

# Rust A safe language for low-level programming

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### Outline

- Lecture 1: Motivation, Rust basics
- Practice session 1

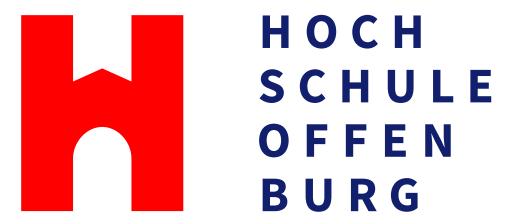
- Lecture 2: High-level language constructs
- Practice session 2

- Lecture 3: Advanced concepts
- Practice session 3
- Summary

Material available on github:

https://github.com/skogsbaer/rust\_class





### Lecture 1

Motivation, Rust basics



Control

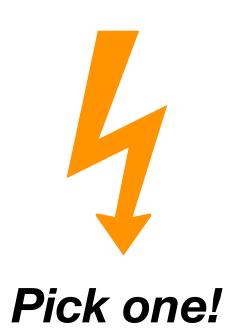
### Motivation

#### Tension between safety and control

#### **Safety**

- No memory errors
- Automatic memory management
- Data encapsulation
- Java, C#, Go, Haskell, ...

#### Want both?



- Control memory layout
- Optimize time and space usage
- Real-time requirements
- C, C++

- Systems programming requires control
- Microsoft: ~70% of security violations are caused by memory violations.
- Mozilla: majority of critical bugs in Firefox are memory related.



C++

# What makes a language unsafe?

Root of all evil: unrestricted combination of aliasing and mutation

- Use after free error
- Dangling references
- Data races

•

```
std::vector<int> v { 10, 11 };
int *vptr = &v[1];  // Alias, points into v
v.push_back(12);  // Mutate the vector
std::cout << *vptr;  // Bug (use-after-free)</pre>
```



# Type checker to the rescue

- Rust detects this bug at compile time.
- Rust prevents unrestricted combination of aliasing and mutation.
- Details explained later.

```
let mut v = vec![10, 11];
let vptr = &v[1];  // Alias, points into v
v.push(12);  // Mutate the vector
println!("{}", *vptr); // Compile error
```

Compile error: cannot borrow v as mutable because it is also borrowed as immutable



Rust

# Ownership

- Each value in Rust has a variable that's called its owner.
- There can only be one owner at a time.
- Ownership is moved on assignment and function calls.
- When the owner goes out of scope, the value will be released.

```
fn consume(w: Vec<i32>) {
    println!("Length of vector: {}", w.len());
    // Memory of w is released automatically
}
let mut v = vec![10, 11];
consume(v); // Transfers ownership (call by value)
v.push(12); // Compile error
```

Compile error: borrow of moved value v



# Quiz preparations

- https://pingo.coactum.de/
- Session: 912867
- Open with your laptop, tablet or mobile phone



#### Bitte warten...





### Quiz 1

# Select the examples with a compile error.

```
Rust
fn move_vec(w: Vec<i32>) {
   // left blank
fn example_1() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    let v2 = v;
   move_vec(v);
fn example_2() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
   move_vec(v);
   println!("{:?}", v);
```

```
Rust
```

```
fn example_3() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    move_vec(v);
    let v2 = v;
}
fn example_4() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    let v2 = v;
    println!("{:?}", v);
    move_vec(v2);
}
```

- https://pingo.coactum.de/
- Session: 912867



# Solution of quiz 1

### All examples exhibit a compile error.

```
Rust
fn move_vec(w: Vec<i32>) {
    // left blank
fn example_1() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    let v2 = v;
    move_vec(v);
fn example_2() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    move_vec(v);
    println!("{:?}", v);
```

```
Rust
fn example_3() {
   let v = vec![10, 11];
   move_vec(v);
    let v2 = v;
fn example_4() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    let v2 = v;
    println!("{:?}", v);
   move_vec(v2);
```

