

Ellipsis in C

Course: Introduction to Programming and Data Structures

Dr. Laltu Sardar

Institute for Advancing Intelligence (IAI),
TCG Centres for Research and Education in Science and Technology (TCG Crest)



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Ellipsis in C

What is Ellipsis in C?

- An ellipsis ('...') in C allows functions to accept a variable number of arguments.
- Commonly used in functions like `printf()` and `scanf()`.
- Enables flexibility in handling different argument types.

Syntax of Ellipsis in C

- Declaration of a function with ellipsis:
- `int myFunction(int count, ...);`
- The first argument is usually used to indicate the number of additional arguments or types.

Example: Using Ellipsis in a Function

```
1 #include <stdarg.h>
2 #include <stdio.h>
3
4 void printNumbers(int n, ...) {
5     va_list args;
6     va_start(args, n);
7     for (int i = 0; i < n; i++) {
8         int value = va_arg(args, int);
9         printf("%d\n", value);
10    }
11    va_end(args);
12 }
13
14 int main() {
15     printNumbers(3, 10, 20, 30); // Pass 3 arguments
16     return 0;
17 }
```

Explanation of Code

- `va_list`: Variable to store the list of arguments.
- `va_start()`: Initializes the argument list.
- `va_arg()`: Retrieves the next argument.
- `va_end()`: Cleans up the argument list.

Common Uses of Ellipsis

- Standard library functions like:
 - `printf()` for formatted output.
 - `scanf()` for formatted input.
- Handling functions that can accept varying numbers of arguments.

Limitations of Ellipsis

- No type safety for arguments passed in ellipsis.
- Risk of accessing wrong types of arguments.
- Caller is responsible for providing the right argument types.

Differences Between Ellipsis and Command Line Arguments

■ Ellipsis:

- Used within functions to handle variable number of arguments.
- Arguments are specified directly in the function call.
- Requires 'stdarg.h' library.

■ Command Line Arguments:

- Used to pass arguments to the program from the command line.
- Arguments are passed when the program is executed.
- Automatically available in 'argc' and 'argv' in the 'main' function.

Conclusion

- Ellipsis and command-line arguments serve different purposes in C.
- Ellipsis is useful for handling a variable number of arguments in a function.
- Command-line arguments allow external input to a program.



THANK YOU

FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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Dr. Laltu Sardar

laltu.sardar@tcgcrest.org

<https://laltu-sardar.github.io>