

# Inductive types and identity types

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February 7, 2012

# Outline

- 1 Non-recursive inductive types
- 2 Recursion and Induction
- 3 Inductive families
- 4 Identity types

# Type constructors

For every type constructor, we have rules for:

- 1 Constructing types
- 2 Constructing terms in those types (introduction)
- 3 Using terms in those types (elimination)
- 4 Eliminating introduced terms (computation)

## Negative types

The only negative type we will use is **dependent product**.

- For  $A: \text{Type}$  and  $B: A \rightarrow \text{Type}$ , we have  $\prod_{x:A} B(x): \text{Type}$ .
- An element of  $\prod_{x:A} B(x)$  is a *dependently typed function*, sending each  $x: A$  to an element  $f(x): B(x)$ .
- Coq syntax: `forall (x:A), B x`

When  $B(x)$  is independent of  $x$ , we have the **function type**

$$(A \rightarrow B) := \prod_{x:A} B$$

## Positive types

Positive types are characterized by their introduction rules.

$$\frac{a: A}{\text{inl}(a): A + B} \quad \frac{b: B}{\text{inr}(b): A + B}$$

$$\frac{a: A \quad b: B}{(a, b): A \times B}$$

$$\frac{}{\text{tt}: \text{unit}}$$

The elimination and computation rules can then be deduced.

## Non-recursive inductive types

All positive types in Coq are **inductive types**.

```
Inductive W : Type :=  
| constr1 : A1 -> A2 -> ... -> Am -> W  
| constr2 : B1 -> B2 -> ... -> Bn -> W  
| :  
| constrk : Z1 -> Z2 -> ... -> Zp -> W.
```

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```

This command causes Coq to:

- 1 create a type `W`
- 2 create functions `constr1` through `constrk` with the specified types
- 3 allow an appropriate form of `match` syntax, and
- 4 implement appropriate computation rules.

## Examples

```
Inductive AplusB : Type :=  
| inlAB : A -> AplusB  
| inrAB : B -> AplusB.
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Inductive AtimesB : Type :=  
| pairAB : A -> B -> AtimesB.
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```
Inductive unit : Type :=  
| tt : unit
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Inductive AtimesB : Type :=  
| pairAB : A -> B -> AtimesB.
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```
Inductive unit : Type :=  
| tt : unit
```

```
Inductive Empty_set : Type :=  
.
```

# Parameters

With **parameters** we can define many related types at once.

```
Inductive sum (A B : Type) : Type :=  
| inl : A -> sum A B  
| inr : B -> sum A B.
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**Implicit arguments** and **notations** make these nicer to use.

# Interlude

(Coq)

## Dependent sums

In the presence of dependent types, the constructors can be dependently typed functions.

```
Inductive sigT (A : Type) (P : A -> Type)
  : Type :=
| existT : forall (a : A), P a -> sigT A P.
```

The type of existT is

$$\prod_{a:A} (P(a) \rightarrow \sum_{x:A} P(x))$$

This is a function of two variables whose output is the type being defined ( $\sum_{x:A} P(x)$ ), but the type of the second input depends on the value of the first.



## Strong eliminators

The elimination rule for an inductive type  $W$  is

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c} \Gamma, p: W \vdash C: \text{Type} \quad \Gamma \vdash p: W \\ \Gamma, (\text{inputs of } \text{constr}_1) \vdash c_1: C[\text{constr}_1(\dots)/p] \\ \vdots \\ \Gamma, (\text{inputs of } \text{constr}_k) \vdash c_k: C[\text{constr}_k(\dots)/p] \end{array}}{\Gamma \vdash \text{match}(p, \dots): C}$$

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**Note:** In general, we must allow the **output type**  $C$  to depend on the **value**  $p: W$ .

### Example

$$p: \sum_{x:A} B \vdash \text{pr}_1(p) := \text{unpack}(p, x^A y^B.x): A$$

$$p: \sum_{x:A} B \vdash \text{pr}_2(p) := \text{unpack}(p, x^A y^B.y): B[\text{pr}_1(p)/x]$$

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## The natural numbers

The natural numbers are generated by 0 and successor s.  
That is,  $\mathbb{N}$  is defined by the ways to **construct** a natural number.  
Thus it is a **positive type**.

