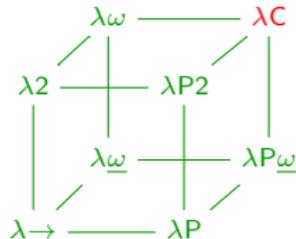


inductive types

Freek Wiedijk

Type Theory & Rocq
2025–2026
Radboud University Nijmegen

October 1, 2025



introduction

today

minimal propositional logic STT = simple type theory
minimal predicate logic λP = dependent types
full Rocq logic CIC = Calculus of Inductive Constructions

CIC = λC + inductive types + coinductive types + universes + ...

how are types introduced?

- ▶ free type variables

STT = simple type theory

- ▶ in the context

PTSs = pure type systems $\lambda \rightarrow \lambda P \ \lambda 2 \ \lambda C$

$\text{nat} : *, O : \text{nat}, S : \text{nat} \rightarrow \text{nat} \vdash S(S(O)) : \text{nat}$

- ▶ definitions

CIC = Calculus of Inductive Constructions

```
Inductive nat : Set :=
| 0 : nat
| S : nat -> nat.
```

definitions in Rocq

- ▶ axioms

environment used like the context in λC

disadvantage: reductions will get stuck

Axiom Parameter

- ▶ definitions of constants

Definition

Lemma

Qed

- ▶ inductive definitions

Inductive

variants

CIC = Calculus of Inductive Constructions

=

λC = Calculus of Constructions

+

MLTT = Martin-Löf type theory

different systems have different variants of CIC:

- ▶ Rocq
- ▶ Agda
- ▶ Lean
- ▶ ...



Thierry Coquand



Per Martin-Löf

typing rules

STT

3 rules

$$\Gamma \vdash M : A$$

PTSs

7 rules

$$\Gamma \vdash M : A$$

$$M =_{\beta} N$$

CIC

many rules

chapter 2.1 of the Rocq manual

$$\mathcal{WF}(E)[\Gamma]$$

$$E[\Gamma] \vdash M : A$$

$$E[\Gamma] \vdash M =_{\beta\delta\iota\eta\zeta} N$$

$$E[\Gamma] \vdash M \leq_{\beta\delta\iota\eta\zeta} N$$

examples of CIC typing rules from the Rocq manual

$$\frac{\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \mathsf{Ind}\ [p]\ (\Gamma_I \ :=\ \Gamma_C) \in E \\ (E[] \vdash q_l : P'_l)_{l=1\dots r} \\ (E[] \vdash P'_l \leq_{\beta\delta\iota\zeta\eta} P_l \{p_u/q_u\}_{u=1\dots l-1})_{l=1\dots r} \\ 1 \leq j \leq k \end{array} \right\}}{E[] \vdash I_j\ q_1\dots q_r : \forall[p_{r+1} : P_{r+1}; \dots; p_p : P_p], (A_j)_{/s_j}}$$

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c} E[\Gamma] \vdash c : (I\ q_1\dots q_r\ t_1\dots t_s) \\ E[\Gamma] \vdash P : B \\ [(I\ q_1\dots q_r)|B] \\ (E[\Gamma] \vdash f_i : \{(c_{p_i}\ q_1\dots q_r)\}^P)_{i=1\dots l} \end{array}}{E[\Gamma] \vdash \mathbf{case}(c, P, f_1|\dots|f_l) : (P\ t_1\dots t_s\ c)}$$

context versus environment

$$\textcolor{red}{E}[\textcolor{green}{\Gamma}] \vdash M : A$$

- ▶ $\textcolor{red}{E}$ is the **environment** of axioms and definitions
- ▶ $\textcolor{green}{\Gamma}$ is the **context** of local variables

example of context versus environment

```
Parameter a : Prop.  
Definition I : a -> a :=  
  fun x : a => x.
```

the typing judgment for the subterm x :

