



Introduction to Mathematical Logic

For CS Students

CS104

Yida TAO (陶伊达)

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南方科技大学



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Hoare Logic

1 Warm up

- To construct formal proofs of *partial correctness* specification, **axioms** and **rules** of inference are needed.
- This is what Hoare Logic provides:
 - The formulation of the deductive system is due to Hoare
 - Some of the underlying ideas originated with R. Floyd (also called Floyd–Hoare logic)
- A proof in Hoare logic is a sequence of lines, each of which is either an axiom of the logic or follows from earlier lines by a rule of inference of the logic
- A formal proof makes explicit what axioms and rules of inference are used to arrive at a conclusion.



Programs

1 Warm up

We can think of any program of our core programming language as a sequence. All of the C_i below are either assignments, if-statements or while-statements. Of course, we allow the if-statements and while-statements to have embedded compositions.

$$C_1;$$
$$C_2;$$
$$\cdot$$
$$\cdot$$
$$\cdot$$
$$C_n$$



Presentation of a proof

1 Warm up

We should design a proof calculus which presents a proof of $\vdash_{par} (\phi_0) P (\phi_n)$ by interleaving formulas with code as in

```
(\phi_0)
C_1;
(\phi_1)      justification
C_2;
.
.
.
(\phi_{n-1})  justification
C_n;
(\phi_n)      justification
```



Presentation of a proof

1 Warm up

A full proof will have one or more conditions before and after each code statement. Each statement makes a Hoare triple with the preceding and following conditions. Each triple (postcondition) has a justification that explains its correctness.

```
⟦ program precondition ⟧
y = 1;
⟦ ... ⟧                                ⟨ justification ⟩
while (x != 0) {
    ⟦ ... ⟧                                ⟨ justification ⟩
    y = y * x;
    ⟦ ... ⟧                                ⟨ justification ⟩
    x = x - 1;
    ⟦ ... ⟧                                ⟨ justification ⟩
}
⟦ program postcondition ⟧           ⟨ justification ⟩
```



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Assignment

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

The rule for assignment has no premises and is therefore an axiom of our logic.

$$\overline{(\downarrow Q[E/x] \downarrow) \rightarrow x = E \rightarrow (\downarrow Q \downarrow)}$$

Intuition:

If we wish to show that Q holds in the state after $x = E$, we must show that Q holds before the assignment $x = E$, but with all free occurrences of x replaced by E in Q .



Assignment: Examples

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

What is the precondition ϕ ?

- $\langle \phi \rangle x = 2 \langle x = y \rangle$
- $\langle \phi \rangle x = x + 1 \langle x = 2 \rangle$
- $\langle \phi \rangle x = y + z \langle x = 1 \rangle$
- $\langle \phi \rangle x = x + 1 \langle x > 0 \wedge y > 0 \rangle$

In program correctness proofs, we usually work backwards from the postcondition.



Implied Rule: Precondition Strengthening

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

The implied rule allows the precondition to be strengthened (i.e., we assume more than we need to).

$$\frac{P \rightarrow P' \quad \langle P' \rangle C \langle Q \rangle}{\langle P \rangle C \langle Q \rangle}$$

Example:

- $P : x > 10$
- $P' : x > 0$
- P is stronger than $P' : x > 10 \rightarrow x > 0$



Examples

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Prove $\vdash_{par} (y = 5) \ x = y + 1 \ (x = 6)$

$$(y = 5)$$

$$(y + 1 = 6)$$

Implied

$$x = y + 1$$

$$(x = 6)$$

Assignment

Although the proof is constructed bottom-up, its justifications make sense when read top-down.



Implied Rule: Postcondition Weakening

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

The implied rule allows for the postcondition to be weakened (i.e. we conclude less than we are entitled to):

$$\frac{\langle P \rangle \ C \ \langle Q' \rangle \quad Q' \rightarrow Q}{\langle P \rangle \ C \ \langle Q \rangle}$$

Intuition: If you can prove something stronger, then you can also claim something weaker.



The Implied Rule

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

The implied rule acts as a **link between program logic and a suitable extension of FOL logic**. It allows us to import proofs in predicate logic enlarged with the **basic facts of arithmetic**, for example:

- $\forall x(x = x + 0)$
- $r = x \wedge q = 0 \rightarrow r = x + y * q$

which are required for reasoning about integer expressions, into the proofs in program logic.



