

Dependent Types

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Andres Löb, Conor McBride and Wouter Swierstra
A Tutorial Implementation of a Dependently Typed Lambda Calculus
Fundamenta Informaticae, 102(2):117–207, April 2010
<https://www.andres-loeh.de/LambdaPi/>

Stephanie Weirich
Implementing Dependent Types in pi-forall
<https://github.com/sweirich/pi-forall>
See doc/oplss.pdf. August 15, 2022

Lambda (Barendregt) Cube

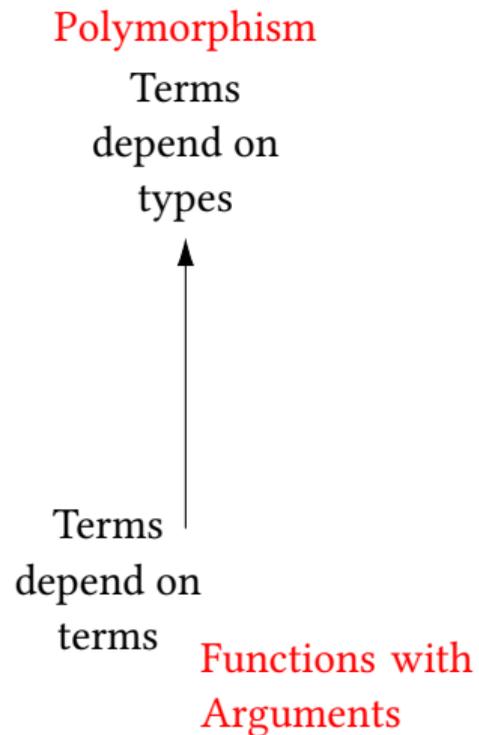
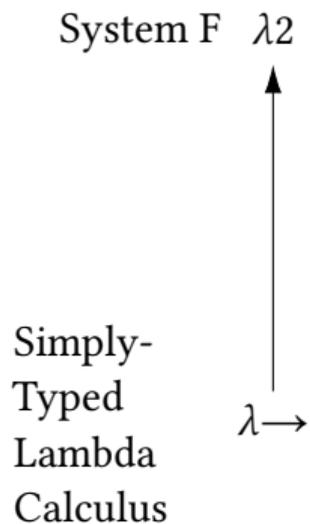
Simply-
Typed
Lambda
Calculus

$\lambda \rightarrow$

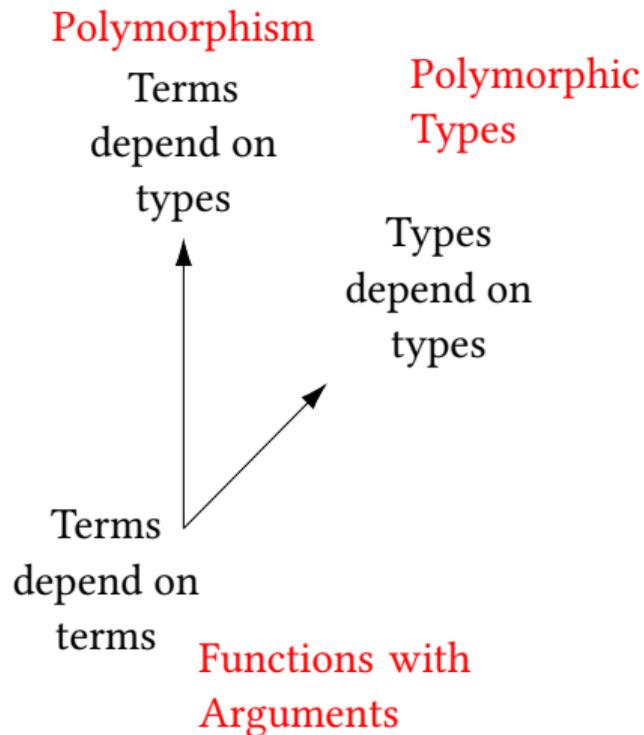
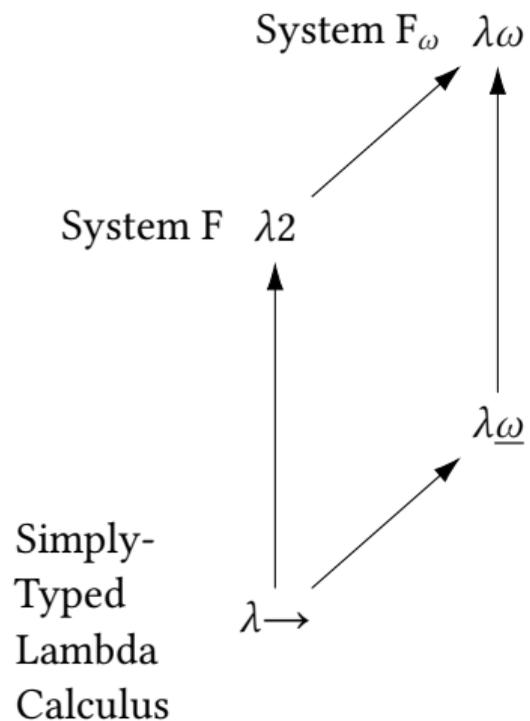
Terms
depend on
terms