Compile error: value used after move



### Quiz 2

Select the examples with undefined behavior at runtime.

```
Rust
fn move_vec(w: Vec<i32>) {
   // left blank
fn example_1() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    let v2 = v;
   move_vec(v);
fn example_2() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
   move_vec(v);
   println!("{:?}", v);
```

```
Rust
```

```
fn example_3() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    move_vec(v);
    let v2 = v;
}
fn example_4() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    let v2 = v;
    println!("{:?}", v);
}
```

- https://pingo.coactum.de/
- Session: 912867



# Solution of quiz 2

Rust

**Examples 1-3 have undefined behavior at runtime.** 

- Vector is released at the end of move\_vec.
- Example 1: releases vector a second time at the end of example\_1
- Example 2: uses the deallocated vector with println!
- Example 3: releases vector a second time at the end of example\_3
- Example 4: no undefined behavior.

```
Rust
fn move_vec(w: Vec<i32>) {
    // left blank
fn example_1() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    let v2 = v;
    move_vec(v);
fn example_2() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    move_vec(v);
    println!("{:?}", v);
```

```
fn example_3() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    move_vec(v);
    let v2 = v;
}
fn example_4() {
    let v = vec![10, 11];
    let v2 = v;
    println!("{:?}", v);
}
```



# Borrowing

- Ownership transfer is not always want we want.
- We can also temporarily borrow a value.
- &T is a reference to a value of type T.
- References are borrowed.
  - No ownership transfer
  - No release at end of borrow

```
fn just_use(w: &Vec<i32>) {
    println!("Length of vector: {}", w.len());
    // No release
}
let mut v = vec![10, 11];
just_use(&v); // Borrows reference
v.push(12); // Works
```



