

III. Classes (Chap. 3)

As we have seen, C++ data types can be classified as:

- Fundamental (or simple or scalar):
A data object of one of these types is a single object.
int, double, char, bool, complex, and the related types (unsigned, short, etc.)
enumerations
- Structured:
These store collections of data.
arrays, structs, unions, classes, valarrays, bitsets, and the containers and adapters in STL

We have studied all of the fundamental types (except `complex`) and the data structures C++ gets from C — arrays, structs, and unions. We will now look at classes in detail; pointers (and linked structures that use pointers) and vectors, stacks, queues, and lists from STL will be considered soon.

A. Structs vs. Classes

Similarities between structs and classes

1. Both can be used to model objects with _____
_____ (also called **fields** or **instance variables**).

They can thus be used to process _____

2. They have essentially the _____.

Differences between structs and classes

1. C does not provide classes; C++ provides both structs and classes.
2. Members of a struct by default are _____ (can be accessed _____).

In C++ they can be explicitly declared to be _____ (cannot be accessed outside the struct).

Members of a class by default are _____

Thus, choosing which to use is not based on their capabilities. It is common practice to use classes to prevent users of a new data type from (directly) accessing the data members. (We can also enforce this with structs, but this is not their default nature.)

Differences between "traditional" (C) structs and OOP (C++) structs and classes

C++'s structs and classes are extensions of C's structs. They can be used to model objects that have:

- Attributes (characteristics) represented as **data members**

and

- _____

Terminology:

It is common to call the two parts of a class *data members* and *member functions* (although "data members" and "function members" is really more correct.) We will use the terms interchangeably.

This is an important difference because it leads to a whole new style of programming — object-oriented rather than procedural. Objects can now be _____, carrying their own operations around with them — commonly called the _____ principle — instead of having to be shipped off to some external function that operates on them and sends them back.

B. Structure and Design of a Class (§11.1)1. Declaring a Classa. Usual Form:

```
class ClassName
{
    public:
        Declarations of public members
    private:
        Declarations of private members
};
```

Notes:

1. The *data members* are normally placed in the _____ section of a class; the *function members* in the _____ section.
2. Some programmers prefer to put the private section first because this is the default access for classes so the `private:` specifier could be omitted. However, we will put the public *interface* part of the class first and the *hidden* private details last.
3. Although not commonly done, a class may have several private and public sections; the keywords `private:` and `public:` mark the beginning of each.

b. Access

- (i) A particular instance of a class is called an _____ :

ClassName object_name;

- (ii) Private members can be accessed _____

(except by _____ functions described later).

- (iii) Public members can be accessed _____.

ClassName object_name;

To access them outside the class, one must use the _____ :

c. Where are class declarations placed?

Usually in a header file whose name is *ClassName.h*. The library is then called a _____.

2. Example: Declaring a class Time — Version 1

```

/** Time.h -----
This header file defines the data type Time for processing time.
Basic operations are:
Set:      To set the time
Display:  To display the time
----- */

#include <iostream>
using namespace std;

class Time
{
/***** Member functions *****/

-----

/* Set sets the data members of a Time object to specified values.
 * See Fig. 3.1 for documentation */

void Set(_____);

/* Display displays time in standard and military format using
 * output stream out.
 * See Fig. 3.1 for documentation */

void Display(_____) _____;

/***** Data Members *****/

_____

    unsigned _____,
        _____;

    char _____; // 'A' or 'P'
    unsigned _____; // military time equivalent
}; // end of class declaration

```

Notes:

1. The "my" in names of data members is simply to remind us of the "I-can-do-it-myself" nature of a class object.
2. The `const` at the end of `Display()`'s prototype makes it a _____, which means that _____ . It is good practice to protect the data members in this way from accidental modification.

3. Why not make all members public?

So they _____.

Why? Otherwise programmers may use them in programs, other classes, libraries, . . .

However, the _____ to improve storage, simplify algorithms for operations, etc., and all programs, classes, . . . that access them directly must then be modified.

Therefore:

Always define data members of a class as private.

Keeping the data members "hidden" forces programs to interact with an object through its _____, which thus provide the _____ between programs and the class. If this interface does not change, then programs that use an object will not require change.

