

# The lcc 4.x Code-Generation Interface

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## Abstract

Lcc is a widely used compiler for Standard C described in *A Retargetable C Compiler: Design and Implementation*. This report details the lcc 4.x code-generation interface, which defines the interaction between the target-independent front end and the target-dependent back ends. This interface differs from the interface described in Chap. 5 of *A Retargetable C Compiler*. Additional information about lcc is available at <http://www.cs.princeton.edu/software/lcc/>.

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## 1. Introduction

Lcc is a widely used compiler for Standard C described in *A Retargetable C Compiler* [1]. Version 4.x is the current release of lcc, and it uses a different code-generation interface than the interface described in Chap. 5 of Reference 1. This report details the 4.x interface. Lcc distributions are available at <http://www.cs.princeton.edu/software/lcc/> along with installation instructions [2].

The code generation interface specifies the interaction between lcc's target-independent front end and target-dependent back ends. The interface consists of a few shared data structures, a 33-operator language, which encodes the executable code from a source program in directed acyclic graphs, or dags, and 18 functions, that manipulate or modify dags and other shared data structures. On most targets, implementations of many of these functions are very simple. The front and back ends share some fields of the shared data structures, but other fields are private to the front or back end. In the descriptions below, fields that are private to the front end or are not explained here are *dimmed*.

The front and back ends are packaged together in a single, monolithic program, and they are clients of each other. The front end calls on the back end to generate and emit code. The back end calls on the front end to perform output, allocate storage, interrogate types, and manage nodes, symbols, and strings. The front-end functions that back ends may call are summarized in the sections below.

## 2. Interface Records

A cross-compiler produces code for one machine while running on another. Lcc can be linked with code generators for several targets, so it can be used as either a native compiler or a cross-compiler. lcc's *interface record* captures everything that its front end needs to know about a target machine, including pointers to the interface routines, type metrics, and interface flags. The interface record is defined in Figure 1

The interface record has fields for *type metrics*, *interface flags*, and pointers to *interface functions*. The *x* field is an extension in which the back end stores target-specific interface data and functions. The *x* field is private to the back end and is defined in *config.h*.

lcc has a distinct instance of the interface record for each target, but interface records can share function pointers.

A type metric specifies the size and alignment for a primitive type:

```
typedef struct metrics {
    unsigned char size, align, outofline;
} Metrics;
```

The *outofline* flag controls the placements of constants of the associated type. If *outofline* is one, constants cannot appear in dags; such constants are placed in anonymous static variables and their values are accessed by fetching the variables. Each primitive type has a metric field in the interface record, as shown in Figure 1. *ptrmetric* describes pointers of all types. The alignment of a structure is the maximum of the alignments of its fields and *structmetric.align*, which thus gives the minimum alignment for structures; *structmetric.size* is unused. Back ends usually set *outofline* to zero only for those types whose values can appear as immediate operands of instructions.

```

typedef struct interface {
    Metrics charmetric;
    Metrics shortmetric;
    Metrics intmetric;
    Metrics longmetric;
    Metrics longlongmetric;
    Metrics floatmetric;
    Metrics doublemetric;
    Metrics longdoublemetric;
    Metrics ptrmetric;
    Metrics structmetric;
    unsigned little_endian:1;
    unsigned mulops_calls:1;
    unsigned wants_callb:1;
    unsigned wants_argb:1;
    unsigned left_to_right:1;
    unsigned wants_dag:1;
    unsigned unsigned_char:1;
    void (*address)(Symbol, Symbol, long);
    void (*blockbeg)(Env *);
    void (*blockend)(Env *);
    void (*defaddress)(Symbol);
    void (*defconst)(int, int, Value);
    void (*defstring)(int n, char *);
    void (*defsymbol)(Symbol);
    void (*emit)(Node);
    void (*export)(Symbol);
    void (*function)(Symbol, Symbol[], Symbol[], int);
    Node (*gen)(Node);
    void (*global)(Symbol);
    void (*import)(Symbol);
    void (*local)(Symbol);
    void (*progbeg)(int, char *[]);
    void (*progend)(void);
    void (*segment)(int);
    void (*space)(int);
    void (*stabblock)(int, int, Symbol*);
    void (*stabend)(Coordinate *, Symbol, Coordinate **,
        Symbol *, Symbol *);
    void (*stabfend)(Symbol, int);
    void (*stabinit)(char *, int, char *[]);
    void (*stabline)(Coordinate *);
    void (*stabsym)(Symbol);
    void (*stabtype)(Symbol);
    Xinterface x;
} Interface;

```

**Figure 1.** The interface record.

The size and alignment for characters must be one. The front end correctly treats signed and unsigned integers and longs as distinct types, but it assumes that they all share `intmetric`. Likewise for doubles and long doubles.

The 18 interface functions are described in sections 7–10. These function pointers are often denoted by just their name. For example, `gen` is used instead of the more accurate but verbose ‘the function pointed to by the `gen` field of the interface record.’

The interface record also holds pointers to some functions that the front end calls to emit symbol tables for debuggers. This report does not describe these ‘stab’ functions.

### 3. Symbols

A symbol represents a variable, label, type, or constant and is defined in Figure 2. The scope and

```
typedef struct symbol *Symbol;

struct symbol {
    char *name;
    int scope;
    Coordinate src;
    Symbol up;
    List uses;
    int sclass;
    unsigned structarg:1;
    unsigned addressed:1;
    unsigned computed:1;
    unsigned temporary:1;
    unsigned generated:1;
    unsigned defined:1;
    Type type;
    float ref;
    union {
        ...See Figure 3...
    } u;
    Xsymbol x;
}
```

**Figure 2.** The symbol structure.

`sclass` fields identify the kind of symbol. For variables and constants, the back end may query the `type` field to learn the data type suffix of the item. For variables and labels, the floating-point value of the `ref` field approximates the number of times that variable or label is referenced; a nonzero value thus indicates that the variable or label is referenced at least once. For labels, constants, and some variables, a field of the union `u` supplies additional data as detailed below.

Variables have a `scope` equal to GLOBAL, PARAM, or LOCAL  $k$  for nesting level  $k$ . `sclass` is STATIC, AUTO, EXTERN, or REGISTER. The `name` of most variables is the name used in the source code. For temporaries and other generated variables, `name` is a digit sequence. For global and static variables, `u.seg` gives the logical segment in which the variable is defined. If the interface flag `wants_dag` is zero, the front end generates explicit temporary variables to hold common subexpressions—those used more than once. It sets the `u.t.cse` fields of these symbols to the dag nodes that compute the values stored in them.

