

# Max/MSP Externals Tutorial

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This document is a tutorial for writing external objects for Max 3.5.x and Max 4 + MSP 2. It assumes that the reader is familiar with the Max environment and the C Programming Language. This document is intended to expand upon the material presented by David Zicarelli in his *Writing External Objects for Max* (1996) and is based on a tutorial started by Dale Stamman while at McGill University. It is strongly recommended that the reader study both documents before attempting to create an external Max object. Several examples are provided to demonstrate this process. Max externals (external objects) can be created using Think C, Symantec C++, and CodeWarrior.

This version (2.4) describes the development of Max/MSP externals (PowerPC only) using CodeWarrior on PowerPC. If you are using Think C or Symantec C++ compilers or on 68k machines please refer to the version 1 of this document.

## Developing Max External Object with CodeWarrior□

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This tutorial will explain how to create PowerPC native Max externals using MetroWerks Codewarrior (Pro 2 or later) Refer also to Zicarelli (1996, 12–8). A very simple external object called **bang** will be created. Refer to Figure 1. for the source code of **bang.c**. The explanation of how **bang** works and writing Max external objects is provided later. First, some preparations are in order.

### Creating a PPC Max External Object (shared library) with CodeWarrior Pro

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1. If you are using IDE 4.1 or later and making object for Max 4 or later, follow the instruction in Zicarelli's *Writing External Objects for Max 4.0 and MSP 2.0* tutorial
2. Make sure both Max 3.5.x with Software Developers Kit and CodeWarrior are properly installed. In Max4/MSP2 download the **Max4/MSP2 Software Development Kit** from <http://www.cycling74.com/products/dlmaxmsp.html>.
3. Launch CodeWarrior IDE [2.1 or later].
4. From File menu select New... [IDE 4.0 or later] or New Project.
5. [IDE 4.1] In the New dialog box Enter the Project name: **bang.mcp**. Set the Location:. Click on MacOS C Stationary. Hit OK. In the New Project dialog box, select Standard Console:PPC:Std C Console PPC. Hit OK.

[IDE 4.0] In the New dialog box Enter the Project name: **bang.mcp**. Set the Location:. Click on MacOS C/C++ Stationary. Hit OK. In the New Project dialog box, select Standard Console:Std C Console PPC. Hit OK.

[IDE 3.3 or earlier] In the dialog box (Select project stationary), use the MacOS:C\_C++: Standard Console:Std C Console PPC. Name the new project, e.g., **bang.mcp**.

6. A Project window named **bang.mcp** should open. Remove Sources folder in the project window by clicking on the name, then select Clear from the Edit menu. Do the same for ANSI Libraries. From Mac Libraries remove: MSL RuntimePPC.lib and MathLib.

7. From **File** menu select **New Text File** or **New [IDE 3.3 or earlier]**. Enter the C source code into this window, then save it in the **bang** folder as **bang.c** or copy a source file (**bang.c**) into the folder. Then drag-and-drop the file (**bang.c**) into the **Project** window.
8. From the **Project** menu, select **Add Files** to add **MaxLib**, which can be found in **Max::Max/MSP SDK::Max includes**, to the project. Close the **Project Messages (Access Path, in IDE 2.1)** box. If you are writing MSP externals, you will also need to add **Max Audio Library**.
9. From the **Edit** menu, select **PPC Std C Console Settings**. From **Target Settings Panel** Select **PPC Target**. Change the **Project Type** from **Application** to **Shared Library**. Change the **File Name** to name of the object, e.g. **bang**. **Creator** to **max2**, and **File Type** to???? [for Max 3.5 or earlier] or to **iLaF** [for Max 4 or later].
10. From the **Target Settings Panels**, under **Linker**, select **PPC Linker**. Uncheck **Generate SYM File**. Under **Entry Points in Main** type **main**.
11. From the **Target Settings Panels**, under **Linker**, select **PPC PEF**. Check **Expand Uninitialized Data**.
12. [For IDE 3.0 and later] From the **Target Settings Panels**, select **C/C++ Language**. Uncheck **ANSI Strict**. In **Prefix File**: enter **MacHeaders.h**.
13. Close the **PPC Std C Console Settings** window and save it.
14. To compile the code, select **Make** from the **Project** menu. If successful you should see the familiar Max external object file created in the project folder (**bang**).
15. Run Max on a PPC Mac or double-click the newly created object. Create a new patcher and create a new box. Type the object name into the box and external object will be created. The location of the object should be specified in the **File Preferences...** in the **Options** menu of Max.

[see also Zicarelli (1996, 12–4)]

```
// bang.c -- A very simple Max external object.
//      Outputs a bang when a bang is received.

#include "ext.h"      // Required for all Max external objects
void *this_class;    // Required. Global pointing to this class

typedef struct _bang // Data structure for this object
{
    t_object b_ob;    // Must always be the first field; used by Max
    void *b_out;      // Pointer to outlet, need one for each outlet
} t_bang;

// Prototypes for methods: need a method for each incoming message
void *bang_new(void); // object creation method
void bang_bang(t_bang *bang); // method for bang message

void main(void)
{
    // set up our class: create a class definition
    setup((t_messlist**) &this_class, [](method)bang_new, []0L, [(short)sizeof(t_bang), []0L, 0];
    addbang((method)bang_bang); // bind method "bang_bang" to the "bang" message}

void *bang_new(void)
{
    t_bang *bang;

    // create the new instance and return a pointer to it
    bang = (t_bang *)newobject(this_class);

    bang->b_out = bangout(bang); // create a bang outlet

    return(bang);              // must return a pointer to the new instance
}

void bang_bang(t_bang *bang)
{
    outlet_bang(bang->b_out);    // send a bang to the outlet bang->b_out
}
```

**Figure 1. Source code for bang.c**

## Writing Max External Objects

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To create an external Max object, you write a shared library. When you type the name of your object into an empty box in a Max patcher window, its shared library file is opened and its contents loaded into memory. The object is then created and able to receive messages from the Max environment. How your object will respond to the various messages is determined by the code you have written.

Your code for an external Max object will consist of a main function and functions (methods) that respond to specific Max messages sent to your object by the Max environment.

The structure of a minimal external object can be divided into four sections:

- initialization
- main()
- definition of the method to create a new object
- definition of methods that bind to other messages

The initialization consists of the necessary #include files, object structure definition, global variable declarations, and function prototypes. The main function, which is called only once when the user types the name of your object into a box in a Max patcher window for the first time, will define your object's class via `setup()` function and binds methods that will be used for incoming messages. The only requisite method for any class definition is the method that creates new objects. Within this method, memory for the new object is allocated and inlets and outlets are defined. Finally, methods that respond to other messages and other functions are defined. An explanation of each of these four sections is given below using a very simple object called **bang**, which simply outputs a bang upon a bang input. (See Figure 1 for the complete source code.)

### The **bang** object: Initialization

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The following lines are required for all objects:

```
#include "ext.h" // Required for all Max external objects
void *this_class; // Required. Global pointing to this class
```

The next step is to define a data structure for the **bang** Max object. This structure *must* start with a field called a `t_object`. The `t_object` contains references to the **bang** object's class definition as well as some other information. It is used by Max to communicate with the **bang** object. The following is the data structure for the **bang** object:

```
typedef struct _bang // Data structure for this object
{
    t_object b_ob; // Must always be the first field; used by Max
    void *b_out; // Pointer to an outlet
} t_bang;
```

It is a Max convention to start the names of each field in the data structure with a lower case letter followed by an underscore (e.g. `b_out`).

After the object's data structure has been declared, the class methods that will respond to Max messages need to be declared. Your object will do its work by responding to messages from the Max environment. Objects commonly receive integer and float messages in their inlets. Your object's methods will process these numbers in some way and then send out messages using the object's outlets.

Your code must include methods (functions) that can respond to each message your Max object will receive. The **bang** object will receive a “new” message when someone types its name into a box in a Max patcher window. Therefore it is necessary to provide a method that will handle this message and create a new instance of the **bang** object. The **bang** object is also expected to sent out a “bang” message on the outlet, upon a receipt of a “bang” in the left inlet. Methods will have to be written to handle this message. The declaration (prototype) of these methods is shown below.

```
// Prototypes for methods: need a method for each incoming message
void *bang_new(void); // object creation method
void bang_bang(t_bang *d); // method for bang message
```

## The **bang** object: main()

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When Max creates your object for the first time, Max will load your external object into memory and create the first instance of your class. At this time, Max will call your external’s main function once and only once. The main function specifies how your object should be initialized. The main function needs to do the following:

1. Set up your class: allocate memory for the object and specify methods for the creation of instances of your object.
2. Define messages that the object can respond to and bind each message to a method.

