C++ TRUTHS

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buffered/unbuffered C++ streams

July 10, 2005

Conventionally, std::cin,
std::cout are
buffererd and
std::cerr is not
buffered.
Unbuffered

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streams are
written to device
immediately. In
general, ofstreams
are buffered. You
can make a stream
unbuffered by
invoking
setbuf(0,0).

For example,

ofstream of;
of.setbuf(0,0); //
makes it
unbuffered.

You can force a
buffered stream to
flush the contents
using std::endl.
Other interesting
thing is to tie an
buffered output
stream with a
buffered input

stream. What this
means is,
whenever you
want to accept an
input from the
input stream, the
output stream
'tied' to it is
flushed
automatically.

For example,
ifstream in; // a
buffered input
stream.
ofstream out; // a
buffered output
stream.
and in and out are
tied together.

then,
out << "data 1" <<
"data 2" << ..... <<
"data N";
// may or may not

occur on screen or
file.

...

in >> somevar; //
out will be flushed
before somevar is
input.

You do this by
invoking:

in.tie(&out);

tie causes two
streams to be
synchronized,
such that,
operations on one
stream occur after
operations on the
other stream are
complete. As a last
note, by default,
the standard
objects cin, cerr

and clog are tied

to cout.

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