Rust

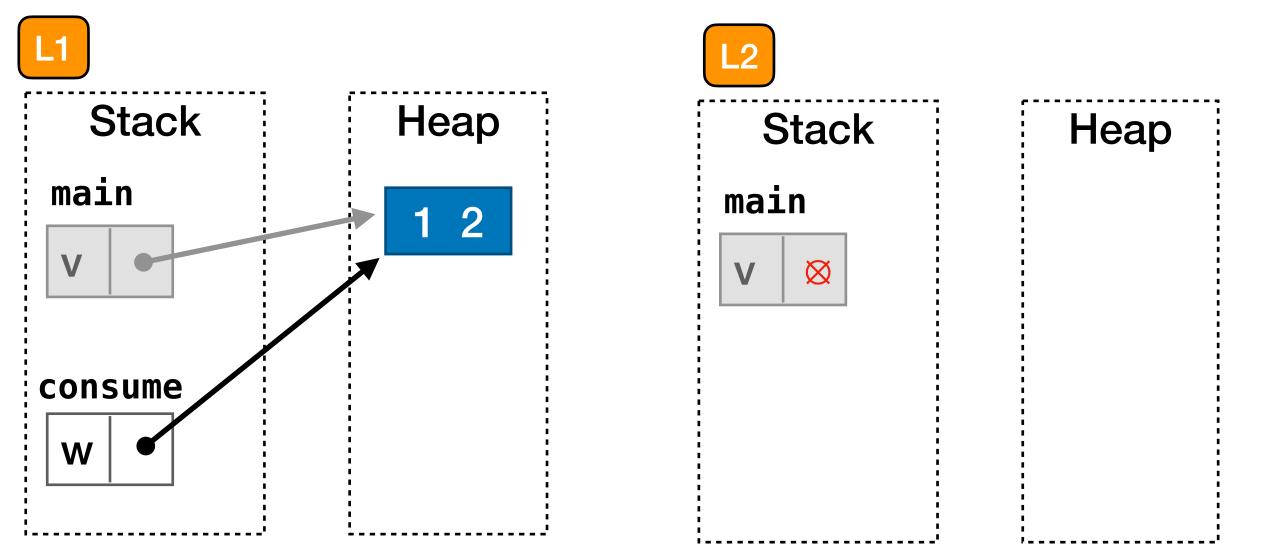
### Visualization

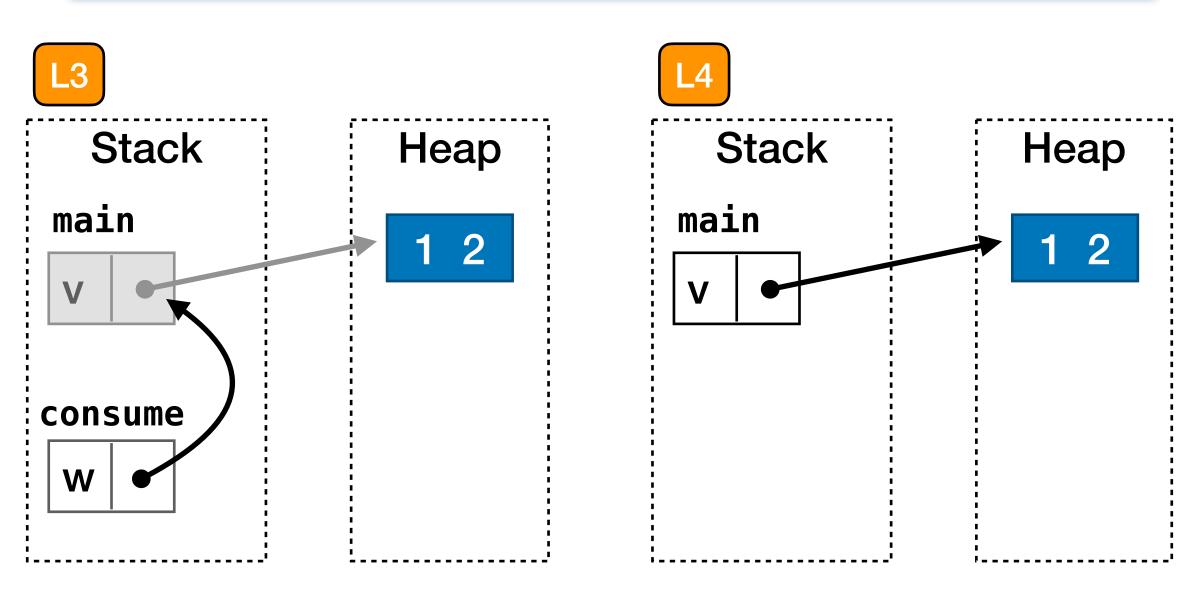
```
fn consume(w: Vec<i32>) {
    println!("Length of vector: {}", w.len());
    // Memory of w is released automatically
}

fn main() {
    let mut v = vec![10, 11];
    consume(v);
    v.push(12); // Compile error
}
```

```
fn just_use(w: &Vec<i32>) {
    println!("Length of vector: {}", w.len());
    // No release
}

fn main() {
    let mut v = vec![10, 11];
    just_use(&v); // Borrows reference
    v.push(12);
}
```







## Mutability

- Variables are immutable by default.
- Immutability is deep: cannot change anything inside.

```
let v = vec![10, 11];
v = vec![1,2];
```

Compile error: cannot assign twice to immutable variable v.

```
let v = vec![10, 11];
v.push(13);
```

Compile error: cannot borrow v as mutable.

```
Type of v: Vec<Vec<i32>
let v = vec![vec![10, 11]];
v[0].push(13);
```

Compile error: cannot borrow v as mutable.

• let mut declares a variable as mutable

```
let mut v = vec![10, 11];
v = vec![1,2]; // Works
```

```
let mut v = vec![10, 11];
v.push(13); // Works
```

let mut v = vec![vec![10, 11]];
v[0].push(13); // Works

&T immutable borrow

• &mut T mutable borrow



### Rules of ownership and borrowing

- Exactly one owner.
  - Ownership moved on assigment.
  - Memory is released if owner goes out of scope.
- One mutable borrow XOR any number of immutable borrows at the same time.
- The lifetime of a borrow is determined from the source code or explicit annotations.

```
let mut v = vec![10, 11];
let vptr = &v[1];
v.push(12);
println!("{}", *vptr);
Lifetime of immutable
borrow vptr

Lifetime of immutable
borrow vptr

borrow for calling push
```

- Declaration of push: fn push(v: &mut Vec<i32>, i: i32)
- v.push(12) is short for push(&mut v, 12)

#### Value of type

- T ownership
- &T immutable borrow
- &mut T mutable borrow

#### Expression

- e move
- &e immutable ref
- &mut e mutable ref



Overlapping lifetimes of two borrows, one borrow is mutable.