Here is the main() function of the **bang** object:

```
void main(void)
{
    // set up our class: create a class definition
    setup((t_messlist **) &this_class, (method)bang_new, 0L, (short)sizeof(t_bang), 0L, 0);
    addbang((method)bang_bang); // bind method "bang_bang" to the "bang" message
}
```

The setup function creates a definition of the **bang** object class, which will be used by the **bang\_new** method to create new instances of the **bang** object. In the above call to the setup function for the **bang** object, **this\_class** is the global variable declared at the beginning of the code. The second argument, **bang\_new**, is a pointer to the instance creation method **bang\_new**. This is the method that will be called when the object receives a “new” message from the Max environment. Since the **bang** object does not require any special memory cleanup when it is removed from the Max environment, **0L** is used in place of a pointer to a **bang\_free** method. The memory occupied by the **bang** object and all of its inlets and outlets will be removed automatically by Max.

The next argument to setup allocates memory for the class. In this example, **sizeof(t\_bang)** is used to determine the number of bytes of memory needed. Since we are not creating a user interface object, the next argument to **menufun** will be **0L**. The final **0** indicates that there is no argument to this object.

As mentioned above, the code must provide a method for each message you want to respond to. In the main function, each method should respond to the message with the functions: **addint**, **addinx**, **addbang**, **address**, **addft**, or **addftx**. Since the **bang** object only responds to the “bang” message, only one method, **bang\_bang**, is needed. In order to bind the **bang\_bang** method, which will output a “bang”, to a “bang” input message, we use the routine **addbang(bang\_bang)**.

## The **bang** object: The object creation function

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When a user creates a new instance of your object by typing the name **bang** into a box in a Max patcher window, opening a file with your object already in it, or by cutting and pasting your object, your object will receive a “new” message. This is a request to your creation method to create an object that is an instance of your class. The creation function then handles any arguments that were typed in the box in the Max patcher window, initializes data fields, and creates the object’s inlets and outlets. Finally, the creation function returns a pointer to the new instance of the object. These actions are shown in the method `bang_new` listed below.

```
void *bang_new(void)
{
    t_bang *bang;

    // create the new instance and return a pointer to it
    bang = (t_bang *)newobject(this_class);

    bang->b_out = bangout(bang); // create a bang outlet

    return(bang); // must return a pointer to the new instance
}
```

The function, `newobject`, is used to create a new instance of the class **bang**. The argument, `this_class`, is the global variable that points to this class. This pointer was set by the `setup` function in the main function.

When your object is created, Max automatically creates one inlet, but other inlets and outlets must be explicitly defined. Using the `bangout` function, an outlet (that only outputs “bang” messages) will be created and returns a pointer, which will be stored in the object’s data field `b_out`.

Finally, `bang`, the pointer to the new instance of our object that was returned by the call to `newobject`, must be returned from the function `bang_new`.

Now we have a new instance of our object represented as a “bang” box in a Max patcher window. It is now waiting to receive “bang” messages that will cause its method to do the specified operation, namely, output a “bang”. We will now examine how this is done.

## The **bang** object: Handling the “bang” message

---

```
void bang_bang(t_bang *bang)
{
    outlet_bang(bang->b_out); // send a bang to the outlet bang->b_out
}
```

When a “bang” message arrives at the object’s left inlet, the `bang_bang` function (method) is called. This happens, because in the `main()` the “bang” message, was bound to this function `bang_bang()` by the function:

```
addbang((method) bang_bang);
```

The `bang_bang` method simply sends a “bang” messages via the outlet. The method calls the Max function `outlet_bang` to cause the “bang” to be output. In the object creation function, `bang_new` (see above), an outlet was created for this object with the statement:

```
bang->b_out = bangout(bang);
```

This function returned a pointer to the object’s outlet which we stored in the struct field `bang->b_out`.

## The **diff** object: Inlets and arguments

A simple object **diff** will be used to introduce how to add inlets and arguments to your object. This object basically functions as the Max built-in “-” object. It outputs the difference of two integers: the number coming in on the left inlet minus the number stored in the object which can be either specified via the right inlet or in the argument inside the object’s box. The source code is shown in Figure 2.

```

/*diff.c -- 97/03/24 IF (based on Dale Stammen's diff)
**          98/01/14 for PowerPC only
**This external defines an object similar to the standard "-" Max object.
**The diff object has 2 inlets and 1 outlet. Left inlet accepts bang and integers,
**right inlet accepts integers, and outlet outputs the difference of the 2 inputs.
*/

#include "ext.h"      // Required for all Max external objects
void *this_class;    // Required. Global pointing to this class

typedef struct _diff // Data structure for this object
{
    t_object d_ob;    // Must always be the first field; used by Max
    long d_valleft;   // Last value from left outlet
    long d_valright;  // Last value from right outlet
    long d_valtotal;  // Value to be sent to outlet
    void *d_out;      // Pointer to outlet, need one for each outlet
} t_diff;

// Prototypes for methods: you need a method for each message you want to respond to
void *diff_new(long value); // Object creation method
void diff_int(t_diff *diff, long value); // Method for message "int" in left inlet
void diff_in1(t_diff *diff, long value); // Method for message "int" in right inlet
void diff_bang(t_diff *diff); // Method for bang message

void main(void) // main receives a copy of the Max function macros table
{
    // set up our class: create a class definition
    setup((t_messlist **) &this_class, (method)diff_new, 0L, (short)sizeof(t_diff),
          0L, A_DEFLONG, 0);

    addbang((method)diff_bang); // bind method "diff_bang" to the "bang" message
    addint((method)diff_int);   // bind method "diff_int" to int's received in the left inlet
    addinx((method)diff_in1,1); // bind method "diff_in1" to int's received in the right inlet
}

/*****
diff_new(long value)
inputs:      value -- the integer from the typed argument in the object box
description: creates a new instance of our class diff. Called once when the external
              object is loaded.
returns:     pointer to new instance
*****/

void *diff_new(long value)
{
    t_diff *diff;

    diff = (t_diff *)newobject(this_class); // Create new instance and return a pointer to it

    diff->d_valright = value; // Initialize the difference value
    diff->d_valleft = 0;
    diff->d_valtotal = value;

    diff->d_out = intout(diff); // Create our outlet

    intin(diff, 1);           // Create the right inlet

    return(diff);            // Must return a pointer to the new instance
}

```

```

/*****
diff_int(t_diff *a, long value)

inputs:      diff - pointer to t_diff object
             value - value received in the inlet
description: subtracts the right value with the incoming value. Stores the new left inlet
             value as well as the total and outputs the total.
returns:     nothing
*****/

void diff_int(t_diff *diff, long value)
{
    diff->d_valleft = value; // Store the value received in the left inlet

    diff->d_valtotal = diff->d_valleft - diff->d_valright; // Subtracts the right inlet
                                                         // value from the left

    diff_bang(diff); // Call bang method right away since it's the left inlet
}

/*****
diff_in1(t_diff *diff, long value)

inputs:      diff - pointer to our object
             value - value received in the inlet
description: stores the new right value, calculates and stores the new difference between
             the left and right value
returns:     nothing
*****/

void diff_in1(t_diff *diff, long value)
{
    diff->d_valright = value; // Store the value

    diff->d_valtotal = diff->d_valleft - value; // Update new difference
}

/*****
diff_bang(t_diff *a)

inputs:      diff - pointer to our object
description: method called when bang is received: it outputs the current difference
             of the left and right values
returns:     nothing
*****/

void diff_bang(t_diff *diff)
{
    outlet_int(diff->d_out, diff->d_valtotal); // put out the current total
}

```

**Figure 2. Source code for the diff object**



## The **diff** object: Initialization

---

The data structure for the diff object is shown below. Note that three values are stored within the object.

```
typedef struct _diff // Data structure for this object
{
  t_object d_ob; // Must always be the first field; used by Max
  long d_valleft; // Last value sent to left outlet
  long d_valright; // Last value sent to right outlet
  long d_valtotal; // Value to be sent to outlet
  void *d_out; // Pointer to outlet, need one for each outlet
} t_diff;
```

In the `setup` function in `main()` now has `A_DEFLONG` argument indicating that the object accept one integer argument in the object box.

```
setup((t_messlist **) &this_class, diff_new, 0L, (short)sizeof(t_diff), 0L, A_DEFLONG, 0);
```

Three methods are bound with the three types of messages: “bang” in the left inlet, integer entered in the left inlet, and integer entered in the right inlet.

```
addbang((method)diff_bang); // bind "diff_bang" to the "bang" message
addint((method)diff_int); // bind "diff_int" to int received in the left inlet
addinx((method)diff_in1,1); // bind "diff_in1" to int received in the right inlet
```

