Introduction to Data Structures and Algorithms

Data Structure is a way of collecting and organising data in such a way that we can perform operations on these data in an effective way. Data Structures is about rendering data elements in terms of some relationship, for better organization and storage. For example, we have some data which has, player's **name** "Virat" and **age** 26. Here "Virat" is of **String** data type and 26 is of **integer** data type.

We can organize this data as a record like **Player** record, which will have both player's name and age in it. Now we can collect and store player's records in a file or database as a data structure. **For example**: "Dhoni" 30, "Gambhir" 31, "Sehwag" 33

If you are aware of Object Oriented programming concepts, then a `class` also does the same thing, it collects different type of data under one single entity. The only difference being, data structures provides for techniques to access and manipulate data efficiently.

In simple language, Data Structures are structures programmed to store ordered data, so that various operations can be performed on it easily. It represents the knowledge of data to be organized in memory. It should be designed and implemented in such a way that it reduces the complexity and increases the efficiency.

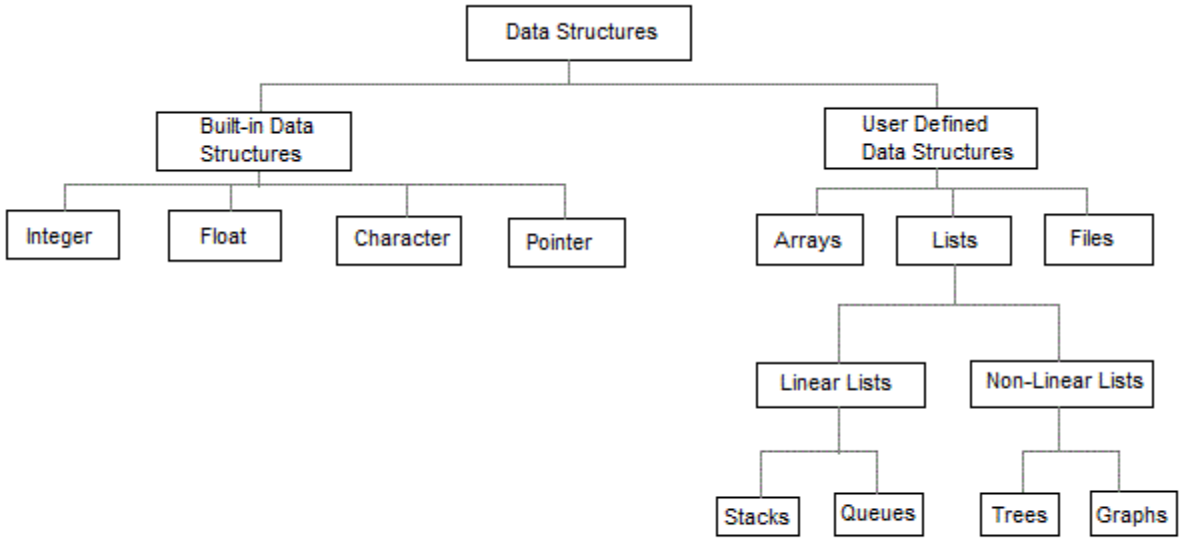
Basic types of Data Structures

As we have discussed above, anything that can store data can be called as a data structure, hence Integer, Float, Boolean, Char etc, all are data structures. They are known as **Primitive Data Structures**.

Then we also have some complex Data Structures, which are used to store large and connected data. Some example of **Abstract Data Structure** are :

- Linked List
- Tree
- Graph
- Stack, Queue etc.

All these data structures allow us to perform different operations on data. We select these data structures based on which type of operation is required. We will look into these data structures in more details in our later lessons.



The data structures can also be classified on the basis of the following characteristics:

Characterstic	Description
Linear	In Linear data structures,the data items are arranged in a linear sequence. Example: **Array**
Non-Linear	In Non-Linear data structures,the data items are not in sequence. Example: **Tree**, **Graph**
Homogeneous	In homogeneous data structures,all the elements are of same type. Example: **Array**
Non-Homogeneous	In Non-Homogeneous data structure, the elements may or may not be of the same type. Example: **Structures**
Static	Static data structures are those whose sizes and structures associated memory locations are fixed, at compile time. Example: **Array**
Dynamic	Dynamic structures are those which expands or shrinks depending upon the program need and its execution. Also, their associated memory locations changes. Example: **Linked List created using pointers**

What is an Algorithm ?

