

Abstract Interpretation

Software Quality Assurance - Static Code Analysis, II | Florian Sihler | December 11, 2024

1. The Why

The Why

```
public static void main(String[] args) {  
    int a = 1;  
    double r = Math.random() * 10;  
    if (r > 5) {  
        a = 2;  
    }  
    System.out.println(a);  
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- We want to proof, that a program satisfies certain properties

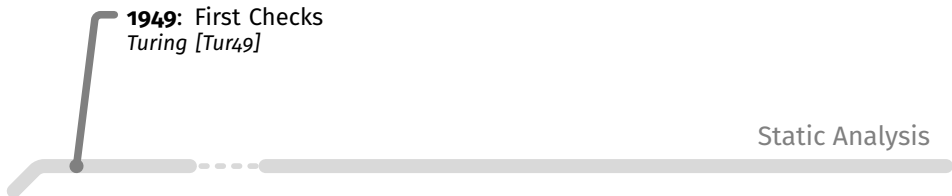
Origins

Static Analysis



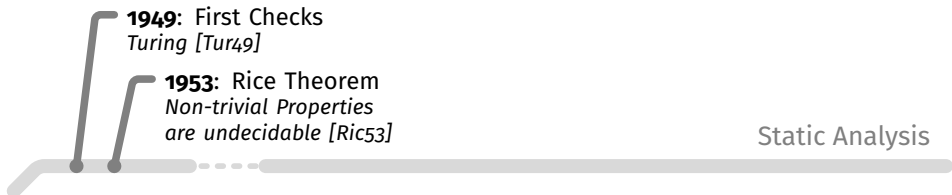
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Origins



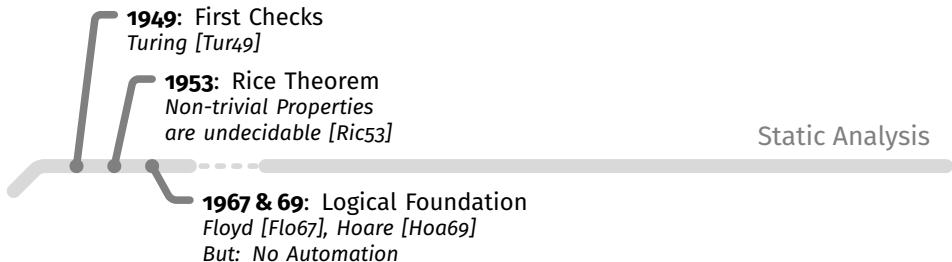
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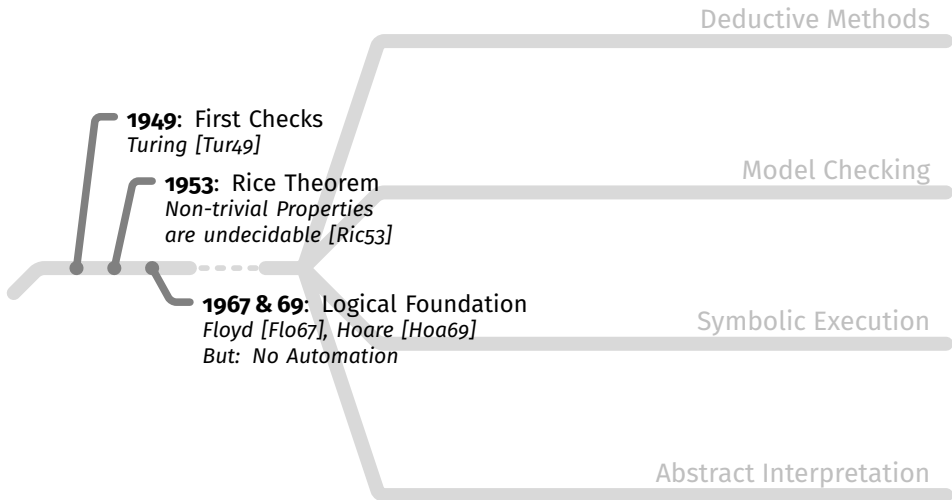
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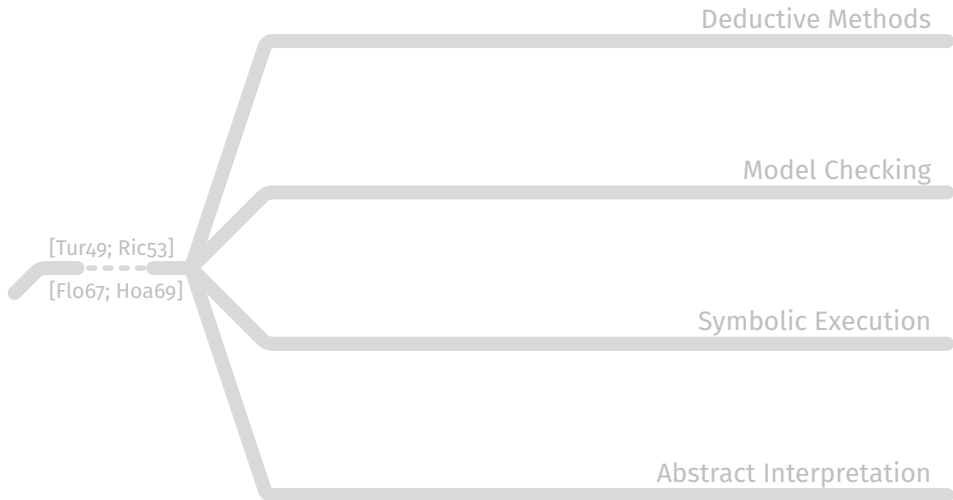
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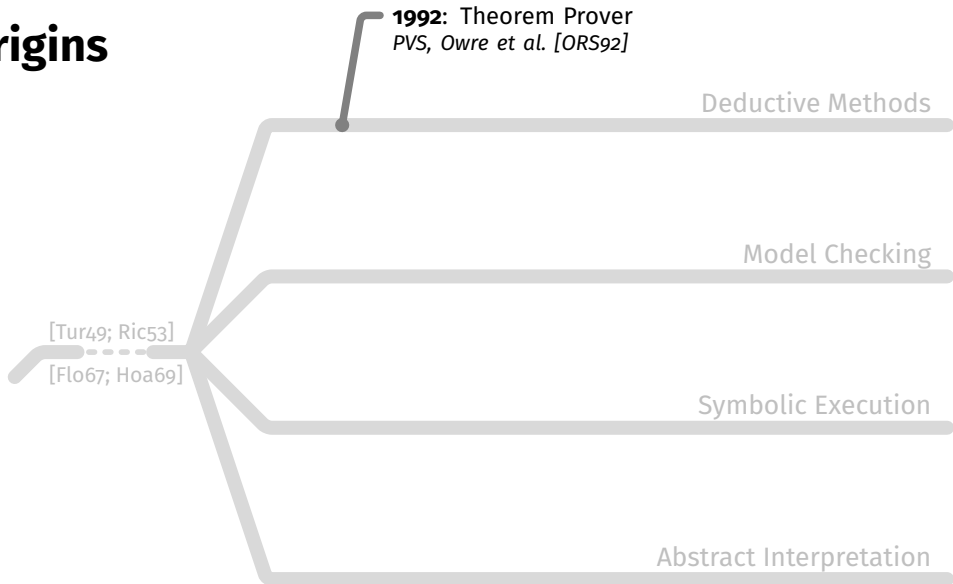
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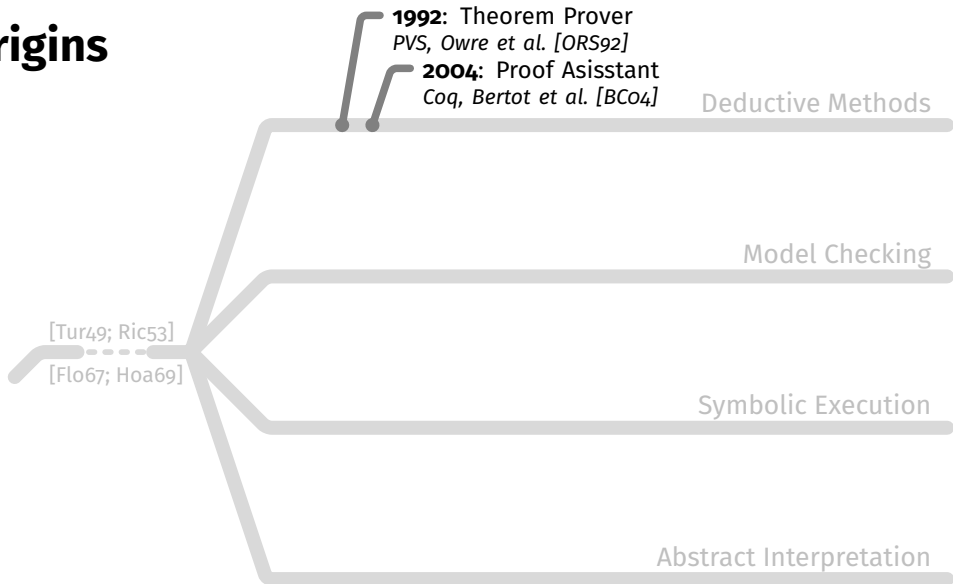
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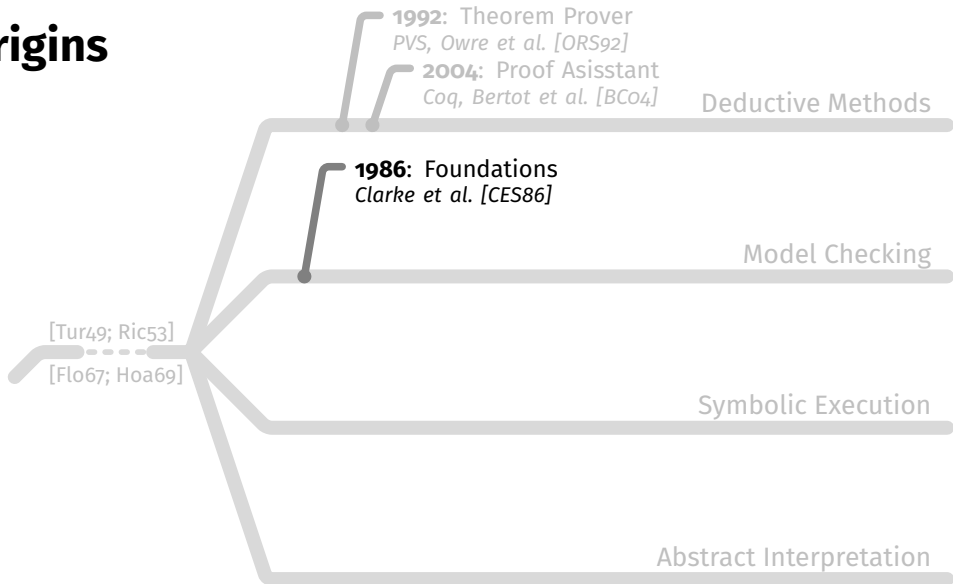
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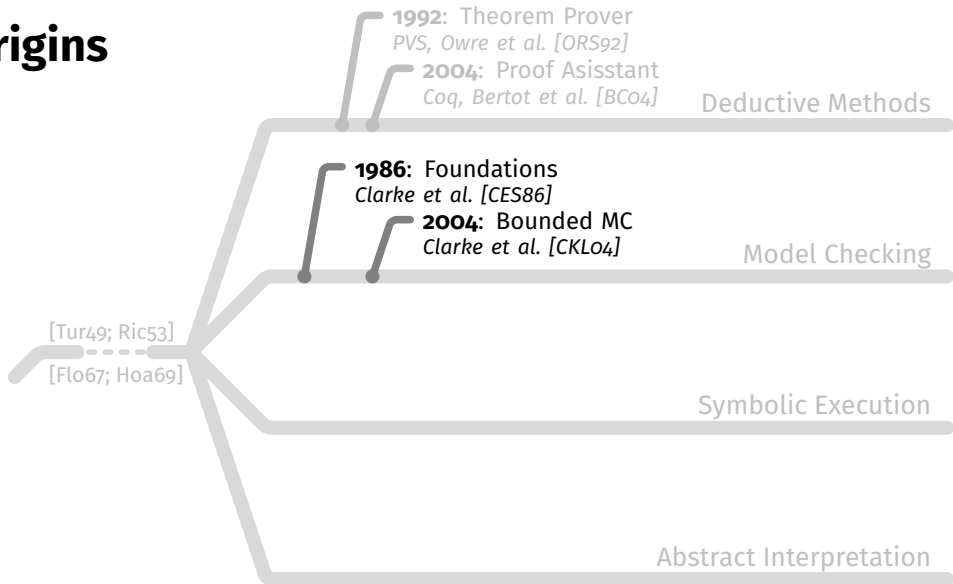
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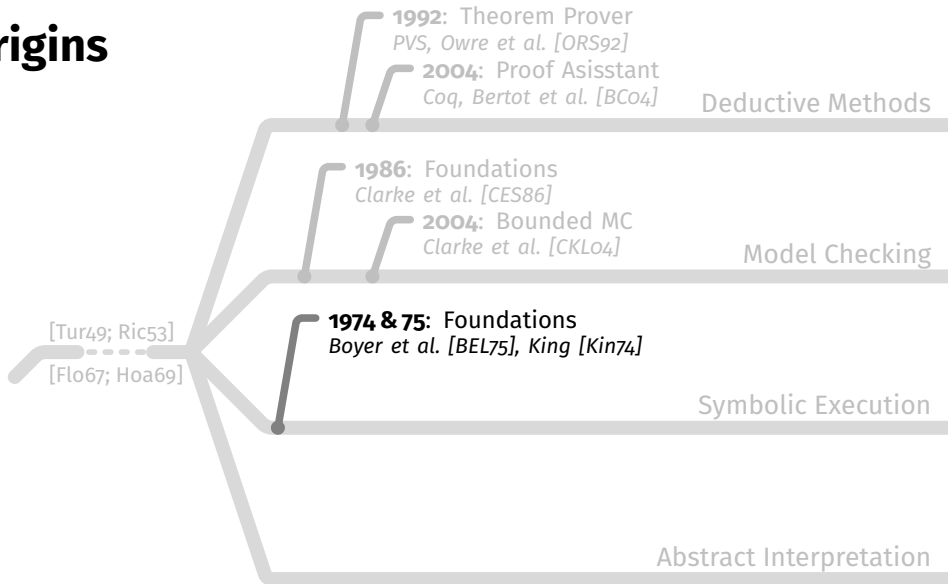
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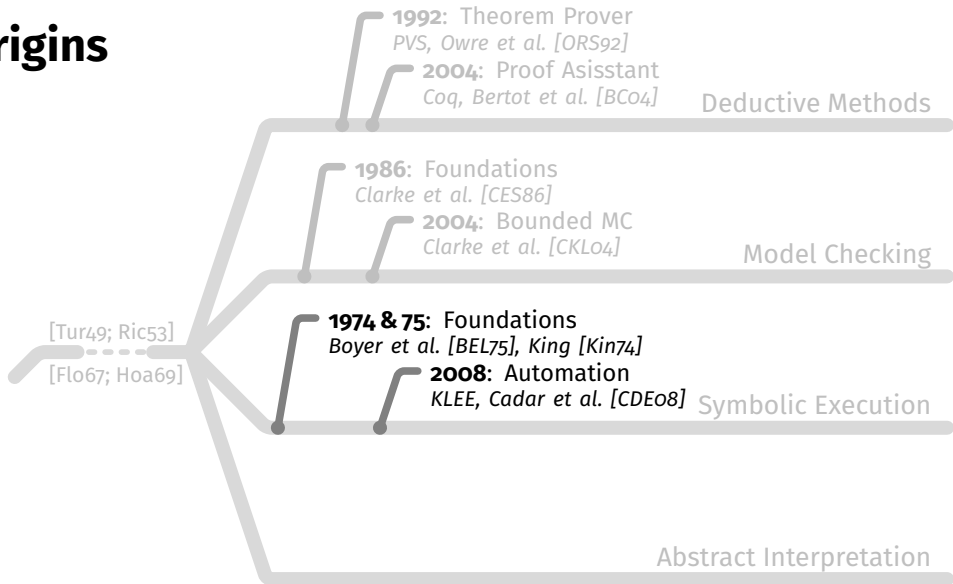
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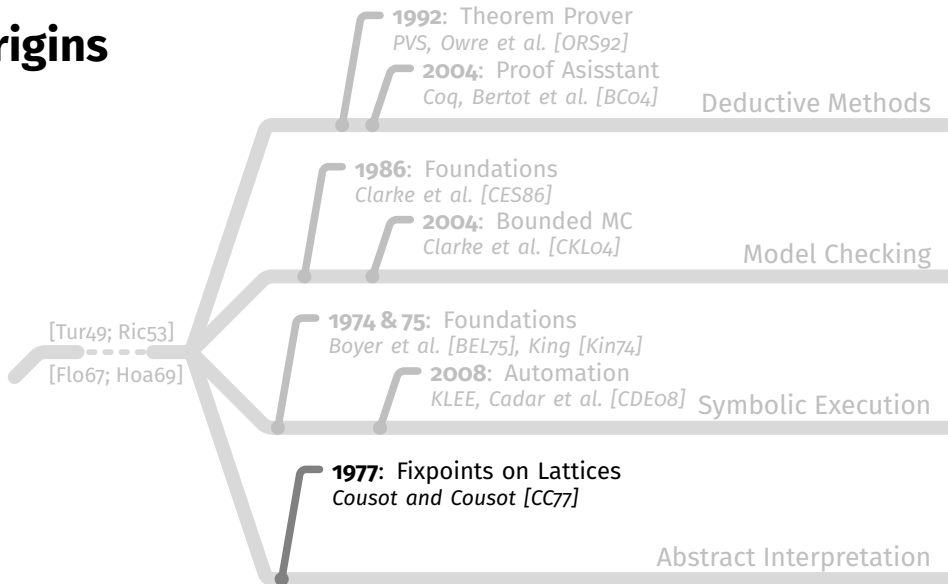
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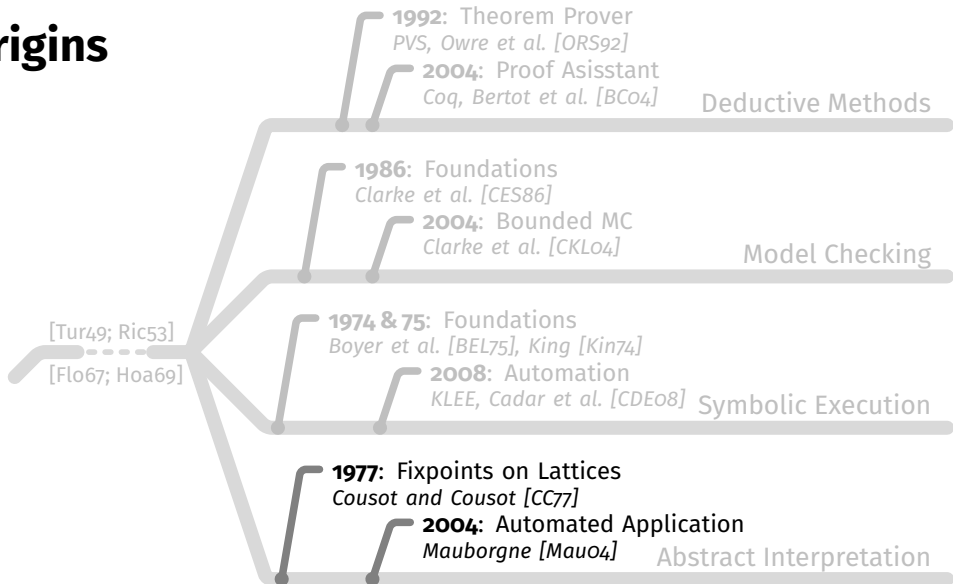
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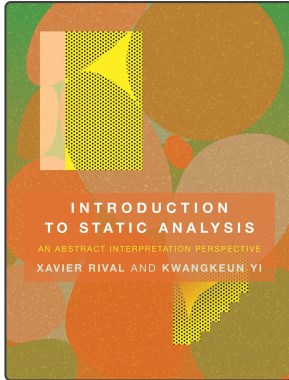
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Recommended Resources

And for an overview: “Tutorial on Static Inference of Numeric Invariants by Abstract Interpretation” [Min17]

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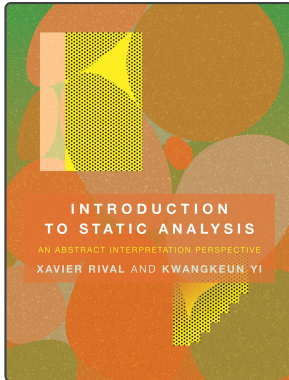
Using Analyses [RY20]



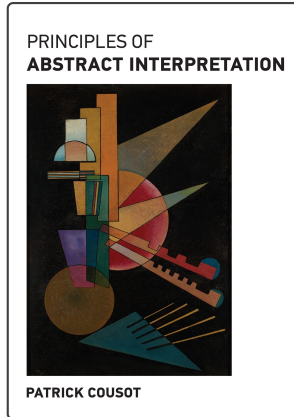
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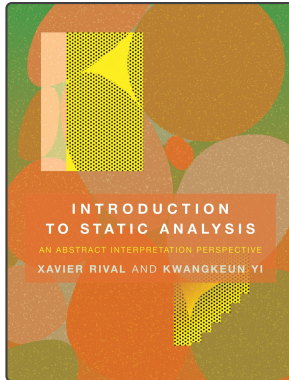
Formal Foundations [Cou21]



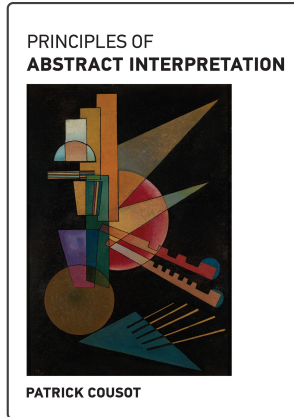
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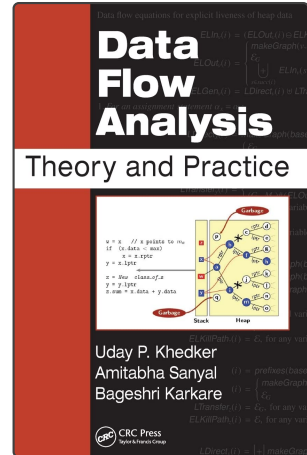
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Formal Foundations [Cou21]



