

Lambda Evolution - Past, Present and Future

Y. Bernat

Core C++ Meetup, Dec. 2017

Outline

Lambda Function - What?

Motivation

The Solution - Lambda Expression

The Missing Part

Capturing

The Type of a Lambda (and more)

C++14

C++17

C++20 (draft)

Summary

Overview

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 - ▶ `std::find_if` - find the first item that matches a criteria
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 - ▶ ...
- ▶ How do we pass the criteria to the algorithm?

Use a Simple Function

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1 bool between3and7 (int x) {
2     return 3 <= x && x <= 7;
3 }
4 void f () {
5     std::vector<int> v;
6     // ... fill v with data ...
7     auto i = std::find_if (v.begin(), v.end(),
8                             &between3and7);
9     if (i != v.end()) {
10        std::cout << "First item between 3 and 7 is "
11                << *i << '\n';
12    }
13    std::vector<int> v2;
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 - ▶ The logic is spread over the code instead of being local

Find Good Names



Jeff Atwood ✓
@codinghorror



 Follow

There are two hard things in computer science: cache invalidation, naming things, and off-by-one errors.

RETWEETS

1,336

LIKES

1,125



12:29 PM - 31 Aug 2014



1.3K



1.1K



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- ▶ A pointer to a function is a good fit but not the only one
- ▶ We can overload the call operator () of a class so any object of this type is also “behaves like a function”
- ▶ Such an object is commonly known as “function object” or “functor” (even if this name isn't accurate)

Functor Example

```
1 struct Between {
2     int m_l, m_h;
3     Between(int l, int h) : m_l(l), m_h(h) {}
4     bool operator()(int x) {
5         return m_l <= x && x <= m_h;
6     }
7 };
8 // ...
9 auto i = std::find_if(v.begin(), v.end(),
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 - ▶ A lot of boilerplate

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- ▶ `{ }` - the (lambda) function body

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3                           return 3 <= i && i <= 7;
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- ▶ Cons:
 - ▶ We lost the generality achieved with functor
- ▶ Did we lost even the simplest reuse we had with functions?

Reuse a Lambda Function

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2     auto between3and7 = [] (int x) {
3         return 3 <= x && x <= 7;
4     };
5     std::vector<int> v;
6     // ... fill v with data ...
7     auto i = std::find_if (v.begin(), v.end(),
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9     if (i != v.end()) {
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Return Type of a Lambda Function

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- ▶ Auto deduced from the single (or no) return statement
- ▶ Can be mentioned explicitly
 - ▶ For cases where the auto deducing result isn't desired
 - ▶ For cases with multiple return statements
- ▶ Uses “trailing return type” style (available also for regular functions)

Compound Initialization

```
1 class Logger {
2     private:
3         std::ostream& m_stream;
4     public:
5         Logger(std::ostream& stream)
6             : m_stream(stream) {}
7         // Some actually useful methods here
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Compound Initialization - 2

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5     public:
6         enum LogTarget { Stdout, File };
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Compound Initialization - 3

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3     [&]() -> std::ostream& {
4         if (target == Stdout)
5             return std::cout;
6         while (!m_file.is_open())
7             m_file.open(getFilename());
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- ▶ First example of capturing
 - ▶ Let's dive in

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The Solution - Lambda Expression

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The Type of a Lambda (and more)

C++14

C++17

C++20 (draft)

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- ▶ Capturing is the way to give access for the lambda expression to externally declared variables

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- ▶ `[=, &x]` - copy in everything, except `x`, which will be used by-ref
- ▶ Both “default capturing” options capture also `this`, if available and relevant

Use capturing

```
1 int lo = 3, hi = 7;
2 auto between = [&lo, &hi](int i){
3     return lo <= i && i <= hi;
4 };
5
6 auto i = std::find_if(v.begin(), v.end(), between);
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8 lo = 0; hi = 42;
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- ▶ E.g. returning a lambda from a function or passing it as a callback to something that will stay alive after the current scope

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- ▶ Occasionally, we write a class of our own to handle a specific resource / usage in our application
 - ▶ The c-tor creates the resource / takes ownership
 - ▶ The d-tor destroys it / does any cleanup task needed
- ▶ Sometimes we want an ad-hoc tool for use only once in the code

ScopeGuard - Usage

```
1 // ...
2
3 _variant_t vtProp;
4 auto hres =
5     message.Get(L"Message", 0, &vtProp, 0, 0);
6
7 CComSafeArray<uint8_t> arr;
8 arr.Attach(vtProp.parray);
9 // DON'T FORGET TO DETACH AT THE END
10 const auto detach = makeScopeGuard([&arr] () {
11                                     arr.Detach();
12                                 });
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14 // Continue working; no fear of throwing exceptions
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2 // MUST RESET THE FLAG AT THE END
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4 const auto flagGuard = gsl::finally([this] {
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- ▶ Less recommended due to a non-trivial overhead, but sometimes we have no better choice

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- ▶ Could be captured by-ref, but this isn't always desired
- ▶ With C++14, init-capture allowed, enabling usage of move-only types but many other use-cases

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 - ▶ `[answer = 42]` - create a variable `answer` inside with type `int` and initialize it to 42

Capturing Improvements - Syntax

- ▶ `[p = std::move(ptr)]` - moves `ptr` in and call it `p`
- ▶ This allows “renaming” in general:
 - ▶ `[x = y]` - copy `y` in but call it `x` inside
 - ▶ `[&r = p]` - use the name `r` inside as a reference to `p`
- ▶ Or even introducing new variables:
 - ▶ `[answer = 42]` - create a variable `answer` inside with type `int` and initialize it to 42
- ▶ ScopeGuard became more usable

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 - ▶ (but have the function body available for the compiler wherever used, just like template)

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- ▶ The conversion to function pointer and `std::function` still works!

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Lambda Function - What?

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The Solution - Lambda Expression

The Missing Part

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The Type of a Lambda (and more)

C++14

C++17

C++20 (draft)

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 - ▶ (by Jason Turner and Ben Deane; CppCon2017 and more)

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- ▶ `auto glambda = []<class T>(T a, auto&& b) {
return a < b; };`

Default-Constructible, Usable in Template Arguments

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1 auto comp = [](const auto& l, const auto& r) {
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- ▶ It's default destructible!
- ▶ We could even write the lambda directly inside the `decltype` but this is just ugly...

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- ▶ Learned the evolution of it over the standard versions
- ▶ Saw a few interesting usages
- ▶ Please don't overuse!