

Computer Science & Engineering 150A Problem Solving Using Computers

Lecture 05 - Loops

Christopher M. Bourke

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cbourke@cse.unl.edu

Chapter 5

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Repetition in Programs

Just as the ability to make decisions (*if-else* selection statements) is an important programming tool, so too is the ability to specify the repetition of a group of operations.

When solving a general problem, it is sometimes helpful to write a solution to a specific case. Once this is done, ask yourself:

- ▶ Were there any steps that I repeated? If so, which ones?
- ▶ Do I know how many times I will have to repeat the steps?
- ▶ If not, how did I know how long to keep repeating the steps?

Counting Loops

A **counter-controlled loop** (or **counting loop**) is a loop whose repetition is managed by a loop control variable whose value represents a count. Also called a *while* loop.

```
1 Set counter to an initial value of 0
2 while counter < someFinalValue do
3     Block of program code
4     Increase counter by 1
5 end
```

Algorithm 1: Counter-Controlled Loop

The C While Loop

This *while* loop computes and displays the gross pay for seven employees. The loop body is a compound statement (between brackets) The **loop repetition condition** controls the *while* loop.

```
1 int count_emp = 0; // Set counter to 0
2 while (count_emp < 7) { //If count_emp < 7, do stmts
3     printf("Hours> ");
4     scanf("%d",&hours);
5     printf("Rate> ");
6     scanf("%lf",&rate);
7     pay = hours * rate;
8     printf("Pay is $%6.2f\n", pay);
9     count_emp = count_emp + 1; /* Increment count_emp */
10 }
11 printf("\nAll employees processed\n");
```

While Loop Syntax

Syntax of the *while* Statement:

- ▶ Initialize the loop control variable
 - ▶ Without initialization, the loop control variable value is meaningless.
- ▶ Test the loop control variable before the start of each loop repetition
- ▶ Update the loop control variable during the iteration
 - ▶ Ensures that the program progresses to the final goal

```
1 count = 1;
2 while (count <= 10) {
3     printf("Count = %d\n", count);
4     count = count + 1;
5 }
```

Common Programming Errors

- ▶ Skipping crucial steps could lead to an *infinite loop*
- ▶ Common error: forgetting to increment your loop control variable
- ▶ Syntax error: misplaced semicolons

```
1 count = 1;
2 while(count <= 10); ← WRONG
3 {
4     printf("Count = %d\n", count);
5     count = count + 1;
6 }
```

General While Loops

Best to generalize code whenever possible.

```
1 int numEmployees = 7,
2   count_emp=0;
3 printf("How many employees > ");
4 scanf("%d", &num_emp);
5 while(count_emp < numEmployees) {
6     . . .
7     count_emp = count_emp + 1;
8 }
```

Using `numEmployees` instead of the constant 7 allows our code to be more general.

While Loop Exercise

Exercise

Write a while loop to compute the sum of natural numbers 1 to 100:

$$\sum_{i=1}^{100} i = 1 + 2 + \dots + 100$$

Generalize the loop so that the sum from 1 to any n can be computed.

Steps to design:

- ▶ Identify and define a loop control variable.
- ▶ Write the syntax for the loop control structure
- ▶ Fill in the code used within the loop to compute the sum

While Loop Exercise

Answer

```
1 int sum = 0;
2 int i = 1; /* our loop control variable */
3 while (i <= 100)
4 {
5     sum = sum + i;
6     i = i + 1;
7 }
8 printf("Sum is %d\n", sum);
```

While Loop Exercise

Answer: Generalized

```
1 int sum = 0;
2 int n = 100; /* general variable, may be
3             * changed or read from input */
4 int i = 1; /* our loop control variable */
5 while (i <= n)
6 {
7     sum = sum + i;
8     i = i + 1;
9 }
10 printf("Sum 1 to %d is %d\n", n, sum);
```

While Loop Example II

Instead of the sum of integers 1 to n , compute the product:

$$\prod_{i=1}^{100} i = 1 \times 2 \times \dots \times 100$$

What changes need to be made?

