Advanced Topics

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Fall 2018

Pointers

Shared pointers

Shared pointers look like regular pointers:

```
#include <memory>

std::shared_ptr<myobject> obj_ptr
    = std::make_shared<myobject>(x);
    // = std::shared_ptr<myobject>( new myobject(x) );
obj_ptr->mymethod(1.1);
cout << obj_ptr->member << endl;

auto array = std::shared_ptr<double>( new double[100] );
// ILLEGAL: array[1] = 2.14;
array->at(2) = 3.15;
```

Reference counting illustrated

We need a class with constructor and destructor tracing:

```
class thing {
public:
  thing()  { cout << ".. calling constructor\n"; };
  ~thing() { cout << ".. calling destructor\n"; };
};
```

Pointer overwrite

Let's create a pointer and overwrite it:

Code:

```
cout << "set pointer1"
     << endl;
auto thing_ptr1 =
  make_shared<thing>();
cout << "overwrite pointer"
     << endl;
thing_ptr1 = nullptr;
```

Output from running ptr1 in code directory pointer:

```
set pointer1
.. calling constructor
overwrite pointer
.. calling destructor
```

Pointer copy

Code:

```
cout << "set pointer2" << endl;
auto thing_ptr2 =
  make_shared<thing>();
cout << "set pointer3 by copy"
     << endl;
auto thing_ptr3 = thing_ptr2;
cout << "overwrite pointer2"
     << endl;
thing_ptr2 = nullptr;
cout << "overwrite pointer3"
     << endl;
thing_ptr3 = nullptr;
```

Output from running ptr2 in code directory pointer:

```
set pointer2
.. calling constructor
set pointer3 by copy
overwrite pointer2
overwrite pointer3
.. calling destructor
```

Linked list code

```
node *node::prepend_or_append(node *other) {
  if (other->value>this->value) {
    this->tail = other;
    return this;
  } else {
    other->tail = this;
    return other;
  }
};
```

Can we do this with shared pointers?

A problem with shared pointers

```
shared_pointer<node> node:prepend_or_append
    ( shared_ptr<node> other ) {
  if (other->value>this->value) {
    this->tail = other;
```

So far so good. However, `this` is a `node*`, not a `shared_ptr<node>`, so

```
    return this;
```

returns the wrong type.

Solution: shared from this

It is possible to have a 'shared pointer to this' if you define your node class with (warning, major magic alert):

```
class node : public enable_shared_from_this<node> {
```

This allows you to write:

```
return this->shared_from_this();
```

Namespaces

You have already seen namespaces

Safest:

```
#include <vector>
int main() {
  std::vector<stuff> foo;
}
```

Drastic:

```
#include <vector>
using namespace std;
int main() {
  vector<stuff> foo;
}
```

Prudent:

```
#include <vector>
using std::vector;
int main() {
  vector<stuff> foo;
}
```

Why not ‘using namespace std’?

This compiles, but should not:

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

int main() {
  int i=1,j=2;
  swap(i,j);
  cout << i << endl;
  return 0;
}
```

This gives an error:

```
#include <iostream>
using std::cout;
using std::endl;

int main() {
  int i=1,j=2;
  swap(i,j);
  cout << i << endl;
  return 0;
}
```

Defining a namespace

You can make your own namespace by writing

```
namespace a_namespace {
  // definitions
  class an_object {
  };
|
```

Namespace usage

```
a_namespace::an_object myobject();
```

or

```
using namespace a_namespace;
an_object myobject();
```

or

```
using a_namespace::an_object;
an_object myobject();
```

Templates

Templated type name

Basically, you want the type name to be a variable. Syntax:

```
template <typename yourtypevariable>
// ... stuff with yourtypevariable ...
```

Example: function

Definition:

```
template<typename T>
void function(T var) { cout << var << end; }
```

Usage:

```
int i; function(i);
double x; function(x);
```

and the code will behave as if you had defined `function` twice, once for `int` and once for `double`.

Exercise 1

Machine precision, or 'machine epsilon', is sometimes defined as the smallest number ϵ so that $1 + \epsilon > 1$ in computer arithmetic.

Write a templated function `epsilon` so that the following code prints out the values of the machine precision for the `float` and `double` type respectively:

