#### A <chrono> Tutorial



#### It's About Time

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#### Where You Can Find This Library

- Everything discussed in this presentation is found in the header <chrono>.
- Everything is in namespace std::chrono.



#### What We Will Be Talking About

- Motivation. Why <chrono>?
- Time durations
- Points in time
- Clocks
- Examples



# Why Bother? (with <chrono>)

 Isn't an integral count (of seconds or whatever) sufficient?

sleep(10);

- Sleep for 10 seconds?
- 10 milliseconds?
- 10 nanoseconds?



# Why Bother? (with <chrono>)

 Isn't an integral count (of seconds or whatever) sufficient?

sleep(10ms);

• Ah: 10 milliseconds.



# Why Bother? (with <chrono>)

- In general using an arithmetic type to represent a duration or time point is *intrinsically ambiguous*.
- Help the compiler *help you* to find logic errors at compile time by <u>making distinct concepts</u>, <u>distinct</u> <u>types</u>.



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# Time Duration

- A time duration is just a period of time.
  - 3 seconds.
  - 3 minutes.
  - 3 hours.



- Lets start with std::chrono::seconds.
  - seconds is an arithmetic-like type.
  - sizeof(seconds) == 8.
  - It is trivially destructible.
  - It is trivially default constructible.
  - It is trivially copy constructible.
  - It is trivially copy assignable.
  - It is trivially move constructible.
  - It is trivially move assignable.
- This is all just like long long and int64\_t.



```
Very simple, very fast:
```

```
class seconds
{
    int64_t sec_;
public:
    seconds() = default;
    // etc.
    // ...
};
```



Scalar-like construction behavior:

seconds s; // no initialization
seconds s{}; // zero initialization



Construction:

seconds s = 3;
// error: Not implicitly constructible from int



Construction:

seconds s = 3;
// error: Not implicitly constructible from int

seconds s{3}; // 0k: 3 seconds



Construction:

seconds s = 3; // error: Not implicitly constructible from int seconds s{3}; // 0k: 3 seconds cout << s << '\n'; // unfortunately, not ok But the library I present tomorrow fixes this.



Construction:

seconds s = 3; // error: Not implicitly constructible from int seconds s{3}; // 0k: 3 seconds cout << s << '\n'; // unfortunately, not ok cout << s.count() << "s\n"; // 3s</pre>



```
void f(seconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";
}</pre>
```



```
void f(seconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";</pre>
}
f(3);
// error: Not implicitly constructible from int
      It is just as important what seconds
      won't do as what it does do!
```



```
void f(seconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";
}
f(3);
// error: Not implicitly constructible from int</pre>
```



```
void f(seconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";</pre>
}
f(3);
// error: Not implicitly constructible from int
f(seconds{3}); // ok, 3s
f(3s);
          // ok, 3s Requires C++14
seconds x{3};
f(x);
                // ok, 3s
```



```
Addition and subtraction just like int:
void f(seconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";
}</pre>
```



```
Addition and subtraction just like int:
```

```
void f(seconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";
}
auto x = 3s;
x += 2s;
f(x); // ok, 5s
x = x - 1s;
f(x); // ok, 4s
f(x + 1); // error: seconds + int not allowed
```



Comparison, all 6 operators, just like int:

```
constexpr auto time_limit = 2s;
void f(seconds d)
{
    if (d <= time_limit)
        cout << "in time: ";
    else
        cout << "out of time: ";
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";
}
```



Comparison, all 6 operators, just like int:



How much does this cost?!

```
seconds int64_t
f(seconds x, seconds y) f(int64_t x, int64_t y)
{
    return x + y; return x + y;
}
```

Compile both functions with optimizations on and inspect the assembly.