## The **diff** object: The object creation function

---

Unlike the **bang** object above, the `diff_new` function is passed an integer argument from the object box that the user may type. The object’s variables are initialized, an outlet that output integer is created, and the right inlet, which accepts integers is also created:

```
void *diff_new(long value)
{
  t_diff *diff;

  diff = (t_diff *)newobject(this_class); // Create new instance and return a pointer to it

  diff->d_valright = value; // Initialize the diff values
  diff->d_valleft = 0;
  diff->d_valtotal = value;

  diff->d_out = intout(diff); // Create our outlet

  intin(diff,1); // Create the right inlet

  return(diff); // Must return a pointer to the new instance
}
```

## The **diff** object: Methods

---

The `diff_int` method is called when an integer comes in on the left inlet. It stores the value in `d_valleft`, subtracts that value with `d_valright`, storing the result in `d_valtotal`, then calls the `diff_bang` method to output the result.

```
void *diff_int(t_diff *diff, long value)
{
    diff->d_valleft = value; // Store the value received in the left inlet
    diff->d_valtotal = diff->d_valleft + diff->d_valright; // Subtract right inlet value
    // from the left
    diff_bang(diff); // Call bang method right away since it's the left inlet
}
```

The `diff_in1` method is called when an integer comes in on the right inlet. It stores the new value in `d_valright` then updates the `val_total`.

```
void *diff_in1(t_diff *diff, long value)
{
    diff->d_valright = value; // Store the value
    diff->d_valtotal = diff->d_valleft + value; // Update new total
}
```

The `diff_bang` method is called when a “bang” comes in the left inlet or, indirectly via `diff_int` method, when an integer comes in the left inlet.

```
void *diff_bang(t_diff *diff)
{
    outlet_int(diff->d_out, diff->d_valtotal); // simply put out the current total
}
```

## The **diff\_assist** object: Adding to the Max's New Object list and assistance messages

---

Two enhancements will be added to the **diff** object: the object (**diff\_assist**) will be included in the Patcher's **New Object** list and the assistance messages, which appears when the mouse is pointed at object's inlets and outlets. The complete listing of **diff\_assist** object is in Figure 3.

To make an entry in the New Object list is very simple. All you need to do is to include the following function in your `main()`:

```
finder_addclass("All Objects", "diff_assist"); // add class to the New object list
```

If you want to add the object to the "Arithmetic/Logic" list, you could add the following:

```
finder_addclass("Arithmetic/Logic", "diff_assist");
```

In order to add the assistance messages: a method must be defined, which must be bound to the Max message "assist", and since we will be using a resource for the string for the assistance messages, we need to copy the string from the resource. The binding and the copying is done in the `main()` as follows:

```
address((method)diff_assist, "assist", A_CANT, 0); // bind method diff_assist to the
// assistance message
rescopy('STR#', ResourceID); // copy the assistance messages resource into Max's
// temp file
```

ResourceID is a number that you define when creating the string resource. The `rescopy` function copies the string to Max's temporary file (Max Temp 1 in the Temporary Items folder). How to create this resource is explained next. The explanation of the `diff_assist` method will follow.

## Creating a String Resource in ResEdit 2.1 for a Max External Object

---

1. Launch ResEdit.
2. Click on the clown to get rid of it.
3. Select **New...** from the **File** menu; move to your project folder.
4. Name your resource file with EXACTLY the same name as your project and append the name with **.rsrc**. For example, if your project is called **projectname.μ**, name your resource **projectname.μ.rsrc**. On recent IDEs the name is not crucial since you will add the file to your project window.
5. Click the **New** button
6. Select **Create New Resource** from the **Resource** menu.
7. Scroll down to the resource type **STR#** in the **Select New Type** window. Make sure you select **STR#** and not **STR**. Click on **OK**.
8. ResEdit will now create a window called **STR# ID = 128**. Click on the field **1) \*\*\*\***. Select **Insert New Field(s)** from the **Resource** menu. In the box after **The string**, type in your external Max object's assistance string for the first inlet. You may use a maximum of 60 characters. Repeat step 8 for as many inlets and outlets as your Max object will need. Create them in order, with the first string being the message for inlet 1, the second for inlet 2.
9. Select **Get Resource Info** from the **Resource** menu. Enter your resource ID number in the field **ID**:. This number **MUST** match the resource ID number you define in your Max object. If you wish, you may type in the name of your resource in the field **Name**. This will help you remember what the resource is used for in the "resource picker window".
10. Save your resource. Make sure it is saved to your project folder and that it has the same name as your project file with **.rsrc** added to the end of the name.
11. Add the resource file to the MetroWorks project window.

## The **diff\_assist** object: **diff\_assist** method

---

```
void *diff_assist(t_diff *diff, Object *b, long msg, long arg, char *s)
{
    // copy the appropriate message to the destination string
    assist_string(ResourceID, msg, arg, 1, 3, s);
}
```

In the argument list for **diff\_assist**, **diff** is a pointer to our object, **b** is a pointer to the object's box in the Max patcher window. **msg** will be one of two values: 1 if the cursor is over an inlet or 2 if it is over an outlet. **arg** is the inlet or outlet number starting at 0 for the left inlet. **s** is where you will copy a C string containing your assistance information.

The function **assist\_string** handles the posting of the assistance string in the assistance area of the Max patcher window. It will copy the correct string from the resource in the memory specified by **ResourceID**. (**ResourceID** was defined at the beginning of the code.) This resource was copied into the Max's temp file by **rescopy()** in the **main** function. **msg** specifies if either an inlet or outlet was selected and **arg** is the inlet or outlets number. The argument 1 specifies that the first string in the resource corresponds to the first inlet. Likewise, the argument 3 specifies that the third string in the resource goes with the first outlet. The function **assist\_string** will copy the selected resource string into **s**, which will then be displayed in the assistance area of the patcher window.

```

/*diff_assist.c -- 97/03/24 IF (based on Dale Stammen's diff)
**                98/01/14 for PowerPC only IF
**This external object defines an object similar to the standard "-" max object.
**The diff object has 2 inlets and 1 outlet. Left inlet accepts bang and integers,
**right inlet accepts integers, and outlet outputs the difference of the 2 inputs.
*/

#include "ext.h" // Required for all Max external objects

void *this_class; // Required. Global pointing to this class

#defineResourceID 3999 // resource ID# for assistance strings created in ResEdit

typedef struct _diff // Data structure for this object
{
    t_obj d_ob; // Must always be the first field; used by Max
    long d_valleft; // Last value sent to left outlet
    long d_valright; // Last value sent to right outlet
    long d_valtotal; // Value to be sent to outlet
    void *d_out; // Pointer to outlet, need one for each outlet
} t_diff;

// Prototypes for methods: you need a method for each message you want to respond to
void *diff_new(long value); // Object creation method
void diff_int(t_diff *diff, long value); // Method for message "int" in left inlet
void diff_inl(t_diff *diff, long value); // Method for message "int" in right inlet
void diff_bang(t_diff *diff); // Method for bang message
void diff_assist(t_diff *diff, Object *b, long msg, long arg, char *s); // Assistance method

void main(void)
{
    // set up our class: create a class definition
    setup((t_messlist **) &this_class, (method)diff_new, 0L, (short) sizeof(t_diff), 0L,
        A_DEFLONG, 0);
    addbang((method)diff_bang); // bind method "diff_bang" to the "bang" message
    addint((method)diff_int); // bind method "diff_int" to int's received in the
        // left inlet
    addinx((method)diff_inl,1); // bind method "diff_inl" to int's received in the
        // right inlet
    address((method)diff_assist, "assist",A_CANT,0); // bind method "diff_assist" to
        // the assistance message
    rescopy('STR#', ResourceID); // copy the assistance messages resource into Max's
        // temp file
    finder_addclass("All Objects", "diff_assist"); // add class to the New object list
}

/*****
diff_new(long value)

inputs: value -- the integer from the typed argument in the object box
description: creates a new instance of our class diff.
Called once when the external object is loaded.
returns: pointer to new instance
*****/

void *diff_new(long value)
{
    t_diff *diff;

    diff = (t_diff *)newobject(this_class); // Create the new instance
    diff->d_valright = value; // Initialize the values
    diff->d_valleft = 0;
    diff->d_valtotal = value;
    diff->d_out = intout(diff); // Create our outlet
    intin(diff,1); // Create the right inlet
    return(diff); // Must return a pointer to the new instance
}

