

# SymPy

symbolic mathematics in Python (3.x)

Piotr Beling

Uniwersytet Łódzki  
(University of Łódź)

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This presentation is based on and cites vast fragments of the official tutorial authored by the SymPy Development Team and available on <http://docs.sympy.org>.

# Run `ipython qtconsole` and import SymPy

Today we will work in a python shell and we will use the `sympy` module.

Please run `ipython qtconsole`:

- Windows with Anaconda: Start → (All) Applications → Anaconda3 → Jupyter QTConsole
- Linux: `ipython3 qtconsole`

Import the whole `sympy` module into the current namespace:

```
from sympy import *
```

And initialize the best SymPy pretty-printer for your environment, to get pretty printing of SymPy expressions:

```
init_printing()
```

# About SymPy and Symbolic Computation

- SymPy is a Python library for symbolic mathematics. It aims to become a full-featured computer algebra system (CAS);
- symbolic computation deals with the computation of mathematical objects symbolically;
- objects (like  $\sqrt{2}$ ) are represented exactly, not approximately, and mathematical expressions with unevaluated variables (like  $x$ ) are left in symbolic form.

**Example:** execute:

<code>import math</code>	imports the <code>math</code> module;
<code>math.sqrt(9)</code>	$\sqrt{9}$ calculated exactly by the <code>math</code> module;
<code>sqrt(9)</code>	similar to the above, but calculated by SymPy;
<code>math.sqrt(8)</code>	approximation of $\sqrt{8}$ calculated by the <code>math</code> module; $\sqrt{8}$ is an irrational number and cannot be represented exactly by a finite decimal;
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# Variables, symbols and expressions – basics

Variables (symbols) in SymPy must be defined before use.  
This can be done by the `symbols`, the `var`, or the `S` function.

**Example:** execute:

<code>x,y = symbols('x,y')</code>	defines 2 symbols and assigns their objects to the Python variables;
<code>expr = x + 2*y</code>	defines a symbolic expression;
<code>expr</code>	displays it;
<code>expr + 1</code>	gives $x + 2y + 1$ ;
<code>expr - x</code>	$x$ and the $-x$ canceled each other, but only obvious simplifications are performed automatically,
<code>x*expr</code>	e.g. the expansion must be forced, and the polynomial factorization too.
<code>expand(x*expr)</code>	
<code>factor(x**2 + 2*x*y)</code>	

**Exercise:** define the additional  $z$  symbol and express  $(x + y)(x + z)^3 - x^4$  in the expanded form.

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```
z = symbols('z')  
expand((x+y) * (x+z)**3 - x**4)
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# Simplification of mathematical expressions

