

# Giving Some Pointers for Abstraction-Based Model Checking

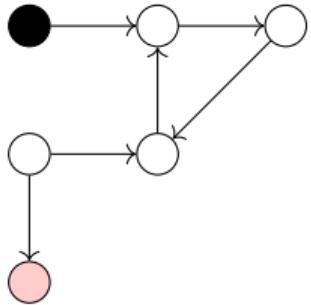
**Levente Bajczi,**

Dániel Szekeres, Csanád Telbisz, Vince Molnár

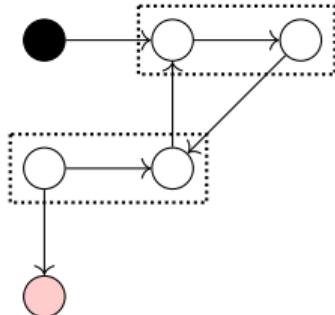
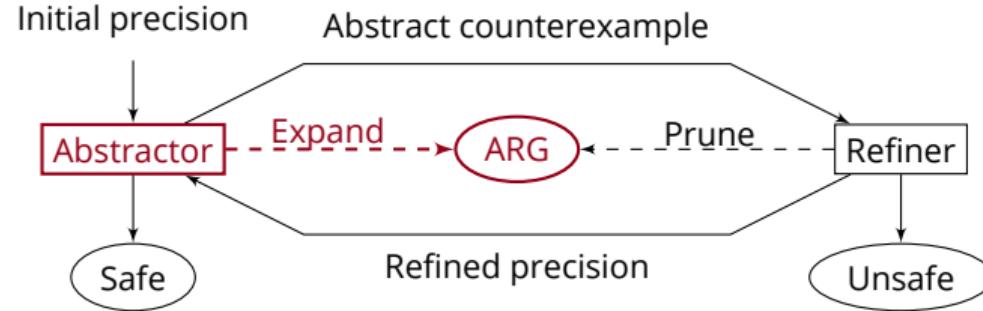
February 3, 2025



# Abstraction in Verification

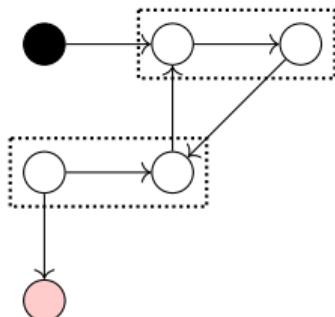
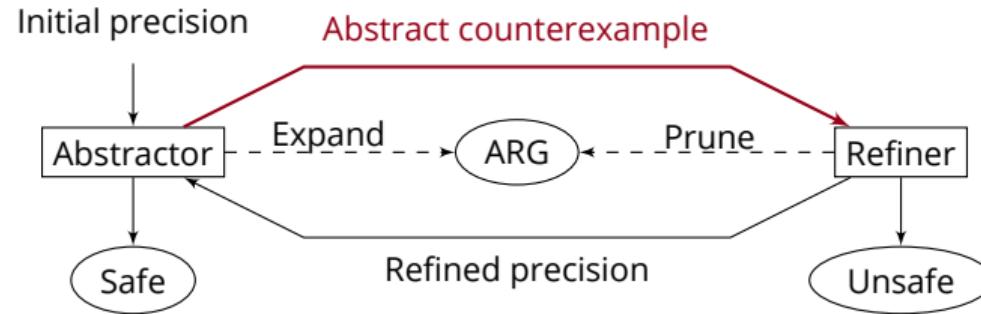


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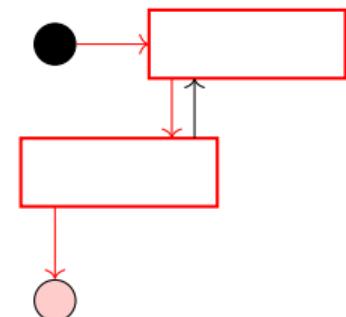