Dataflow Perspective [KSK09]



And for an overview: "Tutorial on Static Inference of Numeric Invariants by Abstract Interpretation" [Min17]

2. The How

Abstract Interpretation

Abstract Interpretation

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- We want to proof interesting properties of programs

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Abstract Interpretation

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- *Dataflow Properties*
Liveness, Fainting, Reaching Definitions, ...

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# Abstract Interpretation



See "A casual introduction to Abstract Interpretation" [Cou12]

# Concrete Interpretation



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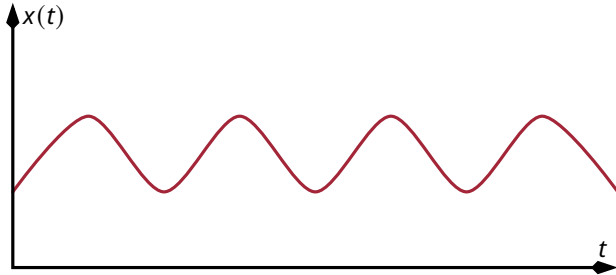
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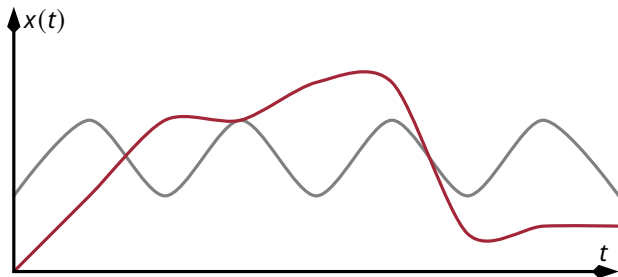


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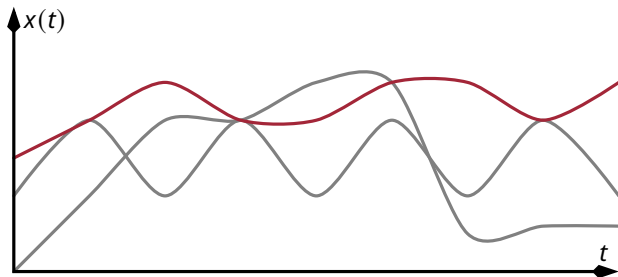
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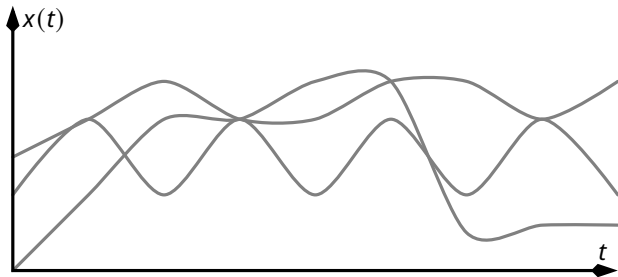
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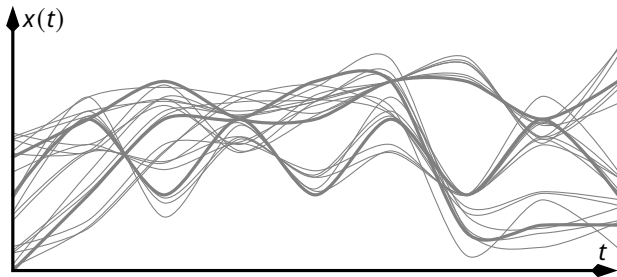
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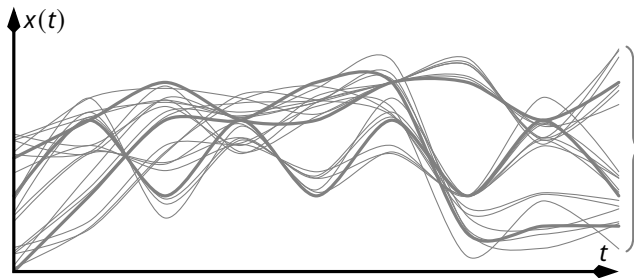
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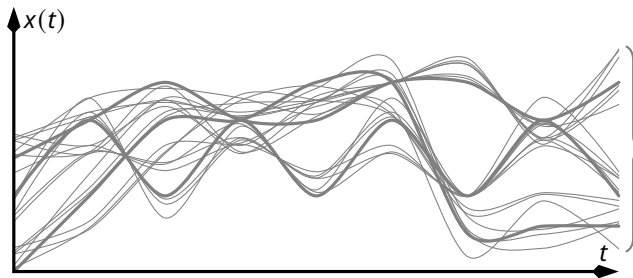
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} Collecting Semantics<sup>[Cou21, p. 91]</sup>

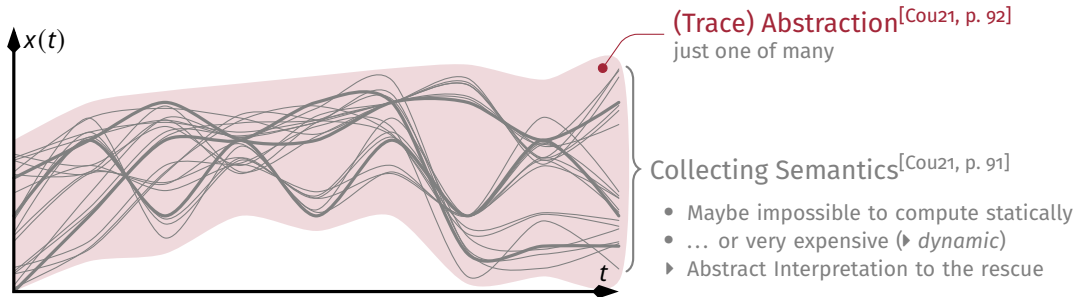
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Collecting Semantics<sup>[Cou21, p. 91]</sup>

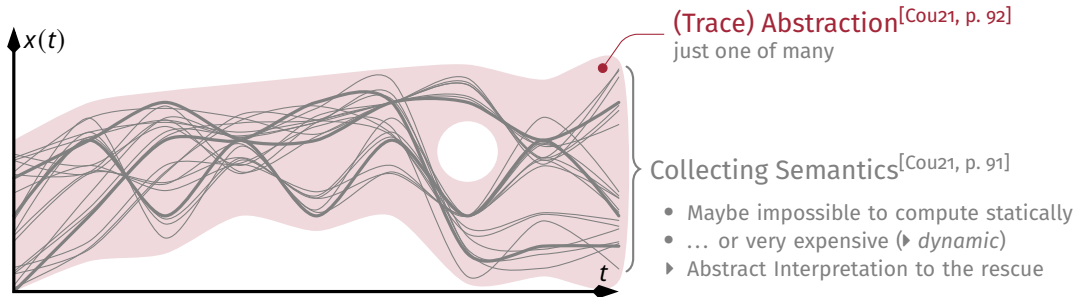
- Maybe impossible to compute statically
- ... or very expensive (► *dynamic*)
- Abstract Interpretation to the rescue

# Abstract Interpretation

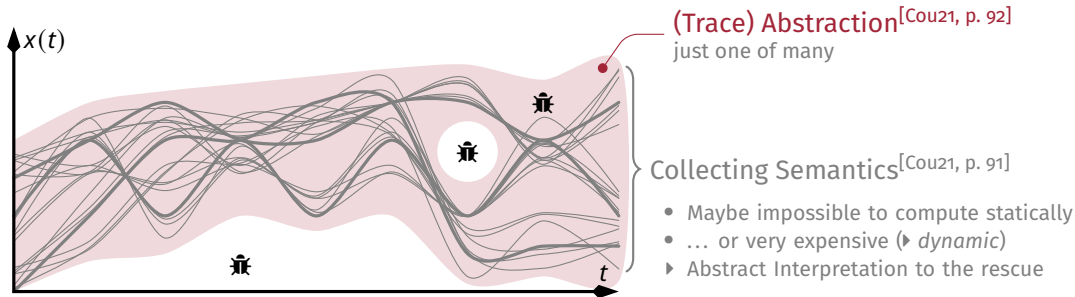




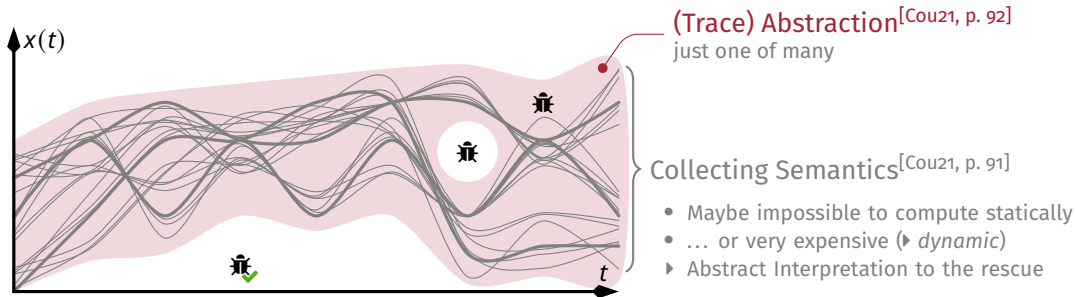
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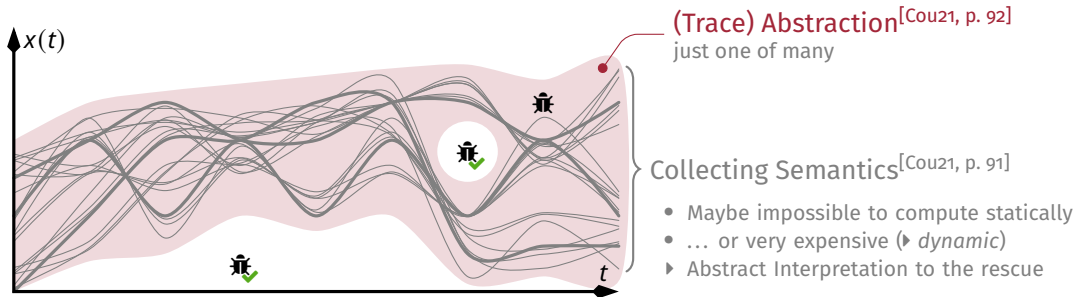
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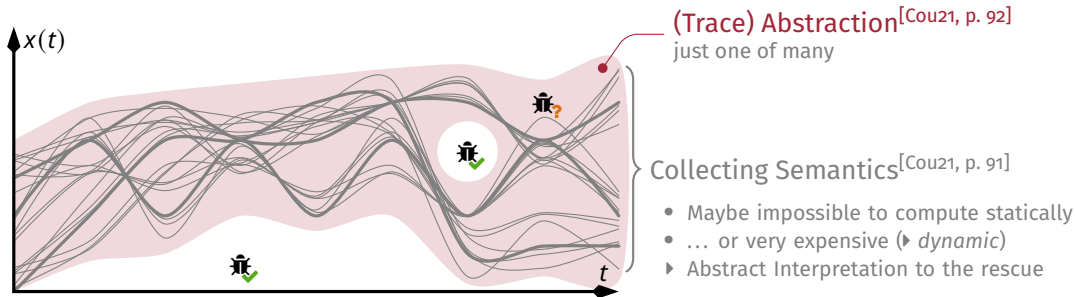


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# Terminology

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Even integers:  $P = \{ z \in \mathbb{Z} \mid \exists k \in \mathbb{Z} : z = 2k \} = \{ 0, 2, 4, 6, \dots \} \subseteq \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{Z})$



