

Functions

Victor Eijkhout and Charlie Dey

spring 2017

Function basics

Turn blocks of code into functions

- Code fragment with clear function:
- Turn into *subprogram*: function *definition*.
- Use by single line: function *call*.

Function definition and call

```
for (int i=0; i<N; i++) {  
    cout << i;  
    if (i%2==0)  
        cout << " is even";  
    else  
        cout << " is odd";  
    cout << endl;  
}  
  
void report_evenness(int n) {  
    cout << i;  
    if (i%2==0)  
        cout << " is even";  
    else  
        cout << " is odd";  
    cout << endl;  
}  
  
...  
int main() {  
    ...  
    for (int i=0; i<N; i++)  
        report_evenness(i);  
}
```

Why functions?

- Easier to read
- Shorter code: reuse
- Maintenance and debugging

Prime function

Using a function, primality testing would look like:

```
bool isprime;  
number = 13;  
isprime = prime_test_function(number);
```

Anatomy of a function definition

- Result type: what's computed. `void` if no result
- Name: make it descriptive.
- Arguments: zero or more.
`int i, double x, double y`
- Body: any length.
- Return statement: usually at the end, but can be anywhere;
the computed result.

Program with function

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

int twice_function(int n) {
    int twice_the_input = 2*n;
    return twice_the_input;
}

int main() {
    int number = 3;
    cout << "Twice three is: " <<
        twice_function(number) << endl;
    return 0;
}
```


Function call

The function call

1. causes the function body to be executed, and
2. the function call is replaced by whatever you return.
3. (If the function does not return anything, for instance because it only prints output, you declare the return type to be void.)

Functions without input, without return result

```
void print_header() {  
    cout << "*****" << endl;  
    cout << "* Output      *" << endl;  
    cout << "*****" << endl;  
}  
  
int main() {  
    print_header();  
    cout << "The results for day 25:" << endl;  
    // code that prints results ....  
    return 0;  
}
```

Functions with input

```
void print_header(int day) {  
    cout << "*****" << endl;  
    cout << "* Output      *" << endl;  
    cout << "*****" << endl;  
    cout << "The results for day " << day << ":" << endl;  
}  
  
int main() {  
    print_header(25);  
    // code that prints results ....  
    return 0;  
}
```

Functions with return result

```
#include <cmath>
double pi() {
    return 4*atan(1.0);
}
```

Scope

Function body is a *scope*: local variables.

No local functions.

Project Exercise 1

Write a function that takes an integer input, and return a boolean corresponding to whether the input was prime.

```
bool isprime;  
isprime = prime_test_function(13);
```

Read the number in, and print the value of the boolean.

Project Exercise 2

Take the prime number testing program, and modify it to read in how many prime numbers you want to print. Print that many successive primes. Keep a variable `number_of_primes_found` that is increased whenever a new prime is found.

Parameter passing

Mathematical type function

Pretty good design:

- pass data into a function,
- return result through `return` statement.
- Parameters are copied into the function.
- *pass by value*

Exercise 3

Early computers had no hardware for computing a square root. Instead, they used *Newton's method*. Suppose you want to compute

$$x = \sqrt{y}.$$

This is equivalent to finding the zero of

$$f(x) = x^2 - y.$$

Newton's method does this by evaluating

$$x_{\text{next}} = x - f(x)/f'(x)$$

until the guess is accurate enough.

- Write functions `f(x,y)` and `deriv(x,y)`, and a function `newton_root` that uses `f` and `deriv` to iterate to some precision.
- Take an initial guess for `x`, not zero.
- As a stopping test, use $|f(x,y)| < 10^{-5}$.

Results other than through return

Also good design:

- Return no function result,
- or return (0 is success, nonzero various informative statuses), and
- return other information by changing the parameters.
- *pass by reference*

Pass by reference example

```
bool can_read_value( int &value ) {  
    int file_status = try_open_file();  
    if (file_status==0)  
        value = read_value_from_file();  
    return file_status!=0;  
}  
...  
if (!can_read_value(n))  
    // if you can't read the value, set a default  
    n = 10;
```

Exercise 4

Write a function `swap` of two parameters that exchanges the input values:

```
int i=2,j=3;  
swap(i,j);  
// now i==3 and j==2
```

Exercise 5

Write a function that tests divisibility and returns a remainder:

```
int number,divisor,remainder;
// get the number and divisor from the user
if ( is_divisible(number,divisor,remainder) )
    cout << number << " is divisible by " << divisor << endl;
else
    cout << number << "/" << divisor <<
        " has remainder " << remainder << endl;
```

Recursion

Recursion

Functions are allowed to call themselves, which is known as *recursion*. You can define factorial as

$$F(n) = n \times F(n - 1) \quad \text{if } n > 1, \text{ otherwise } 1$$

```
int factorial( const int n ) {  
    if (n==1)  
        return 1;  
    else  
        return n*factorial(n-1);  
}
```


Exercise 6

The sum of squares:

$$S_n = \sum_{n=1}^N n^2$$

can be defined recursively as

$$S_1 = 1, \quad S_n = n^2 + S_{n-1}.$$

Write a recursive function that implements this second definition.
Test it on numbers that are input by the user.

Then write a program that prints the first 100 sums of squares.

Exercise 7

Write a recursive function for computing Fibonacci numbers:

$$F_0 = 1, \quad F_1 = 1, \quad F_n = F_{n-1} + F_{n-2}$$

First write a program that computes F_n for a value n that is input by the user.

Then write a program that prints out a sequence of Fibonacci numbers; the user should input how many.

Polymorphic functions

You can have multiple functions with the same name:

```
double sum(double a,double b) {  
    return a+b; }  
double sum(double a,double b,double c) {  
    return a+b+c; }
```

Distinguished by input parameters: can not differ only in return type.

Default arguments

Functions can have *default argument(s)*:

```
double distance( const double x, const double y=0. ) {  
    return sqrt( (x-y)*(x-y) );  
}
```

Any default argument(s) should come last in the parameter list.