Compile error: cannot borrow v as mutable because it is also borrowed as immutable



# Aliasing and mutation

&T Immutable borrow / shared reference: aliasing but no mutation

&mut T Mutable borrow / unique reference: no aliasing but mutation

OK: immutable references shared between threads

Data race: parallel access to the same data, one write access

Compile error: cannot borrow v as mutable because it is also borrowed as immutable



### Rust Basics (1/2)

Rust book: https://doc.rust-lang.org/book/

#### Variable declarations

```
let a = 42;  // immutable
let mut b = 0;  // mutable
let c: i32 = 5; // optional type annotation
```

#### Function definitions

```
Result type (omit if void)
```

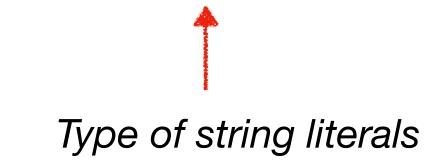
```
pub fn some_function(x: i32, y: i32) -> i32 {
    let z = x + y;
    z + 1
}
```

Visibility (public)

No distinction between statements and expression: Everything is an expression ; sequences expressions No return needed (but possible) No; at the end!

#### Important types

- signed ints: i8, i16, i32, i64, i128, isize
- unsigned ints: u8, u16, u32, u64, u128, usize
- floats: f32, f64
- bool, char
- borrows: &T, &mut T
- vectors: Vec<T>, &[T]
- strings: String, &str





### Rust Basics (2/2)

#### Structs

```
#[derive(Debug, PartialEq)]
pub struct Point2D {
    x: i32,
    y: i32
}
```

```
// Construct value
Point2D {x: x, y: y}
```

#### Control structures

```
if a == 0 {
    println!("zero");
} else {
    println!("not zero");
}
for x in vec![1,2,3] {
    println!("{}", x);
}
while a > 0 {
    a = a - 1;
}
```

```
match res {
   None => 1,
   Some(i) => i
}
```

#### Important expression forms

- function call: some\_function(1, 42)
- arithmetic: 1 + 2 \* 7
- boolean logic: true || (x < 1 && false)
- references: &T, &mut T
- vectors: Vec<T>, &[T]
- strings "zero"
- string formatting println!("{}", x);
  println!("{:?}", x);
- panic panic!("crashing");
- struct values Point2D { x: x, y: y}



# Development infrastructure

- Cargo: tool for building, testing, benchmarking, profiling, running and packaging Rust code
  - cargo run
  - cargo test
- Rust package registry: https://crates.io
- Rust playground: https://play.rust-lang.org
- IDE: Visual Studio Code
  - Use the rust-analyzer extension, not the Rust extension!
  - For debugging: extension CodeLLDB





# Coding Conventions

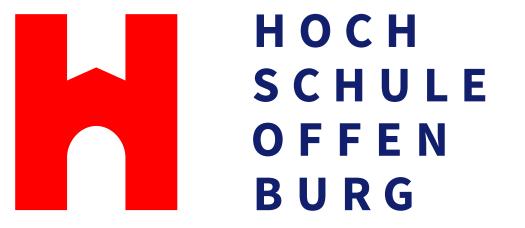
#### Namen

- snake\_case
  - variables
  - functions/methods
  - macros
  - crates / modules
- UpperCamelCase
  - structs, enums, types
  - traits
  - enum variants
- SCREAMING\_SNAKE\_CASE
  - constants
  - static variables

```
if a == 0 {
    println!("zero");
} else {
    println!("not zero");
}
```

