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Crash Course

What is Agena ?

- Agena is an interpreted procedural programming language.
- It can be used in scientific, educational and many other applications.
- Its syntax looks like very simplified Algol 68 with elements taken from Lua and SQL.
- Binaries are available for Windows, Solaris, Linux, OS/2, DOS, Mac.
- Agena is distributed under the GPL licence, thus it is free.
- The implementation is based on the ANSI C sources of Lua 5.1.
- Sources and binaries are available at:

<http://agena.sourceforge.net>

Contents, 1

- Installing Agena
- Running Agena
- First Steps
- Names & Assignment
- Data Types
 - Integral & Rational Numbers
 - Complex Numbers
 - Arithmetic
 - Strings

Contents, 2

- Data Types, cont.
 - Boolean Expressions & Relations
 - Tables
 - Arrays
 - Dictionaries
 - Sets
 - Sequences
 - Pairs
- Control Statements
 - if Statements & is Operator
 - case Statements

Contents, 3

- Loops
 - for Loops
 - while Loops
 - do .. as Loops
 - Combined for/while Loops
 - Loop Control
- Procedures
 - Short-cut Procedures
 - Procedures
 - Local Variables
 - Variable Number of Arguments
 - Options

Contents, 4

- Procedures, cont.
 - Type Checking
 - Predefined Results
 - Efficient Recursion
- Did you know ?
- Miscellaneous
 - Precedence
 - Mathematical Constants




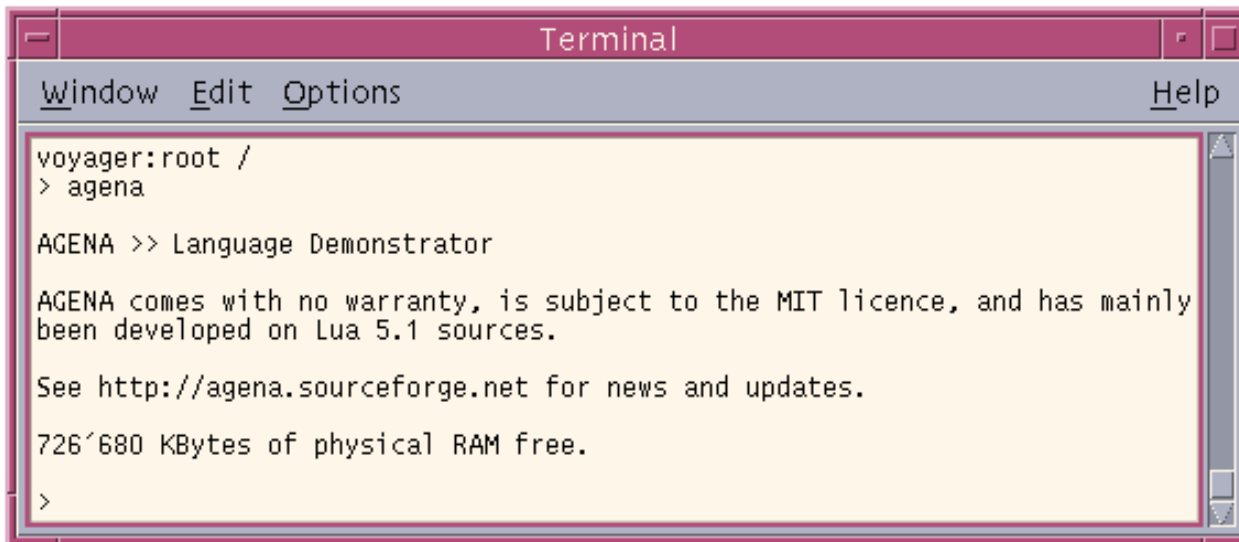
Getting Started

Installing Agena

- In Solaris, Linux, Windows, Mac OS X and OS/2, the respective installer automatically installs and sets up Agena. You do not have to add further settings yourself after installing the binaries.
- Information on how to install the DOS and Haiku versions are included in the manual.