Composition

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

This rule is also known as the sequencing rule, which enables a partial correctness specification for a sequence $C_1; C_2$ to be derived from specification for C_1 and C_2 .

$$\frac{\langle P \rangle C_1 \langle Q \rangle \quad \langle Q \rangle C_2 \langle R \rangle}{\langle P \rangle C_1; C_2 \langle R \rangle}$$

To prove $\langle P \rangle C_1; C_2 \langle R \rangle$, we need to find appropriate **midcondition** Q and prove $\langle P \rangle C_1 \langle Q \rangle$ and $\langle Q \rangle C_2 \langle R \rangle$ (i.e., by splitting the problem into two.)

In our examples, the midcondition will usually be determined by a rule, such as the assignment rule.



Examples

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Prove $\vdash_{par} (x = x_0 \wedge y = y_0) \triangleright t = x; x = y; y = t (x = y_0 \wedge y = x_0)$

$\triangleright ((x = x_0) \wedge (y = y_0)) \triangleright$	
$\triangleright ((y = y_0) \wedge (x = x_0)) \triangleright$	implied <i>[proof required]</i>
$t = x ;$	
$\triangleright ((y = y_0) \wedge (t = x_0)) \triangleright$	assignment
$x = y ;$	
$\triangleright ((x = y_0) \wedge (t = x_0)) \triangleright$	assignment
$y = t ;$	
$\triangleright ((x = y_0) \wedge (y = x_0)) \triangleright$	assignment



If statements

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

The proof rule for if-statements allows us to prove a triple of the form

$$\langle P \rangle \text{ if } B \{ C_1 \} \text{ else } \{ C_2 \} \langle Q \rangle$$

by decomposing it into two triples, subgoals corresponding to the cases of B evaluating to true and to false (i.e., the preconditions are augmented by the knowledge that B is true and false, respectively).

$$\frac{\langle P \wedge B \rangle C_1 \langle Q \rangle \quad \langle P \wedge \neg B \rangle C_2 \langle Q \rangle}{\langle P \rangle \text{ if } B \{ C_1 \} \text{ else } \{ C_2 \} \langle Q \rangle}$$



If statements

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

```
⟦ P ⟧  
if ( B ) {  
    ⟦ ( P ∧ B ) ⟧      if-then-else  
    C1  
    ⟦ Q ⟧              (justify depending on C1—a “subproof”)  
} else {  
    ⟦ ( P ∧ (¬B) ) ⟧   if-then-else  
    C2  
    ⟦ Q ⟧              (justify depending on C2—a “subproof”)  
}  
⟦ Q ⟧                if-then-else [justifies this Q, given previous two]
```



Examples

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Prove the following is satisfied under partial correctness.

```
 $\{ \text{true} \}$   
if ( x > y ) {  
    max = x;  
} else {  
    max = y;  
}  
 $\{ ((x > y) \wedge (max = x)) \vee ((x \leq y) \wedge (max = y)) \}$ 
```



Examples

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

```
⊢ true ⊢
if ( x > y ) {
    ⊢ (x > y) ⊢                                if-then-else
    ⊢ (((x > y) ∧ (x = x)) ∨ ((x ≤ y) ∧ (x = y))) ⊢    implied (a)
    max = x ;
    ⊢ (((x > y) ∧ (max = x)) ∨ ((x ≤ y) ∧ (max = y))) ⊢    assignment
} else {
    ⊢ (¬(x > y)) ⊢                                if-then-else
    ⊢ (((x > y) ∧ (y = x)) ∨ ((x ≤ y) ∧ (y = y))) ⊢    implied (b)
    max = y ;
    ⊢ (((x > y) ∧ (max = x)) ∨ ((x ≤ y) ∧ (max = y))) ⊢    assignment
}
⊢ (((x > y) ∧ (max = x)) ∨ ((x ≤ y) ∧ (max = y))) ⊢    if-then-else
```



While statements

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Suppose our program is: `while B do C`, with:

- B : The loop condition (Boolean expression).
- C : The loop body (the code that runs while B is true).
- I : Loop invariant (manually identified)

A loop invariant (循环不变式) is a logical relationship among the variables (e.g., $x \geq y + 1$) that stays the same throughout the loop:

- It is true before the loop begins.
- It is true at the start of every iteration of the loop and at the end of every iteration..
- It is true after the loop ends.



