CMSC 330 Organization of Programming Languages

OCaml Higher Order Functions Map & Fold

Passing Functions as Arguments

You can pass functions as arguments

let plus3 x = x + 3 (* int -> int *)

twice plus3 5 = 11

The Map Function

map is a higher order function

$$\begin{array}{rcl} \text{map } f & [v1; v2; ...; vn] \\ & = & [f v1; f v2; ...; f vn] \end{array}$$

let add_one x = x + 1
let negate x = -x
map add_one [1; 2; 3] = [2; 3; 4]
map negate [9; -5; 0] = [-9; 5; 0]

How can we implement Map?

```
let rec map f l =
   match l with
   [] -> []
   | h::t -> (f h)::(map f t)
```

Implementing map

let rec map f l =
 match l with
 [] -> []
 | h::t -> (f h)::(map f t)

What is the type of map?

Implementing map

let rec map f l =
 match l with
 [] -> []
 | h::t -> (f h)::(map f t)

What is the type of map?

map, as a cartoon



map is included in the standard List module, i.e., as List.map

Quiz 4: What does this evaluate to?

map (fun
$$x \rightarrow x * 4$$
) [1;2;3]

- A. [1.0; 2.0; 3.0]
- B. [4.0; 8.0; 12.0]
- C. Error
- D. [4; 8; 12]

Quiz 4: What does this evaluate to?

map (fun
$$x \rightarrow x * 4$$
) [1;2;3]

- A. [1.0; 2.0; 3.0]
- B. [4.0; 8.0; 12.0]
- C. Error
- D. [4; 8; 12]

Quiz 5: Which function to use?

map ??? [1; 0; 3] = [true; false; true]

- A. fun x \rightarrow true
- B. fun $x \rightarrow x = 0$
- C. fun $x \rightarrow x != 0$
- D. fun $x \rightarrow x = (x != 0)$

map ??? [1; 0; 3] = [true; false; true]

A. fun $x \rightarrow true$ B. fun $x \rightarrow x = 0$ C. fun $x \rightarrow x != 0$ D. fun $x \rightarrow x = (x != 0)$ int bool

fold

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Two Recursive Functions

Sum a list of ints

Concatenate a list of strings

let rec concat l =
 match l with
 [] -> ""
 | h::t -> h ^ (concat t)

sum [1;2;3;4];;

-: int = 10

concat ["a";"b";"c"];;

Notice Anything Similar?

Sum a list of ints

```
let rec sum l =
  match l with
  [] -> 0
  | h::t -> (+) h (sum t)
```

Concatenate a list of strings

let rec concat l =
 match l with
 [] -> ""
 | h::t -> (^) h (concat t)

The fold Function

Sum a list of ints

Concatenate a list of strings:

```
let rec sum lst = let rec concat lst =
  match l with
  [] -> 0
  [] -> (+) h (sum t) | h::t -> (^) h (concat t)
```

```
let rec fold f a l =
  match l with
  [] -> a
  | h::t -> f h (foldr f a t)
```

let sum l = fold (+) 0 lst

let concat l = fold (^) "" lst CMSC330 Summer 2025

What does **fold** do?

```
let rec fold f a l =
  match l with
  [] -> a
  | h::t -> fold f (f a h) t
```

We just built the sum function!

Using Fold to Build Reverse

```
let rec fold f a l =
  match l with
  [] -> a
  | h::t -> fold f (f a h) t
```

Let's build the reverse function with fold!

```
let prepend a x = x::a
fold prepend [] [1; 2; 3; 4] \rightarrow
fold prepend [1] [2; 3; 4] \rightarrow
fold prepend [2; 1] [3; 4] \rightarrow
fold prepend [3; 2; 1] [4] \rightarrow
fold prepend [4; 3; 2; 1] [] \rightarrow
[4; 3; 2; 1]
```

List.fold_left

let rec fold f a l =
 match l with
 [] -> a
 | h::t -> fold f (f a h) t

- fold f v [v1; v2; ...; vn]
- = fold f (f v v1) [v2; ...; vn]
- = fold f (f (f v v1) v2) [...; vn]

= ...

- = f (f (f (f v v1) v2) ...) vn

List.fold_right [] -> a | h::t -> f h (foldr f a t)

 let f x y = (if x > y then x else y) in fold f 0 [3;4;2]

- **A**. 0
- B. true
- C. 2
- D. 4

let f x y = if x > y then x else y in fold f 0 [3;4;2]

- **A**. 0
- B. true
- C. 2
- D. 4

Quiz 7: What does this evaluate to?

fold (fun a y
$$->$$
 a-y) 0 [3;4;2]

A. -9
B. -1
C. [2;4;3]
D. 9

Quiz 7: What does this evaluate to?

fold (fun a y
$$->$$
 a-y) 0 [3;4;2]

A. -9
B. -1
C. [2;4;3]
D. 9

Type of fold_left, fold_right



Type of fold_left, fold_right

Type of fold_left, fold_right



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Summary: Left-to-right vs. right-to-left

fold_left f v [v1; v2; ...; vn] =
 f (f (f (f v v1) v2) ...) vn

- fold_right f [v1; v2; ...; vn] v =
 f v1 (f v2(... (f vn v) ...))
- fold_left (fun x y -> x y) 0 [1;2;3] = -6since ((0-1)-2)-3) = -6

fold_right [1;2;3] (fun x y \rightarrow x - y) 0 = 2 since 1-(2-(3-0)) = 2

When to use one or the other?

- Many problems lend themselves to fold_right
- But it does present a performance disadvantage
 - The recursion builds of a deep stack: One stack frame for each recursive call of fold_right
- An optimization called tail recursion permits optimizing fold_left so that it uses no stack at all
 - We will see how this works in a later lecture!

Fold Example 1: Product of an int list

```
let mul x y = x * y;;
```

let lst = [1; 2; 3; 4; 5];;

fold mul 1 lst

-: int = 120



Example 2: Count elements of a list satisfying a condition

```
let countif p l =
fold (fun counter element ->
    if p element then counter+1
    else counter) 0 l ;;
countif (fun x -> x > 0) [30;-1;45;100;0];;
```

```
-: int = 3
```

Fold Example 3: Collect even numbers in the list

let f acc y = if (y mod 2) = 0 then y::acc
 else acc;;

fold f [] [1;2;3;4;5;6];;

- : int list = [6; 4; 2] Reversed

Fold Example 4: Find the maximum from a list

```
let maxList lst =
      match 1st with
       []->failwith "empty list"
      h::t-> fold max h t ;;
                             (*
maxList [3;10;5];;
                             maxList [3;10;5]
-: int = 10
                             fold max 3 [10:5]
                             fold max (max 3 10) [5]
                             fold max (max 10 5) []
                             fold max 10 []
                             10
                             *)
```

Combining map and fold

Idea: map a list to another list, and then fold over it to compute the final result

• Basis of the famous "map/reduce" framework from Google, since these operations can be parallelized

```
let countone 1 =
  fold (fun a h -> if h=1 then a+1 else a) 0 1
let countones ss =
  let counts = map countone ss in
  fold (fun a c -> a+c) 0 counts
countones [[1;0;1]; [0;0]; [1;1]] = 4
countones [[1;0]; []; [0;0]; [1]] = 2
```

Sum of sublists

Given a list of int lists, compute the sum of each int list, and return them as list.

let sumList = map (fold (+) 0);;

For example:

sumList [[1;2;3];[4];[5;6;7]]
- : int list = [6; 4; 18]