

Functions in C++

Functions in C++

Eric Roberts
CS 106B
January 7, 2015

Administrative Essentials

- All handouts and course information are on the web site:
<http://cs106b.stanford.edu/>
- All CS 106B students must sign up for a section by Sunday at 5:00P.M. The signup form will appear on the web tomorrow:
<http://cs198.stanford.edu/section/>
- All undergraduates must take CS 106B for **5 units**. The Axes default is 3 units, and we end up signing lots of petitions each year to correct this error.
- You need to install the Qt Creator programming environment, as described on the course web site.
- After class on Wednesdays, I will hold drop-in office hours at Bytes Cafe in Packard. Come share coffee with me.

The Syntax of a Function Definition

- The general form of a function definition looks essentially the same as it does in Java:

```
type name (parameter list) {  
    statements in the function body  
}
```

where *type* indicates what type the method returns, *name* is the name of the method, and *parameter list* is a list of variable declarations used to hold the values of each argument.

- All functions need to be declared before they are called by specifying a **prototype** consisting of the header line followed by a semicolon.

Computing Factorials

- The **factorial** of a number n (which is usually written as $n!$ in mathematics) is defined to be the product of the integers from 1 up to n . Thus, $5!$ is equal to 120, which is $1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 5$.
- The following function definition uses a **for** loop to compute the factorial function:

```
int fact(int n) {  
    int result = 1;  
    for (int i = 1; i <= n; i++) {  
        result *= i;  
    }  
    return result;  
}
```

C++ Enhancements to Functions

- Functions can be **overloaded**, which means that you can define several different functions with the same name as long as the correct version can be determined by looking at the number and types of the arguments. The pattern of arguments required for a particular function is called its **signature**.
- Functions can specify **optional parameters** by including an initializer after the variable name. For example, the function prototype

```
void setMargin(int margin = 72);
```

Indicates that **setMargin** takes an optional argument that defaults to 72.

- C++ supports **call by reference**, which allows functions to share data with their callers.

Call by Reference

- C++ indicates call by reference by adding an ampersand (&) before the parameter name. A single function often has both **value parameters** and **reference parameters**, as illustrated by the **solveQuadratic** function from Figure 2-3 on page 76, which has the following prototype:

```
void solveQuadratic(double a, double b, double c,  
                    double &x1, double &x2);
```

- Call by reference has two primary purposes:
 - It creates a sharing relationship that makes it possible to pass information in both directions through the parameter list.
 - It increases efficiency by eliminating the need to copy an argument. This consideration becomes more important when the argument is a large object.

Call by Reference Example

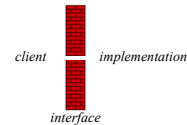
- The following function swaps the values of two integers:

```
void swap(int & x, int & y) {
    int tmp = x;
    x = y;
    y = tmp;
}
```

- The arguments to `swap` must be assignable objects, which for the moment means variables.
- If you left out the `&` characters in the parameter declarations, calling this function would have no effect on the calling arguments because the function would exchange local copies.

Libraries and Interfaces

- Modern programming depends on the use of libraries. When you create a typical application, you write only a tiny fraction of the code.
- Libraries can be viewed from two perspectives. Code that uses a library is called a *client*. The code for the library itself is called the *implementation*.
- The point at which the client and the implementation meet is called the *interface*, which serves as both a barrier and a communication channel:



The `simpio.h` Interface

```
/*
 * File: simpio.h
 * -----
 * This interface exports a set of functions that simplify
 * input/output operations in C++ and provide some error-checking
 * on console input.
 */
#ifndef _simpio_h
#define _simpio_h
```

The `simpio.h` Interface

```
/*
 * Function: getInteger
 * Usage: int n = getInteger();
 *        int n = getInteger(prompt);
 * -----
 * Reads a complete line from cin and scans it as an integer.
 * If the scan succeeds, the integer value is returned. If the
 * argument is not a legal integer or if extraneous characters
 * (other than whitespace) appear in the string, the user is
 * given a chance to reenter the value. If supplied, the
 * optional prompt string is printed before reading the value.
 */
int getInteger(std::string prompt = "");
```

