

Programming and Program Style

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 programming (verb) style
- Good **program** (noun) style

• Why?

- A well-styled program is easier to maintain and more likely to be correct than a poorly-styled program
- A power programmer knows the qualities of a well-styled program, and how to develop one

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Lecture Overview



- Programming style: how to create a good program
 - Top-down design
 - Successive refinement
 - Example: left and right justifying text
- Program style: qualities of a good program
 - · Well structured
 - Uses common idioms
 - · Uses descriptive names
 - · Contains proper comments
 - Modular

Why Care About This Stuff? · Programming style

- · Divide & conquer works in lots of areas
- · Breadth-first fails for most people
- You might get it done better & faster

Program style

- Everyone has limited brainpower
- Re-analyzing code taxes brain
- An over-taxed brain generates errors
- Therefore, good style can reduce errors
- · Consistent style easier for co-workers



Bottom-Up Design is Bad Bottom-up design ☺ Design one part in detailDesign another part in detail · Repeat until finished Bottom-up design in painting Paint upper left part of painting in complete detail 1 2 ... · Paint next part of painting in complete detail · Repeat until finished · 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 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

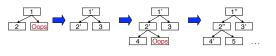
- · Define main() function in pseudocode with minimal detail
- Refine each pseudocode statement
 - Small job => replace with real code
 - Large job => replace with function call
- · Recurse in (mostly) breadth-first order
- Bonus: Product is naturally modular



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 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 at white space or end-of-file
 - No word is longer than 20 characters

Example Input and Output I Tune every heart and every voice. N 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. O U 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. T

Thinking About the Problem



- · I need a notion of "word"
- · Sequence of characters with no white space
 - 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 or EOF
 - Print characters to stdout followed by space(s) or newline
- I need to deal with poorly-formatted input
 - I need to remove extra white space in input
- Unfortunately, I can't print the words as they are read
 - I don't know # of 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?

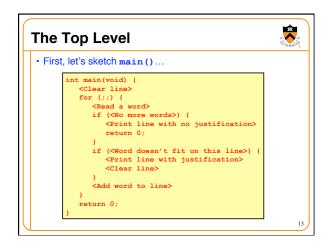
 Need at least one space between adjacent words on a line
- Need at least one space between adjacent words of
 Can add extra spaces evenly to fill up an entire line

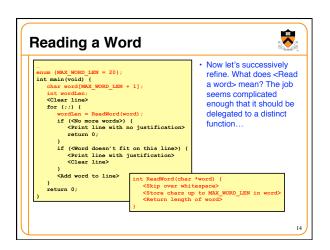
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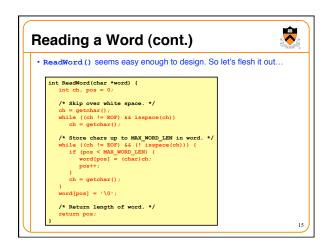
Writing the Program

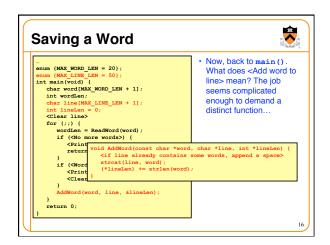


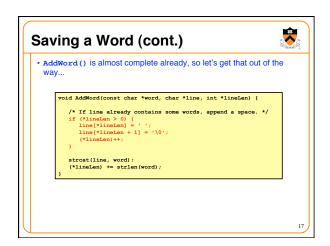
- Key constructs
- Word
- Line
- Next steps
 - Write pseudocode for main ()
 - Successively refine
- Caveats concerning the following presentation
 - Function comments and some blank lines are omitted because of space constraints
 - Don't do that!!!
 - Design sequence is idealized
 - · In reality, much backtracking would occur

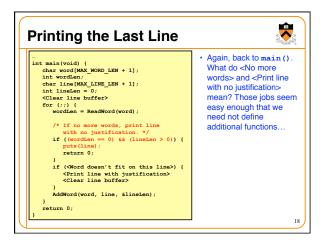




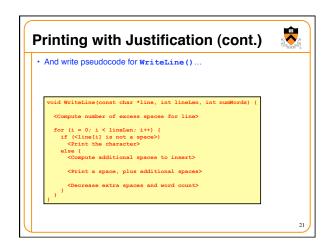


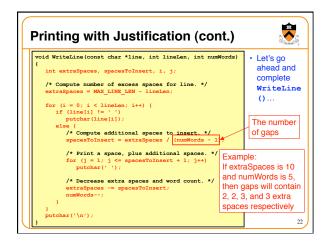


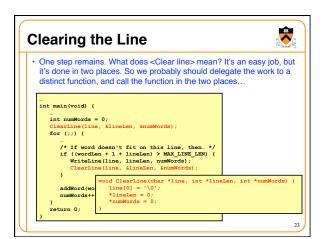




Printing with Justification * Now, to the heart of the program. What does < Print line with justification> mean? Certainly that job demands a distinct function. Moreover, it's clear that the function must know how many words are in the given line. So let's change main() accordingly... int main(void) { 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; }



