Hands-on Robotics Development using Duckietown

This course teaches the practicalities of programming robots. At the end, you will know how to write and deploy simple agents on your Duckiebot.
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PART A

[RH1] Connecting and operating a Duckiebot

This part will take you through the most basic hardware and software skills you need in Duckietown. You will start from building your Duckiebot and learning the most frequently used terminal commands and go all the way to running your first Duckiebot demos!

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We have prepared detailed instructions on how to build your Duckiebot, and, if you need, a whole Duckietown! Here, we will guide you to the relevant parts of the book that contain the specific instructions. Once you are done, you can continue with the next module.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

- **Requires:** Hardware
- **Results:** Know how to build Duckiebots and Duckietowns.
- **Results:** Know where to ask for help.

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### 1.1. Assembling the Duckiebot

The content of the Duckiebox including a detailed set of instructions can be found in the assembly instructions. It is advisable to read through our hardware preliminaries section before you get your hands on your own Duckiebot.

The assembly instructions as well as the hardware preliminaries are part of the extensive documentation on Duckietown, which we refer to as the “Duckumentation”. The Duckumentation is an open-source set of documents that explains everything you need in order to find your way around the Duckietown universe.

If you cannot find the answer to a specific question you have, you can join our international Slack workspace. There you can ask the community about anything. When you sign up, please add your affiliation. It is always a pleasure to see Duckietown spreading around the world, and we are curious to find out where our new members come from.

If you run into any issues during the assembly, there are different ways to find help. First, you can look at the FAQ sections that are on some pages of the Duckumentation. If this does not help you and you need further assistance, let us know via Slack.

**Exercise 1. Duckiebot assembly.**

Assemble the hardware of your Duckiebot according to the assembly instructions.
Working over the terminal is a skill that every roboticist-to-be needs to acquire. It enables you to work on remote agents or computers without the need for a graphical user interface (GUI) and lets you work very efficiently. Once you get the hang of it, you will find out for yourself how it can make your life easier.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

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**2.1. Using a terminal**

If you are completely new to working with a terminal, often also called “console” or “command line”, a beginners tutorial can be found here. It makes sense to get to know the terminal very well, as this will save you a lot of time along the way.

If you are looking for an extensive list of commands that can be used from the terminal, this is the place to look at.

**2.2. Using the Duckietown Shell**

The Duckietown Shell, or dts for short, is a pure Python, easily distributable (few dependencies) utility for Duckietown.

The idea is that most of the functionalities are implemented as Docker containers, and dts provides a nice interface for that, so that users should not type a very long docker run command line. These functionalities range from calibrating your Duckiebot and running demos to building the duckumentation and submitting and evaluating for AI-DO. You will find the commands that you need along the way during the next steps.

If you followed all the steps in the laptop setup, you already installed dts. If not, now is the time to go back and do it.
UNIT A-3
Duckiebot Setup

Major efforts were made to make sure that the setup of your Duckiebot is as comfortable as possible for you. We created a set of instructions for initialization and calibration through which we will guide you here.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

| Requires: | an assembled Duckiebot. |
| Results:   | A Duckiebot that is ready to operate in Duckietown. |

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### 3.1. Initialization

First of all, you have to flash your SD card. Here you have the possibility to give your duckiebot a name and choose what network to connect to. We experienced people having issues when they called their Duckiebot `duckiebot`, so make sure to find a creative name that is different from that.

Follow the initialization instructions here.

### 3.2. Make your Duckiebot move

As soon as you finished the initialization part successfully, it is time to make your Duckiebot move. Follow the instructions here to find out how you can maneuver your Duckiebot using your computer keyboard. This is also the moment to check whether you did a good job at wiring your motors. If your Duckiebot does not behave as you tell him to, this is probably due to the fact that some wires are crossed.

**Note:** If this is the first time that you try to make your Duckiebot move, give it some time. It might take some time until the joystick pops up on your screen.

