

Defining Function Domains as the Primary Line of Defense



Zoran Horvat

PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT AT CODING HELMET

@zoranh75 csharpmentor.com



Partial vs. Total Functions

```
public void Deposit(decimal amount){}
```

Partial Function

Function which is defined on a subset of all possible argument values.

Total Function

Function which is defined for all possible argument values.



Partial vs. Total Functions

```
public void Deposit(decimal amount)
{
    if (amount <= 0)
        throw new ArgumentException(
            "Only positive amounts can be deposited.",
            nameof(amount));
    // Keep going
}
```

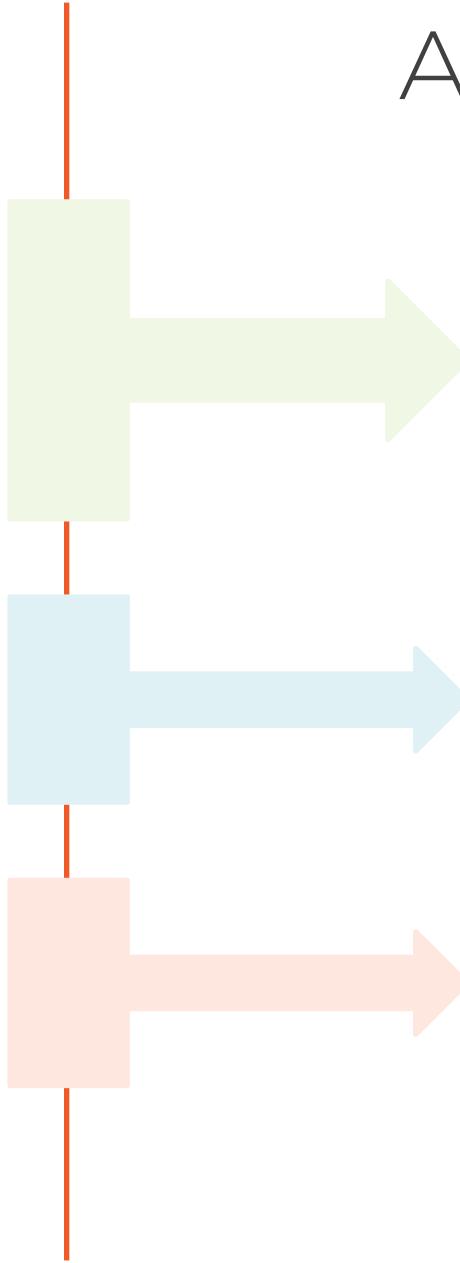
Guard Clause

Programmatic implementation of the partial function.
(a.k.a. if-throw pattern)



All Kinds of Guards

- Null input
- Zero value
- Negative value
- Empty string
- Whitespace string
- Incompatible values
- Violated rules



We are fine
checking values

We could even live with
checking structured values

We are definitely off the rails
guarding complex rules



```
class ExamApplicationBuilder
{
    ...
    public bool CanBuild() =>
        this.Administrator != null &&
        this.Subject != null &&
        this.Candidate != null &&
        this.Candidate.Enrolled ==
            this.Subject.TaughtDuring &&
        !this.Candidate
            .HasPassedExam(this.Subject) &&
        this.Subject.TaughtBy ==
            this.Administrator;
    ...
}
```

◀ **Guarding against null is fine**

That defines the domain on
which function is defined



```
class ExamApplicationBuilder
{
    ...
    public bool CanBuild() =>
        this.Administrator != null &&
        this.Subject != null &&
        this.Candidate != null &&
        this.Candidate.Enrolled ==
            this.Subject.TaughtDuring &&
        !this.Candidate
            .HasPassedExam(this.Subject) &&
        this.Subject.TaughtBy ==
            this.Administrator;
    ...
}
```