Functions with
Arguments

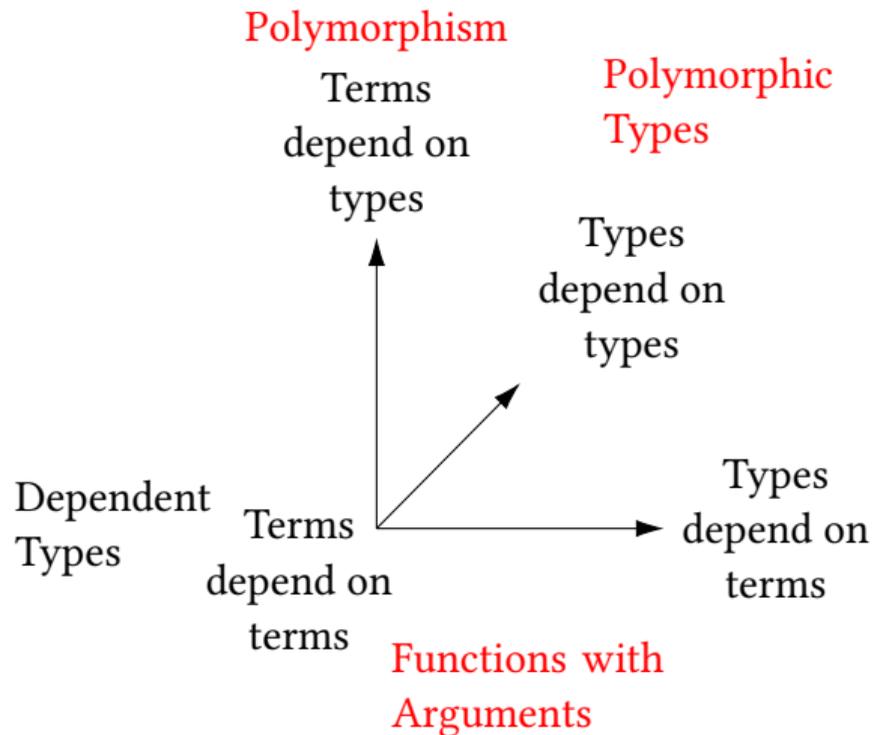
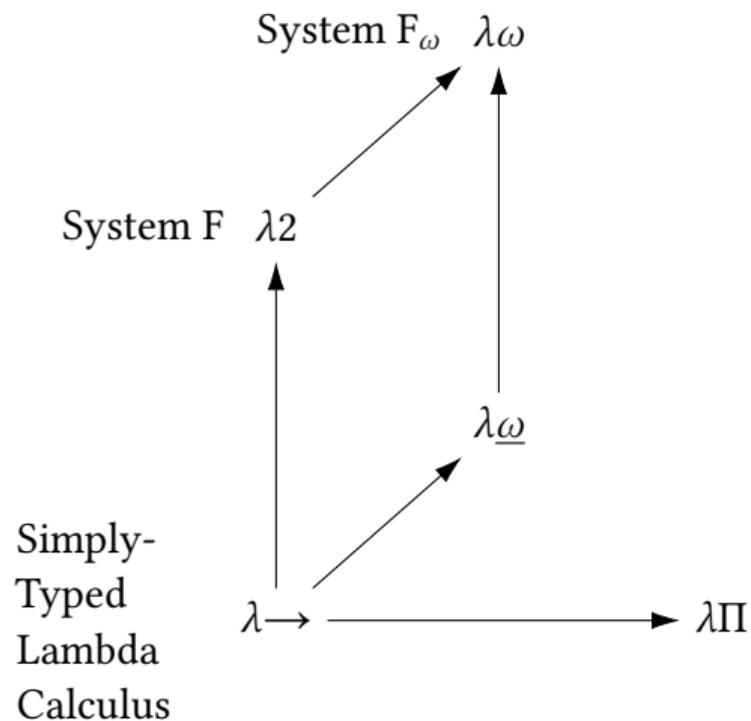
Lambda (Barendregt) Cube



