Cupp-E
The cup collecting robot

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Chapter 1

Summary

As data has been collected and empirically analysed by the canteen personal, found that researchers and students are lazy and will not bring their used service back to the canteen for cleaning. To accommodate this problem a robot is being designed which is able to collect "forgotten" cups and while performing this task also sweeps the floors. The robot platform has been developed but algorithms for the motion planning is still needed. This summary will give an overview of the software design for the robot.

Chapter 2

Road map

2.1 Road map

To simplify the problem of moving around the large map, which presumably had to be done often, the concept of a roadmap was adopted. This, together with cell division would create layers of abstraction. When using the road map, no knowledge of the cells geometry would be needed. Creation of the road map

The road map does need to be created based on the the information about the cells. The cells was represented by pointers to the edges it consisted of. These edges was in turn made up of pointers, here to vertices, two each. The edges also contained information on which cells they were part of. There are two different kinds of edges. Those made out of obstacles, called hard edges and those that made up boundaries between two cells, called soft edges. The road map is build up of nodes representing cells and soft edges, because soft edges are the entrances to the cells. As long as the cells are convex there is a straight line from every point in the cell to any other. Travelling along the road then simplifies to a list of straight lines from the soft edges of cells plus the small distances to get on and off the roadmap from a point within the cell.

The actual road map was created by creating two lists of nodes, one of cell nodes and one of soft edge nodes. Then when all nodes exist, their interconnectivity is saved as information in every node, by the other nodes it immediately connects to, altogether creating a graph. This is done by running through the cells belonging to a soft edge node, and in those cells, running throug all the soft edges to connect to them. This is done by comparing the the list of all soft edge nodes to create the right pointers. This gives $O(n^2)$ since the number of edges per cell an the number of cells per soft edge is very small, but the number of edges in general is large, and this has to be run through twice. But it was not a big deal, since the creation of the map could be done offline, since the buildings on the map was considered not to change position, so the time to execute the creation of the map was not crucial. The picture below is a visualizaition of the connections between soft edges, the connections shown in bright white. Using the road map

The roadmap is used to find a route from one cell to another. The shortest route is found using BFS by maintaining a sorted list off all possible routes from the start, shortest route first. The list is expanded one node at a time by adding the closest node to the shortest route on the list. If a node has already been visited in the particular search, it cannot be added to a route, because another route have obviously gotten there earlier and thereby more efficiently. This is iterated until the soft edge node is reached which is a part of the destination cell. The route that reaches this node must be the shortest since only the shortest route is expanded every iteration. In the figure below is a visualization of a rout from the first cell in the upper left corner to another cell.

The road map was also used to choose the order in which the cells should be visited. Here a DFS was chosen so to only travel a short distance between cells every time, though

