

## Longest Common Prefix

Write a function to find the longest common prefix string amongst an array of strings.

操，妈的想了好半天才想明白题目问的是什么：

意思是求所有字符串数组中字符串的最长公共前缀，也就是说每个字符串都包含这这个前缀。例如

```
str = ["abcdef", "abcke", "abcdk", "ab"]
```

把么"ab"就是最长的公共前缀。其实就是substring，只不过这个substring只能从第一个字符开始取。  
code (Python):

```
11 def longestCommonPrefix(strs):
12     if not str or len(str) == 0:
13         return ""
14
15     prefix = strs[0]
16
17     for i in range(1, len(strs)):
18         j=0
19         while j < min(len(strs[i]), len(prefix)):
20             if strs[i][j] != prefix[j]:
21                 break
22             j += 1
23             prefix = prefix[: j]
24
25     return prefix
```

Analysis:

start from the first string in the array, assume that it is the longest common prefix

```
prefix = str[0]= "abcdef"
```

next, we loop through the array of strings, analyse every string in the array except the prefix ( storing the first string). compare this string with the first string, found out the first character in this string that does not match that in the prefix, example,

```
prefix = str[0] = "abcdef"
```

looping through the array and it it at

```
str[1] = "abcke"
```

compare them we can find out the first un-match character is at the 4th character 'k' of the str[2]. Now that we find the first un-match character, we update the prefix to be the matched substring, in this case

```
prefix = abc
```

then we repeat this procedure for str[1], str[2], and str[3] and update the prefix every time, final the prefix will store the longest common prefix