### 3.3. See what your Duckiebot sees

There is another key component missing now: the image stream from the camera. To find its way around in the city, a Duckiebot needs to be aware of what is going on around him and where he is allowed to drive and where not. To see the image stream from your Duckiebot, follow the instructions here.
3.4. Calibration

As with every real-world system, the hardware of the Duckiebot is always a little different. The “same” cameras or motors that you can buy off the shelf will never be exactly the same. Additionally, the camera might have been mounted in a slightly different orientation than it was supposed to. But don’t worry, this is what we are going to take care of in this step.

We have two calibration procedures for the Duckiebot: one for the camera and one for the motors.

1) Camera calibration

The camera calibration procedure consists of two parts: the first one is the intrinsic camera calibration. It accounts for the differences between each camera and is therefore only dependent on the camera itself. If you did the intrinsic calibration, make sure to not play around with the lens of the camera anymore as it will invalidate the intrinsic calibration.

The second part is the extrinsic camera calibration. It accounts for the positioning of the camera relative to its environment (i.e. how you mount it on the Duckiebot). So if you mounted the camera at a slight angle with respect to the driving direction this part accounts for it.

Follow the instructions here to calibrate the camera of your Duckiebot.

For more detailed background information check out this link.

Exercise 2. Calibration.

During the camera calibration, the Duckiebot will run an automatic verification on the camera calibration. Check if the projection of the street on the actual picture fits. If it doesn’t you have to redo the extrinsic calibration.

2) Wheel calibration

The Duckiebot uses a differential drive. Going forward in a straight line therefore depends on the motors turning at the exact same speed. As in reality every motor is slightly different, we have to account for these imprecisions using a wheel calibration procedure. In Duckietown we are currently using a gain-trim approach for that.

Follow the instructions here to run through the calibration procedure with your Duckiebot and help him drive straight.
UNIT A-4

Networking basics

Networking is extremely vital in Duckietown. And we don’t mean the networking events where duckies socialize (these are pretty fun), but rather the computer networks between the bots, your computers and the rest of the Duckietown equipment. These networks allow us to do some pretty cool stuff, like controlling your Duckiebot from your laptop or creating a centralized observation center that combines the video streams of all watchtowers. Networking’s usefulness is only comparable with its complexity. Indeed, this is often the source of most confusion and problems for Duckietown newbies. That is why we will try to clarify as many things as we can from the very beginning.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

| Requires: Laptop setup. |
| Requires: Duckiebot initialization. |
| Results: Fundamental networking knowledge. |

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4.1. Why do we care about networking in the first place?

Your Duckiebot, just like your computer or your phone, is a network device and you connect to it through the network. You probably want to control it without having to attach a screen, a keyboard and a mouse to it, that would defeat the whole “autonomy” goal. In more complex projects, one computer can also be used to control dozens of devices at a time. And in one of the most challenging undertakings that we have attempted so far, we connect 50+ watchtowers into a single mega-hive. All this is enabled by smartly configured computer networks!

4.2. How do computer networks work?

A local network is setup with a router at the center, that allows all devices that connect to it to find each other and communicate. The role of the router is to direct (route) packages from a sender to a receiver. In big networks you cannot physically connect all devices to a single router. In this case, you can use switches to combine the network traffic from a number of devices onto a single connection to a router. The router must know which device is which and where to find it. To facilitate their communication, the router and the rest of the devices use IP and MAC addresses.
The MAC address is related to your hardware itself, to your computer (or more accurately, to the network interface). This means that it remains the same even if you move to the other end of the world and connect to a different network. If your computer supports both a WiFi and an Ethernet connection, then each one has a different MAC address. The MAC address is of the form: 0d:12:2c:a7:0d:27, with each symbol being a hexadecimal (0-9 + a-f). More importantly, MAC addresses are unique: there is no other device in the world with the same MAC address as the WiFi adapter in your laptop. You can consider it as a citizen number: it is unique personal identifier. That makes MAC addresses extremely useful for routing messages reliably.