The flags `temporary` and `generated` are set for temporaries, and the flag `generated` is set for labels and other generated variables, like those that hold string literals. `computed` is set if the symbol was defined by calling the interface function `address`. `structarg` identifies structure parameters when the interface flag `wants_argb` is set; the material below on `wants_argb` elaborates. `defined` is set when the front end announces a symbol to the back end via the interface functions `defsymbols`, `address`, `local`, or `function`.

Labels have a `scope` equal to LABELS. The `u.l.label` field is a unique numeric value that identifies the label, and `name` is the string representation of that value. Labels have no `type` or `sclass`.

Constants have a `scope` equal to CONSTANTS, and an `sclass` equal to STATIC. For an integral or pointer constant, `name` is its string representation as a C constant. For other types, `name` is undefined. The actual value of the constant is stored in the `u.c.v` field, which is defined by:

```

union {
    struct {
        int label;
        Symbol equatedto;
    } l;
    struct {
        unsigned cfields:1;
        unsigned vfields:1;
        Table ftab;
        Field flist;
    } s;
    int value;
    Symbol *idlist;
    struct {
        Value min, max;
    } limits;
    struct {
        Value v;
        Symbol loc;
    } c;
    struct {
        Coordinate pt;
        int label;
        int ncalls;
        Symbol *callee;
    } f;
    int seg;
    Symbol alias;
    struct {
        Node cse;
        int replace;
        Symbol next;
    } t;
} u;

```

**Figure 3.** The u structure in symbols.

```

typedef union value {
    long i;
    unsigned long u;
    long double d;
    void *p;
    void (*g)(void);
} Value;

```

The type of a constant indicates which Value field holds the actual value. If a variable is generated to hold the constant, u.c.loc points to the symbol-table entry for that variable.

The src field gives the source location at which the symbol is defined as a 'source coordinate:'

```

typedef struct coord {
    char *file;
    unsigned x, y;
} Coordinate;

```

src.y is the line number and src.x is the character number within that line; both are zero-based.

Symbols have an `x` field with type `Xsymbol`, defined in `config.h`. It's an extension in which the back end stores target-specific data for the symbol, like the stack offset for locals. The `x` field is private to the back end, and thus its contents are not part of the interface.

### 3.1 Symbol Constructors

`Symbol constant(Type ty, Value v)`

installs a constant with type `ty` and value `v` into the symbol table with a scope of `CONSTANTS`, if necessary, and returns a pointer to the symbol-table entry. `ty` must be a `INT`, `UNSIGNED`, `FLOAT`, `ARRAY`, `POINTER`, or `FUNCTION` type with the corresponding value in `v.i`, `v.u`, `v.d`, `v.p`, `v.p`, or `v.g`.

`Symbol findlabel(int label)`

returns a symbol-table entry for the label `label`, creating it, if necessary. The entry has scope `LABELS`.

`Symbol intconst(int n)`

calls `constant` to install the `int` constant `n` into the symbol table.

`Symbol newtemp(int sclass, int suffix, int size)`

creates a temporary with storage class `sclass` and the type returned by `btot(suffix)`, and returns a pointer to the symbol-table entry. The new temporary is announced by calling `local`.

## 4. Types

Symbols have a `type` field. If the symbol represents a constant or variable, the `type` field points to a structure that describes the type of the item:

```
typedef struct type *Type;

struct type {
    int op;
    Type type;
    int align;
    int size;
    union {
        Symbol sym;
        struct {
            unsigned oldstyle:1;
            Type *proto;
        } f;
    } u;
    Xtype x;
}
```

The `op` field holds an integer operator code, and the `type` field holds the operand. The operators are the values of the following global enumeration constants or combinations of their values:

```
INT UNSIGNED FLOAT ENUM
ARRAY STRUCT UNION
POINTER FUNCTION
VOID
CONST
```

VOLATILE  
CONST+VOLATILE

The `align` and `size` fields give the type's alignment and the size of objects of that type in bytes. The size must be a multiple of the alignment. The back end must allocate space for a variable so that its address is a multiple of its type's alignment. The size field can be zero, which an incomplete type.

The `INT`, `UNSIGNED`, and `ENUM` operators define the integral types, and the `FLOAT` operator defines the floating types. Together, these types are known as the arithmetic types. The various C arithmetic types are represented by these types with the sizes and alignments take from the type metrics in the interface record. For example, the C type 'char' is represented by a type with an `INT` `op` field and `size` and `align` fields equal to one. The front end initializes and exports types for the C built-in types:

```
Type chartype
Type widechar
Type doubletype
Type floatype
Type inttype
Type longdouble
Type longtype
Type longlong
Type shorttype
Type signedchar
Type unsignedchar
Type unsignedlonglong
Type unsignedlong
Type unsignedshort
Type unsignedtype
```

Except for `ENUM` types, the `u.sym` field of an arithmetic type points to a `GLOBAL` symbol for the type. `u.sym->name` is the C type name, `u.sym->type` is the type structure, `u.sym->addressed` is the `outofline` field of the relevant metric, and `u.sym->u.limits.min` and `u.sym->u.limits.max` give the minimum and maximum values of the type.

Except for `ENUM` types, the arithmetic types have no operands. The `type` field of an `ENUM` type is its compatible integral type, i.e., the type of the enumeration identifiers. For `lcc`, this type is always `int`. The `u.sym` field points to a symbol for its tag. `u.sym->name` is the tag, `u.sym->type` is the enumeration type, and `u.sym->u.idlist` points to a null-terminated array of symbols for the enumeration constants associated with the enumeration type. For each `u.sym->u.idlist[i]`, `sclass` is `ENUM`, `type` is the enumeration type, and `u.value` is the integral value of the enumeration constant.

The `ARRAY`, `STRUCT`, and `UNION` operators identify the aggregate types. `ARRAY`'s operand is the element type.

`STRUCT` and `UNION` do not have operands; `u.sym` points to a symbol that describes the fields. `u.sym->name` is tag and `u.sym->u.s->fields` is a null-terminated linked list of field structures, one for each field in the order the fields appear in the structure:

```
typedef struct field *Field;

struct field {
    char *name;
```

```

    Type type;
    int offset;
    short bitsize;
    short lsb;
    Field link;
}

```

name holds the field name, type is the field's type, and offset is the byte offset to the field in an instance of the structure. When a field describes a bit field, the type field is either inttype or unsignedtype, because those are the only two types allowed for bit fields. The lsb field is nonzero and is the number of the least significant bit in the bit field plus one, where bit numbers start at zero with the least significant bit. This bit field representation for bit fields does not depend on the target's endianness; the same representation is used for both big and little endians. The flags u.sym->u.s.cfields and u.sym->vfields are one if the structure or union type has any const-qualified or volatile-qualified fields.