Abstract state  
space

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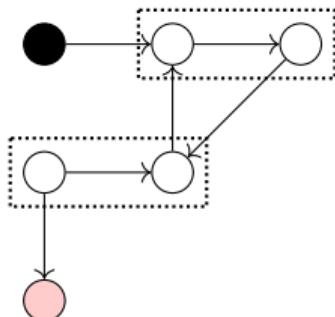
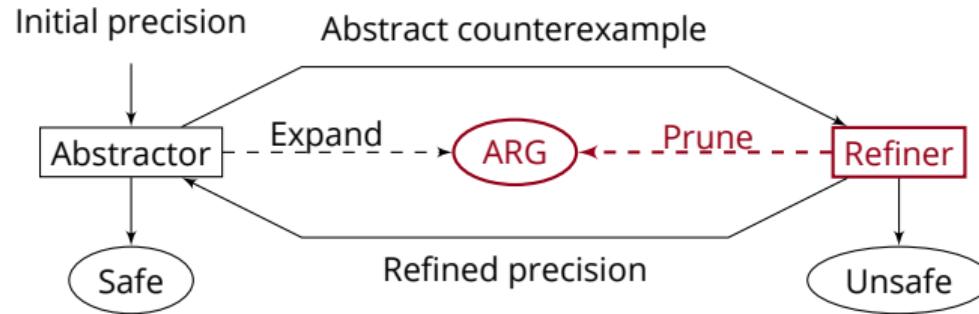


Abstract state  
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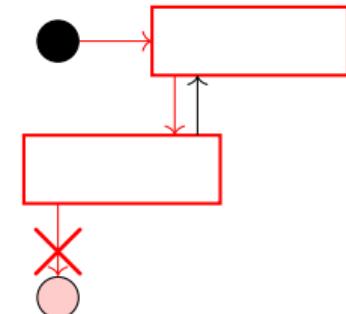


Abstract  
counterexample

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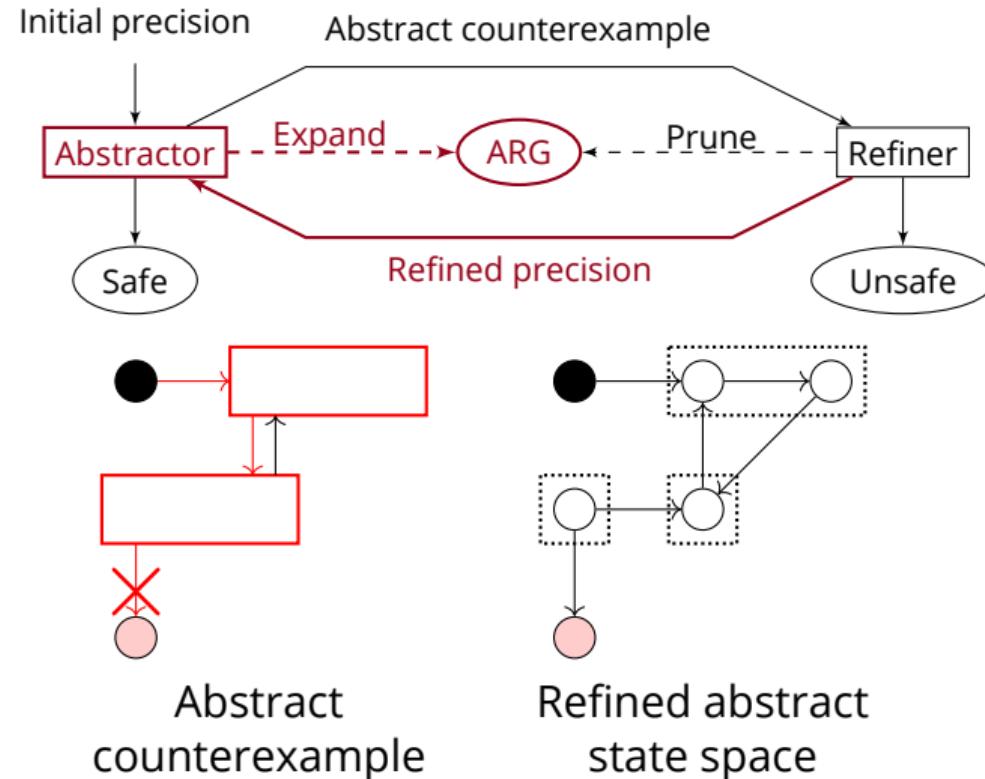