```

```

/*****
diff_int(t_diff *a, long value)

inputs:      diff - pointer to t_diff object
             value - value received in the inlet
description: subtracts the right value with the incoming value. Stores the new left inlet
             value as well as the difference and outputs the difference.
returns:     nothing
*****/

void diff_int(t_diff *diff, long value)
{
    diff->d_valleft[] = value; // Store the value received in the left inlet
    diff->d_valtotal[] = diff->d_valleft[] - diff->d_valright[]; // Subtracts right from the left
    diff_bang(diff); // Call bang method right away since it's the left inlet
}

/*****
diff_inl(t_diff *diff, long value)

inputs: diff -- pointer to our object
        value -- value received in the inlet
description: stores the new right value, calculates and stores the
            new difference between the left and right value
returns:     nothing
*****/

void diff_inl(t_diff *diff, long value)
{
    diff->d_valright = value; // Store the value
    diff->d_valtotal = diff->d_valleft - value; // Update new difference
}

/*****
diff_bang(t_diff *a)

inputs:      diff -- pointer to our object
description: method called when bang is received: it outputs the current
            sum of the left and right values
returns:     nothing
*****/

void diff_bang(t_diff *diff)
{
    outlet_int(diff->d_out, diff->d_valtotal); // simply put out the current total
}

/*****
void diff_assist(a, b, msg, arg, s)

inputs:      diff - pointer to t_diff object
             b - pointer to the t_diff object's box
             msg - specifies whether request for inlet or outlet info
             arg - selected inlet or outlet number
             s - destination for assistance string
description: method called when assist message is received: it outputs the correct
            assistance message string to the patcher window
returns:     nothing
*****/

void diff_assist(t_diff *diff, Object *b, long msg, long arg, char *s)
{
    // copy the appropriate message to the destination string
    assist_string(ResourceID, msg, arg, 1, 3, s);
}

```

Figure 3 Source code for diff\_assist object

## The **minimum** object: Float, Atom, and list

---

Thus far, the only data type we have been using is an integer type, namely long. In this section, we'll introduce the float data type, the Atom data type, and the list, which is an array of Atoms.

The float data type is similar to long except that it involves floating-point numbers. Max provides macros and functions to handle floats very similar to longs, e.g., to add left inlets you would use:

```
addint(long_method);
```

for inlet that accepts long and use:

```
addfloat(float_method);
```

for inlet that accepts float.

An Atom is a special data type (a structure) that allows any of the four data types (long, float, Symbol, Object) used in Max to be stored. Here is how it is defined:

```
union word      /* union for packing any data type */
{
  long w_long;
  float w_float;
  Symbol *w_sym;
  Object *w_obj;
};

typedef struct atom // and an atom which is a typed datum
{
  short a_type; // from the defs below
  union word a_w;
} Atom;
```

The struct member `a_type` specifies what type of data is stored in `a_w`, and it could be any of the following:

```
#define A_NOTHING 0 // ends the type list
#define A_LONG 1 // Type-checked integer argument
#define A_FLOAT 2 // Type-checked float argument
#define A_SYM 3 // Type-checked symbol argument
#define A_OBJ 4 // for argtype lists; passes the value of sym
#define A_DEFLONG 5 // long but defaults to zero
#define A_DEFFLOAT 6 // float, same default
#define A_DEFSYM 7 // symbol, defaults to ""
```

A list in Max is simply an array of Atoms. A list will be used if you declare a method to receive its arguments with `A_GIMME`, typically in either the setup function:

```
setup(&class, (method)minimum_new, 0L, (short)sizeof(Minimum), 0L, A_GIMME, A_NOTHING);
```

or a method that responds to the “list” message:

```
address((method)minimum_list, "list", A_GIMME, A_NOTHING);
```

Then your method, `minimum_list` in the example above, will be passed a list. This is done by `argc` (`short`) and `argv` (`Atom *`). `argc` is the number of Atoms and `argv` points to the first Atom in the array. Here is an example:

```
void minimum_list(Minimum *x, Symbol *s, short argc, Atom *argv)
```

The Symbol `*s` contains the message itself (in this case, “list”). The object **minimum** illustrates use of these data types (see Figure 4).

```

/* minimum.c -- output the minimum of a group of numbers ----- */
// From the Max 3.5 distribution. Slightly modified by IF 97/04/02
// For PowerPC only 98/01/14 IF
// Topics covered: floats, Atoms, lists

#include "ext.h"

#define MAXSIZE 32
#define ResourceID 3008

typedef struct minimum
{
    struct object m_ob;
    Atom m_args[MAXSIZE];
    long m_count;
    short m_incount;
    short m_outtype;
    void *m_out;
} Minimum;

void *class;
void DoAtomMin(Atom *min, Atom *new);
void minimum_bang(Minimum *x);
void minimum_int(Minimum *x, long n);
void minimum_in1(Minimum *x, long n);
void minimum_float(Minimum *x, double f);
void minimum_ft1(Minimum *x, double f);
void minimum_list(Minimum *x, Symbol *s, short ac, Atom *av);
void minimum_assist(Minimum *x, void *b, long m, long a, char *s);
void *minimum_new(Symbol *s, short ac, Atom *av);

void main(void)
{
    setup((t_messlist **)&class, (method)minimum_new, 0L, (short)sizeof(Minimum),
        0L, A_GIMME, 0);
    addbang((method)minimum_bang);
    addint((method)minimum_int);
    addinx((method)minimum_in1, 1);
    addfloat((method)minimum_float);
    addftx((method)minimum_ft1, 1);
    address((method)minimum_list, "list", A_GIMME, 0);
    address((method)minimum_assist, "assist", A_CANT, 0);
    finder_addclass("Arith/Logic/Bitwise", "minimum");
    rescopy('STR#', ResourceID);
}

void DoAtomMin(Atom *min, Atom *new) // check to see if new minimum,
//depending on the data types
{
    if (min->a_type==A_NOTHING) // At startup set minimum
    {
        *min = *new;
        return;
    }
    if (min->a_type==A_FLOAT) // old is FLOAT
    {
        if (new->a_type==A_FLOAT) // new is FLOAT
        {
            if (new->a_w.w_float < min->a_w.w_float)
                min->a_w.w_float = new->a_w.w_float;
        }
        else //new is LONG, old is FLOAT
        {
            if ((float)new->a_w.w_long < min->a_w.w_float)
                min->a_w.w_float = (float)new->a_w.w_long;
        }
    }
    else // old is LONG
    {

```



```

    if (new->a_type==A_LONG) // new is LONG
    {
        if (new->a_w.w_long < min->a_w.w_long)
            min->a_w.w_long = new->a_w.w_long;
    }
    else // new is float, old is LONG
    {
        if ((long)new->a_w.w_float < min->a_w.w_long)
            min->a_w.w_long = (long)new->a_w.w_float;
    }
}

void minimum_bang(Minimum *x)
{
    register short i;
    Atom themin;
    long res;
    double fres;

    themin.a_type = A_NOTHING;
    for (i=0; i < x->m_count; i++) // check if any of the input is a new minimum
        DoAtomMin(&tthemmin,x->m_args+i);
    if (x->m_outtype==A_LONG)
    {
        if (themin.a_type==A_LONG)
            res = themin.a_w.w_long;
        else
            res = (long)themin.a_w.w_float;
        outlet_int(x->m_out,res);
    }
    else
    {
        if (themin.a_type==A_FLOAT)
            fres = themin.a_w.w_float;
        else
            fres = (float)themin.a_w.w_long;
        outlet_float(x->m_out,fres);
    }
}

void minimum_int(Minimum *x, long n)
{
    SETLONG(x->m_args,n);
    minimum_bang(x);
}

void minimum_in1(Minimum *x, long n)
{
    SETLONG(x->m_args+1,n);
    x->m_count = 2;
}

void minimum_float(Minimum *x, double f)
{
    SETFLOAT(x->m_args,f);
    minimum_bang(x);
}

void minimum_ft1(Minimum *x, double f)
{
    SETFLOAT(x->m_args+1,f);
    x->m_count = 2;
}

void minimum_list(Minimum *x, Symbol *s, short ac, Atom *av)
{
    register short i;

    if (ac >= MAXSIZE)
        ac = MAXSIZE - 1;
    for (i=0; i < ac; i++,av++)
    {
        if (av->a_type==A_LONG)
            SETLONG(x->m_args+i,av->a_w.w_long);
        else if (av->a_type==A_FLOAT)

```

```

        SETFLOAT(x->m_args+i,av->a_w.w_float);
    }
    x->m_count = ac;
    minimum_bang(x);
}

void minimum_assist(Minimum *x, void *b, long m, long a, char *s)
{
    assist_string(ResourceID, m, a, 1, 3, s);
}

void *minimum_new(Symbol *s, short ac, Atom *av)
{
    Minimum *x;

    x = (Minimum *)newobject(class);
    x->m_count = 2;
    if (ac)
    {
        x->m_args[1] = *av;    // initialize with the first argument
        if (av->a_type==A_LONG)
        {
            x->m_args[0].a_type = x->m_outtype = A_LONG;
            x->m_out = intout(x);
            x->m_args[0].a_w.w_long = 0;
            intin(x, 1);
        }
        else if (av->a_type==A_FLOAT)
        {
            x->m_args[0].a_type = x->m_outtype = A_FLOAT;
            x->m_out = floatout(x);
            x->m_args[0].a_w.w_float = 0;
            floatin(x, 1);
        }
    }
    else // if no argument, set to a default
    {
        x->m_outtype = A_LONG;
        intin(x,1);
        x->m_out = intout(x);
        SETLONG(x->m_args + 1, 0L);
        SETLONG(x->m_args, 0L);
    }
    return (x);
}

```

Figure 4. Source code for the minimum object

## More Atoms and list

---

Max uses Atoms when passing messages between objects. If your object is going to be able to send a list out of its outlet, it will have to use a list of Atoms. Likewise, if you wish to receive lists, or more than 7 typed data in arguments from your object's box in the Max patcher, you will again have to deal with Atoms. Remember, Atoms are simply a struct that have a field of type union that allows them to contain different types of data.

