

# fn exponential\_top\_k

Michael Shoemate

September 5, 2025

This proof resides in “**contrib**” because it has not completed the vetting process.

This document proves soundness of `exponential_top_k` in `mod.rs` at commit `e62b0aa2` (outdated<sup>1</sup>). `exponential_top_k` noisily selects the index of the best score from a vector of input scores  $k$  times without replacement.

## 1 Hoare Triple

### Preconditions

#### Compiler-Verified

*Types consistent with pseudocode.*

#### Caller-Verified

- Each item of `x` is finite.

### Pseudocode

```
1 def exponential_top_k(x: list[TIA], scale: RBig, k: usize, negate: bool):
2     sign = Sign.from_(negate)
3     scale = scale.into_rational()
4
5     y = [x_i.into_rational() * sign for x_i in x] #
6     return peel_permute_and_flip(y, scale, k)
```

### Postcondition

**Theorem 1.1.** • Returns the index of the top element  $z_i$ , where each  $z_i \sim \text{Exp}(\text{shift} = y_i, \text{scale} = \text{scale})$ , and each  $y_i = -x_i$  if `negate`, else  $y_i = x_i$ ,  $k$  times with removal.

- Errors are data-independent, except for exhaustion of entropy.

*Proof.* By the precondition that each element in  $x$  is finite, the conversion into rational is infallible.

By the postcondition of `peel_permute_and_flip`, and the potential negation on line 5, the postcondition is satisfied.

The only source of error is due to entropy exhaustion. □

---

<sup>1</sup>See new changes with `git diff e62b0aa2..4679a03 rust/src/measurements/noisy_top_k/exponential/mod.rs`