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↖ universe ( $\mathbb{U}$ )

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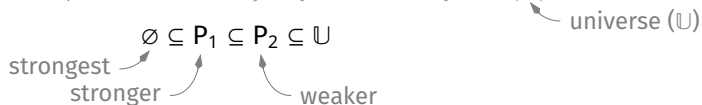
strongest  $\nearrow$   
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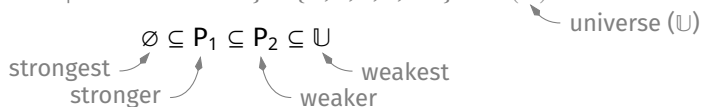
- **Partial Order** — A reflexive, transitive, antisymmetric relation on a set



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universe ( $U$ )

$$\forall x, y, z \in X : x \sqsubseteq y \wedge y \sqsubseteq z \implies x \sqsubseteq z$$

$\forall x \in X : x \sqsubseteq x$  (pointing to the first  $x$ )

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( $\mathbb{Z}, \leq$ )

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- **Partial Order** — A reflexive, transitive, antisymmetric relation on a set

$(\mathbb{Z}, \leq), (\mathcal{P}(\mathbb{Z}), \subseteq), \dots$

# Terminology

- **Property** — Set of states/traces that satisfy that property

Even integers:  $P = \{z \in \mathbb{Z} \mid \exists k \in \mathbb{Z} : z = 2k\} = \{0, 2, 4, 6, \dots\} \subseteq \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{Z})$

universe ( $\mathbb{U}$ )

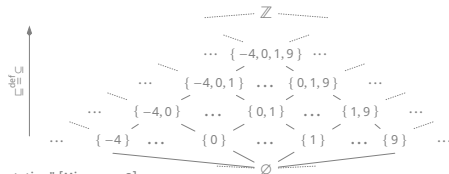


$$\forall x, y, z \in X : x \sqsubseteq y \wedge y \sqsubseteq z \implies x \sqsubseteq z$$

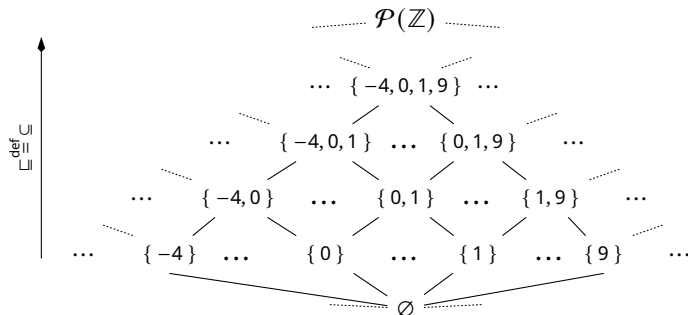
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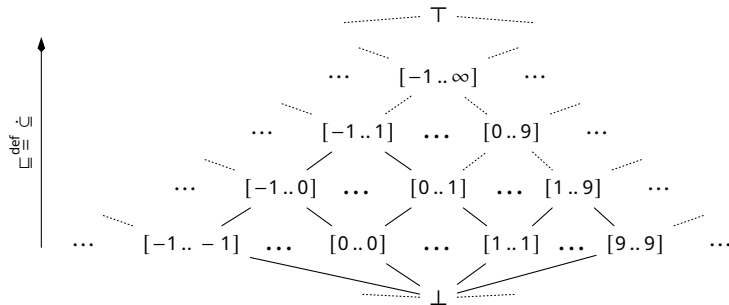
$(\mathbb{Z}, \leq), (\mathcal{P}(\mathbb{Z}), \subseteq), \dots$



# Chains and Lattices

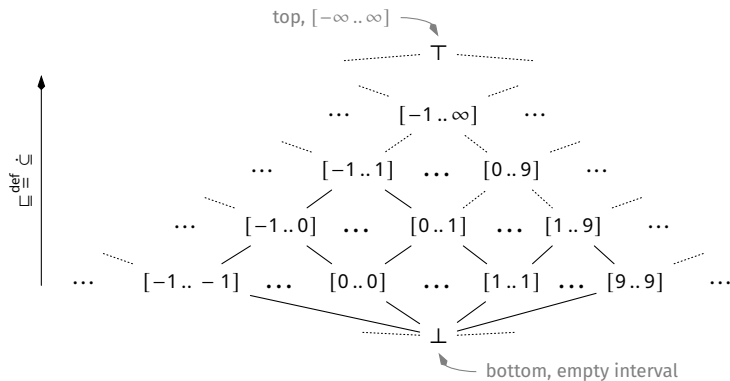


# Chains and Lattices

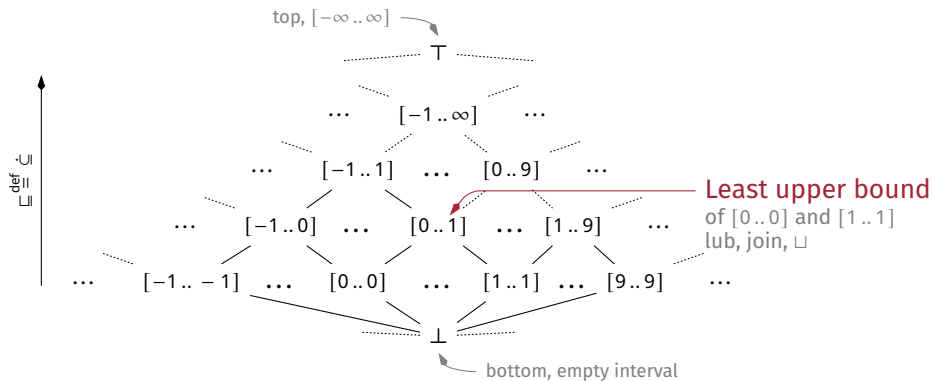




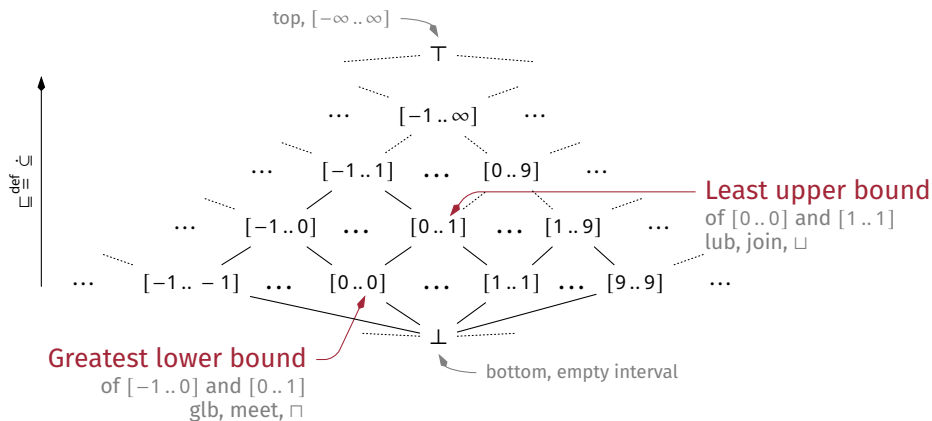
# Chains and Lattices



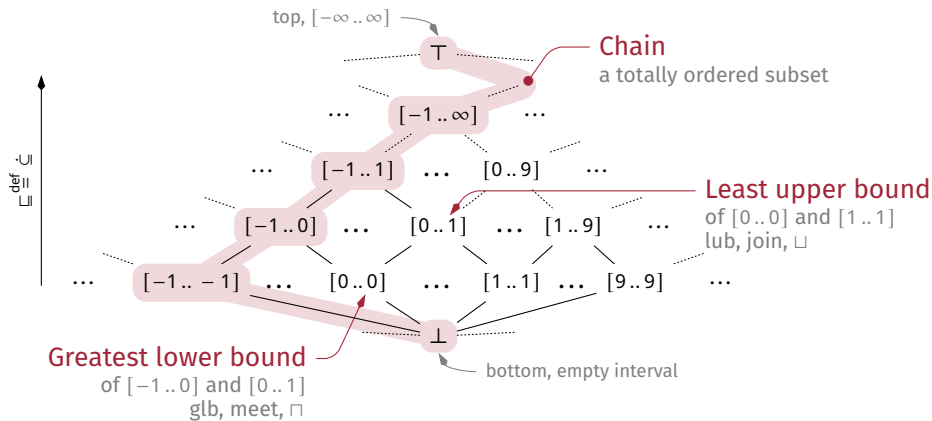
# Chains and Lattices



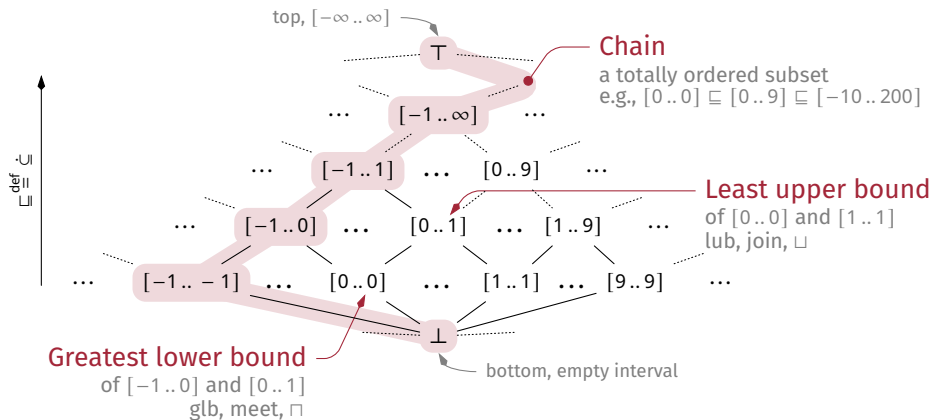
# Chains and Lattices



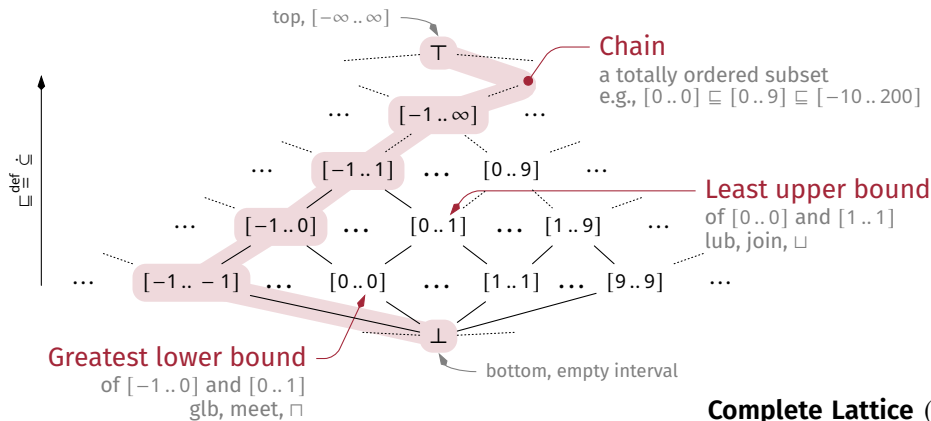
# Chains and Lattices



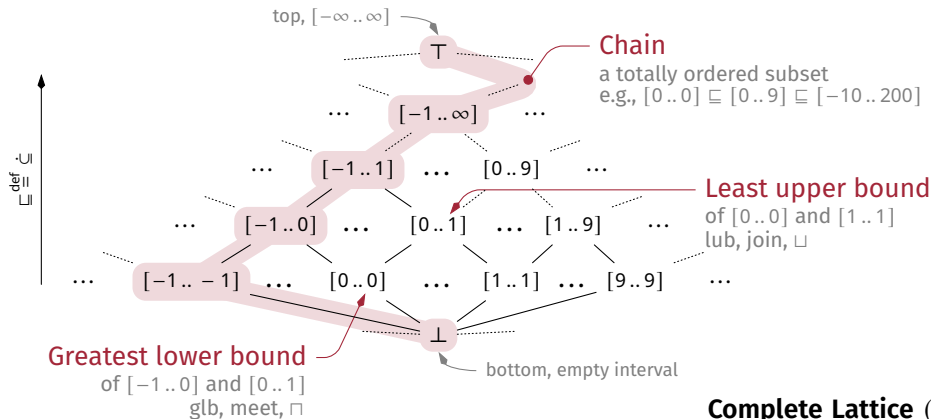
# Chains and Lattices



# Chains and Lattices



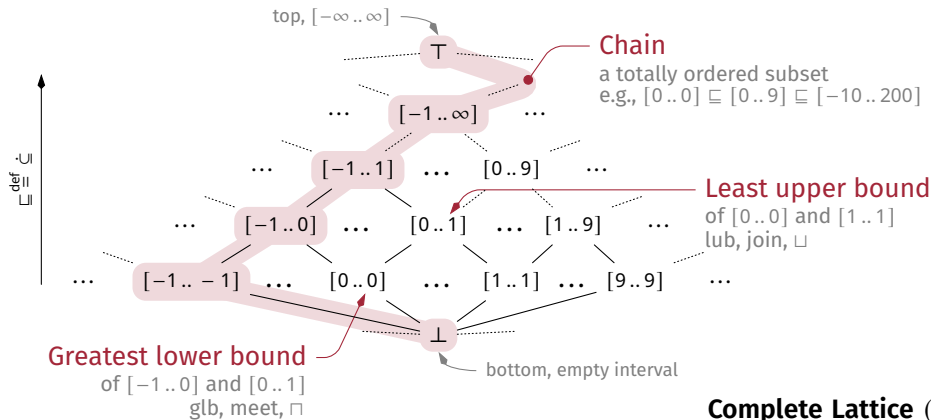
# Chains and Lattices



**Complete Lattice**  $(X, \sqsubseteq, \sqcup, \sqcap, \perp, \top)$

- $(X, \sqsubseteq)$  is a partial order

# Chains and Lattices

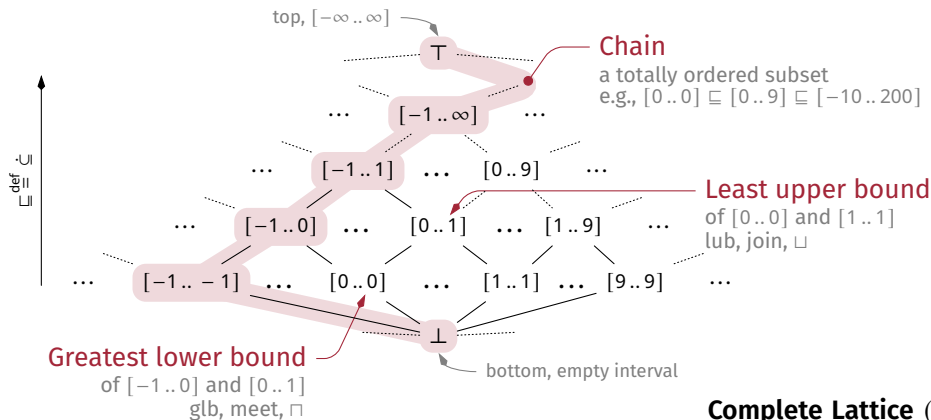


**Complete Lattice**  $(X, \sqsubseteq, \sqcup, \sqcap, \perp, \top)$

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# Chains and Lattices