Abstract state  
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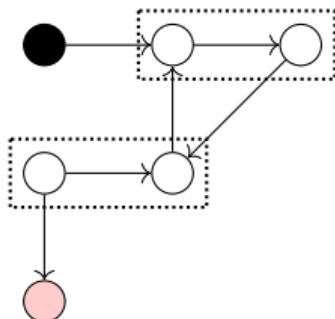
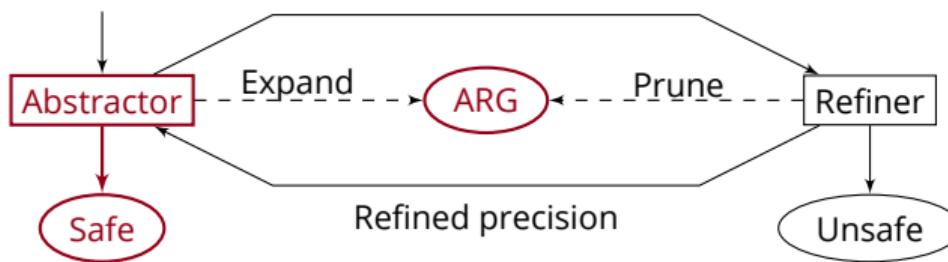
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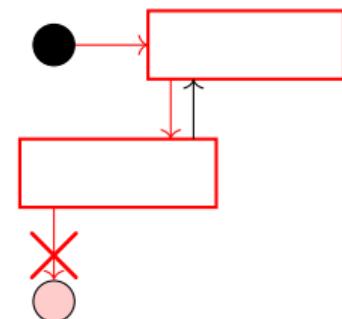


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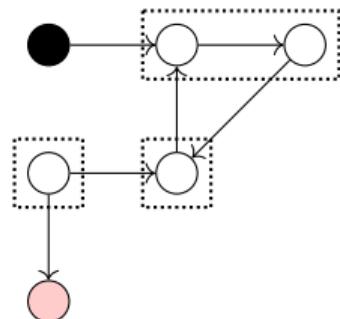
Initial precision      Abstract counterexample