The POINTER operator defines pointer types, and the operand gives the referenced type. The front end initializes and exports the following types:

```

Type charptype
Type funcptype
Type voidptype
Type unsignedptr
Type signedptr

```

funcptype and voidptype are the C types "void (\*)(void)" and "void\*," which are the putative function pointer and object pointer. unsignedptr and signedptr are UNSIGNED and INT types whose sizes and alignments are taken from IR->ptrmetric.

The FUNCTION operator defines function types. The operand is the return type, and u.f.oldstyle is one if the type definition is "old-style;" that is, without a prototype. If the function type is defined with a prototype, u.f.proto points to a null-terminated array of types for each formal parameter. If the function type has a variable number of arguments, the array consists of the types of the declared arguments, voidtype, and the terminating null.

The VOID operator identifies the void type; it has no operand and its size and alignment are both zero. The front end initializes and exports the single instance of the void type:

```

Type voidtype

```

The CONST and VOLATILE operators specify qualified types; their operands are the unqualified versions of the types. The sum CONST+VOLATILE is also a type operator, and it specifies a type that is both constant and volatile.

The x field plays the same role for types as it does in symbols; back ends may define Xtype to add target-specific fields to the type structure. This facility is most often used to support debuggers.

#### 4.1 Type Constructors

```

Type array(Type ty, int n, int align)

```

returns a type for an 'array of n elements of type ty.' If align is nonzero, it is used for the alignment instead of ty->align.

```

Type atop(Type ty)

```

returns a type for a pointer to element type of array type ty.

`Type func(Type ty, Type *proto, int oldstyle)`  
returns a type for a function that returns type `ty` and has the specified prototype. If `oldstyle` is one, `proto` may be null.

`Type ptr(Type ty)`  
returns a type for 'pointer to `ty`.'

`Type qual(int op, Type ty)`  
returns a qualified version of type `ty`. `op` must be `CONST` or `VOLATILE`.

## 4.2 Operations on Types

The innards of types are revealed so that back ends may read the `size` and `align` fields, and read and write the `x` fields, and pass the `type` field to the functions defined in this section. By convention, these are the only fields the back ends are allowed to inspect. In practice, however, back ends may also need to inspect the `u` fields to, for example, examine structure fields and function prototypes.

`int hasproto(Type ty)`  
returns 1 if the function type `ty` has a prototype and 0 otherwise.

`Type btot(int suffix, int size)`  
returns a type of `size` bytes that corresponds to the node type `suffix`. See `ttob` and Sec. 5.

`Type deref(Type ty)`  
returns the reference type of pointer type `ty`.

`Type freturn(Type ty)`  
return the return type of the function type `ty`.

`int isvolatile(Type t)`

`int isconst(Type ty)`

`int isarray(Type ty)`

`int isstruct(Type ty)`

`int isunion(Type ty)`

`int isfunc(Type ty)`

`int isptr(Type ty)`

`int ischar(Type ty)`

`int isint(Type ty)`

`int isfloat(Type ty)`

`int isarith(Type ty)`

`int isunsigned(Type ty)`

`int isscalar(Type ty)`

`int isenum(Type ty)`

Each of these type predicates returns 1 if `ty` is the type indicated by its name and 0 otherwise.

`int ttob(Type ty)`  
returns the node operator type suffix that corresponds to type `ty`. See `btot` and Sec. 5.

`Type unqual(Type ty)`  
returns the unqualified version of type `ty`.

`int variadic(Type ty)`  
returns 1 if function type `ty` has a variable number of arguments.

## 5. Dag Operators

Executable code is specified by dags. A function body is a sequence, or forest, of dags, each of

which is passed to the back end via `gen`. Dag nodes, sometimes called nodes, are defined by:

```
typedef struct node *Node;

struct node {
    short op;
    short count;
    Symbol syms[3];
    Node kids[2];
    Node link;
    Xnode x;
}
```

The elements of `kids` point to the operand nodes. Some dag operators also take one or two symbol-table pointers as operands; these appear in `syms`. The back end may use the third `syms` for its own purposes; the front end uses it, too, but its uses are temporary and occur before dags are passed to the back end. The `link` field points to the root of the next dag in the forest.

The `count` field records the number of times the value of this node is used or referred to by others. Only references from `kids` count; `link` references don't count because they don't represent a use of the value of the node. Indeed, `link` is meaningful only for root nodes, which are executed for side effect, not value. If the interface flag `wants_dag` is zero, roots always have a zero count. The generated code for shared nodes—those whose count exceeds one—must evaluate the node only once; the value is used `count` times.

The `x` field is the back end's extension to nodes. The back end defines the type `Xnode` in `config.h` to hold the per-node data that it needs to generate code.

The `op` field of a node structure holds a dag operator, which consists of a generic operator, a type suffix, and a size indicator. The type suffixes are:

```
enum {
    F=FLOAT,
    I=INT,
    U=UNSIGNED,
    P=POINTER,
    V=VOID,
    B=STRUCT
}
```

Given a generic operator  $o$ , a type suffix  $t$ , and a size modifier  $s$ , a type- and size-specific operator is formed by  $o+t+s\text{izeop}(s)$ . For example, `ADD+F+sizeop(4)` forms the operator `ADDF4`, which denotes the sum of two 4-byte floats. Similarly, `ADD+F+sizeop(8)` forms `ADDF8`, which denotes 8-byte floating addition.

Table 1 lists each generic operator, its valid type suffixes, and the number of `kids` and `syms` that it uses; multiple values for `kids` indicate type-specific variants. The notations in the `syms` column give the number of `syms` values and a one-letter code that suggests their uses: `1V` indicates that `syms[0]` points to a symbol for a variable, `1C` indicates that `syms[0]` is a constant, and `1L` indicates that `syms[0]` is a label. For `1S`, `syms[0]` is a constant whose value is a size in bytes; `2S` adds `syms[1]`, which is a constant whose value is an alignment. Finally, `1T` indicates the `syms[0]->type` is the only field of interest.

