

CSE 307: Principles of Programming Languages

C++ Language

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Topics

C++

- Developed as an *extension* to C by adding object oriented constructs originally found in Smalltalk (and Simula67).
- Most legal C programs are also legal C++ programs
 - “Backwards compatibility” made it easier for C++ to be accepted by the programming community
 - ... but made certain features problematic (leading to “dirty” programs)
- Many of C++ features have been used in Java
 - Some have been “cleaned up”
 - Some useful features have been left out

C++ and Java: The Commonalities

- Classes, instances (objects), data members (fields) and member functions (methods).
- Overloading and inheritance.
 - base class (C++) → superclass (Java)
 - derived class (C++) → subclass (Java)
- Constructors
- Protection (visibility): `private`, `protected` and `public`
- Static binding for data members (fields)

A C++ Primer for Java Programmers

Classes, fields and methods:

Java:

```
class A extends B {  
    private int x;  
    protected int y;  
    public int f() {  
        return x;  
    }  
    public void print() {  
        System.out.println(x);  
    }  
}
```

C++:

```
class A : public B {  
    private: int x;  
    protected: int y;  
    public: int f() {  
        return x;  
    }  
    void print() {  
        std::cout << x << std::endl;  
    }  
}
```

A C++ Primer for Java Programmers

Declaring objects:

- In Java, the declaration `A va` declares `va` to be a *reference* to object of class `A`.
 - Object creation is always via the `new` operator
- In C++, the declaration `A va` declares `va` to be an object of class `A`.
 - Object creation may be automatic (using declarations) or via `new` operator:
`A *va = new A;`

Objects and References

- In Java, all objects are allocated on the heap; references to objects may be stored in local variables.
- In C++, objects are treated analogous to *C structs*: they may be allocated and stored in local variables, or may be dynamically allocated.
- Parameters to methods:
 - Java distinguishes between two sets of values: primitives (e.g. ints, floats, etc.) and objects (e.g. String, Vector, etc.).
Primitive parameters are passed to methods *by value* (copying the value of the argument to the formal parameter)
Objects are passed *by reference* (copying only the reference, not the object itself).
 - C++ passes all parameters *by value* unless specially noted.

Inheritance, Overloading, and Overriding

- **Inheritance:** Subclass inherits all data members and member functions (and can access all public/protected members) from its superclass.

Code reuse: If a method `f()` is defined in class `A`, and `B` is a subclass of `A` ...

... the method can be applied to objects of type `B` without redefinition.

- **Overloading:** A method is distinguished by its *name* and its *signature* (the number and types of arguments).

So multiple methods can be defined with the same *name*.

- **Overriding:** A member (field or method) can be redefined in a subclass which will then override access to the same member of the superclass.

Overloading

- Consider the following definition of Java class `Test`

```
class Test extends Base {  
    void h(Test t);  
    void h(Base b);  
}
```

- Let `t` and `b` refer to objects of class “Base” and “Test” respectively.
- What is the behavior of the following calls?

```
t.h(b);
```

```
t.h(t);
```

Inheritance

- Consider the following Java class definitions:

```
class Base {  
    void h(Base b);  
}  
class Test extends Base {  
    void h(Base b);  
}
```

- Let `b` and `t` refer to objects of class `Base` and `Test` respectively.
- What is the behavior of the following calls?

```
b.h(b);  
t.h(b);
```

Inheritance and Overloading

- Instance methods in OO languages have an *implicit* object parameter (i.e. `this`).
- *Inheritance resembles overloading on the implicit parameter.*
- Main point to consider:
 - What types are used to resolve the overloading?
(i.e., How is the signature of the call constructed?)
- Let `Test` be a subclass of `Base`. Consider the following definitions:

```
Base b;
```

```
Test t;
```

- What are the types of variables `b` and `t`?
- What are the types of objects that can be referenced by `b` and `t`?

Types

- **Apparent Type:** Type of an object as per the declaration in the program.
- **Actual Type:** Type of the object at run time.

Let `Test` be a subclass of `Base`. Consider the following program:

```
Base b = new Base();  
Test t = new Test();  
...  
b = t;
```

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Apparent type of object referenced</i>
b	Base
t	Test

... throughout the scope of `b` and `t`'s declarations

Types (contd.)

Let `Test` be a subclass of `Base`. Consider the following program fragment:

```
Base b = new Base();  
Test t = new Test();  
...  
b = t;
```

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Program point</i>	<i>Actual type of object referenced</i>
b	before b=t	Base
t	before b=t	Test
b	after b=t	Test
t	after b=t	Test

Binding field and method names

- In Java:
 - field names are resolved using their *apparent* types (i.e., at compile time)
[also called “Static Binding”]
 - method names are resolved using their *actual* types (i.e., at run time)
[also called “Dynamic Binding”]
- In C++:
 - both field and names are resolved using their *apparent* types (i.e., at compile time)
 - ... *unless methods are declared as virtual and are accessed via references.*

Polymorphism

“The ability to assume different forms”

- A function/method is polymorphic if it can be applied to values of many types.
- Class hierarchy and inheritance provide a form of polymorphism called *subtype polymorphism*.

[same function can be applied to different types]

- Overloading provides a form of polymorphism called *ad-hoc polymorphism*.

[different forms are distinguished by types of parameters (sometimes return values too)]

- Polymorphic functions increase code reuse.

Polymorphism (contd.)

- Consider the following code fragment: $(x < y) ? x : y$
- “Finds the minimum of two values”.
- The same code fragment can be used regardless of whether x and y are
 - `ints`
 - `floatss`
 - (in C++:) in any class that implements operator “`<`”.
- *Templates* lift the above form of polymorphism (called *parametric* polymorphism) to functions and classes.

Function Template

- Declaring function templates:

```
template <typename T>
    T min ( T x, T y ) {
        return (x < y)? x : y;
    }
```

- typename parameter can be name of any type (e.g. int, long, Base, ...)
- Using template functions:
 - `z = min(x, y)`
 - Compiler fills out the template's typename parameter using the types of arguments.
 - Can also be explicitly used as: `min<float>(x, y)`

Class Templates

- Of great importance in implementing data structures (say list of elements, where all elements have to be of the same type).
- Java does not provide templates:
 - Some uses of templates can be replaced by using Java `interfaces`.
 - Many other uses would require “type casting”
e.g.:

```
Iterator e = ...  
Int x = (Integer) e.next();
```
 - Inherently dangerous since it skirts around compile-time type checking.

C++ “features” from C

- A **class** declaration (set of (and type of) data members, and signatures of member functions) can be separated into a separate **header** file.
 - Header file specifies an *“interface”*.
- Member functions and constructors can be defined within a class declaration, or (usually) in separate files (sometimes called *Dot-C* files)
 - Dot-C file specifies an *“implementation”*.
 - Header files may be included in Dot-C files using the `#include` directive.
- Makefiles are used to compile and link program units.