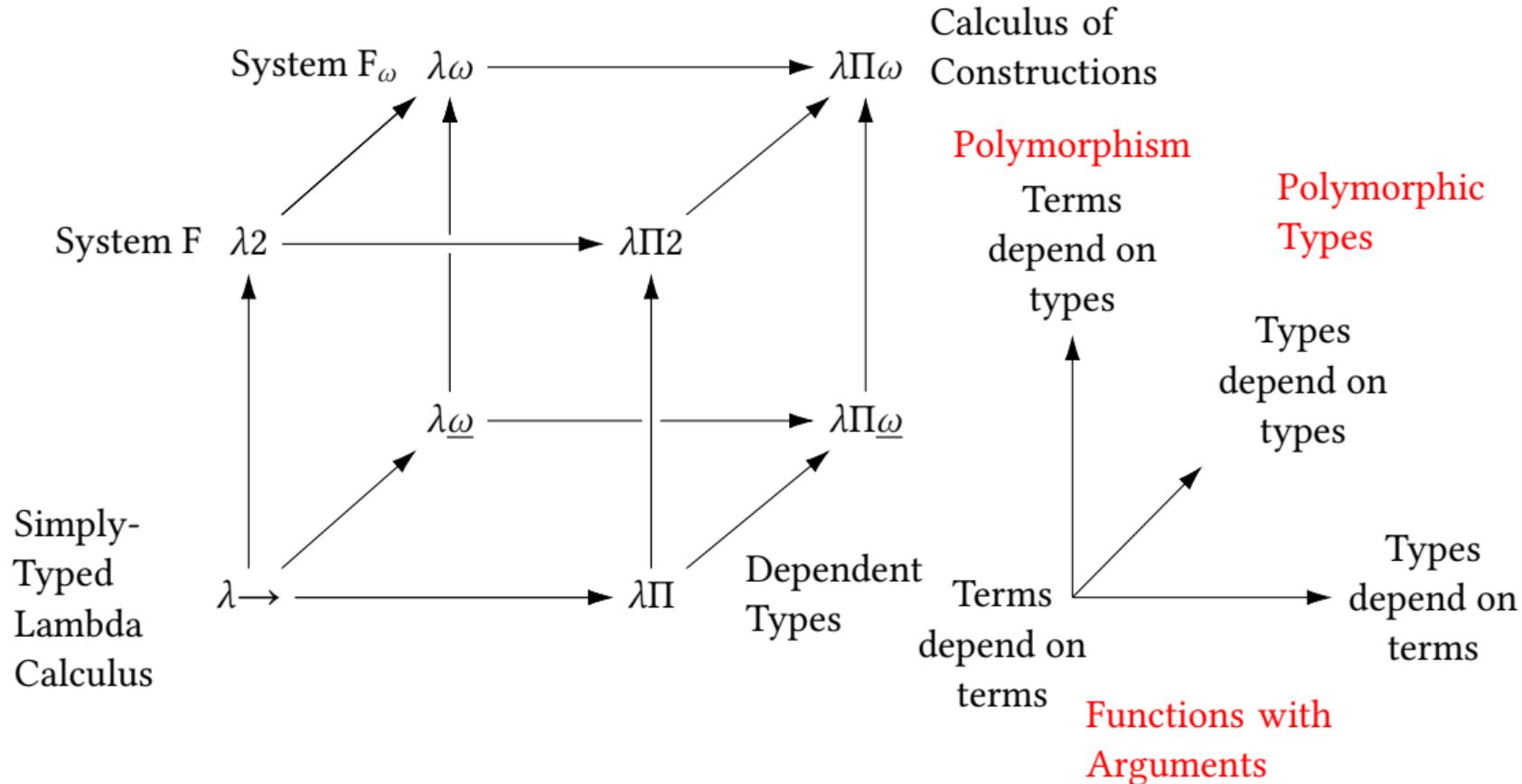
Lambda (Barendregt) Cube



Lambda (Barendregt) Cube



Lambda (Barendregt) Cube



System	Term	Type
$\lambda \rightarrow$	$\lambda x : \mathbf{bool} . x$	$\mathbf{bool} \rightarrow \mathbf{bool}$

Base types and functions from type to type

Binder arguments annotated with a type

No polymorphism: $\lambda x . x$ must have a specific type

System	Term	Type
$\lambda \rightarrow$	$\lambda x : \mathbf{bool} . x$	$\mathbf{bool} \rightarrow \mathbf{bool}$
System F	$\Lambda \alpha . \lambda x : \alpha . x$	$\forall \alpha . \alpha \rightarrow \alpha$

Polymorphic functions: (terms may depend on types)

Type variables, \forall types

A term Λ binds a type argument to a type variable α

Type variables are untyped

System	Term	Type
$\lambda \rightarrow$	$\lambda x : \mathbf{bool} . x$	$\mathbf{bool} \rightarrow \mathbf{bool}$
System F	$\Lambda \alpha . \lambda x : \alpha . x$	$\forall \alpha . \alpha \rightarrow \alpha$
System F_ω	$\Lambda \alpha : * . \lambda h : \alpha . \lambda t : \mathbf{List} \alpha . \dots$	$\forall \alpha : * . \alpha \rightarrow \mathbf{List} \alpha \rightarrow \mathbf{List} \alpha$

Polymorphic types: (types may depend on types)

The type of a type is a kind. $*$ is a simple type, $* \rightarrow *$ is a type constructor like **List**.

This is the “cons” function for the polymorphic list type **List** α

It takes a simple type α , an object of type α , and a list of α 's, and produces a list of α 's

System	Term	Type
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System F	$\Lambda \alpha . \lambda x : \alpha . x$	$\forall \alpha . \alpha \rightarrow \alpha$
System F _{ω}	$\Lambda \alpha : * . \lambda h : \alpha . \lambda t : \mathbf{List} \alpha . \dots$	$\forall \alpha : * . \alpha \rightarrow \mathbf{List} \alpha \rightarrow \mathbf{List} \alpha$
$\lambda \Pi$	Identity on n -element vectors	$(\alpha : *) \rightarrow (n : \mathbf{Nat}) \rightarrow (v : \mathbf{Vec} \alpha n) \rightarrow \mathbf{Vec} \alpha n$

Types may depend on ordinary terms such as natural numbers

You can define a polymorphic **Vec** type parameterized by a type α and a natural number length n

