



Property Testing with QuickCheck

Functional Programming

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Why testing?

- Gain confidence in the correctness of your program
- Show that common cases work correctly
- Show that *corner* cases work correctly

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- Gain confidence in the correctness of your program
- Show that common cases work correctly
- Show that *corner* cases work correctly

Testing cannot prove the absence of bugs

When is a program correct?

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- When it satisfies the specification

When is a program correct?

- When it satisfies the specification
- What is a specification?
- How to establish a relation between the specification and the implementation?
- What about bugs in the specification?

More in *Software Testing and Verification*, period 4

QuickCheck, an *automated* testing library/tool for Haskell

- Describe properties as Haskell programs using an embedded domain-specific language (EDSL)
- Automatic datatype-driven random test case generation
- Extensible, e.g. test case generators can be adapted
 - A default generator for list generates any list, but you may want only sorted lists

Case study: insertion sort

A buggy insertion sort

```
sort :: [Int] -> [Int]
sort []      = []
sort (x:xs)  = insert x xs
```

```
insert :: Int -> [Int] -> [Int]
insert x []                                = [x]
insert x (y:ys) | x <= y                    = x : ys
                | otherwise                 = y : insert x ys
```

Let's try to debug it using QuickCheck

How to write a specification?

A good specification is

- as precise as necessary
- but no more precise than necessary

A good specification for a particular problem, such as sorting, should:

1. distinguish sorting from all other operations on lists,
2. without forcing us to use a particular sorting algorithm

A first approximation

Certainly, sorting a list should not change its length

```
sortPreservesLength :: [Int] -> Bool
sortPreservesLength xs =
    length (sort xs) == length xs
```

We can test by invoking the function:

```
> quickCheck sortPreservesLength
Failed! Falsifiable, after 4 tests:
[0,3]
```

QuickCheck gives back a *counterexample*

Correcting the bug

```
sort :: [Int] -> [Int]
sort []      = []
sort (x:xs)  = insert x xs
```

```
insert :: Int -> [Int] -> [Int]
insert x []                        = [x]
insert x (y:ys) | x <= y          = x : ys
                  | otherwise     = y : insert x ys
```

Which branch does not preserve the list length?

A new attempt

```
> quickCheck sortPreservesLength  
OK, passed 100 tests.
```

Looks better. But have we tested enough?

A different “sorting” algorithm....

```
preserves :: Eq b => (a -> a) -> (a -> b)
           -> a -> Bool
(algo `preserves` prop) x = prop (algo x) == prop x

sortPreservesLength = sort `preserves` length
```

A different “sorting” algorithm....

```
preserves :: Eq b => (a -> a) -> (a -> b)  
            -> a -> Bool
```

```
(algo `preserves` prop) x = prop (algo x) == prop x
```

```
sortPreservesLength = sort `preserves` length
```

```
idPreservesLength   = id `preserves` length
```

id also preserves the lists length:

```
> quickCheck idPreservesLength
```

OK, passed 100 tests.

So we need to refine our specification

When is a list sorted?

We can define a predicate that checks if a list is sorted:

```
isSorted      :: [Int] -> Bool
isSorted []   = True
isSorted [x]  = True
isSorted (x:y:xs) = x < y && isSorted (y:xs)
```

And use this to check that sorting a list produces a list that isSorted

Testing again

```
sortEnsuresSorted    :: [Int] -> Bool  
sortEnsuresSorted xs = isSorted (sort xs)
```

```
> quickCheck sortEnsuresSorted
```

Falsifiable, after 5 tests:

```
[5,0,-2]
```

```
> sort [5,0,-2]
```

```
[0,-2,5]
```

We're still not quite there...

Debugging sort

What's wrong now?

```
sort      :: [Int] -> [Int]
sort []   = []
sort (x:xs) = insert x xs

insert :: Int -> [Int] -> [Int]
```

Debugging sort

What's wrong now?

```
sort      :: [Int] -> [Int]
```

```
sort []   = []
```

```
sort (x:xs) = insert x xs
```

```
insert :: Int -> [Int] -> [Int]
```

We are not recursively sorting the tail in sort!

Another bug

```
> quickCheck sortEnsuresSorted
```

```
Falsifiable, after 7 tests:
```

```
[4,2,2]
```

```
> sort [4,2,2]
```

```
[2,2,4]
```

This is correct. What is wrong?

Another bug

```
> quickCheck sortEnsuresSorted
```

```
Falsifiable, after 7 tests:
```

```
[4,2,2]
```

```
> sort [4,2,2]
```

```
[2,2,4]
```

This is correct. What is wrong?

```
> isSorted [2,2,4]
```

```
False
```

Fixing the specification

The `isSorted` specification reads:

```
sorted          :: [Int] -> Bool
sorted []       = True
sorted (x:[])   = True
sorted (x:y:ys) = x < y && sorted (y : ys)
```

Why does it return `False`? How can we fix it?

Are we done yet?

Is sorting specified completely by saying that

- sorting preserves the length of the input list,
- the resulting list is sorted?

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Is sorting specified completely by saying that

- sorting preserves the length of the input list,
- the resulting list is sorted?