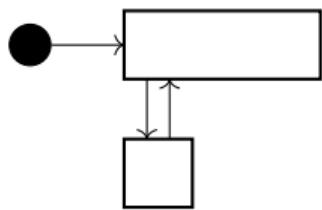
Abstract state  
space



Abstract  
counterexample

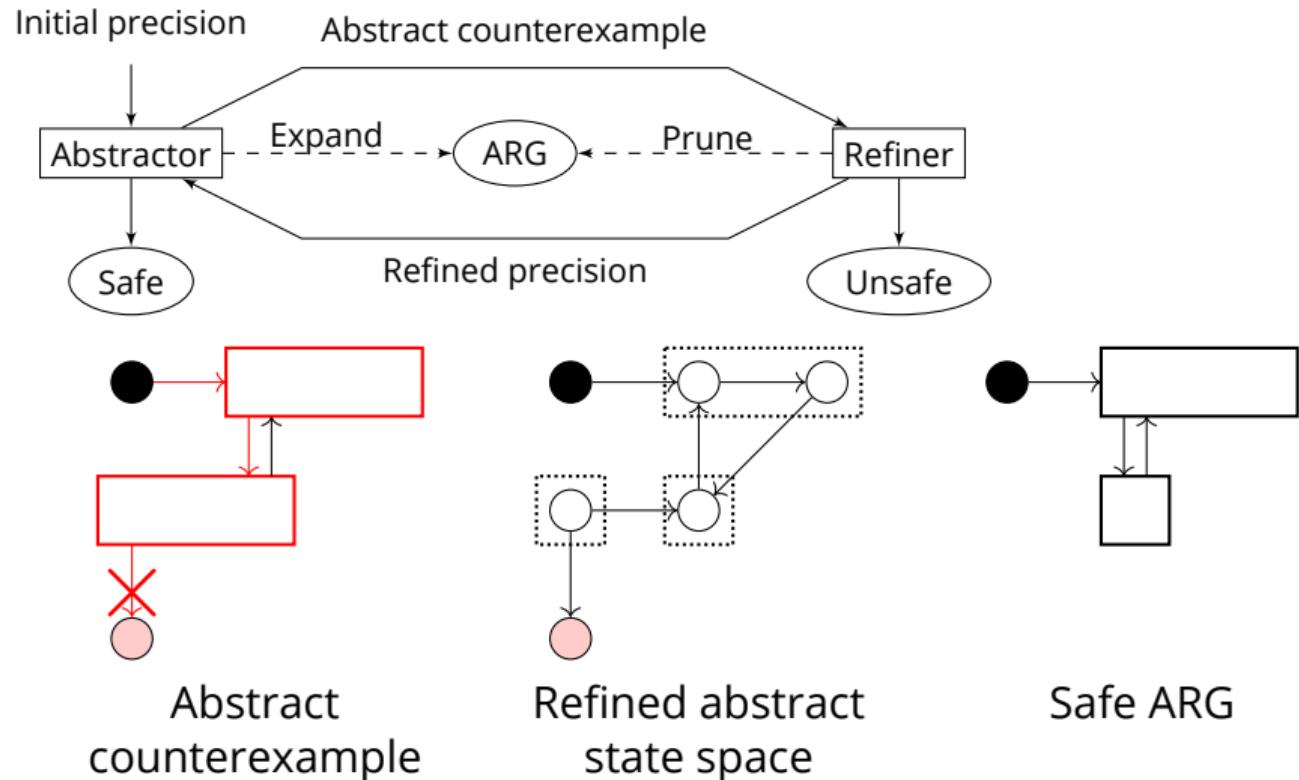


Refined abstract  
state space



Safe ARG

# Abstraction in Verification



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- ▶ Easy to implement
- ▶ Great for safety proofs (if lucky)
- ▶ Unsuitable for bug finding

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Rarely useful

Widespread tool support

Plenty of research

# Summary of Contributions

## Theoretical

- ▶ Precise, symbolic pointer analysis leveraging SMT solvers
- ▶ Extensible pointer analysis *plug-in* for CEGAR
- ▶ Examination of the effect of abstract domain choice

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- ▶ Precise, symbolic pointer analysis leveraging SMT solvers
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## Practical

- ▶ Plug-In implementation in  $\Theta$ theta
- ▶ Evaluation on software benchmarks

# Pointers in Verification

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2 int b;
3 a = 0; b = 0;
4 int cond = nondet();
5 int *c = cond?&a:&b;
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Aliasing either *a* or *b*

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Never the same as *c*

At least *a* or *b* was aliased by *c*

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Contribution 1: Reference Elimination