The entries in the *Sizes* column indicate sizes of the operators that back ends must implement. Letters denote the size of float ( $f$ ), double ( $d$ ), long double ( $x$ ), character ( $c$ ), short integer ( $s$ ), integer ( $i$ ), long integer ( $l$ ), 'long long' integer ( $h$ ), and pointer ( $p$ ). These sizes are separated

**Table 1.** Node operators.

<i>syms</i>	<i>kids</i>	<i>Operator</i>	<i>Type Suffixes</i>	<i>Sizes</i>	<i>Operation</i>
1V	0	ADDRF	...P..	<i>p</i>	address of a parameter
1V	0	ADDRG	...P..	<i>p</i>	address of a global
1V	0	ADDRL	...P..	<i>p</i>	address of a local
1C	0	CNST	FIUP..	<i>fdx csilh p</i>	constant
	1	BCOM	.IU...	<i>ilh</i>	bitwise complement
1S	1	CVF	FI....	<i>fdx ilh</i>	convert from float
1S	1	CVI	FIU...	<i>fdx csilh csilhp</i>	convert from signed integer
1S	1	CVP	..U..	<i>p</i>	convert from pointer
1S	1	CVU	.IUP..	<i>csilh p</i>	convert from unsigned integer
	1	INDIR	FIUP.B	<i>fdx csilh p</i>	fetch
	1	NEG	FI....	<i>fdx ilh</i>	negation
	2	ADD	FIUP..	<i>fdx ilh ilhp p</i>	addition
	2	BAND	.IU...	<i>ilh</i>	bitwise AND
	2	BOR	.IU...	<i>ilh</i>	bitwise inclusive OR
	2	BXOR	.IU...	<i>ilh</i>	bitwise exclusive OR
	2	DIV	FIU...	<i>fdx ilh</i>	division
	2	LSH	.IU...	<i>ilh</i>	left shift
	2	MOD	.IU...	<i>ilh</i>	modulus
	2	MUL	FIU...	<i>fdx ilh</i>	multiplication
	2	RSH	.IU...	<i>ilh</i>	right shift
	2	SUB	FIUP..	<i>fdx ilh ilhp p</i>	subtraction
2S	2	ASGN	FIUP.B	<i>fdx csilh p</i>	assignment
1L	2	EQ	FIU...	<i>fdx ilh ilhp</i>	jump if equal
1L	2	GE	FIU...	<i>fdx ilh ilhp</i>	jump if greater than or equal
1L	2	GT	FIU...	<i>fdx ilh ilhp</i>	jump if greater than
1L	2	LE	FIU...	<i>fdx ilh ilhp</i>	jump if less than or equal
1L	2	LT	FIU...	<i>fdx ilh ilhp</i>	jump if less than
1L	2	NE	FIU...	<i>fdx ilh ilhp</i>	jump if not equal
2S	1	ARG	FIUP.B	<i>fdx ilh p</i>	argument
1T	1	CALL	FIUPV.	<i>fdx ilh p</i>	function call
1T	2	CALL	.....B		
	1	RET	FIUPV.	<i>fdx ilh p</i>	function return
	1	JUMP	....V.		unconditional jump
1L	0	LABEL	....V.		label definition

into sets for each type suffix, except that a single set is used for both I and U when the set for I is identical to the set for U; INDIR is an example.

The actual values for the size indicators, *fdxcsilhp*, depend on the target. A specification like ADDF*f* denotes the operator ADD+F+sizeop(*f*), where '*f*' is replaced by a target-dependent value, e.g., ADDF4 and ADDF8. For example, back ends must implement the following CVI and MUL operators.

```
CVIFf CVIFd CVIFx
CVIIc CVIIs CVIIi CVIIl CVIIh
CVIUc CVIUs CVIUi CVIUl CVIUh CVIUp
```

```
MULFf MULFd MULFx
MULIi MULIl MULIh
MULUi MULUl MULUh
```

On most platforms, there are fewer than three sizes of floats and six sizes of integers, and pointers are usually the same size as one of the integers. And lcc doesn't support the 'long long' type, so *h* is not currently used. So, the set of platform-specific operators is usually smaller than the list above suggests. For example, the X86, SPARC, and MIPS back ends implement the following CVI and MUL operators.

```
CVIF4 CVIF8
CVII1 CVII2 CVII4
CVIU1 CVIU2 CVIU4
```

```
MULF4 MULF8
MULI4
MULU4
```

The set of operators is thus target-dependent; for example, ADDI8 appears only if the target supports an 8-byte integer type. The lcc distribution includes a program, *ops.c*, that, given a set of sizes, prints the required operators and their values, e.g.,

```
% ops c=1 s=2 i=4 l=4 h=4 f=4 d=8 x=8 p=4
...
CVIF4=4225 CVIF8=8321
CVII1=1157 CVII2=2181 CVII4=4229
CVIU1=1158 CVIU2=2182 CVIU4=4230
...
MULF4=4561 MULF8=8657
MULI4=4565
MULU4=4566
...
131 operators
```

The leaf operators yield the address of a variable or the value of a constant. *syms*[0] identifies the variable or constant. The unary operators accept and yield a number, except for INDIR, which accepts an address and yields the value at that address. The binary operators accept two numbers and yield one.

The type suffix for a conversion operator denotes the type of the result and the size indicator gives the size of the result. For example, CVUI4 converts an unsigned (U) to a 4-byte signed inte-

ger (I4). The `syms[0]` field points to a symbol-table entry for an integer constant that gives the size of the source operand. For example, if `syms[0]` in a CVUI4 points to a symbol-table entry for 2, the conversion widens a 2-byte unsigned integer to a 4-byte signed integer. Conversions that widen unsigned integers zero-extend; those that widen signed integers sign-extend.

The front end composes conversions between types  $T_1$  and  $T_2$  by widening  $T_1$  to its ‘supertype’, if necessary, converting that result to  $T_2$ ’s supertype, then narrowing the result to  $T_2$ , if necessary. The following table lists the supertypes; omitted entries are their own supertypes.

<i>Type</i>	<i>Supertype</i>
signed char	int
signed short	int
unsigned char	int, if <code>sizeof(char) &lt; sizeof(int)</code> unsigned, otherwise
unsigned short	int, if <code>sizeof(short) &lt; sizeof(int)</code> unsigned, otherwise
void *	an unsigned type as large as a pointer

Pointers are converted to an unsigned type of the same size, even when that type is not one of the integer types.

For example, the front end converts a signed short to a float by first converting it to an int and then to a float. It converts an unsigned short to an int with a single CVUIi conversion, when shorts are smaller than ints.

ASGN stores the value of `kids[1]` into the cell addressed by `kids[0]`. `syms[0]` and `syms[1]` point to symbol-table entries for integer constants that give the size of the value and its alignment. These are most useful for ASGNB, which assigns structures and initializes automatic arrays.

JUMP is an unconditional jump to the address computed by `kids[0]`. For most jumps, `kids[0]` is a constant ADDR node, but switch statements compute a variable target, so `kids[0]` can be an arbitrary computation. LABEL defines the label given by `syms[0]`, and is otherwise a no-op. For the comparisons, `syms[0]` points to a symbol-table entry for the label to jump to if the comparison is true.

