Program and Programming Style

Professor Jennifer Rexford

http://www.cs.princeton.edu/~jrex

The material for this lecture is drawn, in part, from The Practice of Programming (Kernighan & Pike) Chapter 1

Goals of this Lecture

• Help you learn about:
  • Good program (noun) style
  • Good programming (verb) style

• Why?
  • A large program that is well styled is
    • easier to maintain and
    • more likely to be correct
    than a large program that is poorly styled
  • A power programmer knows the qualities of a well styled program, and how to go about developing one
Overview

• Program style: qualities of a good program
  • Well structured
  • Uses common idioms
  • Uses descriptive names
  • Contains proper comments
  • Modular

• Programming style: how to create a good program
  • Top-down design
  • Successive refinement
  • Example: left and right justifying text

Part 1: Program Style
Program Style

• Who reads your code?
  • The compiler
  • Other programmers

```c
typedef struct{double x,y,z}vec;vec U,black,amb={.02,.02,.02};struct sphere{
vec cen,color;double rad,kd,ks,kt,kl,ir}*s,*best,sph[30]={};
double vdot(A,B)vec A, B;{return A.x*B.x+A.y*B.y+A.z*B.z;}vec vcomb(a,A,B)double a;vec A,B;{B.x+=a*A.x;B.y+=a*A.y;B.z+=a*A.z;return B;}vec vunit(A)vec A;{return vcomb(1./sqrt(vdot(A,A)),A,black);}struct sphere*intersect(P,D)vec P,D;{best=0;tmin=1e30;s=sph+5;while(s--sph)b=vdot(D,U=vcomb(-1.,P,s-cen)),u=b*b-vdot(U,U)+s-rad*s-s.rad,u0?sqrt(u):1e31,u=b-u1e-7?b-u:b+u,tmin=u=1e-7&&u<tmin?best=s,u:tmin;return best;}
```

This is a working ray tracer! (courtesy of Paul Heckbert)

Program Style

• Why does program style matter?
  • Bugs often caused by programmer’s misunderstanding
    • What does this variable do?
    • How is this function called?
  • Good code = human readable code

• How can code become easier for humans to read?
  • Convey program structure
  • Use common idioms
  • Choose descriptive names
  • Compose proper comments
  • Use modularity
Structure: Spacing

- Use readable/consistent spacing
  - Example: Assign each array element \( a[j] \) to the value \( j \).
  - Bad code

  ```c
  for (j=0; j<100; j++) a[j]=j;
  ```

  - Good code

  ```c
  for (j=0; j<100; j++)
  a[j] = j;
  ```

  - Can often rely on auto-indenting feature in editor

Structure: Indentation (cont.)

- Use readable/consistent indentation
  - Example: Checking for leap year (does Feb 29 exist?)

Wrong code

```c
if (month == FEB) {
  if (year % 4 == 0) {
    if (day > 29)
      legal = FALSE;
  } else {
    if (day > 28)
      legal = FALSE;
  }
}
``` (else matches “if day > 29”)

Right code

```c
if (month == FEB) {
  if (year % 4 == 0) {
    if (day > 29)
      legal = FALSE;
  }
  else {
    if (day > 28)
      legal = FALSE;
  }
}
```
Structure: Indentation (cont.)

• Use "else-if" for multi-way decision structures
  • Example: Comparison step in a binary search.
  • Bad code
    
    ```c
    if (x < v[mid])
        high = mid - 1;
    else
        if (x > v[mid])
            low = mid + 1;
        else
            return mid;
    ```

  • Good code
    
    ```c
    if (x < v[mid])
        high = mid - 1;
    else if (x > v[mid])
        low = mid + 1;
    else
        return mid;
    ```

Structure: "Paragraphs"

• Use blank lines to divide the code into key parts

```c
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>

int main(void)
{
    /* Read a circle’s radius from stdin, and compute and write its
diameter and circumference to stdout. Return 0 if successful. */
    const double PI = 3.14159;
    int radius;
    int diam;
    double circum;
    printf("Enter the circle’s radius:\n");
    if (scanf("%d", &radius) != 1)
    {
        fprintf(stderr, "Error: Not a number\n");
        exit(EXIT_FAILURE); /* or: return EXIT_FAILURE; */
    }
    ...
```
diam = 2 * radius;
circum = PI * (double)diam;
printf("A circle with radius %d has diameter %d\n", radius, diam);
printf("and circumference %f.\n", circum);
return 0;

if (!(n >= k) && !(n <= j))
	if ((j < n) && (n < k))
		...
Structure: Expressions (cont.)