# Pointers in Verification

```
1 (declare-fun deref (Int Int Int) Int)
  (declare-fun a () Int) (declare-fun b () Int) (declare-fun c () Int)
  (declare-fun d () Int) (declare-fun cond () Bool)

2 (assert (= a 0))
  (assert (= b 1))

3 (assert (= (deref a 0 1) 0)) (assert (= (deref b 0 1) 0))

4 (assert (= c (ite cond a b))) (assert (= d (ite (not cond) a b)))

5 (assert
    (let ((idx1 (+ 1 (ite (= c 1) 1 (ite (= c 0) 1 0))))))
    (let ((idx2 (+ 1 (ite (= d c) idx1 (ite (= d 1) 1 (ite (= d 0) 1 0)))))))
    (and (= (deref c 0 idx1) 1)
         (= (deref d 0 idx2) 2)
         (let ((idx3 (ite (= 0 d) idx2 (ite (= 0 c) idx1 1)))))
         (let ((idx4 (ite (= 1 d) idx2 (ite (= 1 c) idx1 1))))
         (or (= (deref a 0 idx3) 1)
             (= (deref b 0 idx4) 1)))))))

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deref  
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Dereference:  
 $(ptr, offset, idx) \rightarrow value$

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Unique  
address

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deref  
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Index  