Running Agena

- In Windows and OS/2, simply click the  icon in the programme group to start the interpreter.
- In Solaris, Linux, Mac, Haiku & DOS, type `agena` in a shell.



```
Terminal
Window Edit Options Help
voyager:root /
> agena

AGENA >> Language Demonstrator

AGENA comes with no warranty, is subject to the MIT licence, and has mainly
been developed on Lua 5.1 sources.

See http://agena.sourceforge.net for news and updates.

726'680 KBytes of physical RAM free.

>
```

- Statements can be entered right after the '`>`' prompt.

First Steps, 1

- Any valid Agena code can be entered at the console with or without a trailing colon or semicolon:
 - If an expression is finished with a colon, it is evaluated and its value is printed at the console.
 - If the expression ends with a semicolon or neither with a colon nor a semicolon, it is evaluated, but nothing is printed.
- You may optionally insert one or more white spaces between operands in your statements.
- Assume you would like to add the numbers 1 and 2 and show the result. Just type:

```
> 1 + 2 :  
3
```

First Steps, 2

- If you want to store a value into a variable, type:

```
> c := 25;
```

- Now the value 25 is stored into the name `c`, and you can refer to this number through the name `c` in subsequent calculations.
- Suppose that `c` is 25° Celsius. If you want to convert it to Fahrenheit, enter:

```
> 1.8*c + 32:  
77
```

- The `cls` statement clears the screen, `restart` clears all values, and `bye` quits the interpreter.

Names & Assignment

- A name always begins with an upper-case or lower-case letter or an underscore, followed by one or more upper-case or lower-case letters, underscores or numbers in any order.
- Use the assignment operator `:=` to store a value to a name.

```
> a := 1;  
  
> var1 := 'hello world';
```

- Delete a value by assigning it to `null` or use `clear`:

```
> a := null;  
  
> clear var1;
```

agenda > >

Data Types

Integral & Rational Numbers

- Numbers can be represented like in the following examples.

- Integers:

```
> -1:  
-1
```

- More than one value can also be printed at one line:

```
> 0, 1, 1.0, 1, 1.0:  
0      1      1      1      1
```

- Rational numbers:

```
> 3.141592654, -1.0:  
3.141592654      -1
```

- Scientific notation:

```
> 10e-3, -1e3, 2.3e3:  
0.01      -1000      2300
```

Complex Numbers

- There are two notations to represent complex numbers.

- The `!` operator:

```
> 1!2, -1.1!-2, 3!0:  
1+2*I    -1.1-2*I    3
```

- The `I` operand:

```
> 1+2*I, -1.1-2*I, 3+0*I:  
1+2*I    -1.1-2*I    3
```

- Real part:

```
> real(1+2*I):  
1
```

- Imaginary part:

```
> imag(1+2*I):  
2
```

Arithmetic, 1

- Agena allows to mix rational and complex numbers in calculations.
- Addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and integer division:

rational	complex/mixed
$2 + 3$	$2+3*I + 1!2$
$2 - 3$	$2 - 3+1*I$
$2 * 3$	$2!2 * 3-I$
$2 / 3$	$2!0 / 3!1$
$2 \setminus 3$	$2!0 \setminus 3!1$

- Examples:

```
> 2+3, 2!0/3!1, 2 + 3!1:  
5      0.6-0.2*I      5+I
```


Arithmetic, 2

- Modulus (for rational numbers only):

```
> 2 % 3:  
2
```

- Exponentiation with rational or integer power:

```
> 2 ^ 3.1, 2 ^ 3:  
8.5741877002903 8
```

- Exponentiation with integer power only (faster):

```
> 2 ** 3:  
8
```

Strings, 1

- Strings can be enclosed in single or double quotes. There is no difference in meaning.

```
> 'this is a text':  
this is a text  
  
> "this is a text":  
this is a text
```

- Concatenation of two or more strings:

```
> 'Hello ' & 'world':  
Hello world
```

Strings, 2

- Substrings:

```
> 'abcd'[2]:  
b  
  
> 'abcd'$(2):  
b  
  
> 'abcd'$(2, 3):  
bc  
  
> 'abcd'$(2, -1):    # from 2nd two last character  
bcd  
  
> 'abcd'$.(-1):      # last character  
d  
  
> 'abcd'$.(-2, -1):  # last character  
cd
```