```
Inductive nat : Type :=  
| zero : nat  
| succ : nat -> nat.
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| zero : nat  
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```

A new feature: the **input** of the constructor `succ` involves something of the type  $\mathbb{N}$  being defined!

We intend, of course, that all elements of  $\mathbb{N}$  are generated by *successively* applying constructors.

$$0, s(0), s(s(0)), s(s(s(0))), \dots$$

## The natural numbers

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But this is not much good; we need to **recurse**.

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The variable  $r$  represents the result of the recursive call at  $x$ , to be used the computation  $c_s$  of the value at  $s(x)$ .



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$$\begin{aligned} \text{rec}(0, c_0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C.c_s) &\rightarrow_{\beta} c_0 \\ \text{rec}(s(n), c_0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C.c_s) &\rightarrow_{\beta} c_s[n/x, \text{rec}(n, c_0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C.c_s)/r] \end{aligned}$$

## Addition

We define addition by recursion on the first input.

$$\begin{aligned}0 + m &:= m \\s(n) + m &:= s(n + m)\end{aligned}$$

In terms of the rec eliminator, this is

$$n: \mathbb{N}, m: \mathbb{N} \vdash \text{plus}(n, m) := \text{rec}(n, m, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^{\mathbb{N}}.s(r))$$

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- When  $n = 0$ , the result is  $m$ .
- When  $n$  is a successor  $s(x)$ , the result is  $s(r)$ .  
(As before,  $r$  is the result of the recursive call at  $x$ .)

## Computing an addition

$$\begin{aligned}ss0 + sss0 &\rightarrow_{\beta} s(s0 + sss0) \\ &\rightarrow_{\beta} s(s(0 + sss0)) \\ &\rightarrow_{\beta} s(s(sss0)) = sssss0.\end{aligned}$$

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$$\begin{aligned}&:= \text{rec}(ss0, sss0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C . s(r)) \\ &\rightarrow_{\beta} (s(r)) \left[ s0/x, \text{rec}(s0, sss0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C . s(r)) / r \right] \\ &= s(\text{rec}(s0, sss0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C . s(r))) \\ &\rightarrow_{\beta} s \left( (s(r)) \left[ 0/x, \text{rec}(0, sss0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C . s(r)) / r \right] \right) \\ &= s \left( s(\text{rec}(0, sss0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C . s(r))) \right) \\ &\rightarrow_{\beta} s(s(sss0)) = sssss0\end{aligned}$$

# Interlude

(Coq)



## Fixpoints

The “Fixpoint” command in Coq allows traditional-style programming with recursive functions.

```
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  match n with  
  | 0 => 1  
  | S n' => (S n') * fac n'  
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```

But Coq checks that our functions could be written with “rec” and therefore always terminate. This is necessary for logic to be consistent!

```
Fixpoint oops : Empty_set :=  
  oops.
```

## The “limits” of Coq

With recursion over  $\mathbb{N}$  in Coq, we can program:

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With classical axioms (PEM, AC) we can program:

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With recursion over  $\mathbb{N}$  in Coq, we can program:

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(But they don't compute—they may not be computable!)

**NB:** These naturals are unary, hence very inefficient. But we can also define binary ones.



## Other recursive inductive types

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

Contains nil, cons(a,nil), cons(a,cons(b,nil)), ...

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```

**Contains nil, cons(a,nil), cons(a,cons(b,nil)), ...**

```
Inductive btree (A : Type) : Type :=  
| leaf : A -> btree A  
| branch : btree A -> btree A -> btree A.
```

## Programming with inductive datatypes