While MAC addresses have the benefit of stability, they are very clumsy to work with, imagine that every time you want to send a letter to your friend you need to write down their citizen number. And also imagine you are the mailman: it is very different to deliver mail if you don’t know where the person lives. Computers use IP addresses to handle these problems.

The IP address of a device is relative to the network it lives in. It is a sequence of numbers that are uniquely mapped to devices inside the network. It is coded on 32 bits. Most home networks use the range of IP from 192.168.1.1 to 192.168.1.255, so you may have seen the numbers before. The structure of the IP address shows the hierarchical nature of the network architecture. This address will change as soon as you change network, and it is assigned by the network administrator. Typically this is handled by a DHCP server which, in most home networks is part of the router. In a local network, all addresses use the same subnetwork, which means that the first 24 bits of it are the same. If my IP is 192.168.1.23, then my subnetwork is 192.168.1. xyz. This makes it easy to determine which devices are on the same local network as me, as then the router can directly deliver my messages. If you are trying to connect to a device outside your local network (e.g., on the Internet), the router will need to find a way to deliver the message to it.

This concept is actually quite important. Your router will give you the address of any device on your local network, such that you can connect to it, but does not work for resources on the Internet, for example, docs.duckietown.org. Therefore, instead, it acts as an intermediary between your device and the Internet. The technical term for that is gateway. The router will mask any request that comes from you as if it comes from the router itself, and once it gets a reply from the remote server, it forwards that back to your device.

Even though using IP addresses is very convenient for computers, humans do not handle them that well. They change from time to time and are hard to memorize. Instead, we prefer to name our devices with memorable names such as quackabot or duckiecar. These names are called hostnames and you should have picked one for your Duckiebot when you initialized it. In Duckietown, we mostly use the hostnames for connecting to devices. However, the ability to find a device by hostname is non-standard and requires a protocol called multicast DNS (mDNS).

**Note:** This mDNS protocol works by default on most home or office networks, but is blocked on large corporate networks like the ones of universities. If you have issues connecting to your Duckiebot though the hostname, that is the most likely reason and you should first check with your network provider if mDNS is indeed blocked.
**Exercise 3. Network utilities.**

Now we will discuss some useful tools that can help understand the network on which you are.

There is nothing simpler than finding your hostname: simply type `hostname` in a terminal. Now, make sure you are connected to a network first.

We can use the `ifconfig` command to find some properties of this network. Open a terminal and type the command `ifconfig`. You might be missing the package that provides this command. If that is the case, install it and try again.

The `ifconfig` command outputs a few paragraphs, one for each network interface. You typically will find one called something like `wlan0` (your wireless interface) and another one called `eth0` (your Ethernet interface). Look at the one through which you are connected at the moment. After the keyword `inet` you should see your IP address and after the keyword `ether` or `HWaddress` you should get the MAC address of this interface.

Can you determine what is your sub-network? How many devices can you put on this sub-network?

Now that you know what your network is, it is time to explore the devices on it. There are many ways to do this. If you know about a device that should be connected, like your Duckiebot, then you can directly try to find it. To do so, you can try to ping it. This will just “poke” the device to see if it is on the network and it is responsive to the poking. You can ping by IP address and a hostname. Pinging by IP address always works if a device is connected to the network. Pinging by hostname requires that mDNS is enabled, therefore if that fails it could mean that either your device is not connected, or that the mDNS traffic is being blocked on your network.

**Exercise 4. Ping.**

Open a terminal. Run `ping hostname`, where `hostname` is your Duckiebot’s hostname. Does it work? What is the output? Now try `ping hostname.local` instead. Does this work? For the router to find a device with its hostname, it needs to know that the hostname is in the local network, not somewhere else on internet. In contrast, try to ping a server outside of the local network: `ping google.com`. You can stop pinging the Duckiebot by pressing `CTRL-C`.