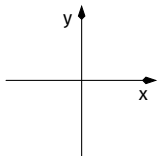


**Complete Lattice**  $(X, \sqsubseteq, \sqcup, \sqcap, \perp, \top)$

- $(X, \sqsubseteq)$  is a partial order
- $\forall A \subseteq X : \sqcup A$  and  $\sqcap A$  exist
- $\perp / \top$  as smallest/largest element

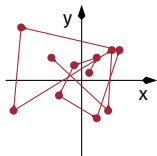
# Abstract Domains

# Numerical



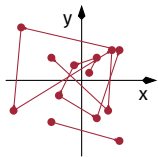
# Abstract Domains

# Numerical



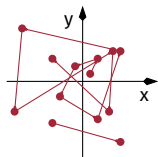
# Abstract Domains

# Numerical



# Abstract Domains

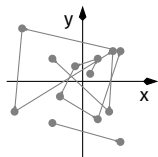
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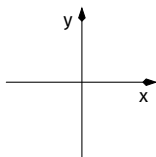
Collecting Semantics

# Abstract Domains

# Numerical

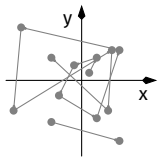


Collecting Semantics

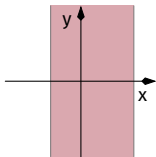


# Abstract Domains

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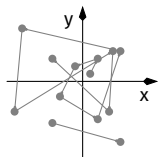


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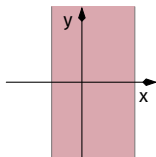


# Abstract Domains

# Numerical



Collecting Semantics

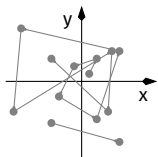


Intervals  $x \in [a..b]$

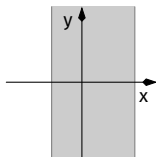


# Abstract Domains

# Numerical



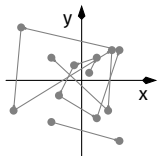
Collecting Semantics



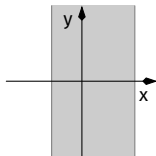
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# Abstract Domains

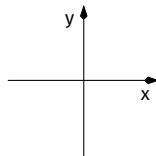
# Numerical



Collecting Semantics

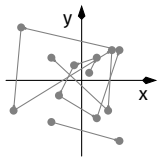


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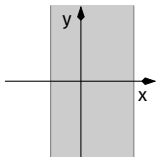


# Abstract Domains

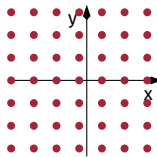
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Collecting Semantics



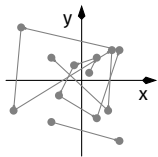
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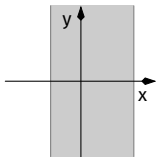
Simple Congruences

# Abstract Domains

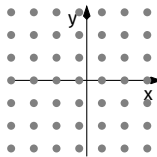
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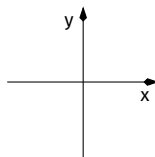
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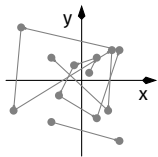


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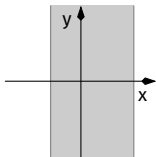


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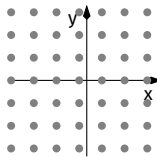
