CMSC 330: Organization of Programming Languages

Functional Programming with Lists

Lists in OCaml

- The basic data structure in OCaml
  - Lists can be of *arbitrary length*
    - Implemented as a linked data structure
  - Lists must be *homogeneous*
    - All elements have the same type

- Operations
  - Construct lists
  - Destruct them via pattern matching

Constructing Lists

Syntax

- `[]` is the empty list (pronounced "nil")
- ***e1*::*e2*** prepends element ***e1*** to list ***e2***
  - Operator `::` is pronounced "cons"
  - ***e1*** is the head, ***e2*** is the tail
- `[e1;e2;…;en]` is *syntactic sugar* for `e1::e2::…::en::[]`

Both *cons* and *nil* are terms from LISP

Examples

```
3::[]          (* The list [3] *)
2::(3::[])     (* The list [2; 3] *)
[1; 2; 3]      (* The list 1::(2::(3::[])) *)
```

Constructing Lists

Evaluation

- `[]` is a value
- To evaluate ***`e1`***`::`***`e2`***, evaluate ***`e1`*** to a value ***`v1`***, evaluate ***`e2`*** to a (list) value ***`v2`***, and return ***`v1`***`::`***`v2`***
  - Actually, OCaml's language description permits evaluating ***`e2`*** first; the evaluation order is *unspecified*. This doesn't matter if there are no side effects; more on this later.

Consequence of the above rules:

- To evaluate `[`***`e1`***`;…;`***`en`***`]`, evaluate ***`e1`*** to a value ***`v1`***, …., evaluate ***`en`*** to a value ***`vn`***, and return `[`***`v1`***`;…;`***`vn`***`]`

Examples

```
# let y = [1; 1+1; 1+1+1] ;;
val y : int list = [1; 2; 3]

# let x = 4::y ;;
val x : int list = [4; 1; 2; 3]

# let z = 5::y ;;
val z : int list = [5; 1; 2; 3]

# let m = “hello”::”bob”::[];;
val m : string list = [“hello”; “bob”]
```

Typing List Construction

Nil:

`[]: 'a list`

Polymorphic type:
like a generic type in Java

i.e., empty list has type ***t*** **list** for any type ***t***

Cons:

If ***e1*** : ***t*** and ***e2*** : ***t*** **list** then ***e1*** **::** ***e2*** : ***t*** **list**

With parens for clarity:

If ***e1*** : ***t*** and ***e2*** : (***t*** **list**) then (***e1*** **::** ***e2***) : (***t*** **list**)

Examples

```
# let x = [1;"world"] ;;
This expression has type string but an expression
  was expected of type int

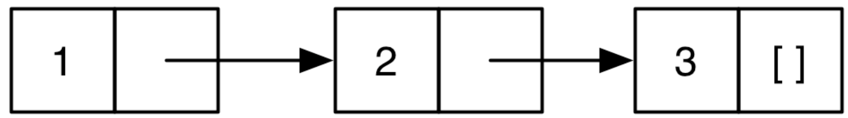
# let m = [[1];[2;3]];;
val y : int list list = [[1]; [2; 3]]

# let y = 0::[1;2;3] ;;
val y : int list = [0; 1; 2; 3]

# let w = [1;2]::y ;;
This expression has type int list but is here
  used with type int list list
```

- The left argument of :: is an element, the right is a list
- Can you construct a list y such that [1;2]::y makes sense?