• Parenthesize to resolve ambiguity
  • Example: Check if integer \( n \) satisfies \( j < n < k \)
  • Moderately bad code

\[
\text{if (} j < n \text{ && } n < k \text{)}
\]

• Moderately better code

\[
\text{if (} (j < n) \text{ && } (n < k) \text{)}
\]

• Good to make the groupings explicit
  • Relational operators (e.g., ">") have precedence over logical operators (e.g., "&&"), but who can remember these things?

Structure: Expressions (cont.)

• Parenthesize to resolve ambiguity (cont.)
  • Example: read and print character until the end-of-file.
  • Wrong code (what will it do???)

\[
\text{while (} c = \text{getchar()} \text{ != EOF}) \\
\quad \text{putchar} (c);
\]

• Right code

\[
\text{while (} (c = \text{getchar()} \text{) != EOF}) \\
\quad \text{putchar} (c);
\]

• Must make the grouping explicit
  • Logical operator ("!=") has precedence over assignment ("=")
Structure: Expressions (cont.)

• Break up complex expressions
  • Example: Identify chars corresponding to months of year
  • Bad code
    
    ```
    if ((c == 'J') || (c == 'F') || (c == 'M') || (c == 'A') || (c == 'S') || (c == 'O') || (c == 'N') || (c == 'D'))
    ```
  
  • Good code
    
    ```
    if ((c == 'J') || (c == 'F') || (c == 'M') || (c == 'A') || (c == 'S') || (c == 'O') || (c == 'N') || (c == 'D'))
    ```

  • Lining up the parallel structures is helpful, too!

C Idioms

• Use C idioms
  • Example: Set each array element to 1.0.
  • Bad code (or, perhaps just “so-so” code)
    
    ```
    i = 0;
    while (i <= n-1)
        array[i++] = 1.0;
    ```
  
  • Good code
    
    ```
    for (i=0; i<n; i++)
        array[i] = 1.0;
    ```

• We’ll see many C idioms throughout the course
• Don’t feel obliged to use C idioms that decrease clarity
Naming

- Use descriptive names for globals and functions
  - E.g., display, CONTROL, CAPACITY
- Use concise names for local variables
  - E.g., i (not arrayIndex) for loop variable
- Use case judiciously
  - E.g., Buffer_Insert (Module_function)
    - CAPACITY (constant)
    - buf (local variable)
- Use a consistent style for compound names
  - E.g., frontsize, frontSize, front_size
- Use active names for functions
  - E.g., getchar(), putchar(), Check_Octal(), etc.

Comments

- Master the language and its idioms
  - Let the code speak for itself
  - And then...
- Compose comments that add new information
  - i++; /* add one to i */
- Comment sections (“paragraphs”) of code, not lines of code
  - E.g., “Sort array in ascending order”
- Comment global data
  - Global variables, structure type definitions, etc.
- Compose comments that agree with the code!!!
  - And change as the code itself changes. 😊
Comments (cont.)

- Comment sections ("paragraphs") of code, not lines of code

```c
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>

int main(void)
/* Read a circle's radius from stdin, and compute and write its
diameter and circumference to stdout. Return 0 if successful. */
{
    const double PI = 3.14159;
    int radius;
    int diam;
    double circum;

    /* Read the circle's radius. */
    printf("Enter the circle's radius:\n");
    if (scanf("%d", &radius) != 1)
    {
        fprintf(stderr, "Error: Not a number\n");
        exit(EXIT_FAILURE); /* or: return EXIT_FAILURE; */
    }

    /* Compute the diameter and circumference. */
    diam = 2 * radius;
    circum = PI * (double)diam;

    /* Print the results. */
    printf("A circle with radius %d has diameter %d\n", radius, diam);
    printf("and circumference %.1f\n", circum);
    return 0;
}
```
Function Comments

• Describe what a caller needs to know to call the function properly
  • Describe what the function does, not how it works
  • Code itself should be readable enough to reveal how it works...
  • If not, compose “paragraph” comments within definition

• Describe inputs: parameters, files read, global variables used

• Describe outputs: return value, parameters, files written, global variables affected

• Refer to parameters by name

Function Comments (cont.)