- ▶ Variable names?
- ▶ Initialized variable value?
- ▶ Operators?

Note: this is the *factorial* function,

$$n! = \prod_{i=1}^n i$$

While Loop Example II

Answer

```
1 int product = 1;
2 int n = 100; /* general variable, may be
3             * changed or read from input */
4 int i = 1; /* our loop control variable */
5 while (i <= n)
6 {
7     product = product * i;
8     i = i + 1;
9 }
10 printf("Product 1 to %d is %d\n", n, product);
```

Program Failed

Run the previous program: it gives an answer of 0—why?

- ▶ Debug your code: use a `printf` statement in the loop to see what intermediate values are computed:
`printf("i = %3d product = %d\n", i, product);`
- ▶ Check the answers with a calculator
- ▶ For what i does this program fail?

Overflow

- ▶ We got the wrong answer for $i = 13$,

$$13! = 6,227,020,800$$

- ▶ We used a 32-bit integer to store `product`
- ▶ Maximum representable value is $2^{31} = 2,147,483,648$
- ▶ When a number is too large (or too small!) to be represented by its type, *overflow* occurs (or *underflow*)
- ▶ More sophisticated solutions are available, but beyond this course

Compound Assignment Operators

- ▶ Expressions such as `variable = variable op expression;` (where `op` is a C operator such as `+`, `-`, `*`, `/`,) occur *frequently*
- ▶ C provides several syntax shortcuts
- ▶ `x = x + 1;` and `x += 1;` are "equivalent"
- ▶ Can do this with other operators (see table)

Expression	Shortcut
<code>x = x + 1;</code>	<code>x += 1;</code>
<code>x = x - 1;</code>	<code>x -= 1;</code>
<code>x = x * 5;</code>	<code>x *= 5;</code>
<code>x = x / 2;</code>	<code>x /= 2;</code>

Table: Compound Assignment Operators

Compound Assignment Operators

Example Revisited

```
1 int product = 1;
2 int n = 100; /* general variable, may be
3             * changed or read from input */
4 int i = 1; /* our loop control variable */
5 while (i <= n)
6 {
7     product *= i;
8     i += 1;
9 }
10 printf("Product 1 to %d is %d\n", n, product);
```

For Loops

- ▶ Program Style
- ▶ Increment and Decrement Operators
- ▶ Increment and Decrement Other Than 1

For Loops

- ▶ Any repetition can be implemented using a while loop
- ▶ Another way to construct a counting loop is to use a *for loop*
- ▶ C provides `for` statements as another form for implementing loops.
- ▶ As before we need to initialize, test, and update the loop control variable.
- ▶ The syntax for a `for` statement is more rigid: it designates a specific place for the initialization, testing, and update components

For Loop Example

Consider the sum problem again: compute

$$\sum_{i=0}^{100} i$$

using a for loop.

```
1 int sum = 0;
2 int n = 100;
3 int i;
4 for(i = 0; i <= n; i++)
5 {
6     sum = sum + i;
7 }
```

- ▶ Advantages: more readable, more predictable
- ▶ Easier to debug
- ▶ **Pitfall:** note the placement of semicolons!

Increment Operators

- ▶ New syntax: `i++`
- ▶ Known as a (postfix) increment
- ▶ "Equivalent" to `i = i + 1`
- ▶ Also available: (postfix) decrement: `i--` ("equivalent" to `i = i - 1`)

Program Style

For clarity, the book usually places each expression of the `for` heading on a separate line. If all three expressions are very short, however, they will be placed on one line.

The body of the `for` loop is indented just as the `if` statement.

Increment and Decrement Operators

The counting loops that we have seen have all included assignment expressions of the form

- ▶ `counter = counter + 1`
- ▶ `counter++`
- ▶ `counter += 1`

This will add 1 to the variable counter.

Using `--` will subtract one from the counter.