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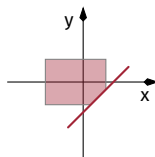
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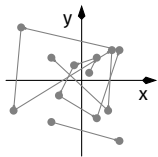
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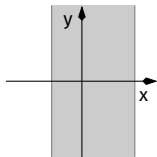
Pentagons

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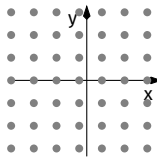
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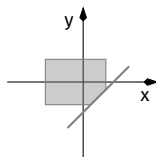
Collecting Semantics



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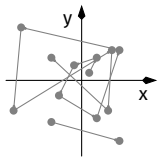
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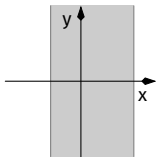
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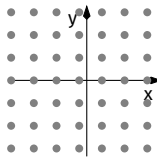
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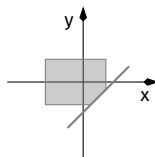
Collecting Semantics



Intervals  $x \in [a..b]$



Simple Congruences

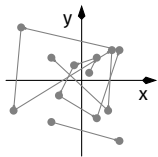


Pentagons

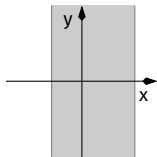
- Octagons

# Abstract Domains

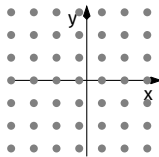
# Numerical



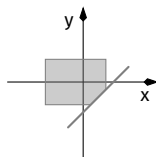
Collecting Semantics



Intervals  $x \in [a..b]$



Simple Congruences



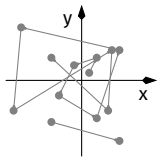
Pentagons

- Octagons
- Ellipses

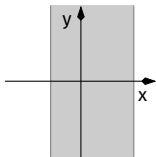


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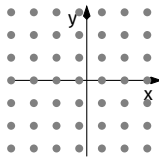
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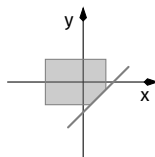
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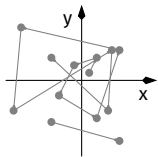


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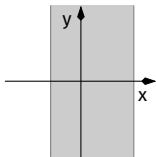
- Octagons
- Ellipses
- Exponentials

# Abstract Domains

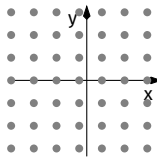
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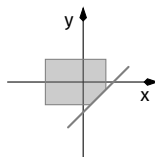
Collecting Semantics



Intervals  $x \in [a..b]$



Simple Congruences



Pentagons

- Octagons

- Ellipses

- Exponentials

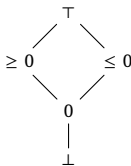
- Signs

# Sign Analysis

# Simple Sign Domain

# Sign Analysis

## Simple Sign Domain

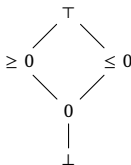


# Sign Analysis

## Simple Sign Domain

- We still have no program semantics, but we can try...