An algorithm is a finite set of instructions or logic, written in order, to accomplish a certain predefined task. Algorithm is not the complete code or program, it is just the core logic(solution) of a problem, which can be expressed either as an informal high level description as **pseudocode** or using a **flowchart**.

Every Algorithm must satisfy the following properties:

1. **Input**- There should be 0 or more inputs supplied externally to the algorithm.
2. **Output**- There should be atleast 1 output obtained.
3. **Definiteness**- Every step of the algorithm should be clear and well defined.
4. **Finiteness**- The algorithm should have finite number of steps.

1. **Correctness**- Every step of the algorithm must generate a correct output.

An algorithm is said to be efficient and fast, if it takes less time to execute and consumes less memory space. The performance of an algorithm is measured on the basis of following properties :

1. Time Complexity
2. Space Complexity

Space Complexity

Its the amount of memory space required by the algorithm, during the course of its execution. Space complexity must be taken seriously for multi-user systems and in situations where limited memory is available.

An algorithm generally requires space for following components :

- **Instruction Space:** Its the space required to store the executable version of the program. This space is fixed, but varies depending upon the number of lines of code in the program.
- **Data Space:** Its the space required to store all the constants and variables(including temporary variables) value.

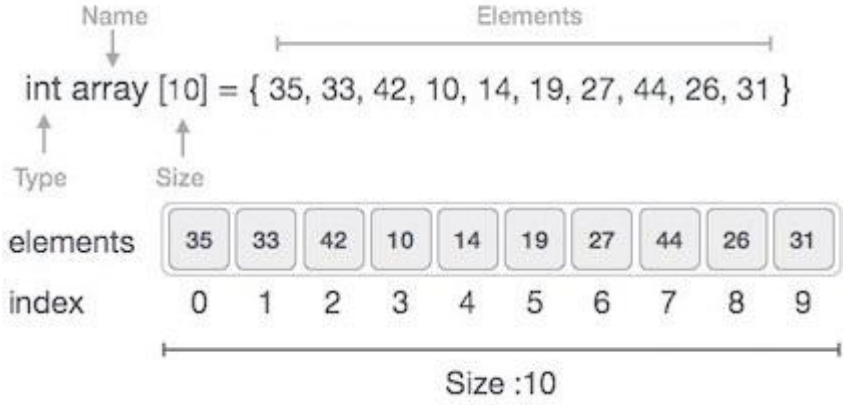
Data Structures and Algorithms - Arrays

Array is a container which can hold a fix number of items and these items should be of the same type. Most of the data structures make use of arrays to implement their algorithms. Following are the important terms to understand the concept of Array.

- **Element** – Each item stored in an array is called an element.
- **Index** – Each location of an element in an array has a numerical index, which is used to identify the element.

Array Representation

Arrays can be declared in various ways in different languages. For illustration, let's take C array declaration.



As per the above illustration, following are the important points to be considered.

- Index starts with 0.
- Array length is 10 which means it can store 10 elements.
- Each element can be accessed via its index. For example, we can fetch an element at index 6 as 9.

Basic Operations

Following are the basic operations supported by an array.

- **Traverse** – print all the array elements one by one.
- **Insertion** – Adds an element at the given index.
- **Deletion** – Deletes an element at the given index.
- **Search** – Searches an element using the given index or by the value.
- **Update** – Updates an element at the given index.

In C, when an array is initialized with size, then it assigns defaults values to its elements in following order.

Data Type	Default Value
bool	false
char	0
int	0

float	0.0
double	0.0f
void	
wchar_t	0

Insertion Operation

Insert operation is to insert one or more data elements into an array. Based on the requirement, a new element can be added at the beginning, end, or any given index of array.

Here, we see a practical implementation of insertion operation, where we add data at the end of the array −

Algorithm

Let **Array** be a linear unordered array of **MAX** elements.