It is now necessary to examine the structure of a message in Max. Consider the following message box:

```
play 100 200 2.5 stop
```

This message box contains 5 items, the symbol "play", the long integers 100 and 200, the float 2.5, and finally the symbol "stop". If this message is sent to your object, your object will actually receive the message "play", followed by a list of 4 atoms containing 100, 200, 2.5 and "stop". In other words, "play" is the message and the remaining items are its arguments. One way to make your object understand this message is to use `address( )` in its main function.

```
address(max_play, "play", A_LONG, A_LONG, A_FLOAT, A_SYM, 0); // bind method max-play to the
"play" message"
```

or with optional arguments, so that if some of the arguments are not specified by the user, the object will set them to a default values:

```
address(max_play, "play", A_DEFLONG, A_DEFLONG, A_DEFFLOAT, A_DEFSYM, 0);
```

But this approach requires that you always have two longs, a float and a symbol in the right order. You are also limited to a total of seven arguments using this declaration method.

There is another way for your object to receive messages and their arguments. When you declare a method to receive its arguments with `A_GIMME`, the arguments will be passed to your object in an `argc`, `argv` list. More about this `argc`, `argv` stuff later.

In order to tell Max to give you all of the arguments in a message, you bind your method to the message in your main function with the Max function `address`. For example, to bind the method `atoms_play` with the above message you would write in your main function:

```
address(atoms_play, "play", A_GIMME, 0); // bind method "atoms_play" to the "play" message"
```

This call binds the method `atoms_play` to the message "play". Whenever the object receives the message "play", Max will call the method `atoms_play` and pass it the message and a list of arguments.

`A_GIMME` tells Max to pass the message and its arguments without typechecking them. You are now responsible for typechecking them yourself.

You now need to write a method that will be able to receive this message and its arguments. The method `atoms_play` would be declared as:

```
void *atoms_play(Example *a, Symbol *mess, int argc, Atom *argv)
```

In this function declaration, `a` is a pointer to your object, `mess` is pointer to the message that called this method (in this example the, "play" message). The integer

argc is the number of arguments contained in the atom list and argv is a pointer to an array of atoms containing the actual arguments. Up to 65,536 arguments can be received by a method.

If your object receives the message “play 100 200 2.5 stop”, Max will call your play function. Your atoms\_play function will receive a pointer to the symbol “play” in mess, the integer 4 in argc, and finally a pointer to a list of atoms containing the values 100 200 2.5 “stop”. The code in Figure 5 shows you how to typecheck and access the data in the atom list.

```
#define MAX_ARGS 20

typedef struct example          // data structure for this object
{
    Object a_ob;
    Atom a_list[MAX_ARGS]; // array of Atoms: list
    int a_size;           // number of Atoms in the list
} Example;

void *atoms_play(Example *a,int argc, Atom *argv)
{
    int i;

    a->a_size = argc;
    if (a->a_size > MAX_ARGS)
        a->a_size = MAX_ARGS;

    for(i = 0; i < a->a_size; i++)
        switch(argv[i].a_type) // type check each argument
        {
            case A_LONG:
                SETLONG(a->a_list + i, argv[i].a_w.w_long);
                post("argument %ld is a long: %ld", (long) i,argv[i].a_w.w_long);
                break;
            case A_FLOAT:
                SETFLOAT(a->a_list + i, argv[i].a_w.w_float);
                post("argument %ld is a float: %f", (long) i, argv[i].a_w.w_float);
                break;
            case A_SYM:
                SETSYM(a->a_list + i, argv[i].a_w.w_sym);
                post("argument %ld is a symbol: %s", (long) i,
                    argv[i].a_w.w_sym->s_name);
                break;
        }
    }
}
```

**Figure 5. Type checking an argc, argv list of atoms**

This example receives a list of arguments from Max whenever the object receives the “play” message. It then checks the type of each Atom in the argv list and stores it into an internal array of Atoms. Finally, it reports to the Max window the type and value of the argument.

When working an Atom, you must be able to correctly access its various fields. In Figure 5, we examine the a\_type field of an Atom to determine the type of data contained in the union. As mentioned above a\_type will be either A\_LONG, A\_FLOAT, or A\_SYM. These constants are declared in the Max #include file “ext\_mess.h”.

Notice that we use the struct notation argv[i].a\_type to access the a\_type field. It is also possible to use the pointer argv to access the field, i.e., (argv + i)->a\_type. You may choose whatever style suits you best.

In the above example, if the Atom contains a long (i.e., a\_type == A\_LONG), we want to store the argument into our internal Atom list, a\_list as a long. Likewise, if (a\_type == A\_FLOAT) we would store it as a float, and if (a\_type == A\_SYM) we

would store the argument as a symbol. Max provides several macros for storing an item into an atom. These are:

```
SETLONG(Atom *a, long number);
SETFLOAT(Atom *a, float number);
SETSYM(Atom *a, Symbol *s);
```

Here are the current macro definitions as they appear in Max #include file "ext\_mess.h".

```
#define SETSYM(ap, x) ((ap)->a_type = A_SYM, (ap)->a_w.w_sym = (x))
#define SETLONG(ap, x) ((ap)->a_type = A_LONG, (ap)->a_w.w_long = (x))
#define SETFLOAT(ap, x) ((ap)->a_type = A_FLOAT, (ap)->a_w.w_float = (x))
```

These macros accomplish two things. First the macro sets the `a_type` field of the Atom to the correct type. This means that `SETLONG` will set the `a_type` field of the Atom to `A_LONG`, `SETFLOAT` sets it to `A_FLOAT`, and `SETSYM` sets it to `A_SYM`. The macro then puts the long, float, or the pointer to the symbol into the union `a_w`. Remember that a pointer to the symbol is stored in the union, and not the actual symbol.

In the above example we used the following line of code to call `SETLONG`:

```
SETLONG(a->a_list + i, argv[i].a_w.w_long);
```

In this call, `a` is a pointer to our Object. We use it to access the array of Atoms called `a_list` that is in our object's data structure. Since `SETLONG` requires a pointer to an Atom, we must give it a pointer to the  $i$ th Atom in the array. When  $i == 0$ , `a->a_list + i` is a pointer to the first Atom in the array `a_list`. Likewise, if  $i == 5$ , `a->a_list + i` is a pointer to the 6th Atom in the array.

Notice how we access the long field of the union `a_w` in the `argv` Atom list. We write `argv[i]` to access the  $i$ th Atom in the `argv` list. `argv[i].a_w` accesses the union `a_w` field of the struct atom. Finally, `argv[i].a_w.w_long` accesses the long value stored in the union `a_w`. We first access the atom, then the union, and finally the data.

Another way of putting a long value into an Atom is:

```
a->a_list[i].a_type = A_LONG;
a->a_list[i].a_w.w_long = 100;
```

Using this method you are responsible for setting the `a_type` field yourself.

You can use `SETFLOAT` the same way as `SETLONG`. `SETFLOAT` will set the `a_type` field to `A_FLOAT`, and place the float value in the float field of the union `a_w` (i.e., `a_w.w_float`). To access a float field of an Atom in the `argv` list in the above example, we write:

```
argv[i].a_w.w_float OR (argv + i)->a_w.w_float
```

Likewise, to access this value in our internal array of Atoms we write:

```
a->a_list[i].a_w.w_float OR (a->a_list + i)->a_w.w_float
```

When you want to store a symbol into an Atom, or access a symbol already in an Atom, you must remember that a pointer to the symbol is stored in the Symbol field of the union `a_w`. The field in the union `a_w` is defined as Symbol `*w_sym`. Therefore, in order to store a symbol into an Atom you store the pointer to the symbol and not the symbol itself. Likewise, when you access a symbol, you need to access what the pointer in the Symbol field points to. In other words, to get at a symbol, there is yet another stage of indirection.