Not really...

```
evilNoSort :: [Int] -> [Int]
```

```
evilNoSort xs = replicate (length xs) 1
```

This function fulfills both specifications, but does not sort

Specifying sorting

```
permutes :: ([Int] -> [Int]) -> [Int] -> Bool
permutes f xs = f xs `elem` permutations xs
```

```
sortPermutes :: [Int] -> Bool
sortPermutes xs = sort `permutes` xs
```

This completely specifies sorting and our algorithm passes the corresponding tests:

```
sorts      :: ([Int] -> [Int]) -> [Int] -> Bool
sorts alg xs = and [ alg `permutes` xs
                    , alg `preserves` length
                    , sorted (alg xs)
                    ]
```

QuickCheck in general

The type of quickCheck

The type of is an *overloaded* type:

```
quickCheck :: Testable prop => prop -> IO ()
```

- The argument of is a property of type `prop`
- The only restriction on the type is that it is in the `Testable` *type class*.
- When executed, prints the results of the test to the screen – hence the `IO ()` result type.

Which properties are Testable?

So far, all our properties have been of type:

```
sortPreservesLength :: [Int] -> Bool
```

```
sortEnsuresSorted :: [Int] -> Bool
```

```
sortPermutes :: [Int] -> Bool
```

When used on such properties, QuickCheck generates random integer lists:

- If the result is `True` for 100 cases, this success is reported in a message
- If the result is `False` for a test case, the input triggering the failure is printed

Nullary properties

A property without arguments is also possible:

```
lengthEmpty :: Bool
```

```
lengthEmpty = length [] == 0
```

```
wrong :: Bool
```

```
wrong = False
```

```
> quickCheck lengthEmpty
```

```
OK, passed 100 tests.
```

```
> quickCheck wrong
```

```
Falsifiable, after 0 tests.
```

QuickCheck subsumes unit tests

Other example properties

```
appendLength :: [Int] -> [Int] -> Bool
appendLength xs ys =
    length xs + length ys == length (xs ++ ys)
```

```
plusIsCommutative :: Int -> Int -> Bool
plusIsCommutative m n = m + n == n + m
```

```
takeDrop :: Int -> [Int] -> Bool
takeDrop n xs = take n xs ++ drop n xs == xs
```

```
dropTwice :: Int -> Int -> [Int] -> Bool
dropTwice m n xs =
    drop m (drop n xs) == drop (m + n) xs
```

Other forms of properties – contd.

```
> quickCheck takeDrop
```

```
OK, passed 100 tests.
```

```
> quickCheck dropTwice
```

```
Falsifiable after 7 tests.
```

```
1
```

```
-1
```

```
[0]
```

```
> drop (-1) [0]
```

```
[0]
```

```
> drop 1 (drop (-1) [0])
```

```
[]
```

Recall the type of `quickCheck`:

```
quickCheck :: Testable prop => prop -> IO ()
```

We can now say more about when types are `Testable`:

- testable properties usually are functions (with any number of arguments) resulting in a `Bool`

What argument types are admissible?

Recall the type of `quickCheck`:

```
quickCheck :: Testable prop => prop -> IO ()
```

We can now say more about when types are `Testable`:

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What argument types are admissible?

- `QuickCheck` has to know how to produce random test cases of such types

Properties – continued

A Testable thing is something which can be turned into a Property:

```
class Testable prop where
  property :: prop -> Property
```

A Bool is testable:

```
instance Testable Bool where ...
```

If a type is testable, we can add a function argument, as long as we know how to generate and print test cases:

```
instance (Arbitrary a, Show a, Testable b) =>
  Testable (a -> b) where
```

Information about test data

We can show the actual data that is tested:

```
> quickCheck (\xs -> collect xs (sorts sort xs))
```

OK, passed 100 tests:

6% []

1% [9,4,-6,7]

1% [9,-1,0,-22,25,32,32,0,9,...

...

Why is it important to have access to the test data?

Implications

The function insert preserves an ordered list:

```
implies :: Bool -> Bool -> Bool
```

```
implies x y = not x || y
```

```
insertPreservesOrdered :: Int -> [Int] -> Bool
```

```
insertPreservesOrdered x xs = sorted xs `implies` sorted (insert x xs)
```

Implications – contd.

```
> quickCheck insertPreservesOrdered
```

```
OK, passed 100 tests.
```

Implications – contd.

```
> quickCheck insertPreservesOrdered
```

OK, passed 100 tests.

But:

```
> quickCheck (\x xs -> collect (sorted xs)
                                   (insertPreservesOrdered x xs))
```

OK, passed 100 tests.

88% False

12% True

For **88** test cases, insert has not actually been relevant!

Implications – contd.

The solution is to use the QuickCheck implication operator:

```
(==>) :: Testable prop => Bool -> prop -> Property
```

```
insertPreservesOrdered :: Int -> [Int] -> Property
```

```
insertPreservesOrdered x xs = sorted xs ==> sorted (insert x xs)
```

Now, lists that are not sorted are discarded and do not contribute towards the goal of 100 test cases

Implications – contd.