```
Fixpoint length {A : Type} (l : list A) : nat :=
  match l with
  | nil          => 0
  | cons _ l'   => S (length l')
  end.
```

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```

$$\begin{aligned} \text{length}(\text{cons}(a, \text{cons}(b, \text{nil}))) &\rightarrow_{\beta} \text{s}(\text{length}(\text{cons}(b, \text{nil}))) \\ &\rightarrow_{\beta} \text{s}(\text{s}(\text{length}(\text{nil}))) \\ &\rightarrow_{\beta} \text{s}(\text{s}(0)) \end{aligned}$$

## Proof by induction

Recall that **propositions** are just **types** in some sort “Prop”.

$$\frac{\Gamma, n: \mathbb{N} \vdash P: \text{Prop} \quad \Gamma \vdash n: \mathbb{N} \quad \Gamma \vdash c_0: P[0/n] \quad \Gamma, x: \mathbb{N}, r: P[x/n] \vdash c_s: P[s(x)/n]}{\Gamma \vdash \text{rec}(n, c_0, x^{\mathbb{N}} r^C . c_s): P}$$

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This is just classical **proof by induction**.

types	$\longleftrightarrow$	propositions
programming	$\longleftrightarrow$	proving
recursion	$\longleftrightarrow$	induction

## Example

### Theorem

*Every natural number is either zero or the successor of some other natural number.*

### Proof.

Let  $P(n) := (n = 0) + \sum_{m: \mathbb{N}} (n = sm)$ .

$$\frac{\begin{array}{l} \vdash n: \mathbb{N} \\ \vdash \text{inl}(\text{refl}_0): P(0) \quad x: \mathbb{N}, r: P(x) \vdash \text{inr}(x, \text{refl}_{sx}): P(sx) \end{array}}{\vdash P(n)}$$



# Interlude

(Coq)



## Inductive proofs

*Proof by induction is not something special about the natural numbers. It applies to any inductively defined type, including even non-recursive ones.*

## Induction on lists

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### Theorem

$$\text{length}(l_1 \# l_2) = \text{length}(l_1) + \text{length}(l_2)$$

### Proof.

By induction on  $l_1$ .

- 1 When  $l_1$  is nil, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \text{length}(\text{nil} \# l_2) &= \text{length}(l_2) \\ &= 0 + \text{length}(l_2) \\ &= \text{length}(\text{nil}) + \text{length}(l_2) \end{aligned}$$

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### Proof.

By induction on  $l_1$ .

- ② When  $l_1$  is  $\text{cons}(a, l'_1)$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} \text{length}(\text{cons}(a, l'_1) \# l_2) &= \text{length}(\text{cons}(a, l'_1 \# l_2)) \\ &= s(\text{length}(l'_1 \# l_2)) \\ &= s(\text{length}(l'_1) + \text{length}(l_2)) \\ &= s(\text{length}(l'_1)) + \text{length}(l_2) \\ &= \text{length}(\text{cons}(a, l'_1)) + \text{length}(l_2) \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

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## Parameters versus indices

An inductive definition with **parameters**, like

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

actually defines a dependent type

$$\text{list: Type} \rightarrow \text{Type}$$

But each type  $\text{list}(A)$  is separately inductively defined; the constructors don't “hop around” between different  $A$ s.

**Indices** remove this restriction.

## Vectors with indices

A **vector** is a list whose length is specified in its type.

```
Inductive vec (A : Type) : nat -> Type :=  
| vnil : vec A 0  
| vcons : forall (n : nat),  
  A -> vec A n -> vec A (S n).
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- For **each** type  $A$ , we inductively define the **family** of types  $\text{vec } A \ n$ , as  $n$  ranges over natural numbers.
- The value of  $n$  used in the constructors can vary both **between** constructors and **within** the inputs and outputs of a single constructor.

Thus  $A$  is a **parameter**,  $n$  is an **index**.