Function calls have a CALL node preceded by zero or more ARG nodes. The front end unnests function calls—it performs the inner call first, assigns its value to a temporary, and uses the temporary henceforth—so ARG nodes are always associated with the next CALL node in the forest. If `wants_dag` is one, CALL nodes always appear as roots in the forest. If `wants_dag` is zero, only CALL+V nodes appear as roots; other CALL nodes appear as right operands to ASGN nodes, which are roots.

A CALL node’s `syms[0]` points to a symbol whose only nonnull field is `type`, which is the function type of the callee.

ARG nodes establish the value computed by `kids[0]` as the next argument. `syms[0]` and `syms[1]` point to symbol-table entries for integer constants that give the size and alignment of the argument.

In CALL nodes, `kids[0]` computes the address of the callee. CALL+B nodes are used for calls to functions that return structures; `kids[1]` computes the address of a temporary local variable to hold the returned value. The CALL+B code and the function prologue must collaborate to store the CALL+B’s `kids[1]` into the callee’s first local. CALL+B nodes have a count of zero because the front end references the temporary wherever the returned value is referenced. There is no RET+B; the front end uses an ASGN+B to the structure addressed by the first local. CALL+B nodes appear only if the interface flag `wants_callb` is one; see Sec. 6. In RET nodes, `kids[0]` computes the value returned.

Character and short-integer actual arguments are always promoted to the corresponding integer type even in the presence of a prototype, because most machines must pass at least integers as arguments. Upon entry to the function, the promoted values are converted back to the type declared for the formal parameter. For example, the body of

```
f(char c) { f(c); }
```

becomes the two forests shown in Figure 4 on a 32-bit target. The solid lines are kids pointers and the dashed line is the link pointer. The left forest holds one dag, which narrows the widened actual argument to the type of the formal parameter. In the left dag, the left ADDRFP4 *c* refers to the formal parameter, and the one under the INDIRI4 refers to the actual argument. The right forest holds two dags. The first widens the formal parameter *c* to pass it as an integer, and the second calls *f*.

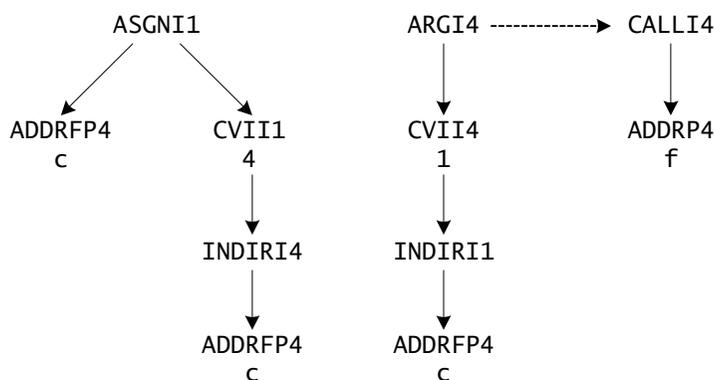


Figure 4. Forests for `f(char c) { f(c); }`

In Table 1, the operators listed at and following ASGN are used for their side effects. They appear as roots in the forest, and their reference counts are zero. CALL+F, CALL+I, CALL+U, CALL+P also yield a value, in which case they appear as the right-hand side of an ASGN node and have a reference count of one. With this lone exception, all operators with side effects always appear as roots in the forest of dags, and they appear in the order in which they must be executed. The front end communicates all constraints on evaluation order by ordering the dags in the forest. If the Standard specifies that *x* must be evaluated before *y*, then *x*'s dag will appear in the forest before *y*'s, or they will appear in the same dag with *x* in the subtree rooted by *y*. An example is

```
int i, *p; f() { i = *p++; }
```

The code for the body of *f* generates the forest shown in Figure 5 (for a 32-bit target). The INDIRP4 fetches the value of *p*, and the ASGNP4 changes *p*'s value to the sum computed by this INDIRP4 and 4. The ASGNI4 sets *i* to the integer pointed to by the original value of *p*. Since the INDIRP4 appears in the forest *before* *p* is changed, the INDIRI4 is guaranteed to use the original value of *p*.

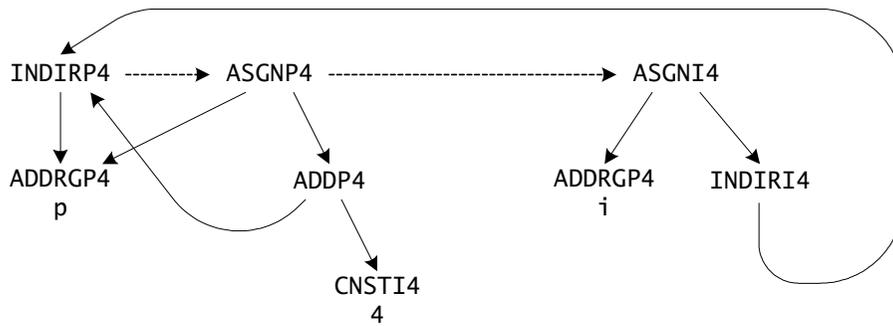


Figure 5. Forest for `int i, *p; f() { i = *p++; }`.

### 5.1 Node Constructors

`Node newnode(int op, Node left, Node right, Symbol sym)`

allocates a dag node; initializes the `op` field to `op`, `kids[0]` to `left`, `kids[1]` to `right`, and `syms[0]` to `sym`; and returns a pointer to the new node.

### 5.2 Operations on Node Operators

`int generic(int op)`

return the generic operator for `op`; that is, an operator without a type suffix or size modifier. For example, `generic(ADD+F+sizeop(8))` is `ADD`.

`int opindex(int op)`

returns the operator number for `op` and is used to map the generic operators into a contiguous range of integers.

`int opsize(int op)`

extracts and returns the size modifier from `op`. For example, `opsize(ADD+F+sizeop(8))` is `8`.

`int optype(int op)`

returns the type suffix for `op`, which is one of `F`, `I`, `U`, `P`, `V`, or `B`. For example, `optype(ADD+F+sizeop(8))` is `F`.

`int sizeop(int n)`

converts `n` to a size modifier, which can be added to a generic operator and a type suffix; e.g., `ADD+F+sizeop(8)` forms `ADDF4`, 4-byte floating-point addition.

`int specific(int op)`

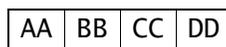
returns the type-specific operator for `op`; that is, an operator with a size modifier. For example, `specific(ADD+F+sizeop(8))` is `ADD+F`.

