);
```

Example:

Practice: Password Verification



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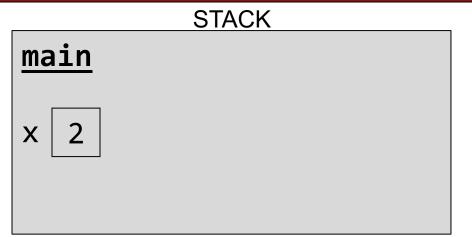
- A *pointer* is a variable that stores a memory address.
- Because there is no pass-by-reference in C like in C++, pointers let us pass around the address of one instance of memory, instead of making many copies.
- One (8 byte) pointer can refer to any size memory location!
- Pointers are also essential for allocating memory on the heap, which we will cover later.
- Pointers also let us refer to memory generically, which we will cover later.

```
int x = 2;
// Make a pointer that stores the address of x.
// (& means "address of")
int *xPtr = &x;
// Dereference the pointer to get the data it points to.
// (* means "dereference")
printf("%d", *xPtr); // prints 2
```

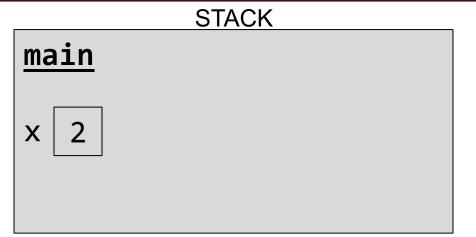
```
A pointer is just a variable that stores a
memory address!
void myFunc(int *intPtr) {
     *intPtr = 3;
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     int x = 2;
     myFunc(&x);
     printf("%d", x);  // 3!
```

main STACK

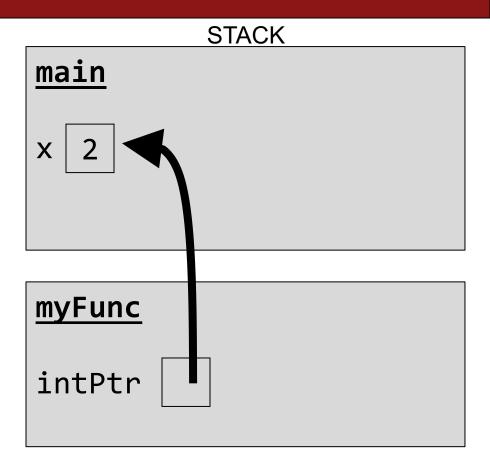
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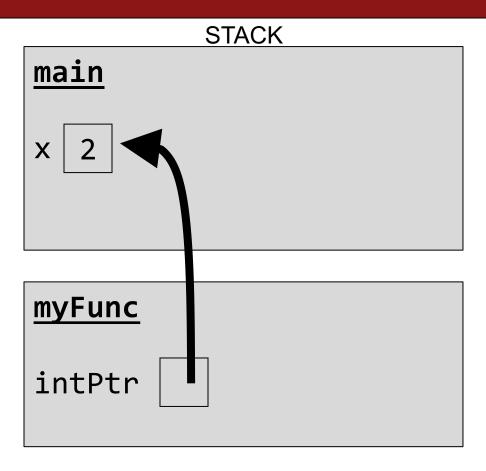
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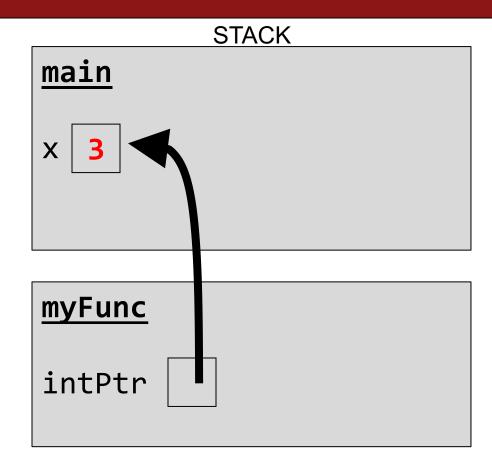
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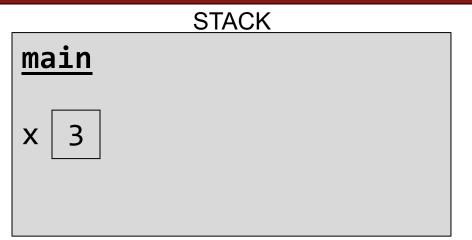
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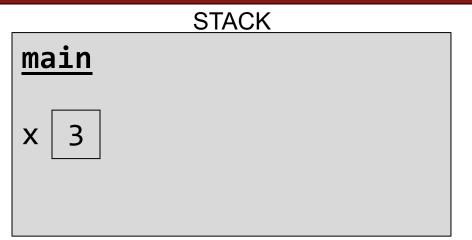
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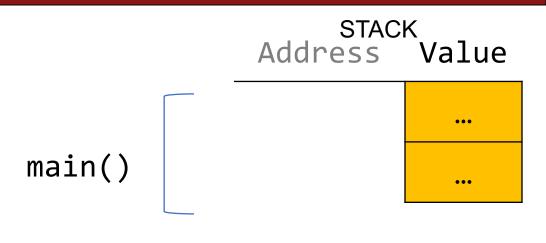
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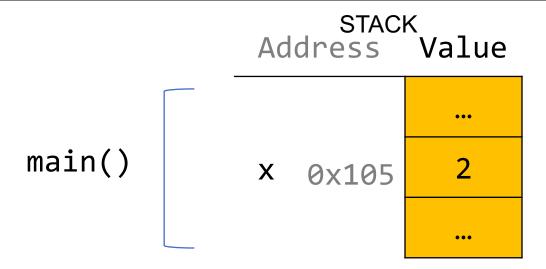
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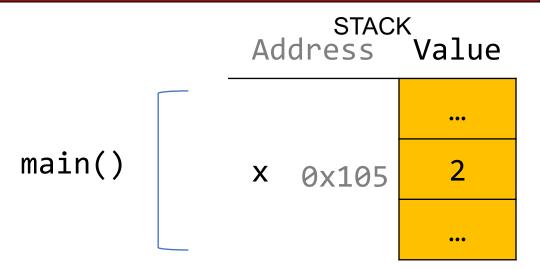
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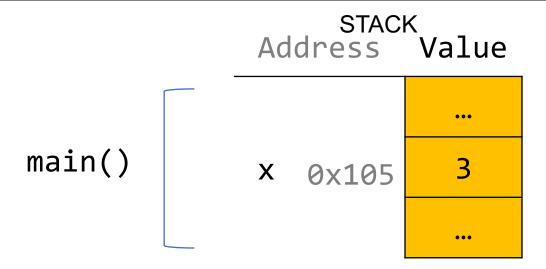