3. Implementation of a Class

Usually, only the prototypes of the member functions are placed inside the class declaration to _____ — definitions are outside.

However, when a declaration of some public item such as a type, constant, or function is inside a class declaration — another name for "function prototype" is "function declaration" — and is then referenced or defined outside the class declaration, the compiler must be informed where the declaration/prototype is

This is accomplished using the _____ which has the form

This is referred to as the _____ or _____ **name** of *ItemName*.

Example:

```
class Something
{
public:
    _____ const int CAPACITY = 100;
    typedef double ArrayType[CAPACITY];

    void Print(ArrayType a, int itsSize);
    . . .
}
. . .
```

Traditionally, definitions of member functions have been put in an implementation file `ClassName.cpp` corresponding to the class' header file. This is done to _____
_____. (Unfortunately, the class data members, which store data and are therefore part of the implementation, must be in the `.h` file.)

With the increasing use of _____, however, this practice is becoming less common because current compiler technology doesn't permit this split for templates — everything has to be in the same file. Thus the reason for dropping the `.h` from standard class libraries. They're really class-template libraries, and there are therefore no corresponding `.cpp` file.

4. Example: Definitions of Member Functions for class `Time` — Version 1

```

/** Time.cc -- implements the Time member functions */
#include "Time.h"

/** Utility Functions -- Prototypes */
int ToMilitary(unsigned hours, unsigned minutes, char am_pm);

//----- Function to implement the Set operation -----
void _____(unsigned hours, unsigned minutes, char am_pm)
{
    // Check _____

    if (hours >= 1 && hours <= 12 &&
        minutes >= 0 && minutes <= 59 &&
        (am_pm == 'A' || am_pm == 'P'))
    {
        myHours = hours;
        myMinutes = minutes;
        myAMorPM = am_pm;
        myMilTime = ToMilitary(hours, minutes, am_pm);
    }
    else
        cerr << "*** Can't set time with these values ***\n";
    // Object's data members remain unchanged
}

//----- Function to implement the Display operation -----
void _____(ostream & out) const
{
    out << myHours << ':' <<
        << (myMinutes < 10 ? "0" : "") << myMinutes
        << ' ' << myAMorPM << ".M. (" <<
        << myMilTime << " mil. time)";
}

```

```

/** Utility Functions -- Definitions */
/* ToMilitary converts standard time to military time.
 *
 * Receive: hours, minutes, am_pm
 * Return: The military time equivalent
 *****/
int ToMilitary (unsigned hours, unsigned minutes, char am_pm)
{
    if (hours == 12)
        hours = 0;

    return hours * 100 + minutes + (am_pm == 'P' ? 1200 : 0);
}

```

5. Testing the class

```

// Test driver

#include <iostream>
using namespace std;

int main()
{
    _____
    _____

    cout << "We'll be eating at ";

    _____

    cout << endl;
}

```

Execution:

We'll be eating at 5:30 P.M. (1730 military time)

Again, note the difference from the procedural approach. Rather than package up the object and send it off to some function for processing, we _____

To set my digital watch to 5:30 P.M., I don't wrap it up and mail it off to Casio and have them do it; rather, I push a button! To display the time, I don't wrap up my watch and mail it off to Casio and have them tell me what time it is. Ridiculous! I have it display the time to me itself, perhaps pushing a button to turn on the backlight so I can see it.

6. Some Notes

- a. Member functions: "Inside" an object so don't pass object to them as a parameter. Another way to view this:

They receive the class object to be operated on implicitly, rather than explicitly via a parameter.

Non-member functions: "Outside" an object, so *to operate on an object, they must receive it via a parameter.*

- b. Public items like types and constants declared inside a class declaration must be qualified with the class name when used outside the class:

```
ClassName::ItemName
```

Constants are usually specified to be static so this is a global class property that can be accessed by all objects of that class type rather than having each such object carry around it's own copy of that constant.