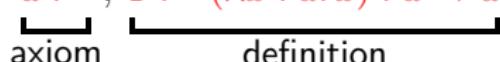
$$(a : *)[x : a] \vdash x : a$$

a is in the environment

x is in the context

after these three lines the environment is:

$$a : * , I := (\lambda x : a. x) : a \rightarrow a$$



syntax

STT

$$A, B ::= a \mid A \rightarrow B$$
$$M, N ::= x \mid MN \mid \lambda x : A. M$$

λC

$$M, N, A, B ::= x \mid MN \mid \lambda x : A. M \mid \Pi x : A. B \mid s$$
$$s ::= * \mid \square$$

CIC

$$M, N, A, B ::= x \mid MN \mid \lambda x : A. M \mid \Pi x : A. B \mid s \mid$$
$$\text{let } x := N : A \text{ in } M \mid$$
$$\text{fix } \dots \mid \text{match } \dots \mid \dots$$
$$s ::= \text{Set} \mid \text{Prop} \mid \text{SProp} \mid \text{Type}(i)$$

the universe levels i are explicit natural numbers

universes

λC

$*$: \square

CIC

$\{\text{Set}, \text{Prop}, \text{SProp}\} : \text{Type}(1) : \text{Type}(2) : \text{Type}(3) : \dots$

in λC the sort \square does not have a type

in CIC every term has a type

the universe $\text{Type}(1)$ is often used like $*$ too

the universe levels i are generally inferred by the system

SProp is a proof irrelevant version of Prop

subtyping

$$\text{Prop} \leq \text{Set} \leq \text{Type}(1) \leq \text{Type}(2) \leq \text{Type}(3) \leq \dots$$

Check True.

Check (True : Set).

Check (True : Type).

Check nat.

Check (nat : Type).

Check (nat : Prop).

Check (Type : Type).

conversion rule:

$$\frac{E[\Gamma] \vdash M : A \quad E[\Gamma] \vdash A' : s \quad E[\Gamma] \vdash A \leq_{\beta\delta\iota\zeta\eta} A'}{E[\Gamma] \vdash M : A'}$$

reduction

fun	β	η
Definition	δ	
fix match	ι	
let	ζ	

$$(\lambda x : A. M)N \xrightarrow{\beta} M[x := N]$$

$$\lambda x : A. (Fx) \xrightarrow{\eta} F \quad \text{when } F : (\Pi x : A. B)$$

$$\text{let } x := N : A \text{ in } M \xrightarrow{\zeta} M[x := N]$$

why let-in definitions when we have beta redexes?

let $A := \text{nat} : \text{Set}$ in $(\lambda x : A. x) O$
is well-typed

$(\lambda A : \text{Set}. ((\lambda x : A. x) O)) \text{nat}$
is not well-typed

because the subterm

$\lambda A : \text{Set}. ((\lambda x : A. x) O)$
is not well-typed

defining constants in Rocq

```
Definition two : nat :=
  S (S 0).
```

```
Print two.
```

```
Definition two' : nat.
```

```
apply S.
```

```
apply S.
```

```
apply 0.
```

```
Defined.
```

```
Print two'.
```

```
Lemma eq_two : two = two'.
```

```
reflexivity.
```

```
Qed.
```

delta reduction:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{two} \xrightarrow{\delta} S(S 0) \\ \text{two'} \xrightarrow{\delta} S(S 0) \end{array}$$

the natural numbers

defining an inductive type

```
Inductive nat : Set :=
| 0 : nat
| S : nat -> nat.
```

$$\text{nat} = \{0, S\ 0, S\ (S\ 0), S\ (S\ (S\ 0)), \dots\}$$

what is a type?