In the above example, we use SETSYM to set the pointer to the symbol contained in the argv list into our internal Atom list a\_list. Therefore, SETSYM wants a pointer to the symbol as its second argument.

```
SETSYM(a->a_list + i, argv[i].a_w.w_sym);
```

Notice how we post the actual symbol to the Max window. We use the following post function:

```
post("argument %ld is a symbol: %s", (long) i, argv[i].a_w.w_sym->s_name);
```

Note that in order to access our actual symbol, we must access what the symbol pointer points to:

```
argv[i].a_w.w_sym->s_name
```

In the Max #include file "ext\_mess.h" a symbol is defined as the following struct:

```
struct symbol
{
  char *s_name;          /* name */
  struct object *s_thing; /* possible binding to an object */
} Symbol;
```

Therefore, in order to access a symbol in an Atom, first access the Atom, then the union a\_w, then the w\_sym field and finally the s\_name field of the Symbol, i.e., argv[i].a\_w.w\_sym->s\_name.

Now that you have a list of Atoms in your object you can send it to an outlet. To do this you need to create a list outlet using the Max function:

```
Outlet *listout (void *owner)
```

In our example we would create the list outlet in the object's creation function example\_new.

```
a->a_list_outlet = listout(Example *x);
```

To send the internal list a\_list out this outlet, one would use the Max function:

```
void *outlet_list(Outlet *x, Symbol *msg, int argc, Atom *argv);
```

We would call this function with the following arguments:

```
outlet_list(a->a_list_outlet, "list", a->a_size, &(a->a_list));
```

where a->a\_list\_outlet is a pointer to the outlet we created with listout, "list" is the message to be sent, a->a\_size is the number of Atoms in the internal Atom list, and &(a->a\_list) is a pointer to the first Atom in this list.

## The **atoms** object:

---

Notice the address functions:

```
address(atoms_list,"play",A_GIMME,0); // bind method "atoms_list" to "play" message
address(atoms_list,"list",A_GIMME,0); // bind method "atoms_list" to "list" message
```

Both of these lines of code cause the function `atoms_list` to be called when the object receives either the “play” message or the “list” message. Also notice that we requested that Max send to our object the arguments of the message as a list of atoms. This was accomplished by using `A_GIMME`.

### The **list** Method

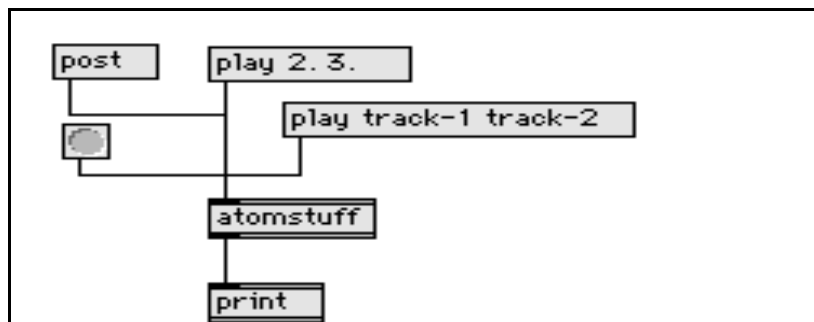
This method receives a list of atoms from Max that contain the items of the list sent to your object. The number of items (or atoms) in the list is in `argc`. The actual atoms are stored in `argv`. Actually these are pointers to atoms. We then check each atom for its type before we put it in our list. The list method then sends the list of atoms out its outlet using `outlet_list`. Notice we use `&(a->a_list)` to point to our list of Atoms.

### The **bang** Method

When our object receives the bang message, it simply sends the current contents of its list out its outlet using the `outlet_list` function.

### The **post** Method (Zicarelli 1996, 71)

When the object receives the “bang” message, it posts the contents of its Atom list to the Max window using the function `postatom` (Zicarelli 1996, 72). Here is how to post a list of atoms:



## The **mymetro** object: Clock routines

---

This example uses the **Clock** object (Zicarelli 1996, 60–3), which allows scheduling in Max. The routines associated with the **Clock** objects allows events to happen in the future. This is accomplished by assigning a function to be executed when the clock goes off and indicate when the clock is to go off. More specifically:

1. Use `clock_new()` to create a **Clock** object and assign the function to be executed when it goes off.
2. Use `clock_delay()` to schedule the execution of the clock function at absolute time or relative time, respectively. Zicarelli recommends using `clock_delay` rather than `clock_set` (Zicarelli 1996, 61).
3. When the **Clock** is no longer needed, it should be removed with `freeobject` function.

```

/* Defines the object "mymetro" which is similar to the standard
"metro" Max object. The metro object has 2 inlets and 2 outlets.

"bang" in left inlet starts metronome
"stop" in left inlet stops metronome
integer in right inlet sets tempo in ms

left output sends bangs at each metronome interval
right outlet outputs current time

The object also posts messages to the Max window indicating the current state of
mymetro.
*/

#include "ext.h" // Required for all Max external objects

#define ResourceID 3999 /* resource ID# for assistance strings */
#define DEFAULT_TEMPO 1000
#define MIN_TEMPO 40

typedef struct _metro /* data structure for this object */
{
    t_object m_ob; /* must always be the first field; used by Max */
    void *m_clock; /* pointer to clock object */
    long m_interval; /* tempo in milliseconds */
    void *m_bang_outlet; /* pointers to bang outlet */
    void *m_time_outlet; /* pointers to time outlet */
} t_metro;

void *metro_new(long value);
void metro_inl(t_metro *m, long value);
void metro_bang(t_metro *m);
void metro_assist(t_metro *m, t_object *b, long msg, long arg, char *s);
void metro_free(t_metro *m);
void metro_stop(t_metro *m);
void clock_function(t_metro *m);

void *class; // Required. Global pointing to this class

void main(void)
{
    /* set up our class: create a class definition */
    setup((t_messlist **) &class, (method)metro_new, (method)metro_free,
        (short)sizeof(t_metro), 0L, A_DEFLONG, 0);

    /* bind method "metro_bang" to the "bang" message */
    addbang((method)metro_bang);

```



```

/* bind method "metro_in1" to int's received in the right inlet */
addinx((method)metro_in1,1);

/* bind method "metro_stop" to the "stop" message" */
address((method)metro_stop,"stop",0);

/* bind method "metro_assist" to the assistance message" */
address((method)metro_assist,"assist",A_CANT,0);

/* copy the assistance messages resource into the Max temp file */
rescopy('STR#',ResourceID);

/* add class to the New object list */
finder_addclass("All Objects","mymetro");
}

/*****
metro_new(long value)

inputs:   value - the integer from the typed in argument in the object box
description: creates a new instance of this class metro.
returns:   pointer to new instance
*****/
void *metro_new(long value)
{
    t_metro *m;

    m = (t_metro *)newobject(class); // create the new instance and return a pointer to it

    if (value > MIN_TEMPO) // initialize
    {
        m->m_interval = value; // save tempo arguement from box
        post("mymetro tempo set to %ld", value);
    }
    else
    {
        m->m_interval = DEFAULT_TEMPO; // set to default tempo
        post("mymetro set to default tempo of %ld ms", DEFAULT_TEMPO);
    }
    m->m_clock = clock_new(m, (method)clock_function); // create the metronome clock

    intin(m, 1); // create the right inlet
    m->m_time_outlet = intout(m); // create right outlet for time
    m->m_bang_outlet = bangout(m); // create left outlet for ticks

    return(m);
}

/*****
metro_in1(t_metro *m, long value)

inputs:m    -- pointer to our object
        value -- value received in the inlet
description: stores the new metronome tempo value
*****/
void metro_in1(t_metro *m, long value)
{
    m->m_interval = value; // store the new metronome interval
    post("metronome tempo changed to %ld", value);
}

