Lists and Patterns

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Pattern discrimination allows to **decompose** lists:

```
sum [] = 0
sum (x:xs) = x + sum xs
```

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We say that e_1 matches e_2 if there exists a substitution for the variables of e_1 that make it the same as e_2 .

Examples:

- x:xs matches [2, 5, 8] because [2, 5, 8] is 2 : (5 : 8 : []) substituting x with 2 and xs with (5 : 8 : []) which is [5, 8].
- x:xs does not match [] because [] and : are different constructors.
- x1:x2:xs matches [2, 5, 8] substituting x1 with 2, x2 with 5 and xs with [8].
- x1:x2:xs matches [2, 5] substituting x1 with 2, x2 with 5 and xs with [].

Note: The mechanism of *matching* is not the same as the *unification* (Prolog).

Instructor Youtube Channel: Lucas Science