#### Style

- No newline before opening brace {
- Closing brace } on a line on its own (except with else)
- Indent using 4 spaces
- Do not use return unless necessary
- Style guide: https://github.com/rustdev-tools/fmt-rfcs/blob/master/guide/ guide.md
- rustfmt: Tool for checking or fixing code style

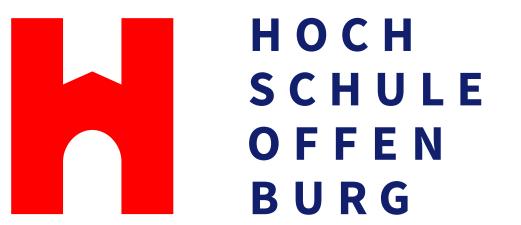


### Practice Session 1

Material available on github:

https://github.com/skogsbaer/rust\_class





### Lecture 2

High-level language constructs



### Enums

- More powerful than in C/C++
- Each alternative may carry values
- Like algebraic datatypes in functional languages
- Support pattern matching
- No NULL in Rust
- Type-safe optional values: 0ption<T>

```
enum Option<T> {
    None,
    Some(T)
}
```

Type parameter

Example: method get for HashMap<K, V>

```
fn get(&self, k: &K) -> Option<&V>
```

Type system force us to deal with the **None** case

```
let hm: HashMap<String, i32> = ...;
let foo_val = match hm.get("foo") {
   None => 0,
   Some(i) => i
};
```



### More Enums

#### Example: representing JSON

```
enum Json {
    Object(HashMap<String, Json>),
    Array(Vec<Json>),
    String(String),
    Number(f64),
    Bool(bool),
    Null,
}
```

Recursion

```
fn is_primitive(j: &Json) -> bool {
    match j {
        Json::Object(_) | Json::Array(_) => false,
        _ => true
    }
}
```



# Error handling

- 1. Unexpected problems: panic! ("some bug")
  - Aborts the current thread
  - Catching is possible but discouraged.
- 2. Expected problems: Result type
  - Examples: Working with files, network operations, ...
  - Result is either 0k or Err
  - Ways to handle the result:
    - Pattern matching
    - Error propagation via ?
    - unwrap (crashes, don't use)

```
enum Result<T, E> {
    Ok(T),
    Err(E),
}
```



# Pattern Matching on Result

from Rust's stdlib

Example: TCP server

```
type io::Result<T> = Result<T, io::Error>; // specialized result for io
fn TcpListener::bind(addr: &str) -> io::Result<TcpListener>
fn TcpListener::accept(&self) -> io::Result<(TcpStream, SocketAddr)>
fn TcpStream::write(&mut self, buf: &[u8]) -> io:Result<usize>
```

```
fn start_tcp_server_1() -> io::Result<()> {
    match TcpListener::bind("127.0.0.1:7878") {
        Err(err) => Err(err),
        0k(listener) => {
            match listener.accept() {
                Err(err) => Err(err),
                Ok((mut stream, _)) => {
                    match stream.write(&[1]) {
                        Err(err) => Err(err),
                        0k(bytes_written) =>
                            if bytes_written == 1 {
                                0k(())
                            } else {
                                Err(io::Error::new(io::ErrorKind::Other, ""))
            }}}
```



# Error propagation for Result

from Rust's stdlib

```
type io::Result<T> = Result<T, io::Error>; // specialized result for io
fn TcpListener::bind(addr: &str) -> io::Result<TcpListener>
fn TcpListener::accept(&self) -> io::Result<(TcpStream, SocketAddr)>
fn TcpStream::write(&mut self, buf: &[u8]) -> io:Result<usize>
```

```
fn start_tcp_server_2() -> io::Result<()> {
    let listener = TcpListener::bind("127.0.0.1:7878")?;
    let (mut stream, _) = listener.accept()?;
    let bytes_written = stream.write(&[1])?;
    if bytes_written == 1 {
        Ok(())
    } else {
        Err(io::Error::new(io::ErrorKind::Other, "error"))
    }
}
```