```
int a = 0;
int b = 12;
int c = a + b;
int d = c - b;
```

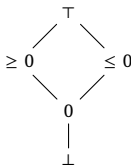


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int b = 12;
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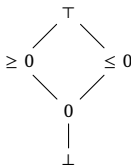


# Sign Analysis

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```
int a = 0; { a = 0 }
int b = 12; { b ≥ 0 }
int c = a + b;
int d = c - b;
```

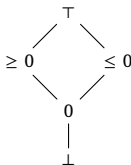


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|                             |                                       |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| <code>int b = 12;</code>    | $\{ b \geq 0 \}$                      |
| <code>int c = a + b;</code> | $\{ c \geq 0 \quad (= 0 + \geq 0) \}$ |
| <code>int d = c - b;</code> |                                       |



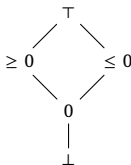


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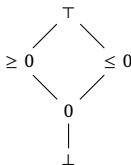
# Sign Analysis

## Simple Sign Domain

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| <code>int c = a + b;</code> | $\{ c \geq 0 \quad (= 0 + \geq 0) \}$    |
| <code>int d = c - b;</code> | $\{ d = \top \quad (\geq 0 - \geq 0) \}$ |

- But how to handle control flow? Loops? Recursion?



# Fixpoints

"A lattice-theoretical fixpoint theorem and its applications." [Tar55], "Introduction to metamathematics" [Kle52], "Principles of Abstract Interpretation" [Cou21, p. 165]

# Fixpoints

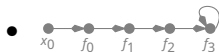
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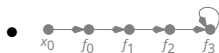
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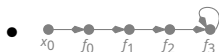
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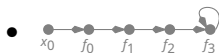
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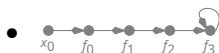
reach a fixpoint,  $f^p = f(f^p)$



reach a cycle,  $f^{p+\ell} = f^p, \ell > 0$

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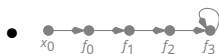
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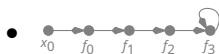


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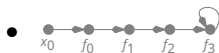
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- If our function is monotonic, we can always find a fixpoint<sup>[Tar55]</sup>

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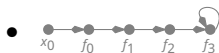
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Tarski's Theorem

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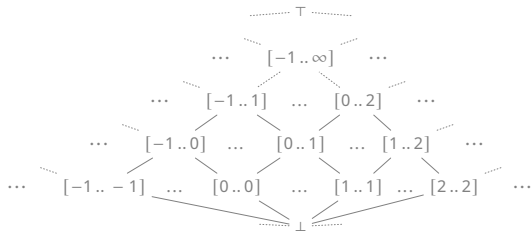
- Analyzing, e.g. loops, we “go up” the lattice until we reach a least fixpoint