- ▶ syntax
 - ▶ string over some alphabet
- ▶ semantics: 'something like a set'
 - ▶ function types
 - ▶ **inductive types**

an inductive type 'consists of'
the terms you can make with the constructors

more precisely: the **closed terms in normal form**

closed = no free variables

normal form = does not reduce any further

normal forms are unique (CR = Church-Rosser)

every well-typed term has a normal form (SN = Strong Normalization)

intuitionism

Bishop-style constructive mathematics (\approx Rocq)



the ur-intuition of time (synthetic a priori):

This intuition of two-oneness, the basal intuition of mathematics, creates not only the numbers one and two, but also all finite ordinal numbers, inasmuch as one of the elements of the two-oneness may be thought of as a new two-oneness, which process may be repeated indefinitely.



L.E.J. Brouwer

natural numbers in Rocq

```
Inductive nat : Set :=          nat_rect =
| 0 : nat                      fun (P : nat -> Type) (f : P 0)
| S : nat -> nat.               (f0 : forall n : nat,
                                    P n -> P (S n)) =>
                                fix F (n : nat) : P n :=
Check nat.                    match n as n0 return (P n0) with
Check 0.                       | 0 => f
Check S.                        | S n0 => f0 n0 (F n0)
Check nat_ind.                  end
Check nat_sind.                : forall P : nat -> Type,
Check nat_rect.                 P 0 ->
                                (forall n : nat,
                                 P n -> P (S n)) ->
Print nat.                      forall n : nat, P n
Print 0.
Print S.
Print nat_ind.
Print nat_rect.
```

Arguments nat_ind _%function_scope
_ _%function_scope

the constants defined by an inductive type definition

```
Inductive nat : Set :=
| 0 : nat
| S : nat -> nat.
```

makes three kinds of constants available:

- ▶ the type
primitive

nat : Set

- ▶ the constructors
primitive

0 : nat

S : nat → nat

- ▶ the destructors
 - = eliminators = induction principles
 - = recursors = recursion principles
- defined using 'fix' and 'match'

induction / recursion principles

nat_{_}ind : ...
nat_{_}sind : ...
nat_{_}rec : ...
nat_{_}rect : ...

correspond to predicates in {Prop, SProp, Set, Type}

two variants:

- ▶ **dependent principle**
(looks more complicated, easier to understand)
- ▶ **non-dependent principle**
(can be derived from the dependent principle)

inductive types in Prop with more than two constructors:

only the first two, non-dependent

inductive types in Set or Type: all four, dependent

defining addition

```
Fixpoint add (n m : nat) : nat :=
  match n with
  | 0 => m
  | S n' => S (add n' m)
  end.
```

structural recursion: recursive call has to be on a smaller term

```
Definition add' (n m : nat) : nat.
induction n as [|n' r].
- apply m.
- apply S. apply r.
Defined.
```

```
Definition add'' (n m : nat) : nat :=
  nat_rec (fun _ => nat) m (fun n' r => S r) n.
```

recursive definitions in Rocq

```
Fixpoint add (n m : nat)          = S (S 0)
  : nat :=                      : nat
  match n with
  | 0 => m
  | S n' => S (add n' m)
  end.

Print add.
```

```
Lemma add_1_1 :
  add (S 0) (S 0) = S (S 0).
simpl.
reflexivity.
Qed.
```

```
Eval compute in
  add (S 0) (S 0).
```

iota reduction

fun	β	η
Definition	δ	
fix match	ι	
let	ζ	

constructor
↓
 $(\mathbf{fix} \ f \dots := M) \dots (c \dots) \dots$

\downarrow
 $M[f := (\mathbf{fix} \ f \dots := M)] \dots (c \dots) \dots$

match $(c N_1 \dots N_k)$ **with** $\dots | (c x_1 \dots x_k) \Rightarrow M | \dots$ **end**