You can define an identity function on such vectors

Aside: Types as Terms: Tuples as Type Lists in Haskell (System F_ω)

```
$ ghci
> :set -XTypeOperators -- Infix type constructor syntax
> data Nil = Nil deriving Show -- Empty list
> data tail :: head = tail :: head deriving Show -- List of types (wrong associativity)
> x = Nil :: (5::Int) :: 'a' -- :: as data constructor
> :t x
x :: (Nil :: Int) :: Char -- :: as type constructor: Char, Int "pairs"
```

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x :: (Nil :: Int) :: Char -- :: as type constructor: Char, Int "pairs"
> myhd (t :: h) = h -- Head of list
> :t myhd
myhd :: (tail :: head) -> head -- myhd on a "Cons" type returns the type of its head
> mytl (t :: h) = t -- Tail of list
> :t mytl
mytl :: (tail :: head) -> tail -- mytl on a "Cons" type returns the type of its tail
```

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> :t mytl
mytl :: (tail :: head) -> tail -- mytl on a "Cons" type returns the type of its tail
> myhd x
'a'
> mytl x
Nil :: 5
> :t mytl x
mytl x :: Nil :: Int -- Type of Int singletons
> myhd (mytl x)
5 -- WORKS, BUT CAN'T USE LIST MACHINERY
```

$\lambda \rightarrow$ Types and Expressions

$\tau ::= \alpha$	base type
$\tau \rightarrow \tau$	function type
$e ::= e : \tau$	annotated term
x	variable
$e e$	application
$\lambda x . e$	lambda abstraction

$\lambda \rightarrow$ Values

$v ::= n$	neutral term
$\lambda x . v$	lambda abstraction
$n ::= x$	variable
$n v$	application

Another Simply Typed Lambda Calculus

Base types α are, e.g., **Bool**, **Nat**

Type annotations on expressions instead of variables in λ terms. Not a significant change

Values (normal forms of evaluation): e.g., x , $\lambda x . x$, $x y (\lambda z . z)$. No redexes allowed

Löh et al. write $e :: \tau$ for $e : \tau$ and $\lambda x \rightarrow e$ for $\lambda x . e$

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$\lambda \rightarrow$ Big-Step Evaluation Rules

$$\frac{e \Downarrow v}{e : \tau \Downarrow v} \quad \frac{}{x \Downarrow x} \quad \frac{e \Downarrow \lambda x . v \quad v[x := e'] \Downarrow v'}{e e' \Downarrow v'} \quad \frac{e \Downarrow n \quad e' \Downarrow v'}{e e' \Downarrow n v'} \quad \frac{e \Downarrow v}{\lambda x . e \Downarrow \lambda x . v}$$

Strongly normalizing; normal form always exists; reduce to a value in a single step

“Ignore type annotations” “Stop at variables” “Apply a λ value by substituting”

“Applying a neutral term, just reduce argument” “Reduce the body of a λ ”

$$\left((\lambda x . x) : (\alpha \rightarrow \alpha) \right) y \Downarrow y \quad \left((\lambda x . \lambda y . x) : (\beta \rightarrow \beta) \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \beta \rightarrow \beta \right) (\lambda z . z) y \Downarrow (\lambda z . z)$$

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Contexts

$\Gamma ::= \epsilon$	empty context
$\Gamma, \alpha : *$	adding a type identifier
$\Gamma, x : \tau$	adding a term identifier

“*” means “base type”; vacuous for now

Valid Contexts

$\frac{}{\text{valid}(\epsilon)}$	$\frac{\text{valid}(\Gamma)}{\text{valid}(\Gamma, \alpha : *)}$	$\frac{\text{valid}(\Gamma) \quad \Gamma \vdash \tau : *}{\text{valid}(\Gamma, x : \tau)}$
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“The empty context is valid”

“A base type may be in context”

“An identifier in context has a base type”

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$\lambda \rightarrow$ Type Rules in Bidirectional Style

