Class 46: Variable-Arity Procedures

Held: Monday, 20 November 2006

Summary: Today we consider how and why to write procedures that can take different numbers of arguments in different situations.

Related Pages:
- EBoard.
- Lab: Variable-Arity Procedures.
- Reading: Variable-Arity Procedures.

Notes:
- Time for questions on HW 16.

Overview:
- Definition of *arity*.
- Why have variable-arity procedures.
- How to write variable-arity procedures.
- Lab.

Variable-Arity Procedures

- Def. *Arity*: The number of parameters a procedure expects.
- Some procedures naturally take varying numbers of parameters:
  - `+` takes 0 or more parameters.
  - `display` takes 1 or 2 parameters.
  - `map` takes 2 or more parameters.
- It would be nice to be able to write our own procedures of variable arity (that is, varying numbers of parameters).
- Zero or more parameters:
  ```
  (lambda params
   body)
  ```
  - `params` is *not* parenthesized.
  - In your body, treat `params` as a list.
- One or more parameters:
(lambda (first . remaining)
  body)
  + In your body, treating remaining as a list.

- Two or more parameters:

  (lambda (first second . remaining)
         body)
  + In your body, treating remaining as a list.

**Lab**

- Do the laboratory entitled Variable-Arity Procedures.
- Be prepared to reflect.

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