\downarrow
 $M[x_1 := N_1, \dots, x_k := N_k]$

induction in Rocq

```
Lemma add_n_0 (n : nat) :      add' =
  add n 0 = n.                  fun n m : nat =>
induction n as [|n' IH].      nat_rec (fun _ : nat => nat) m
- reflexivity.                 (fun _ r : nat => S r) n
- simpl. rewrite IH.          : nat -> nat -> nat
  reflexivity.  
Qed.
```

```
Definition add' (n m : nat)
  : nat.
```

```
induction n as [|n' r].
- apply m.
- apply S. apply r.
```

```
Defined.
```

```
Print add'.
```

```
Definition add'' (n m : nat)
  : nat :=
nat_rec (fun _ => nat) m (fun n' r => S r) n.
```

elimination tactics

`elim`

`destruct`

`intros + pattern`

`induction`

`inversion` ← next week

induction principle

```
nat_ind
  : forall P : nat -> Prop,
    P 0 ->
    (forall n : nat, P n -> P (S n)) ->
    forall n : nat, P n
```

structure of an induction principle:

- for all parameters of the type,
- for all predicates over the type,
- if the predicate is preserved by the constructors,
- then the predicate holds on the full type

the induction tactic applies the induction principle

recursion principle

```
nat_rec
  : forall A : nat -> Set,
    A 0 ->
    (forall n : nat, A n -> A (S n)) ->
    forall n : nat, A n
```

$$\begin{aligned}f(0) &= g \\ f(n+1) &= h\ n\ (f\ n)\end{aligned}$$

$$f = \text{nat_rec } A\ g\ h$$

$$\begin{aligned}g &: A\ 0 \\ h &: \prod n : \text{nat}. A\ n \rightarrow A\ (\text{S}\ n) \\ f &: \prod n : \text{nat}. A\ n\end{aligned}$$

induction = recursion

nat_rec

```
: forall A : nat -> Set,  
  A 0 ->  
  (forall n : nat, A n -> A (S n)) ->  
  forall n : nat, A n
```

nat_ind

```
: forall P : nat -> Prop,  
  P 0 ->  
  (forall n : nat, P n -> P (S n)) ->  
  forall n : nat, P n
```

non-dependent principle from dependent principle

```
nat_rec_dep
  : forall A : nat -> Set,
    A 0 ->
    (forall n : nat, A n -> A (S n)) ->
    forall n : nat, A n
```

```
nat_rec_nondep
  : forall A : Set,
    A ->
    (forall n : nat, A -> A) ->
    forall n : nat, A
```

```
nat_rec_nondep
  : forall A : Set,
    A ->
    (nat -> A -> A) ->
    nat -> A
```

Inductive nat : Prop :=
| 0 : nat
| S : nat -> nat.

Check nat_ind.

iota reduction revisited

$$\begin{aligned}f(0) &= g \\ f(n+1) &= h n (f n)\end{aligned}$$

$$f = \text{nat_rec } A \ g \ h$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{nat_rec } A \ g \ h \ O &\xrightarrow{\beta\delta\iota} g \\ \text{nat_rec } A \ g \ h \ (\mathbf{S} \ n) &\xrightarrow{\beta\delta\iota} h \ n \ (\text{nat_rec } A \ g \ h \ n)\end{aligned}$$

examples of inductive types

Curry-Howard

datatypes		logic
Set		Prop
$\mathbb{1}$		\top
\emptyset		\perp
$A \rightarrow B$	functions	$A \rightarrow B$
$A \times B$	pairs	$A \wedge B$
$A + B$		$A \vee B$
$\Pi x : A. B$	functions	$\forall x : A. B$
$\Sigma x : A. B$	pairs	$\exists x : A. B$

unit and empty types

```
Inductive unit : Set :=
| tt : unit.
```

```
Inductive True : Prop :=
| I : True.
```

```
Inductive Empty_set : Set := .
```

```
Inductive False : Prop := .
```

product and sum types

```
Inductive prod (A B : Set) : Set :=
| pair : A -> B -> prod A B.
```

```
Inductive and (A B : Prop) : Prop :=
| conj : A -> B -> and A B.
```

```
Inductive sum (A B : Set) : Set :=
| inl : A -> sum A B
| inr : B -> sum A B.
```

```
Inductive or (A B : Prop) : Prop :=
| or_introl : A -> or A B
| or_intror : B -> or A B.
```

```
Inductive sumbool (A B : Prop) : Set :=
| left : A -> sumbool A B
| right : B -> sumbool A B.
```