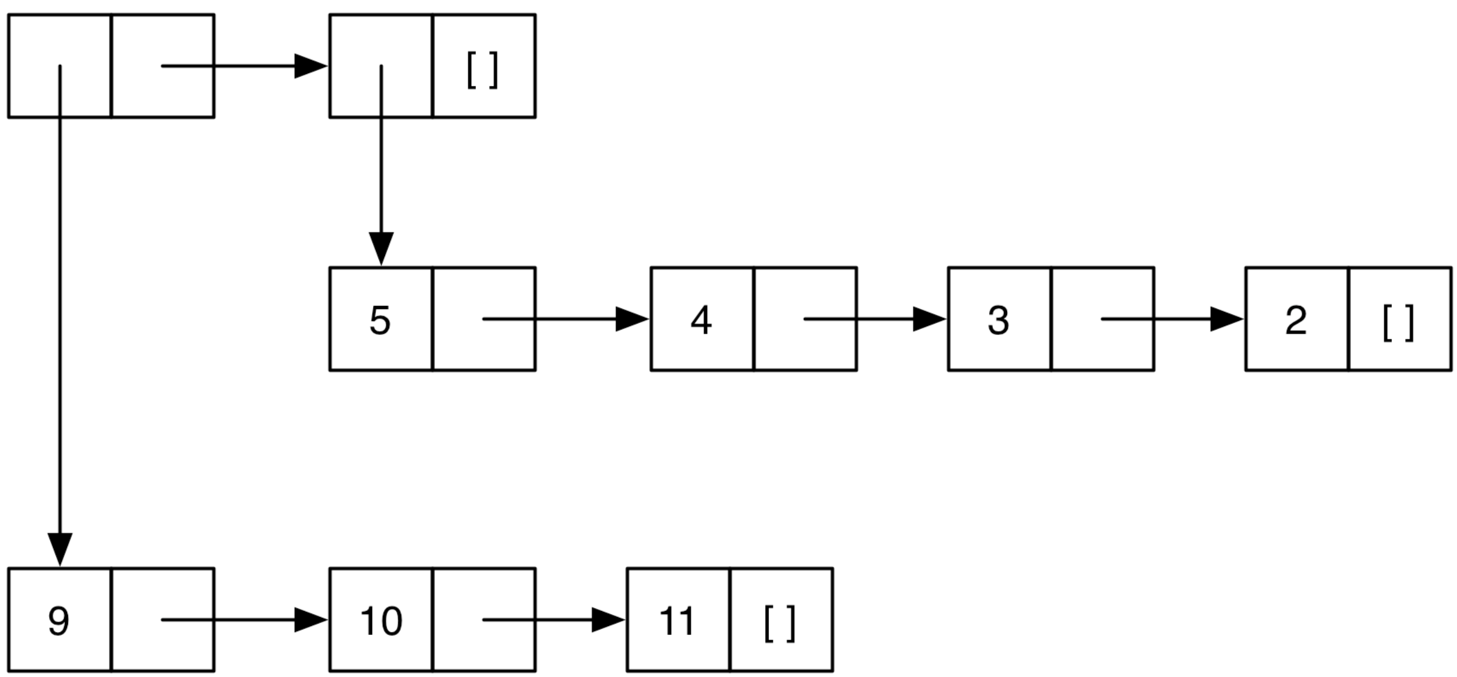
Lists in Ocaml are Linked



- [1;2;3] is represented above
  - A nonempty list is a pair (element, rest of list)
  - The element is the head of the list
  - The pointer is the tail or *rest* of the list
    - ...which is itself a list!
- Thus in math (i.e., inductively) a list is either
  - The empty list [ ]
  - Or a pair consisting of an element and a list
    - This recursive structure will come in handy shortly

Lists of Lists

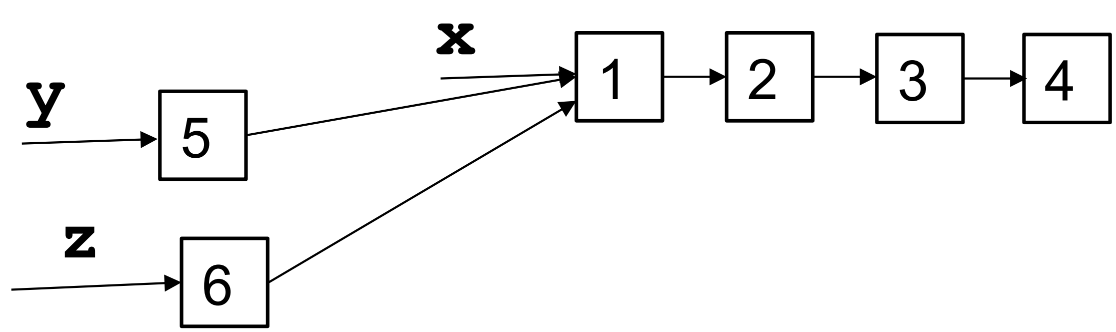
- Lists can be nested arbitrarily
  - Example: `[ [9; 10; 11]; [5; 4; 3; 2] ]`
    - (Type `int list list`)



Lists are Immutable

- No way to *mutate* (change) an element of a list
- Instead, build up new lists out of old, e.g., using **::**

```
let x = [1;2;3;4]
let y = 5::x
let z = 6::x
```



Quiz 1

What is the type of the following expression?

```
[1.0; 2.0; 3.0; 4.0]
```

A. `array`

B. `list`

C. `int list`

D. `float list`

Quiz 1

What is the type of the following expression?

```
[1.0; 2.0; 3.0; 4.0]
```

A. **`array`**
B. **`list`**
C. **`int list`**
D. **`float list`**

Quiz 2

What is the type of the following expression?

```
31::[3]
```

A. **`int`**

B. **`int list`**

C. **`int list list`**

D. **`error`**

Quiz 2

What is the type of the following expression?