Example

Result

Let **LA** be a Linear Array (unordered) with **N** elements and **K** is a positive integer such that **K<=N**. Following is the algorithm where ITEM is inserted into the K^{th} position of LA −

```
1. Start
2. Set J = N
3. Set N = N+1
4. Repeat steps 5 and 6 while J >= K
5. Set LA[J+1] = LA[J]
6. Set J = J-1
```

```
7. Set LA[K] = ITEM
8. Stop
```

Example

Following is the implementation of the above algorithm –

```
#include <stdio.h>


main() {
   int LA[] = {1,3,5,7,8};
   int item = 10, k = 3, n = 5;
   int i = 0, j = n;

   printf("The original array elements are :\n");

   for(i = 0; i<n; i++) {
      printf("LA[%d] = %d \n", i, LA[i]);
   }

   n = n + 1;

   while( j >= k) {
      LA[j+1] = LA[j];
      j = j - 1;
```

```
   }

   LA[k] = item;

       printf("The array elements after insertion :\n");

   for(i = 0; i<n; i++) {
      printf("LA[%d] = %d \n", i, LA[i]);
```

When we compile and execute the above program, it produces the following result –

Output

```
The original array elements are :
LA[0] = 1
LA[1] = 3
LA[2] = 5
LA[3] = 7
LA[4] = 8
The array elements after insertion :
LA[0] = 1
LA[1] = 3
LA[2] = 5
LA[3] = 10
LA[4] = 7
LA[5] = 8
```

For other variations of array insertion operation click here

Deletion Operation

Deletion refers to removing an existing element from the array and re-organizing all elements of an array.

Algorithm

Consider **LA** is a linear array with **N** elements and **K** is a positive integer such that **K<=N**. Following is the algorithm to delete an element available at the K^{th} position of LA.

```
1. Start
2. Set J = K
3. Repeat steps 4 and 5 while J < N
4. Set LA[J] = LA[J + 1]
5. Set J = J+1
6. Set N = N-1
7. Stop
```

Example

Following is the implementation of the above algorithm –

```
#include <stdio.h>

main() {

   int LA[] = {1,3,5,7,8};

   int k = 3, n = 5;

   int i, j;



   printf("The original array elements are :\n");
```

```
   for(i = 0; i<n; i++) {
      printf("LA[%d] = %d \n", i, LA[i]);
   }

   j = k;

   while( j < n) {
      LA[j-1] = LA[j];
      j = j + 1;
   }

   n = n -1;

   printf("The array elements after deletion :\n");

   for(i = 0; i<n; i++) {
      printf("LA[%d] = %d \n", i, LA[i]);
   }
}
```

When we compile and execute the above program, it produces the following result –

Output

```
The original array elements are :
LA[0] = 1
LA[1] = 3
LA[2] = 5
LA[3] = 7
LA[4] = 8
The array elements after deletion :
LA[0] = 1
LA[1] = 3
LA[2] = 7
LA[3] = 8
```

Search Operation

You can perform a search for an array element based on its value or its index.

Algorithm

Consider **LA** is a linear array with **N** elements and **K** is a positive integer such that **K<=N**. Following is the algorithm to find an element with a value of ITEM using sequential search.

```
1. Start
2. Set J = 0
3. Repeat steps 4 and 5 while J < N
4. IF LA[J] is equal ITEM THEN GOTO STEP 6
5. Set J = J +1
6. PRINT J, ITEM
7. Stop
```

Example

Following is the implementation of the above algorithm –

```
#include <stdio.h>
```

```
main() {
   int LA[] = {1,3,5,7,8};
   int item = 5, n = 5;
   int i = 0, j = 0;

   printf("The original array elements are :\n");

   for(i = 0; i<n; i++) {
      printf("LA[%d] = %d \n", i, LA[i]);
   }

   while( j < n){
      if( LA[j] == item ) {
         break;
      }

      j = j + 1;
   }

   printf("Found element %d at position %d\n", item, j+1);
}
```

When we compile and execute the above program, it produces the following result –

Output

```
The original array elements are :
LA[0] = 1
LA[1] = 3
LA[2] = 5
LA[3] = 7
LA[4] = 8
Found element 5 at position 3
```

Data Structure and Algorithms - Linked List

A linked list is a sequence of data structures, which are connected together via links.

Linked List is a sequence of links which contains items. Each link contains a connection to another link. Linked list is the second most-used data structure after array. Following are the important terms to understand the concept of Linked List.

- **Link** – Each link of a linked list can store a data called an element.
- **Next** – Each link of a linked list contains a link to the next link called Next.
- **LinkedList** – A Linked List contains the connection link to the first link called First.

Linked List Representation

Linked list can be visualized as a chain of nodes, where every node points to the next node.

As per the above illustration, following are the important points to be considered.