# Interval Analysis, I

```
int x = 0;
while(x < 2) {
 x = x + 1;
}
```

# Interval Analysis, I

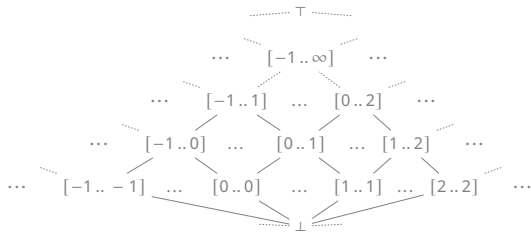
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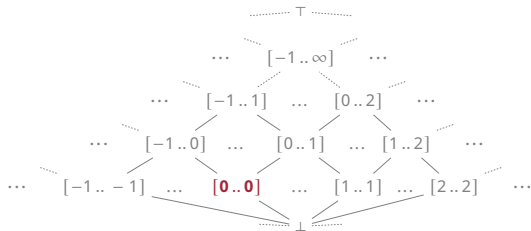
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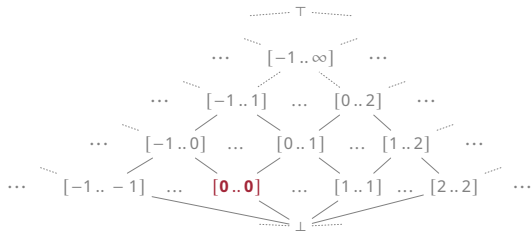
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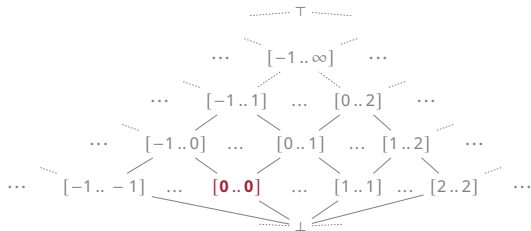
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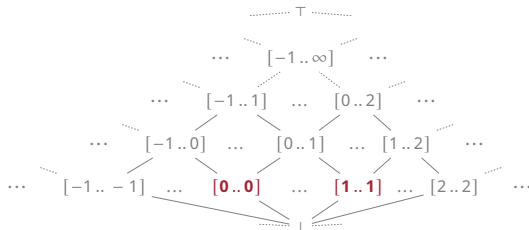
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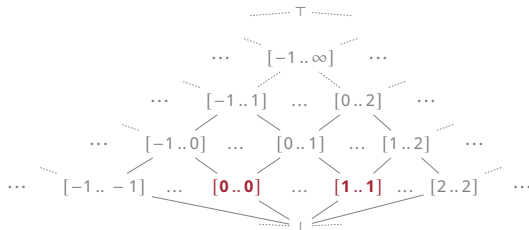
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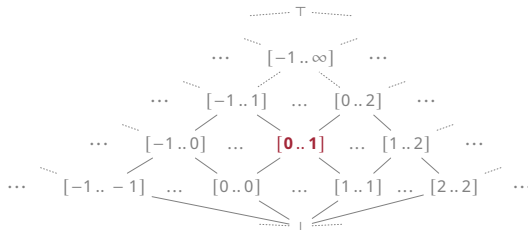
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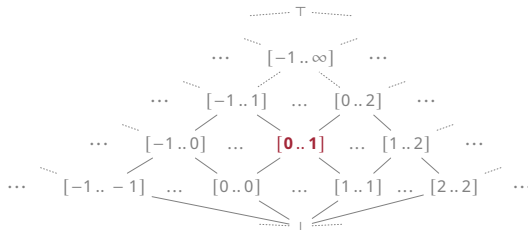
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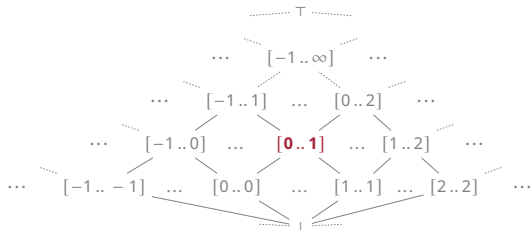
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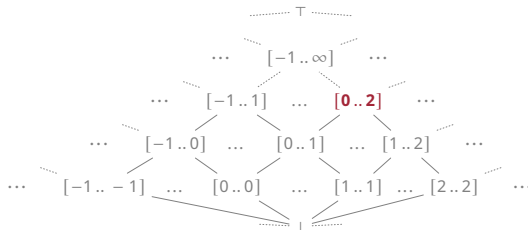
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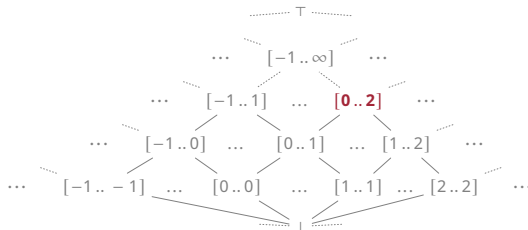
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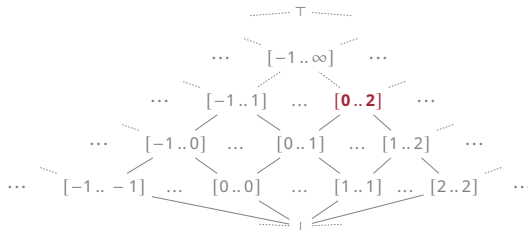
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Intervals

$\{ x_0 \in [0 .. 0] \}$   
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Signs

$\{ x_0 = 0 \}$   
 $\{ [\text{pre}] x_1 \geq 0 \}$   
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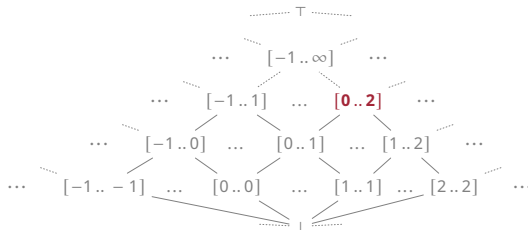
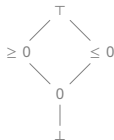
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# 3. Semantics

# Semantics





```
int x = 0;

while(x < 2) {

 x = x + 1;

}
```

# Semantics

## Program Syntax (simplified)

Variable  $v \in \mathbb{V}$

```
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```

# Semantics

# Program Syntax (simplified)

Variable  $v \in \mathbb{V}$   
Assignment

```
int x = 0;
```

```
while(x < 2) {
```

```
 x = x + 1;
```

```
}
```

# Semantics

# Program Syntax (simplified)

```
int x = 0;

while(x < 2) {

 x = x + 1;

}
```

Variable  $v \in \mathbb{V}$

Assignment

Numeric Constant  $c \in \mathbb{I}$

# Semantics

# Program Syntax (simplified)

Variable  $v \in \mathbb{V}$

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Sequence

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# Semantics

# Program Syntax (simplified)

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Variable  $v \in \mathbb{V}$

Assignment

Sequence

Loop

Numeric Constant  $c \in \mathbb{I}$

# Semantics

# Program Syntax (simplified)

Variable  $v \in \mathbb{V}$

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Loop

Comparison  $\bowtie \in \{\leq, <, \dots\}$

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int x = 0;
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Binary Expression

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# Semantics

# Program Syntax (simplified)

Variable  $v \in \mathbb{V}$   
Assignment  
Sequence  
Numeric Constant  $c \in \mathbb{I}$   
Loop  
Comparison  $\bowtie \in \{\leq, <, \dots\}$   
Binary Expression

```
int x = 0;
while(x < 2) {
 x = x + 1;
}
```

|             |       |                                             |                                                 |
|-------------|-------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <i>stm</i>  | $::=$ | $V \leftarrow \text{expr}$                  | (assignment, $V \in \mathbb{V}$ )               |
|             | $ $   | $\text{stm}_1; \text{stm}_2$                | (sequence)                                      |
|             | $ $   | <b>while</b> ( <i>cond</i> ) { <i>stm</i> } | (loop)                                          |
| <i>expr</i> | $::=$ | $V$                                         | (variable, $V \in \mathbb{V}$ )                 |
|             | $ $   | $c$                                         | (constant, $c \in \mathbb{I}$ )                 |
|             | $ $   | $\text{expr}_1 \diamond \text{expr}_2$      | (bin. expr., $\diamond \in \{+, -, \dots\}$ )   |
| <i>cond</i> | $::=$ | $b$                                         | (boolean, $b \in \mathbb{B}$ )                  |
|             | $ $   | $\text{expr}_1 \bowtie \text{expr}_2$       | (comparison, $\bowtie \in \{\leq, <, \dots\}$ ) |

# Atomic Expression Semantics

```
int x = 0;
while(x < 2) {
 x = x + 1;
}
```

|             |       |                          |                                               |
|-------------|-------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <i>expr</i> | $::=$ | $V$                      | (variable, $V \in \mathbb{V}$ )               |
|             | $ $   | $c$                      | (constant, $c \in \mathbb{I}$ )               |
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- We use an environment  $\mathcal{E} \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \mathbb{V} \rightarrow \mathbb{I}$  to represent the current program state

# Atomic Expression Semantics

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|             |     |                          |                                               |
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Variable 

# Atomic Expression Semantics

```
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}
```

|             |       |                          |                                               |
|-------------|-------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
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|             | $ $   | $c$                      | (constant, $c \in \mathbb{I}$ )               |
|             | $ $   | $expr_1 \diamond expr_2$ | (bin. expr., $\diamond \in \{+, -, \dots\}$ ) |

Variable  Integer Values 

- We use an environment  $\mathcal{E} \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \mathbb{V} \rightarrow \mathbb{I}$  to represent the current program state

# Atomic Expression Semantics

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|             |       |                          |                                               |
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Variable  $\swarrow$  Integer Values  $\swarrow$

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| $\mathbb{V}$ | $\mathbb{I}$ |
| $x$          | 0            |
| $c$          | 5            |

# Atomic Expression Semantics

```
int x = 0;
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```

|             |       |                          |                                               |
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- We use an environment  $\mathcal{E} \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \mathbb{V} \rightarrow \mathbb{I}$  to represent the current program state
- Now we can define  $\text{evalExpr}(expr, env)$  for an environment  $env \in \mathcal{E}$

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| $\mathbb{V}$ | $\mathbb{I}$ |
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# Atomic Expression Semantics

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Usually written as  $\mathbb{E} \llbracket expr \rrbracket \rho$
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$$\text{evalExpr}(V, env) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} env(V)$$

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| $\mathbb{V}$ | $\mathbb{I}$ |
|--------------|--------------|
| x            | 0            |
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$\mathbb{S} \llbracket stm \rrbracket \mathcal{D}$



# Denotational Semantics

## while loops

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**while**(*cond*) { *stm* }

Suppose we start the loop with states *Start*

↓  
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## while loops

Suppose we start the loop with states *Start*

$$\text{while}(\text{cond}) \{ \text{stm} \} \overset{\text{def}}{=} F(X) \text{ } \text{Start} \cup \text{evalStm}(\text{stm}, \text{evalCond}(\text{cond}, X))$$

iterate to find the least fixpoint [Min17, p. 52]

Suppose we start the loop with states  $Start$

$$\text{while}(\textcolor{red}{cond}) \{ \textcolor{red}{stm} \} \begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ F(X) \end{array} \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} Start \cup evalStm(\textcolor{red}{stm}, evalCond(\textcolor{red}{cond}, X))$$

iterate to find the least fixpoint [Min17, p. 52]

Keep only states  $S$  with  $evalCond(\neg \textcolor{red}{cond}, S)$

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There are alternatives (e.g., equation systems, [Cou21, part 7])

We achieve their abstract counterpart using the same principles but for abstract domains!