- SymPy has dozens of functions (like `expand` or `factor`) to perform various kinds of simplification;
- there is also one general function called `simplify` that attempts to apply all of these functions in an intelligent way to arrive at the simplest form of an expression. Try:

```
simplify((x**3 + x**2 - x - 1)/(x**2 + 2*x + 1))  
(sin(x)**2 + cos(x)**2).simplify()
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Many operations in SymPy are available (with the same names) as both: stand-alone functions and methods of expressions.

- `simplify` uses heuristics to determine the simplest result;
- however “simplest” is not a well-defined term and sometimes the desired form needs to be indicated explicitly, e.g. compare `simplify(x**2+2*x+1)` with `factor(x**2+2*x+1)`;

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**Code:** `simplify(sin(x)*cos(y) + cos(x)*sin(y))`

# Test symbolic expressions for equality

In SymPy, `==` represents exact structural equality testing, e.g: `2*x==2*x` is `True`, as expressions are identical, but `a==b` is `False` for `a = (x + 1)**2` and `b = x**2 + 2*x + 1` (check!).

The best ways to check if  $a = b$  in the mathematical sense are:

- `simplify(a-b)==0` simplifies  $a - b$ , and sees if it goes to 0;
- `simplify(Eq(a,b))` simplifies the symbolic equalities of  $a$  and  $b$  (`Eq(a,b)`), which may lead to a boolean value;
- `a.equals(b)` tries more techniques (e.g. it can evaluate and compare  $a$  with  $b$  numerically at random points) and returns `True` if  $a = b$ , `False` if  $a \neq b$ , or `None` if it cannot decide.

Note that all the methods above work well for most common expressions (give `True` for our  $a$  and  $b$ ), but are not perfect. It is proven that it is impossible to determine if two symbolic expressions are identically equal in general.

**Exercise:** check if  $\cos(2x) = \cos^2(x) - \sin^2(x)$

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To perform multiple substitutions at once, pass a **dictionary**, a **set**, or a sequence (e.g. a **list**) of (old, new) pairs to `subs`, e.g.

<code>expr = x**3 + 4*x*y - z</code>	constructs the expression;
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Substitution replaces all instances of something in an expression with something else. It is done using the `subs` method, e.g.

<code>a = cos(x)+1</code>	constructs the expression <code>a</code> ;
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Expressions can be converted to floating-point approximations (numbers) using either the `evalf` method or the `N` function.

`N(expr, ...)` is equivalent to `sympify(expr).evalf(...)`.

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**Examples:** execute:

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default accuracy is 15 decimal digits, but it can be set; SymPy supports arbitrary-precision floating point numbers;

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N(pi, 100)
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similar to the previous one;

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N("1/3", 100)
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**Exercises:** evaluate the given formulas to an accuracy of 20 digits:

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1  $\sqrt{3} \cdot e^{10} + 1/3$  `(sqrt(3)*exp(10) + S(1)/3).evalf(20)`

2  $5 \cdot x \cdot \pi^2 + \sqrt{8}$  `(5*x*pi**2 + sqrt(8)).evalf(20)`



# Evaluation with substitution

To numerically evaluate an expression with a *Symbol at a point*:

- we might use `subs` followed by `evalf` (or `N`), for example:

$$\begin{array}{l|l} \text{cos}(x).\text{subs}(x, 1).\text{evalf}(50) & \approx \text{cos}(1) \\ \text{N}(\text{sqrt}(x).\text{subs}(x, 3), 50) & \approx \sqrt{3} \end{array}$$

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**Exercises:** define `expr = x + y**2` and evaluate it at points:

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The `plot` function plots functions of a single variable.

**Examples:** execute:

- `plot(x**2)` plots  $x^2$  in the default range  $(-10, 10)$ ;
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`limit(f(x), x, p)` computes  $\lim_{x \rightarrow p} f(x)$   
(the limit of  $f(x)$  at the point  $p$ ), e.g. (execute):

<code>limit(sin(x)/x, x, 0)</code>	computes $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sin(x)}{x}$ ;
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`oo` (the lowercase letter “o” twice) denotes  $\infty$  (infinity).

To evaluate a one-sided limit, pass additional `'+'` or `'-'` argument, e.g. `limit(1/x, x, 0, '+')` computes  $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0^+} \frac{1}{x}$ .

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# Sums and products

`summation(f, (i, a, b))` computes  $\sum_{i=a}^b f(i)$  (the sum of  $f$  with respect to  $i$  from  $a$  to  $b$ );

`product(f, (i, a, b))` computes  $\prod_{i=a}^b f(i)$  (the product of  $f$  with respect to  $i$  from  $a$  to  $b$ ).

**Example:** execute:

`i,n = symbols('i,n', integer=True)` defines integer symbols;

`summation(1/(2**i), (i, 1, oo)) =  $\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{2^i} = \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} + \dots$ ;`

`summation(x/(2**i), (i, 1, oo)) =  $\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \frac{x}{2^i} = \frac{x}{2} + \frac{x}{4} + \dots$ ;`