- Linked List contains a link element called first.
- Each link carries a data field(s) and a link field called next.
- Each link is linked with its next link using its next link.
- Last link carries a link as null to mark the end of the list.

Types of Linked List

Following are the various types of linked list.

- **Simple Linked List** – Item navigation is forward only.
- **Doubly Linked List** – Items can be navigated forward and backward.
- **Circular Linked List** – Last item contains link of the first element as next and the first element has a link to the last element as previous.

Basic Operations

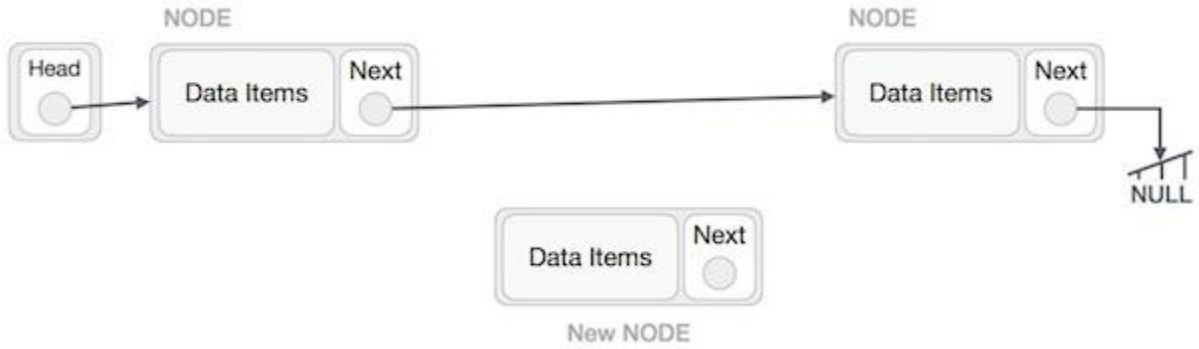
Following are the basic operations supported by a list.

- **Insertion** – Adds an element at the beginning of the list.
- **Deletion** – Deletes an element at the beginning of the list.

- **Display** – Displays the complete list.
- **Search** – Searches an element using the given key.
- **Delete** – Deletes an element using the given key.

Insertion Operation

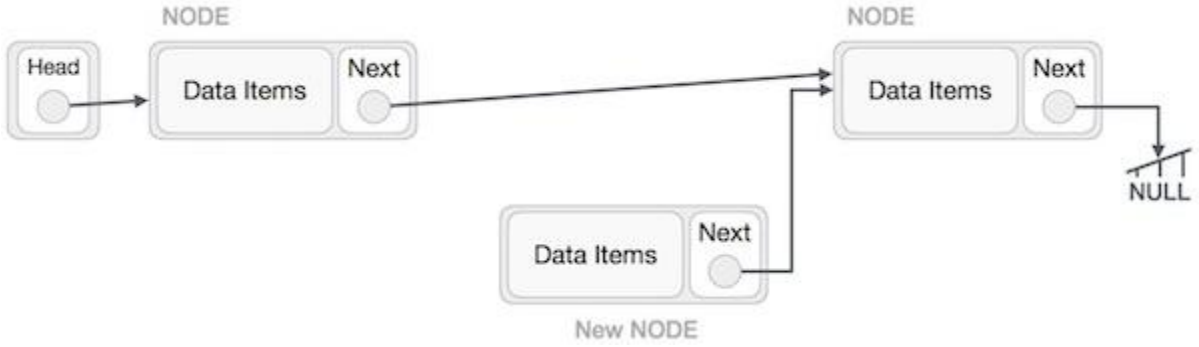
Adding a new node in linked list is a more than one step activity. We shall learn this with diagrams here. First, create a node using the same structure and find the location where it has to be inserted.