## Programming with indices

For any  $A$ , we can define a dependently typed function

$$\text{concat} : \prod_{n: \mathbb{N}} \left( \text{vec}(A, n) \rightarrow \prod_{m: \mathbb{N}} \left( \text{vec}(A, m) \rightarrow \text{vec}(A, n+m) \right) \right)$$

as follows:

$$\text{concat}(0, \text{vnil}, m, v) := v$$

$$\text{concat}(s(n), \text{vcons}(a, v_1), m, v_2) := \text{vcons}(a, \text{concat}(n, v_1, m, v_2))$$

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- 1 The first clause is well-typed because  $0 + m \leftrightarrow_{\beta} m$ .

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- 2 The second is well-typed because  $s(n + m) \leftrightarrow_{\beta} sn + m$ .

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as follows:

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$$\text{concat}(s(n), \text{vcons}(a, v_1), m, v_2) := \text{vcons}(a, \text{concat}(n, v_1, m, v_2))$$

- 1 The first clause is well-typed because  $0 + m \leftrightarrow_{\beta} m$ .
- 2 The second is well-typed because  $s(n + m) \leftrightarrow_{\beta} sn + m$ .

## Programming with indices

For any  $A$ , we can define a dependently typed function

$$\text{concat} : \prod_{n: \mathbb{N}} \left( \text{vec}(A, n) \rightarrow \prod_{m: \mathbb{N}} \left( \text{vec}(A, m) \rightarrow \text{vec}(A, n+m) \right) \right)$$

as follows:

$$\text{concat}(0, \text{vnil}, m, v) := v$$

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- 1 The first clause is well-typed because  $0 + m \leftrightarrow_{\beta} m$ .
- 2 The second is well-typed because  $s(n + m) \leftrightarrow_{\beta} sn + m$ .

**NB:** In each “case”, the indices automatically get specialized to the appropriate values.

The definition **and behavior** of “length” are built into the **type**.

## Induction with indices

### Theorem

For  $v_i: \text{vec}(A, n_i)$ ,  $i = 1, 2, 3$ , we have

$$v_1 \# (v_2 \# v_3) = (v_1 \# v_2) \# v_3$$

### Proof.

By induction on  $v_1$ .

- 1 If  $v_1$  is `vnil`, then both sides are  $v_2 \# v_3$ .
- 2 If  $v_1$  is `vcons(a, v'_1)`, the LHS is `vcons(a, v'_1 # (v_2 # v_3))`, and the RHS is `vcons(a, (v'_1 # v_2) # v_3)`, which are equal by the inductive hypothesis.



## Lists with indices

Any inductive definition with parameters:

```
Inductive listP (A : Type) : Type :=  
| nilP : listP A  
| consP : A -> listP A -> listP A.
```

can be rephrased using indices:

```
Inductive listI : Type -> Type :=  
| nilI : forall A, listI A  
| consI : forall A, A -> listI A -> listI A.
```

But the inductive principle we obtain is subtly different.

# Parameters versus indices

## With parameters

The type  $\text{listP}(A)$  is separately inductively defined for every  $A$ . Thus we can use induction to prove something about  $\text{listP}(A)$  for some **particular**  $A$ .

## With indices

The family of types  $\text{listI}(A)$  is jointly inductively defined for all  $A$ . Thus we can only use induction to prove something about  $\text{listI}(A)$  for **all**  $A$  at once.



# Interlude

(Coq)

## Parameters versus indices

Define  $\text{sum}: \text{listP}(\mathbb{N}) \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$  by

$$\text{sum}(\text{nilP}) := 0$$

$$\text{sum}(\text{consP}(a, \ell)) := a + \text{sum}(\ell)$$

### Theorem

$$\text{sum}(\ell_1 ++ \ell_2) = \text{sum}(\ell_1) + \text{sum}(\ell_2)$$

### Proof.

By induction. . .