```
STACK
A pointer is just a variable that stores a
                                                        Address Value
memory address!
                                          main()
void myFunc(int *intPtr) {
                                                           0x105
     *intPtr = 3;
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
                                                                 0x105
                                                    intPtr 0xf0
     int x = 2;
                                        myFunc()
     myFunc(&x);
     printf("%d", x);  // 3!
```

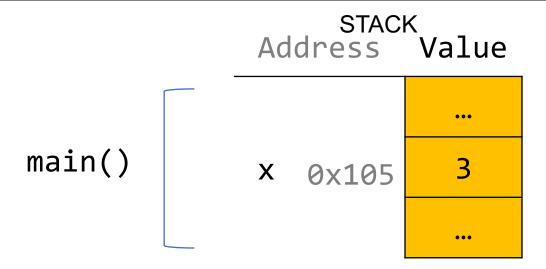
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int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
                                                    intPtr 0xf0
     int x = 2;
                                        myFunc()
     myFunc(&x);
     printf("%d", x);  // 3!
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void myFunc(int *intPtr) {
                                                           0x105
     *intPtr = 3;
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
                                                    intPtr 0xf0
     int x = 2;
                                        myFunc()
     myFunc(&x);
     printf("%d", x);  // 3!
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     int x = 2;
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     printf("%d", x);  // 3!
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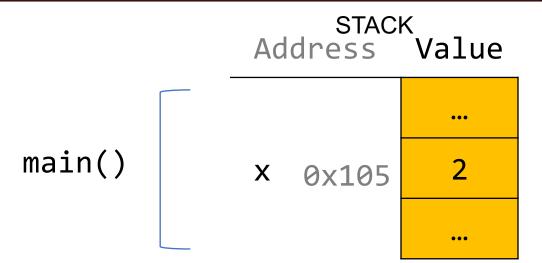
Without pointers, we would make copies.

