

Class 08: Writing Your Own Procedures

Held: Wednesday, 9 September 2009

Summary: We begin to consider how you can write your own procedures and why you might do so.

Related Pages:

- EBoard.
- Reading: Writing Your Own Procedures & How Scheme Evaluates Expressions (version 2).
- Due: Assignment 2: Algorithms for Drawing, Revisited.

Notes:

- EC/Support: Come watch David run at the Les Duke invitational this weekend.
- EC/Support: Come watch women's soccer at 5:30 today.
- EC/Academic: Thursday extra at 4:30 in Science 3821. Jerod Weinman on cool vision stuff.
- EC/Academic: Thursday forum at 11:00 in Science 2022. Larry Dahl on Symmetry and Its Importance in Art and Science.
- Assignment 3 is now ready. It follows up on today's lab.
- The next reading (on lists) is new for this semester, and is not yet ready for public consumption. Please wait until Thursday afternoon to read it.

Overview:

- Why define your own procedures?
- How to define your own procedures.

User Defined Procedures

- It's clear that programmers often want to (and need to) define their own procedures.
- By "their own procedures", we mean collections of Scheme commands that are parameterized and referred to be a single name, just like the built-in procedures, such as square and +, or the DrFu procedures, such as drawing-hshift or turtle-forward!
- User-defined procedures can add clarity to a program.
 - Rather than looking at *how* code does something, the user of a procedure can focus on *what* the code does.
 - A reader of the program is much more likely to understand a procedure call than the body of the procedures.
- Programmers can avoid repetitive (and, therefore, error prone) code.
 - Rather than retyping the same code again and again, just changing a few values, a programmer can give a name to the same code.
- How do you define your own procedures? Using the following template:

```
(define your-procedure
  (lambda (param1 ... paramn)
    expression1
    ...
    expressionm))
```

- For example,

```
(define square
  (lambda (val)
    (* val val)))
```

- You can (and should) document your procedures so that others can understand what they are supposed to do. We'll come back to this issue in about a week.
- When the body of a procedure has multiple expressions (as in the template), only the value of the last procedure is returned.

Lab on User-Defined Procedures

- Do the lab.
- Be prepared to reflect (e.g., to describe the most important or most confusing thing you dealt with today). (And no, you can't say "Sam is the most confusing thing I dealt with today.")

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