While statements

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

In the proof rule of **partial-while** (do not yet require termination):

- Premise: if I and B are true before we execute C , and C terminates, then I still holds
- Conclusion: no matter how many times the body C is executed, if I is true initially and the while statement terminates, then I will be true at the end. Moreover, since the while-statement has terminated, B will be false, $\neg B$ will be true.

$$\frac{\langle I \wedge B \rangle C \langle I \rangle}{\langle I \rangle \text{ while } B \{C\} \langle I \wedge \neg B \rangle}$$



Proving partial correctness of a while loop

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Steps to follow:

- Find a loop invariant (which is both an art and a skill).
- Complete the annotations.
- Prove any implied's.



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Prove that the following triple is satisfied under partial correctness.

```
 $\{ (x \geq 0) \}$   
 $y = 1$  ;  
 $z = 0$  ;  
while ( $z \neq x$ ) {  
     $z = z + 1$  ;  
     $y = y * z$  ;  
}  
 $\{ (y = x!) \}$ 
```



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Step 1: Write down the values of all the variables every time the while test is reached.

```
 $\langle (x \geq 0) \rangle$   
 $y = 1 ;$   
 $z = 0 ;$   
while  $(z \neq x) \{$   
     $z = z + 1 ;$   
     $y = y * z ;$   
 $\}$   
 $\langle (y = x!) \rangle$ 
```

At the while statement:

x	y	z	$z \neq x$
5	1	0	true
5	1	1	true
5	2	2	true
5	6	3	true
5	24	4	true
5	120	5	false



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Step 2: Find relationships among the variables that are true for every `while` test. These are our candidate invariants.

```
 $\langle (x \geq 0) \rangle$   
y = 1 ;  
z = 0 ;  
while (z != x) {  
    z = z + 1 ;  
    y = y * z ;  
}  
 $\langle (y = x!) \rangle$ 
```

At the `while` statement:

x	y	z	$z \neq x$
5	1	0	true
5	1	1	true
5	2	2	true
5	6	3	true
5	24	4	true
5	120	5	false



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Is $\neg(z = x)$ a loop invariant?

```
⟦  $(x \geq 0)$  ⟧  
y = 1 ;  
z = 0 ;  
while (z != x) {  
    z = z + 1 ;  
    y = y * z ;  
}  
⟦  $(y = x!)$  ⟧
```

At the while statement:

x	y	z	$z \neq x$
5	1	0	true
5	1	1	true
5	2	2	true
5	6	3	true
5	24	4	true
5	120	5	false



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Is $x \geq 0$ a loop invariant?

```
⌊  $(x \geq 0)$  ⌋  
y = 1 ;  
z = 0 ;  
while (z != x) {  
    z = z + 1 ;  
    y = y * z ;  
}  
⌊  $(y = x!)$  ⌋
```

At the while statement:

x	y	z	$z \neq x$
5	1	0	true
5	1	1	true
5	2	2	true
5	6	3	true
5	24	4	true
5	120	5	false



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Is $y \geq z$ a loop invariant?

```
⌊  $(x \geq 0)$  ⌋  
y = 1 ;  
z = 0 ;  
while (z != x) {  
    z = z + 1 ;  
    y = y * z ;  
}  
⌊  $(y = x!)$  ⌋
```

At the while statement:

x	y	z	$z \neq x$
5	1	0	true
5	1	1	true
5	2	2	true
5	6	3	true
5	24	4	true
5	120	5	false



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Is $y = z!$ a loop invariant?

```
⌈  $(x \geq 0)$  ⌋  
y = 1 ;  
z = 0 ;  
while (z != x) {  
    z = z + 1 ;  
    y = y * z ;  
}  
⌈  $(y = x!)$  ⌋
```

At the while statement:

x	y	z	$z \neq x$
5	1	0	true
5	1	1	true
5	2	2	true
5	6	3	true
5	24	4	true
5	120	5	false



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Step 3: Try each candidate invariant until we find one that works for our proof.

```
 $\langle (x \geq 0) \rangle$   
 $y = 1 ;$   
 $z = 0 ;$   
 $\text{while } (z \neq x) \{$   
     $z = z + 1 ;$   
     $y = y * z ;$   
 $\}$   
 $\langle (y = x!) \rangle$ 
```

At the `while` statement:

x	y	z	$z \neq x$
5	1	0	true
5	1	1	true
5	2	2	true
5	6	3	true
5	24	4	true
5	120	5	false