• Bad function comment

/* decomment.c */

int main(void) {

/* Read a character. Based upon the character and the current DFA state, call the appropriate state-handling function. Repeat until end-of-file. */

...}

• Describes how the function works
Function Comments (cont.)

• Good function comment

/* decomment.c */

int main(void) {

/* Read a C program from stdin.
   Write it to stdout with each comment replaced
   by a single space.
   Preserve line numbers.
   Return 0 if successful, EXIT_FAILURE if not. */

   ...

}

• Describes what the function does

Modularity

• Big programs are harder to write than small ones
  • "A dog house can be built without any particular design, using
    whatever materials are at hand. A house for humans, on the other
    hand, is too complex to just throw together." – K. N. King

• Abstraction is the key to managing complexity
  • Abstraction allows programmer to know what something does
    without knowing how

• Examples of function-level abstraction
  • Function to sort an array of integers
  • Character I/O functions, e.g. `getchar()` and `putchar()`
  • Mathematical functions, e.g. `lcm()` and `gcd()`

• Examples of file-level abstraction
  • (Described in a later lecture)
Part 2: Programming Style

Bottom-Up Design is Bad

- Bottom-up design
  - Design one part in detail
  - Design another part in detail
  - Repeat until finished

- Bottom-up design in painting
  - Paint upper left part of painting in complete detail
  - Paint next part of painting in complete detail
  - Repeat until finished
  - Note: Unlikely to produce a good painting

- Bottom-up design in programming
  - Write first part of program in complete detail
  - Write next part of program in complete detail
  - Repeat until finished
  - Note: Unlikely to produce a good program
Top-Down Design is Good

- **Top-down design** 😊
  - Design entire product with minimal detail
  - Successively refine until finished

- **Top-down design in painting**
  - Sketch the entire painting with minimal detail
  - Successively refine the entire painting

- **Top-down design in programming**
  - Define main() function in pseudocode with minimal detail
  - Refine each pseudocode statement
    - Small job => replace with real code
    - Large job => replace with function call
  - Recurse in (mostly) breadth-first order
  - Bonus: Product is naturally modular

Top-Down Design in Reality

- **Top-down design in programming in reality**
  - Define main() function in pseudocode
  - Refine each pseudocode statement
    - Oops! Details reveal design error, so…
    - Backtrack to refine existing (pseudo)code, and proceed
  - Recurse in (mostly) breadth-first order, until all functions are defined
Example: Text Formatting

- Goals of the example
  - Illustrate good program and programming style
    - Especially function-level modularity and top-down design
  - Illustrate how to go from problem statement to code
    - Review and illustrate C constructs
- Text formatting (derived from King Section 15.3)
  - Input: ASCII text, with arbitrary spaces and newlines
  - Output: the same text, left and right justified
    - Fit as many words as possible on each 50-character line
    - Add even spacing between words to right justify the text
    - No need to right justify the very last line
  - Simplifying assumptions
    - Word ends with space, tab, newline, or end-of-file
    - No word is longer than 20 characters

Example Input and Output

**INPUT**

Tune every heart and every voice.  
Bid every bank withdrawal.  
Let's all with our accounts rejoice.  
In funding Old Nassau.  
In funding Old Nassau we spend more money every year.  
Our banks shall give, while we shall live.  
We’re funding Old Nassau.

**OUTPUT**

Tune every heart and every voice. Bid every bank withdrawal. Let's all with our accounts rejoice. In funding Old Nassau. In funding Old Nassau we spend more money every year. Our banks shall give, while we shall live. We're funding Old Nassau.
Thinking About the Problem

• I need a notion of “word”
  • Sequence of characters with no white space, tab, newline, or EOF
  • All characters in a word must be printed on the same line

• I need to be able to read and print words
  • Read characters from stdin till white space, tab, newline, or EOF
  • Print characters to stdout followed by white space(s) or newline

• I need to deal with poorly-formatted input
  • I need to remove extra white spaces, tabs, and newlines in input

• Unfortunately, I can’t print the words as they are read
  • I don’t know # of white spaces needed till I read the future words
  • Need to buffer the words until I can safely print an entire line