Boolean Expressions & Relations, 1

- Agena supports the logical values `true` and `false`, also called `booleans`. A third Boolean constant named `fail` indicates an error.
- Any condition, e.g. `a < b`, results to one of these logical values.
- Relational operators are:

Relation	Operator
less than	<code><</code>
greater than	<code>></code>
less or equal	<code><=</code>
greater or equal	<code>>=</code>
equality	<code>=</code>

Boolean Expressions & Relations, 2

- Logical operators are:

Relation	Operator
Boolean and	and
Boolean or	or
Boolean complement	not
Boolean exclusive-or	xor

```
> 1 < 2:  
true  
  
> 1 < 2 and 1 = 0:  
false  
  
> true xor false:  
true
```

Tables, 1

- Tables are used to represent more complex data structures. Tables consist of zero, one or more key-value pairs: the key referencing to the position of the value in the table, and the value the data itself.
- Tables can contain other tables, as well.

```
> tbl := [  
>   1 ~ ['a', 7.71],  
>   2 ~ ['b', 7.70],  
>   3 ~ ['c', 7.59]  
> ];
```

- To get the data with key 1, input:

```
> tbl[1]:  
[a, 7.71]
```

Tables, 2

- To get the second entry in the subtable, enter:

```
> tbl[1, 2]:  
7.71
```

- There are two forms to create empty tables.

```
> tbl := [];  
  
> create table tbl;
```

- Tables can even be nested:

```
> [1, [2, [3]]]:  
[1, [2, [3]]]
```

Arrays

- Tables with positive integral keys are called arrays.

```
> tbl := [10, 11, 12];
```

- Values can be inserted into arrays in two ways:

```
> tbl[4] := 'a'; tbl[5] := 'b';  
  
> insert 'a', 'b' into tbl;
```

- Values can be deleted like this:

```
> tbl[1] := null;  
  
> delete 'a', 'b' from tbl;
```


Dictionaries

- Another form of a table is the *dictionary* which indices can be any kind of data - not only positive integers. Key-value pairs are entered with tildes.

```
> dic := ['donald' ~ 'duck', 'mickey' ~ 'mouse'];
```

- As with arrays, indexed names are used to access the corresponding values stored to dictionaries.

```
> dic['donald']:  
duck
```

- If a table key is a string, you can also use the notation:

```
> dic.donald:  
duck
```

Sets, 1

- Sets are collections of unique items: numbers, strings, and any other data except `null`. Any item is stored only once.

```
> s := {'donald', 'mickey', 'donald'}:  
{donald, mickey}
```

- If you want to check whether `'donald'` is part of the set `s`, just index it as follows:

```
> s['donald']:  
true  
  
> s['daisy']:  
false
```

Sets, 2

- If you want to add or delete items to or from a set, use the `insert` and `delete` statements.

```
> insert 'daisy' into s;  
  
> delete 'daisy' from s;
```

- The `in` operator also checks whether an item is part of a set.

```
> 'donald' in s:  
true  
  
> 'daisy' in s:  
false
```

- Sets consume around 40 % less memory than tables.

Sequences, 1

- Sequences can hold any number of items except `null`.

```
> s := seq(1, 1, 'donald', true):  
1, 1, donald, true
```

- You can access the items the usual way:

```
> s[2]:  
donald
```

- Values can be added as with tables.

```
> s[4] := {1, 2, 2};  
  
> insert [1, 2, 2] into s;
```

Sequences, 2

- Items can be deleted by setting their index position to `null`, or by applying `delete`.

```
> s[4] := null;  
  
> delete [1, 2, 2] from s;
```

- The `in` operator checks whether a sequence contains a given item.

```
> 'donald' in s:  
donald
```

- Sequences are faster than tables when adding or accessing values.