- c. Nontrivial member functions:

Usually: Prototypewithin the class
Define outsided the class; must qualify their names:

```
ClassName::FunctionName( . . . )
```

- d. Simple member functions:

Usually: Specify that it be an _____ function, which *suggests* to the compiler that it _____ with parameters
replaced by arguments, thus avoiding the usual overhead of a function call. This can be done in two ways:

1. Prototype the function inside the class declaration as usual, but _____
 _____ **its name as usual:**

```
In ClassName.h
class ClassName
{
    // Public section -- function members
    . . .
    ReturnType SimpleFunction(param_list);
    . . .
    // Private section -- data members
    . . .
};

_____ ReturnType ClassName::SimpleFunction(param_list)
{
    // function body
}
```

2. Simply _____

In this case, it need not be prototyped, its name need not be qualified, and the compiler will treat it as an inline function:

```
In ClassName.h
class ClassName
{
    // Public section -- function members
    . . .
    Return Type SimpleFunction(param_list)
    {
        // function body
    }
    . . .
    // Private section -- data members
};
```

But use this method only for simple functions to avoid interface clutter.

d. In Set(), we tested whether the arguments are valid:

```
if (hours >= 1 && hours <= 12 &&
    minutes >= 0 && minutes <= 59 &&
    (am_pm == 'A' || am_pm == 'P'))
{
    myHours = hours;
    myMinutes = minutes;
    . . .
}
else . . .
```

This is to ensure that the following **class invariant** is true:

This class invariant is intended to guarantee that the _____
 _____ so that other function members can be sure of this Thus, whenever an operation modifies
any of the data members, we should always check that _____.

An alternative way to test this is to use the _____ mechanism (from `<cassert>`— at least during debugging — which:

- Accepts a boolean condition;
- If that condition is true, execution continues as usual.
- If the condition is false, execution halts and an error message is displayed.

```
#include _____
using namespace std;
. . .
//----- Function to implement the Set operation -----
void Time::Set(unsigned hours, unsigned minutes, char am_pm)
{
    _____ (hours >= 1 && hours <= 12 && minutes <= 59 &&
                (am_pm == 'A' || am_pm == 'P'));
    myHours = hours;
    myMinutes = minutes;
    . . .
}
```


Testing:

If we change `driver.cpp` as: `mealTime.Set(13, 30, 'P');`
 execution terminates with the following message:

```
Time.cpp:11: failed assertion `hours >= 1 && hours <= 12 &&
minutes <= 59 && (am_pm == 'A' || am_pm == 'P')'
IOT trap
```

A third alternative is to _____ that the calling function can _____ and take appropriate action

```
//----- Function to implement the Set operation -----
void Time::Set(unsigned hours, unsigned minutes, char am_pm)
{
    // Check class invariant
    if (hours >= 1 && hours <= 12 &&
        minutes >= 0 && minutes <= 59 &&
        (am_pm == 'A' || am_pm == 'P'))
    {
        . . .
    }
    else
    {

    }
}
```

To catch this exception, a calling function might contain

```
{
    mealTime.Set(13, 30, 'P');
    cout << "This is a valid time\n";
}

{
    cout << "ERROR: " << badTime << endl;
    exit(-1);
}
cout << "Proceeding. . .\n";
. . .
```

When executed, the output produced will be

```
ERROR: *** Illegal initializer values ***
```

7. Class Constructors

a. Recall that *constructing* an object consists of:

- (1) _____ for the object, and
- (2) _____ the object.

In our example, after the declaration

```
Time mealTime;
```

memory has been allocated for `mealTime`, but its data members are not initialized (and are likely to contain "garbage" values). It would be better if:

- the programmer could specify initial values for `mealTime`
- default values were used if no initial values are specified.

b. This can be accomplished using _____ .

Properties:

- (1) Their primary role (for now) is to _____ of an object with values (either default values or values provided as arguments)
- (2) Their names are always the same as the _____ .
- (3) They are always function members and are (almost always) prototyped in the `public` section.
- (4) They do not return a value; they have _____ (not even `void`).

For this reason, documentation that describes their behavior commonly specify:

1. What values they receive (if any) via parameters:
2. Preconditions: Conditions that must be true before the function is called.
and
3. Postconditions: Conditions that must be true when the function terminates.

- (5) Often they are quite simple and can be inlined in either of the two ways escribed earlier.