• But, how much space should I add between words?
  • Need at least one space between adjacent words on a line
  • Can add extra spaces evenly to fill up an entire line

Writing the Program

• Key constructs
  • Word
  • Line

• Next steps
  • Write pseudocode for main()
  • Successively refine

• Caveats concerning the following presentation
  • Function comments and some blank lines are omitted because of space constraints
    • Don’t do that!!!
  • Design sequence is idealized
    • In reality, much backtracking would occur
The Top Level

• First, let’s sketch main()...

```c
int main(void) {
    <Clear line>
    for (;;) {
        <Read a word>
        if (<No more words>) {
            <Print line with no justification>
            return 0;
        }
        if (<Word doesn’t fit on this line>) {
            <Print line with justification>
            <Clear line>
        }
        <Add word to line>
    }
    return 0;
}
```

Reading a Word

```c
#include <stdio.h>
enum {MAX_WORD_LEN = 20};
int main(void) {
    char word[MAX_WORD_LEN + 1];
    int wordLen;
    <Clear line>
    for (;;) {
        wordLen = ReadWord(word);
        if (<No more words>) {
            <Print line with no justification>
            return 0;
        }
        if (<Word doesn’t fit on this line>) {
            <Print line with justification>
            <Clear line>
        }
        <Add word to line>
    }
    return 0;
}

int ReadWord(char *word) {
    <Skip over whitespace>
    <Store chars up to MAX_WORD_LEN in word>
    <Return length of word>
}
```
The ReadWord() function seems easy enough to design. So let's flesh it out...

```c
int ReadWord(char *word) {
    int ch, pos = 0;
    /* Skip over whitespace. */
    ch = getchar();
    while ((ch == ' ') || (ch == '
') || (ch == '	'))
        ch = getchar();
    /* Store chars up to MAX_WORD_LEN in word. */
    while ((ch != ' ') && (ch != '
') && (ch != '	') && (ch != EOF)) {
        if (pos < MAX_WORD_LEN) {
            word[pos] = (char)ch;
            pos++;
        }
        ch = getchar();
    }
    word[pos] = '\0';
    /* Return length of word. */
    return pos;
}
```

Hmm. ReadWord() contains some duplicate code. That could affect maintainability, and often is a sign of poor design. Let's factor the duplicate code into a function, and call the function from two places...

```c
int IsWhitespace(int ch) {
    return (ch == ' ') || (ch == '\n') || (ch == '\t');
}
```
Saving a Word

#include <stdio.h>
#include <string.h>
enum {MAX_WORD_LEN = 20};
enum {MAX_LINE_LEN = 50};
int main(void) {
    char word[MAX_WORD_LEN + 1];
    int wordLen;
    char line[MAX_LINE_LEN + 1];
    int lineLen = 0;
    <Clear line>
    for (;;) {
        wordLen = ReadWord(word);
        if (<No more words>) {
            <Print line with no justification>
            return 0;
        }
        if (<Word doesn't fit on this line>) {
            <Print line with justification>
            <Clear line>
        }
        AddWord(word, line, &lineLen);
    }
    return 0;
}

void AddWord(const char *word, char *line, int *lineLen) {
    /* If line already contains some words, append a space. */
    if (*lineLen > 0) {
        line[*lineLen] = ' ';
        line[*lineLen + 1] = '\0';
        (*lineLen)++;
    }
    strcat(line, word);
    (*lineLen) += strlen(word);
}

Saving a Word (cont.)

• AddWord() is almost complete already, so let’s get that out of the way...

void AddWord(const char *word, char *line, int *lineLen) {
    /* If line already contains some words, append a space. */
    if (*lineLen > 0) {
        line[*lineLen] = ' ';
        line[*lineLen + 1] = '\0';
        (*lineLen)++;
    }
    strcat(line, word);
    (*lineLen) += strlen(word);
}
Printing the Last Line

```c
int main(void) {
    char word[MAX_WORD_LEN + 1];
    int wordLen;
    char line[MAX_LINE_LEN + 1];
    int lineLen = 0;
    <Clear line buffer>
    for (;;) {
        wordLen = ReadWord(word);
        /* If no more words, print line
           with no justification. */
        if ((wordLen == 0) && (lineLen > 0)) {
            puts(line);
            return 0;
        }
        if (<Word doesn't fit on this line>) {
            <Print line with justification>
            <Clear line buffer>
        }
        AddWord(word, line, &lineLen);
    }
    return 0;
}
```

- Again, back to main(). What do <No more words> and <Print line with no justification> mean? Those jobs seem easy enough that we need not define additional functions...

