

Debuggers



What Does gdb Do?

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- Stop your program
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- **MAGIC**

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One annoying gotcha shows up if the program to debug takes any options. The simple prime program does not, but if it did:

```
> ./prime --imaginary-option # running normally
> gdb ./prime --imaginary-option # will not work
gdb: unrecognized option '--imaginary-option'
> gdb --args ./prime --imaginary-option # gdb will ignore everything after --a
rgs
```

GDB's Text User Interface

- It's a CLI program, get over it!
- Nope... Beast Mode... GDB TUI
 - At launch with `--tui`
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GDB TUI Key Bindings (partial)

Binding

`C-x a`

`C-x 1`

`C-x 2`

`C-x o`

`C-x s`

`C-l`

`C-p`, `C-n`, `C-b`, `C-f`

Action

Enter/exit TUI

Change TUI layout?

Change TUI layout

Switch window focus

Single Key mode

Refresh screen

Readline navigation (Emacs FTW!)

GDB TUI Single Key Mode

- This is truly GDB Beast Mode... on steroids!

Key	Action
c	continue
d	down
f	finish
n	next
q	exit the Single Key mode
r	run
s	step
u	up
v	info locals
w	where
---	-----

gdb Commands

run

- Starting gdb will not run your program by default. You must use the `run` command to begin execution.
- Using `run` will start your program with the options originally specified, or you can pass new options with `run`.

```
(gdb) run --different-option
```

- If your project is recompiled, each `run` will automatically reload the new version. Debugging is easier if you don't quit gdb, but leave it running in a separate terminal.

gdb Commands

backtrace, **up**, **down**, **frame**, **print**

- While your program is running, it has a function call stack that is built up with frames that hold parameters, locals, and register information for each invocation. Consider math.c:

```
#include <stdio.h>
int subtract (int a, int b) { return a - b; }
int divide (int a, int* b) { return a / *b; }
int do_math (int x, int y, int z) {
    int temp = subtract(x, y);
    temp = divide(z, &temp);
    return temp;
}
int main () {
    int temp;
    temp = do_math(10, 10, 20);
    printf("Result: %d\n", temp);
    return 0;
}
```

Function call stack
(growing to the right)

main

main -> do_math

main -> do_math ->
subtract

main -> do_math

main -> do_math ->
divide

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- Look at your source with `list` or `list <function>`
- Stop and start your program with `break` and `continue`
- Take things at your own pace with `step` (into) and `next`
- Make a change to variables and registers with `set`

More on breakpoints

- Generally specified by filename:linenumber
- Will also work in context
- List all current breakpoints with `info breakpoints`
- Remove with `delete <number>` or `disable <number>` until later
- Skip over working code with breakpoints on either side and `continue`

GDB Does Python!!

- Access to GDB internals
- Variables, functions, etc.
- Inline, short entry, and script
- A pretty printer

```
class ObjectPrinter:
    '''Pretty print an Object'''

    def __init__(self, val):
        self.val = val

    def to_string(self):
        '''Change this to reflect real properties from the object'''
        return self.val

    def lookup_type(val):
        if val == 'Object':
            return ObjectPrinter(val)

    def display_hint(self):
        return 'Object'

gdb.pretty_printers.append(lookup_type)
```

Open Problems with Debugging

Look at `inf.c`