

C - ARRAYS

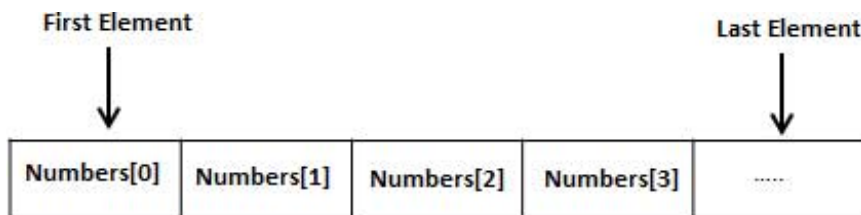
http://www.tutorialspoint.com/cprogramming/c_arrays.htm

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C programming language provides a data structure called **the array**, which can store a fixed-size sequential collection of elements of the same type. An array is used to store a collection of data, but it is often more useful to think of an array as a collection of variables of the same type.

Instead of declaring individual variables, such as `number0`, `number1`, ..., and `number99`, you declare one array variable such as `numbers` and use `numbers[0]`, `numbers[1]`, and ..., `numbers[99]` to represent individual variables. A specific element in an array is accessed by an index.

All arrays consist of contiguous memory locations. The lowest address corresponds to the first element and the highest address to the last element.



Declaring Arrays

To declare an array in C, a programmer specifies the type of the elements and the number of elements required by an array as follows:

```
type arrayName [ arraySize ];
```

This is called a *single-dimensional* array. The **arraySize** must be an integer constant greater than zero and **type** can be any valid C data type. For example, to declare a 10-element array called **balance** of type `double`, use this statement:

```
double balance[10];
```

Now `balance` is a variable array which is sufficient to hold up to 10 double numbers.

Initializing Arrays

You can initialize array in C either one by one or using a single statement as follows:

```
double balance[5] = {1000.0, 2.0, 3.4, 17.0, 50.0};
```

The number of values between braces `{ }` can not be larger than the number of elements that we declare for the array between square brackets `[]`. Following is an example to assign a single element of the array:

If you omit the size of the array, an array just big enough to hold the initialization is created. Therefore, if you write:

```
double balance[] = {1000.0, 2.0, 3.4, 17.0, 50.0};
```

You will create exactly the same array as you did in the previous example.

```
balance[4] = 50.0;
```

The above statement assigns element number 5th in the array a value of 50.0. Array with 4th index will be 5th i.e. last element because all arrays have 0 as the index of their first element which is also called base index. Following is the pictorial representation of the same array we discussed above:

	0	1	2	3	4
balance	1000.0	2.0	3.4	7.0	50.0

Accessing Array Elements

An element is accessed by indexing the array name. This is done by placing the index of the element within square brackets after the name of the array. For example:

```
double salary = balance[9];
```

The above statement will take 10th element from the array and assign the value to salary variable. Following is an example which will use all the above mentioned three concepts viz. declaration, assignment and accessing arrays:

```
#include <stdio.h>

int main ()
{
    int n[ 10 ]; /* n is an array of 10 integers */
    int i,j;

    /* initialize elements of array n to 0 */
    for ( i = 0; i < 10; i++ )
    {
        n[ i ] = i + 100; /* set element at location i to i + 100 */
    }

    /* output each array element's value */
    for (j = 0; j < 10; j++ )
    {
        printf("Element[%d] = %d\n", j, n[j] );
    }

    return 0;
}
```

When the above code is compiled and executed, it produces the following result:

```
Element[0] = 100
Element[1] = 101
Element[2] = 102
Element[3] = 103
Element[4] = 104
Element[5] = 105
Element[6] = 106
Element[7] = 107
Element[8] = 108
Element[9] = 109
```

C Arrays in Detail

Arrays are important to C and should need lots of more details. There are following few important concepts related to array which should be clear to a C programmer:

Concept	Description
Multi-dimensional arrays	C supports multidimensional arrays. The simplest form of the multidimensional array is the two-dimensional array.
Passing arrays to functions	You can pass to the function a pointer to an array by specifying the array's name without an index.

<u>Return array from a function</u>	C allows a function to return an array.
<u>Pointer to an array</u>	You can generate a pointer to the first element of an array by simply specifying the array name, without any index.