We can now easily run into a new problem:

```
insertPreservesOrdered      :: Int -> [Int] -> Property
insertPreservesOrdered x xs =
    length xs > 2 && sorted xs ==> sorted (insert x xs)
```

We try to ensure that lists are not too short, but:

```
> quickCheck (\x xs -> collect (sorted xs)
                               (insertPreservesOrdered x xs))
```

Arguments exhausted after 20 tests (100% True).

The chance that a random list is sorted is extremely small

Custom generators

- Generators belong to an abstract data type Gen
 - The only effect available to us is access to random numbers
 - Think of as a restricted version of IO
- We can define our own generators using another domain-specific language
 - The default generators for datatypes are specified by defining instances of class Arbitrary

```
class Arbitrary a where
  arbitrary :: Gen a
  ...
```

Generator combinators

```
choose      :: Random a => (a,a) -> Gen a
oneof       :: [Gen a] -> Gen a
frequency   :: [(Int, Gen a)] -> Gen a
elements    :: [a] -> Gen a
sized       :: (Int -> Gen a) -> Gen a
```

Simple generators

```
instance Arbitrary Bool where
  arbitrary = choose (False, True)
```

```
instance (Arbitrary a, Arbitrary b)
  => Arbitrary (a,b) where
  arbitrary = do x <- arbitrary
                y <- arbitrary
                return (x,y)
  -- arbitrary = (,) <$> arbitrary <*> arbitrary
```

```
data Dir = North | East | South | West
```

```
instance Arbitrary Dir where
  arbitrary = elements [North, East, South, West]
```

Generating random numbers

- A simple possibility:

```
instance Arbitrary Int where  
  arbitrary = choose (-20,20)
```

- Better:

```
instance Arbitrary Int where  
  arbitrary = sized (\n -> choose (-n,n))
```

- QuickCheck automatically increases the size gradually

How to generate sorted lists

Idea: Adapt the default generator for lists

The following function turns a list of integers into a sorted list of integers:

```
mkSorted :: [Int] -> [Int]
mkSorted []      = []
mkSorted [x]     = [x]
mkSorted (x:y:ys) = x : mkSorted ((x + abs y : ys))
```

For example:

```
> mkSorted [1,2,-3,4]
[1,3,6,10]
```

The generator can be adapted as follows:

```
genSorted :: Gen [Int]
genSorted = do xs <- arbitrary
              return (mkSorted xs)
-- genSorted = mkSorted <$> arbitrary
```

Using a custom generator

There is another function to construct properties provided by QuickCheck, passing an explicit generator:

```
forall :: (Show a, Testable b)
        => Gen a -> (a -> b) -> Property
```

This is how we use it:

```
insertPreservesOrdered :: Int -> Property
insertPreservesOrdered x = forall genSorted (\xs ->
    length xs > 2 && sorted xs ==> sorted (insert x xs))
```


The other method in `Arbitrary` is:

```
shrink :: (Arbitrary a) => a -> [a]
```

- Maps each value to structurally smaller values
 - `[2,3]` is structurally smaller than `[1,2,3]`
- When a failing test case is discovered, QuickCheck shrinks repeatedly until no smaller failing test case can be obtained

- Haskell can deal with infinite values, and so can QuickCheck
 - Properties must *not* inspect infinitely many values
 - Solution: only inspect finite parts
- QuickCheck can also generate functional values
 - Requires defining an instance of another class `Coarbitrary`
 - Showing functional values is still problematic
- QuickCheck has facilities for testing properties that involve IO

QuickCheck is a great tool:

- A domain-specific language for writing properties
- Test data is generated automatically and randomly
- Another domain-specific language to write custom generators

However, keep in mind that writing good tests still requires practice, and that tests can have bugs, too

Correctness

Correctness as a goal

Testing **cannot** prove the absence of bugs

- Only point at failing cases

Are there ways to prove your code correct?

Equational reasoning

1. Write a bunch of properties that specify your algorithm
2. Prove that they hold using equational reasoning
3. You are done!

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Caveats

- Time-consuming, needs lots of manual work
- Laziness and exceptions are not taken care of
 - Proofs only work for finite values

Help you proving properties about your program

- Check that every inference step is correct
- Fill in boring and obvious proofs

Some interactive theorem provers:

- Coq (blame the French for the name!)
- Isabelle/HOL

More expressive types

Define the type of your function in such a way that only correct implementations are allowed

```
append :: List n a -> List m a -> List (n + m) a
```

1. Dependent types

- Allow values to appear in types
- Examples: Agda, Idris, Coq

2. Refinement types

- Attach predicates to types
- Example: LiquidHaskell

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Learn about them in *Advanced FP*!

Theorems for free

How many implementations are of these signatures?

$f :: a \rightarrow a$

$g :: (a, b) \rightarrow (b, a)$

Theorems for free

How many implementations are of these signatures?

```
f :: a -> a
```

```
g :: (a, b) -> (b, a)
```

Only one!

```
f x      = x      -- identity function
```

```
g (x, y) = (y, x) -- swap pair
```

Types are enough to determine many properties of the implementation

- We call those *free theorems*