Imagine that we are inserting a node **B** (NewNode), between **A** (LeftNode) and **C** (RightNode). Then point B.next to C –

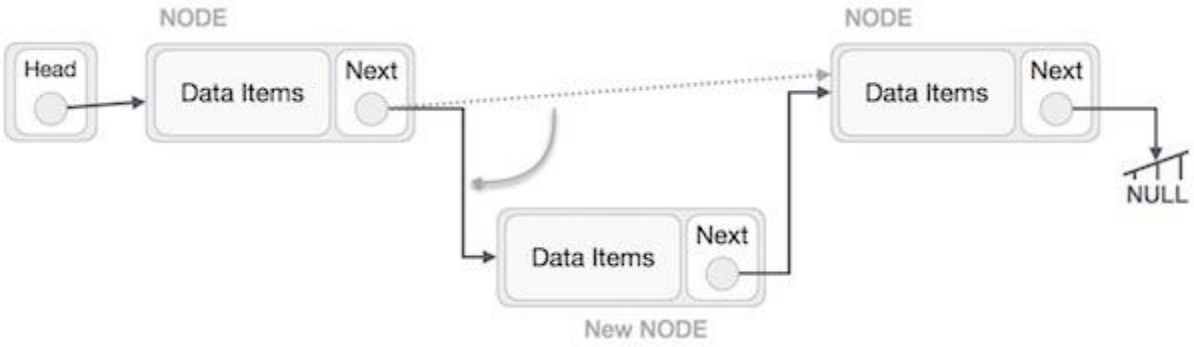
```
NewNode.next -> RightNode;
```

It should look like this –



Now, the next node at the left should point to the new node.

```
LeftNode.next -> NewNode;
```

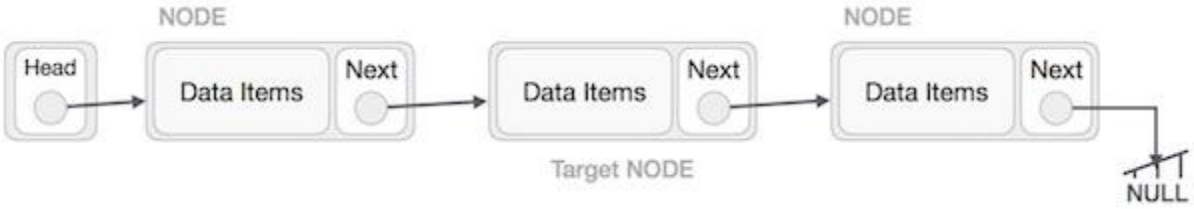


This will put the new node in the middle of the two. The new list should look like this –

Similar steps should be taken if the node is being inserted at the beginning of the list. While inserting it at the end, the second last node of the list should point to the new node and the new node will point to NULL.

Deletion Operation

Deletion is also a more than one step process. We shall learn with pictorial representation. First, locate the target node to be removed, by using searching algorithms.

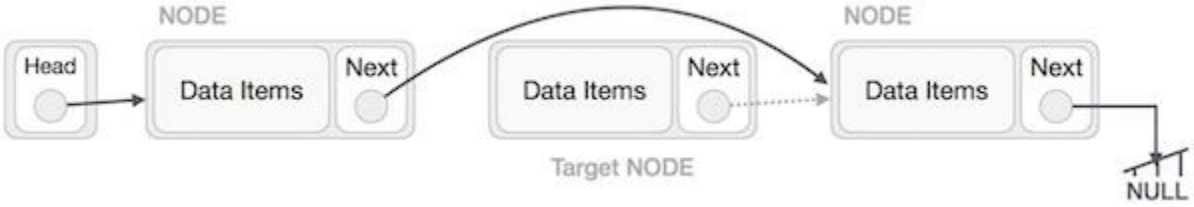


The left (previous) node of the target node now should point to the next node of the target node –

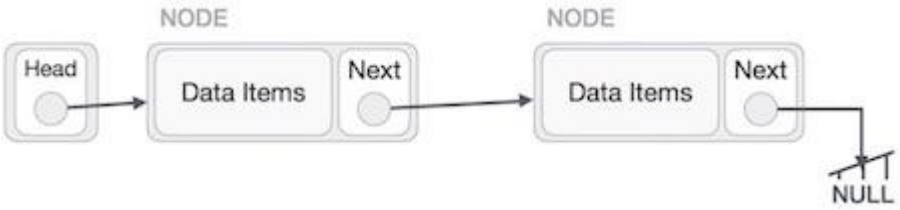
```
LeftNode.next -> TargetNode.next;
```

This will remove the link that was pointing to the target node. Now, using the following code, we will remove what the target node is pointing at.

```
TargetNode.next -> NULL;
```

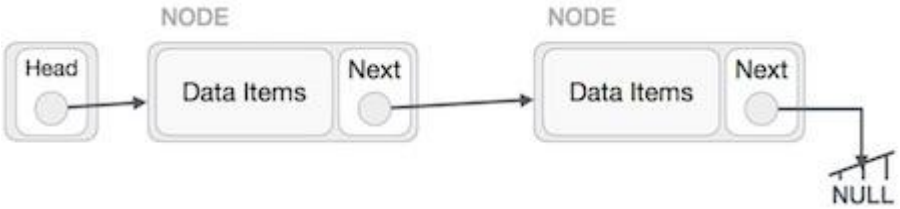


We need to use the deleted node. We can keep that in memory otherwise we can simply deallocate memory and wipe off the target node completely.