`31::[3]`

A. **`int`**
B. **`int list`**
C. **`int list list`**
D. **`error`**

Quiz 3

What is the type of the following definition?

```
let f x = 1::[x]
```

A. `int -> int`

B. `int list`

C. `int list -> int list`

D. `int -> int list`

Quiz 3

What is the type of the following definition?

```
let f x = 1::[x]
```

A. `int -> int`

B. `int list`

C. `int list -> int list`

D. `int -> int list`

Pattern Matching

- To pull lists apart, use the **`match`** construct
- Syntax

```
match e with
| p1 -> e1
| …
| pn -> en
```

- ***p1***...***pn*** are *patterns* made up of **`[]`**, **`::`**, constants, and *pattern variables* (which are normal OCaml variables)
- ***e1***...***en*** are *branch expressions* in which pattern variables in the corresponding pattern are bound

Pattern Matching Semantics

```
match e with
| p1 -> e1
| …
| pn -> en
```

- Evaluate `e` to a value `v`
- If `p1` matches `v`, then evaluate `e1` to `v1` and return `v1`
- ...
- Else if `pn` matches `v`, then evaluate `en` to `vn` and return `vn`
- Else, no patterns match: raise **`Match_failure`** exception

- (When evaluating branch expression `ei`, any pattern variables in `pi` are bound in `ei`, i.e., they are in scope)

Pattern Matching Example

```
let is_empty l =
  match l with
    [] -> true
  | (h::t) -> false
```

- Example runs
  - `is_empty []    (* evaluates to true  *)`
  - `is_empty [1]   (* evaluates to false *)`
  - `is_empty [1;2](* evaluates to false *)`

Pattern Matching Example (cont.)

```
let hd l =
  match l with
   (h::t) -> h
```

- Example runs
  - `hd [1;2;3]` `(* evaluates to 1 *)`
  - `hd [2;3]` `(* evaluates to 2 *)`
  - `hd [3]` `(* evaluates to 3 *)`
  - `hd []` `(* Exception: Match_failure *)`

Quiz 4

To what does the following expression evaluate?

```
match [1;2;3] with
    [] -> [0]
  | h::t -> t
```

A. `[]`
B. `[0]`
C. `[1]`
D. `[2;3]`

Quiz 4

To what does the following expression evaluate?

```
match [1;2;3] with
    [] -> [0]
  | h::t -> t
```

A. `[]`
B. `[0]`
C. `[1]`
D. `[2;3]`

"Deep" pattern matching

- You can nest patterns for more precise matches
  - `a::b` matches lists with **at least one** element
    - Matches `[1;2;3]`, binding `a` to `1` and `b` to `[2;3]`
  - `a::[]` matches lists with **exactly one** element
    - Matches `[1]`, binding `a` to `1`
    - Could also write pattern `a::[]` as `[a]`
  - `a::b::[]` matches lists with **exactly two** elements
    - Matches `[1;2]`, binding `a` to `1` and `b` to `2`
    - Could also write pattern `a::b::[]` as `[a;b]`
  - `a::b::c::d` matches lists with **at least three** elements
    - Matches `[1;2;3]`, binding `a` to `1`, `b` to `2`, `c` to `3`, and `d` to `[]`
    - *Cannot* write pattern as `[a;b;c]::d` (why?)

Pattern Matching – Wildcards

- An underscore `_` is a wildcard pattern
  - Matches anything
  - But doesn't add any bindings
  - Useful to hold a place but discard the value
    - i.e., when the variable does not appear in the branch expression

- In previous examples
  - Many values of `h` or `t` ignored
  - Can replace with wildcard `_`

Pattern Matching – Wildcards (cont.)

- Code using _
  - ```
    let is_empty l = match l with
            [] -> true | (_::_) -> false
    ```
  - `let hd l = match l with (h::_) -> h`
  - `let tl l = match l with (_::t) -> t`
- Outputs
  - `is_empty[1](* evaluates to false *)`
  - `is_empty[ ](* evaluates to true  *)`
  - `hd [1;2;3] (* evaluates to 1     *)`
  - `hd [1]     (* evaluates to 1     *)`
  - `tl [1;2;3] (* evaluates to [2;3] *)`
  - `tl [1]     (* evaluates to [ ]   *)`
    ```

Quiz 5

To what does the following expression evaluate?

```
match [1;2;3] with
    1::[]      -> [0]
  | _::_       -> [1]
  | 1::_::[] -> []
```

A. `[]`
B. `[0]`
C. `[1]`
D. `[2;3]`

Quiz 5

To what does the following expression evaluate?