(6) Constructors get called _____

(7) If no constructor is given in the class, _____

which allocates memory and initializes it with some default (possibly garbage) value.

A default constructor is one that is used when the declaration of an object contains no initial values:

```
ClassName object_name;
```

(8) If we supply a constructor for a class, then we must also provide a default constructor.

c. Example: Constructors for Time classIn Time.h

```

. . .
class Time
{
/***** Member functions *****/
public:

/***** Class constructors *****/

/* --- Construct a class object (default).
 * Precondition: A Time object has been declared.
 * Postcondition: The Time object is initialized to 12:00 A.M.;
 *               that is, the myHours, myMinutes, and myAMorPM
 *               members are initialized to 12, 0, 'A', respectively,
 *               and myMilTime to 0.
 *****/

/*****

/* --- Construct a class object (explicit values).
 * Precondition: A Time object has been declared.
 * Receive:      Initial values initHours, initMinutes, and
 *               initAMPM
 * Postcondition: The myHours, myMinutes, and myAMorPM members
 *               of theTime object are initialized to initHours,
 *               initMinutes, and initAMPM , respectively, and
 *               myMilTime to the corresponding military time.
 *****/

/*****

. . .
// other member function prototypes
. . .
/***** Data Members *****/
private:
. . .
}; // end of class declaration

```

or

class Time

```

/***** Function Members *****/
public:

/**** Class constructors *****/

/* --- Construct a class object (default).
...
-----*/

Time()
{
    myHours = 12;
    myMinutes = 0;
    myAMorPM = 'A';
    myMilTime = 0;
}

/* --- Construct a class object (explicit values).
...
-----*/
. . .

// other member function prototypes
. . .

/***** Data Members *****/
private:
. . .

}; // end of class declaration

```

Add to Time.cpp

```

#include <cassert>
using namespace std;
. . .

//----- Function to implement the explicit-value constructor -----

_____ (unsigned initHours, unsigned initMinutes, char initAMPM)
{
    // Check class invariant
    assert(initHours >= 1 && initHours <= 12 &&
           initMinutes >= 0 && initMinutes <= 59 &&
           (initAMPM == 'A' || initAMPM == 'P'));

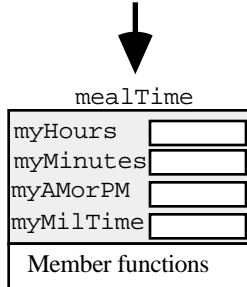
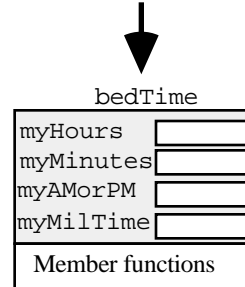
    myHours = _____;
    myMinutes = _____;
    myAMorPM = _____;
    myMilTime = ToMilitary(initHours, initMinutes, initAMPM);
}

```

Testing # 1

```
Time mealTime,
    bedTime(11,30,'P');
```

Creates and initializes 2 Time objects:

Default Constructor**Explicit-Value Constructor**

```
mealTime.Display(cout);
cout << endl;
bedTime.Display(cout);
cout << endl;
```

Execution:

```
12:00 A.M. (0 mil. time)
11:30 P.M. (2330 mil. time)
```

Testing # 2

```
Time mealTime,
    bedTime(13,0,'P');
    ...
```

Execution:

```
Time.cpp:12: failed assertion
`initHours >= 1 && initHours <= 12 &&
initMinutes <= 59 &&
(initAMPM == 'A' || initAMPM == 'P')'
IOT trap
```

Note: We could combine both constructors into a single constructor function by using _____:

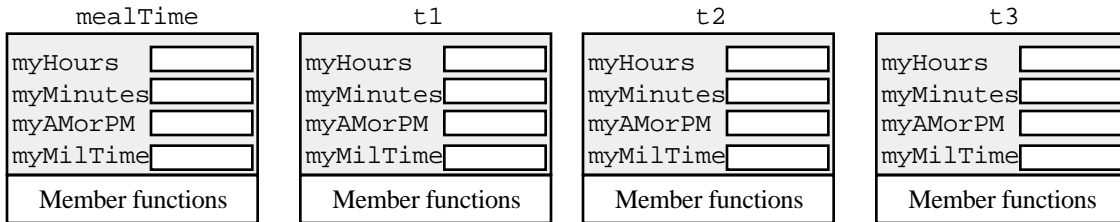
Replace constructors in Time.h with:

```
/* --- Construct a class object.
Precondition: A Time object has been declared.
Precondition: A Time object has been declared.
Receive:      Initial values initHours, initMinutes, and
               initAMPM (defaults 12, 0, 'A')
Postcondition: The myHours, myMinutes, and myAMorPM members of
               the Time object are initialized to initHours,
               initMinutes, and initAMPM , respectively.
-----*/
```

Testing:

```
Time mealTime,
    t1(5), t2(5, 30), t3(5, 30, 'P');
```

Creates 4 Time objects:



Execution:

```
mealTime.Display(cout);
cout << endl;
t1.Display(cout); cout << endl;
t2.Display(cout); cout << endl;
t3.Display(cout); cout << endl;
```

```
12:00 A.M. (0 mil. time)
5:00 A.M. (500 mil. time)
5:30 A.M. (530 mil. time)
5:30 P.M. (1730 mil. time)
```

Question: What happens with the declaration

```
Time t(5, 'P');
```

Will it create Time object t with values 5, 0, 'P' in its data members?

All parameters with default arguments must appear after all parameters without default arguments.

9. Copy Operations

Two default copy operations are provided:

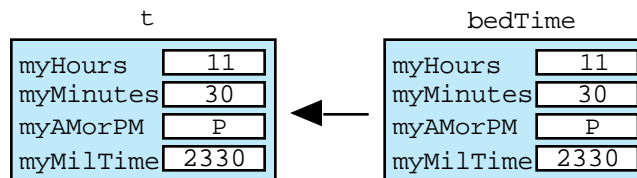
1. Copy in _____
2. Copy in _____

Each makes a (byte-by-byte) copy of the data members of the object.

Examples:

Both:

1. Allocate memory for t
2. Copy data members of bedTime into them so t is a copy of bedTime :



Time t = _____

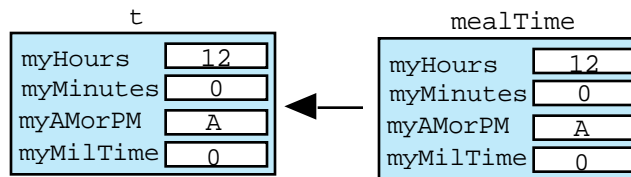
also does: Right side calls the explicit-value constructor to construct a (temporary) Time object and then copies it into t.

Note: These are *not* assignments; a default _____ is called.

There is a default copy operation for assignment.

Example:

copies the members of mealTime into t, replacing any previous values:



9. Access (Extractor) Functions

Data members are private; they cannot be accessed outside the class. It is often necessary, however, to make the values stored in some or all of these members accessible. For this, **access** (or **extractor**) member functions can be provided.

Example:

Problem: To add extractors to class Time:

(We will do this only for the myHours member; the others are essentially the same.)

Specification:

Receives: _____

Returns: _____

As usual, the specification tells us how to prototype the function:

- If we declare it as a member function, then it will be "inside" the Time object and so no parameters (Time or otherwise) will be needed.
- The function returns myHours, which is an integer.

In addition, because this function simply retrieves the value stored in a data member, it is simple enough to _____.

Also because it does not modify any data members it should be prototyped (and defined) as a _____ function.

Add to Time.h

```
class Time
{
/***** Data Members *****/
. . .
/***** Member functions *****/
public:
. . .
/***** Data Retrievers *****/

/* Hour Accessor
* Receive: The Time object containing this function (implicitly)
* Return: The value stored in the myHours member of the Time
* object containing this function
*****/
```

```
// and similar functions for myMinutes, myAMorPM, and myMilTime retrieval
```

```

. . .
/***** Data Members *****/
private:
. . .
}; // end of class declaration
. . .

//----- Definition of Hour()
inline unsigned Time::Hour() const;

{ _____ }

```

Testing:

```

Time mealTime;
. . .
cout << "Hour: " << mealTime.Hour() << endl;
. . .