Usually written as  $S^\#, C^\#, E^\#, \dots$



# Interval Analysis, II

```
int x = 0;
while(x < 2) {
 x = x + 1;
}
```

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```
int x = 0;

while(x < 999999) {
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}
```

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```
int x = 0; { $x_0 \in [0..0]$ }

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```
int x = 0; { $x_0 \in [0..0]$ }
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 x = x + 1; { [in] $x_2 \in [0..0] \quad ([0..0] \cap (-\infty..1])$ }
}
```

# Interval Analysis, II

|                                     |                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <code>int x = 0;</code>             | $\{ x_0 \in [0 .. 0] \}$                                                  |
| <code>while(x &lt; 999999) {</code> | $\{ \text{[pre]} x_1 \in [0 .. 0] \}$                                     |
| <code>x = x + 1;</code>             | $\{ \text{[in]} x_2 \in [0 .. 0] \quad ([0 .. 0] \cap (-\infty .. 1]) \}$ |
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|                                     |                                                                                                    |
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| <code>}</code>                      | $\{ x_3 \in [1..2] \quad ([0..1] \oplus [1..1]) \}$                                                |
|                                     | $\{ [post] x_4 \in [999999.. \infty) \quad ([0.. \infty) \cap [999999.. \infty)) \}$               |

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# 4. Soundness and Completeness

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- We can not solve the halting problem
- We have to approximate the reality



# The Confusion Matrix




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**Prediction**  E.g., do we claim there is an error?

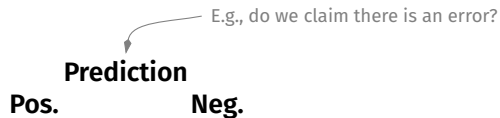
# The Confusion Matrix

**Prediction**  
**Pos.**

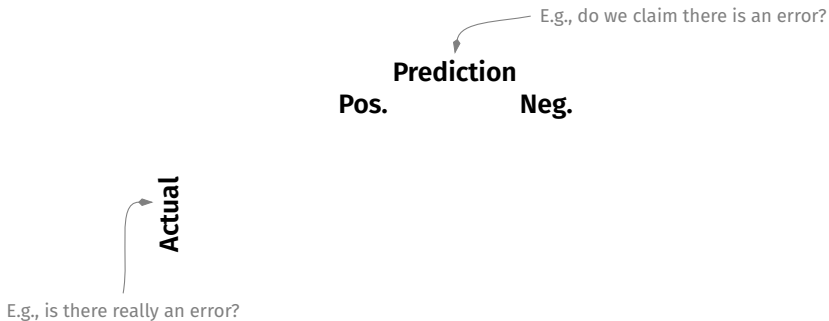
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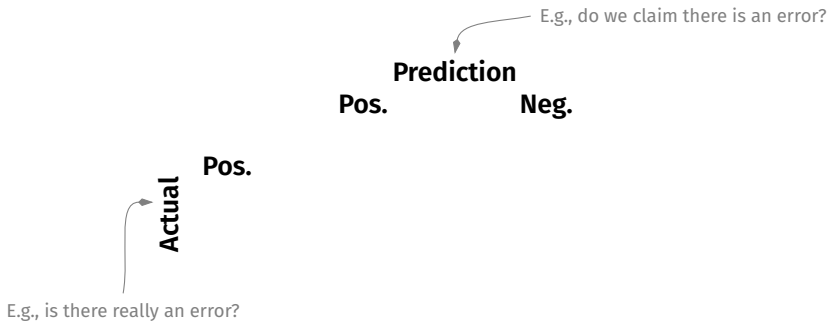
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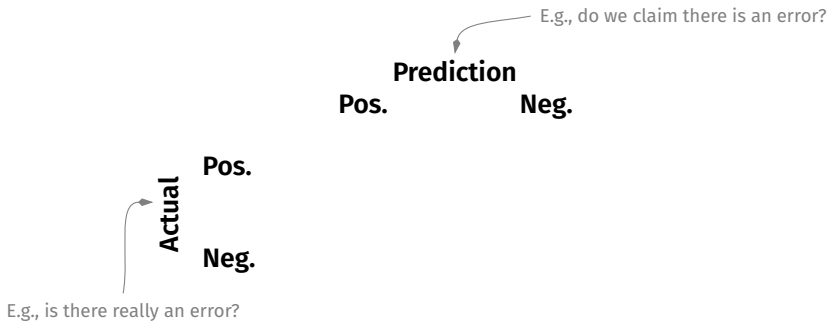
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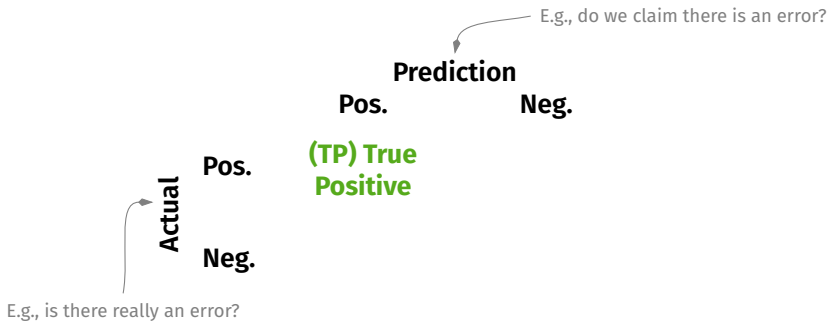
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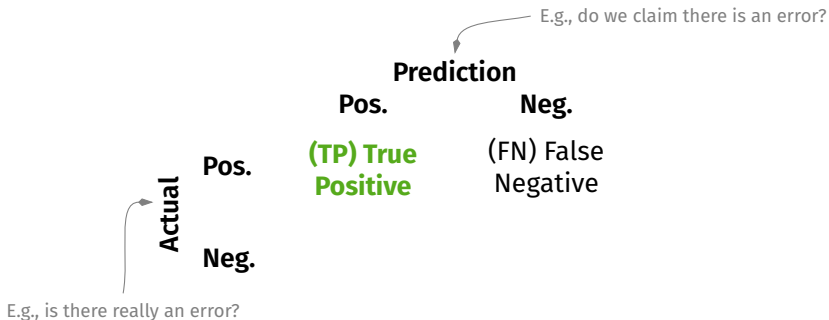
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# The Confusion Matrix

|        |      | Prediction          |                     |
|--------|------|---------------------|---------------------|
|        |      | Pos.                | Neg.                |
| Actual | Pos. | (TP) True Positive  | (FN) False Negative |
|        | Neg. | (FP) False Positive |                     |

E.g., do we claim there is an error?

E.g., is there really an error?

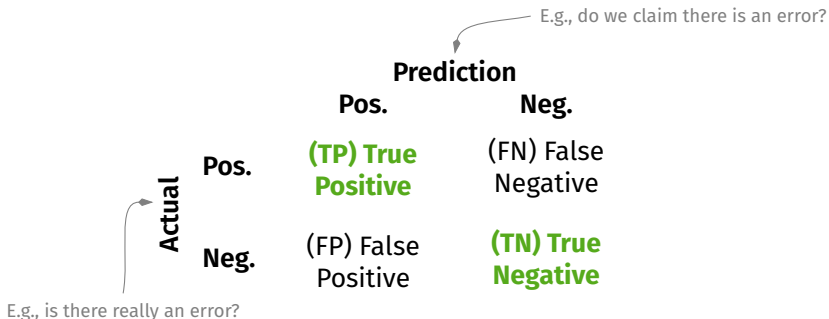
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E.g., is there really an error?

# The Confusion Matrix



The diagram shows a confusion matrix with 'Actual' as rows and 'Prediction' as columns. Annotations include an arrow pointing to the 'Actual' label with the text 'E.g., is there really an error?' and another arrow pointing to the 'Prediction' label with the text 'E.g., do we claim there is an error?'.

|        |      | Prediction          |                     |
|--------|------|---------------------|---------------------|
|        |      | Pos.                | Neg.                |
| Actual | Pos. | (TP) True Positive  | (FN) False Negative |
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- **Precision:**  $\text{TP} / (\text{TP} + \text{FP})$  (“how many false alarms”)

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E.g., do we claim there is an error?

E.g., is there really an error?

- **Precision:**  $\text{TP} / (\text{TP} + \text{FP})$  (“how many false alarms”)
- **Recall:**  $\text{TP} / (\text{TP} + \text{FN})$  (“how many errors did we find”)

# Soundness and Completeness

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## Completeness

- We are able to infer all interesting properties in the program
- If we report bugs for violated properties, we produce no false positive

Abstract interpretation soundly over-approximates the program semantics

# 5. Outlook

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- Domain transformers  
combine abstract domains<sup>[Min17, p. 149]</sup>

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- Galois connections  
define the relationship between concrete and abstract domains<sup>[Cou21, p. 110]</sup>



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combine abstract domains<sup>[Min17, p. 149]</sup>
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- Existing libraries allow for easy implementation  
LiSA<sup>[Fer+21]</sup>, MOPSA<sup>[Jou+19]</sup>, Apron<sup>[JM09]</sup>

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