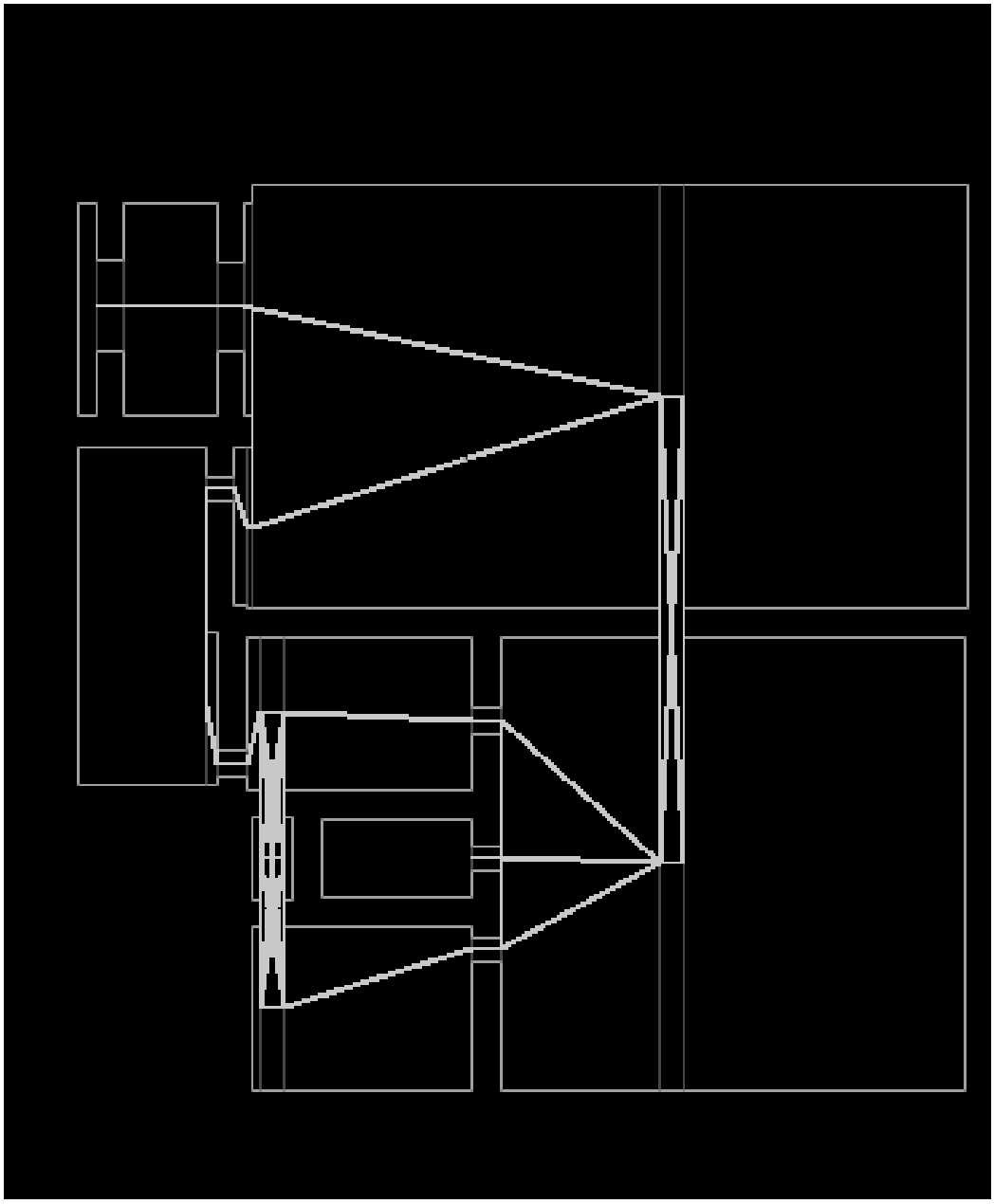

Figure 2.1: Choosing overall coverage plan

some long distance travelling was bound to happen also. Given a starting point, a list of cell nodes to visit was created by recursively visit every cell node, marking it as visited when entering it, and marking it as having all childs explored when returning from the recursive function of that cell.

A simulation of finding a route from every cell to the next in the overall coverage plan and summing up the length resulted in a total traveling length for moving between cells of 8849.96 meters.