#### How much does this cost?!

\_\_Z1fNSt3\_\_16chrono8durationIxNS\_5ratioILl1... @\_Z1fNSt3\_\_16chrono8durationIxNS\_5ratioILl1... .cfi\_startproc ## BB#0: pushq %rbp Ltmp0: .cfi\_def\_cfa\_offset 16 Ltmp1: .cfi\_offset %rbp, -16 movq %rsp, %rbp Ltmp2: .cfi\_def\_cfa\_register %rbp leaq (%rdi,%rsi), %rax popq %rbp retq .cfi\_endproc

Z1fxx: @ Z1fxx .cfi\_startproc ## BB#0: pushq %rbp Ltmp0: .cfi def cfa offset 16 Ltmp1: .cfi\_offset %rbp, -16 movq %rsp, %rbp Ltmp2: .cfi\_def\_cfa\_register %rbp leaq (%rdi,%rsi), %rax popq %rbp retq .cfi\_endproc

##

**Exactly** the same object code generation (release configuration, except for name mangling).



What is the range?

seconds m = seconds::min();
seconds M = seconds::max();

You can query seconds for its range.

On every platform implemented this is +/- 292 *billion* years.

If you overflow, you've got issues.



So seconds is just a wrapper around an integral type, and acts just like an integral type (sans conversions to other integral types).

Is this such a big deal?!

Yes



What if suddenly you needed to transform your *million-line* <u>seconds-based</u> code to deal with <u>milliseconds</u>?





<chrono> also has a type called milliseconds...



And milliseconds works just like seconds:

```
class milliseconds
{
    int64_t ms_;
public:
    milliseconds() = default;
    // etc.
    // ...
};
```

Except its range is only +/-292 million years.



So you just search and replace seconds for milliseconds?



So you just search and replace seconds for milliseconds?

# No

It is much safer than that!



```
You can modify a small piece of code at time:
```

```
void f(seconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";
}</pre>
```



```
You can modify a small piece of code at time:
```

```
void f(milliseconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "ms\n";
}</pre>
```



Clients either continue to work, or fail at compile time:

```
void f(milliseconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "ms\n";
}</pre>
```



Clients either continue to work, or fail at compile time:

```
void f(milliseconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "ms\n";
}
f(3);
// error: Not implicitly constructible from int</pre>
```


Clients either continue to work, or fail at compile time:

```
void f(milliseconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "ms\n";</pre>
}
f(3);
// error: Not implicitly constructible from int
f(seconds{3}); // ok, no change needed! 3000ms
f(3s);
                // ok, no change needed! 3000ms
seconds x{3};
f(x);
                // ok, no change needed! 3000ms
```



Clients either continue to work, or fail **at compile time**:

```
void f(seconds d)
{
    if (d <= time_limit)
        cout << "in time: ";
    else
        cout << "out of time: ";
        cout << d.count() << "s\n";
}</pre>
```



Clients either continue to work, or fail **at compile time**:

```
void f(milliseconds d)
{
    if (d <= time_limit)
        cout << "in time: ";
    else
        cout << "out of time: ";
    cout << d.count() << "ms\n";
}</pre>
```



Clients either continue to work, or fail **at compile time**:

```
constexpr auto time_limit = 2s;
                                              No change
void f(milliseconds d)
                                               needed!
{
    if (d <= time_limit)</pre>
        cout << "in time: ";</pre>
    else
        cout << "out of time: ";</pre>
    cout << d.count() << "ms\n";</pre>
}
```

f(3s); // ok, no change needed! out of time: 3000ms

#### ripple

<chrono> knows about the relationship between
milliseconds and seconds. It knows it has to multiply
by 1000 to convert seconds to milliseconds.



<chrono> knows about the relationship between
milliseconds and seconds. It knows it has to multiply
by 1000 to convert seconds to milliseconds.

You should not manually code conversions from seconds to milliseconds. It is a simple computation. But it is easy to get wrong in one obscure place out of many in a *million-line* program.

Let <chrono> do this conversion for you. It does it in only one place, and is tested over many applications. And it is no less efficient than you could have coded manually.



