8. Floating-point Numbers II

Floating-point Number Systems; IEEE Standard; Limits of Floating-point Arithmetics; Floating-point Guidelines; Harmonic Numbers

Floating-point Number Systems

A Floating-point number system is defined by the four natural numbers:

- $\beta \geq 2$, the base,
- $p \geq 1$, the precision (number of places),
- $e_{\min}$, the smallest possible exponent,
- $e_{\max}$, the largest possible exponent.

Notation:

$$F(\beta, p, e_{\min}, e_{\max})$$

Floating-point number Systems

$F(\beta, p, e_{\min}, e_{\max})$ contains the numbers

$$\pm \sum_{i=0}^{p-1} d_i \beta^{-i} \cdot \beta^e,$$

$d_i \in \{0, \dots, \beta - 1\}$, $\quad e \in \{e_{\min}, \dots, e_{\max}\}$.

represented in base β:

$$\pm\, d_{0\bullet} d_1 \dots d_{p-1} \times \beta^e,$$

Floating-point Number Systems

Representations of the decimal number 0.1 (with $\beta = 10$):

$$1.0 \cdot 10^{-1}, \quad 0.1 \cdot 10^{0}, \quad 0.01 \cdot 10^{1}, \quad \ldots$$

Different representations due to choice of exponent

Normalized representation

Normalized number:

$$\pm\, d_0 \bullet d_1 \ldots d_{p-1} \times \beta^e, \qquad d_0 \neq 0$$

Remark 1

The normalized representation is unique and therefore prefered.

Remark 2

The number 0, as well as all numbers smaller than $\beta^{e_{\min}}$, have no normalized representation (we will come back to this later)

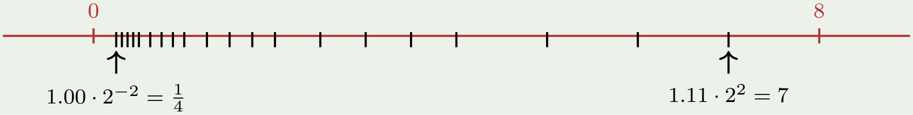
Set of Normalized Numbers

$$F^*(\beta, p, e_{\min}, e_{\max})$$

Normalized Representation

Example $F^*(2, 3, -2, 2)$ (only positive numbers)

$d_{0\bullet}d_1d_2$	$e = -2$	$e = -1$	$e = 0$	$e = 1$	$e = 2$
1.00_2	0.25	0.5	1	2	4
1.01_2	0.3125	0.625	1.25	2.5	5
1.10_2	0.375	0.75	1.5	3	6
1.11_2	0.4375	0.875	1.75	3.5	7



Binary and Decimal Systems

- Internally the computer computes with $\beta = 2$ (binary system)
- Literals and inputs have $\beta = 10$ (decimal system)
- Inputs have to be converted!

Conversion Decimal $\to$ Binary

Assume, $0 < x < 2$.
Binary representation:

$$x = \sum_{i=-\infty}^{0} b_i 2^i = b_{0\bullet} b_{-1} b_{-2} b_{-3} \dots$$

$$= b_0 + \sum_{i=-\infty}^{-1} b_i 2^i = b_0 + \sum_{i=-\infty}^{0} b_{i-1} 2^{i-1}$$

$$= b_0 + \underbrace{\left(\sum_{i=-\infty}^{0} b_{i-1} 2^i \right)}_{x' = b_{-1\bullet} b_{-2} b_{-3} b_{-4}} /2$$

Conversion Decimal $\rightarrow$ Binary

Assume $0 < x < 2$.