## 6. Interface Flags

The interface flags help configure the front end for a target.

`unsigned little_endian:1`

should be one if the target is a little endian and zero if it's a big endian. A computer is a little endian if the least significant byte in each word has the smallest address of the bytes in the word. For example, little endians lay out the word with the 32-bit unsigned value `0xAABBCCDD` thus:



where the addresses of the bytes increase from the right to the left. A computer is a big endian if the least significant byte in each word has the largest address of the bytes in the word. For example, big endians lay out the word with the unsigned value 0xAABBCCDD thus:

DD	CC	BB	AA
----	----	----	----

In other words, lcc's front end lays out a list of bit fields in the addressing order of the bytes in an unsigned integer: from the least significant byte to the most significant byte on little endians and vice versa on big endians. The Standard permits either order, but following increasing addresses is the prevailing convention.

**unsigned mulops\_calls:1**

should be zero if the hardware implements multiply, divide, and remainder. It should be one if the hardware leaves these operations to library routines. The front end unnests nested calls, so it needs to know which operators are emulated by calls.

**unsigned wants\_callb:1**

tells the front end to emit CALL+B nodes to invoke functions that return structures. If `wants_callb` is zero, the front end generates no CALL+B nodes but implements them itself, using simpler operations: It passes an extra, leading, hidden argument that points to a temporary; it ends each structure function with an ASGN+B dag that copies the return value to this temporary; and it has the caller use this temporary when it needs the structure returned. When `wants_callb` is one, the front end generates CALL+B nodes. The `kids[1]` field of a CALL+B computes the address of the location at which to store the return value, and the first local of any function that returns a structure is assumed to hold this address. Back ends that set `wants_callb` to one must implement this convention by, for example, initializing the address of the first local accordingly. If `wants_callb` is zero, the back end cannot control the code for functions that return structure arguments, so it cannot, in general, mimic an existing calling convention.

**unsigned wants\_argb:1**

tells the front end to emit ARG+B nodes to pass structure arguments. If `wants_argb` is zero, the front end generates no ARG+B nodes but implements structure arguments itself using simpler operations: It builds an ASGN+B dag that copies the structure argument to a temporary; it passes a pointer to the temporary; it adds an extra indirection to references to the parameter in the callee; and it changes the types of the callee's formals to reflect this convention. It also sets `structarg` for these parameters to distinguish them from bona fide structure pointers. If `wants_argb` is zero, the back end cannot control the code for structure arguments, so it cannot, in general, mimic an existing calling convention.

**unsigned left\_to\_right:1**

tells the front end to evaluate and to present the arguments to the back end left to right. That is, the ARG nodes that precede the CALL appear in the same order as the arguments in the source code. If `left_to_right` is zero, arguments are evaluated and presented right to left. The Standard permits either order.

**unsigned wants\_dag:1**

tells the front end to pass dags to the back end. If it's zero, the front end undags all nodes with reference counts exceeding one. It creates a temporary, assigns the node to the temporary, and uses the temporary wherever the node had been used. When `wants_dag` is zero, all reference counts are thus zero or one, and only trees, which are degenerate dags, remain; there are no general dags.

**unsigned unsigned\_char:1**

tells the front end whether plain characters are signed or unsigned. If it's zero, `char` is a signed type; otherwise, `char` is an unsigned type.

All the interface flags can be set by command-line options, e.g., `-Wf-unsigned_char=1` causes plain characters to be unsigned.

## 7. Initialization

During initialization, the front end calls

```
void (*progbeg)(int argc, char *argv[])
```

`argv[0..argc-1]` point to those program arguments that are not recognized by the front end, and are thus deemed target-specific. `progbeg` processes such options and initializes the back end.

At the end of compilation, the front end calls

```
void (*progend)(void)
```

to give the back end an opportunity to finalize its output. On some targets, `progend` has nothing to do and is thus empty.

## 8. Definitions

Whenever the front end defines a new symbol with scope `CONSTANTS`, `LABELS`, or `GLOBAL`, or a static variable, it calls

```
void (*defsymbol)(Symbol p)
```

to give the back end an opportunity to initialize its `Xsymbol` field, `p->x`. For example, the back end might want to use a different name for the symbol. The conventions on some targets in this book prefix an underscore to global names. The `Xsymbol` fields of symbols with scope `PARAM` are initialized by function, those with scope `LOCAL+k` by `local`, and those that represent address computations by address.

A symbol is *exported* if it's defined in the module at hand and used in other modules. It's *imported* if it's used in the module at hand and defined in some other module. The front end calls

```
void (*export)(Symbol p)
void (*import)(Symbol p)
```

to announce an exported or imported symbol. Only nonstatic variables and functions can be exported. The front end always calls `export` *before* defining the symbol, but it may call `import` at any time, before or after the symbol is used. Most targets require `export` to emit an assembler directive. Some require nothing from `import`.

```
void (*global)(Symbol p)
```

emits code to define a global variable. The front end will already have called `segment`, described below, to direct the definition to the appropriate logical segment, and it will have set `p->u.seg` to that segment. It will follow the call to `global` with any appropriate calls to the data initialization functions. `global` must emit the necessary alignment directives and define the label.

The front end announces local variables by calling

```
void (*local)(Symbol p)
```

It announces temporaries likewise; these have the `p->temporary` flag set, which indicates that the symbol will be used only in the next call to `gen`. If a temporary's `p->u.t.cse` field is non-null, it points to the `Node` that computes the value assigned to the temporary. `local` must initialize `p->x`, which holds data like the local's stack offset or register number.

The front end calls

```
void (*address)(Symbol p, Symbol q, long n)
```

to initialize `q` to a symbol that represents an address of the form `x+n`, where `x` is the address represented by `p` and `n` is positive or negative. Like `defsymbols`, `address` initializes `q->x`, but it does so based on the values of `p->x` and `n`. A typical `address` adds `p`'s stack offset to `n` for locals and parameters, and sets `q->x.name` to `p->x.name` concatenated with `+n` or `-n` for other variables. For example, if `n` is 40 and `p` points to a symbol with the source name `array`, and if the back end forms names by prefixing an underscore, then `address` will create the name `_array+40`, so that the addition can be done by the assembler instead of at run time. `address` accepts globals, parameters, and locals, and is called only after these symbols have been initialized by `defsymbols`, `function`, or `local`. Also, `address` is optional: If the function pointer in the interface record is null, the front end will not call `address`.

When the front end announces a symbol by calling one of the interface procedures above, it sets the symbol's `defined` flag after the call. This flag prevents the front end from announcing a symbol more than once.