$\frac{\Gamma(\alpha) = *}{\Gamma \vdash \alpha : *} \text{var1}$	$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \tau : * \quad \Gamma \vdash \tau' : *}{\Gamma \vdash \tau \rightarrow \tau' : *} \text{fun}$	$\frac{\Gamma(x) = \tau}{\Gamma \vdash x : \uparrow \tau} \text{var2}$	$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \tau : * \quad \Gamma \vdash e : \downarrow \tau}{\Gamma \vdash (e : \tau) : \uparrow \tau} \text{ann}$
$\frac{\Gamma \vdash e : \uparrow \tau \rightarrow \tau' \quad \Gamma \vdash e' : \downarrow \tau}{\Gamma \vdash e e' : \uparrow \tau'} \text{app}$	$\frac{\Gamma \vdash e : \uparrow \tau}{\Gamma \vdash e : \downarrow \tau} \text{chk}$	$\frac{\Gamma, x : \tau \vdash e : \downarrow \tau'}{\Gamma \vdash (\lambda x . e) : \downarrow \tau \rightarrow \tau'} \text{lam}$	

Type checked: “ $:\downarrow \tau$ ” “Is this τ right?”

Type inferred: “ $:\uparrow \tau$ ” “Found type is τ ”

“Context: base type” “Function: base type” “Variable’s type” “Confirm type annotation”

“Infer result of application”

“Inferred type checks out”

“Check type of lambda”

$\lambda \rightarrow$ Types and Expressions

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$\frac{\Gamma \vdash e : \uparrow \tau \rightarrow \tau' \quad \Gamma \vdash e' : \downarrow \tau}{\Gamma \vdash e e' : \uparrow \tau'} \text{app}$	$\frac{\Gamma \vdash e : \uparrow \tau}{\Gamma \vdash e : \downarrow \tau} \text{chk}$	$\frac{\Gamma, x : \tau \vdash e : \downarrow \tau'}{\Gamma \vdash (\lambda x . e) : \downarrow \tau \rightarrow \tau'} \text{lam}$	

$$\epsilon, \alpha : *, y : \alpha \vdash \left(\left((\lambda x . x) : (\alpha \rightarrow \alpha) \right) y \right) : \alpha$$

$$\epsilon, \alpha : *, y : \alpha, \beta : * \vdash \left(\left((\lambda x . \lambda y . x) : (\beta \rightarrow \beta) \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \beta \rightarrow \beta \right) (\lambda z . z) y \right) : \beta \rightarrow \beta$$

$\lambda\Pi$ (Dependently Typed) Syntax

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho$	annotated term
$*$	the type of types
$(x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho$	dependent function
x	variable
$e e$	application
$\lambda x . e$	lambda abstraction

In $\lambda\Pi$, *everything* is an expression, including type “expressions” ρ and kinds

$(x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho'$ is the type of a function from ρ to ρ'

Weirich writes $(x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho'$; Löh et al. write $\forall x :: \rho . \rho'$; $\Pi x : \rho . \rho'$ is traditional

This is where $\lambda\Pi$, the dependently typed lambda calculus, gets its Π

$\Pi x : \rho . \rho'$ parallels $\lambda x . e$ x is made available to the body ρ'

$\lambda\Pi$ (Dependently Typed) Syntax

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An example: the type of the identity function on n -element vectors of α 's

$$(\alpha : *) \rightarrow (n : \text{Nat}) \rightarrow (v : \text{Vec } \alpha \ n) \rightarrow \text{Vec } \alpha \ n$$

The type variable v isn't used

$\lambda\Pi$ (Dependently Typed) Syntax

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$\lambda\Pi$ (Dependently Typed) Values

$v, \tau ::= n$	neutral term
$*$	the type of types
$(x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau$	dependent function
$\lambda x . v$	lambda abstraction
$n ::= x$	variable
$n v$	application

“Types” τ are now just particular values

The kind $*$ is just a particular value

$\lambda\Pi$ (Dependently Typed) Syntax

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$n ::= x$	variable
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Contexts

$\Gamma ::= \epsilon$	empty context
$\Gamma, x : \tau$	adding a variable

No distinction between values and types makes this simple

Valid Contexts

$\frac{}{\text{valid}(\epsilon)}$	$\frac{\text{valid}(\Gamma) \quad \Gamma \vdash \tau : \downarrow *}{\text{valid}(\Gamma, x : \tau)}$
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The “type” of a variable in context must check as the type of a type