```
void myFunc(int val) {
     val = 3;
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     int x = 2;
     myFunc(x);
     printf("%d", x);  // 2!
```



Without pointers, we would make copies.

```
void myFunc(int val) {
     val = 3;
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     int x = 2;
     myFunc(x);
     printf("%d", x);  // 2!
```



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void myFunc(int val) {
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int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     int x = 2;
     myFunc(x);
     printf("%d", x);  // 2!
```



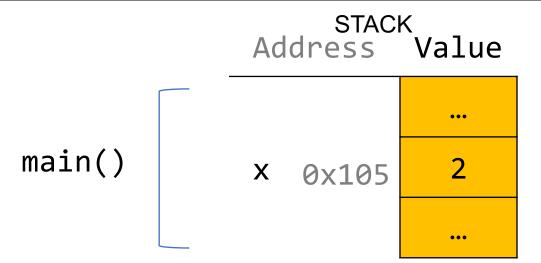
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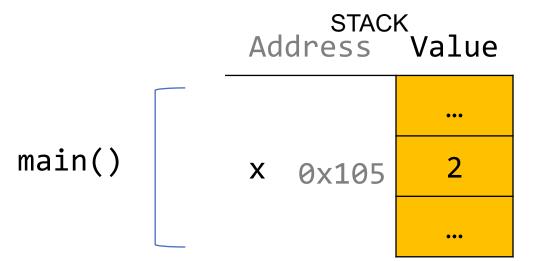
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     myFunc(x);
     printf("%d", x);  // 2!
```



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     val = 3;
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
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```



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Announcements

- Assignment 1 due Monday 1/21 11:59PM PST
 - Grace period until Wed. 1/23 11:59PM PST
- Lab 2: C strings practice
- Assignment 2 released at Assignment 1 due date
 - Due Mon. 1/28 11:59PM PST, grace period until Wed. 1/30 11:59PM PST
 - Programs using C strings
 - Style guide published on course website

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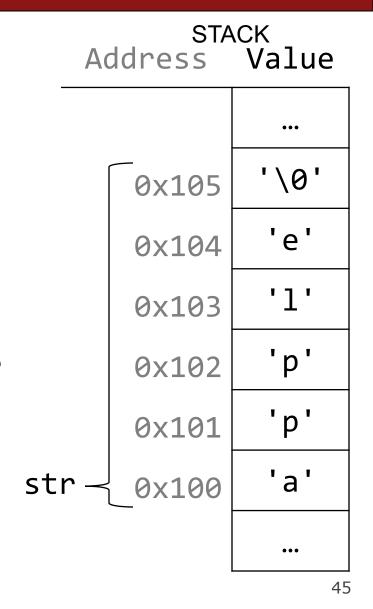
Character Arrays

When you declare an array of characters, contiguous memory is allocated on the stack to store the contents of the entire array.

```
char str[6] = "apple";
```

The array variable (e.g. **str**) is not a pointer; it refers to the entire array contents. In fact, **sizeof** returns the size of the entire array!

```
int arrayBytes = sizeof(str);  // 6
(so then why do we need strlen? We'll see soon!)
```



Character Arrays

An array variable refers to an entire block of memory. You cannot reassign an existing array to be equal to a new array.