- Hence: $x' = b_{-1} \bullet b_{-2} b_{-3} b_{-4} \ldots = 2 \cdot (x - b_0)$
- Step 1 (for x): Compute b_0:

$$b_0 = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } x \geq 1 \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

- Step 2 (for x): Compute $b_{-1}, b_{-2}, \ldots$:

  Go to step 1 (for $x' = 2 \cdot (x - b_0)$)

Binary representation of 1.1_{10}

x	b_i	$x - b_i$	$2(x - b_i)$
1.1	$b_0 = 1$	0.1	0.2
0.2	$b_1 = 0$	0.2	0.4
0.4	$b_2 = 0$	0.4	0.8
0.8	$b_3 = 0$	0.8	1.6
1.6	$b_4 = 1$	0.6	1.2
1.2	$b_5 = 1$	0.2	0.4

$\Rightarrow 1.0\overline{0011}$, periodic, *not* finite

Binary Number Representations of 1.1 and 0.1

- are not finite, hence there are errors when converting into a (finite) binary floating-point system.
- `1.1f` and `0.1f` do not equal 1.1 and 0.1, but are slightly inaccurate approximation of these numbers.
- In `diff.cpp`: $1.1 - 1.0 \neq 0.1$

Binary Number Representations of 1.1 and 0.1

on my computer:

$$\texttt{1.1} = \underline{1.10000000000000000}888178\ldots$$
$$\texttt{1.1f} = \underline{1.1000000}238418\ldots$$

Computing with Floating-point Numbers

Example ($\beta = 2$, $p = 4$):

$$
\begin{array}{rr}
 & 1.111 \cdot 2^{-2} \\
+ & 1.011 \cdot 2^{-1} \\
\hline
 & = 1.001 \cdot 2^{0}
\end{array}
$$

1. adjust exponents by denormalizing one number 2. binary addition of the significands 3. renormalize 4. round to p significant places, if necessary

The IEEE Standard 754

defines floating-point number systems and their rounding behavior and is used nearly everywhere

- Single precision (`float`) numbers:

  $F^*(2, 24, -126, 127)$ (32 bit) plus 0, ∞, $\ldots$

- Double precision (`double`) numbers:

  $F^*(2, 53, -1022, 1023)$ (64 bit) plus 0, ∞, $\ldots$

- All arithmetic operations round the *exact* result to the next representable number

The IEEE Standard 754

Why

$$F^*(2, 24, -126, 127)?$$

- 1 sign bit
- 23 bit for the significand (leading bit is 1 and is not stored)
- 8 bit for the exponent (256 possible values)(254 possible exponents, 2 special values: 0, ∞,...)

$\Rightarrow$ 32 bit in total.

The IEEE Standard 754

Why

$$F^*(2, 53, -1022, 1023)?$$

- 1 sign bit
- 52 bit for the significand (leading bit is 1 and is not stored)
- 11 bit for the exponent (2046 possible exponents, 2 special values: 0, ∞,...)

$\Rightarrow$ 64 bit in total.

Example: 32-bit Representation of a Floating Point Number

31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

$\pm$	Exponent	Mantisse
$\pm$	$2^{-126}, \ldots, 2^{127}$ $0, \infty, \ldots$	$1.00000000000000000000000$ $\cdots$ $1.11111111111111111111111$

Floating-point Rules

Rule 1

Do not test rounded floating-point numbers for equality.

```
for (float i = 0.1; i != 1.0; i += 0.1)
    std::cout << i << "\n";
```

endless loop because i never becomes exactly 1

Rule 2

Do not add two numbers of very different orders of magnitude!

$$\begin{aligned} & 1.000 \cdot 2^5 \\ +& 1.000 \cdot 2^0 \\ =& 1.00001 \cdot 2^5 \\ \text{"="}\ & 1.000 \cdot 2^5 \end{aligned}$$ (Rounding on 4 places)

Addition of 1 does not have any effect!

Harmonic Numbers

Rule 2

- The n-the harmonic number is

$$H_n = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{1}{i} \approx \ln n.$$

- This sum can be computed in forward or backward direction, which is mathematically clearly equivalent

Harmonic Numbers

Rule 2

```
// Program: harmonic.cpp
// Compute the n-th harmonic number in two ways.

#include <iostream>

int main()
{
  // Input
  std::cout << "Compute H_n for n =? ";
  unsigned int n;
  std::cin >> n;

  // Forward sum
  float fs = 0;
  for (unsigned int i = 1; i <= n; ++i)
    fs += 1.0f / i;

  // Backward sum
  float bs = 0;
  for (unsigned int i = n; i >= 1; --i)
    bs += 1.0f / i;

  // Output
  std::cout << "Forward sum  = " << fs << "\n"
            << "Backward sum = " << bs << "\n";
  return 0;
}
```