Deciding When to Print

```c
int main(void) {
    char word[MAX_WORD_LEN + 1];
    int wordLen;
    char line[MAX_LINE_LEN + 1];
    int lineLen = 0;
    <Clear line buffer>
    for (;;) {
        wordLen = ReadWord(word);
        /* If no more words, print line
           with no justification. */
        if ((wordLen == 0) && (lineLen > 0)) {
            puts(line);
            return 0;
        }
        /* If word doesn't fit on this line, then... */
        if ((wordLen + 1 + lineLen) > MAX_LINE_LEN) {
            <Print line with justification>
            <Clear line buffer>
        }
        AddWord(word, line, &lineLen);
    }
    return 0;
}
```

- What does <Word doesn't fit on this line> mean? That's somewhat tricky, but involves little code...
Printing with Justification

• Now, to the heart of the program. What does \textit{Print line with justification} mean? Certainly that job demands a distinct function. Moreover, it’s clear that the function must know how many words are in the given line. So let’s change main() accordingly...

```c
int main(void) {
    int numWords = 0;
    <Clear line>
    for (; ;) {
        /* If word doesn’t fit on this line, then */
        if ((wordLen + 1 + lineLen) > MAX_LINE_LEN) {
            WriteLine(line, lineLen, numWords);
            <Clear line>
        }
        AddWord(word, line, &lineLen);
        numWords++;
    }
    return 0;
}
```

Printing with Justification (cont.)

• And write pseudocode for \textit{WriteLine}...

```c
void WriteLine(const char *line, int lineLen, int numWords) {
    <Compute number of excess spaces for line>
    for (i = 0; i < lineLen; i++) {
        if (<line[i] is not a space>)
            <Print the character>
        else {
            <Compute additional spaces to insert>
            <Print a space, plus additional spaces>
            <Decrease extra spaces and word count>
        }
    }
}
```
Printing with Justification (cont.)

```c
void WriteLine(const char *line, int lineLen, int numWords)
{
    int extraSpaces, spacesToInsert, i, j;
    /* Compute number of excess spaces for line. */
    extraSpaces = MAX_LINE_LEN - lineLen;
    for (i = 0; i < lineLen; i++) {
        if (line[i] != ' ')
            putchar(line[i]);
        else {
            /* Compute additional spaces to insert. */
            spacesToInsert = extraSpaces / (numWords - 1);
            /* Print a space, plus additional spaces. */
            for (j = 1; j <= spacesToInsert + 1; j++)
                putchar(' ');
            /* Decrease extra spaces and word count. */
            extraSpaces -= spacesToInsert;
            numWords--;
        }
    }
    putchar('\n');
}
```

The number of gaps

Example: If extraSpaces is 10 and numWords is 5, then gaps will contain 2, 2, 3, and 3 extra spaces respectively.

Clearing the Line

• One step remains. What does <Clear line> mean? It's an easy job, but it's done in two places. So we probably should delegate the work to a distinct function, and call the function in the two places...

```c
int main(void) {
    int numWords = 0;
    ClearLine(line, &lineLen, &numWords);
    for (;;) {
        /* If word doesn't fit on this line, then... */
        if ((wordLen + 1 + lineLen) > MAX_LINE_LEN) {
            WriteLine(line, lineLen, numWords);
            ClearLine(line, &lineLen, &numWords);
        }
        addWord(word, line, &lineLen);
        numWords++;
    }
    return 0;
}
```

void ClearLine(char *line, int *lineLen, int *numWords) {
    line[0] = '\0';
    *lineLen = 0;
    *numWords = 0;
}
Modularity: Summary of Example

• To the user of the program
  • Input: Text in messy format
  • Output: Same text left and right justified, looking mighty pretty

• Between parts of the program
  • Word-handling functions
  • Line-handling functions
  • main() function

• The many benefits of modularity
  • Reading the code: In small, separable pieces
  • Testing the code: Test each function separately
  • Speeding up the code: Focus only on the slow parts
  • Extending the code: Change only the relevant parts