```
char str[6] = "apple";
char str2[8] = "apple 2";
str = str2;  // not allowed!
```

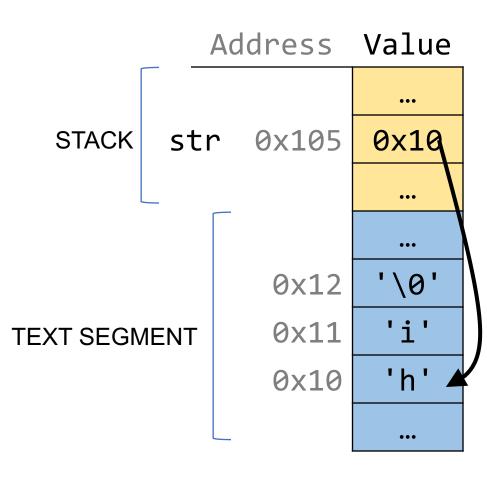
An array's size cannot be changed once you create it; you must create another new array instead.

char *

When you declare a char pointer equal to a string literal, the string literal is *not* stored on the stack. Instead, it's stored in a special area of memory called the "Text segment". You cannot modify memory in this segment.

```
char *str = "hi";
```

The pointer variable (e.g. **str**) refers to the *address* of the first character of the string in the text segment. Since this variable is just a pointer, **sizeof** returns 8, no matter the total size of the string!



int stringBytes = sizeof(str); // 8

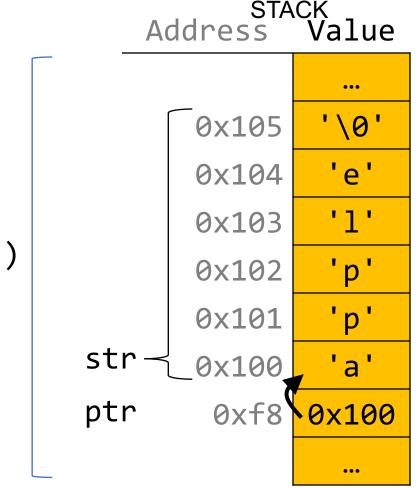
char *

A **char** * variable refers to a single character. You can reassign an existing **char** * pointer to be equal to another **char** * pointer.

Arrays and Pointers

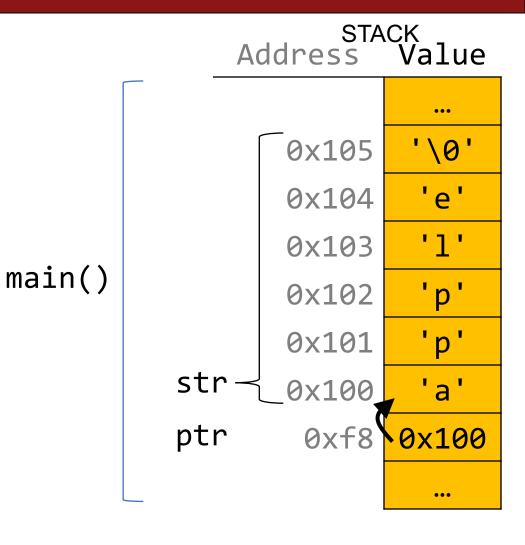
```
You can also make a pointer equal to an array;
it will point to the first element in that array.

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    char str[6] = "apple";
    char *ptr = str;
    ...
    main()
}
```



Arrays and Pointers

```
You can also make a pointer equal to an array;
it will point to the first element in that array.
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     char str[6] = "apple";
     char *ptr = str;
     // equivalent
     char *ptr = &str[0];
     // equivalent, but avoid
     char *ptr = &str;
```



Pointer Arithmetic

When you do pointer arithmetic, you are adjusting the pointer by a certain *number of places* (e.g. characters).