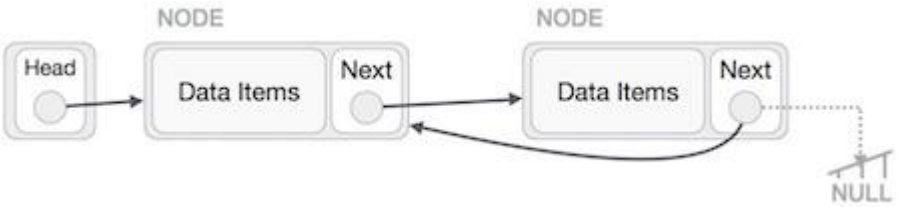


Reverse Operation

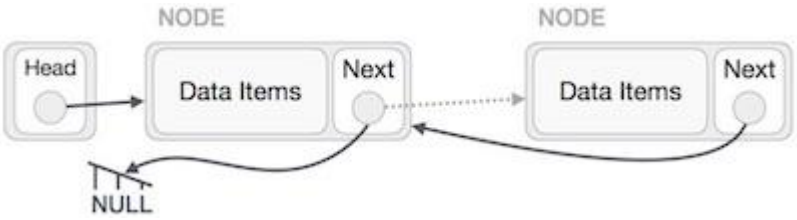
This operation is a thorough one. We need to make the last node to be pointed by the head node and reverse the whole linked list.



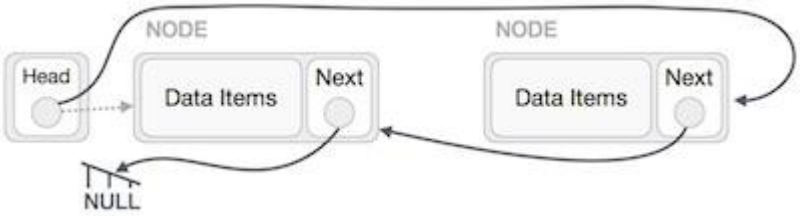
First, we traverse to the end of the list. It should be pointing to NULL. Now, we shall make it point to its previous node −



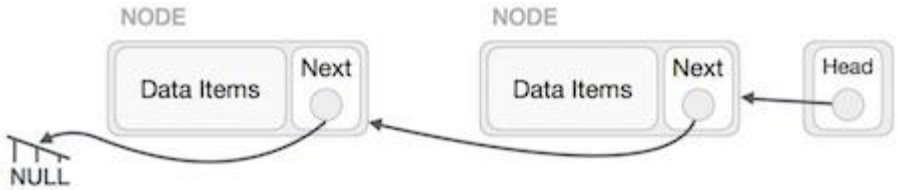
We have to make sure that the last node is not the lost node. So we'll have some temp node, which looks like the head node pointing to the last node. Now, we shall make all left side nodes point to their previous nodes one by one.



Except the node (first node) pointed by the head node, all nodes should point to their predecessor, making them their new successor. The first node will point to NULL.



We'll make the head node point to the new first node by using the temp node.



The linked list is now reversed. To see linked list implementation in C programming language, please click here.

Data Structure and Algorithms - Queue

Queue is an abstract data structure, somewhat similar to Stacks. Unlike stacks, a queue is open at both its ends. One end is always used to insert data (enqueue) and the other is used to remove data (dequeue). Queue follows First-In-First-Out methodology, i.e., the data item stored first will be accessed first.

A real-world example of queue can be a single-lane one-way road, where the vehicle enters first, exits first. More real-world examples can be seen as queues at the ticket windows and bus-stops.

Queue Representation

As we now understand that in queue, we access both ends for different reasons. The following diagram given below tries to explain queue representation as data structure −

As in stacks, a queue can also be implemented using Arrays, Linked-lists, Pointers and Structures. For the sake of simplicity, we shall implement queues using one-dimensional array.