Harmonic Numbers

Results:

- ```
  Compute H_n for n =?  10000000
  Forward sum = 15.4037
  Backward sum = 16.686
  ```
- ```
  Compute H_n for n =?  100000000
  Forward sum = 15.4037
  Backward sum = 18.8079
  ```

Harmonic Numbers

Rule 2

Observation:

- The forward sum stops growing at some point and is “really” wrong.
- The backward sum approximates H_n well.

Explanation:

- For $1 + 1/2 + 1/3 + \cdots$, later terms are too small to actually contribute
- Problem similar to $2^5 + 1$ “$=$” 2^5

Floating-point Guidelines

Rule 4

Do not subtract two numbers with a very similar value.

Cancellation problems, cf. lecture notes.

Literature

David Goldberg: What Every Computer Scientist Should Know About Floating-Point Arithmetic (1991)

Randy Glasbergen, 1996

9. Functions I

Defining and Calling Functions, Evaluation of Function Calls, the Type `void`

Functions

- encapsulate functionality that is frequently used (e.g. computing powers) and make it easily accessible
- structure a program: partitioning into small sub-tasks, each of which is implemented as a function

$\Rightarrow$ Procedural programming; procedure: a different word for function.

Example: Computing Powers

```
double a;
int n;
std::cin >> a; // Eingabe a
std::cin >> n; // Eingabe n

double result = 1.0;
if (n < 0) { // a^n = (1/a)^(-n)
  a = 1.0/a;
  n = -n;
}
for (int i = 0; i < n; ++i)
  result *= a;

std::cout << a << "^" << n << " = " << result << ".\n";
```

"Funktion pow"

Function to Compute Powers

```
// PRE: e >= 0 || b != 0.0
// POST: return value is b^e
double pow(double b, int e)
{
    double result = 1.0;
    if (e < 0) { // b^e = (1/b)^(-e)
        b = 1.0/b;
        e = -e;
    }
    for (int i = 0; i < e; ++i)
        result *= b;
    return result;
}
```

Function to Compute Powers

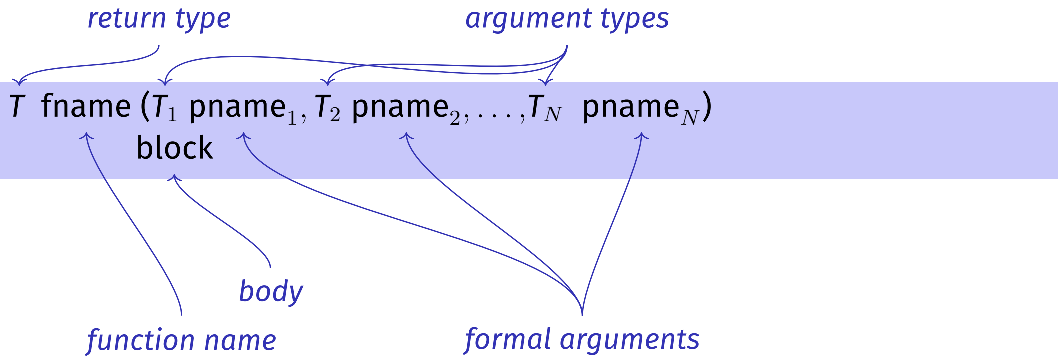
```
// Prog: callpow.cpp
// Define and call a function for computing powers.
#include <iostream>

double pow(double b, int e){...}

int main()
{
  std::cout << pow( 2.0, -2) << "\n"; // outputs 0.25
  std::cout << pow( 1.5, 2) << "\n"; // outputs 2.25
  std::cout << pow(-2.0, 9) << "\n"; // outputs -512

  return 0;
}
```

Function Definitions



Defining Functions

- may not occur *locally*, i.e. not in blocks, not in other functions and not within control statements
- can be written consecutively without separator in a program

```
double pow (double b, int e)
{
    ...
}

int main ()
{
    ...
}
```

