



Basic lambdas for C (slides)

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Basic lambdas for C

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<https://modernc.gforge.inria.fr/>



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Policy

- *extend* the standard
 - valid code remains valid
 - new feature integrates syntactically and semantically
- fix as much requirements as possible through constraints
 - specific syntax
 - explicit constraints
- avoid new undefined behavior
 - only, if property is not (or hardly) detectable at translation time
 - or we leave design space to implementations
- don't mess with ABI
 - no changes
 - no extensions



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Example: simple function literal

```
char const* stringArray[NUMEL];  
...  
qsort(stringArray, NUMEL, sizeof(stringArray[0]),  
      [](void const* a, void const* b){  
        char const*const* A = a;  
        char const*const* B = b;  
        return strcmp(*A, *B);  
      }));
```

- function literal appears close to its use
- return type is inferred as the same as `strcmp`
- function literal is converted to function pointer

```
int (*)(void const* a, void const* b)
```

- that function pointer is passed into `qsort`



Example: iterated function literal

```
auto strSort = [] (size_t n, char const* stringArray[n]) {
    qsort(stringArray, n, sizeof(stringArray[0]),
        [] (void const* a, void const* b) {
            typedef(stringArray[0]) const* A = a;
            typedef(stringArray[0]) const* B = b;
            return strcmp(*A, *B);
        });
};
```

- a lambda expression that sorts string pointers
- the outer lambda has no **return** => return type is **void**
- use of **sizeof** and **typedef** makes it type safe (no evaluation!)
- no function with **void*** parameters is exported
- may be used directly in a function call
- may be converted to a function pointer

```
void (*) (size_t n, char const* stringArray[n])
```

Example: value closure

- value captures are evaluated when the lambda *expression* is met

```
// freeze  $\varepsilon$  to  $\delta$  and have the function parameter dependent
auto const  $\lambda 5\varepsilon$  = [ $\delta = \varepsilon$ ] (double x, typeof(x) func(typeof(x))) {
    double h =  $\delta * x$ ;
    return (-func(x+2*h)+8*func(x+h)-8*func(x-h)+func(x-2*h)) / (12*h);
};
```

- even if the capture is itself a lambda *value*

```
// also freeze a function, and have the parameter dependent
auto const  $\lambda 5\varepsilon\_func$  = [ $\delta = \varepsilon$ , func = f] (typeof(func(0)) x) {
    auto h =  $\varepsilon * x$ ;
    return (-func(x+2*h)+8*func(x+h)-8*func(x-h)+func(x-2*h)) / (12*h);
};
```

- this works if f is a function, function pointer or lambda



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Design choice, expression

Function definitions versus expressions

- function definition
 - naming is a burden
 - function use is distant from definition
 - nested functions may access all outer variables (no control mechanism)
- expression
 - anonymous
 - use where defined
 - lambda expression:
 - dedicated syntax to control access to outer variables



Design choice, capture

Capture model

- *visibility* of (almost) all identifiers as usual
- *access* is different
 - identifiers with linkage => business as usual
 - static identifiers without linkage => ok if not VM
 - automatic variables: default is *no capture*
 - value capture by explicit request
 - identifier capture by explicit request
 - options **N2893**
 - shadow capture by explicit request
 - *capture all* as identifier capture
 - *capture all* as shadow capture

(`[]`, function literal)

(`[hui = fui]`)

(`[&hui]`)

(`[bla]`)

(`[&]`)

(`[=]`)



Design choices, function call

Call sequence

- lambda values are only visible in the same TU
- escape from TU only if function literal and converted to function pointer
- closure => addressless **static** function with *no escape* guarantee
- no ABI change



Design choices

Interoperability

- all is fixed at *translation time*
- no linker dependency

Not available

recursion only if function literal via function pointer

stdarg no variable argument list allowed

VM types would be evaluated



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Deviation from C++ – maybe added later

No return type specification

- C++ has the syntax “ $\rightarrow$ *return-type*” as in

```
[ ] (double x, double h, double (*func) (double))  $\rightarrow$  double {
    return (-func(x+2*h)+8*func(x+h)-8*func(x-h)+func(x-2*h)) / (12*h);
}
```

Make captures mutable

- C++ has the keyword **mutable**

```
[ $\delta = \varepsilon$ ] (double x, double (*func) (double)) mutable {
    if (condition)  $\delta$  += 1.E-7;
    double h =  $\delta$  * x;
    return (-func(x+2*h)+8*func(x+h)-8*func(x-h)+func(x-2*h)) / (12*h);
}
```

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Existing extensions

C++ and widely used gcc extensions

	language	value	identifier	shadow
nested function	gcc' C	no	always	no
statement expression	gcc' C et al.	no	always	no
blocks	objective C gcc' C and C++	no	property	default
lambda	C++	explicit	explicit	explicit