Now, when you pinged your Duckiebot, did you notice that there was an IP address in the output? Is it yours? No! It is the IP of the Duckiebot! You can now use this IP address and try pinging with it. Do you need to add the `.local` this time? Can you figure out why?

This part will be very important for a lot of the things you will do in Duckietown. When a command involving your Duckiebot doesn’t work, the first thing to try is to ping it and make sure it is still accessible.

**Exercise 5. NMap.**

We can now investigate what is on our network by using one of the many network mapping tools that exist out there. Keep in mind that depending on the network and
the devices on it, you might not be able to see every device and every parameter. Since you know your IP address, you also know your sub-network. Using the tool `nmap`, we are going to search the whole sub-network. Try to run `nmap -sP YOUR IP /24` in a terminal. The `/24` part tells `nmap` to keep the 24 first bits the same in its search. If you don’t put it, then `nmap` will search the complete space of addresses (which are the monstrous $2^{32}$ addresses).

The output should give you the list of all devices connected to your network, with their IP addresses and most of the time their hostnames. This way, you found your hostname and its IP, as well as other potentially present Duckiebots or computers.

### 4.3. Connecting to your Duckiebot

Now that we know what our local network is and how it works, we can this information to gain access to Duckiebots. The industry standard way of connecting to remote devices is a protocol known as **SSH** (Secure SHell). Then name describes it quite well: just in the same way that you can run shell commands on your computer in the terminal you can run shell commands on a remote device in a secure way, on a remote device. In this case, the remote device will be your Duckiebot.

#### Exercise 6. SSH.

Let’s connect to our Duckiebot via SSH. Open a terminal and type `ssh user-name @ hostname .local`. The username and hostname should be the ones you supplied when you flashed your card. If you didn’t set a username, then it should be the default value of *duckie*. If you are prompted to enter a password, again use the one you set when flashing, or if you didn’t use the default *quackquack* password.

Now your terminal is not in your computer anymore but on the Duckiebot. Did the text before the place where you can enter you command change? Why? What do these things there mean?

You should now be in a shell in the Duckiebot. Try to move around with terminal commands like `cd` and `ls`, as explained in the terminal basics. Verify that these are not the directories and files you find on your computer. They actually are the ones on your robot.

Repeating the steps from one of the previous exercises, find the MAC address of your Duckiebot.

Once you are ready, you can exit the session on the Duckiebot and return to your computer by simply typing `exit` or by pressing `CTRL+D`.

You can connect to your bot without having to type a password (maybe that was already the case). This is done by using SSH keys (*a private* and a *public* one). You don’t know this yet, but when you flashed the SD card on your computer, it added an SSH key to your computer and to the Duckiebot. With this, the Duckiebot recognizes your computer and won’t ask for a password. On your computer, the key is in `~/ .ssh`, and it is called `DT18_key_00`. If you in fact try to `ssh` in a Duckiebot on the network that was not flashed on your computer, you will have to know the password.
Exercise 7. SSH keys.
Open a new terminal and navigate to ~/.ssh and open the file named config. What is in there? It is a list of known agents mapped with the key to use. When you run ssh hostname ssh will directly use the key and the provided Linux username (duckie by default).
If you are frequent user of Python, you have probably experienced that making your projects portable can sometimes be quite difficult. Your code might work only on a specific version of Python and requires specific versions of some particular libraries. But how can you make sure that the users of your code have the same installed? Thankfully, the Python community has developed wonderful tools to manage that, such as virtual environments and PyPI. Unfortunately, these tools stop short of extending their convenience outside the Python world. What about your parameters, libraries, packages written in different languages, binary executables, system configurations, and anything else that your code might need to run correctly? How do you make sure your user has all of this setup correctly? And what if you want this to work across different hardware and operating systems? How difficult can achieving true portability be? In fact, it turns out, this is an engineering task that has taken thousands of the world’s brightest developers many decades to implement!

Thanks to the magic of container technology we can now run any Linux program on almost any networked device on the planet. All of the environment preparation, installation and configuration steps can be automated from start to finish. Depending on how much network bandwidth you have, it might take a while, but that’s all right. All you need to do is type a single command string correctly.