? propagates errors to the caller, unpacks Ok values



### Panic for Result

from Rust's stdlib

```
type io::Result<T> = Result<T, io::Error>; // specialized result for io
fn TcpListener::bind(addr: &str) -> io::Result<TcpListener>
fn TcpListener::accept(&self) -> io::Result<(TcpStream, SocketAddr)>
fn TcpStream::write(&mut self, buf: &[u8]) -> Result<usize>
```

```
fn start_tcp_server_3() {
    let listener = TcpListener::bind("127.0.0.1:7878").unwrap();
    let (mut stream, _) = listener.accept().unwrap();
    let bytes_written = stream.write(&[1]).unwrap();
    if bytes_written != 1 {
        panic!("error")
    }
}
```

unwrap causes a panic

Don't use



### Closures

- Anonymous functions
- May refer to variables from the context
- Can be passed around as arguments and results

```
let opt1 = Some("some string");
let opt2 = opt1.map(|s| s.len());
// opt2 is Some(11)

Parameter of Body of closure, you closure can also enclose the body in { . . . . }
```



### Traits

#### from Rust's stdlib

- Similar to interfaces (but different)
- Method signatures for shared behavior

Rust can implement several standard traits automatically

Standard trait for equality

```
// debugging output
trait Debug {
    fn fmt(&self, f: &mut Formatter<'_>) -> Result<(), Error>;
}

// user-facing output
trait Display {
    fn fmt(&self, f: &mut Formatter<'_>) -> Result<(), Error>;
}
```

```
#[derive(Debug, PartialEq)]
pub struct Point2D {
    x: i32,
    y: i32
}
impl Display for Point2D {
    fn fmt(&self, f: &mut fmt::Formatter<'_>) -> fmt::Result
{
        write!(f, "({}, {})", self.x, self.y)
     }
}
```



### Iterators

- A stream of values
- Used for iterating over elements of a collection
- Implemented by many types in the Rust standard library
- Can be implemented for custom types
- Iterator is a trait (similar to an interface)

print\_all is a generic method. It works for all iterators over T where T implements the Display trait.

```
fn print_all<T, I>(iter: I) where I : Iterator<Item=T>, T: Display {
   for (i, x) in iter.enumerate() {
      println!("Element at index {}: {}", i, x);
   }
}
```

#### Usage

```
let v = vec![1,2,3];
print_all(v.iter());
```



# String Formatting

- println! prints to stdout
- format! returns the formatted string
- {} is replaced by argument that implements Display
- {:?} is replaced by argument that implements Debug
- Details: https://doc.rust-lang.org/std/fmt/

```
format!("Hello, {}!", "world");  // => "Hello, world!"
format!("The number is {}", 1);  // => "The number is 1"
format!("{:?}", (3, 4));  // => "(3, 4)"
format!("{value}", value=4);  // => "4"
let people = "Rustaceans";
format!("Hello {people}!");  // => "Hello Rustaceans!"
format!("{:04}", 42);  // => "0042" with leading zeros
```



# Strings

- String heap-allocated, mutable/growable strings std::string in C++
- &str string slice: immutable reference to some string data

char\* in C++, but slightly more sophisticated

- view into parts of some String (string data lives in heap)
- string literal (string data lives in binary's text section)

```
fn play_with_strings() {
    let mut s = String::from("hello"); // turns a &str into String
    s.push_str(" world");
    println!("{}", s); // prints hello world
    let (first, second): (&str, &str) = s.split_at(5);
    println!("first={first}, second={second}"); // prints first=hello, second= world
    call_me(&s);
    call_me("foo")
}

automatic conversion between &String and &str

fn call_me(s: &str) { }
```



### Vectors

- Vec<T> heap-allocated, mutable and growable arrays of T
- &[T] slice: immutable reference to some vector data

```
let mut v = Vec::new(); // type of v: Vec<i32>
v.push(1);
v.push(2);
v.push(3);
let sub = v.get(0..2); // type of sub: Option<&[i32]>
println!("v={v:?}, sub={sub:?}"); // prints v=[1, 2, 3], sub=Some([1, 2])
let v2 = vec![4,5,6]; // type of v: Vec<i32>
```