Lcc's front end manages four logical segments that separate code, data, and literals:

```
enum { CODE=1, BSS, DATA, LIT }
```

The front end emits executable code into the `CODE` segment, defines uninitialized variables in the `BSS` segment, and it defines and initializes initialized variables in the `DATA` segment and constants in the `LIT` segment. The front end calls

```
void (*segment)(int seg)
```

to announce a segment change. The argument is one of the segment codes above. `segment` maps the logical segments onto the segments provided by the target machine.

`CODE` and `LIT` can be mapped to read-only segments; `BSS` and `DATA` must be mapped to segments that can be read and written. The `CODE` and `LIT` segments can be mapped to the same segment and thus combined. Any combination of `BSS`, `DATA`, and `LIT` can be combined likewise. `CODE` would be combined with them only on single-segment targets.

## 9. Constants

The interface functions

```
void (*defaddress)(Symbol p)
void (*defconst)(int suffix, int size, Value v)
```

initialize constants. `defconst` emits directives to define a cell and initialize it to a constant value. `v` is the value, and `suffix` encodes its type and thus which element of the `Value v` to access, as shown in the following table.

suffix	v Field	Type
F	v.d	float, double, long double
I	v.i	signed char, signed short, signed int, signed long
U	v.u	unsigned char, unsigned short, unsigned int, unsigned long
P	v.p	void *, function pointers

`defconst` must narrow `v.x` when `size` is less than `sizeof v.x`; e.g., to emit an unsigned char, `defconst` should emit `(unsigned char)v.u`.

If `suffix` is P, `v.p` holds a numeric constant of some pointer type. These originate in declarations like `char *p=(char*)0xF0`. `defaddress` initializes pointer constants that involve symbols instead of numbers.

The `defconst` functions in distributed back ends permit cross-compilation, so they compensate for different representations and byte orders. For example, they swap the two halves of a `double` if compiling for a big endian on a little endian or vice versa.

In general, Standard C compilers can't leave the encoding of floating-point constants to the assembler, because few assemblers implement C's casts. For example, the correct initialization for

```
double x = (float)0.3
```

has zeros in the least significant bits. Typical assembler directives like

```
.double 0.3
```

can't implement casts and thus erroneously initialize `x` without zeros in the least significant bits, so most `defconst`s must initialize doubles by emitting two unsigneds, for example.

```
void (*defstring)(int n, char *s)
```

emits code to initialize a string of length `len` to the characters in `s`. The front end converts escape sequences like `\000` into the corresponding ASCII characters. Null bytes can be embedded in `s`, so they can't flag its end, which is why `defstring` accepts not just `s` but also its length.

```
void (*space)(int n)
```

emits code to set aside `n` zero bytes.

## 10. Functions

The front end compiles functions into private data structures. It completely consumes each function before passing any part of the function to the back end. This organization permits certain optimizations. For example, only by processing complete functions can the front end identify the locals and parameters whose address is not taken; only these variables may be assigned

to registers.

Three interface functions and two front-end functions collaborate to compile a function:

```
void (*function)(Symbol f, Symbol caller[], Symbol callee[], int ncalls)
void (*emit)(Node)
Node (*gen)(Node)

void emitcode(void)
void gencode(Symbol caller[], Symbol callee[])
```

At the end of each function, the front end calls `function` to generate and emit code. The typical form of `function` is

```
void function(Symbol f, Symbol caller[], Symbol callee[], int ncalls) {
    ...initialize...
    gencode(caller, callee);
    ...emit prologue...
    emitcode();
    ...emit epilogue...
}
```

`gencode` is a front-end procedure that traverses the front end's private structures and passes each forest of dags to the back end's `gen`, which selects code, annotates the dag to record its selection, and returns a dag pointer. `gencode` also calls `local` to announce new locals, `blockbeg` and `blockend` to announce the beginning and end of each block, and so on. `emitcode` is a front-end procedure that traverses the private structures again and passes each of the pointers from `gen` to `emit` to emit the code.

This organization offers the back-end flexibility in generating function prologue and epilogue code. Before calling `gencode`, `function` initializes the `Xsymbol` fields of the function's parameters and does any other necessary per-function initializations. After calling `gencode`, the size of the procedure activation record, or *frame*, and the registers that need saving are known; this information is usually needed to emit the prologue. After calling `emitcode` to emit the code for the body of the function, `function` emits the epilogue.

The argument `f` to `function` points to the symbol for the current function, and `ncalls` is the number of calls to other functions made by the current function. `ncalls` helps on targets where *leaf* functions—those that make no calls—get special treatment.

The arguments `caller` and `callee` are arrays of pointers to symbols; a null pointer terminates each. The symbols in `caller` are the function parameters as passed by a caller; those in `callee` are the parameters as seen within the function. For many functions, the symbols in each array are the same, but they can differ in both `sclass` and `type`. For example, in

```
single(x) float x; { ... }
```

a call to `single` passes the actual argument as a `double`, but `x` is a `float` within `single`. Thus, `caller[0]->type` is `doubletype`, the front-end global that represents doubles, and `callee[0]->type` is `floattype`. And in

```
int strlen(register char *s) { ... }
```

`caller[0]->sclass` is `AUTO` and `callee[0]->sclass` is `REGISTER`. Even without register declarations, the front end assigns frequently referenced parameters to the `REGISTER` class, and sets

callee's `sclass`} accordingly. To avoid thwarting the programmer's intentions, this assignment is made only when there are no explicit register locals.

`caller` and `callee` are passed to `gencode`. If `caller[i]->type` differs from `callee[i]->type`, or the value of `caller[i]->sclass` differs from `callee[i]->sclass`, `gencode` generates an assignment of `caller[i]` to `callee[i]`. If the types are not equal, this assignment may include a conversion; for example, the assignment to `x` in `single` includes a truncation of a `double` to a `float`. For parameters that include register declarations, `function` must assign a register and initialize the `x` field accordingly, or change the callee's `sclass` to `AUTO` to prevent an unnecessary assignment of `caller[i]` to `callee[i]`.

`function` could also change the value of `caller[i]->sclass` from `AUTO` to `REGISTER` if it wished to assign a register to that parameter. The MIPS calling convention, for example, passes some arguments in registers, so `function` assigns those registers to the corresponding callees in leaf functions. If, however, `caller[i]->addressed` is set, the address of the parameter is taken in the function body, and it must be stored in memory on most machines.

Most back ends define for each function activation an *argument-build area* to store the arguments to outgoing calls. The front end unnests calls, so the argument-build area can be used for all calls. The back end makes the area big enough to hold the largest argument list. When a function is called, the caller's argument-build area becomes the callee's actual arguments.