Docker is a tool for portable, reproducible, and self-contained computing. It is used to perform operating-system-level virtualization, something often referred to as containerization. While Docker is not the only software that does this, it is by far the most popular one.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

- **Requires**: Laptop setup
- **Results**: The very basic knowledge of using Docker

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**5.1. What’s so special about containerization?**

A (Docker) container is a packaging around all the software (libraries, configuration files, services, binary executable, etc.) that a computer needs to run a program. And by all, we don’t simply mean the source code or the dependencies, we really mean all. Everything you need, from the lowest level OS components to the user interface. A con-
Container does not care what flavor or release of Linux you try to run it on, it has everything it needs to work everywhere inside it (it is a container, after all). Not to mention that Linux Docker containers can generally be also executed on Mac OS and Windows as well!

Containerization is a process that allows partitioning the hardware and the core software (the kernel) of an operating system in such a way that different containers can coexist on the same system independently from one another. Programs running in such a container have access only to the resources they are allowed to and are completely independent of libraries and configurations of the other containers and the host machine. Because of this feature, Docker containers are extremely portable.

Containers are often compared to virtual machines (VMs). The main difference is that VMs require a host operating system (OS) with a hypervisor (another program) and a number of guest OS, each with their own libraries and application code. This can result in a significant overhead. Imagine running a simple Ubuntu server in a VM on Ubuntu: you will have most of the kernel libraries and binaries twice and a lot of the processes will be duplicated on the host and on the guest. Containerization, on the other hand, leverages the existing kernel and OS, keeps track of what you already have and adds only the additional binaries, libraries and code necessary to run a given application. See the illustration below.

Because containers don’t need a separate OS to run they are much more lightweight than VMs. This makes them perfect to use in cases where one needs to deploy a lot of independent services on the same hardware or to deploy on not-that-powerful platforms, such as a Raspberry Pi - the platform Duckiebots use.

Containers allow for reuse of resources and code, but are also very easy to work with in the context of version control. If one uses a VM, they would need to get into the VM and update all the code they are using there. With a Docker container, the same process is as easy as pulling the container image again.

The same feature makes Docker containers great for development. If you mess up a configuration or a library in a container, all you need to do to fix it is, stop it, remove it, and try again. There is no trace left on your system and you cannot break down your OS by committing a simple stupid mistake in a container.

And the best part of it all, Docker containers are extremely portable. That means, that once you package your mind-bogglingly awesome Duckiebot code as a Docker container, you can very easily share it with your friends and anyone else in the world, who would be able to try it on their own robot with a single line in the terminal. Just as
easily you can test it in simulation or even submitting for competing in the AI Driving
Olympics!

5.2. What is it in a Docker container?

You can think of Docker containers as objects built from Docker images which in turn
are built up of Docker layers. So what are these?

Docker images are build-time constructs while Docker containers are run-time con-
structs. That means that a Docker image is static, like a .zip or .iso file. A container
is like a running VM instance: it starts from a static image but as you use it, files and
configurations might change.

Docker images are build up from layers. The initial layer is the base layer, typically an
official stripped-down version of an OS. For example, a lot of the Docker images we run
on the Duckiebots have rpi-ros-kinetic-base as a base.

Each layer on top of the base layer constitutes a change to the layers below. The Docker
internal mechanisms translate this sequence of changes to a file system that the con-
tainer can then use. If one makes a small change to a file, then typically only a single
layer will be changed and when Docker attempts to pull the new version, it will need to
download and store only the changed layer, saving space, time and bandwidth.

In the Docker world images get organized by their repository name, image name and
tags. As with Git and GitHub, Docker images can be stored in image registers that re-
side on the Internet and allow easy worldwide access to your code. The most popular
Docker register is called DockerHub and it is what we use in Duckietown.