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### Proof.

By induction. . .



With `listI` this is a non-starter.

Proving something about `listI(N)` by induction is like proving  
“3 is prime” by induction on 3.

## What indices can do

Indices give a weaker induction principle because in general, we can't separate the values at different inputs.

In theory, we could have:

```
Inductive listI' : Type -> Type :=
| nilI : forall A, listI' A
| consI : forall A, A -> listI' A -> listI' A
| huh : listI' ( $\mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{Z}$ ) -> listI'  $\mathbb{N}$ 
```

Just like `vec`, we couldn't define this type with parameters.

## Parameters versus indices

“If an index could be a parameter, it should be.”

## Parameters versus indices

“If an index could be a parameter, it should be.”

but actually. . .

If an index could be a parameter, it **might as well** be.

### Theorem

*We can prove the induction principle of `listP` from the induction principle of `listI`.*

### Proof.

The induction principle of `listP` says “for any  $A$ , any property of elements of `listP(A)` can be proven by induction.” But **this** statement is general over all  $A$ , hence follows from the induction principle of `listI`. □

## Trickier induction with indices

### Theorem

*For any  $v: \text{vec}(A, 0)$  we have  $v = \text{vnil}$ .*

### Proof.

By induction??

Again, this is like proving “3 is prime” by induction on 3.

## Trickier induction with indices

### Theorem

For any  $v: \text{vec}(A, 0)$  we have  $v = \text{vnil}$ .

### Proof.

Define  $P: \prod_{n: \mathbb{N}} (\text{vec}(A, n) \rightarrow \text{Prop})$  by induction on  $n$ :

$$\begin{aligned} P(0, v) &:= (v = \text{vnil}) \\ P(sn, v) &:= \top \end{aligned}$$

Now prove by induction on  $v: \text{vec}(A, n)$  that  $P(n, v)$  holds.

- 1 If  $v$  is  $\text{vnil}$ , then  $P(0, v)$  is  $(\text{vnil} = \text{vnil})$ , which is true.
- 2 If  $v$  is  $\text{vcons}(a, v')$ , then  $P(0, v)$  is  $\top$ , which is true.

Finally, let  $n = 0$ .





## Non-uniform parameters

As usual, this is an oversimplification. Coq also allows “non-uniform parameters”, which are basically indices that are written like parameters, but treated slightly differently internally. Not really important for us.

# Outline

- 1 Non-recursive inductive types
- 2 Recursion and Induction
- 3 Inductive families
- 4 Identity types**

# Equality types

## Definition

The **equality type** (or **identity type** or **path type**) of any type  $A$  is the following inductive family:

```
Inductive eq {A : Type} : A -> A -> Type :=  
| refl : forall (a:A), eq a a.
```

Notations:  $\text{eq}_A(a, b)$   $(a = b)$   $\text{Id}_A(a, b)$   $\text{Paths}_A(a, b)$

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Notations:  $\text{eq}_A(a, b)$   $(a = b)$   $\text{Id}_A(a, b)$   $\text{Paths}_A(a, b)$

- There is only one way to prove that two things are equal; namely, everything is equal to itself.
- $A$  is a parameter;  $a$  and  $b$  are indices.
- We can make  $a$  into a parameter (Paulin-Möhrring equality), but not also  $b$ .

## Induction on equality

The eliminator for equality is:

$$\frac{\begin{array}{l} \Gamma, x: A, y: A, p: (x = y) \vdash C: \text{Type} \\ \Gamma \vdash a: A \quad \Gamma \vdash b: A \quad \Gamma \vdash p: (a = b) \\ \Gamma, x: A \vdash c: C[y/x, \text{refl}_x/p] \end{array}}{\Gamma \vdash J(x^A.c; p): C}$$

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In words:

*If  $C(x, y, p)$  is a property of pairs of equal elements of  $A$ , and  $C(x, x, \text{refl}_p)$  holds, then  $C(a, b, p)$  holds whenever  $p: (a = b)$ .*