calculation

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0( <i>a, c</i> )	0	2	1

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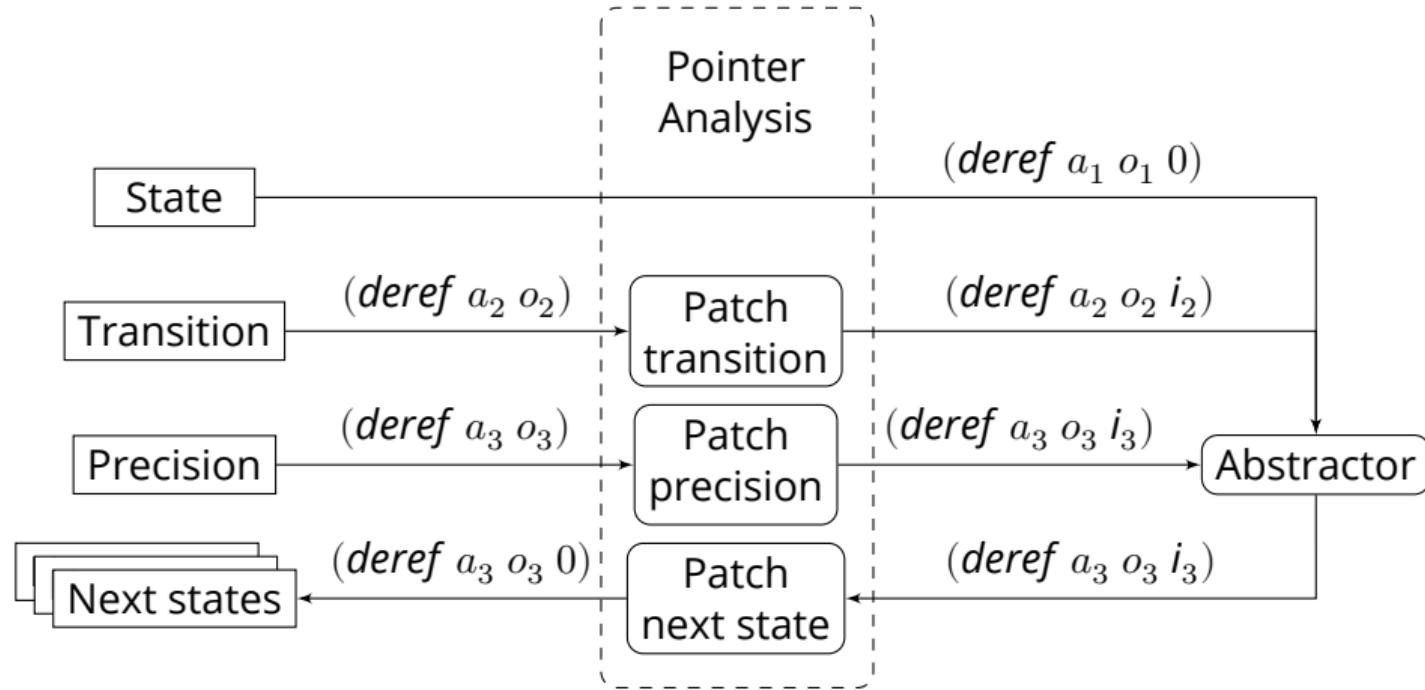
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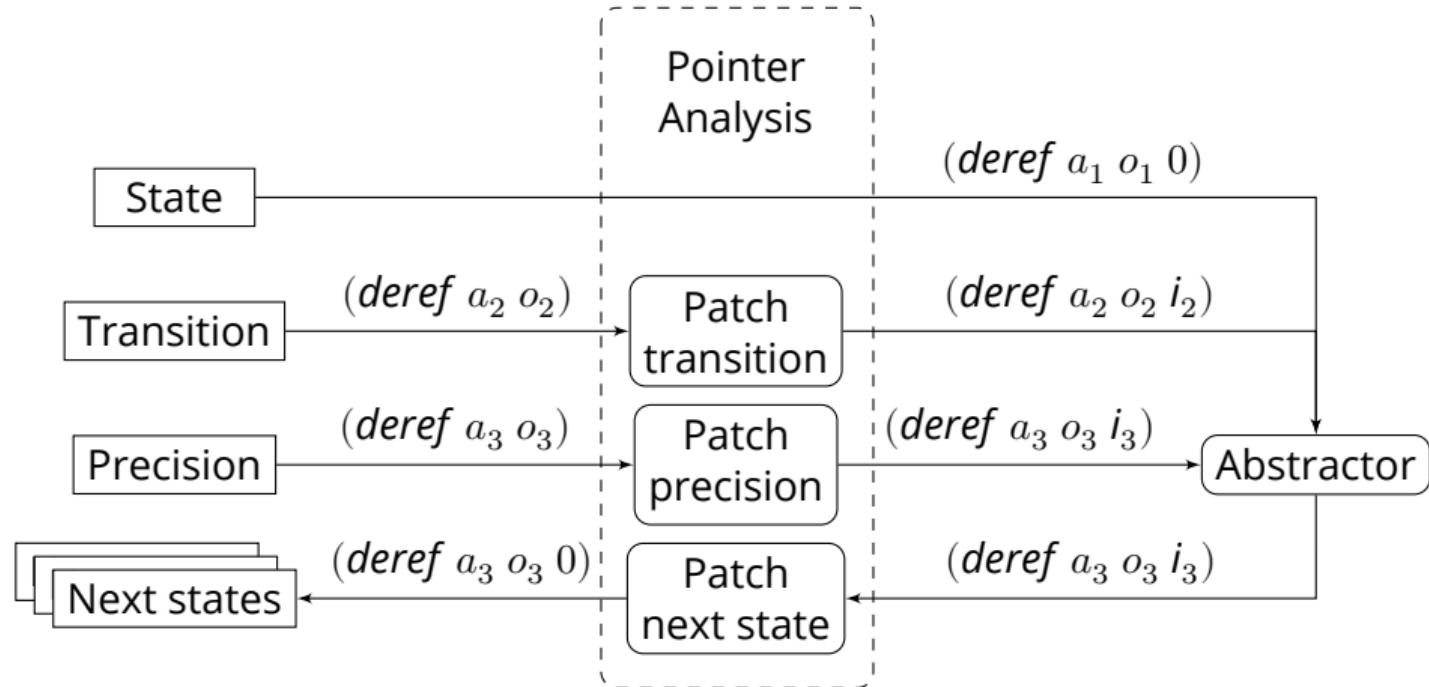
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# CEGAR Plug-In



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Contribution 2: CEGAR Plug-In

# Experiments

## Implementation in $\Theta\textbf{\textit{theta}}$

- ▶ As an independent plug-in
- ▶ Supports any abstract domain and all refinement strategies
- ? Better than *havoc*?
- ? Which domain is best?

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## Experiments on Benchmarks

- ▶ 633 *reachability* tasks from  
    SV-Benchmarks
- ▶ BenchExec for accuracy

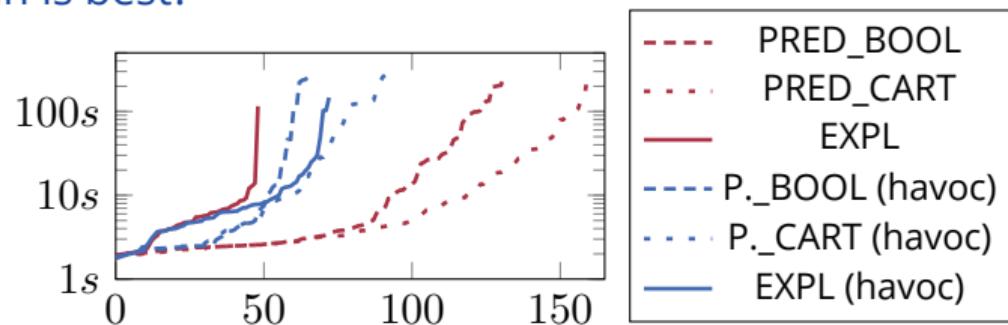
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- ▶ As an independent plug-in
- ▶ Supports any abstract domain and all refinement strategies
- ?
- Better than *havoc*? **Yes!**
- ?
- Which domain is best? **Predicate**

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