Sigma types and the existential quantifier

```
Inductive prod (A B : Set) : Set :=
| pair : A -> B -> prod A B.
```

```
Inductive sigT (A : Set) (B : A -> Set) : Set :=
| existsT : forall x : A, B x -> sigT A B.
```

```
Inductive sig (A : Set) (B : A -> Prop) : Set :=
| exist : forall x : A, B x -> sig A B.
```

```
Inductive ex (A : Set) (B : A -> Prop) : Prop :=
| ex_intro : forall x : A, B x -> ex A B.
```

notation:

$A \times B$	$A * B$	<code>prod A B</code>
$A + B$	$A + B$	<code>sum A B</code>
$\Sigma_{x:A} B$	$\{x : A \& B\}$	<code>@sigT A (fun x : A => B)</code>
$\{x : A \mid B\}$	$\{x : A \mid B\}$	<code>@sig A (fun x : A => B)</code>
$\exists x : A. B$	$\textcolor{red}{exists\ } x : A, B$	<code>@ex A (fun x : A => B)</code>

proof rules

logical connectives as inductive types:

proposition \longleftrightarrow type

introduction rules \longleftrightarrow constructors

example: disjunction elimination

```
Inductive or (A B : Prop) : Prop :=
| or_introL : A -> or A B
| or_introR : B -> or A B.
```

for all parameters of the type,
for all predicates over the type,
if the predicate is preserved by the constructors,
then the predicate holds on the full type

or_ind

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{or_ind} \\ \quad \text{: forall } A B \\ \quad \quad P : \text{Prop}, & \frac{A}{A \vee B} \text{ Il}\vee & \frac{B}{A \vee B} \text{ Ir}\vee \\ \quad (A \rightarrow P) \rightarrow & & \\ \quad (B \rightarrow P) \rightarrow & & \\ \quad \text{or } A B \rightarrow P & & \\ & \frac{A \vee B \quad A \rightarrow P \quad B \rightarrow P}{P} \text{ E}\vee \end{array}$$

propositions versus Booleans

two very different types for truth values:

- ▶ **Prop**

elements are types, does not support if-then-else
predicates map to Prop

- ▶ **bool**

elements are data, supports if-then-else
decision procedures map to bool

Prop : Type

True : Prop

False : Prop

I : True

bool : Set

true : bool

false : bool

datatypes: lists and vectors

```
Inductive blist : Set :=
| bnil : blist
| bcons : bool -> blist -> blist.
```

```
Inductive list (A : Set) : Set :=
| nil : list A
| cons : A -> list A -> list A.
```

```
Inductive vec (A : Set) : nat -> Set :=
| vnil : vec A 0
| vcons : forall n : nat, A -> vec A n -> vec A (S n).
```

Arguments vcons {A} {n}.

```
Fixpoint vappend {A : Set} {n m : nat}
  (v : vec A n) (w : vec A m) : vec A (add n m) :=
  match v in vec _ n return vec A (add n m) with
  | vnil _ => w
  | vcons h t => vcons h (vappend t w)
  end.
```

extended match

```
match ... in  $Ix_1 \dots x_n$  as  $y$  return  $A$  with
| ...
|  $(c_i \dots) \Rightarrow M_i$ 
| ...
end
```

for all i should hold:

$$(c_i \dots) : IN_1 \dots N_n$$

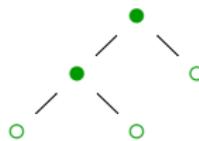


$$M_i : A[x_1 := N_1, \dots, x_n := N_n, y := (c_i \dots)]$$

trees

```
Inductive bintree : Set :=
| node : bintree -> bintree -> bintree
| leaf : bintree.
```

node (node leaf leaf) leaf



W-types

```
Inductive W (A : Set) (B : A -> Set) : Set :=
| sup : forall x : A, (B x -> W A B) -> W A B.
```

nodes are labeled with elements of A

edges are labeled with elements of Bx

(where x is the label of the node it starts from)

inductive predicates

rules

Rocq formalization of any system of rules of the form:

$$\frac{\text{hyp}_1 \quad \dots \quad \text{hyp}_n}{\text{conclusion}}$$

- ▶ logics: proof rules
- ▶ type systems: typing rules
- ▶ programming language semantics
- ▶ ...

