details without changing the program interface, and that makes programs much easier to maintain.

Public or Private?

You can declare class members, whether they are data items or member functions, either in the public or the private section of a class. But because one of the main OOP precepts is to hide the data, data items normally go into the private section. The member functions that constitute the class interface go into the public section; otherwise, you can't call those functions from a program. As the Stock declaration shows, you also can put member functions in the private section. You can't call such functions directly from a program, but the public methods can use them. Typically, you use private member functions to handle implementation details that don't form part of the public interface.

You don't have to use the keyword private in class declarations, for that is the default access control for class objects:

class World
{
    float mass;       // private by default
    char name[20];    // private by default
public:
    void tellall(void);
    ... 
};

However, we'll explicitly use the private label in order to emphasize the concept of data hiding.

Classes and Structures

Class descriptions look much like structure declarations with the addition of member functions and the public and private visibility labels. In fact, C++ extends to structures the same features classes have. The only difference is that the default access type for a structure is public, whereas the default type for the class is private. C++ programmers