Ch. 17: Linked Lists

CS 2308
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Jill Seaman

17.1 Introduction to Linked Lists

• A data structure representing a list
• A series of nodes chained together in sequence
  - Each node points to one other node.
• A separate pointer (the head) points to the first item in the list.
• The last element points to nothing (NULL)

Introduction to Linked Lists

• The nodes are dynamically allocated
  - The list grows and shrinks as nodes are added/removed.
• Linked lists can easily insert a node between other nodes
• Linked lists can easily delete a node from between other nodes

Node Organization

• The node is usually implemented as a struct
• Each node contains:
  - a data field – may be organized as a structure, an object, etc.
  - a pointer – that can point to another node
Linked List Organization

- A linked list contains 0 or more nodes.
- The list head is a pointer that points to the first node.
- Each node points to the next node in the list.
- The last node points to NULL (address 0).

Empty List

- An empty list contains 0 nodes.
- The list head points to NULL (address 0).
- (There are no nodes, it’s empty)

Declaring the Linked List data type

- We will be defining a class to represent a linked list data type that can store values of type double.
- This data type will describe the values (the lists) and operations over those values.
- In order to define the values we must:
  - define a (nested) data type for the nodes
  - define a pointer variable (head) that points to the first node in the list.

Declaring the Node data type

- Use a struct for the node type

```
struct ListNode {
    double value;
    ListNode *next;
};
```

- (this is just a data type, no variables declared)
- next can hold the address of a ListNode.
  - it can also be NULL
  - “self-referential data structure”
Defining the Linked List member variable

- Define a pointer for the head of the list:

```
ListNode *head;
```

- It must be initialized to NULL to signify the end of the list.
- Now we have an empty linked list:

```
head NULL
```

Using NULL

- Equivalent to address 0
- Used to specify end of the list
- NULL is defined in the cstddef header:

```
#include <cstddef>
```

- to test a pointer for NULL (these are equivalent):

```
while (p) ...  <=>  while (p != NULL) ...
if (!p) ...  <=>  if (p == NULL) ...
```

17.2 Linked List operations

- Basic operations:
  - create a new, empty list
  - append a node to the end of the list
  - insert a node within the list
  - delete a node
  - display the linked list
  - delete/destroy the list

Linked List class declaration

```
#include <cstddef>   // for NULL
using namespace std;

class NumberList
{
    private:
        struct ListNode    // the node data type
        {
            double value;           // data
            struct ListNode *next;  // ptr to next node
        };    // ListNode
        ListNode *head;    // the list head

    public:
        NumberList();      // creates an empty list
        NumberList();
        void appendNode(double);
        void insertNode(double);
        void deleteNode(double);
        void displayList();
};
```
Operation: **Create** the empty list

- Constructor: sets up empty list

```cpp
#include "NumberList.h"

NumberList::NumberList()
{
    head = NULL;
}
```

Operation: **append** node to end of list

- appendNode: adds new node to end of list
- Algorithm:

Create a new node and store the data in it
If the list has no nodes (it's empty)
    Make head point to the new node.
Else
    Find the last node in the list
    Make the last node point to the new node

appendNode: find last elem

- How to find the last node in the list?
- Algorithm:

Make a pointer p point to the first element
while (the node p points to) is not pointing to NULL
    make p point to (the node p points to) is pointing to

In C++:

```cpp
void NumberList::appendNode(double num) {
    ListNode *newNode;  // To point to the new node
    // Create a new node and store the data in it
    newNode = new ListNode;
    newNode->value = num;
    newNode->next = NULL;

    if (head==NULL)
        head = newNode;
    else {
        ListNode *p;  // To move through the list
        p = head;     // initialize to start of list
        // traverse list to find last node
        while (p->next)         //it's not last
            p = p->next;         //make it pt to next
        p->next = newNode;
    }
}
```
Driver to demo NumberList

- ListDriver.cpp version 1 (no output)

```cpp
#include "NumberList.h"

int main() {
    // Define the list
    NumberList list;
    // Append some values to the list
    list.appendNode(2.5);
    list.appendNode(7.9);
    list.appendNode(12.6);
```

Traversing a Linked List

- Visit each node in a linked list, to display contents, sum data, test data, etc.
- Basic process:
  - set a pointer to point to what head points to
  - while pointer is not NULL
  - process data of current node
  - go to the next node by setting the pointer to the pointer field of the current node
  - end while

Operation: **display** the list

```cpp
void NumberList::displayList() {
    ListNode *p;  // ptr to traverse the list
    // start p at the head of the list
    p = head;
    // while p pts to something (not NULL), continue while (p)
    {
        // Display the value in the current node
        cout << p->value << " ";
        // Move to the next node
        p = p->next;
    }
    cout << endl;
```