The `simpio.h` Interface

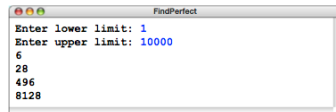
```
/*
 * Function: getReal
 * Usage: double x = getReal();
 *        double x = getReal(prompt);
 * -----
 * Reads a complete line from cin and scans it as a floating-point
 * number. If the scan succeeds, the floating-point value is
 * returned. If the input is not a legal number or if extraneous
 * characters (other than whitespace) appear in the string, the
 * user is given a chance to reenter the value. If supplied, the
 * optional prompt string is printed before reading the value.
 */
double getReal(std::string prompt = "");
```

The `simpio.h` Interface

```
/*
 * Function: getLine
 * Usage: string line = getLine();
 *        string line = getLine(prompt);
 * -----
 * Reads a line of text from cin and returns that line as a string.
 * The newline character that terminates the input is not stored
 * as part of the return value. If supplied, the optional prompt
 * string is printed before reading the value.
 */
std::string getLine(std::string prompt = "");
#endif
```

Exercise: Finding Perfect Numbers

- Greek mathematicians took a special interest in numbers that are equal to the sum of their proper divisors (a proper divisor of n is any divisor less than n itself). They called such numbers **perfect numbers**. For example, 6 is a perfect number because it is the sum of 1, 2, and 3, which are the integers less than 6 that divide evenly into 6. Similarly, 28 is a perfect number because it is the sum of 1, 2, 4, 7, and 14.
- Our first exercise today is to design and implement a C++ program that finds all the perfect numbers between two limits entered by the user, as follows:



Recursive Functions

- The easiest examples of recursion to understand are functions in which the recursion is clear from the definition. As an example, consider the factorial function, which can be defined in either of the following ways:

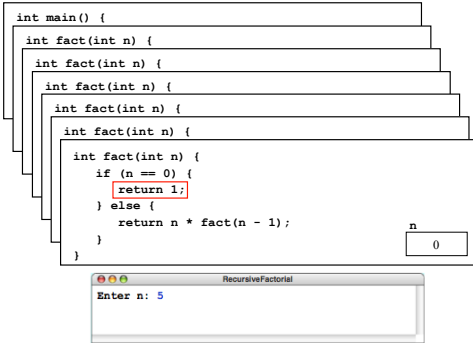
$$n! = n \times (n-1) \times (n-2) \times \dots \times 3 \times 2 \times 1$$

$$n! = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } n \text{ is } 0 \\ n \times (n-1)! & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

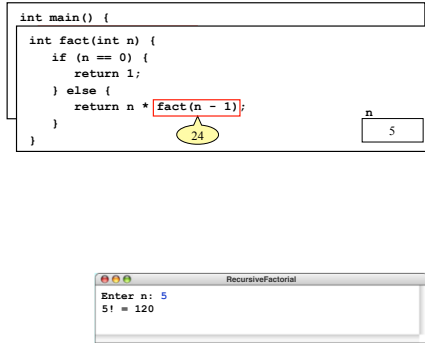
- The second definition leads directly to the following code, which is shown in simulated execution on the next slide:

```
int fact(int n) {
    if (n == 0) {
        return 1;
    } else {
        return n * fact(n - 1);
    }
}
```

Simulating the **fact** Function



Simulating the **fact** Function



The Recursive Paradigm

- Most recursive methods you encounter in an introductory course have bodies that fit the following general pattern:

```
if (test for a simple case) {
    Compute and return the simple solution without using recursion.
} else {
    Divide the problem into one or more subproblems that have the same form.
    Solve each of the problems by calling this method recursively.
    Return the solution from the results of the various subproblems.
}
```

- Finding a recursive solution is mostly a matter of figuring out how to break it down so that it fits the paradigm. When you do so, you must do two things:
 - Identify **simple cases** that can be solved without recursion.
 - Find a **recursive decomposition** that breaks each instance of the problem into simpler subproblems of the same type, which you can then solve by applying the method recursively.

Exercise: Greatest Common Divisor

One of the oldest known algorithms that is worthy of the title is Euclid's algorithm for computing the greatest common divisor (GCD) of two integers, x and y . Euclid's algorithm is usually implemented iteratively using code that looks like this:

```
int gcd(int x, int y) {
    int r = x % y;
    while (r != 0) {
        x = y;
        y = r;
        r = x % y;
    }
    return y;
}
```

Rewrite this method so that it uses recursion instead of iteration, taking advantage of Euclid's insight that the greatest common divisor of x and y is also the greatest common divisor of y and the remainder of x divided by y .