Pairs

- Pairs hold exactly two values of any type (including `null` and other pairs).

```
> p := 10:11;
```

- The `left` and `right` operators provide read access to its left and right operands; the standard indexing method using integers is supported, as well:

```
> left(p), right(p), p[1], p[2]:  
10      11      10      11
```

- The left and right operand of a pair can be changed as follows:

```
> p[1] := -10;
```

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Control Statements

if Statements & is Operator

- Conditions can be checked with the `if` statement. The `elif` and `else` clauses are optional. The closing `fi` is obligatory.

```
> if 1 < 2 then
>   print('valid')
> elif 1 = 2 then
>   print('invalid')
> else
>   print('invalid, too')
> fi;
valid
```

- The `is` operator checks a condition, too:

```
> result := is 1 < 2 then 'valid' else 'invalid' si;

> result:
valid
```


case Statements

- The `case` statement facilitates comparing values and executing corresponding statements.

```
> c := 'agena';  
  
> case c  
>   of 'agena' then  
>     print('Agena !')  
>   of 'lua' then  
>     print('Lua !')  
>   else  
>     print('Another programming language !')  
> esac;  
Agena !
```

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Loops

for Loops, 1

- A `for` loop iterates over one or more statements.
- It begins with an initial numeric value (`from` clause), and proceeds up to and including a given numeric value (`to` clause). The step size can also be given (`step` clause). The `od` keyword indicates the end of the loop body.
- The current iteration value is stored to a control variable (`i` in this example) which can be used in the loop body.

```
> for i from 1 to 3 by 1 do
>   print(i, i^2, i^3)
> od;
1 1 1
2 4 8
3 9 27
```

for Loops, 2

- The `from` and `step` clauses are optional.
- If the `from` clause is omitted, the loop starts with the initial value 1.
- If the `step` clause is omitted, the step size is 1.

```
> for i to 3 do  
>   print(i, i^2, i^3)  
> od;  
1 1 1  
2 4 8  
3 9 27
```

for Loops, 3

- The value of the control variable cannot be accessed outside the loop, since control variables are local.
- You can change this by using the `external` keyword. Since after the last iteration, the control variable is increased by the step size at very last time, its contents is:

```
> for external i to 3 do  
>   result := i^2  
> od;  
  
> i:  
4
```

for Loops, 4

- A `for/in` loop iterates on all values in a table, set, and sequence. With strings, it iterates each character from the left to the right.

```
> for i in ['Agena', 'programming', 'language'] do
>   print(i)
> od
Agena
programming
language

> for i in 'Agena' do print(i) od
A
g
e
n
a
```

for Loops, 5

- You can also iterate only the keys of a table (or sequence) or both keys and values:

```
> for keys i in ['donald' ~ 'duck', 'daisy' ~ 'duck'] do
>   print(i)
> od;
daisy
donald

> for i, j in ['donald' ~ 'duck', 'daisy' ~ 'duck'] do
>   print(i, j)
> od;
daisy    duck
donald    duck
```

while Loops

- A `while` loop first checks a condition and if this condition is `true` or any other value except `false`, `fail`, or `null`, it iterates the loop body again and again as long as the condition remains `true`.
- The following statements calculate the largest Fibonacci number less than 1000.

```
> a := 0; b := 1;  
  
> while b < 1000 do  
>   c := b; b := a + b; a := c  
> od;  
  
> c:  
987
```


do .. as Loops

- A variation of `while` is the `do .. as` loop which checks a condition at the end of the iteration.
- Thus the loop body will always be executed at least once.

```
> c := 0;  
  
> do  
>   inc c  
> as c < 10;  
  
> c:  
10
```

Combined for/while Loops

- All flavours of for loops can be combined with a `while` condition. As long as the `while` condition is satisfied, i.e. is `true`, the `for` loop iterates.

```
> for x to 10 while ln(x) <= 1 do  
>   print(x, ln(x))  
> od;  
1 0  
2 0.69314718055995
```

Loop Control

- Agena features two statements to manipulate loop execution. Both are applicable to all loop types.
 - The `skip` statement causes another iteration of the loop to begin at once, thus skipping all of the following loop statements after the `skip` keyword for the current iteration.
 - The `break` statement quits the execution of the loop entirely and proceeds with the next statement right after the end of the loop.

```
> for i to 5 do
>   if i = 3 then skip fi;
>   print(i)
>   if i = 4 then break fi;
> od;
1
2
4
```