```

```

||
||
||
||

```

Execution:

```
Hour: 12
```

9. Output and Input — Overloading Operators — Friend Functions

Add output operation to a class early so that it can be used for debugging.

It is convenient to overload `operator<<` for a `Time` object so we can write

```
cout << "We'll be eating at " << mealTime << endl;
```

instead of

```
cout << "We'll be eating at " ;
mealTime.Display(cout);
cout << endl;
```

a. Overloading operators:

— In C++, `operator` can be implemented with the function _____

— If a member function of a class `C`, and `a` is of type `C`, the compiler treats `a` `b` as

— If not a member function of a class `C` the compiler treats `a` `b` as

b. Overloading Output Operator `<<`

Can `operator<<()` be a member function? No, because the compiler will treat

```
cout << t
```

as

which would mean that `operator<<()` would have to be a member of class `ostream`!

Putting the prototype

```
ostream & operator<<(ostream & out, const Time & t);
```

inside the class declaration causes a compiler error like:

```
`Time::operator <<(ostream &, const Time &)' must take exactly one argument
```

because making `operator<<()` a *member* function of `Time` means that it already has the `Time` object containing it as an (implicit) parameter, so it can't have two more.

Option 1: Put its prototype in the header file `Time.h` but outside the class declaration.
and its definition in `Time.cpp`

Actually,

because it is so simple, we inline it by putting its definition in `Time.h`:

```
class Time
{
public:    // documentation omitted to save space here
    Time();
    Time(unsigned initHours, unsigned initMinutes, char initAMPM);
    int Hour() const{ return myHour; }
    int Minute() const{ return myMinute; }
    char AMPM() const{ return myAMorPM; }
    int MilTime() const{ return myMilTime; }
    void Display(ostream & out);
private:
    unsigned myHours,
            myMinutes;
    char myAMorPM;    // 'A' or 'P'
    unsigned myMilTime; // military time equivalent
}; // end of class declaration

/* --- operator<< displays time in standard and military format
using ostream out.
Receives:    An ostream out and a Time object t
Output:      The time represented by the Time object t
Passes back: The ostream out with t inserted into it.
Return value: out
-----*/
```

- Why 1st parameter a reference parameter?
The ostream gets modified so must be passed back.
- Why 2nd parameter a const reference parameter?
To avoid the overhead of having to copy a class object.
- Why return a reference to out?

So we can _____.

For example:

Output

```
cout << t1 << endl << t2 << endl;           5:00 A.M. (500 mil. time)
                                           5:30 A.M. (530 mil. time)
```

Because << is _____, this is evaluated as

So first function must return _____ so expression becomes

which is evaluated as

...

Option 2: Replace Display() with operator<<:

Replace the prototype of Display() in Time.h

```
class Time
{
    . . .
public:
    . . .

    /***** I/O Functions *****/

    /* --- operator<< displays time in standard and military format
       using ostream out.
       Receives:      An ostream out and a Time object t
       Output:        The time represented by t
       Passes back:   The ostream out with representation of t
                       inserted into it.
       Return value:  out
       -----*/

    _____ ostream & operator<<(ostream & out, const Time & t);
};
```

And replace the definition of Display() in Time.cpp

```
//----- Function to implement ostream output -----
ostream & operator<<(ostream & out, const Time & t)
{
    out << t.myHours << ':'
        << (t.myMinutes < 10 ? "0" : "") << t.myMinutes
        << ' ' << t.myAMorPM << ".M. ("
        << t.myMilTime << " mil. time)";

    return out;
}
```

A function that a class names as a *friend* is a: _____ **to which the class has granted permission to** _____.

Note: Because a friend function is not a function member:

- It's definition is not qualified using the class name and the scope operator (::).
- It receives the time object on which it operates as a parameter
- It uses the dot operator to access the data members.

b. Input

To add an input operator to our Time class, we proceed in much the same way as for output. We could either:

1. Add a member function ReadTime() that reads values and stores them in the data members of a Time object; then call it from non-member function operator>>()
2. Declare operator>>() to be a friend function so that it can access the data members of a Time object and store input values in them.