# More high-level features

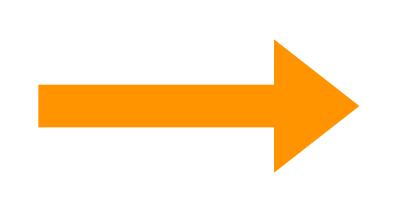
- Macros
  - More powerful than in C/C++
  - Macro body partially checked by the compiler
  - Macro invocations end with !
    - println!
    - panic!
    - format!
    - vec!
- Module system
  - Fine-grained visibility rules



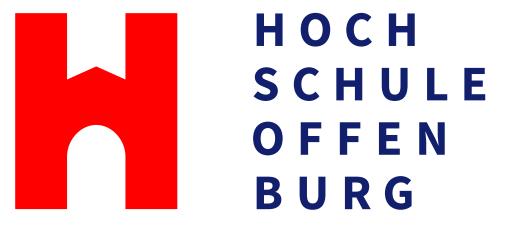
## Performance

- Performance of idiomatic Rust code is comparable to C/C++
- Sometimes it's even faster
  - Invariants checked dynamically in C/C++ are checked statically in Rust
- Bechmarks:
  - Constructing an UTF-16 string from a bytearray: Rust is slightly faster than C
  - Parsing JSON with parser combinators: Rust is faster than nodejs
  - Bezier Benchmark aus dem OABench 2.0: Rust and C perform pretty much the same

```
fn boring(k: i32) -> i32 {
    let mut result = 0;
    for j in (k..).step_by(2).zip(1..5) {
        result += j.0 + j.1;
    }
    result
}
```



```
int boring2(int i) {
   int j = i << 1;
   int k = j + 5;
   int l = i << 1;
   int m = k + l;
   int n = m + 17;
   return n;
}</pre>
```

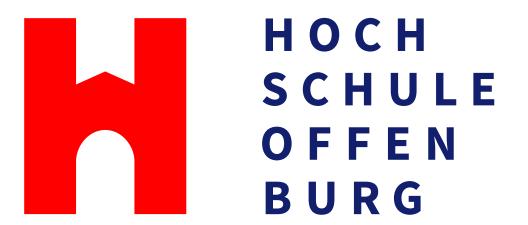


### Practice Session 2

Material available on github:

https://github.com/skogsbaer/rust\_class





## Lecture 3

Advanced concepts



## Lifetimes

Example from part 1

```
let mut v = vec![10, 11];
let vptr = &v[1];
v.push(12);
println!("{}", *vptr);

Lifetime of borrow vptr
Lifetime of mutable
borrow for calling push

• Declaration of push: fn push(v: &mut Vec<i32>, i: i32)
• v.push(12) is short for push(&mut v, 12)
```



Compile error: cannot borrow v as mutable because it is also borrowed as immutable

- Automatic management of lifetimes, most of the time
- Explicit lifetime variables: 'a 'b 'c ...



## Explicit Lifetimes

Rust infers: x: &'a str, y: &'b str Need the shorter lifetime here. But is 'a shorter or 'b?

```
fn longest(x: &str, y: &str) -> &str {
   if x.len() > y.len() { x } else { y }
}
```



Compile error: missing lifetime specifier

- Solution: explicit lifetimes
- &'a str means: a reference that lives at least as long as lifetime 'a

```
fn longest<'a>(x: &'a str, y: &'a str) -> &'a str {
   if x.len() > y.len() { x } else { y }
}
```



## Heap-allocated data

Consider implementing a linked list

```
pub struct Node<T> {
    data: T,
    next: Option<Node<T>>
}
```

```
Compile error: recursive type `Node` has infinite size
```

pub struct Node<T> {

fn play\_with\_node() {

next: Option<Box<Node<T>>>

let n1 = Node { data: 42, next: None };

let n2 = Node { data: 10, next: Some(Box::new(n1)) };

// Owner n2 goes out of scope => automatic free

data: T,

- Struct values live on the stack
- Size must be known to the compiler
  - Heap-allocated data to the rescue
  - Box<T> places value of type T in the heap
- Automatic free once the owner of the box is dropped



## Shared mutable state

- Rust's ownership and borrowing is sufficient for many programming idioms.
- But it prevents shared mutable state.
  - Doubly-linked lists
  - Sharing writeable data between threads
- Still, you can have shared mutable state in Rust.
- Example: Mutex allows to share mutable data between threads.