How much does this cost?!

```
milliseconds
f(seconds x)
{
    return x;
}
```

int64\_t
f(int64\_t x)
{
 return x\*1000;
}



#### How much does this cost?!

Z1fNSt3 16chrono8durationIxNS...: ## @\_Z1fNSt3\_\_16chrono8durationIxNS... .cfi\_startproc ## BB#0: pushg %rbp Ltmp0: .cfi\_def\_cfa\_offset 16 Ltmp1: .cfi\_offset %rbp, -16 movq %rsp, %rbp Ltmp2: .cfi\_def\_cfa\_register %rbp ## imm = 0x3E8 imulq \$1000, %rdi, %rax popq %rbp retq .cfi\_endproc

Z1fx: ## @ Z1fx .cfi\_startproc ## BB#0: pushq %rbp Ltmp0: .cfi def cfa offset 16 Ltmp1: .cfi\_offset %rbp, -16 movq %rsp, %rbp Ltmp2: .cfi\_def\_cfa\_register %rbp imulg \$1000, %rdi, %rax ## imm = 0x3E8 popq %rbp retq .cfi\_endproc

**Exactly** the same object code generation (release configuration, except for name mangling).



<chrono> allows you to migrate from seconds to
milliseconds a piece at a time. Code across such a
transition will either be correct, or will not compile.



Even "mixed mode" arithmetic works just fine:

auto x = 2s; auto y = 3ms; f(x + y); // 2003ms f(y - x); // -1997ms



# In General

If it compiles, it is working.

If it doesn't compile, don't escape the type system (using count()) to fix it, unless you understand why it didn't work.

If you escape the type system and it compiles, all subsequent run time errors are **on you**.

I/O or interfacing with legacy code is the typical reason for needing to use count().



In general: If a <chrono> conversion is *loss-less*, then it is implicit.

If a conversion is not loss-less, it does not compile without special syntax.

Example:

seconds x = 3400ms; // error: no conversion



In general: If a <chrono> conversion is *loss-less*, then it is implicit.

If a conversion is not loss-less, it does not compile without special syntax.

Example:

seconds x = 3400ms; // error: no conversion
seconds x = duration\_cast<seconds>(3400ms); // 3s
duration\_cast means: convert
with truncation towards zero.



duration\_cast<duration> truncates towards zero.

In C++1z (hopefully C++17)

floor<duration> truncates towards negative infinity.

round<duration> truncates towards nearest and towards even on a tie.

ceil<duration> truncates towards positive infinity.



Only use an explicit cast when an implicit conversion won't work.

If the implicit conversion compiles, it will be exact.

Otherwise it won't compile and you can make the decision of which rounding mode you need (towards zero, towards infinity, towards negative infinity, towards nearest).



### Wait, there's more...

hours minutes seconds milliseconds microseconds nanoseconds

Everything I've said about seconds and milliseconds is also true for all of these other units.



# All of these units work together seamlessly

hours minutes seconds milliseconds microseconds nanoseconds

```
void f(nanoseconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "ns\n";
}
auto x = 2h;
auto y = 3us;
f(x + y); // 720000003000ns</pre>
```

ripple

# This is overkill for my application

I'm building a TRS-80 emulator and all I need is a 32-bit second.

<chrono> still has you covered.

using seconds32 = std::chrono::duration<int32\_t>;

seconds32 will interoperate with the entire <chrono>
library as described for std::chrono::seconds, but
use int32\_t as the "representation".



# This is overkill for my application

I'm building a TRS-80 emulator and all I need is a 32-bit second.

I meant unsigned 32 bits.

whatever...

using seconds32 = std::chrono::duration<uint32\_t>;



# This is overkill for my application

I'm building a TRS-80 emulator and all I need is a 32-bit second.

I meant unsigned 32 bits. And I need overflow protection.

Find (or build) a "safeint" library that does what you want, and then:

using seconds32 = duration<safe<uint32\_t>>;



In general, you can plug any arithmetic type, or emulation thereof, into duration<Rep> and you will get a type that means seconds, using that representation.

Yes, even floating point types.