$\lambda\Pi$ (Dependently Typed) Syntax

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho$	annotated term
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$(x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho$	dependent function
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$v, \tau ::= n$	neutral term
$*$	the type of types
$(x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau$	dependent function
$\lambda x . v$	lambda abstraction
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$n v$	application

$\lambda\Pi$ Big-Step Evaluation Rules

$\frac{e \Downarrow v}{e : \tau \Downarrow v}$	$\frac{}{* \Downarrow *}$	$\frac{\rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \rho' \Downarrow \tau'}{(x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho' \Downarrow (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau'}$	$\frac{}{x \Downarrow x}$
$\frac{e \Downarrow \lambda x . v \quad v[x := e'] \Downarrow v'}{e e' \Downarrow v'}$		$\frac{e \Downarrow n \quad e' \Downarrow v'}{e e' \Downarrow n v'}$	$\frac{e \Downarrow v}{\lambda x . e \Downarrow \lambda x . v}$

Type expressions (ρ) in function type terms are evaluated to types (τ); the types remain

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho \mid * \mid (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho \mid x \mid e e \mid \lambda x . e$ $v, \tau ::= n \mid * \mid (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau \mid \lambda x . v$ $n ::= x \mid n v$
 Type checked: “ $:\downarrow \tau$ ” Type inferred: “ $:\uparrow \tau$ ”

$\lambda\Pi$ Type Rules

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \rho : \downarrow * \quad \rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \Gamma \vdash e : \downarrow \tau_{\text{ann}}}{\Gamma \vdash (e : \rho) : \uparrow \tau}$$

Checking that ρ is a $*$ now uses “regular” type rules

ρ is now a type expression, so it is reduced to a type τ before checking the type of body e

Type checking now requires *executing* type expressions

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho \mid * \mid (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho \mid x \mid e e \mid \lambda x . e$
 Type checked: “ $:_{\downarrow} \tau$ ”

$v, \tau ::= n \mid * \mid (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau \mid \lambda x . v \quad n ::= x \mid n v$
 Type inferred: “ $:_{\uparrow} \tau$ ”

$\lambda\Pi$ Type Rules

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \rho :_{\downarrow} * \quad \rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \Gamma \vdash e :_{\downarrow} \tau_{\text{ann}}}{\Gamma \vdash (e : \rho) :_{\uparrow} \tau}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma(x) = \tau}{\Gamma \vdash x :_{\uparrow} \tau} \text{var}$$

The single *var* rule now handles values, types, and kinds

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho \mid * \mid (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho \mid x \mid ee \mid \lambda x . e$
 Type checked: “ $:\downarrow \tau$ ”

$v, \tau ::= n \mid * \mid (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau \mid \lambda x . v \quad n ::= x \mid nv$
 Type inferred: “ $:\uparrow \tau$ ”

$\lambda\Pi$ Type Rules

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \rho : \downarrow * \quad \rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \Gamma \vdash e : \downarrow \tau_{\text{ann}}}{\Gamma \vdash (e : \rho) : \uparrow \tau}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma(x) = \tau}{\Gamma \vdash x : \uparrow \tau} \text{var}$$

$$\frac{}{\Gamma \vdash * : \uparrow *} \text{star}$$

The kind $*$ is of type $*$

This simple choice leaves the type system unsound (allows a kind of Russell's paradox)

Choosing $* : *_1, *_1 : *_2, *_2 : *_3$, etc. solves the soundness problem

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho \mid * \mid (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho \mid x \mid e e \mid \lambda x . e$ $v, \tau ::= n \mid * \mid (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau \mid \lambda x . v$ $n ::= x \mid n v$
 Type checked: “ $:\downarrow \tau$ ” Type inferred: “ $:\uparrow \tau$ ”