◀ **Guarding against null is fine**

That defines the domain on which function is defined

◀ **Guarding against violating dynamic rules is not fine**

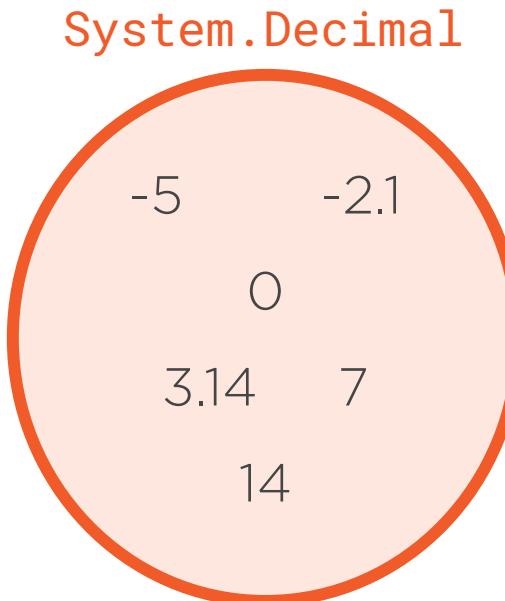
That would be controlling execution flow with exceptions



Partial Functions Revisited

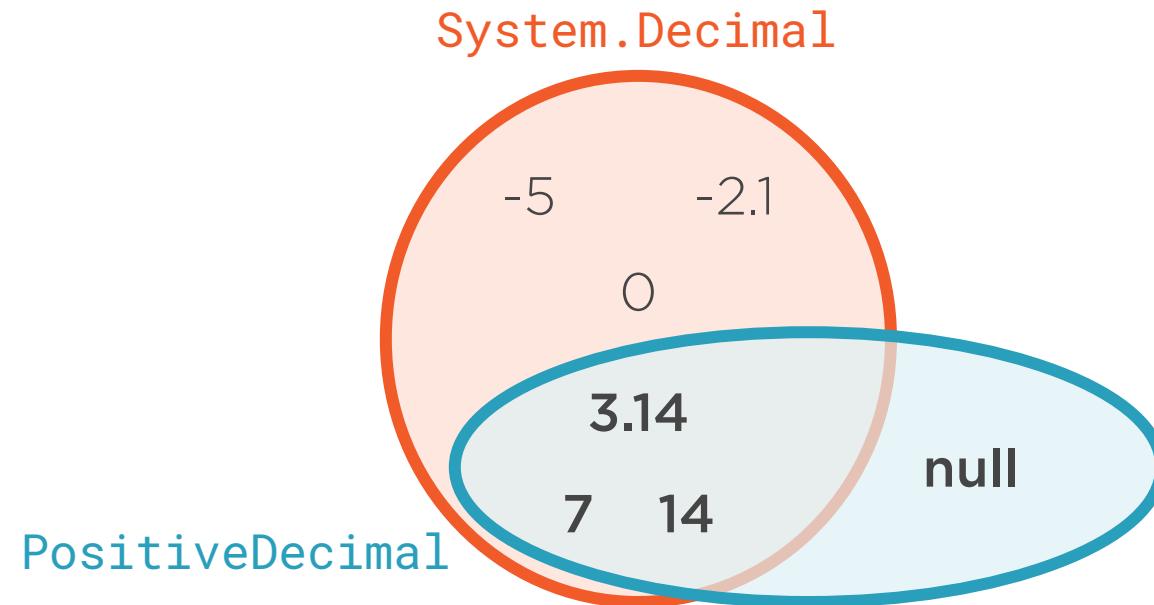
```
public void Deposit(decimal amount)
{
    if (amount <= 0)
        throw new ArgumentException(
            "Only positive amounts can be deposited.",
            nameof(amount));
    this.Balance += amount;
}
```

How long has this negative value been around?



