Member Function Encyclopedia Article

Member Function

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Member Function

A member **function** is a component of objects. Objects are miniature programs, which consist of both **code** and **data** (data members). The code is comprised of a series of member functions. It is these functions that are called on by a user, also described as sending the **object** a **message**, in order to use the object. For example, calling an object's Draw function can also be described as sending the object the Draw message. Calling a member function invokes the function on the object.

A member function allows some of an object's behavior or contents to be retrieved. Thus, it forms one of the underpinnings of the **programming** of object-oriented languages such as **C++**.

Member functions can be classified according to their purpose. Examples of some types of member functions in C++ are "getters," "setters," "command methods," and "factory methods." Also, classification based on the properties of member functions is possible. Examples of these include "primitive or composed method," "hook or **template** method," "class or instance method," or a "convenience method."