

Ve 280

Programming and Elementary Data Structures

const Qualifier;
Procedural Abstraction

Announcement

- Project 1 released on Canvas
 - On C++ Basics
 - Due by midnight of June 4th

Outline

- Review of C++ Basics: Struct
- const Qualifier
- Procedural Abstraction

Structs

- Declare a `struct` type that holds grades.
- Why struct? To create a **compound type**

```
struct Grades {  
    char name[9];  
    int  midterm;  
    int  final;  
};
```

name:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

midterm:

--

final:

--

- This statement declares the **type** “struct grades”, but does not declare any **objects** of that type.
- We can define single objects of this type as follows:

```
struct Grades Alice;
```

Structs

```
struct Grades {  
    char name[9];  
    int  midterm;  
    int  final;  
};
```

name:

A	l	i	c	e	\0			
---	---	---	---	---	----	--	--	--

midterm:

60

final:

85

- We can initialize them in the following way:

```
struct Grades Alice= {"Alice", 60, 85};
```

Structs

```
struct Grades {  
    char name[9];  
    int  midterm;  
    int  final;  
};
```

name:

A	l	i	c	e	\0			
---	---	---	---	---	----	--	--	--

midterm:

65

final:

85

- Once we have a struct, we can access its individual components using the “dot” operator:
`Alice.midterm = 65;`
 - This changes the `midterm` element of `Alice` to 65
- If you have a pointer to struct, visit component using “->”

```
struct Grades *gPtr = &Alice;  
gPtr->final = 90;
```

Outline

- Review of C++ Basics: Struct
- **const Qualifier**
- Procedural Abstraction

const Qualifier

- Often, a numerical value in a program could have some valid meaning.

```
char name[256];
```

The max size of name string

- Also, that value with the same meaning may appear many times in the program

```
for (i=0; i < 256; i++) ...
```

- If we only use 256, it has two drawbacks
 - The readability is bad.
 - If we need to update max size of a name string from 256 to 512, we need to examine each 256 (some may have other meanings) and update the corresponding ones.
 - It takes time and is error-prone!

const Qualifier

- Instead of just using 256, define a constant, and use the constant:

```
const int MAXSIZE = 256;  
char name[MAXSIZE];
```

- Usually, constant is defined as a global variable.
- Property
 - Cannot be modified later on
 - Must be initialized when it is defined

```
const int a = 10;  
a = 11; // Error
```

```
const int i;  
// Error
```

const Reference

```
const int iVal = 10;  
const int &rVal = iVal;
```

- Furthermore, const reference can be initialized to an rvalue

```
const int &ref = 10; // OK  
const int &ref = iVal+10; // OK
```

- In contrast, nonconst reference cannot be initialized to an rvalue

```
int &ref = 10; // ERROR  
int &ref = iVal+10; // ERROR
```

Practical Use of const Reference

- One popular use of const reference: pass struct/class as the function argument

```
int avg_exam(const struct Grades & gr) {  
    return (gr.midterm+gr.final)/2;  
}
```

- In comparison:

```
int avg_exam(struct Grades gr) { ... }
```

Problem? Pass-by-value can be **expensive**,
particularly for large structures.

```
int avg_exam(struct Grades & gr) { ... }
```

Problem? It allows for the possibility of (mistakenly)
changing the contents of the **caller's** `gr`.

Practical Use of const Reference

- One popular use of const reference: pass struct/class as the function argument

```
int avg_exam(const struct Grades & gr) {  
    return (gr.midterm+gr.final)/2;  
}
```

- Advantages of using const reference as argument
 - We don't have the expense of a copy.
 - We have the safety guarantee that the function cannot change the caller's state.

Practical Use of const Reference

- Compared with non-const reference, another advantage is function call with consts or expressions is OK
 - In contrast, for non-const reference, function call with consts or expressions is not OK

```
foo("Hello world!")
```

```
void foo(string & str) {...}
```

versus

```
void foo(const string &str) {...}
```

const Pointers

- When you have pointers, there are two things you might change:
 1. The value of the pointer.
 2. The value of the object to which the pointer points.
- Either (or both) can be made unchangeable:

```
const T *p;    // "T" (the pointed-to object)
               // pointer to const // cannot be changed by pointer p
T *const p;    // "p" (the pointer) cannot be
               // const pointer  // changed
const T *const p; // neither can be changed.
```