Basic Operations

Queue operations may involve initializing or defining the queue, utilizing it, and then completely erasing it from the memory. Here we shall try to understand the basic operations associated with queues −

- **enqueue()** − add (store) an item to the queue.
- **dequeue()** − remove (access) an item from the queue.

Few more functions are required to make the above-mentioned queue operation efficient. These are −

- **peek()** − Gets the element at the front of the queue without removing it.
- **isfull()** − Checks if the queue is full.
- **isempty()** − Checks if the queue is empty.

In queue, we always dequeue (or access) data, pointed by **front** pointer and while enqueing (or storing) data in the queue we take help of **rear** pointer.

Let's first learn about supportive functions of a queue −

peek()

This function helps to see the data at the **front** of the queue. The algorithm of peek() function is as follows −

Algorithm

```
begin procedure peek
```

```
   return queue[front]

end procedure
```

Implementation of peek() function in C programming language –

Example

```
int peek() {
   return queue[front];
}
```

isfull()

As we are using single dimension array to implement queue, we just check for the rear pointer to reach at MAXSIZE to determine that the queue is full. In case we maintain the queue in a circular linked-list, the algorithm will differ. Algorithm of isfull() function –

Algorithm

```
begin procedure isfull

   if rear equals to MAXSIZE
      return true
   else
      return false
   endif
```

```
end procedure
```

Implementation of isfull() function in C programming language –

Example

```
bool isfull() {

   if(rear == MAXSIZE - 1)

      return true;

   else

      return false;

}
```

isempty()

Algorithm of isempty() function –

Algorithm

```
begin procedure isempty



   if front is less than MIN  OR front is greater than rear

      return true

   else

      return false

   endif


end procedure
```

If the value of **front** is less than MIN or 0, it tells that the queue is not yet initialized, hence empty.

Here's the C programming code –

Example

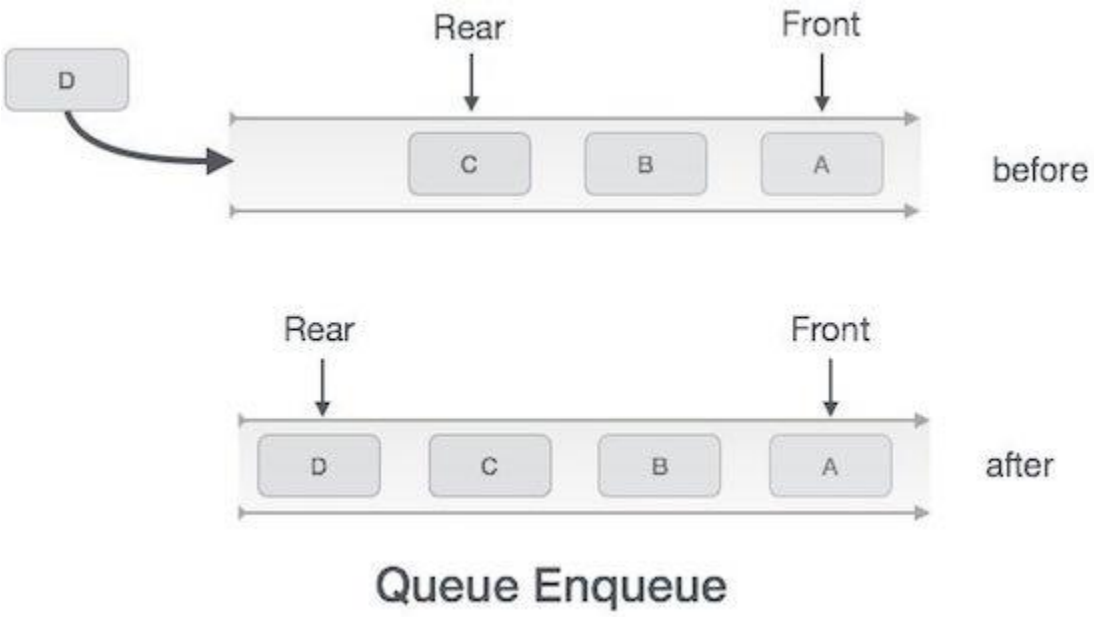
```
bool isempty() {

   if(front < 0 || front > rear)

      return true;

   else

      return false;

}
```

Enqueue Operation

Queues maintain two data pointers, **front** and **rear**. Therefore, its operations are comparatively difficult to implement than that of stacks.