```
char *str = "apple"; // e.g. 0xff1
char *str2 = str + 1; // e.g. 0xff2
char *str3 = str + 3; // e.g. 0xff4
printf("%s", str);
                 // apple
printf("%s", str2); // pple
printf("%s", str3);
                  // le
```

TEXT SEGMENT	
Address	Value
	•••
0xff6	'\0'
0xff5	'e'
0xff4	'1'
0xff3	'p'
0xff2	'p'
0xff1	'a'
	•••

Pointer Arithmetic

Pointer arithmetic does *not* add bytes. Instead, it adds the *size of the type it points to*.

```
// nums points to an int array
int *nums = \dots // e.g. 0xff1
int *nums2 = nums + 1; // e.g. 0xff5
int *nums3 = nums + 3; // e.g. 0xffd
printf("%d", *nums);  // 52
printf("%d", *nums2); // 23
printf("%d", *nums3); // 34
```

STACK	
Address	Value
	•••
0x1005	1
0x1001	16
0xffd	34
0xff9	12
0xff5	23
0xff1	52
	•••

char *

When you use bracket notation with a pointer, you are actually *performing pointer arithmetic and dereferencing*:

```
Address Value
char *str = "apple"; // e.g. 0xff1
                                                           '\0'
                                                    0xff6
                                                           'e'
                                                    0xff5
// both of these add two places to str,
                                                           '1'
                                                    0xff4
// and then dereference to get the char there.
                                                           'p'
                                                    0xff3
// E.g. get memory at 0xff3.
                                                           'p'
                                                    0xff2
char thirdLetter = str[2];
                            // 'p'
                                                           'a'
                                                    0xff1
char thirdLetter = *(str + 2);  // 'p'
```

TEXT SEGMENT

```
STACK
When you pass a char * string as a parameter,
                                                           Address Value
C makes a copy of the address stored in the
char *, and passes it to the function. This
means they both refer to the same memory
                                             main()
                                                         str
                                                              0x105
location.
void myFunc(char *myStr) {
                                                      myStr
                                          myFunc()
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     char *str = "apple";
     myFunc(str);
```

```
STACK
When you pass a char array as a parameter, C
                                                            Address
makes a copy of the address of the first array
element, and passes it (as a char *) to the function.
                                                               0x105
                                                                       '\0'
                                                               0x104
void myFunc(char *myStr) {
                                                                       '1'
                                                               0x103
                                             main()
                                                               0x102
                                                               0x101
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     char str[6] = "apple";
     myFunc(str);
                                           myFunc()
                                                                      0x100
```

```
STACK
When you pass a char array as a parameter, C
                                                           Address
makes a copy of the address of the first array
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                                                                      '\0'
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void myFunc(char *myStr) {
                                                                      '1'
                                                              0x103
                                             main()
                                                              0x102
                                                              0x101
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     char str[6] = "apple";
     // equivalent
     char *arrPtr = str;
     myFunc(arrPtr);
                                           myFunc(
                                                                     0x100
```

```
STACK
This means if you modify characters in
                                                         Address
myFunc, the changes will persist back in main!
                                                                    '\0'
                                                            0x105
void myFunc(char *myStr) {
                                                            0x104
     myStr[4] = 'y';
                                                                    '1'
                                                            0x103
                                           main()
                                                            0x102
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
                                                            0x101
     char str[6] = "apple";
     myFunc(str);
     printf("%s", str); // apply
                                         myFunc()
                                                                   0x100
```

```
STACK
This means if you modify characters in
                                                         Address
myFunc, the changes will persist back in main!
                                                                   '\0'
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void myFunc(char *myStr) {
                                                            0x104
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                                                            0x102
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
                                                            0x101
     char str[6] = "apple";
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     printf("%s", str); // apply
                                         myFunc()
                                                                   0x100
```