```
float float_eps;
epsilon(float_eps);
cout << "For float, epsilon is " << float_eps << endl;

double double_eps;
epsilon(double_eps);
cout << "For double, epsilon is " << double_eps << endl;
```

Templated vector

the Standard Template Library (STL) contains in effect

```
template<typename T>
class vector {
private:
  // data definitions omitted
public:
  T at(int i) { /* return element i */ };
  int size() { /* return size of data */ };
  // much more
}
```

Exceptions

Exception throwing

Throwing an *exception* is one way of signalling an error or unexpected behaviour:

```
void do_something() {
  if ( oops )
    throw(5);
}
```

Catching an exception

It now becomes possible to detect this unexpected behaviour by *catching* the exception:

```
try {
  do_something();
} catch (int i) {
  cout << "doing something failed: error=" << i << endl;
}
```

Exception classes

```
class MyError {
public :
  int error_no; string error_msg;
  MyError( int i,string msg )
  : error_no(i),error_msg(msg) {};
}

throw( MyError(27,"oops");

try {
  // something
} catch ( MyError &m ) {
  cout << "My error with code=" << m.error_no
    << " msg=" << m.error_msg << endl;
}
```

You can use exception inheritance!

Multiple catches

You can multiple `catch` statements to catch different types of errors:

```
try {
  // something
} catch ( int i ) {
  // handle int exception
} catch ( std::string c ) {
  // handle string exception
}
```

Catch any exception

Catch exceptions without specifying the type:

```
try {
  // something
} catch ( ... ) { // literally: three dots
  cout << "Something went wrong!" << endl;
}
```

More about exceptions

- Functions can define what exceptions they throw:
```
void func() throw( MyError, std::string );
void funk() throw();
```
- Predefined exceptions: `bad_alloc`, `bad_exception`, etc.
- An exception handler can throw an exception; to rethrow the same exception use '`throw;`' without arguments.
- Exceptions delete all stack data, but not `new` data. Also, destructors are called; section **??**.
- There is an implicit `try/except` block around your main. You can replace the handler for that. See the `exception` header file.

Destructors and exceptions

The destructor is called when you throw an exception:

Code:

```
class SomeObject {
public:
  SomeObject() { cout <<
    "calling the constructor"
    << endl; };
  ~SomeObject() { cout <<
    "calling the destructor"
    << endl; };
};
  /* ... */
  try {
    SomeObject obj;
    cout << "Inside the nested scope" << endl;
    throw(1);
  } catch (...) {
    cout << "Exception caught" << endl;
  }
```

Output from running exceptobj in code directory object:

```
calling the constructor
Inside the nested scope
calling the destructor
Exception caught
```

Auto

Type deduction

In:

```
std::vector< std::shared_ptr< myclass >>*
  myvar = new std::vector< std::shared_ptr< myclass >>
                ( 20, new myclass(1.3) );
```

the compiler can figure it out:

```
auto myvar =
  new std::vector< std::shared_ptr< myclass >>
            ( 20, new myclass(1.3) );
```

Type deduction in functions

Return type can be deduced in C++17:

```
auto equal(int i,int j) {
  return i==j;
};
```

Auto and references, 1

`auto` discards references and such:

Code:

```
A my_a(5.7);
auto get_data = my_a.access();
get_data += 1;
my_a.print();
```

Output from running plainget in code directory auto:

```
data: 5.7
```

Auto and references, 2

Combine `auto` and references:

Code:

```
A my_a(5.7);
auto &get_data = my_a.access();
get_data += 1;
my_a.print();
```

Output from running refget in code directory auto:

```
data: 6.7
```

Auto and references, 3

For good measure:

Code:

```
A my_a(5.7);
const auto &get_data = my_a.access();
get_data += 1;
my_a.print();
```

Output from running constrefget in code directory auto:

```
make[3]: *** No rule to make target ‘error_constrefget.c
```

Auto iterators

```
vector<int> myvector(20);
for ( auto copy_of_int : myvector )
  s += copy_of_int;
for ( auto &ref_to_int : myvector )
  ref_to_int = s;
```

Can be used with anything that is iteratable
(vector, map, your own classes!)