For floating-point representations, you can implicitly convert from any precision without using duration\_cast. The rationale is that there is no truncation error (only rounding error). And so implicit conversion is safe.

```
using fseconds = duration<float>;
void f(fseconds d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "s\n";
}
f(45ms + 63us); // 0.045063s</pre>
```



Can I do generalized representation with milliseconds?

```
template <class T>
using my_ms = std::chrono::duration<T, std::milli>;
void f(my_ms<float> d)
{
    cout << d.count() << "ms\n";
}</pre>
```

f(45ms + 63us); // 45.063ms



The standard specifies:

using nanoseconds = duration<int\_least64\_t, nano>; using microseconds = duration<int\_least55\_t, micro>; using milliseconds = duration<int\_least45\_t, milli>; using seconds = duration<int\_least35\_t >;



The standard specifies:

```
using nano = ratio<1, 1'000'000'000>;
using micro = ratio<1, 1'000'000>;
using milli = ratio<1, 1'000>;
```

```
Where ratio<N, D> is:
template <intmax_t N, intmax_t D = 1>
class ratio
{
```

static constexpr intmax\_t num; // N/D reduced to
static constexpr intmax\_t den; // lowest terms
using type = ratio<num, den>;

The standard specifies:

using	nanoseconds	=	duration <int_least64_t,< th=""><th>nano&gt;;</th></int_least64_t,<>	nano>;
using	microseconds	=	duration <int_least55_t,< td=""><td><pre>micro&gt;;</pre></td></int_least55_t,<>	<pre>micro&gt;;</pre>
using	milliseconds	=	duration <int_least45_t,< td=""><td>milli&gt;;</td></int_least45_t,<>	milli>;
using	seconds	=	duration <int_least35_t,< td=""><td>ratio&lt;1&gt;&gt;;</td></int_least35_t,<>	ratio<1>>;
using	minutes	=	duration <int_least29_t,< td=""><td>ratio&lt;60&gt;&gt;;</td></int_least29_t,<>	ratio<60>>;
using	hours	=	duration <int_least23_t,< td=""><td>ratio&lt;3600&gt;&gt;;</td></int_least23_t,<>	ratio<3600>>;

```
template <class Rep, class Period = ratio<1>>
class duration {
    Rep rep_;
public:
};
```



## Durations

```
template <class Rep, class Period = ratio<1>>
class duration {
  public:
    using rep = Rep;
    using period = Period;
    // ...
```

};

Every duration has a nested type rep, which is its representation, and a nested type period which is a fraction representing the period of the duration's "tick" in units of seconds.

```
milliseconds::rep is int64_t
milliseconds::period::num is 1
milliseconds::period::den is 1000
```



## Generalized Duration Unit

You can build any duration that meets your needs:

```
using frames = duration<int32_t, ratio<1, 60>>;
```

void f(duration<float, milli> d);

And things will just work, following all of the previously outlined rules:

```
f(frames{1}); // 16.6667ms
f(45ms + frames{5}); // 128.333ms
```



 $45ms + frames{5}$ 

pseudo syntax:

45 [int64\_t, 1/1000] + 5 [int32\_t, 1/60]

Everything inside [] is *always* computed at compile time.



 $45ms + frames{5}$ 

pseudo syntax:

45 [int64\_t, 1/1000] + 5 [int32\_t, 1/60] Find common\_type and convert to it:

45\*3 [int64\_t, 1/3000] + 5\*50 [int64\_t, 1/3000]

Computed least common multiple at compile time!



 $45ms + frames{5}$ 

pseudo syntax:

45 [int64\_t, 1/1000] + 5 [int32\_t, 1/60]

Find common\_type and convert to it:

45\*3 [int64\_t, 1/3000] + 5\*50 [int64\_t, 1/3000] Do arithmetic in common\_type:

385 [int64\_t, 1/3000]



 $45ms + frames{5}$ 

pseudo syntax:

45 [int64\_t, 1/1000] + 5 [int32\_t, 1/60]
Find common\_type and convert to it:
45\*3 [int64\_t, 1/3000] + 5\*50 [int64\_t, 1/3000]
Do arithmetic in common\_type:
385 [int64\_t, 1/3000]

Convert to duration<float, milli>:

128.333 [float, 1/1000]



