

Assignment 2

Verification at Every Tern

15-414: Bug Catching: Automated Program Verification

Due 23:59pm, Friday, September 19, 2025
70 pts

This assignment is due on the above date and it must be submitted electronically on Gradescope. Please carefully read the policies on collaboration and credit on the course web pages at <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~15414/assignments.html>.

What To Hand In

You should hand in the following files on Gradescope:

- Submit the file `asst2.zip` to Assignment 2 (Code). You can generate this file by running `make handin`. This will include your solution `ternary.mlw`, and the proof session in `ternary/`.
- Submit a PDF containing your answers to the written questions to Assignment 2 (Written). You may use the file `asst2.tex` as a template and submit `asst2.pdf`.

Make sure your session directories and your PDF solution files are up to date before you create the handin file.

Using LaTeX

We prefer the answer to your written questions to be typeset in LaTeX, but as long as you hand in a readable PDF with your solutions it is not a requirement. We package the assignment source `asst2.tex` to get you started on this.

1 Leave No Tern Unstoned (55 pts)

Balanced ternary numbers are a representation of integers with some remarkable properties. This representation has three digits with values -1, 0, and 1. It represents any integer uniquely (assuming no leading 0s) and has some nice symmetry properties. For example, a number is negated just by negating every digit. An early computer built in Moscow in 1958 actually used balanced ternary numbers and ternary logic, instead of the binary system we are now used to. The Wikipedia article on [balanced ternary](#) provides an introduction and more details about how to perform operations on numbers represented this way.

In this problem you are asked to implement and verify some simple functions over ternary numbers. This is partly an exercise in specification suitable for verification, and partly an exercise in working with data types. It may be helpful to review regular expressions ([Lecture 5](#) and live code [regexp-spec.mlw](#)) and how we wrote the axioms specifying the interpretation of regular expressions.

Each function you write should be verified against contracts expressing the correctness of your implementation.

The digits d should be either $\bar{1}$, 0, or 1 with values $f(\bar{1}) = -1$, $f(0) = 0$ and $f(1) = 1$. The value of a ternary number $d_n \dots d_0$ is determined by

$$v(d_n \dots d_0) = \sum_{i=0}^n f(d_i) 3^i$$

From a verification perspective, this is difficult to work with due to its use of exponentials. More helpful is the following recurrence:

$$\begin{aligned} v(d_n \dots d_0) &= f(d_0) + 3 v(d_n \dots d_1) \\ v() &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

This suggests representing ternary numbers as a list of digits, *with the least significant bit first*. Note that the representation of a number is not unique, because one can add arbitrarily many leading zeros without changing its value.

For concreteness, we suggest the following representation, which you can find in the file `ternary.mlw`. You are free to choose a different representation, but if you do, please briefly explain it in a comment in the file.

```
1  type digit = Z0 | P1 | M1
2  let function f (d:digit) : int =
3  match d with Z0 -> 0 | P1 -> 1 | M1 -> -1 end
4
5  type tern = list digit
6  (* least significant digit first *)
7  (* trailing Z0 digits are allowed *)
```

Note that we defined `let function f` which means that f can be used logically, in contracts, but also computationally. Here are several examples:

Integer	Ternary	WhyML
6	1 $\bar{1}$ 0	Cons Z0 (Cons M1 (Cons P1 Nil))
- 2	$\bar{1}$ 1	Cons P1 (Cons M1 Nil)

Task 1 (10 pts). Specify a predicate value $(t:\text{tern}) \rightarrow (a:\text{int})$ that relates a ternary number to its integer value by a set of axioms.

Task 2 (5 points). Test your axioms using Why3 goal constructs, as demonstrated in the live-code component of [Lecture 6](#).

- In this case, the goal formulas that you write should either state that value correctly relates a given int to a corresponding tern, or that value *does not* relate an int to an incorrect tern.
- Demonstrate that you have tested your axioms by including at least five such goals in your solution.

Task 3 (5 pts). Define a function $\text{to_int} (t:\text{tern}) : \text{int}$ converting a ternary number t to the integer it represents.

Task 4 (10 pts). Define a function $\text{from_int} (a:\text{int}) : \text{tern}$ converting an integer a to a ternary number. The module `int.EuclideanDivision` that defines `div` and `mod` functions may be helpful.

You may not use the functions `to_int` and `from_int` in the remaining tasks. Those functions should be defined directly on the ternary representation.

Task 5 (10 pts). Define functions $\text{inc} (t:\text{tern}) : \text{tern}$ and $\text{dec} (t:\text{tern}) : \text{tern}$ that increment and decrement t , respectively.

Task 6 (15 pts). Define a function $\text{plus} (s:\text{tern}) (t:\text{tern}) : \text{tern}$ that computes the sum of s and t .

2 It's a Question of Semantics (15 pts)

In this collection of tasks we work with the simple while language from [Lecture 5](#).

Task 7 (10 pts). Define the semantics of a repeat-until loop

repeat α until Q

which executes α repeatedly until Q becomes true. Importantly, Q is tested *after* each execution of α , which means that the body will always execute at least once.

Task 8 (5 pts). Define an alternative semantics of the repeat-until loop by showing how to translate it into the while language. You do not have to prove that the two definitions are equivalent.