

Ashwin Balakrishna

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BACKGROUND I am excited about algorithms for data-driven decision making. I am currently a research scientist at Google DeepMind working on building foundation models for general purpose robotic manipulation. I am particularly interested in bridging vision and language foundation models with decision-making algorithms which can actively interact with users and improve based on experience.

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| WORK EXPERIENCE | Google DeepMind , Senior Research Scientist | 2024 - Present |
| | Toyota Research Institute , Research Scientist | 2023 - 2024 |
| | Nuro , Research Scientist | 2022 - 2023 |
| | Toyota Research Institute , Research Intern | 2021 |
| | SpaceX , Software Engineering Intern (Avionics) | 2017 |

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| EDUCATION | UC Berkeley , Berkeley, CA | Aug 2018 - May 2022 |
| | <i>Ph.D.</i> in Computer Science | GPA: 3.97/4.00 |
| | Thesis: Scalable Supervision for Safe and Efficient Online Robot Learning | |
| | California Institute of Technology , Pasadena, CA | Sep 2014 - Jun 2018 |
| | <i>Bachelor of Science</i> in Electrical Engineering | GPA: 3.97/4.00 |

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS Moo Jin Kim*, Karl Pertsch*, Siddharth Karamcheti*, Ted Xiao, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Suraj Nair et al. OpenVLA: An Open-Source Vision-Language-Action Model. *Preprint* 2024.

Alexander Khazatsky*, Karl Pertsch*, Suraj Nair, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, et al. DROID: A Large-Scale In-The-Wild Robot Manipulation Dataset. *Preprint* 2024.

Siddharth Karamcheti, Suraj Nair, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Percy Liang, Thomas Kollar, and Dorsa Sadigh. Prismatic VLMs: Investigating the Design Space of Visually-Conditioned Language Models. *Preprint* 2024.

Albert Wilcox, **Ashwin Balakrishna**, Jules Dedieu, Wyame Benslimane, et al. Monte Carlo Augmented Actor-Critic for Sparse Reward Deep Reinforcement Learning from Suboptimal Demonstrations. *Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS)* 2022.

Brijen Thananjeyan*, **Ashwin Balakrishna***, Suraj Nair, Michael Luo, Krishnan Srinivasan, et al. Recovery RL: Safe Reinforcement Learning with Learned Recovery Zones. *Robotics and Automation Letters (RA-L)* and *International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)* 2021.

* = equal contribution

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| AWARDS & HONORS | Qualcomm Innovation Fellowship Finalist | 2021 |
| | Timothy B. Campbell Innovation Award (Berkeley EECS) | 2020-2021 |
| | Apple AI/ML PhD Fellowship Nomination (Berkeley EECS) | 2020 |
| | National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship | 2018-2021 |