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Procedures

Short-cut Procedures

- If your procedure consists of exactly one expression, then you may use an abridged syntax if the procedure does not include statements such as `if`, `for`, `insert`, etc.
- Let us define a simple factorial function with one argument.

```
> factorial := << (x) -> exp(lgamma(x+1)) >>;  
  
> factorial(4):  
24
```

- A function with two arguments:

```
> sum := << (x, y) -> x + y >>;  
  
> sum(1, 2):  
3
```

Procedures

- Let us write a procedure to compute the factorial of an integer.
- A procedure can call itself to generate the final result.
- The `return` statement passes the result of a computation.

```
> factorial := proc(n) is
>   # computes the factorial of an integer n
>   if n < 0 then return fail
>   elif n = 0 then return 1
>   else return factorial(n-1)*n
>   fi
> end;

> factorial(4):
24
```

Local Variables

- A local variable is known only to the respective procedure and the block where it has been declared.
- It cannot be used in other procedures, the interactive Agena level, or outside the block where it has been declared.

```
> factorial := proc(n) is
>   local result;
>   result := 1;
>   for i from 1 to n do result := result * i od;
>   return result
> end;

> factorial(10):
3628800
```

Variable Number of Arguments

- If you want to pass a variable number of arguments, use the `?` keyword in the parameter list.
- The system variable `nargs` contains the number of arguments passed.
- The `varargs` system table contains all variable arguments. Values can be accessed like with any other table.

```
> f := proc(?)  
>   return nargs, varargs, varargs[1]  
> end;  
  
> f('Beowulf', 'Grendel'):  
2      [Beowulf, Grendel]      Beowulf
```


Options, 1

- A function does not have to be called with exactly the number of parameters given at procedure definition.
- You may optionally pass less or more values at run-time. If no value is passed for a parameter, then the parameter is automatically set to `null` at function call.

```
> f := proc(a, b, c)
>   return a, b, c
> end;

> f(1):
1      null      null
```

- If you pass more arguments than there are actual parameters, excess arguments are ignored.

Options, 2

- Let us build an extended square root function that either computes in the real or complex domain. By default, i.e. if only one argument is given, the real domain is taken, otherwise you may explicitly set the domain using a pair as a second argument.

```
> xsqrt := proc(x, mode) is
>   if nargs = 1 or mode = 'domain':'real' then
>     return sqrt(x)
>   elif mode = 'domain':'complex' then
>     return sqrt(x + 0*I)
>   else
>     return fail
>   fi
> end;

> xsqrt(-2):
undefined

> xsqrt(-2, 'domain':'real'):
undefined
```

Options, 3

- If the left-hand value of the pair in a function call shall denote a string, you can spare the single quotes around the string by using the = token which converts the left-hand name to a string.

```
> xsqrt(-2, domain = 'complex'):  
1.4142135623731*I
```

Type Checking

- You can check the type of arguments passed in two ways:
- Query the type with the `type` operator:

```
> f := proc(x)
>   if type(x) <> number then error('wrong type of argument') fi;
>   return x
> end;

> f('men ne cunnon hwyder helrunan hwyrftum scriþað.'):
wrong type of argument
```

- State the expected type in the parameter list:

```
> f := proc(x::number)
>   return x
> end;

> f('men ne cunnon hwyder helrunan hwyrftum scriþað.'):
Error in stdin:
  invalid type for argument #1: expected number, got string.
```

Predefined Results

- Predefined results can be set with the `defaults` function by entering them into a remember table.
- Agena returns the given predefined result if it exists and does not compute it by executing the procedure body, so there is also an increase in speed.

```
> defaults(fact, [ # defaults for fact(0) .. fact(3)
>   -1~undefined, 0~1, 1~1, 2~2, 3~6
> ]);

> fact(-1):
undefined

> defaults(fact):
[[2] ~ [2], [1] ~ [1], [0] ~ [1], [3] ~ [6], [-1] ~ [undefined]]
```

Efficient Recursion

- Agena remembers procedure results if the `remember` function is invoked. An optional table of predefined results can also be given.

```
> fib := proc(n) is
>   assume(n >= 0);
>   return fib(n-2) + fib(n-1)
> end;

> remember(fib, [0~1, 1~1]);

> fib(50):
20365011074
```

- This significantly speeds up recursively defined procedures.
- For the differences between `defaults` and `remember` check the manual.