```
STACK
This also means we can no longer get the full
                                                           Address
size of the array using sizeof, because now it is
just a regular char * pointer.
                                                                     '\0'
                                                              0x105
                                                              0x104
void myFunc(char *myStr) {
                                                                      '1'
                                                              0x103
     int size = sizeof(myStr); // 8
                                            main()
                                                              0x102
                                                              0x101
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
     char str[6] = "apple";
     int size = sizeof(str);
     myFunc(str);
                                          myFunc()
                                                                    0x100
```

Strings and Memory

These memory behaviors explain why strings behave the way they do:

- 1. We can modify a string created as a **char[]** because its memory lives in our stack space.
- 2. We cannot modify a string created as a **char*** because its memory does not live in our stack space; it lives in the text segment.
- 3. We can set a **char*** equal to another value, because it is just a pointer.
- 4. We cannot set a char[] equal to another value, because it is not a pointer; it refers to the block of memory reserved for the original array.
- 5. If we change characters in a string passed to a function, these changes will persist outside of the function.
- 6. When we pass a char array as a parameter, we can no longer use **sizeof** to get its full size.

Demo: Strings and Memory



Plan For Today

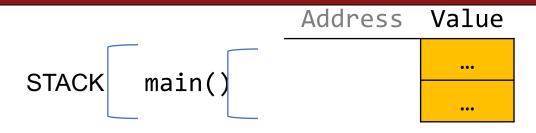
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- Pointers to Strings

Sometimes, we would like to modify a string's pointer itself, rather than just the characters it points to.

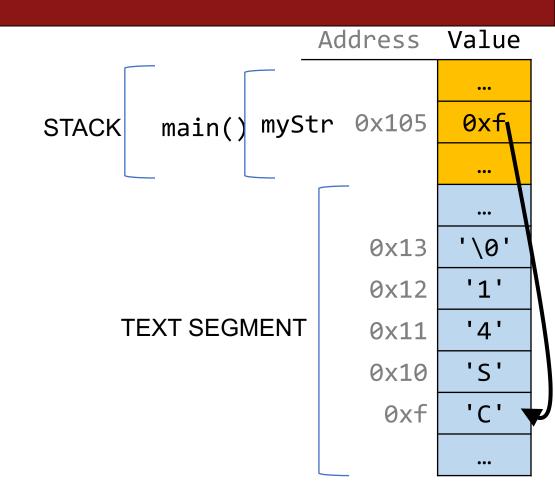
• Ex. Write a function **skipCSPrefix** that takes in a **char** * representing a class name, and modifies it to advance past the "CS" prefix, if any, in the string.

```
char *myStr = "CS41";
skipCSPrefix(&myStr);
printf("%s\n", myStr); // 41
```

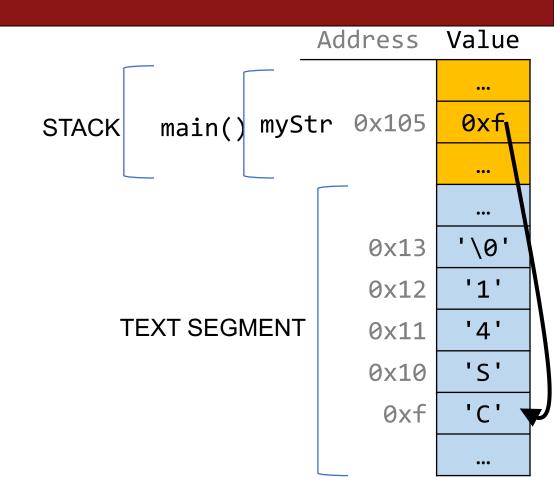
```
void skipCSPrefix(char **strPtr) {
    char *prefix = strstr(*strPtr, "CS");
    if (prefix != NULL && prefix == *strPtr) {
        *strPtr += strlen("CS");
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    char *myStr = "CS41";
    skipCSPrefix(&myStr);
    printf("%s\n", myStr);
                                 // 41
    return 0;
```



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```
Address
                                                                                 Value
void skipCSPrefix(char **strPtr) {
    char *prefix = strstr(*strPtr, "CS");
    if (prefix != NULL && prefix == *strPtr) {
                                                                     myStrox105
                                                             main()
                                                                                   0xf
        *strPtr += strlen("CS");
                                            STACK
                                                    skipCSPrefix()
                                                                     strPtr 0xf0
                                                                                  0x105
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    char *myStr = "CS41";
    skipCSPrefix(&myStr);
    printf("%s\n", myStr);
                                  // 41
                                                                                  '\0'
                                                                            0x13
    return 0;
                                                                                   '1'
                                                                            0x12
                                                          TEXT SEGMENT
                                                                                   '4'
                                                                            0x11
                                                                                   'S'
                                                                            0x10
                                                                                   'C'
                                                                             0xf
```