Increment and Decrement Other Than 1

We can use the "shortcut" compound assignment operators with values other than 1

- ▶ **Increment operations:** `sum = sum + x` or `sum += x`, will take the value of `sum`, add `x` to it, and then assign the new value to `sum`
- ▶ **Decrement operations:** `temp = temp - x` or `temp -= x`, will take the value of `temp`, subtract `x` from it and then assign the new value to `temp`

Increment and Decrement Other Than 1

Example

```
1 /* increment by 10 */
2 int x = 10;
3 int i;
4 for(i=0; i<100; i+=x)
5     printf("i = %d\n",i);
6
7 /* decrement by 5 */
8 int y = 5;
9 for(i=25; i>=0; i-=y)
10    printf("i = %d\n",i);
```

Conditional Loops

- ▶ The exact number of loop repetitions we need to run for a loop will not always be known before loop execution begins.

Initialization step? Test? Update action?

Exercise

Exercise

Create a program that prompts the user for a value x and multiplies it by the previous value of x storing the result in x until the user enters a 0.

Exercise

Pseudocode

- 1 Set x to an initial value of 1
- 2 Prompt the user for a value $input$
- 3 **while** $input$ is not zero **do**
- 4 Set x to x multiplied by $input$
- 5 Prompt the user for a new input value
- 6 **end**

Algorithm 2: Prompt Product Loop

Exercise

Translated to C

```
1 int x = 1;
2 int value;
3 printf("Enter a value, (0 to quit)> ");
4 scanf("%d",&value);
5 while(value != 0)
6 {
7     x = x * value;
8     printf("Enter a value, (0 to quit)> ");
9     scanf("%d",&value);
10 }
11 printf("The product is %d", value);
```

Loop Design

To this point, we have been analyzing the actions a loop performs.

Now, we also want to design our own loops:

- ▶ Sentinel-Controlled Loops
- ▶ Using a **for** Statement to Implement a Sentinel Loop

Sentinel-Controlled Loops

- ▶ Often we don't know how many data items the loop should process when it begins execution.
- ▶ **Sentinel-Controlled Loops** continue to read data until a unique data value is read, called the *sentinel value*.
- ▶ The sentinel value should be a value that could not normally occur as data.
- ▶ Reading the sentinel value signals the program to stop reading and processing new data and exit the loop.
- ▶ Example: Product of a list of numbers, with -1 stopping the loop.

Sentinel-Controlled Loops

```
1 Get a line of data
2 while Sentinel value is not encountered do
3     Process the data
4     Get another line of data
5 end
```

Algorithm 3: Product Loop using a Sentinel

Implementing a Sentinel Loop

Because the `for` statement combines the initialization, test, and update in once place, some programmers prefer to use it to implement sentinel-controlled loops.

```
1 int sentinelValue = -1;
2 int score = 0
3 printf("Enter first score (%d to quit)>", sentinelValue);
4 for(scanf("%d",&score);
5     score != sentinelValue;
6     scanf("%d",&score)) {
7     sum += score;
8     printf("Enter next score (%d to quit)>", sentinelValue);
9 }
```

Implementing a Sentinel Loop

- ▶ `scanf("%d",&score);` ← Initialization: read the first score
- ▶ `score != sentinelValue;` ← Terminating condition (test)
- ▶ `scanf("%d",&score)) {...` ← Update: read another score

Nested Loops

Like `if` statements, loops can also be nested.

- ▶ Nested loops consist of an outer loop with or more inner loops.
- ▶ Each time the outer loop is repeated, the inner loops are reentered.
- ▶ The inner loop control expressions are reevaluated, and all required iterations are performed.

Example

```
1 int i, j;
2 for(i=1; i<=10; i++)
3 {
4     for(j=1; j<=10; j++)
5     {
6         if(j<i)
7             printf("+");
8         else
9             printf("*");
10    }
11    printf("\n");
12 }
```

Example - Output

```
1 *****
2 +*****
3 +*****
4 +*****
5 +*****
6 +*****
7 +*****
8 +*****
9 +*****
10 +*****
```

The do-while Statement and Flag-Controlled Loops

- ▶ `do-while` statement
- ▶ flag-controlled loops

Do-While Statement

- ▶ The `for` statement and the `while` statement evaluate conditions *before* the first execution of the loop body.
- ▶ In most cases, this pretest is desirable;
 - ▶ Prevents the loop from executing when there are no data items to process
 - ▶ Prevents execution when the initial value of the loop control variable is outside the expected range.
- ▶ Situations involving interactive input, when we know that a loop must execute *at least* one time, often use a `do-while` loop.

Do While

Example

```
1 char letter_choice;
2 do {
3     printf("Enter a letter from A through E> ");
4     scanf("%c", &letter_choice);
5 } while (letter_choice < 'A' || letter_choice > 'E');
```

Do While

- ▶ Loop begins with `do`
- ▶ Ends with `while`
- ▶ **Careful:** Conditional expression *does* end with a semicolon!
- ▶ Conditional is checked at the end of each loop (versus the beginning)

Flag-Controlled Loops

- ▶ Sometimes a loop repetition condition becomes so complex that placing the full expression in its usual spot is awkward.
- ▶ In many cases, the condition may be simplified by using a *flag*.
 - ▶ A **flag** is a type `int` variable used to represent whether or not a certain event has occurred.
 - ▶ A flag has one of two values: 1 (`true`) and 0 (`false`).

Flag Example

```
1 char letter_choice;
2 int isDone = 0;
3 while(!isDone)
4 {
5     printf("Enter a letter from A through E> ");
6     scanf(" %c", &letter_choice);
7     isDone = (letter_choice >= 'A' && letter_choice <= 'E');
8 }
```

How to Debug and Test Programs

- ▶ Debugging using `printf`
- ▶ Off-by-One Loop Errors
- ▶ Testing

Debugging using `printf`

- ▶ Use several `printf` statements to output the values of your variables to make sure they have the correct value in them as your program executes.
- ▶ It is often helpful to print out the value of your loop control variable to make sure you are incrementing it and will not enter an infinite loop.

Off-by-One Loop Errors

Loop boundaries - the initial and final values of the loop control variable.

- ▶ A fairly common logic error in programs with loops is a loop that executes one more time or one less time than required.
 - ▶ If a sentinel-controlled loop performs an extra repetition, it may erroneously process the sentinel value along with the regular data.
- ▶ If a loop performs a counting operation, make sure that the initial and final values of the loop control variable are correct and that the loop repetition condition is right.
 - ▶ The sum of 1...100, is not `for(i = 1; i < 100; i++) sum += i;`
 - ▶ Instead, `i <= 100` should be used.

Testing

After all errors have been corrected and the program appears to execute as expected, the program should be tested thoroughly to make sure it works.

For a simple program, make enough test runs to verify that the program works properly for representative samples of all possible data combinations.

Common Programming Errors I

- ▶ `if` and `while` statement can be confused, since they have similar appearance.
- ▶ Remember to initialize loop control variable as to prevent infinite loops.
- ▶ Infinite loops are bad: kill your program using control-C
- ▶ Remember to use brackets { ... } around the code of the loop statements.

Common Programming Errors II

- ▶ Be careful about the loop conditions, if we only want positive results then `if(result != 0)` would not work since result might become negative without ever being 0.
- ▶ `do-while` loops always executes once and *then* tests the condition.
- ▶ With the compound assignment operators, the parentheses are assumed to be around any expression that is the second operand.

Real World Example

- ▶ Zune Bug: December 31st, 2008
- ▶ 2008 was a leap year: 366 days
- ▶ Thousands of Zunes froze for 24 hours
- ▶ An embedded module in the Zune contained the following (actual) code

Real World Example

What happened?

```
1  while (days > 365)
2  {
3      if (IsLeapYear(year))
4      {
5          if (days > 366)
6          {
7              days -= 366;
8              year += 1;
9          }
10     }
11     else
12     {
13         days -= 365;
14         year += 1;
15     }
16 }
```

Other Examples

- ▶ September 30, 1999: \$125 million Mars orbiter crashes
- ▶ September 26, 1983: Stanislav Petrov averts nuclear war
- ▶ Wired Article: History's Worst Software Bugs (<http://www.wired.com/software/coolapps/news/2005/11/69355>)

Questions

Questions?