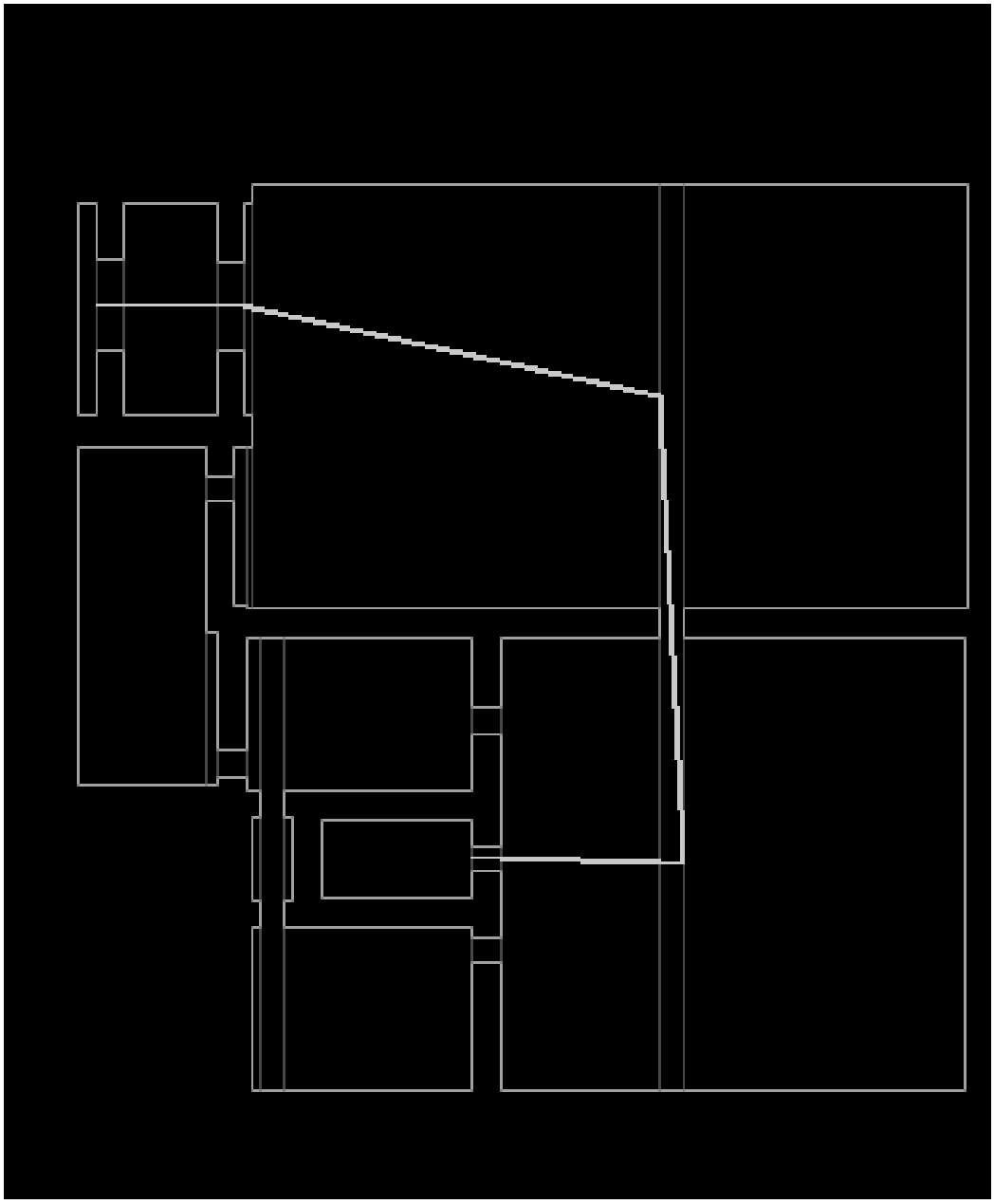

Figure 2.2: Road map results

Chapter 3

Coverage

3.1 Strategy

The coverage method used is boustrophedon, meaning "the way of the ox" from the plowing pattern of old days. The advantage of this strategy is that it ensures full coverage of a room with no obstacles and it is simple.

It is clear that when actually implemented on a robot, it must be supported by online sensors to cope with the obstacles present in the room, but for the purpose of estimating the distance travelled by such a robot, it gives a best case route.

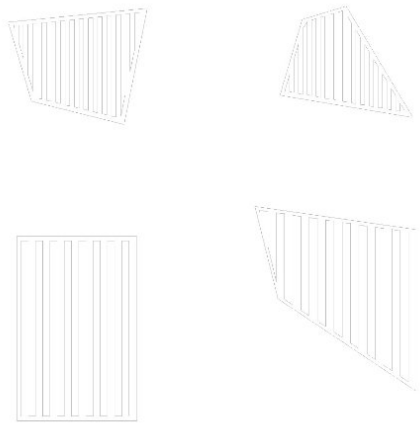

Figure 3.1: Shows example cells covered

3.1.1 Algorithm

The algorithm developed for covering follows the points listed in 1. The algorithm assumes the cell has been shrunk so the area given in the cell structure represents the free spae in which the robots center can move.

The algorithm first constructs a polygon from the cell data. Then the cell is swept by discrete vertical lines for every distance given by radius. This way a list is constructed holding the points where the sweeplines intersect the cell polygon, thus giving the robots turning points. Finally the list is sorted to reflect the order in which the turning points should be visited.

Algorithm 1 Boustrophedon coverage

```
Input:
cell                                   ▷ Structure holding vertices and edges
radius                                 ▷ The radius covered by the robot
list                                   ▷ empty list for returning the route
Output:
distance                               ▷ the lapsed distance
function COVER AREA(cell , radius , points)
    for each edge in cell do
        push line segment to polygon   ▷ This constructs a polygon shaped as the cell
    end for
    while sweepline inside polygon do
        construct next sweepline
        find intersections with polygon
        push intersections to points
    end while
    for each point in points do
        order points                   ▷ up,down,up,down sequence
    end for
    for each point in points do
        remove dublicates              ▷ in case intersection is a vertice
    end for
    for each point in points do
        calculate distance
    end for
    return distance
end function
```

3.1.2 Running time

The running time of this algoritm depends on the number of turningpoints in the returned path and theese again depends on the width of the cell and the radius of the robot.

$$n = 2 \cdot \frac{width}{radius} \tag{3.1}$$

Finding the point requires finding the possible intersections between a sweepline and the cell polygon. Since most cells are polygons of four vertices this means on average checking each sweepline against four lines or two checks per turning point. Checking the intersection between two lines means solving the equaled line equasions and is thus done in constant time giving this problem a complexity of O(n).