A Duckietown image stored on DockerHub has a name of the form duckietown/rpi-
ros-kinetic-base:daffy. Here the repository name is duckietown, the image name is
rpi-ros-kinetic-base, and the tag is daffy.

All Duckietown-related images are in the duckietown repository. The images them-
selves can be very different and for various applications.

Sometimes a certain image might need to have several different versions. These can be
designated with tags. For example, the daffy tag means that this is the image to be
used with the daffy version of the Duckietown code base.

It is not necessary to specify a tag. If you don’t, Docker assumes you are interested in
the image with latest tag, should such an image exist.

5.3. Working with Docker images

We will now take a look at how you can use Docker in practice. For this, we assume you
have already set up Docker on your computer as explained in the Laptop Setup page.

If you want to get a new image from a Docker register (e.g., DockerHub) on your local
machine then you have to pull it. For example, you can get an Ubuntu 18.04 image by
running the following command:

```bash
$ docker pull library/ubuntu:18.04
```
You will now be able to see the new image you pulled if you run:

```
$ docker image list
```

Just like that you got a whole new OS on your computer with a single line in the terminal!

If you don’t need this container, or if you’re running down on storage space, you can remove it by simply running:

```
$ docker image rm ubuntu:18.04
```

You can also remove images by their IMAGE ID as printed by the `list` command.

If you want to look into the heart and soul of your images, you can use the commands `docker image history` and `docker image inspect` to get a detailed view.

### 5.4. Working with containers

Containers are the run-time equivalent of images. When you want to start a container, Docker picks up the image you specify, creates a file system from its layers, attaches all devices and directories you want, “boots” it up, sets up the environment, and starts a pre-determined process in this container. All that magic happens with you running a single command: `docker run`. You don’t even need to have pulled the image beforehand, if Docker can’t find it locally, it will look for it on DockerHub.

Here’s a simple example:

```
$ docker run ubuntu
```

This will take the `ubuntu` image with latest tag and will start a container from it.

The above won’t do much. In fact, the container will immediately exit as it has nothing to execute. When all processes of a container exit, the container exits as well. By default this `ubuntu` image runs `bash` and as you don’t pass any commands to it, it exits immediately. This is no fun, though.

Let’s try to keep this container alive for some time by using the `-it` switch. This tells Docker to create an interactive terminal session.

```
$ docker run -it ubuntu
```

Now you should see something like:

```
$ root@73335ebd3355:#
```

Keep in mind that the part after `@` (the container’s hostname) will be different - that is your container ID.
In this manual, we will use the following icon to show that the command should be run in the container:

$ command to be run in the container

You are now in your new ubuntu container! Try to play around, you can try to use some basic bash commands like `ls`, `cd`, `cat` to make sure that you are not in your host machine.

If you are sure about the difference between the host and the container, you might want to see what happens when you do `rm -rf / IN THE CONTAINER`. Do that extremely carefully because that wipes out all of the root of a system. You do not want to run this on your host. By running the above command in a Docker container you will destroy the OS inside the container - but you can just exit and start another one. If instead you have confused host and container, at this point you probably need to re-install your OS.

You can check which containers you are running using the docker `ps` command - analogous to the Linux `ps` command. Open a new terminal window (do not close the other one just yet) and type:

$ docker ps

An alternative syntax is

$ docker container list

These commands list all running containers.

Now you can go back to your ubuntu container and type `exit`. This will bring you back to your host shell and will stop the container. If you again run the docker `ps` command you will see nothing running. So does this mean that this container and all changes you might have made in it are gone? What about all these precious changes you made in it? Are they forever lost into the entropy abyss of electric noise in your computer’s memory? Not at all, docker `ps` and docker container list only list the currently running containers.

You can see all containers, including the stopped ones with:

$ docker container list -a

Here `-a` stands for all. You will see you have two ubuntu containers here (remember the first one that exited immediately?). There are two containers because every time you use docker `run`, a new container is created. Note that their names seem strangely random. We could have added custom, more descriptive names, but more on this later.