Partial Functions Revisited

```
public void Deposit(PositiveDecimal amount)
{
    if (amount <= 0)
        throw new ArgumentException(
            "Only positive amounts can be deposited.",
            nameof(amount));
    this.Balance += amount;
}
```

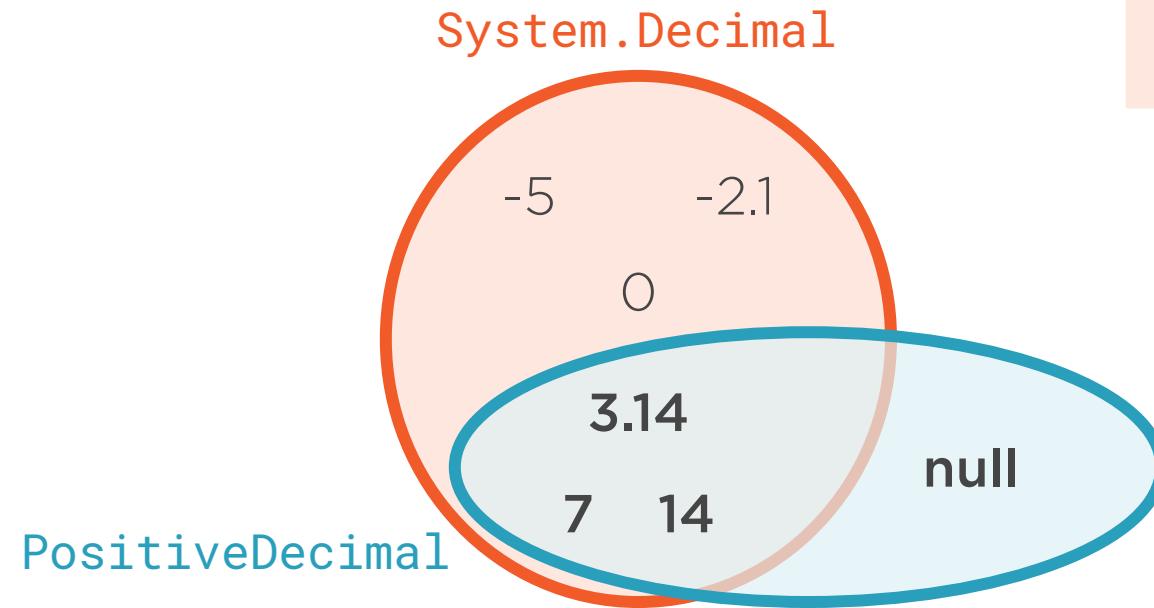


Partial Functions Revisited

```
public void Deposit(PositiveDecimal amount)
{
    if (amount == null)
        throw new ArgumentNullException(nameof(amount));
    this.Balance += amount;
}
```

