Step-by-step Client-Side Networking

Step 1. Figure out what IP address and port to talk to. (getaddrinfo())

// returns 0 on success, negative number on failure
int getaddrinfo(const char *hostname, // hostname to lookup
    const char *servname, // service name
    const struct addrinfo *hints,  // desired output (optional)
    struct addrinfo **res); // results structure

struct addrinfo {
    int ai_flags; // additional flags
    int ai_family; // AF_INET, AF_INET6, AF_UNSPEC
    int ai_socktype; // SOCK_STREAM, SOCK_DGRAM, 0
    int ai_protocol; // IPPROTO_TCP, IPPROTO_UDP, 0
    size_t ai_addrlen; // length of socket addr in bytes
    struct sockaddr* ai_addr; // pointer to socket addr
    char* ai_canonname; // canonical name
    struct addrinfo* ai_next; // can have linked list of records
}

Step 2. Create a socket. (socket())

// returns file descriptor on success, -1 on failure (errno set)
int socket(int domain, // AF_INET, AF_INET6, etc.
           int type, // SOCK_STREAM, SOCK_DGRAM, etc.
           int protocol); // usually 0

Step 3. Connect to the server. (connect())

// returns 0 on success, -1 on failure (errno set)
int connect(int sockfd, struct sockaddr *serv_addr, socklen_t addrlen);

Step 4. Transfer data through the socket. (read() and write())

ssize_t read(int fd, void *buf, size_t count);

ssize_t write(int fd, void *buf, size_t count);

These are the same POSIX calls used for files, so remember to deal with partial reads/writes!

Step 5. Close the socket when done. (close())

int close(int fd);
Exercise 2
Fitting the Pieces Together. The following diagram depicts the basic skeleton of a C/C++ program for client-side networking, with arrows representing the flow of data between them. Fill in the names of the functions being called, and the arguments being passed. Then, for each arrow in the diagram, fill in the type and/or data that it represents.

1. \( \text{[Function]} \) (hostname, servname, \_, \_)
   - specify lookup hints
   - extract fields from result (IPv4 vs IPv6)

2. \( \text{[Function]} \) (\_, type, protocol)

3. \( \text{[Function]} \) (\_, \_, addrlen)

4. read(\_, buf, count)
   - write(\_, buf, count)

5. close(\_)