

# Save-the-word Haskell

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## 1. The easiest way: Haskell platform

### (a) GHC: the most widely used Haskell compiler.

How to use:

- Start (use them both, one by one):  
`ghci`  
`:set prompt "ghci> "`
- Load up a file (provided **myfunctions.hs**):  
`:l myfunctions`
- Reload:  
`:r`

## 2. Basic knowledge

### (a) Always surround a negative number with parentheses.

### (b) inequality symbol:

`/=`

(watch out for the difference between `4` and `"4"`)

### (c) function

- Functions are called by writing the function name, a space and then the parameters, separated by spaces. For examples,  
`min 9 10`  
So,  
`bar (bar 3)` means `bar(bar(3))` in C.  
And there is no `bar(bar 3)` in Haskell.
- Function application has the highest precedence, which means these two statements are equivalent:  
`succ 9 + max 5 4 + 1`  
`(succ 9) + (max 5 4) + 1`
- If a function takes two parameters, we can also call it as an infix function by surrounding it with backticks.  
`div 92 10`  
`92 `div` 10`
- Write your own functions:
  - how to make functions (contents in **myfilename.hs**):  
`doubleMe x = x + x`

– how to make use of it:

```
:l myfilename
doubleMe 9
```

– some examples:

```
doubleMe x = x + x
doubleUs x y = x*2 + y*2
```

(by having these, we can also run:  
doubleUs 28 88 + doubleMe 123)

(we can also redefine the function doubleUs as:  
doubleUs x y = doubleMe x + doubleMe y)

– Functions in Haskell don't have to be in any particular order, so it doesn't matter if you define doubleMe first and then doubleUs or if you do it the other way around.

– if statement:

```
doubleSmallNumber x = if x > 100
.....then x
.....else x*2
```

(Each '.' indicates a space. Because I fail to create spaces :P)

\* the else part is mandatory in Haskell.

\* if statement in Haskell is an expression:

```
doubleSmallNumber' x = (if x > 100 then x else x*2)
+ 1
```

**notes:** That apostrophe (') doesn't have any special meaning. It's ok in a function name. We usually use ' to either denote a strict version of a function (one that isn't lazy) or a slightly modified version of a function or a variable.

– what is more:

\* Functions can't begin with uppercase letters.

\* When a function doesn't take any parameters, we usually say it's a definition (or a name):

```
conanO'Brien = "It's a-me, Conan O'Brien!"
```

(d) lists

- elements need to be of the same type

- make a list:

```
let lostNumbers = [4,8,15,16,23,42]
```

(Doing let a = 1 inside GHCi is the equivalent of writing a = 1 in a script and then loading it.)

- strings are lists of characters

- putting two lists together:

- `[1,2,3,4] ++ [9,10,11,12]`  
(take a while if the left one is too big)
- `'A': " SMALL CAT"`  
(instantaneous)
- `:` takes a number and a list of numbers or a character and a list of characters, whereas `++` takes two lists.

(So if you're adding an element to the end of a list with `++`, you have to surround it with square brackets so it becomes a list.)

(`[1,2,3]` means `1:2:3:[]` or `1:2:[3]`)

- `[]`, `[]` and `[]`, `[]`, `[]` are different:  
an empty list  
a list that contains one empty list  
a list that contains three empty lists