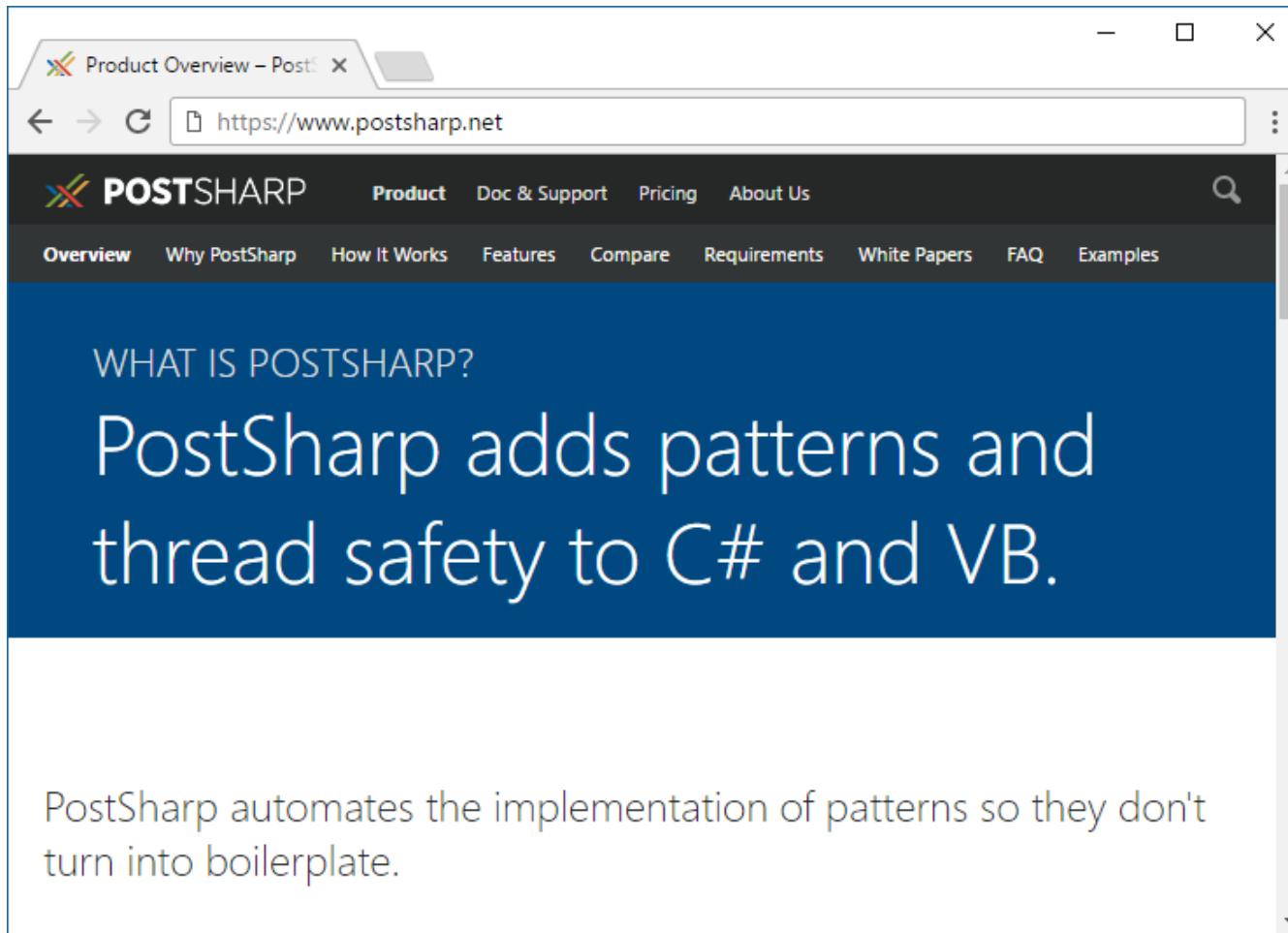
Null remains
the only villain

Until we get
the ability to
forbid null
syntactically



Guarding with (Paid) Tools

<https://www.postsharp.net>



Input Validation Attributes

NotNull

NotEmpty

Required

CreditCard

EmailAddress

Phone

RegularExpression

StringLength

EnumDataType

Greater Than

Less Than

Positive

StrictlyPositive

Range



Guarding with (Paid) Tools

```
class Account
{
    private NonNegativeAmount Balance { get; set; }

    public void Deposit([NotNull] PositiveDecimal amount) =>
        this.Balance += amount;
}
```

Advice:

If you don't use null in code,
then null checks will never fail

Do not pass null as argument

Do not return null from a method

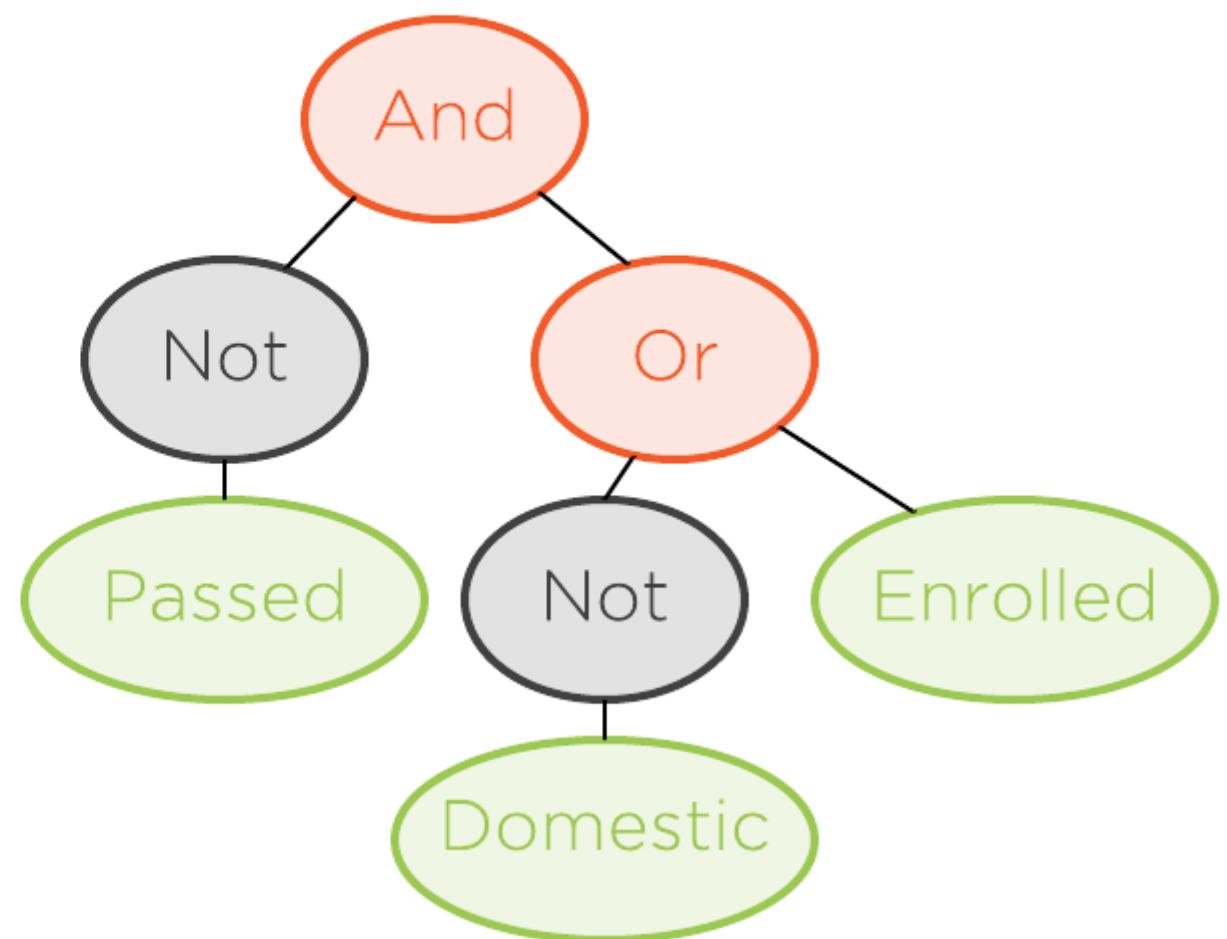
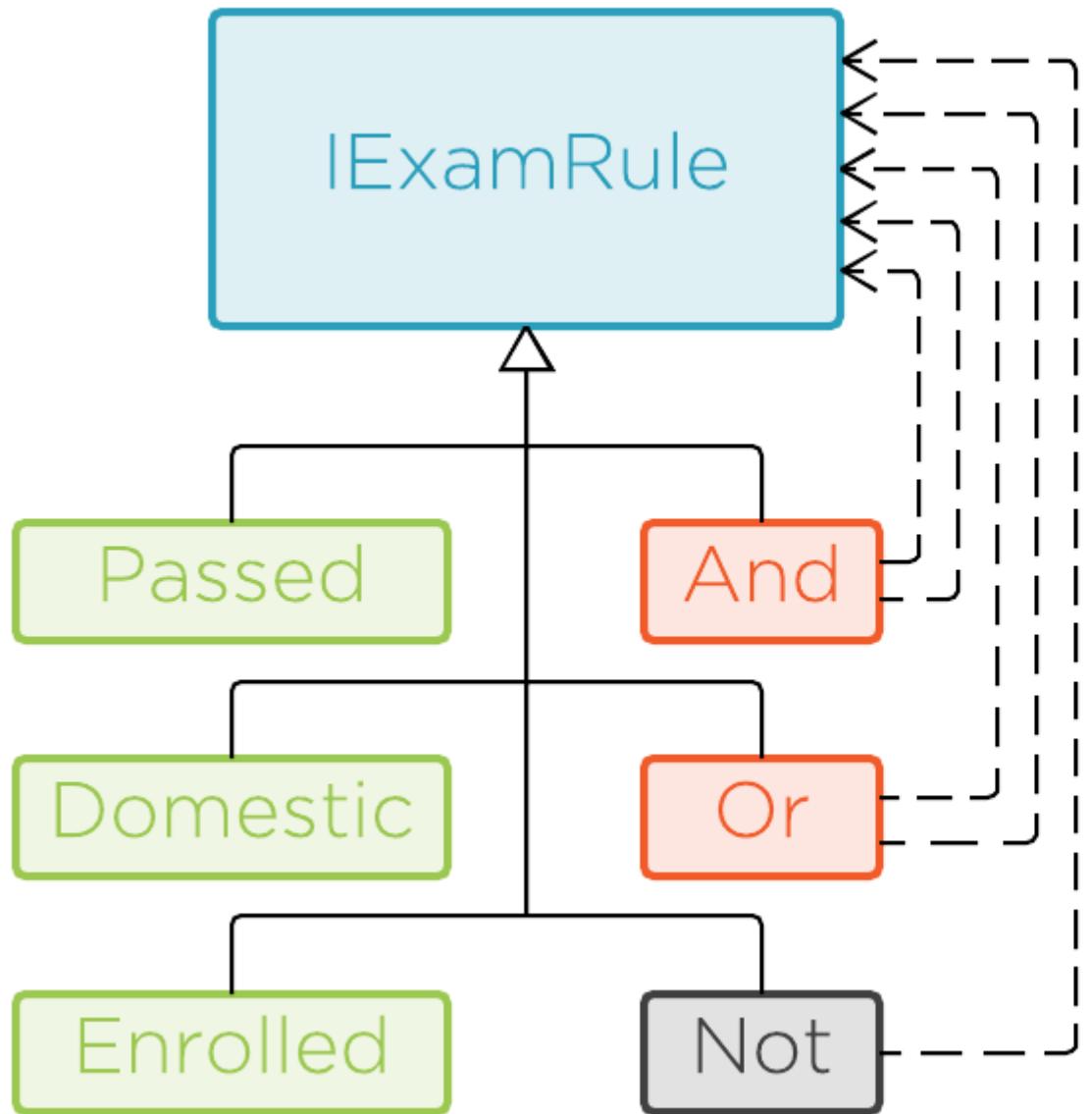
Do not set variables to null

Null check remains
the last guard

PostSharp offers attributes,
leaving implementation clean



Expressions and Expression Builders



Separating View and Domain Models

Querying data

Bulk load
flat data

Reconstructing
domain objects

Load lots of
related objects



Summary



Programmatic vs. Mathematical Functions

- Both can be partial

Function fails if called outside its domain

- Typically throws an exception



Summary



Techniques to make functions total

- Define custom argument types with specific domain
- Apply Callback pattern and execute only when possible
- Filter objects that belong to domain

Later during this course

- Option<T> functional type
- Either<TLeft, TRight> functional type

Null checks as the last barrier

- Possibility to turn them into an aspect



Summary



Persisting complex model

- Every model, complex or not, has to be persisted at some point

Separation of models

- Domain layer defines separate Domain and View models
- Persistence layer defines its own Persistence model
- More details follow...

Next module

Encapsulation and Domain Rules