`product(n**n, (n, 5, 20))  $\prod_{n=5}^{20} n^n = 5^5 \cdot 6^6 \cdot \dots \cdot 20^{20}$ ;`

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**Exercise:** calculate:

1  $\prod_{i=1}^{10} n^i$

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**Exercise:** calculate:

1  `$\prod_{i=1}^{10} n^i$  product(n**i, (i, 1, 10))`

2  `$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{6}{n^2}$  summation(6/n**2, (n, 1, oo))`

3  `$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{x^n}{n!}$  (simplify the result expression)`

`summation(x**n/factorial(n), (n, 1, oo)).simplify()`

# Solving inequalities and equations algebraically

`solveset(f, symbol, domain)` solves the inequality or equation `f` over `domain` (`S.Complexes` by default); returns a set of all values for `symbol` for which `f` is `True` or is equal to zero.

**Examples:** execute:

- `solveset(x**2>2, x, S.Reals)` solves  $x^2 > 2$  for real  $x$ ;
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- `a,b,c = symbols('a,b,c')`  
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**Exercises:** find all real  $x$  such that:

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# Derivatives

To take derivatives, use the `diff` function, e.g. `diff(cos(x), x)` differentiates  $\cos(x)$  with respect to  $x$ ;  $\frac{\partial}{\partial x} \cos(x)$ .

To take multiple derivatives, pass the variable as many times as you wish to differentiate, or pass a number after the variable.

For example both `diff(x**4, x, x, x)` and `diff(x**4, x, 3)` find the third derivative of  $x^4$ .

To take derivatives with respect to many variables at once, just pass each derivative in order, e.g. each of the following will

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1 `x` Code: `diff(x**3+2*y, x)`

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# Integrals

To compute an integral, use the `integrate` function.

To compute an indefinite integral, just pass the variable after the expression, e.g. `integrate(cos(x), x)` calculates  $\int \cos(x) dx$ . (Note that SymPy does not include the constant of integration.)

To compute a definite integral, pass a tuple (integration\_variable, lower\_limit, upper\_limit), e.g. `integrate(exp(-x), (x, 0, oo))` calculates  $\int_0^{\infty} e^{-x} dx$ .

You can pass multiple limit tuples to perform a multiple integral, e.g. `integrate(exp(-x**2-y**2), (x,-oo,oo), (y,-oo,oo))` computes  $\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-x^2-y^2} dx dy$ .

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You can pass multiple limit tuples to perform a multiple integral, e.g. `integrate(exp(-x**2-y**2), (x,-oo,oo), (y,-oo,oo))` computes  $\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-x^2-y^2} dx dy$ .

**Exercises:** calculate:

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- 1  $\int x \cos(x) dx$  Code: `integrate(x*cos(x), x)`
- 2  $\int_0^{2\pi} \sin(x) dx$  Code: `integrate(sin(x), (x, 0, 2*pi))`
- 3  $\int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{x} dx$  Code: `integrate(1/x, (x, 1, oo))`



# Unevaluated objects

- SymPy contains classes whose instances (so called *unevaluated objects*) represent unevaluated operations, for example:
  - `Derivative`  
(its constructor takes the same arguments as `diff`);
  - `Integral`  
(its constructor takes the same arguments as `integrate`);
  - `Sum`  
(its constructor takes the same arguments as `summation`);
- unevaluated objects are useful for delaying the evaluation, or for printing purposes, for instance (execute):

<code>der</code>		displays <code>der</code> ,
<code>latex(der)</code>		$\LaTeX$ representation of <code>der</code> ;
<code>der.doit()</code>		solves <code>der</code> .
- unevaluated objects are also returned by `diff`, `integrate`, etc. when SymPy does not know how to compute something. For example try: `integrate(x**x, x)`

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# Homework

- 1 simplify the formula  $\frac{x^2+x}{x \sin^2(y)+x \cos^2(y)}$ ;
- 2 calculate  $\lim_{x \rightarrow -\infty} \left( \frac{1}{x} \ln(e^x + 1) \right)$ ;
- 3 find all real  $x$  such that  $x^2 + 2 > x^3 \wedge \sqrt{x+2} > x$ ;
- 4 solve  $ax^3 + bx^2 + cx + d = 0$  for  $x$ ;
- 5 evaluate  $\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x \partial y} (\sin(x+y) \cos(xy))$  to an accuracy of 30 decimal digits at point  $x = -1, y = 2$ ;
- 6 plot both  $f(x) = 3x^2$  and  $\frac{\partial}{\partial x} f(x)$  together in the range  $(0, 5)$ ;
- 7 plot  $f(x) = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left( 1 + \frac{1}{n} \right)^{nx}$  in the range  $(-1, 1)$ ;
- 8 evaluate  $\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-x^2} dx$  to an accuracy of 50 digits;
- 9 plot  $\int e^{-x^2} dx$  in the range  $(-4, 4)$ ;
- 10 for volunteers: find a simple formula for the area of a triangle with vertices at points:  $(0, 0), (a, b), (c, d)$ . Next, evaluate the formula for  $a = 2, b = 2, c = 4, d = 0$ .

Please note all the expressions you used.

- Official *SymPy's documentation* (especially *SymPy Tutorial*), available on <http://docs.sympy.org/>
- Jonathan Gross *Math and Physics with SymPy*, available on <http://www.jonathangross.de/files/IPCS2016/sympy.pdf>
- Paul Lutus *IPython: Math Processor*, available on <http://arachnoid.com/IPython/>