Ordering the list means iterating the list and reordering the points not fulfilling the criteria. Since swapping two entries of a vector is done in constant time, the operation is done in linear time.

Checking for dublicates means iterating the list and for each point checking the rest of the list for similar points. This operation is done i quadratic time.

Calculating the travelled distance is done by iterating through the list and adding up all the distances. Finding the distance between two points is done in constant time and thus the complexity of this problem is O(n).

3.1.3 Conclusion

Overall analysis of the algorithm thus shows that it runs in quadratic time due to the dublicate check and thus any effort to optimize the algorithm should start here, but since most cells are relatively small, the problem is also small.

Chapter 4

Cupscanner

The cup scanning algorithm was designed to take the workspace map (.pgm-file) and the point from which the robot would travel and the point to which it would travel. It returns a list of points where cups have been detected. Figure 4.1 illustrates a visualization of the algorithm and together with algorithm 2 a brief overview will be presented here.

4.1 Brief overview

The design of the algorithm had to solve the general problem of how to detect cups from a region determined by the shape of the robot and the two points in which the robot travels between. To solve this problem it is necessary to take into consideration that the robot can travel in any direction, and this can lead to divisions by zero if for instance $arctan$ is used to determine some angle of travelling, thus the algorithm is designed to not utilise mathematical tools which will lead to singularities. The algorithm is designed with help from mathematical vectors to create auxiliary points, and then lines and intersections are calculated with Boost Geometry. Figure 4.1 illustrates the geometries which is used to calculate this region of interest, this region is bounded by the bounding box and the red lines. Algorithm 2 explains in more detail what is going on behind the scene. The complexity of the algorithm is $O(N)$, where N is the numbers of points scanned between two points, N is dependent of length of travel and the radius of the robot. As the bounding region that is actually scanned does not match up with the ideal geometry of the robot an error is introduced, this error could possibly lead to cups are not detected or cups are detected without being in the actual range of the robot.

Algorithm 2 Cup scanner algorithm

Input:
map ▷ Workspace map where cups are represented
$from$ ▷ The point where the robot is located
to ▷ The point where the robot needs to go
radius ▷ The radius covered by the robot
Output:
$listOfCups$ ▷ A list which contain position of cups detected

```
1: function cupsBetweenPoints(map, from, to, radius)
2:     create auxiliary points A, B, C, D, E, F, A_x, B_x, C_x, D_x from points from, to
3:     create bounding box bBox from points A, B, C, D, E, F ▷ Creates area of interest
4:     create auxiliary line lineA from points A_x, B_x
5:     create auxiliary line lineB from points C_x, D_x
6:     create auxiliary line travelLine from points E, F
7:     for each y in bBox do
8:         clear listOfIntersections
9:         create new scanLine
10:        set minimum and maximum values of x from bBox
11:        calculate intersections between lines scanLine, lineA, lineB, travelLine
12:        if number of intersections equals 3 then▷ Decides if minX and/or maxX needs
   adjustment
13:            decide which intersection point has lowest and highest x-value
14:        else if number of intersections equals 2 then
15:            decide if intersection with either line lineA or lineB creates a maximum or
   minimum value of x from the intersection with travelLine
16:        end if
17:        for each x between minX and maxX do
18:            if map(x, y) is a cup then
19:                add point to listOfCups
20:            end if
21:        end for
22:    end for
23:    return listOfCups
24: end function
```