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

First, annotate by partial-while, with the chosen loop invariant $y = z!$.

```
 $\langle x \geq 0 \rangle$   
  
y = 1 ;  
  
z = 0 ;  
 $\langle y = z! \rangle$  [justification required]  
while (z != x) {  
     $\langle (y = z!) \wedge \neg(z = x) \rangle$  partial-while ( $\langle I \wedge B \rangle$ )  
    z = z + 1 ;  
  
    y = y * z ;  
     $\langle y = z! \rangle$  [justification required]  
}  
 $\langle y = z! \wedge (z = x) \rangle$  partial-while ( $\langle I \wedge \neg B \rangle$ )  
 $\langle y = x! \rangle$ 
```



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Next, annotate **assignment** statements.

```
 $\langle x \geq 0 \rangle$   
 $\langle 1 = 0! \rangle$   
 $y = 1 ;$   
 $\langle y = 0! \rangle$  assignment  
 $z = 0 ;$   
 $\langle y = z! \rangle$  assignment  
while ( $z \neq x$ ) {  
     $\langle (y = z!) \wedge \neg(z = x) \rangle$  partial-while  
     $\langle y(z+1) = (z+1)! \rangle$   
     $z = z + 1 ;$   
     $\langle yz = z! \rangle$  assignment  
     $y = y * z ;$   
     $\langle y = z! \rangle$  assignment  
}  
 $\langle y = z! \wedge (z = x) \rangle$  partial-while  
 $\langle y = x! \rangle$ 
```




Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Then, note the **implied**, to be proven separately.

$\langle x \geq 0 \rangle$	
$\langle 1 = 0! \rangle$	implied (a)
$y = 1 ;$	
$\langle y = 0! \rangle$	assignment
$z = 0 ;$	
$\langle y = z! \rangle$	assignment
while (z != x) {	
$\langle (y = z!) \wedge \neg(z = x) \rangle$	partial-while
$\langle y(z+1) = (z+1)! \rangle$	implied (b)
$z = z + 1 ;$	
$\langle yz = z! \rangle$	assignment
$y = y * z ;$	
$\langle y = z! \rangle$	assignment
}	
$\langle y = z! \wedge (z = x) \rangle$	partial-while
$\langle y = x! \rangle$	implied (c)



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Finally, prove the implied assertions using the inference rules of ordinary logic (FOL, arithmetic).

Proof of implied (a): $(x \geq 0) \vdash (1 = 0!)$
By definition of factorial.

$\langle x \geq 0 \rangle$	
$\langle 1 = 0! \rangle$	implied (a)
$y = 1 ;$	
$\langle y = 0! \rangle$	assignment
$z = 0 ;$	
$\langle y = z! \rangle$	assignment
while ($z \neq x$) {	
$\langle (y = z!) \wedge \neg(z = x) \rangle$	partial-while
$\langle y(z+1) = (z+1)! \rangle$	implied (b)
$z = z + 1 ;$	
$\langle yz = z! \rangle$	assignment
$y = y * z ;$	
$\langle y = z! \rangle$	assignment
}	
$\langle y = z! \wedge (z = x) \rangle$	partial-while
$\langle y = x! \rangle$	implied (c)



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Proof of implied (c):

$$(y = z!) \wedge (z = x) \vdash (y = x!)$$

1. $(y = z!) \wedge (z = x)$ Premise
2. $(y = z!)$ $\wedge e:1$
3. $(z = x)$ $\wedge e:1$
4. $(z! = x!)$ eq. of substitution 3
5. $(y = x!)$ transitivity of eq. 2,4

```

 $\langle x \geq 0 \rangle$ 
 $\langle 1 = 0! \rangle$  implied (a)
y = 1 ;
 $\langle y = 0! \rangle$  assignment
z = 0 ;
 $\langle y = z! \rangle$  assignment
while (z != x) {
     $\langle (y = z!) \wedge \neg(z = x) \rangle$  partial-while
     $\langle y(z+1) = (z+1)! \rangle$  implied (b)
    z = z + 1 ;
     $\langle yz = z! \rangle$  assignment
    y = y * z ;
     $\langle y = z! \rangle$  assignment
}
 $\langle y = z! \wedge (z = x) \rangle$  partial-while
 $\langle y = x! \rangle$  implied (c)