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Did you know ?

Did you know ?

- If you want your self-written procedures, constants, etc. to be available every time you invoke the interpreter, just put them into a file called `agena.ini` file (Windows, OS/2, DOS) or `.agenainit` (UNIX) in your home directory.
- Data you compute in a session can be stored to a file using the `save` function to be read into another session later by `read`.
- The way Agena outputs tables, sets, sequences, complex numbers, and pairs can be changed by modifying the `_EnvPrint*` procedures in the `library.agn` file located in the `lib` directory of your Agena installation.

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Miscellaneous

Precedence

- Operator precedence follows the table below, from lowest to highest.

Prio	Operators
10	<code>or xor</code>
9	<code>and</code>
8	<code>< > <= >= = == <></code>
7	<code>in subset xsubset union minus intersect atendof</code>
6	<code>& :</code>
5	<code>+ - split ^^</code>
4	<code>* / % \ shift &&</code>
3	<code>not -</code>
2	<code>^ **</code>
1	<code>! ~~</code> and all other unary operators

Packages, 1

- Agena features various packages that can be invoked with the `with` or `readlib` statements, e.g. `with 'calc'`.

Package	Function
ads	Database specialised on storing and retrieving strings
binio	Functions for processing binary files
calc	Undergraduate Calculus package
clock	Functions to process hours, minutes, and seconds
fractals	Various fractals and plotting routines
gdi	Graphics
io	Input/output functions for console and files
linalg	Undergraduate Linear Algebra
mapm	Mathematical arbitrary precision library for the real domain

Packages, 2

Package	Function
math	Additional mathematical functions
os	Functions to operate with the underlying operating system
stats	Statistical functions
strings	Various string handling functions
tables	Functions specialised on table processing
utils	Utility functions, e.g. CSV import and export
xbase	xBase file support

Mathematical Constants

- Agena features the following numeric constants:

Constant	Meaning
Eps	Equals $1.4901161193847656e-08$
degrees	Factor $1/\text{Pi} \cdot 180$ to convert radians to degrees
Exp	Constant $e = \exp(1) = 2.71828182845904523536$
I	Imaginary unit
infinity	Infinity
Pi	Equals 3.14159265358979323846
radians	Factor $\text{Pi}/180$ to convert degrees to radians
undefined	An expression stating that it is undefined, e.g. a singularity

Any Questions ?

- For further information, please consult
 - the *Primer and Reference*,
a manual explaining Agena on 314 pages
 - the *Quick Reference*,
an overview of all the functions available
- Both are available at

<http://agna.sourceforge.net/documentation.html>

The image shows a screenshot of a web browser displaying a table titled 'Basic Operators and Functions'. The table has four columns: Name, Operator, Function, and Functionality. It lists various Agena functions and their behaviors.

Name	Operator	Function	Functionality
abs	x		on a number, abs returns its absolute value; on a string, a length; on a boolean, returns 0 for false, and 1 for true, w
allnames		x	returns all names assigned in a session
assume		x	issues an error, if its condition is false
attr		x	returns various information on the size of structures
bye			quits an interactive session
clear	x		unassigns a name and garbage-collects its former value
concat		x	concatenates strings with an optionally given delimiter
error		x	terminates execution of a function and issues an error
filled	x		checks whether a structure contains at least one non-null
gc		x	invokes or administers garbage collection
getenv		x	Returns the current environment in use by a function
globals		x	determines whether function includes global variables
getmetatable		x	returns the metatable of a structure
gettype		x	returns the user-defined type of a structure or procedure
has		x	checks whether a structure contains an element
hasstable		x	checks whether a functions has a remember table
null	x		checks whether a functions has a remember table
left	x		returns the left operand of a pair
load		x	loads a chunk using a function to get its pieces