```

```

/*****
void metro_bang(t_metro *m)

inputs:  m -- pointer to our object
description: method called when bang is received: it starts the metronome
*****/
void metro_bang(t_metro *m)
{
    long time;

    time = gettimeofday(); // get current time
    clock_delay(m->m_clock, 0L); // set clock to go off now
    post("clock started at %ld", time);
}

/*****
void metro_stop(t_metro *m)

inputs:  m -- pointer to our object
description: method called when myMetro receives "stop" message. Stops the metronome
*****/
void metro_stop(t_metro *m)
{
    long time;

    time = gettimeofday(); // get current time
    clock_unset(m->m_clock); // remove the clock routine from the scheduler
    outlet_int(m->m_time_outlet, time);
    post("metronome stopped at %ld", time);
}

/*****
void clock_function(t_metro *m)

inputs:  m -- pointer to our object
description: method called when clock goes off: it outputs a bang to be sent to the
           outlet and resets the clock to go off after the next interval.
*****/
void clock_function(t_metro *m)
{
    long time;

    time = gettimeofday(); // get current time
    clock_delay(m->m_clock, m->m_interval); // schedule another metronome click
    outlet_bang(m->m_bang_outlet); // send out a bang
    outlet_int(m->m_time_outlet, time); // send current time to right outlet
    post("clock_function %ld", time);
}

/*****
metro_free(t_metro *m)

inputs:  m -- pointer to our object
description: method called when t_metro objects is destroyed. It is used to free memory
           allocated to the clock.
*****/
void metro_free(t_metro *m)
{
    clock_unset(m->m_clock); // remove the clock routine from the scheduler
    clock_free(m->m_clock); // free the clock memory
}

void metro_assist(t_metro *m, Object *b, long msg, long arg, char *s)
{
    // copy the appropriate message to the destination string
    assist_string(ResourceID, msg, arg, 1L, 3L, s);
}

```

Figure 6. Source code for mymetro.c

## The **sgate** object: Using Proxies to create and control Inlets

This example uses the **sgte** object (Andrés Hidalgo/Ichiro Fujinaga 2002), a sequential gate which uses proxies to create and control the use of inlets. Proxies are “intermediary objectst” that intercept messages arriving at an inlet before your object sees them. Then after storing the number of the receiving inlet, the Proxy sends the message on to you, where you can check this inlet number and take appropriate action. One creates aProxy object with proxy\_new, but unlike inlets and outlets one must explicitly get rid of a Proxy (using freeobject) in your objects free function.

Note: you cannot mix regular inlets and Proxies together in the same object. (Zicarelli, Writing Max/MSP externals).

Here is the code.

```

/* *****
// sgate.c – Software code by[]Andrés Hidalgo and IF 02/09/01
// For PowerPC only
// Sequential Gate using Proxies
//
//
//*****
// Description:
//
// A non-zero integer in its left inlet will open
// the gate's outlets, from the left outlet (outlet 1),
// to the numbered outlet matching the integer received.
// It takes an argument for the amount of outlets.
// When open, this sgate will respond to either a 1 or 0 messages
// received in its right inlet:
// a 1 will bang out a 1 to selected outlets
// a 0 will bang out a 0 to selected outlets
//
//*****/

#include "ext.h" // Required for all Max external objects
#include "string.h" // Required for string copy
#define MAXSIZE 250 // Maximun number of outlets
#define ResourceID 3997 // Resource id number

typedef struct _sgate // Data structure for this object
{
    t_object s_ob; // Must always be the first field; used by Max
    long s_valleft; // Variable for ints in Left inlet
    long s_valright; // Variable for ints in Right inlet
    void *s_out[MAXSIZE]; // Array pointer to outlet, need one for each outlet
    long s_n_out; // Variable for keeping count number of outlets
    void *s_proxy[1]; // 3 inlets requires 2 proxies
    long s_inletNumber; // where proxy will put inlet number
} t_sgate;

void *this_class; // Required. Global pointing to this class

// Prototypes for methods: need a method for each incoming message
void *sgate_new(long value); // Object creation method
void DoGate(t_sgate *sgate); // Method for sending out int 1 to outlets
void sgate_int(t_sgate *sgate, long value); // Method for message "int" in left inlet

void sgate_inl(t_sgate *sgate, long n); // Method for message "int" in right inlet

void sgate_bang(t_sgate *sgate); // Method for bang message
void sgate_clear(t_sgate *sgate); // Method clear
void sgate_assist(t_sgate *sgate, t_object *b, long m, long a, char *dstString);

//void sgate_l(t_sgate *sgate, long n);
void *sgate_free(t_sgate *sgate);

void main(void)
{

```

```

// Set up our class: create a class definition
setup((t_messlist **) &this_class, (method)sgate_new, (method)sgate_free,
(short)sizeof(t_sgate), 0L, A_DEFLONG, 0);

    addint((method)sgate_int); // bind method "sgate_int" to int received in left inlet
    addbang((method)sgate_bang); // bind method "sgate_bang" to the "bang" message
    address((method)sgate_assist, "assist", A_CANT, 0); // bind method "sgate_assist" to the
assistance message
    rescopy('STR#', ResourceID); // copy the assistance messages resource into Max's temp file
    finder_addclass("Arith/Logic/Bitwise", "sgate"); // add class to the New object list in Max
    address((method)sgate_clear, "clear", 0); // bind method "sgate_clear" to the "clear"
message"
}

/*****
void *sgate_new(long value)
creates a new instance of class sgate.
*****/
void *sgate_new(long value)
{
    int i;
    t_sgate *sgate;

    // create the new instance and return a pointer to it
    sgate = (t_sgate *)newobject(this_class);

    /* creates proxy objects from right to left */

    sgate->s_proxy[0] = proxy_new(sgate, 1, &sgate->s_inletNumber);

    for (i = 0; i < value; i++) //create multiple outlets
        sgate->s_out[i] = intout(sgate);

    sgate->s_n_out = value; // keeps track of number of outlets
    return(sgate); // must return a pointer
}

/*****
void sgate_int(t_sgate *sgate, long value)
inputs:sgate -- pointer to our object
       value -- value received in left inlet
description: -- stores the int received in left inlet
*****/
void sgate_int(t_sgate *sgate, long value)
{
    post("message arrived at inlet %ld", sgate->s_inletNumber);
    post("value %ld", value);
    if (sgate->s_inletNumber == 1)
        sgate_inl(sgate, value);
    else
        sgate->s_valleft = value; //store int received in left inlet
}

/*****
void sgate_inl(t_sgate *sgate, long n)
inputs:sgate -- pointer to our object
       n -- value received in right inlet
description: -- responds to either a 1 or 0 int received in the right inlet
            if 1 is received, it calls method DoGate;
            if 0 is received, it calls method sgate_bang
*****/
void sgate_inl(t_sgate *sgate, long n)
{
    int x = 1;
    int y = 0;

```

```

    sgate->s_valright = n; // store int received in right inlet
    post("val %ld", n);
    post("s_valright %ld", n);
    if(n == x) // call DoGate if n == 1
        DoGate(sgate);
    else
        if (n == y) // call sgate_bang if n == 0
            sgate_bang(sgate);
}

/*****
void sgate_bang(t_sgate *sgate)

inputs:  sgate -- pointer to our object

description: -- method called when an int 0 is received
            in the right inlet: it outputs a 0 to matching outlets
*****/
void sgate_bang(t_sgate *sgate)
{
    register short i;
    for(i = 0; i < sgate->s_valleft; i++) //send out 0 to matching outlets
        outlet_int(sgate->s_out[sgate->s_n_out - (i + 1)], 0);
}

/*****
void DoGate(t_sgate *sgate)

inputs: sgate -- pointer to our object

description: -- method called when an int 1 is received
            in the right inlet: it outputs a 1 to matching outlets
*****/
void DoGate(t_sgate *sgate)
{
    short i;
    for(i = 0; i < sgate->s_valleft; i++) //send out 1 to matching outlets
        outlet_int(sgate->s_out[sgate->s_n_out - (i + 1)], 1);
}

/*****
void sgate_assist(t_sgate *sgate, t_object *b, long m, long a, char *dstString)

description: method called when assist message is received: it outputs the correct
            assistance message string to the max window
*****/
void sgate_assist(t_sgate *sgate, t_object *b, long m, long a, char *dstString)
{
    if(m == 1)
        assist_string(ResourceID, m, a, 1, 3, dstString, a + 1); // for both inlets
    else
        assist_string(ResourceID, m, 0L, 1, 3, dstString, a + 1); //for multiple outlets
}

/*
The following is an alternative way of doing assist messages,
it needs to have #include "string.h" in the source code;
and MSL C.PPC.Lib files added in the project window
*/
#if 0
    if(m == 1)
    {

```

```
        switch(a)
        {
            case 0:
                strcpy(dstString, "l inlet");
                break;
            case 1:
                strcpy(dstString, " r inlet");
                break;
        }
    }
    else if(m ==2)
    {
        strcpy(dstString, "outlet");
    }
#endif
}

//-----
void sgate_clear(t_sgate *sgate)
{
    register short i;
    post("message arrived at inlet %ld", sgate->s_inletNumber);

    for(i = 0; i < sgate->s_n_out; i++)
        outlet_int(sgate->s_out[sgate->s_n_out - (i + 1)], 0);
    post("all outlets cleared");
}

//-----
void *sgate_free(t_sgate *sgate)
{
    freeobject(sgate->s_proxy[0]);
    return(sgate);
}
```

Figure 6. Source code for sgate.c

## Writing MSP External Objects

Creating a MSP external object is very similar to creating a Max externals. There are two additional methods you need to create: **perform method** and **dsp method**. To create a CodeWarrior project, follow the instruction for Max externals described above **Creating a PPC Max External Object (shared library) with CodeWarrior Pro**. Make sure to add the Max Audio Library in Step 8.

