

# Inside STL: The array

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The C++ standard library `array` is just a C-style array wrapped inside a class so that it behaves like a normal C++ object instead of a wacky thing that undergoes decay.

```
template<typename T, size_t N>
class array
{
    T elements[N];
};
```

```
template<typename T>
class array<T, 0>
{
};
```

The only weird case is  $N = 0$ . You are allowed to create a zero-length `std::array`, but C++ does not allow zero-length C-style arrays. The zero-length `std::array` is just an empty class.

Visual Studio and the Windows debugger come with a visualizer:

```
0:000> dx a
a           : { size=5 } [Type: std::array<int,5>]
  [<Raw View>] [Type: std::array<int,5>]
  [0]         : 3 [Type: int]
  [1]         : 1 [Type: int]
  [2]         : 4 [Type: int]
  [3]         : 1 [Type: int]
  [4]         : 5 [Type: int]
```

Or you can just dig out the elements yourself.

```
0:000> ?? a
class std::array<int,5>
  +0x000 _Elems      : [5] 0n3
0:000> ?? a._Elems[1]
int 0n1
```

The `dt` command with the `-a` option (array) is handy for dumping C-style arrays.

```

0:000> ?? &a
class std::array<int,5> * 0x00000094`bed0f698
  +0x000 _Elems          : [5] 0n3
0:000> dt -a5 int 0x00000094`bed0f698
[0] @ 00000094`bed0f698
-----
0n3

[1] @ 00000094`bed0f69c
-----
0n1

[2] @ 00000094`bed0f6a0
-----
0n4

[3] @ 00000094`bed0f6a4
-----
0n1

[4] @ 00000094`bed0f6a8
-----
0n5

```

The simplicity of the `std::array` is a nice break from the complexity of `std::deque`.