Mutex unlocked once guard goes out of scope.



### **Smart Pointers for shared mutable state**

#### • Rc<T>

- reference-counting pointer
- allows multiple owners (immutable)
- memory deallocated when the last owner goes out of scope
- single-threaded
- Arc<T>
  - thread-safe variant of Rc<T>

#### • RefCell<T>

- mutable memory location
- borrow rules are checked dynamically
- Weak<T> weak pointer
- Mutex<T> allows to share mutable data between threads.



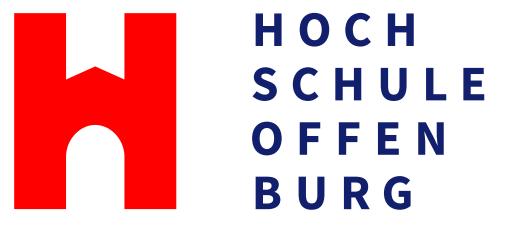
## Unsafe Rust

- How can Mutex be realized?
- Option 1: make the typesystem more powerful (read: more complicated)
- Option 2: realize Mutex as a builtin construct
- Option 3: unsafe code with a safe API
  - Approach used by Rust
  - Unsafe code has superpowers
    - Use raw pointers
    - Invoke unsafe functions
  - Unsafe code is the exception not the rule



## Correctness guarantees

- Without unsafe: 100% memory safe and free of data races.
  - Verified proof for a significant subset of Rust (RustBelt project)
- With unsafe: same guarantees but
  - unsafe features must be wrapped in a safe API, and
  - there must be a proof that the unsafe code satisfies the safe API.
    - The RustBelt project did such proofs for several abstractions of Rust's standard library, e.g. Mutex
    - Complicated!
- Miri: tool to test your program against undefined behavior



## Practice Session 3

Material available on github:

https://github.com/skogsbaer/rust\_class





## Cheatsheet for Practice 3

• opt.take() become owner of opt's content, old owner becomes None

```
let mut x = Some(2);
let y = x.take();
// x is None, y is Some(2)
```

- opt.as\_ref() converts from &0ption<T> to 0ption<&T>
- opt.as\_deref() converts from Option<T> or &Option<T> to Option<&T::Target>
  - T::Target is the dereference target of T
- opt.as\_mut() converts from &mut Option<T> to Option<&mut T>
- Box::new(...) creates a new box
- \*box gets content of box

```
let b: Box<i32> = Box::new(42);
let i: i32 = *b;
```



# Summary



## Resources

#### Start with this book!

- Steve Klabnik and Carol Nichols: The Rust Programming Language. 2023, https://doc.rust-lang.org/book
  - Interactive version with quizzes and visualizations:

```
https://rust-book.cs.brown.edu/
```

- Embedded Rust documentation: https://docs.rust-embedded.org
- Microsoft documentation: https://docs.microsoft.com/de-de/learn/paths/rust-first-steps/
- Learn Rust With Entirely Too Many Linked Lists. https://rust-unofficial.github.io/too-many-lists/

Advanced material! work through this tutorial if you really want to understand ownership, borrows, various smart pointers and unsafe code.



## Rust Summary

- Safety and control
- No unrestricted combination of aliasing and mutation
- Strong type system: 100% memory safe
- Unsafe code embedded within a safe API
- High-level language features
- Very good performance

- Steep learning curve (but you don't need a PhD)
- Open-source licence: Apache and MIT
- Developed since 2009 mainly at Mozilla.
- Rust Foundation since 2021, founded by AWS, Huawei, Google, Microsoft und Mozilla.