Summary

• Program style
  • Convey program structure (spacing, indentation, parentheses)
  • Use common C idioms
  • Choose consistent and descriptive names (for variables, functions)
  • Compose proper comments, especially for functions
  • Modularity (divide program into modules, and files)

• Programming style
  • Think about the problem
  • Use top-down design and successive refinement
  • But know that backtracking inevitably will occur

• Reading this week
  • Required, King book: chapters 16, 17, and 19
  • Recommended: K&P book: chapters 1 and 2
#include <stdio.h>
#include <string.h>

enum {MAX_WORD_LEN = 20};
enum {MAX_LINE_LEN = 50};

int IsWhitespace(int ch) {
    /* Return 1 (TRUE) iff ch is a whitespace character. */
    return (ch == ' ') || (ch == '
') || (ch == '	');
}

Appendix: The “justify” Program

continued on next slide

int ReadWord(char *word) {
    /* Read a word from stdin. Assign it to word. Return the length of the word, or 0 if no word could be read. */
    int ch, pos = 0;
    /* Skip over whitespace. */
    ch = getchar();
    while (IsWhitespace(ch))
        ch = getchar();
    /* Store chars up to MAX_WORD_LEN in word. */
    while (!IsWhitespace(ch) && (ch != EOF)) {
        if (pos < MAX_WORD_LEN) {
            word[pos] = (char)ch;
            pos++;
        } else {
            ch = getchar();
            word[pos] = '\0';
        }
    }
    /* Return length of word. */
    return pos;
}

continued on next slide
Appendix: The “justify” Program

void ClearLine(char *line, int *lineLen, int *numWords) {
    /* Clear the given line. That is, clear line, and set *lineLen and *numWords to 0. */
    line[0] = '\0';
    *lineLen = 0;
    *numWords = 0;
}

void AddWord(const char *word, char *line, int *lineLen) {
    /* Append word to line, making sure that the words within line are separated with spaces. Update *lineLen to indicate the new line length. */

    /* If line already contains some words, append a space. */
    if (*lineLen > 0) {
        line[0] = ' '; 
        line[1] = '\0';
        (*lineLen) ++;
    }
    strcat(line, word);
    (*lineLen) += strlen(word);
}

Appendix: The “justify” Program

void WriteLine(const char *line, int lineLen, int numWords) {
    /* Write line to stdout, in right justified form. lineLen indicates the number of characters in line. numWords indicates the number of words in line. */

    int extraSpaces, spacesToInsert, i, j;
    /* Compute number of excess spaces for line. */
    extraSpaces = MAX_LINE_LEN - lineLen;
    for (i = 0; i < lineLen; i++) {
        if (line[i] == ' ')
            putchar(line[i]);
        else {
            /* Compute additional spaces to insert. */
            spacesToInsert = extraSpaces / (numWords - 1);
            /* Print a space, plus additional spaces. */
            for (j = 1; j <= spacesToInsert + 1; j++)
                putchar(' ');
            /* Decrease extra spaces and word count. */
            extraSpaces -= spacesToInsert;
            numWords --;
        }
        putchar('\n') ;
    }
}
Appendix: The “justify” Program

```c
int main(void) {
    /* Read words from stdin, and write the words in justified format to stdout. */
    /* Simplifying assumptions:
    Each word ends with a space, tab, newline, or end-of-file.
    No word is longer than MAX_WORD_LEN characters. */
    char word[MAX_WORD_LEN + 1];
    int wordLen;
    char line[MAX_LINE_LEN + 1];
    int lineLen = 0;
    int numWords = 0;
    ClearLine(line, &lineLen, &numWords);

    for (;;) {
        wordLen = ReadWord(word);
        /* If no more words, print line with no justification. */
        if ((wordLen == 0) && (lineLen > 0)) {
            if ((numWords == 0) && (lineLen > 0)) {
                puts(line);
                break;
            }
        }

        /* If word doesn’t fit on this line, then... */
        if ((wordLen + 1 + lineLen) > MAX_LINE_LEN) {
            WriteLine(line, lineLen, numWords);
            ClearLine(line, &lineLen, &numWords);

            AddWord(word, line, &lineLen);
            numWords++;
        }

        return 0;
    }
}
```
Continued on next slide