
CMSC 330: Organization of Programming Languages

Working with OCaml

OCaml Compiler

- OCaml programs can be compiled using **ocamlc**
 - Produces **.cmo** (“compiled object”) and **.cmi** (“compiled interface”) files
 - We’ll talk about interface files later
 - By default, also links to produce executable **a.out**
 - Use **-o** to set output file name
 - Use **-c** to compile only to **.cmo/.cmi** and not to link
- Can also compile with **ocamlopt**
 - Produces **.cmx** files, which contain native code
 - Faster, but not platform-independent (or as easily debugged)

OCaml Compiler

- Compiling and running the following small program:

hello.ml:

```
(* A small OCaml program *)  
print_string "Hello world!\n";;
```

```
% ocamlc hello.ml
```

```
% ./a.out
```

```
Hello world!
```

```
%
```

OCaml Compiler: Multiple Files

main.ml:

```
let main () =  
  print_int (Util.add 10 20);  
  print_string "\n"  
  
let () = main ()
```

util.ml:

```
let add x y = x+y
```

- Compile both together (produces a.out)
 `ocamlc util.ml main.ml`
- Or compile separately
 `ocamlc -c util.ml`
 `ocamlc util.cmo main.ml`
- To execute
 `./a.out`

OCaml Top-level

- The *top-level* is a read-eval-print loop (REPL) for OCaml
 - Like Ruby's `irb`
- Start the top-level with the `ocaml` command:

```
ocaml
      OCaml version 4.07.0
# print_string "Hello world!\n" ;;
Hello world!
- : unit = ()
#
```
- To exit the top-level, type `^D` (Control D) or call the `exit 0`

```
# exit 0;;
```

OCaml Top-level (cont'd)

Expressions can also be typed and evaluated at the top-level:

```
# 3 + 4;;
- : int = 7
# let x = 37;;
val x : int = 37
# x;;
- : int = 37
# let y = 5;;
val y : int = 5
# let z = 5 + x;;
val z : int = 42
# print_int z;;
42- : unit = ()
# print_string "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously";;
Colorless green ideas sleep furiously- : unit = ()
# print_int "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously";;
This expression has type string but is here used with type int
```

gives type and value of each expr

“-” = “the expression you just typed”

unit = “no interesting value” (like void)

Loading Files in the Top-level

File `hello.ml` :

```
print_string "Hello world!\n";;
```

- Load a file into top-level

```
#use "filename.ml"
```

- Example:  `#use` loads in a file one line at a time

```
# #use "hello.ml";;
```

```
Hello world!
```

```
- : unit = ()
```

```
#
```

OPAM: OCaml Package Manager

- `opam` is the package manager for OCaml
 - Manages libraries and different compiler installations
- We recommend installing the following packages with `opam`
 - OUnit, a testing framework similar to `minitest`
 - Utop, a top-level interface similar to `irb`
 - Dune, a build system for larger projects

Ocamlbuild: Smart Project Building

- Use `ocamlbuild` to compile larger projects and automatically find dependencies
- Build a bytecode executable out of `main.ml` and its local dependencies

```
ocamlbuild main.byte
```

- The executable `main.byte` is in `_build` folder.
To execute:

```
./main.byte
```

Dune: Smarter Project Building

- Use **dune** to compile larger projects and automatically find dependencies
- Define a dune file, similar to a Makefile:

dune:

```
(executable  
  (name main))
```

Indicates that an executable (rather than a library) is to be built

Name of main file (entry point)

```
% dune build main.exe  
% _build/default/main.exe  
30  
%
```

Check out <https://medium.com/@bobbypriambodo/starting-an-ocaml-app-project-using-dune-d4f74e291de8>

Dune commands

- If defined, run a project's test suite:

`dune runtest`

- Load the modules defined in `src/` into the `utop` top-level interface:

`dune utop src`

- `utop` is a replacement for `ocaml` that includes dependent files, so they don't have to be `#loaded`

A Note on ;;

- ;; ends an expression in the top-level of OCaml
 - Use it to say: “Give me the value of this expression”
 - **Not used in the body of a function**
 - Not needed after each function definition
 - Though for now it won't hurt if used there
- There is also a single semi-colon ; in OCaml
 - But we won't need it for now
 - It's only useful when programming imperatively, i.e., with side effects
 - Which we won't do for a while