#### void test(milliseconds x, frames y) { f(x + y);}

#### LCPI0\_0:

.long 1077936128

## float 3

.align 4, 0x90

\_\_Z4testNSt3\_\_16chrono8durationIxNS\_5ratioILl1ELl1000EEEEENS1\_IiNS2\_ILl1ELl60EEEEE:

.cfi\_startproc

## BB#0:

```
pushq %rbp
```

Ltmp0:

.cfi\_def\_cfa\_offset 16

Ltmp1:

```
.cfi_offset %rbp, -16
```

movq %rsp, %rbp

```
Ltmp2:
```

.cfi\_def\_cfa\_register %rbp

```
leaq (%rdi,%rdi,2), %rax
                            // * 3
          %esi, %rcx
```

// \* 50 imulq \$50, %rcx, %rcx addq %rax, %rcx

```
cvtsi2ssq %rcx, %xmm0
```

// x + y

// / 3 divss LCPI0\_0(%rip), %xmm0

popq %rbp

\_\_Z1fNSt3\_\_16chrono8durationIfNS\_5ratioILl1ELl1000EEEEE ## TAILCALL

.cfi\_endproc

jmp

ripple

movslq

#### All of the complicated work is done at compile time.

### I know it is a lot

Feel like you've been drinking from the fire hose?



Wait, there's more...



# But before we go on

Recall back in the beginning when there were just seconds, and then maybe milliseconds are introduced?

All of this fancy stuff about frames, and nanoseconds, and floating point milliseconds, and 32 bit representations...

It is all there only in case you need it. You don't pay for it if you don't use it. This whole shebang is still just as simple as a wrapper around a int64\_t which means seconds.

Simple. Only as complicated as you need it to be.



# But before we go on

Simple. Only as complicated as you need it to be.

seconds is to duration<int64\_t, ratio<1, 1>>

as

string is to basic\_string<char, char\_traits<char>, allocator<char>>

You can just use it without worrying about the fact that it is a specialization of a template.


# But before we go on

Simple. Only as complicated as you need it to be. And type-safe.

This library lives and dies by converting one type to another.

If the conversion is loss-less (seconds to milliseconds), it can be made implicitly.

If the conversion is lossy (milliseconds to seconds) it can be made with duration\_cast.

If the conversion is dangerous, it must be made with explicit conversion syntax (int to seconds or seconds to int).



# But before we go on

Simple. Only as complicated as you need it to be. And type-safe.

If you make a reasonable change that doesn't involve explicit type conversion syntax (and it compiles), you can have confidence that you have not introduced a bug.

Use the weakest type conversion possible:

- Implicit if at all possible.
- duration\_cast if you need to specify truncation.
- .count() in a Kobayashi Maru.



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So far we've only talked about time *durations*.

Relax.

Your knowledge of durations will carry over to time\_points.

There is not that much more to learn.



A duration such as 10'000s means any 10,000s. Or if you prefer 2h + 46min + 40s.

But:

time\_point<system\_clock, seconds> tp{10'000s};

Means:

1970-01-01 02:46:40 UTC

(Not specified, but de facto standard)



A time\_point refers to a specific point in time, with respect to some clock, and has a precision of some duration:



time\_points and durations can have the exact same representation, but they mean different things.



When it comes to arithmetic, time\_points are similar to pointers: time\_points can be subtracted, but not added. Their difference is not another time\_point but rather a duration.

auto d = tp1 - tp2;

You can add/subtract a duration to/from a time\_point, resulting in another time\_point.

```
auto tp2 = tp1 + d;
```

It is a 100% self-consistent algebra, type-checked **at compile-time**.



time\_points convert much like the durations do:

Implicitly when the conversion does not involve truncation error.

```
using namespace std::chrono;
template <class D>
    using sys_time = time_point<system_clock, D>;
sys_time<seconds> tp{5s}; // 5s
sys_time<milliseconds> tp2 = tp; // 5000ms
```



time\_points convert much like the durations do:

Implicitly when the conversion does not involve truncation error.

