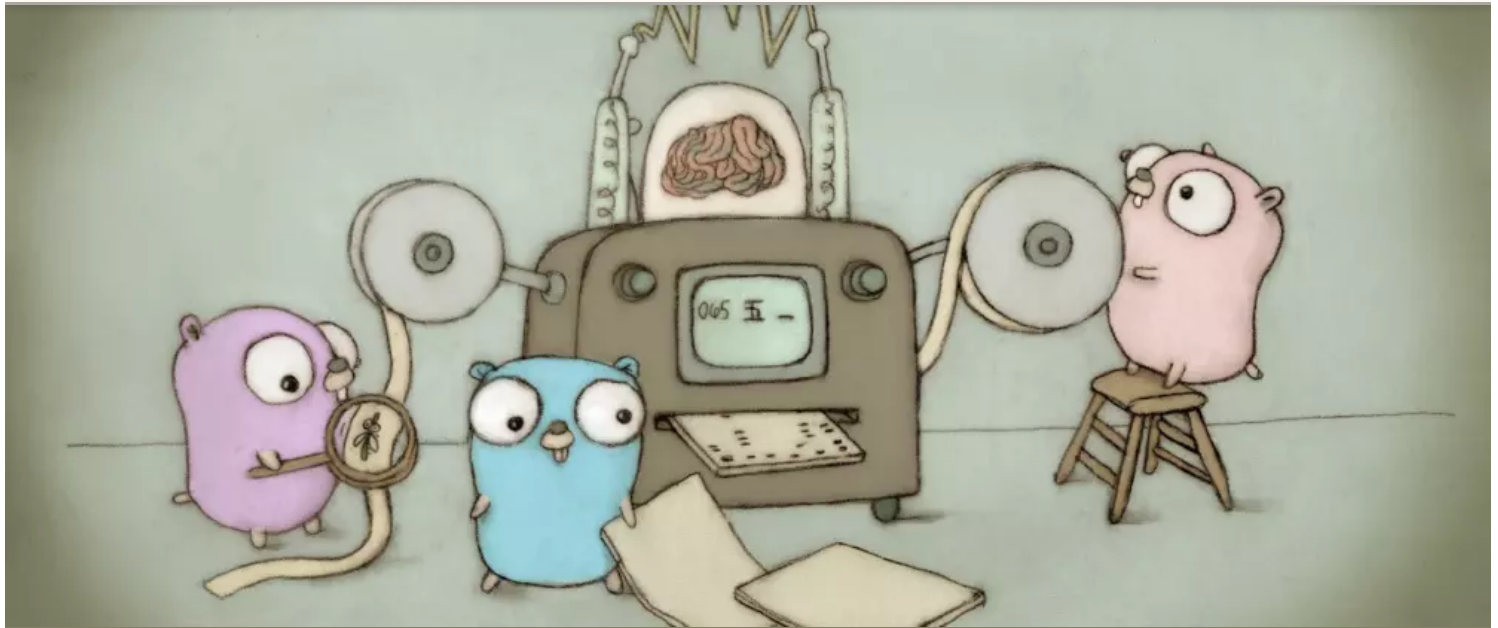




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Call Go function from C function



Yasuhiro Matsumoto 🐦 🔄 Nov 17 '17 · 3 min read

#go

Cgo is useful to embed C function into Go.

```
package main

/*
void doSomething(int *p) {
    *p = 123;
}
*/
import "C"

func main() {
    var n C.int
    C.doSomething(&n)
    println(n)
}
```



23



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no problem. So in your first look, you might think you will not met any issue in future.

Please imagine the case when you want to call APIs which take a callback function and pointer of user_data.

APIs

```
typedef void (*callback)(void *);  
void register_callback(callback cb, void *user_data);  
void wait_event();
```

As you guess, `register_callback` registers a callback function, `wait_event` waits for some event, and calls the callback function when an event occurred.

Go

```
func my_callback(v unsafe.Pointer) {  
}  
  
func main() {  
    user_data := "my userdata"  
    C.register_event(/* ? */, /* ? */)   
    C.wait_event()  
}
```



23



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register_event ? Unfortunately, type of my_callback in Go is not same as C.callback. In short, you can't write below.

```
C.register_event(my_callback, &user_data) // compilation errors
```

To make a function which is possible to be called from C, hack is required.

- export Go function to be called from C
- pass valid pointer from Go

To export Go function, put comment line `//export FuncName` above function.

```
//export hello
func hello() {
    // do something
}
```

Wow this is simplify. Thus, it is possible make callback proxy.

```
package main

/*
#include <myapi.h>
```



23



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```
}  
*/  
import "C"  
import (  
    "fmt"  
)  
  
func my_callback(v string) {  
    fmt.Println("hello", v)  
}  
  
func main() {  
    C._register_callback(...)  
    C.wait_event()  
}  
  
//export cb_proxy  
func cb_proxy(v unsafe.Pointer) {  
    // call my_callback  
}
```

`_register_callback` is wrapper of `register_callback` to call `cb_proxy`. `wait_event` will invoke callback internally with taking argument `user_data`. `user_data` should be passed from `main`. However, one another issue you meet.

Rules for passing pointers between Go and C

Unfortunately again, Go can't pass pointer which is allocated in Go into C function.

But that's possible. See <https://github.com/mattn/go-pointer>.



23



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```
var s string  
C.pass_pointer(pointer.Save(&s))  
v := *(pointer.Restore(C.get_from_pointer()).(*string))
```

As the trick, go-pointer allocate 1-byte dummy memory for passing to C. And it is pointed to the value. i.e. this is unique key of map which is related on the real Go pointer.

`pointer.Save(&v)` store Go pointer into the map and return C pointer which is allocated as dummy.

```
package main  
  
/*  
#include <myapi.h>  
  
void cb_proxy(void *v);  
  
static void _register_callback(void *user_data) {  
    register_callback(cb_proxy, user_data);  
}  
*/  
import "C"  
import (  
    "fmt"  
    "unsafe"  
  
    "github.com/mattn/go-pointer"  
)  
  
type Callback struct {  
    Func      func(string)  
    UserData  string  
}
```



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```
func main() {
    C._register_callback(pointer.Save(&Callback{
        Func:    my_callback,
        UserData: "my-callback",
    }))
    C.wait_event()
}

//export cb_proxy
func cb_proxy(v unsafe.Pointer) {
    cb := pointer.Restore(v).(*Callback)
    cb.Func(cb.UserData)
}
```

`_register_callback` pass `cb_proxy`. And `cb_proxy` restore the pointer as `*Callback`. And it call original `Callback.Func` with `Callback.UserData`. You can pass callback function to C from Go.

You can try this behavior on this code.

```
package main

/*
typedef void (*callback)(void *);

static callback _cb;
static void *_user_data;
static void register_callback(callback cb, void *user_data) {
    _cb = cb;
    _user_data = user_data;
}
```



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```
void cb_proxy(void *v);

static void _register_callback(void *user_data) {
    register_callback(cb_proxy, user_data);
}
*/
import "C"
import (
    "fmt"
    "unsafe"

    "github.com/matttn/go-pointer"
)

type Callback struct {
    Func      func(string)
    UserData  string
}

func my_callback(v string) {
    fmt.Println("hello", v)
}

func main() {
    C._register_callback(pointer.Save(&Callback{
        Func:      my_callback,
        UserData:  "my-callback",
    }))
    C.wait_event()
}

//export cb_proxy
func cb_proxy(v unsafe.Pointer) {
    cb := pointer.Restore(v).(*Callback)
    cb.Func(cb.UserData)
}
```



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2



2



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23



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