The following steps should be taken to enqueue (insert) data into a queue –

- **Step 1** – Check if the queue is full.
- **Step 2** – If the queue is full, produce overflow error and exit.
- **Step 3** – If the queue is not full, increment **rear** pointer to point the next empty space.
- **Step 4** – Add data element to the queue location, where the rear is pointing.
- **Step 5** – return success.



Queue Enqueue

Sometimes, we also check to see if a queue is initialized or not, to handle any unforeseen situations.

Algorithm for enqueue operation

```
procedure enqueue(data)

   if queue is full

      return overflow

   endif


   rear ← rear + 1


   queue[rear] ← data


   return true

```

```
end procedure
```

Implementation of enqueue() in C programming language –

Example

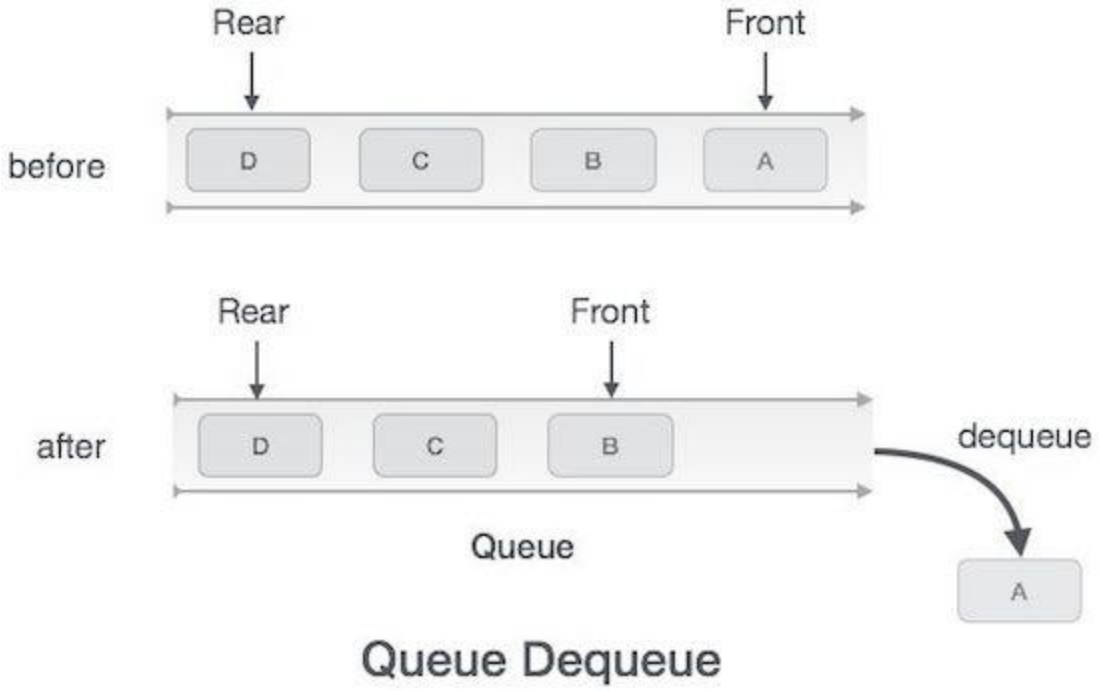
```
int enqueue(int data)

   if(isfull())

      return 0;



   rear = rear + 1;

   queue[rear] = data;



   return 1;

end procedure
```

Dequeue Operation

Accessing data from the queue is a process of two tasks – access the data where **front** is pointing and remove the data after access. The following steps are taken to perform **dequeue** operation –

- **Step 1** – Check if the queue is empty.
- **Step 2** – If the queue is empty, produce underflow error and exit.
- **Step 3** – If the queue is not empty, access the data where **front** is pointing.

- **Step 4** – Increment **front** pointer to point to the next available data element.
- **Step 5** – Return success.



Queue Dequeue

Algorithm for dequeue operation

```
procedure dequeue

   if queue is empty

      return underflow

   end if


   data = queue[front]

   front ← front + 1


   return true
```

```
end procedure
```

Implementation of dequeue() in C programming language –

Example

```
int dequeue() {


   if(isempty())

      return 0;


   int data = queue[front];

   front = front + 1;


   return data;

}
```

For a complete Queue program in C programming language, please click here.

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