Calls are unnested because some targets pass some arguments in registers. If we try to generate code for a nested call like `f(a, g(b))`, and if arguments are evaluated and established left to right, it is hard not to generate code that loads `a` into the first argument register and then destroys it by loading `b` into the same register, because both `a` and `b` belong in the first argument register, but `a` belongs there later.

Some *calling conventions* push arguments on a stack. They can handle nested calls, so an argument-build area is not always necessary. Unnesting has the advantage that stack overflow can occur only at function entry, which is useful on targets that require explicit prologue code to detect stack overflow.

For each block, the front end first announces locals with explicit register declarations, in order of declaration, to permit programmer control of register assignment. Then it announces the rest, starting with those that it estimates to be most frequently used. It assigns `REGISTER` class to even these locals if their addresses are not taken and if they are estimated to be used more than twice. This announcement order and `sclass` override collaborate to put the most promising locals in registers even if no registers were declared.

If `p->sclass` is `REGISTER`, `local` may decline to allocate a register and may change `sclass` to `AUTO`. The back end has no alternative if it has already assigned all available registers to more promising locals. As with parameters, `local` could assign a register to a local with `sclass` equal to `AUTO` and change `sclass` to `REGISTER`, but it can do so only if the symbol's `addressed` flag is zero.

Source-language blocks bracket the lifetime of locals. `gencode` announces the beginning and end of a block by calling:

```
void (*blockbeg)(Env *e)
void (*blockend)(Env *e)
```

`Env`, defined in `config.h`, is target-specific. It typically includes the data necessary to reuse that portion of the local frame space associated with the block and to release any registers assigned to locals within the block. For example, `blockbeg` typically records in `*e` the size of the frame and the registers that are busy at the beginning of the block, and `blockend` restores the register state and updates the stack if the new block has pushed deeper than the maximum depth seen so far.

The front end calls `gen` to select code. It passes `gen` a forest of dags. For example, Figure 5 shows the forest for

```
int i, *p; f() { i = *p++; }
```

A postorder traversal of this forest yields the linearized representation shown in the table below.

<i>Node #</i>	<i>op</i>	<i>count</i>	<i>kids</i>	<i>syms</i>
1	ADDGRP4	2		<i>p</i>
2	INDIRP4	2	1	
3	CNSTI4	1		4
4	ADDP4	1	2, 3	
5	ASGNP4	0	1, 4	4, 4
6	ADDRGP4	1		<i>i</i>
7	INDIRI4	1	2	
8	ASGNI4	0	6, 7	4, 4

This forest consists of three dags, rooted at nodes 2, 5, and 8. The `INDIRP4` node, which fetches the value of `p`, comes before node 5, which changes `p`, so the original value of `p` is available for subsequent use by node 7, which fetches the integer pointed to by that value.

`gen` traverses the forest and selects code, but it emits nothing because it may be necessary to determine, for example, the registers needed before the function prologue can be emitted. So `gen` merely annotates the nodes in their `x` fields to identify the code selected, and returns a pointer that is ultimately passed to the back end's `emit` to output the code. Once the front end calls `gen`, it does not inspect the contents of the nodes again, so `gen` may modify them freely.

`emit` emits a forest. Typically, it traverses the forest and emits code by switching on the opcode or some related value stored in the node by `gen`.

## 11. Interface Binding

The compiler option `-target=name` identifies the desired target. The name-interface pairs for the available targets are stored in

```
typedef struct binding {
    char *name;
    Interface *ir;
} Binding;
```

```
Binding bindings[]
```

The front end identifies the one in the `-target` and stores a pointer to its interface record in

```
Interface *IR
```

Whenever the front end needs to call an interface function, or read a type metric or an interface flag, it uses `IR`.

Back ends must define and initialize `bindings`, which associates names and interface records. For example, the back ends in `lcc` distribution define `bindings` in `bind.c`.

## 12. Upcalls

In addition to the functions defined in the previous sections, back ends calls the front-end functions listed below to perform output, allocate storage, generate labels, and manage strings.

`void *allocate(unsigned long n, unsigned arena)`

permanently allocates `n` bytes in `arena`, which can be one of PERM, FUNC, or STMT and returns a pointer to the first byte. The space is guaranteed to be aligned to suit the machine's most demanding type. Data allocated in PERM are deallocated at the end of compilation; data allocated in FUNC and STMT are deallocated after compiling functions and statements.

`void fprintf(FILE *f, const char *fmt, ...)`

`void print(const char *fmt, ...)`

print formatted data to the file stream `f` (`fprintf`) or to standard output (`print`). These functions are like Standard C's `fprintf` and `printf`, but support only some of the standard conversion specifiers and do not support flags, precision, and field-width specifications. They support additional conversion specifiers useful for generating code. The conversion specifiers are listing ed Table 2.

**Table 2.** Format conversion specifiers.

<i>Specifiers</i>	<i>Argument Types</i>	<i>Action or Corresponding printf Specifiers</i>
<code>%d %D</code>	int, long	<code>%d %ld</code>
<code>%u %U</code>	unsigned, unsigned long	<code>%u %lu</code>
<code>%o</code>	unsigned	<code>%o</code>
<code>%x %X</code>	unsigned, unsigned long	<code>%x %lx</code>
<code>%f %e %g</code>	double	<code>%f %e %g</code>
<code>%p</code>	void*	<code>%x</code> , if the argument is null <code> %#x</code> , if the argument is nonnull
<code>%s</code>	const char*	<code>%s</code>
<code>%S</code>	const char*, int	print a string of a specified length
<code>%I</code>	int	print spaces
<code>%k</code>	int	print an English for a token code
<code>%t</code>	Type	print an English for a Type
<code>%w</code>	Coordinate	print a source coordinate

`int genlabel(int n)`

increments the generated-identifier counter by `n` and returns its old value.

`int roundup(int n, int m)`

is `n` rounded up to the next multiple of `m`, which must be a power of two.

`const char *string(const char *str)`

returns `stringn(str, strlen(str))`.

`const char *stringd(long n)`

returns the string representation of `n`; `stringd` installs the returned string in the string table, if necessary.

`const char *stringf(const char *fmt, ...)`

formats its arguments into a string, installs that string to the string table, if necessary, and returns a pointer to the installed string. See `print` for formatting details.

`const char *stringn(const char *str, int len)`  
installs `str[0..len-1]` in the string table, if necessary, and returns a pointer to the installed copy. The string table holds only one copy of each unique string, so strings returned by any of the string functions can be compared for equality by comparing only their pointers.

## References

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