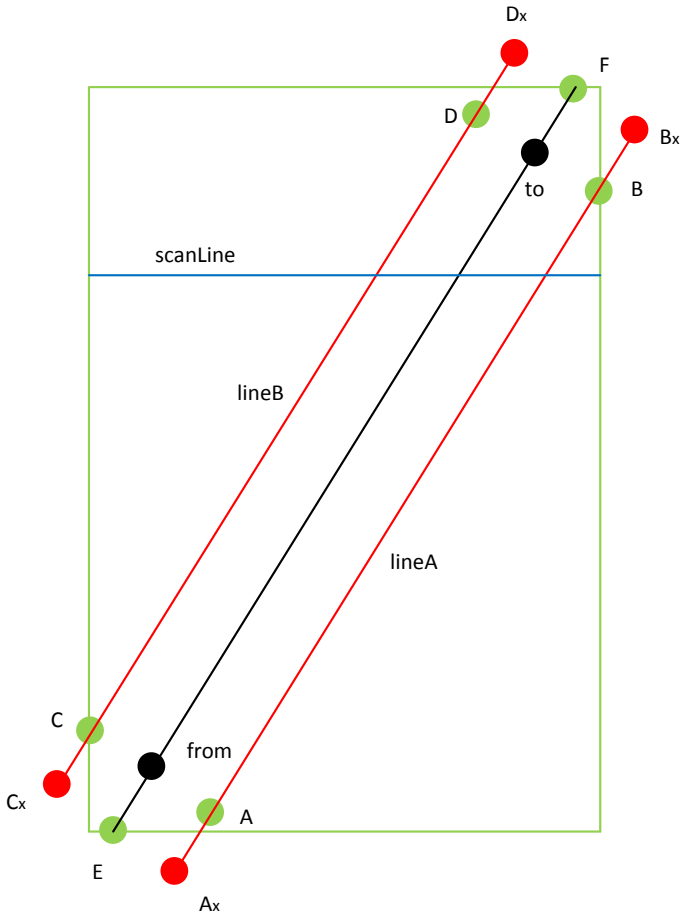

Figure 4.1: Illustrates how the the bounding box (green) and the red lines A and B defines the area of interest.

Chapter 5

Online planning

5.1 Simulation

The simulation is done online, but seeks to reduce the output to a minimum. The main task is to visit all cells in the map and sweep them. This is simulated as an online statemachine changing between different brahaviours of the robot.

5.1.1 Behaviours

There are basically three beahaviours of the robot:

- Select a destination
- Go to a destination
- Cover a cell

The main task is solved using theese three behaviours encapsulated in a state machine. The state machine concists of two parts. The first part is a decision maker that selects a route and the other is an onlie stepper to follow the route.

5.1.2 The decision maker

The decision maker selects a route based on the current state and is thus a state machine. In either state it facilitates the behaviours to select a route implemented as a list of points to visit followed by a state transition based on state variables. The state machine follows the diagram in figure 5.1.

5.1.3 The stepper

The stepper is a sequential piece of code that iterates through the list of points adding up the travelled distance, checking for cups in range, collects the cups and returns the cups when tray is full. The task of returning the cups only contributes to the travelled distance since the robot cannot collect cups and the concept is therefore implemented as a mere calculation. A flow chart for the stepper can be seen in figure 5.2