Pointers to const

Example

```
int a = 53;
const int *cptr = &a;
    // OK: A pointer to a const object
    // can be assigned the address of a
    // nonconst object
*cptr = 42;
    // ERROR: We cannot use a pointer to
    // const to change the underlying
    // object.
a = 28 // OK
int b = 39;
cptr = &b; // OK: the value in the pointer
           // can be changed.
```

const Pointers

Example

```
int a = 53;  
int *const cptr = &a;  
    // OK: initialization  
*cptr = 42;  
    // OK: We can use a const pointer to  
    // change the underlying object.  
int b = 39;  
cptr = &b;  
    // ERROR: We cannot change the value of  
    // a const pointer.
```


Define Pointers to const Using typedef

- Recall typedef: give an alias to the existing types:
`typedef existing_type alias_name;`
 - Example: `typedef int * intptr;`
Then we can use it: `intptr ip;`
- Use `typedef` to define pointer to const:
 - `typedef const T constT_t;`
`typedef constT_t * ptr_constT_t;`
 - Now `ptr_constT_t` is an alias for the type of
`const T *` pointer to const

Define const Pointers Using typedef

Group exercise

- Question: How do we use `typedef` to rename the type of `T *const`? const pointer

Practical Use of Pointer to const

Example

```
void strcpy(char *dest, const char *src)
    // src is a NULL-terminated string.
    // dest is big enough to hold a copy of src.
    // The function place a copy of src in dest.
    // src is not changed.
{ ... }
```

- Strictly speaking, we don't **need** to include the `const` qualifier here since the comment promises that we won't modify the source string
- So, why include it?

Practical Use of Pointer to `const`

Example


- Why include `const`?
- Because once you add it, you CANNOT change `src`, even if you do so by mistake.
- Such a mistake will be caught by the **compiler**.
 - Bugs that are detected at compile time are among the easiest bugs to fix – those are the kinds of bugs we want.
- **General guideline**: Use `const` for things that are passed by reference, but won't be changed.

Pointer to const versus Normal Pointer

- Pointers-to-const-T are **not the same** type as pointers-to-T.
- You can use a pointer-to-T anywhere you expect a pointer-to-const-T, but NOT vice versa.


```
int const_ptr(const int *ptr)
{
    ...
}

int main()
{
    int a = 0;
    int *b = &a;
    const_ptr(b);
}
```



```
int nonconst_ptr(int *ptr)
{
    ...
}

int main()
{
    int a = 0;
    const int *b = &a;
    nonconst_ptr(b);
}
```



Pointer to const versus Normal Pointer

- Why can you use a pointer-to-T anywhere you expect a pointer-to-const-T?
 - Code that expects a pointer-to-const-T will work perfectly well for a pointer-to-T; it's just guaranteed not to try to change it.
- Why **cannot** you use a pointer-to-const-T anywhere you expect a pointer-to-T?
 - Code that expects a pointer-to-T might try to change the T, but this is illegal for a pointer-to-const-T!

Outline

- Review of C++ Basics: Struct
- `const` Qualifier
- Procedural Abstraction

Abstraction

- Abstraction
 - Provides only those details that matter.
 - Eliminates unnecessary details and reduces complexity.
- Abstraction is like a black box: we know how to use a black box, but we don't know how it operates
- A person using a black box only needs to know **what** it does, NOT **how** it does it
- Example: Multiplication algorithm
 - Many ways to do: table lookup, summing, etc.
 - Each looks quite different, but they do the **same** thing.
 - In general, a user won't care how it's done, just that it multiplies.

Abstraction

- There are two types of abstraction:
 - Procedural  Focus of this lecture
 - Data

Procedural Abstraction

- **Function** is a way of providing “computational” abstractions.

```
int multi(int a, int b)
{
    // An implementation
    // of multiplication
    ...
}
```



```
int square(int a)
{
    return multi(a, a);
}
```

Using the “multi”
abstraction

Procedural Abstraction

- For any function, there is a person who **implements** the function (**the author**) and a person who **uses** the function (**the client**).
- **The author** needs to think carefully about **what** the function is supposed to do, as well as **how** the function is going to do it.
- In contrast, **the client** only needs to consider the **what**, not the **how**.
- Since **how** is much more complicated, this is a Big Win for **the client**!
- In individual programming, you will often be the author and the client. Sometimes it is to your advantage to “forget the details” and only concentrate on abstraction.

Procedural Abstraction

- Procedural abstractions, done properly, have two important properties:
 - **Local**: the **implementation** of an abstraction does not depend on any other abstraction **implementation**.
 - To realize an implementation, you only need to focus **locally**.
 - **Substitutable**: you can replace one (correct) **implementation** of an abstraction with another (correct) one, and no callers of that abstraction will need to be modified.