Example: Xor

```
// post: returns l XOR r
bool Xor(bool l, bool r)
{
    return l && !r || !l && r;
}
```

Example: Harmonic

```
// PRE: n >= 0
// POST: returns nth harmonic number
//      computed with backward sum
float Harmonic(int n)
{
    float res = 0;
    for (unsigned int i = n; i >= 1; --i)
        res += 1.0f / i;
    return res;
}
```

Example: min

```
// POST: returns the minimum of a and b
int min(int a, int b)
{
    if (a<b)
        return a;
    else
        return b;
}
```

Function Calls

fname (*expression*$_1$, *expression*$_2$, …, *expression*$_N$)

- All call arguments must be convertible to the respective formal argument types.
- The function call is an expression of the return type of the function. Value and effect as given in the postcondition of the function *fname*.

Example: `pow(a,n)`: Expression of type `double`

Function Calls

For the types we know up to this point it holds that:

- Call arguments are R-values
  $\hookrightarrow$ *call-by-value* (also *pass-by-value*), more on this soon
- The function call is an R-value.

$$\textit{fname}\text{: R-value} \times \text{R-value} \times \cdots \times \text{R-value} \longrightarrow \text{R-value}$$

Evaluation of a Function Call

- Evaluation of the call arguments
- Initialization of the formal arguments with the resulting values
- Execution of the function body: formal arguments behave laike local variables
- Execution ends with
  `return` *expression*;

Return value yiels the value of the function call.

Example: Evaluation Function Call

```
double pow(double b, int e){
    assert (e >= 0 || b != 0);
    double result = 1.0;
    if (e<0) {
        // b^e = (1/b)^(-e)
        b = 1.0/b;
        e = -e;
    }
    for (int i = 0; i < e ; ++i)
        result * = b;
    return result;
}

...
pow (2.0, -2)
```

Call of pow

Return

sometimes em formal arguments

- Declarative region: function definition
- are *invisible* outside the function definition
- are allocated for each call of the function (automatic storage duration)
- modifications of their value do not have an effect to the values of the call arguments (call arguments are R-values)

Scope of Formal Arguments

```
double pow(double b, int e){
    double r = 1.0;
    if (e<0) {
        b = 1.0/b;
        e = -e;
    }
    for (int i = 0; i < e ; ++i)
        r * = b;
    return r;
}
```

```
int main(){
    double b = 2.0;
    int e = -2;
    double z = pow(b, e);

    std::cout << z; // 0.25
    std::cout << b; // 2
    std::cout << e; // -2
    return 0;
}
```

Not the formal arguments `b` and `e` of pow but the variables defined here locally in the body of `main`

The type void

```
// POST: "(i, j)" has been written to standard output
void print_pair(int i, int j) {
    std::cout << "(" << i << ", " << j << ")\n";
}

int main() {
    print_pair(3,4); // outputs (3, 4)
    return 0;
}
```

The type `void`

- Fundamental type with empty value range
- Usage as a return type for functions that do *only* provide an effect

`void`-Functions

- do not require `return`.
- execution ends when the end of the function body is reached or if
- `return;` is reached
  or
- `return` *expression*`;` is reached.

Expression with type `void` (e.g. a call of a function with return type `void`

Functions and `return`

The behavior of a function with non-`void` return type is **undefined** if the end of the function body is reached without a `return` statement.

Wrong:

```
bool compare(float x, float y) {
  float delta = x - y;
  if (delta*delta < 0.001f) return true;
}
```

Here the value of `compare(10,20)` is undefined.

Functions and `return`

The behavior of a function with non-`void` return type is **undefined** if the end of the function body is reached without a `return` statement.

Better:

```
bool compare(float x, float y) {
   float delta = x - y;
   if (delta*delta < 0.001f)
    return true;
   else
    return false;
}
```

All execution paths reach a `return`

Functions and `return`

The behavior of a function with non-`void` return type is **undefined** if the end of the function body is reached without a `return` statement.

Even better and simpler

```
bool compare(float x, float y) {
   float delta = x - y;
   return delta*delta < 0.001f;
 }
```