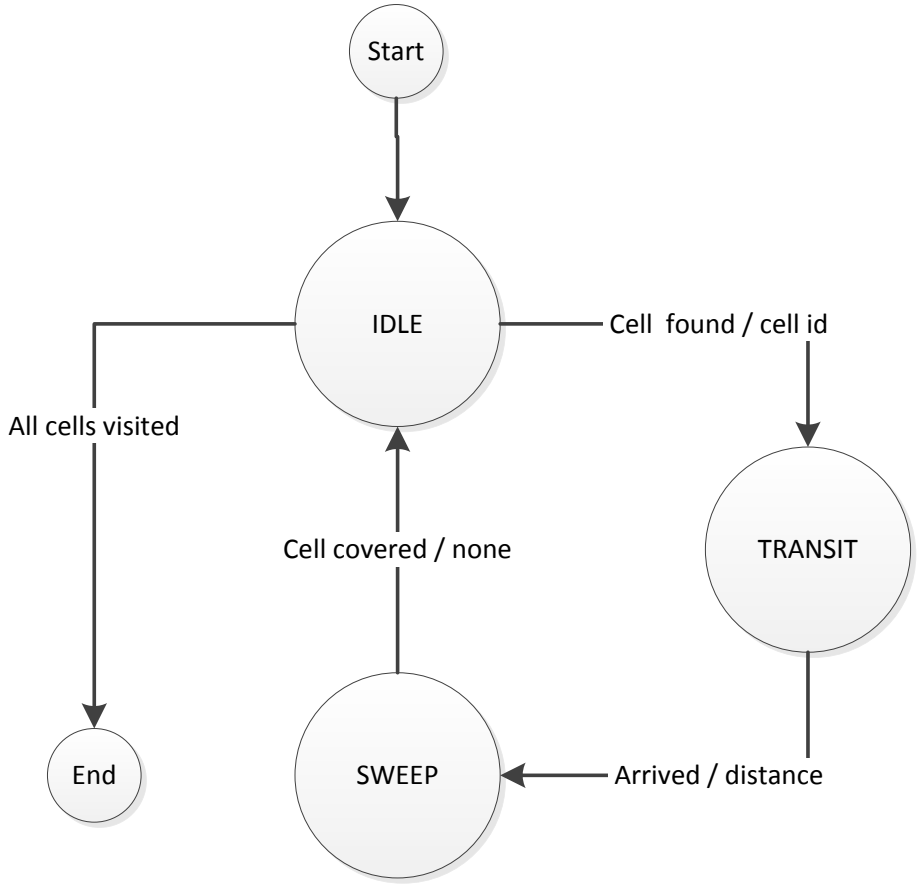

Figure 5.1: State machine diagram of the decision maker

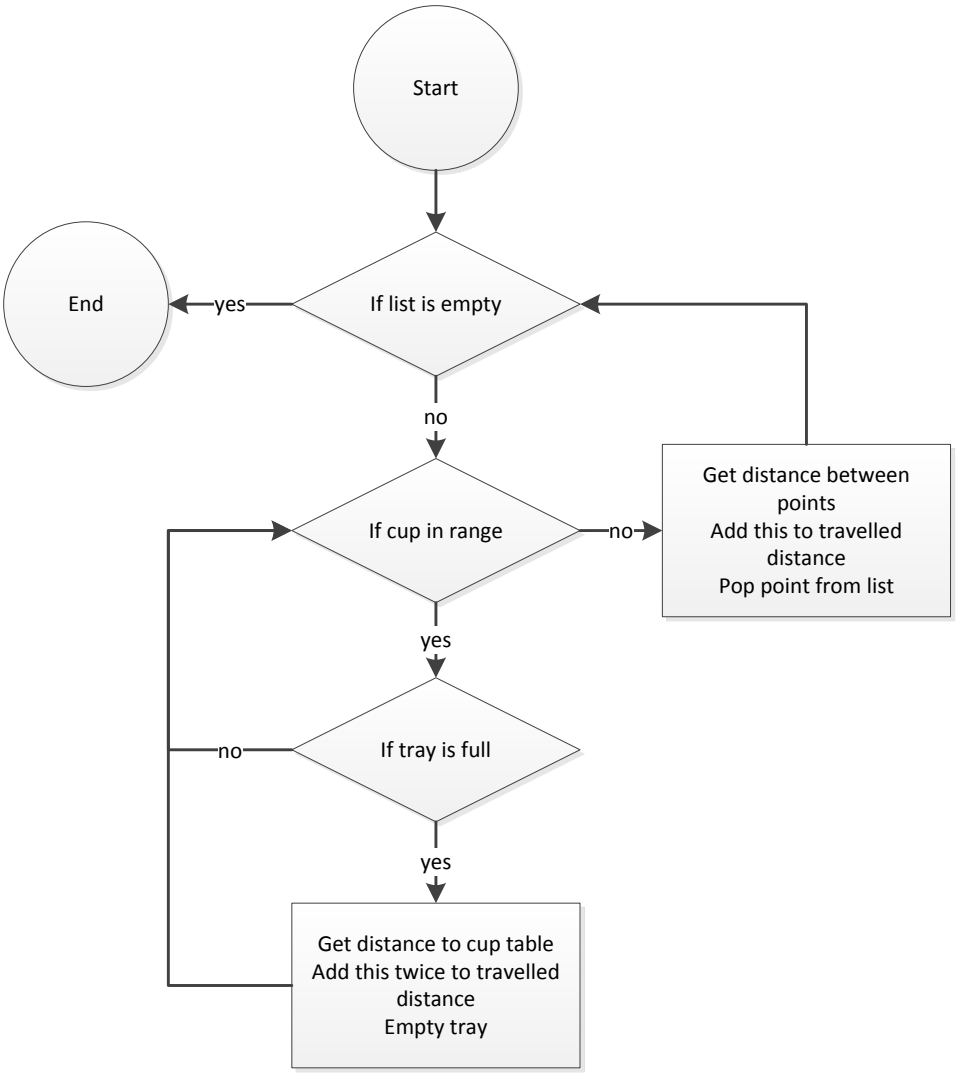

Figure 5.2: Flow chart of the stepper