examples

```
Inductive even : nat -> Prop :=
| even_0 : even 0
| even_SS : forall n : nat, even n -> even (S (S n)).
```

$$\frac{}{\text{even } 0} \qquad \frac{\text{even } n}{\text{even } (n + 2)}$$

```
Inductive le : nat -> nat -> Prop :=
| le_n : forall n : nat, le n n
| le_S : forall n m : nat, le n m -> le n (S m).
```

```
Inductive le (n : nat) : nat -> Prop :=
| le_n : le n n
| le_S : forall m : nat, le n m -> le n (S m).
```

$$\frac{}{n \leq n} \qquad \frac{n \leq m}{n \leq m + 1}$$

proving that four is even

```
Inductive even : nat -> Prop :=  
| even_0 : even 0  
| even_SS n : even n ->  
  even (S (S n)).
```

```
Lemma even_4 :  
  even (S (S (S (S 0)))).  
apply even_SS.  
apply even_SS.  
apply even_0.  
Qed.
```

```
even_4 = even_SS (S (S 0))  
          (even_SS 0 even_0)  
: even (S (S (S (S 0))))
```

$$\frac{\text{even } 0}{\text{even } ((0 + 2) + 2)}$$

Print even_4.

proving that three is not even: inversion

```
Inductive even
  : nat -> Prop :=
| even_0 : even 0
| even_SS n :
  even n ->
  even (S (S n)).
```

```
Ltac my_inversion H :=
  inversion H; clear H; subst.
```

```
Lemma odd_3 :
  ~ even (S (S (S 0))).  
intro H.  
my_inversion H.  
my_inversion H1.  
Qed.
```

exercise: figure out the induction principle of even

dependent induction principle of nat

nat_ind

```
: forall P : nat -> Prop,  
P 0 ->  
(forall n : nat, P n -> P (S n)) ->  
forall n : nat, P n
```

non-dependent induction principle of even

even_ind

```
: forall P : nat -> Prop,  
P 0 ->  
(forall n : nat, even n -> P n -> P (S (S n))) ->  
forall n : nat, even n -> P n
```

equality

```
Inductive le (n : nat) : nat -> Prop :=
| le_n : le n n
| le_S : forall m : nat, le n m -> le n (S m).
```

```
Inductive eq_nat (n : nat) : nat -> Prop :=
| eq_n : eq_nat n n.
```

```
Inductive eq (A : Type) (x : A) : A -> Prop :=
| eq_refl : eq A x x.
```

eq_ind

```
: forall (A : Type) (x : A)
  (P : A -> Prop)
  P x ->
  forall (y : A), eq A x y -> P y
```

Leibniz equality

$$\frac{P(x) \quad x = y}{P(y)}$$

conclusion

overview

- ▶ CIC (it's complicated)
 - ▶ universes: Prop, Set, Type
 - ▶ reduction: $\rightarrow_{\beta\delta\iota\zeta\eta}$
- ▶ inductive types
 - ▶ constructors
 - ▶ induction/recursion principles
- ▶ Rocq
 - ▶ Inductive
 - ▶ Fixpoint and match
 - ▶ induction
 - ▶ inversion (more next week)
- ▶ examples
 - ▶ logical operators
 - ▶ datatypes
 - ▶ inductive predicates
 - ▶ Leibniz equality

table of contents

[contents](#)

introduction

CIC

the natural numbers

examples of inductive types

inductive predicates

conclusion

[table of contents](#)