Driver to demo NumberList

- ListDriver.cpp version 2

```cpp
#include "NumberList.h"

int main() {
    // Define the list
    NumberList list;
    // Append some values to the list
    list.appendNode(2.5);
    list.appendNode(7.9);
    list.appendNode(12.6);
    // Display the values in the list.
    list.displayList();
```

Output:

2.5  7.9  12.6
Operation: destroy a List

• The destructor must “delete” (deallocate) all nodes used in the list
• To do this, use list traversal to visit each node
• ~NumberList: what’s wrong with this definition?

```cpp
class NumberList {
    ListNode *p;   // traversal ptr
    ListNode *n;   // saves the next node

    public:
    NumberList() { p = head; // start at head of list

        while (p) {
            delete p; // delete current
            n = p->next; // save the next
            p = n; // advance ptr
        }
    }
};
```

```
destructor

• You need to save p->next before deleting p:

```cpp
NumberList::~NumberList() {
    ListNode *p;   // traversal ptr
    ListNode *n;   // saves the next node

    p = head; // start at head of list

    while (p) {

        n = p->next; // save the next
        delete p;  // delete current
        p = n; // advance ptr
    }
}
```
```

Operation: delete a node from the list

• deleteNode: removes node from list, and deletes (deallocates) the removed node.
• Requires two extra pointers:
  - one to point to the node before the node to be deleted. (n) [why?]
  - one to point to the node to be deleted (p) [why?]

```
head   5  13  19

Deleting 13 from the list
```

Deleting a node

• Change the pointer of the previous node to point to the node after the one to be deleted.

```
n->next = p->next;
```

• Now just “delete” the p node
Deleting a node

- After the node is deleted:

```c
delete p;
```

```c
// set up the list
NumberList list;
list.appendNode(2.5);
list.appendNode(7.9);
list.appendNode(12.6);
list.displayList();
cout << endl << "remove 7.9:" << endl;
list.deleteNode(7.9);
list.displayList();
cout << endl << "remove 8.9: " << endl;
list.deleteNode(8.9);
list.displayList();
cout << endl << "remove 2.5: " << endl;
list.deleteNode(2.5);
list.displayList();
```

Driver to demo NumberList

```
Output: 2.5 7.9 12.6
```

deleteNode code

```c
inline NumberList::deleteNode(double num) {
    ListNode *p = head; // to traverse the list
    ListNode *n; // trailing node pointer
    // skip nodes not equal to num, stop at last
    while (p && p->value!=num) {
        n = p;        // save it!
        p = p->next;  // advance it
    }
    // p not null: num was found, set links + delete
    if (p) {
        if (p==head) {   // p points
            head = p->next;
            delete p;
        } else {  // n points to the predecessor
            n->next = p->next;
            delete p;
        }
    }
    return list;
}
```

Operation:

**insert** a node into a linked list

- Inserts a new node into the middle of a list.
- Uses two extra pointers:
  - one to point to node before the insertion point [why?]
  - one to point to the node after the insertion point [why?] [this one is optional]
Inserting a Node into a Linked List

- Insertion completed:

```cpp
def insertNode(double num):
    # Allocate new node
    newNode = ListNode()
    newNode.value = num
    # Skip all nodes less than num
    p = head
    while p and p.value < num:
        n = p
        p = p.next
    # Insert node
    if p == head:
        head = newNode
        newNode.next = p
    else:
        n.next = newNode
        newNode.next = p
```

Insert Node Algorithm

How do you determine the insertion point?

- Maintain sorted list: the insertion point is immediately before the first node in the list that has a value greater than the value being inserted. **We do this.**
- Insert by position: InsertNode takes a second argument that is the index of a node. Insert new value before (or after) that node.
- Use a cursor: The list class has a member variable that is a pointer to a “current node”, insert new value before (or after) the current node.

Driver to demo NumberList

```cpp
int main()
```
Advantages of linked lists over arrays

- A linked list can easily grow or shrink in size.
  - Nodes are created in memory as they are needed.
  - The programmer doesn’t need to predict how many elements will be in the list.
- The amount of memory used to store the list is always proportional to the number of elements in the list.
  - For arrays, the amount of memory used is often much more than is required by the actual elements in the list.
- When a node is inserted into or deleted from a linked list, none of the other nodes have to be moved.

Advantages of arrays over linked lists

- Arrays allow random access to elements: array[i]
  - linked lists allow only sequential access to elements (must traverse list to get to i’th element).
- Arrays do not require extra storage for “links”
  - linked lists are impractical for lists of characters or booleans (pointer value is bigger than data value).

Exercise: find four errors

```c++
int main() {
    struct node {
       int data;
       node * next;
    }

    // create empty list
    node * list;

    // insert six nodes at front of list
    node *n;
    for (int i=0;i<=5;i++) {
        n = new node;
        n->data = i;
        n->next = list;
    }

    // print list
    n = list;
    while (!n) {
        cout << n->data << " ";
        n = n->next;
    }
    cout << endl;
}
```