In our original version of this new data type, we had two other basic operations, comparing two `Time`s to determine if one is less than another, and advancing a `Time` by a given number of hours and minutes. We will now consider how these can be added to the class.

10. Adding Relational Operators:

We will describe how to add only one of the relational operators — less than — the others are similar.

Specification:

Receives: Two `Time` objects

Returns: True if the first `Time` object is less than the second;
false otherwise.

Question: Should it be a member function?

Question to help in deciding: Should it be inside the `Time` class from where it can operate on the `Time` object that contains it and another external `Time` object

or

should it be outside the class from where it can operate on any two `Time` objects?

Answer: Either will work, but in keeping with the OOP "I-can-do-it-myself" principle of making objects self-contained, we usually opt for using member functions whenever possible.

In this case, we might better rephrase our specification as:

Receives: A `Time` object (and the current object implicitly)

Returns: True if I (the `Time` object containing this function) am less than the `Time` object received;
false otherwise.

Add to `Time.h`:

```

/***** Relational operators *****/
/* --- operator< determines if one Time is less than another Time
    Receive:  A Time t (and the current object implicitly)
    Return:   True if time represented by current object is < t.
    -----*/
-----

```

Because of the simplicity of this function we inline it in either of the two ways described earlier; for example, put it's inlined definition after the end of the class declaration in `Time.h`:

```

. . .
}; // end of class declaration

```

For the external perspective:

```

...
class Time
{
public:    // member functions
...
/***** Relational operators *****/

/* --- operator< determines if one Time is less than another Time

Receive:  Two Times t1 and t2
Return:   True if time t1 is less than time t2/
-----*/

-----

}; // end of class declaration

```

12. Adding Increment/Decrement Operators:

Specification:

Receives: A Time object (perhaps implicitly)
Returns: The Time object with minutes incremented by 1 minute.

Question: Should it be a member function? Yes

Add to Time.h:

```

/***** Increment operator *****/

/* --- Advance() increments a Time by 1 minute.

Receive:  Current time object (implicitly)
Pass back: The Time object with its minutes incremented by 1.
-----*/

void Advance();

```

Add to Time.cpp:

```

//----- Function to implement Advance() -----

void Time::Advance()
{
    myMinutes++;
    myHours += myMinutes / 60;
    myMinutes %= 60;
    if (myMilTime == 1159)
        myAMorPM = 'P';
    else if (myMilTime == 2359)
        myAMorPM = 'A';
    // else no change
    myMilTime = ToMilitary(myHours, myMinutes, myAMorPM);
}

```

We could overload `operator++()` but how do we distinguish between prefix `++` and postfix `++`?

Solution: In C++,
`operator++()` with no parameters is prefix
`operator++(int)` with one `int` parameter is postfix
 [The `int` parameter is not used in the definition.]

13. Problem of Redundant Declarations

A class like `Time` might be used in a program, libraries, other class libraries, and so it could easily happen that it gets included several times in the same file —

e.g.,
 Program needs `Time` class, so it `#includes "Time.h"`
 Program also needs library `Lib`, so it `#includes "Lib.h" ... but Lib.h`
 also `#includes "Time.h"`

This would cause "redeclaration" errors during compiling.

How do we prevent the declarations in `Time.h` from being included more than once in a file?

Use _____

Wrap the declarations in `Time.h` inside preprocessor directives like the following:

[The preprocessor scans through a file removing comments, `#including` files, and processing other directives (which begin with `#`) before the file is passed to the compiler.]

```

_____          Usually the name of the class in all caps
_____
      :
      :
_____
  
```

The first directive tests to see whether the identifier `TIME` has been defined.

If it has not:

Processing proceeds to the second directive, which defines `TIME` (to be 1), and then continues on through what follows and on to the `#endif` and beyond.

If it has been defined:

The preprocessor removes all code that follows until a `#elif`, `#else`, or `#endif` directive is encountered.

Thus, the first time the preprocessor encounters a class declaration like `Time`, it defines the name `TIME`. If it encounters the class declaration again, since `TIME` has been defined, all code between `#ifndef TIME` and `#endif` is stripped, thus removing the redeclaration.