```



Example I

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Proof of implied (b):

$$(y = z!) \wedge \neg(z = x) \vdash (z + 1)y = (z + 1)!$$

- $(y = z!) \wedge \neg(z = x)$ Premise
- $(y = z!)$ $\wedge e:1$
- $(z + 1)y = (z + 1)z!$ eq. of subs 2
- $(z + 1)z! = (z + 1)!$ def. of factorial 3
- $(z + 1)y = (z + 1)!$ trans of eq. 3,4

```

( $\Downarrow x \geq 0 \Downarrow$ )
( $\Downarrow 1 = 0! \Downarrow$ )
y = 1 ;
( $\Downarrow y = 0! \Downarrow$ )
z = 0 ;
( $\Downarrow y = z! \Downarrow$ )
while (z != x) {
    ( $\Downarrow (y = z!) \wedge \neg(z = x) \Downarrow$ )
    ( $\Downarrow y(z + 1) = (z + 1)! \Downarrow$ )
    z = z + 1 ;
    ( $\Downarrow yz = z! \Downarrow$ )
    y = y * z ;
    ( $\Downarrow y = z! \Downarrow$ )
}
( $\Downarrow y = z! \wedge (z = x) \Downarrow$ )
( $\Downarrow y = x! \Downarrow$ )

```

implied (a)

assignment

assignment

partial-while

implied (b)

assignment

assignment

partial-while

implied (c)



Example II

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Prove the following is satisfied under partial correctness.

```
 $\{ (n \geq 0) \wedge (a \geq 0) \}$   
s = 1 ;  
i = 0 ;  
while (i < n) {  
    s = s * a ;  
    i = i + 1 ;  
}  
 $\{ s = a^n \}$ 
```



Example II

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Step 1: Draw an execution trace to help find the invariant.

$\langle (n \geq 0) \wedge (a \geq 0) \rangle$

`s = 1 ;`

`i = 0 ;`

`while (i < n) {`

`s = s * a ;`

`i = i + 1 ;`

`}`

$\langle s = a^n \rangle$

Trace of the loop:

a	n	i	s
2	3	0	1
2	3	1	1*2
2	3	2	1*2*2
2	3	3	1*2*2*2



Example II

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Attempt 1: try the invariant $s = a^i$.

But **implied (c)** cannot be proved.

We must use a different invariant.

```
⌊ ((n ≥ 0) ∧ (a ≥ 0)) ⌋
⌊ ... ⌋
s = 1 ;
⌊ ... ⌋
i = 0 ;
⌊ (s = ai) ⌋
while (i < n) {
    ⌊ ((s = ai) ∧ (i < n)) ⌋    partial-while
    ⌊ ... ⌋
    s = s * a ;
    ⌊ ... ⌋
    i = i + 1 ;
    ⌊ (s = ai) ⌋
}
⌊ ((s = ai) ∧ (i ≥ n)) ⌋    partial-while
⌊ (s = an) ⌋                implied (c)
```



Example II

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Attempt 2: try the invariant
 $(s = a^i) \wedge (i \leq n)$.

Now, the proof succeeds.

$\Downarrow ((n \geq 0) \wedge (a \geq 0)) \Downarrow$	
$\Downarrow ((1 = a^0) \wedge (0 \leq n)) \Downarrow$	implied (a)
$s = 1 ;$	
$\Downarrow ((s = a^0) \wedge (0 \leq n)) \Downarrow$	assignment
$i = 0 ;$	
$\Downarrow ((s = a^i) \wedge (i \leq n)) \Downarrow$	assignment
$\text{while } (i < n) \{$	
$\Downarrow ((s = a^i) \wedge (i \leq n)) \wedge (i < n) \Downarrow$	partial-while
$\Downarrow (((s \cdot a) = a^{i+1}) \wedge ((i+1) \leq n)) \Downarrow$	implied (b)
$s = s * a ;$	
$\Downarrow ((s = a^{i+1}) \wedge ((i+1) \leq n)) \Downarrow$	assignment
$i = i + 1 ;$	
$\Downarrow ((s = a^i) \wedge (i \leq n)) \Downarrow$	assignment
$\}$	
$\Downarrow ((s = a^i) \wedge (i \leq n)) \wedge (i \geq n) \Downarrow$	partial-while
$\Downarrow (s = a^n) \Downarrow$	implied (c)



Example III

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

For the following program C :

```
z=1;  
while (z*z<16) {  
    z=z+1;  
}
```

Find a loop invariant to prove $\vdash_{par} \langle true \rangle C \langle z = 4 \rangle$.