Implementation of square() does not depend on **how you implement multi()**

```
int square(int a)
{
    return multi(a,a);
}
```

We can **change** the implementation of multi(). It won't affect square() as long as it does multiplication

Procedural Abstraction

- Locality and substitutability only apply to **implementations** of abstractions, not the **abstractions** themselves.
 - If you change the **abstraction** that is offered, the change is not local.
- It is CRITICALLY IMPORTANT to get the **abstractions** right before you start writing code.

```
int square(int a)
{
    return multi(a,a);
}
```

We cannot change
the abstraction of
“multi” to $2*a*b$.

Procedural Abstraction: Summary

- **Abstraction** and **abstraction implementation** are **different!**
 - Abstraction: tells **what**
 - Implementation: tells **how**
 - **Same** abstraction could have **different** implementations
- If you need to change what an **abstraction** itself, it can involve many different changes in the program.
- However, if you only change the **implementation** of an abstraction, then you are guaranteed that no other part of the project needs to change.
 - **This is vital for projects that involve many programmers.**

Procedural Abstraction and Function

- **Function** is a way of providing procedure abstractions.
- The **type signature** of a function can be considered as **part of the abstraction**
 - Recall: type signature includes return type, number of arguments and the type of each argument.
 - If you change type signature, callers must also change.
- Besides type signature, we need some way to describe **the abstraction (not implementation)** of the function.
 - We use **specifications** to do this.

Procedural Abstraction

Specifications

- We describe procedural abstraction by specification. It answers three questions:
 - What pre-conditions must hold to use the function?
 - Does the function change any inputs (even implicit ones, e.g., a global variable)? If so, how?
 - What does the procedure actually do?
- We answer each of these three questions in a **specification comment**, and we **always** include one with **function declaration** (or function definition in case we don't have declaration)

```
...
```

```
// SPECIFICATION COMMENT
```

```
int add(int a, int b);
```


Procedural Abstraction

Specification Comments

- There are three clauses to the specification:
 - **REQUIRES**: the pre-conditions that must hold, **if any**.
 - **MODIFIES**: how inputs are modified, **if any**.
 - **EFFECTS**: what the procedure computes given legal inputs.
- Note that the first two clauses have an “**if any**”, which means they may be empty, in which case you may omit them.

Procedural Abstraction

Specification Comment Example

```
bool isEven(int n);  
    // EFFECTS: returns true if n is even,  
    // false otherwise
```

- This function returns true if and only if its argument is an even number.
- Since the function isEven is well-defined over all inputs (every possible integer is either even or odd) there need be no REQUIRES clause.
- Since isEven modifies no (implicit or explicit) arguments, there need be no MODIFIES clause.

Procedural Abstraction

Specification Comment Example

```
int factorial(int n);  
    // REQUIRES: n >= 0  
    // EFFECTS: returns n!
```

- The mathematical abstraction of factorial is only defined for non-negative integers. So, there is a **REQUIRE** clause.
- The **EFFECTS** clause is only valid for inputs satisfying the **REQUIRES** clause.
- Importantly, this means that the implementation of factorial **DOES NOT HAVE TO CHECK** if $n < 0$! The function specification tells the caller that s/he **must** pass a non-negative integer.

Procedural Abstraction

More Function Details

- Functions without REQUIRES clauses are considered **complete**; they are valid for all input.
- Functions with REQUIRES clauses are considered **partial**
 - Some arguments that are "legal" with respect to the type (e.g., int) are not legal with respect to the function.
- Whenever possible, it is much better to write complete functions than partial ones.
- When we discuss **exceptions**, we will see a way to convert partial functions to complete ones.

Procedural Abstraction

More Function Details

- What about the MODIFIES clause?
- A MODIFIES clause identifies any function argument or global state that **might** change if this function is called.
 - For example, it can happen with call-by-reference as opposed to call-by-value inputs.

Procedural Abstraction

Specification Comment Example

```
void swap(int &x, int &y);  
  // MODIFIES: x, y  
  // EFFECTS: exchanges the values of  
  // x and y
```

- NOTE: If the function **could** change a reference argument, the argument must go in the MODIFIES clause. Leave it out only if the function can **never** change it.

Reference

- **const Qualifier**
 - C++ Primer, 4th Edition, Chapter 2.4
- **const Pointers**
 - C++ Primer, 4th Edition, Chapter 4.2.5
- **const References**
 - C++ Primer, 4th Edition, Chapter 2.5
- **Procedural Abstraction**
 - Problem Solving with C++, 8th Edition, Chapter 4.4 and 5.3