

The universal property of *fold*

For finite lists, the universal property of *fold* can be stated as the following equivalence between two definitions for a function *g* that processes lists:

 $g[] = v \qquad \Leftrightarrow \qquad g = fold f v$ g(x:xs) = f x (g xs)

In the right-to-left direction, substituting g = fold f v into the two equations for g gives the recursive definition for fold.

Conversely, in the left-to-right direction the two equations for g are precisely the assumptions required to show that g = fold f v using a simple proof by induction on finite lists...

Taken as a whole, the universal property states that for finite lists the function fold f v is not just a solution to its defining equations, but in fact the unique solution....

The universal property of **fold** can be generalised to handle partial and infinite lists...

A tutorial on the universality and expressiveness of fold

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GRAHAM HUTTON

 $\begin{aligned} fold :: (\alpha \to \beta \to \beta) \to \beta \to ([\alpha] \to \beta) \\ fold f v [] &= v \\ fold f v (x : xs) &= f x (fold f v xs) \end{aligned}$



Graham Hutton 🔰 💥 @haskelhutt

$$\begin{cases} g[1] = v \\ g(x:xs) = f x (g xs) \end{cases} \Leftrightarrow g = fold f v$$

$$sum :: [Int] \rightarrow Int \\ sum [1] = 0 \\ sum (x:xs) = x + sum xs \end{cases} \Leftrightarrow sum = fold (+) 0$$

$$product :: [Int] \rightarrow Int \\ product [1] = 1 \\ product (x:xs) = x \times product xs \end{cases} \Leftrightarrow product = fold (\times) 1$$

$$length :: [\alpha] \rightarrow Int \\ length [1] = 0 \\ length (x:xs) = 1 + length xs \end{cases} \Leftrightarrow length = fold (\lambda x. \lambda n. 1 + n) 0$$

$$(\#) :: [\alpha] \rightarrow [\alpha] \\ [1] \# ys = ys \\ (x:xs) \# ys = x : (xs \# ys) \end{cases} \Leftrightarrow (\# ys) = fold (:) ys$$

$$concat :: [[\alpha]] \rightarrow [\alpha] \\ concat [1] = [1] \\ concat (xs : xss) = xs \# concat xss \end{cases} \Leftrightarrow concat = fold (\#) [1]$$



The **Triad** of *map*, *filter* and *fold*



The *bread*, *butter*, and *jam* of **Functional Programming**

$$g[] = v$$

$$g(x:xs) = f x (g xs) \qquad \Leftrightarrow \qquad g = foldr f v$$

$$map :: (a \to \beta) \to ([a] \to [\beta])$$

$$map f[] = []$$

$$map f (x:xs) = f x : map f xs$$

$$filter :: (a \to Bool) \to ([a] \to [a])$$

$$filter p [] = []$$

$$filter p (x:xs) = if p x$$

$$then x : filter p xs$$

$$else filter p xs$$

$$filter p xs$$

$$filter p = foldr (\lambda x. \lambda xs. if p x then x : xs else xs) []$$







fold

inspired by

Folding Unfolded Polyglot FP for Fun and Profit Haskell and Scala

See how recursive functions and structural induction relate to recursive datatypes

Follow along as the **fold abstraction** is introduced and explained

Watch as **folding** is used to simplify the definition of **recursive functions** over **recursive datatypes**

2 @philip_schwarz



Richard Bird http://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/people/richard.bird/

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Graham Hutton 🥑 @haskellhutt

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> GRAHAM HUTTON University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK http://www.cs.nott.ac.uk/-gmh



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