The reference material can be found in (Zicarelli, D. 1998. *How to write MSP externals*.) An explanation of how to setup an MSP external is given below using a very simple object called **thru~**, which simply outputs the input. (See Figure 7 for the complete source code.)

```

/* thru~.c
** one channel thru object (a minimal MSP object)
** 99/04/05 IF
** 00/02/21 IF mono only, see thru2~ for the stereo version
*/
#include "ext.h" // Required for all Max external objects
#include "z_dsp.h" // Required for all MSP external objects

void *thru_class; // Required. Global pointing to this class

typedef struct _thru
{
    t_pxobject x_obj;
} t_thru;

void *thru_new(void);
t_int *thru_perform(t_int *w);
void thru_dsp(t_thru *x, t_signal **sp, short *count);

void main(void)
{
    setup((t_messlist **)&thru_class, (method)thru_new, (method)dsp_free,
          (short)sizeof(t_thru), 0L, 0);
    address((method)thru_dsp, "dsp", A_CANT, 0);
    dsp_initclass();
}

void *thru_new(void)
{
    t_thru *x = (t_thru *)newobject(thru_class);
    dsp_setup((t_pxobject *)x, 1); // left inlet
    outlet_new((t_pxobject *)x, "signal"); // left outlet
    return (x);
}

void thru_dsp(t_thru *x, t_signal **sp, short *count)
{
    dsp_add(thru_perform, 3, sp[0]->s_vec, sp[1]->s_vec, sp[0]->s_n);
}

t_int *thru_perform(t_int *w)
{
    t_float *inL = (t_float *) (w[1]);
    t_float *outL = (t_float *) (w[2]);
    int n = (int) (w[3]);

    while (n--)
        *outL++ = *inL++;
    return (w + 4);
}

```

Figure 7. Source code for thru~.c

## The `thru~` object: Initialization

---

In addition to the required “ext.h,” “z\_dsp.h” must be included. z\_dsp.h and other MSP-specific header files can be found in the **MSP #includes** folder, which should be placed somewhere below the folder containing the Max application. One place to put the **MSP #includes** folder is inside **MAX #includes** folder

```
#include "ext.h" // Required for all Max external objects
#include "z_dsp.h" // Required for all MSP external objects
```

The data structure to define a data structure for the MSP object is different from Max objects. The first field in the struct is the `t_pxobject` instead of the `t_object`. The following is the data structure for the `thru~` object:

```
typedef struct _thru // Data structure for this object
{
    t_pxobject x_obj;
} t_thru;
```

A minimum of three functions must be called in the `main()`. The first is the `setup()`, which is same as the call in the Max objects, except that `dsp_free` must be passed as parameter to free memory. The message binding function, `address()` is called to bind the system message “dsp” to your dsp method, which will add your perform method to the DSP chain. The message “dsp” is sent to your object whenever the user starts DAC or ADC. Finally, `dsp_initclass()` is called to transparently add other methods to your object. As in Max objects, if there are other messages to be bound, it should be done here.

```
void main(void)
{
    setup(&thru_class, thru_new, (method)dsp_free, (short)sizeof(t_thru), 0L, 0);
    address((method)thru_dsp, "dsp", A_CANT, 0);
    dsp_initclass();
}
```

## The `thru~` object: New instance creation

---

In the instance creation function, `thru_new()`, a new object is created via the `newobject()` function. Inlet that accepts signal data is created by the `dsp_setup()` function. This function must be called even if your object does not have any signal inlet, in which case 0 should be passed as the second parameter. The signal outlets are created using the `outlet_new()` function. Use multiple call to `outlet_new()` to create additional outlets. Non-signal inlets can be created using the standard functions (e.g. `intin`, `floatin`, `inlet_new`).

```
void *thru_new(void)
{
    t_thru *x = (t_thru *)newobject(thru_class);
    dsp_setup((t_pxobject *)x, 1); // left inlet
    outlet_new((t_pxobject *)x, "signal"); // left outlet
    return (x);
}
```

## The `thru~` object: The dsp method

---

The dsp method will be called via the “dsp” message from MSP when it is building the DSP call chain (when audio is turned on). Your task is to add your perform method to the chain using the `dsp_add()`. When MSP calls this function, it is passed the object, an array containing buffers to inlets and outlets defined, and another



array that indicates the number of connections to the inlets and outlets. Note that you must add a perform method even if no inlets and outlets are connected.

```
void thru_dsp(t_thru *x, t_signal **sp, short *count)
{
    dsp_add(thru_perform, 3, sp[0]->s_vec, sp[1]->s_vec, sp[0]->s_n);
}
```

The first parameter in `dsp_add()` is the name of your perform method, the second number indicates the number of arguments in the perform method, followed by the arguments, all of which must be the size of a pointer or a long and appears in your perform method as an array of `t_int`. The second parameter passed to the `dsp` method, `t_signal **sp`, is an array of pointers to `struct t_signal` (defined in `z_dsp.h`).

```
typedef struct _signal
{
    int s_n; // number of samples: Signal Vector Size
    t_sample *s_vec; // pointer to inlet/outlet buffer
    float s_sr; // sample rate
    struct _signal *s_next;
    struct _signal *s_nextused;
    short s_refcount;
    short s_zero;
} t_signal;
```

The array is ordered left to right for inlets then left to right for outlets.

## The `thru~` object: The perform method

---

The perform method is where the actual signal processing take place. The method is added to the DSP signal chain by the `dsp` method (see above) and will be repeatedly called as long as the audio is on.

```
t_int *thru_perform(t_int *w)
{
    t_float *inL = (t_float *) (w[1]);
    t_float *outL = (t_float *) (w[2]);
    int n = (int) (w[3]);

    while (n--)
        *outL++ = *inL++;
    return(w + 4);
}
```

The parameters passed to the perform method are typically pointers to buffers representing the inlets and outlets, and the size of the buffer, which is usually the Signal Vector Size (DSP Status).

## The `thru2~` object: Stereo version of `thru~`

---

Figure 8 is the source code for the `thru2~` object, which is the stereo version of the `thru~` object with two inlets and two outlets. Note that in the `thru2_new()`, a flag is set so that inlet and outlet points to two different memory locations.

```
x->x_obj.z_misc = Z_NO_INPLACE;
```

```

/* thru2~.c -- two channel thru object
** 99/04/05 IF
** 00/02/21 IF set x->x_obj.z_misc
*/
#include "ext.h" // Required for all Max external objects
#include "z_dsp.h" // Required for all MSP external objects

void *thru2_class;

typedef struct _thru2 // Data structure for this object
{
    t_pxobject x_obj;
} t_thru2;

void *thru2_new(void);
t_int *thru2_perform(t_int *w);
void thru2_dsp(t_thru2 *x, t_signal **sp, short *count);

void main(void)
{
    setup(&thru2_class, thru2_new, (method)dsp_free, (short)sizeof(t_thru2), 0L, 0);
    address((method)thru2_dsp, "dsp", A_CANT, 0);
    dsp_initclass();
}

void *thru2_new(void)
{
    t_thru2 *x = (t_thru2 *)newobject(thru2_class);
    dsp_setup((t_pxobject *)x, 2); // two inlets
    outlet_new((t_pxobject *)x, "signal"); // left outlet
    outlet_new((t_pxobject *)x, "signal"); // right outlet
    x->x_obj.z_misc = Z_NO_INPLACE;
    return (x);
}

t_int *thru2_perform(t_int *w)
{
    t_float *inL = (t_float *)w[1];
    t_float *inR = (t_float *)w[2];
    t_float *outL = (t_float *)w[3];
    t_float *outR = (t_float *)w[4];
    int n = (int)w[5];

    while (n--)
    {
        *outL++ = *inL++;
        *outR++ = *inR++;
    }
    return (w + 6);
}

void thru2_dsp(t_thru2 *x, t_signal **sp, short *count)
{
    dsp_add(thru2_perform, 5, sp[0]->s_vec, sp[1]->s_vec, sp[2]->s_vec,
            sp[3]->s_vec, sp[0]->s_n);
}

```

Figure 8. Source code for thru2~.c