We don’t really need both of these containers, so let’s get rid of one of them:

$ docker container rm container name

Here `container name` is the name of the container you want to remove.
You need to put your container name after `rm`. Using the container ID instead is also possible. Note that if the container you are trying to remove is still running you will have to first stop it.

You might need to do some other operations with containers. For example, sometimes you want to start or stop an existing container. You can simply do that with:

```bash
$ docker container start container name
$ docker container stop container name
$ docker container restart container name
```

Imagine you are running a container in the background. The main process is running but you have no shell attached. How can you interact with the container? You can open a terminal in it with:

```bash
$ docker attach container name
```

Let’s start again the container that we stopped before. You can check its container ID and name via `docker container list -a`. You can then start it again with command introduced above. You will see that the docker start command will only print the container ID and will return you back to the terminal. Rather uneventful, huh? Don’t worry, your container is actually running: check that with `docker ps`.

But even though it is running, it seems you cannot do anything with it. But fear not, use the `docker attach` command to get back in the container’s shell. Now you’re back in and ready for the next adventure.

Often, you will need to run multiple processes in a single container. But how could you do that if you have only a single terminal? Well, Docker has a neat command for that: `docker exec`. The full signature of it is `docker exec CONTAINER_NAME/ID COMMAND`. Let’s use that to create a file in our Ubuntu container that is already running. Open a new terminal and simply substitute the container name or ID in the signature above and use the command `touch /quackworld` which should create an empty file called `quackworld` in the container’s root. The full command should look like that:

```bash
$ docker exec c73ee1f963a2 touch /quackworld
```

Verify that the file was indeed created by running it again, but this time with the command `ls` instead, which will show you the contents of the root folder. Finally, verify that the change was made in the same container as the one to which you attached before by finding the file there and that the change was not made on your host by checking that you don’t have a file called `quackworld` in your root folder.
Now that you know more about how to assemble a duckiebot, how to use a terminal, how to set up a Duckiebot, how to handle a bit of networking and a bit of Docker, it is high time you learn how to use the basic functionalities of the Duckiebot. In this section, you will learn multiple ways to operate and manage existing functions of the Duckiebot.

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- Section 6.1 - Remote connection with a browser and an interface
  - Page 19
- Section 6.2 - Starting a demo using the DT shell
  - Page 20

### 6.1. Remote connection with a browser and an interface

One of the easiest ways to use and get an overview of your Duckiebot’s operations capacities is to use a Duckietown designed web interface, that we call the **Dashboard**. The dashboard will allow you to monitor and operate basic functionalities of the Duckiebot.

**Exercise 8. Using the Dashboard.**

To set up the dashboard, follow this tutorial. Once on the dashboard, explore the interface and try to understand its features.

Through the dashboard you can, e.g., move the Duckiebot. You can find a tutorial on how to do so on Section 9.4 - Option 2: Using the dashboard.

You can even see what the Duckiebot is seeing Through the dashboard. You can follow the instructions from Section 10.3 - Viewing the image stream on the Dashboard to do so.

The dashboard is really useful for quick debugging and for moving the Duckiebot. We suggest you use it every time you have doubts about the camera nor working or the motors not being plugged in the right way.

But this interface has its limits, as it hides everything that is actually running on the duckiebot. To better understand the duckiebot, let’s take a look at what is under the hood: we will use portainer.

To manage and use containers, the command line interface is not so easy to use. But there exist a tool that create a nice interface to manage containers: **Portainer**. Portainer
is itself a container that runs on a device. Let’s learn how to use it.


Luckily, we have one running directly on the duckiebots at startup. Go to `hostname.local:9000` on your web browser. You should arrive on an interface. Navigate on the side window to Containers. Here you will see all the containers that are running or that are stopped on your duckiebot.

Look for the one that has `duckiebot_interface` in the name. This one contains all the drivers you need to drive around, use the camera and the leds.

Select it, click on stop, then try to move your duckiebot around again with the dashboard. It doesn’t work anymore. