CSC161 2011S *Imperative Problem Solving*

Class 31: Pointers and Arrays

Held: Wednesday, 16 March 2011

Summary: We continue our exploration of pointers in C. In particular, we consider the relationship between pointers and arrays in C.

Related Pages:

- EBoard.
- Lab: Pointers, Revisited.
- Reading: K&R 5.3-5.4.
- Due: Exam 2.

Notes:

- I have not responded to most of the questions on the first reading on pointers. It will go on my to-do list.
- There are two labs today. We will not finish both labs. (We may not even finish one.) You should attempt to finish them on your own.
- I should be in from about 1:30-3:00 today and 9am-2pm tomorrow (Thursday).
- No class Friday! Rest. Do other homework. Leave town early. Whatever.
- Break reading (or skimming): *Managing Projects with GNU Make*, Chapters 1 and 2.

Overview:

- Pointers and Arrays.
- Lab on pointers.
- Second lab on pointers.

Pointers and Arrays

- In C, a pointer and an array are more or less the same (at least internally).
- In fact, you can (mostly) treat a pointer as an array or an array as a pointer.
- Some key differences:
  - When you declare arrays, you usually specify the size.
  - You should not be able to change where an array "points".
- In many ways, arrays are “syntactic sugar” for pointers.
- For example a[i] is really just *(a + i).

Labs

- Do the first lab on pointers.
- Begin the lab on pointers, revisited.