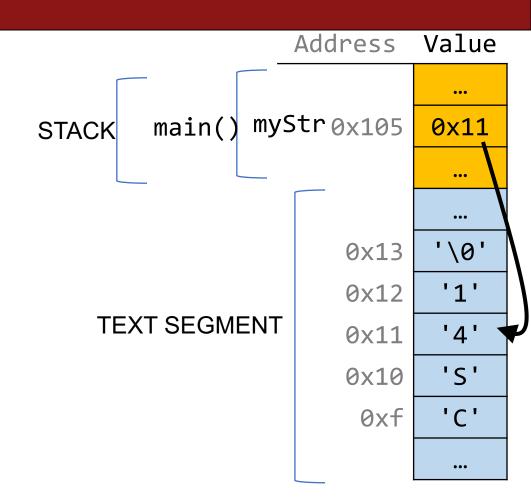
```
Address
                                                                                    Value
void skipCSPrefix(char **strPtr) {
    char *prefix = strstr(*strPtr, "CS");
    if (prefix != NULL && prefix == *strPtr) {
                                                                       myStr<sub>0x105</sub>
                                                              main()
                                                                                     0xf
        *strPtr += strlen("CS");
                                             STACK
                                                                      strPtr 0xf0
                                                                                    0x105
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
                                                      skipCSPrefix()
    char *myStr = "CS41";
                                                                      prefix 0xe8
                                                                                     0xf
    skipCSPrefix(&myStr);
    printf("%s\n", myStr);
                                   // 41
    return 0;
                                                                                     '\0'
                                                                              0x13
                                                                                     '1'
                                                                              0x12
                                                            TEXT SEGMENT
                                                                                     '4'
                                                                              0x11
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                                                                                    Value
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                                                                       myStr<sub>0x105</sub>
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                                                                              0x13
                                                                                     '1'
                                                                              0x12
                                                            TEXT SEGMENT
                                                                                     '4'
                                                                              0x11
                                                                                     'S'
                                                                              0x10
                                                                                     'C'
                                                                               0xf
```

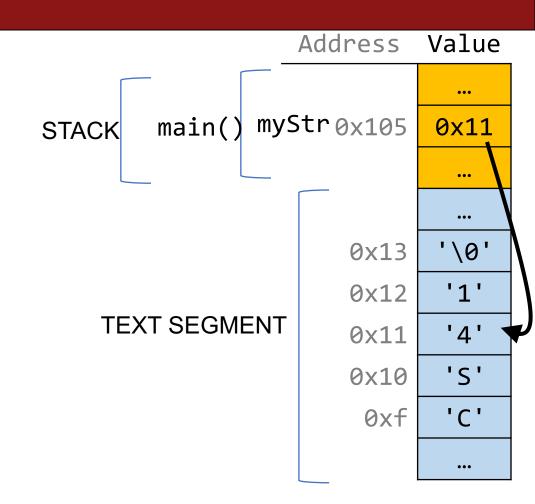
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                                                                                    Value
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                                                                                    Value
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    char *myStr = "CS41";
                                                                      prefix 0xe8
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                                                            TEXT SEGMENT
                                                                                     '4'
                                                                              0x11
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Recap

- Recap: String Operations
- Demo: Buffer Overflow and Valgrind
- Arrays of Strings
- **Practice:** Password Verification
- Pointers
- Announcements
- Strings in Memory
- Pointers to Strings

Next time: Arrays and Pointers