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In particular, if  $C$  depends only on  $y$ , then we have the principle of **substitution of equals for equals**:

*If  $a = b$  and  $C(a)$  holds, then so does  $C(b)$ .*

# Properties of equality

## Theorem

*Equality is transitive.*

## Proof.

Suppose  $p: (a = b)$  and  $q: (b = c)$ . Then using  $q$ , we can substitute  $c$  for  $b$  in  $p: (a = b)$  to obtain  $J(b.p, q): (a = c)$ . □



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## Theorem

*Equality is symmetric.*

## Proof.

Suppose  $p: (a = b)$ . Then using  $p$ , we substitute  $b$  for the first copy of  $a$  in  $\text{refl}_a: (a = a)$  to obtain  $J(a.\text{refl}_a, p): (b = a)$ .  $\square$

# Interlude

(Coq)

## A trickier application

Theorem

$0 \neq 1$ .

## A trickier application

### Theorem

$0 \neq 1$ .

### Proof.

Suppose  $p: (0 = 1)$ . Define  $C: \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \text{Type}$  by “recursion”:

$$C(0) := \text{unit}$$

$$C(sn) := \emptyset$$

Now we have  $\text{tt}: C(0)$ . Using  $p$ , we can substitute 1 for 0 in this to obtain a term in  $C(1) = \emptyset$ . □

## A trickier application

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Now we have  $\text{tt}: C(0)$ . Using  $p$ , we can substitute 1 for 0 in this to obtain a term in  $C(1) = \emptyset$ . □

**NB:** This proof is **not** by “induction on  $p$ ”. We cannot do induction on  $p$ , since its type is not fully general. Instead we **apply** to  $p$  the already proved theorem of substitution.

## A non-application

### Theorem

*For any  $p$ :  $(a = a)$  we have  $p = \text{refl}_a$ .*

### Proof.

By induction, it suffices to assume that  $p$  is  $\text{refl}_a$ . But then we have  $\text{refl}_{\text{refl}_a} : (p = \text{refl}_a)$ . □

## A non-application

### Theorem

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By induction, it suffices to assume that  $p$  is  $\text{refl}_a$ . But then we have  $\text{refl}_{\text{refl}_a}: (p = \text{refl}_a)$ . □

This is **not valid**.

The type of  $p$  is not fully general.

We are trying to prove “3 is prime” by induction on 3.

# Interlude

(Coq)



## Intensional equality types

There are ways to formulate the rules of inductive type families so that  $p = \text{refl}_a$  becomes provable. One such way is implemented (by default) in the proof assistant Agda.

Or, we could just add it as an axiom.

But I find it much more natural just to take seriously the rule we teach our incoming freshmen: *when you prove something by induction, the statement must be fully general.*

## Intensional equality types

There are ways to formulate the rules of inductive type families so that  $p = \text{refl}_a$  becomes provable. One such way is implemented (by default) in the proof assistant Agda.

Or, we could just add it as an axiom.

But I find it much more natural just to take seriously the rule we teach our incoming freshmen: *when you prove something by induction, the statement must be fully general.*

Of course, I'm biased, because this is what makes the homotopy interpretation possible. We'll see that for most types arising in real-world programming, the rule  $p = \text{refl}_a$  does hold automatically, so this merely expands the scope of the theory.

## Resources

If you're serious about following along in Coq, then at this point I recommend starting to read some standard tutorials. Unfortunately (for a mathematician), these are all written by people working in verified computer programming.

- Benjamin Pierce et. al., *Software foundations* (<http://www.cis.upenn.edu/~bcpierce/sf/>)
- Adam Chlipala, *Certified programming with dependent types* (<http://adam.chlipala.net/cpdt/>)
- Yves Bertot and Pierre Castéran, *The Coq'Art*
- The Coq web site: <http://coq.inria.fr/>