

Atomic Operations on `std::shared_ptr`

WE'LL COVER THE FOLLOWING ^

- Atomic Smart Pointers

There are specializations for the atomic operations load, store, compare, and exchange for an `std::shared_ptr`. By using the explicit variant, you can even specify the memory model. Here are the free atomic operations for `std::shared_ptr`:

```
std::atomic_is_lock_free(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_load(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_load_explicit(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_store(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_store_explicit(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_exchange(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_exchange_explicit(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_compare_exchange_weak(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_compare_exchange_strong(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_compare_exchange_weak_explicit(std::shared_ptr)
std::atomic_compare_exchange_strong_explicit(std::shared_ptr)
```

For the details, have a look at cppreference.com. Now it is quite easy to modify a shared pointer that is bound by reference in a thread-safe way.

```
std::shared_ptr<int> ptr = std::make_shared<int>(2011);

for (auto i = 0; i < 10; i++){
    std::thread([&ptr]{
        auto localPtr = std::make_shared<int>(2014);
        std::atomic_store(&ptr, localPtr);
    }).detach();
}
```

The update of the `std::shared_ptr ptr` in the expression `auto localPtr = std::make_shared<int>(2014)` is thread-safe. All is well? NO! Finally, we need atomic smart pointers.

Atomic Smart Pointers

That is not the end of the story for atomic smart pointers. With C++20, there is a high probability that we can expect two new smart pointers: `std::atomic_shared_ptr` and `std::atomic_weak_ptr`. For the impatient reader, here are the details of the upcoming [atomic smart pointers](#).

Atomics and their atomic operations are the basic building blocks for the memory model. They establish synchronization and ordering constraints that hold for both atomics and non-atomics. Let's have a deeper look into the synchronization and ordering constraints.