



# C Introduction

CS 2130: Computer Systems and Organization 1  
March 23, 2026

# Announcements

- Homework 6 **due tonight at 11:59pm**
- Homework 7 available soon, due next Monday on Gradescope
- Midterm 2 is on April 3
  - Similar format to midterm 1
  - Schedule with SDAC early if needed

# Data Types in C

Pointers - how C uses addresses!

- Hold the address of a position in memory
- Need to know the kind of information stored at that location

# Example

```
int main() {  
    int x = 3;  
    long y = 4;  
    int *a = &x;  
    long *b = &y;  
    long z = *a;  
    int w = *b;  
    return 0;  
}
```

# Example

```
int main() {
    int x = 3;
    long y = 4;
    int *a = &x;
    long *b = &y;
    long z = *a;
    int w = *b;
    return 0;
}

0000000000000000 <main>:
0: 55          push   %rbp
1: 48 89 e5    mov    %rsp,%rbp
4: 31 c0       xor    %eax,%eax
6: c7 45 fc 00 00 00 00  movl  $0x0,-0x4(%rbp)
d: c7 45 f8 03 00 00 00  movl  $0x3,-0x8(%rbp)
14: 48 c7 45 f0 04 00 00  movq  $0x4,-0x10(%rbp)
1b: 00
1c: 48 8d 4d f8  lea   -0x8(%rbp),%rcx
20: 48 89 4d e8  mov   %rcx,-0x18(%rbp)
24: 48 8d 4d f0  lea   -0x10(%rbp),%rcx
28: 48 89 4d e0  mov   %rcx,-0x20(%rbp)
2c: 48 8b 4d e8  mov   -0x18(%rbp),%rcx
30: 48 63 09    movslq(%rcx),%rcx
33: 48 89 4d d8  mov   %rcx,-0x28(%rbp)
37: 48 8b 4d e0  mov   -0x20(%rbp),%rcx
3b: 48 8b 09    mov   (%rcx),%rcx
3e: 89 4d d4    mov   %ecx,-0x2c(%rbp)
41: 5d        pop   %rbp
42: c3        retq
```

# Example

## Swap Example

```
void swap(int *a, int *b) {  
    int tmp = *a;  
    *a = *b;  
    *b = tmp;  
}
```

# Arrays

Array: 0 or more values of same type stored contiguously in memory

- Declare as you would use: `int myarr[100];`
- `sizeof(myarr) = 400` — 100 4-byte integers
- `myarr` treated as pointer to first element
- Can declare array literals:  
`int y[5] = {1, 1, 2, 3, 5}`

# Pointers and Arrays

`*myarr` and `myarr[0]` are equivalent

- Pointer to single value and pointer to first value in array
- Treat array as pointer to the first value (lowest address)
- Indexing into array: `myarr[n]` and `*(myarr+n)`
  - If `myarr` is an `int *`, then `myarr+1` points to **next int** in memory
  - Adding 1 to pointer adds `sizeof()` the type we're pointing to

# Pointers and Arrays

Consider: `int **a`

# Pointers

- All pointers are the same size: address size in underlying ISA
- Two special integer types (defined using `typedef`)
  - `size_t` - integer the size of a pointer (unsigned)
  - `ssize_t` - integer the size of a pointer (signed)
  - With our compiler and ISA, these are both variants of `long`

# Pointers

Consider the following code:

```
int x = 10;  
int *y = &x;  
int *z = y + 2;  
long w = ((long)z) - ((long)y);
```

Why is  $w = 8$ ?

# Other Types and Values

- Literal values - integer literals are implicitly cast
  - `unsigned long very_big = 9223372036854775808uL`
  - `u` for unsigned, `L` for long
- `enum` - named integer constants (in ascending order)
  - `enum { a, b, c, d=100, e };`  
`int foo = e;`
- `void` - a byte with no meaning or "nothing"
  - Pointers: `void *p`
  - Return values: `void myfunction();`

# Other Types and Values

- Casting - changing type, converting
  - Integer: zero- or sign-extend or truncate to space
  - Int to float: convert to nearby representable value
  - Float to int: truncate remainder (no rounding)

# Structures

## struct - Structures in C

- Act like Java classes, but no methods and all public fields
- Stores fields adjacently in memory (but may have padding)
- Compiler determines padding, use `sizeof()` to get size
- Name of the resulting type includes word `struct`

```
struct foo {  
    long a;  
    int b;  
    short c;  
    char d;  
};
```

```
struct foo x;  
x.b = 123;  
x.c = 4;
```

# Structure Literals

```
struct a {  
    int b;  
    double c;  
};
```

```
/* Both of the following initialize b to 0 and c to 1.0 */  
struct a x = { 0, 1.0 };  
struct a y = { .b = 0, .c = 1.0 };
```

# typedef

typedef - give new names to any type!

- Fairly common to see several names for same data type to convey intent
- Ex: `unsigned long` may be `size_t` when used in sizes

- Examples:

```
typedef int Integer;  
Integer x = 4;  
typedef double ** dpp;
```

- Used with *anonymous structs*:

```
typedef struct { int x; double y; } foo;  
foo z = { 42, 17.4 };
```

# Struct Example

```
typedef struct {  
    long x;  
    long y;  
    long *array;  
    long length;  
} foo;
```

# Struct Example

```
long sum2(foo *arg) {
    long ans = arg->x;
    for(long i = 0; i < arg->length; i += 1)
        ans += arg->y * arg->array[i];
    return ans;
}

sum2:
    movq    (%rdi), %rax
    movq    24(%rdi), %r8
    testq   %r8, %r8
    jle    .LBB1_3
    movq    8(%rdi), %rdx
    movq    16(%rdi), %rsi
    xorl    %edi, %edi
.LBB1_2:
    movq    (%rsi,%rdi,8), %rcx
    imulq   %rdx, %rcx
    addq    %rcx, %rax
    incq    %rdi
    cmpq    %rdi, %r8
    jne    .LBB1_2
.LBB1_3:
    retq
```

# Struct Example

```
long sum1(foo arg) {
    long ans = arg.x;
    for(long i = 0; i < arg.length; i += 1)
        ans += arg.y * arg.array[i];
    return ans;
}

sum1:
    movq    8(%rsp), %rax
    movq    32(%rsp), %r8
    testq   %r8, %r8
    jle    LBB0_3
    movq    16(%rsp), %rdx
    movq    24(%rsp), %rsi
    xorl    %edi, %edi
.LBB0_2:
    movq    (%rsi,%rdi,8), %rcx
    imulq   %rdx, %rcx
    addq    %rcx, %rax
    incq    %rdi
    cmpq    %rdi, %r8
    jne    .LBB0_2
.LBB0_3:
    retq
```