```
match [1;2;3] with
    1::[]      -> [0]
  | _::_       -> [1]
  | 1::_::[] -> []
```

A. `[]`
B. `[0]`
C. `[1]`
D. `[2;3]`

Pattern Matching – An Abbreviation

- `let f p = e`, where *p* is a pattern
  - is shorthand for `let f x = match x with p -> e`
- Examples
  - `let hd (h::_) = h`
  - `let tl (_::t) = t`
  - `let f (x::y::_) = x + y`
  - `let g [x; y] = x + y`
- Useful if there's only one acceptable input

Pattern Matching Typing

```
match e with
| p1 -> e1
| …
| pn -> en
```

- If ***e*** and ***p1***, …, ***pn*** each have type ***ta***
- and ***e1***, …, ***en*** each have type ***tb***
- Then entire **match** expression has type ***tb***

- Examples

type: *'a list -> 'a*

```
let hd l =
  match l with
  (h::_) -> h
```

ta = 'a list

tb

tb = 'a

type: *int list -> int*

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

tb

ta = int list

tb = int

Polymorphic Types

- The **`sum`** function works only for **`int lists`**
- But the **`hd`** function works for *any type of list*
  - **`hd [1; 2; 3]        (* returns 1 *)`**
  - **`hd ["a"; "b"; "c"] (* returns "a" *)`**
- OCaml gives such functions polymorphic types
  - **`hd : 'a list -> 'a`**
  - this says the function takes a list of *any* element type **`'a`**, and returns something of that same type
- These are basically generic types in Java
  - **`'a list`** is like **`List<T>`**

Examples Of Polymorphic Types

- `let tl (_::t) = t`

```
# tl [1; 2; 3];;
- : int list = [2; 3]
# tl [1.0; 2.0];;
- : float list = [2.0]
(* tl : 'a list -> 'a list *)
```

- `let fst x y = x`

```
# fst 1 “hello”;;
- : int = 1
# fst [1; 2] 1;;
- : int list = [1; 2]
(* fst : 'a -> 'b -> 'a *)
```

Examples Of Polymorphic Types

- `let hds (x::_) (y::_) = x::y::[]`

```
# hds [1; 2] [3; 4];;
- : int list = [1; 3]
# hds [“kitty”] [“cat”];;
- : string list = [“kitty”; “cat”]
# hds [“kitty”] [3; 4] -- type error
(* hds: 'a list -> ’a list -> 'a list *)
```

- `let eq x y = x = y    (* let eq x y = (x = y) *)`

```
# eq 1 2;;
- : bool = false
# eq “hello” “there”;;
- : bool = false
# eq “hello” 1    -- type error
(* eq : 'a -> ’a -> bool *)
```

Quiz 6

What is the type of the following function?

```
let f x y =
  if x = y then 1 else 0
```

A. `'a -> 'b -> int`
B. `'a -> 'a -> bool`
C. `'a -> 'a -> int`
D. `int`

Quiz 6

What is the type of the following function?

```
let f x y =
  if x = y then 1 else 0
```

A. `'a -> 'b -> int`

B. `'a -> 'a -> bool`

C. `'a -> 'a -> int`

D. `int`

Pattern matching is ***AWESOME***

1. You can’t forget a case
   – Compiler issues inexhaustive pattern-match warning
2. You can’t duplicate a case
   – Compiler issues unused match case warning
3. You can’t get an exception
   – Can’t do something like `List.hd []`
4. Pattern matching leads to elegant, concise, beautiful code

Lists and Recursion

- Lists have a recursive structure
  – And so most functions over lists will be recursive

```
let rec length l = match l with
    [] -> 0
  | (_::t) -> 1 + (length t)
```

  – This is just like an inductive definition
    - *The length of the empty list is zero*
    - *The length of a nonempty list is 1 plus the length of the tail*
  – Type of length?
    - **`'a list -> int`**

More Examples

- `sum l (* sum of elts in l *)`

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

- `negate l (* negate elements in list *)`

```
let rec negate l = match l with
    [] -> []
  | (x::xs) -> (-x) :: (negate xs)
```

- `last l  (* last element of l *)`

```
let rec last l = match l with
    [x] -> x
  | (x::xs) -> last xs
```

More Examples (cont.)

```
(* return a list containing all the elements in the
  list l followed by all the elements in list m *)
```

- **append l m**

```
 let rec append l m = match l with
     [] -> m
   | (x::xs) -> x::(append xs m)
```

- **rev l** (* reverse list; hint: use append *)

```
 let rec rev l = match l with
      [] -> []
    | (x::xs) -> append (rev xs) [x]
```

- **rev** takes $O(n^2)$ time. Can you do better?