With time\_point\_cast when you want to force a truncation error.

using namespace std::chrono; template <class D>

ripple

time\_points convert much like the durations do:

Implicitly when the conversion does not involve truncation error.

- With time\_point\_cast when you want to force a truncation error.
- Explicitly when you want to force a duration to time\_point conversion.

With .time\_since\_epoch() when you want to force a time\_point to duration conversion.



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A clock is a bundle of a duration, a time\_point and a static function to get the current time.

```
struct some_clock
{
    using duration = chrono::duration<int64_t, microseconds>;
    using rep = duration::rep;
    using period = duration::period;
    using time_point = chrono::time_point<some_clock>;
    static constexpr bool is_steady = false;
```

```
static time_point now() noexcept;
};
```

```
ripple
```

Every time\_point is associated with a clock.

time\_points associated with different clocks <u>do not</u> convert to one another.



Every time\_point is associated with a clock.

- time\_points associated with different clocks <u>do not</u> convert to one another.
- Applications can have as many different clocks as they want to.
- There are two useful std-supplied clocks:

std::chrono::system\_clock

std::chrono::steady\_clock

Ignore std::chrono::high\_resolution\_clock as it is a type alias for one of the above clocks.



std::chrono::system\_clock

Use system\_clock when you need time\_points that must relate to some calendar.

system\_clock can tell you what time of day it is, and what the date is.







std::chrono::steady\_clock

Use steady\_clock when just need a stopwatch.

It is good for timing, but can not give you the time of day.





Whatever clock you use, you can get its time\_point like this:

clock::time\_point tp



And you can get the current time like this:

clock::time\_point tp = clock::now();



Or like this:

auto tp = clock::now();



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Timing:

```
auto t0 = steady_clock::now();
f();
auto t1 = steady_clock::now();
cout << nanoseconds{t1-t0}.count() << "ns\n";</pre>
```

Output:

#### 135169457ns



Timing:

```
auto t0 = steady_clock::now();
f();
auto t1 = steady_clock::now();
cout << duration<double>{t1-t0}.count() << "s\n";</pre>
```

Output:

0.135169s



Timing:

```
auto t0 = steady_clock::now();
f();
auto t1 = steady_clock::now();
cout << duration_cast<milliseconds>(t1-t0).count() << "ms\n";</pre>
```

Output:

135ms



mutex timed try lock:

std::timed\_mutex mut; if (mut.try\_lock\_for(500ms)) // got the lock if (mut.try\_lock\_until(steady\_clock::now() + 500ms)) // got the lock



Custom duration:

using days = duration<int, ratio<86400>>; // same thing



Sleep with custom duration:

std::this\_thread::sleep\_for(days{1});



Sleep with custom duration:

std::this\_thread::sleep\_for(days{1});

std::this\_thread::sleep\_for(weeks{2});



Time since epoch (de facto standard 1970-01-01 00:00:00 UTC).

auto tp = time\_point\_cast<seconds>(system\_clock::now()); cout << tp.time\_since\_epoch().count() << "s\n";</pre>

1469456123s



Time since epoch (de facto standard 1970-01-01 00:00:00 UTC).

auto tp = time\_point\_cast<seconds>(system\_clock::now()); cout << tp.time\_since\_epoch().count() << "s\n";</pre>

#### 1469456123s

auto td = time\_point\_cast<days>(tp);
cout << td.time\_since\_epoch().count() << " days\n";</pre>

17007 days



- duration
- time\_point
- clock



- duration
- time\_point
- clock

- Compile-time errors are favored over run-time errors.
- As efficient as hand-written code (or better).
- Feature rich, but you don't pay for features you don't use.



- duration
- time\_point
- clock
- Designed a decade ago.
- Voted into C++11 in 2008.
  - Standard C++ for half a decade now.
- This is not bleeding edge, it is best practice.



- duration
- time\_point
- clock
- Designed a decade ago.
- Voted into C++11 in 2008.
  - Standard C++ for half a decade now.
- This is not bleeding edge, it is best practice.
- Bleeding edge in time computations is my talk tomorrow at 4:45pm which builds upon (not obsoletes) <chrono>...