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$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \rho : \downarrow * \quad \rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \Gamma \vdash e : \downarrow \tau_{\text{ann}}}{\Gamma \vdash (e : \rho) : \uparrow \tau}$$

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$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \rho : \downarrow * \quad \rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \Gamma, x : \tau \vdash \rho' : \downarrow *}{\Gamma \vdash (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho' : \uparrow *} \text{pi}$$

This replaces the *fun* rule in $\lambda\rightarrow$, which concluded $\tau \rightarrow \tau' : *$

For functions from ρ to ρ' , both ρ and ρ' must have kind $*$

However, ρ is reduced to type τ and passed to ρ' through the context (dependency)

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho \mid * \mid (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho \mid x \mid ee \mid \lambda x . e$
 Type checked: “ $:_{\downarrow} \tau$ ”

$v, \tau ::= n \mid * \mid (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau \mid \lambda x . v \quad n ::= x \mid n v$
 Type inferred: “ $:_{\uparrow} \tau$ ”

$\lambda\Pi$ Type Rules

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \rho :_{\downarrow} * \quad \rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \Gamma \vdash e :_{\downarrow} \tau}{\Gamma \vdash (e : \rho) :_{\uparrow} \tau} \text{ann}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma(x) = \tau}{\Gamma \vdash x :_{\uparrow} \tau} \text{var}$$

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$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \rho :_{\downarrow} * \quad \rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \Gamma, x : \tau \vdash \rho' :_{\downarrow} *}{\Gamma \vdash (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho' :_{\uparrow} *} \text{pi}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma, x : \tau \vdash e :_{\downarrow} \tau'}{\Gamma \vdash (\lambda x . e) :_{\downarrow} (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau'} \text{lam}$$

The $\lambda \rightarrow$ version checked $(\lambda x . e) : \tau \rightarrow \tau'$; this checks an equivalent term

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho \mid * \mid (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho \mid x \mid e e \mid \lambda x . e$
 Type checked: “ $:_{\downarrow} \tau$ ”

$v, \tau ::= n \mid * \mid (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau \mid \lambda x . v \quad n ::= x \mid n v$
 Type inferred: “ $:_{\uparrow} \tau$ ”

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$$\frac{\Gamma, x : \tau \vdash e :_{\downarrow} \tau'}{\Gamma \vdash (\lambda x . e) :_{\downarrow} (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau'} \text{lam}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash e :_{\uparrow} (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau' \quad \Gamma \vdash e' :_{\downarrow} \tau \quad \tau'[x := e'] \Downarrow \tau''}{\Gamma \vdash e e' :_{\uparrow} \tau''} \text{app}$$

Instead of $\tau \rightarrow \tau'$, we infer $(x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau'$

$(x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau'$ provides the type variable x to τ' via a substitution

$e, \rho ::= e : \rho \mid * \mid (x : \rho) \rightarrow \rho \mid x \mid ee \mid \lambda x . e$
 Type checked: “ $:_{\downarrow} \tau$ ”

$v, \tau ::= n \mid * \mid (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau \mid \lambda x . v \quad n ::= x \mid n v$
 Type inferred: “ $:_{\uparrow} \tau$ ”

$\lambda\Pi$ Type Rules

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash \rho :_{\downarrow} * \quad \rho \Downarrow \tau \quad \Gamma \vdash e :_{\downarrow} \tau}{\Gamma \vdash (e : \rho) :_{\uparrow} \tau} \text{ann}$$

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$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash e :_{\uparrow} (x : \tau) \rightarrow \tau' \quad \Gamma \vdash e' :_{\downarrow} \tau \quad \tau'[x := e'] \Downarrow \tau''}{\Gamma \vdash ee' :_{\uparrow} \tau''} \text{app}$$

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash e :_{\uparrow} \tau}{\Gamma \vdash e :_{\downarrow} \tau} \text{chk}$$

This says “given a type τ , we can conclude e has that type if we can infer type τ for e ”