Example III

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

- Loop invariant candidate 1: $z \geq 1$
- This loop invariant $z \geq 1$ is not useful, cannot prove Implied (b).

```
⊢ true ⊢  
z = 1;  
⊢ (z ≥ 1) ⊢ Assignment  
while (z * z < 16){  
    ⊢ ((z ≥ 1) ∧ ((z · z) < 16)) ⊢ Partial-While  
    z = z + 1;  
    ⊢ (z ≥ 1) ⊢  
}  
⊢ ((z ≥ 1) ∧ (¬((z · z) < 16))) ⊢ Partial-While  
⊢ (z = 4) ⊢ ???
```



Example III

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

- Loop invariant candidate 2: $z * z \leq 16$
- This loop invariant $z * z \leq 16$ is not useful, cannot prove Implied (b), since z might be -4 .

```
⌊ true ⌋  
z = 1;  
⌊ ((z · z) ≤ 16) ⌋           Assignment  
while (z * z < 16){  
    ⌊ (((z · z) ≤ 16) ∧ ((z · z) < 16)) ⌋   Partial-While  
    z = z + 1;  
    ⌊ ((z · z) ≤ 16) ⌋  
}  
⌊ (((z · z) ≤ 16) ∧ (¬((z · z) < 16))) ⌋   Partial-While  
⌊ (z = 4) ⌋                               ???
```



Example III

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Combine both invariants: $(z \geq 1) \wedge (z * z \leq 16)$

$\Downarrow \text{true} \Downarrow$

$\Downarrow ((1 \geq 1) \wedge ((1 \cdot 1) \leq 16)) \Downarrow$

Implied(a)

$z = 1;$

$\Downarrow ((z \geq 1) \wedge ((z \cdot z) \leq 16)) \Downarrow$

Assignment

while $(z * z < 16)\{$

$\Downarrow (((z \geq 1) \wedge ((z \cdot z) \leq 16)) \wedge ((z \cdot z) < 16)) \Downarrow$

Partial-While

$\Downarrow (((z + 1) \geq 1) \wedge (((z + 1) \cdot (z + 1)) \leq 16)) \Downarrow$

Implied (b)

$z = z + 1;$

$\Downarrow ((z \geq 1) \wedge ((z \cdot z) \leq 16)) \Downarrow$

Assignment

}

$\Downarrow (((z \geq 1) \wedge ((z \cdot z) \leq 16)) \wedge (\neg((z \cdot z) < 16))) \Downarrow$

Partial-While

$\Downarrow (z = 4) \Downarrow$

Implied (c)



Choosing loop invariants

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

The discovery of a suitable invariant:

- a necessary step in order to use the proof rule Partial-while.
- in general it requires intelligence and ingenuity
- This contrasts markedly with the case of the proof rules for if-statements and assignments, which are purely mechanical in nature: their usage is just a matter of symbol-pushing and does not require any deeper insight.



Proving Total Correctness

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

The proof calculus for total correctness is the same as for partial correctness for all the rules except the rule for `while` statements.

A proof of total correctness for a `while` consists of two parts:

- Proving partial correctness (identify **invariant**)
- Proving termination (identify **variant**)



Proving Termination

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

A **variant** is an *integer expression* that:

- Always stay non-negative
- Strictly decrease in every loop iteration

If we can find such an expression with these properties, it follows that the `while` statement must terminate: because the expression can only be decremented *a finite number of times* before it becomes 0.



Example of Variants

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Let's choose the variant: $x - z$.

- At the start of the loop: $x - z \geq 0$
($x \geq 0, z = 0$)
- At each iteration: z increases by 1, x stays the same, so $x - z$ decreases.

Hence, $x - z$ will eventually reach 0, meaning that the loop terminates.

```
 $\{ (x \geq 0) \}$   
 $y = 1$  ;  
 $z = 0$  ;  
while ( $z \neq x$ ) {  
     $z = z + 1$  ;  
     $y = y * z$  ;  
}  
 $\{ (y = x!) \}$ 
```




Choosing loop variants

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

Finding a working variant is a creative activity which requires skill, intuition and practice.

There is no general method to always find a variant proving termination; in other words, the automatic extraction of useful variants or termination expressions cannot be realized.



Readings

2 Axioms and Inference Rules

- Text B: chapter 4.3, 4.4
- Reference: lecture notes of CS245, University of Waterloo.



Introduction to Mathematical Logic

Thank you for listening!
Any questions?