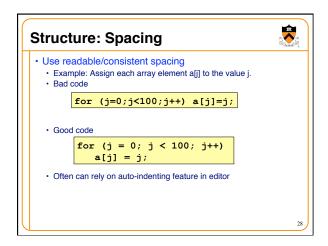


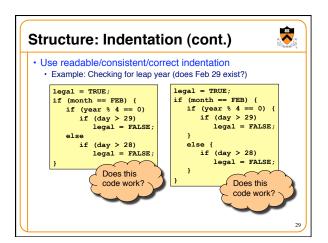


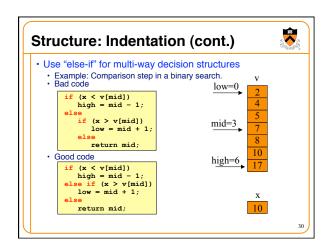
Modularity: Summary of Example • To the user of the program • Input: Text in messy format • Output: Same text left and right justified, looking mighty pretty • Between parts of the program • Word-handling functions • Line-handling functions • main() function • The many benefits of modularity • Reading 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

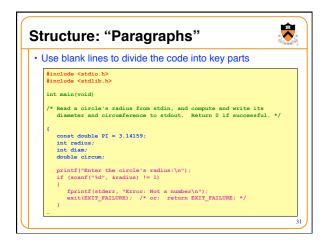


Program Style • Why does program style matter? • Bugs often caused by programmer's misunderstanding • What does this variable do? • How is this function called? • Good code = human readable code • How can code become easier for humans to read? • Convey program structure • Use common idioms • Choose descriptive names • Compose proper comments • Use modularity

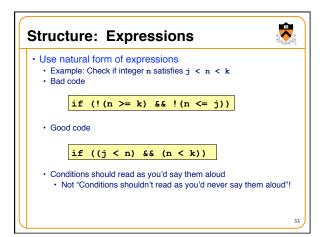


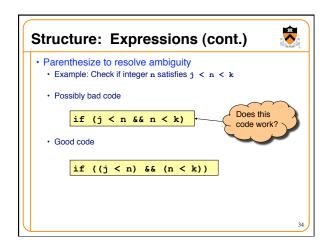


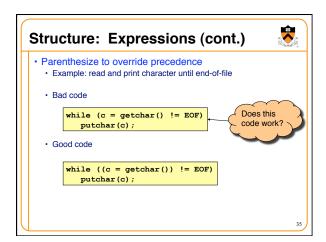


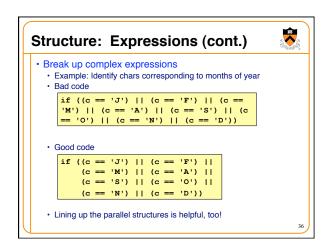


Structure: "Paragraphs" • Use blank lines to divide the code into key parts diam = 2 * radius; circum = PI * (double)diam; printf("A circle with radius %d has diameter %d\n", radius, diam); printf("and circumference %f.\n", circum); return 0; }









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, field definitions, etc.
- Compose comments that agree with the code!!!
- And change as the code itself changes. $\ensuremath{\texttt{©}}$

Comments (cont.) • Comment sections ("paragraphs") of code, not lines of code #include <stdio.h> #include <stdio.h> #include <stdiio.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(etderr, "Error: Not a number\n"); exit(EXIT_FAILURE); /* or: return EXIT_FAILURE; */ } }

Comments (cont.) /* 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 %f.\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 clearly reveal how it works...
 - If not, compose "paragraph" comments within definition
- Describe input
 - · Parameters, files read, global variables used
- Describe output
 - 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

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 such as getchar() and putchar() Mathematical functions such as lem() and gcd() Examples of file-level abstraction (Described in a later lecture)

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

Program style Convey program structure Spacing, indentation, parentheses Use common C idioms But not at the expense of clarity Choose consistent and descriptive names For variables, functions, etc. Compose proper comments Especially for functions Divide code into modules Functions and files

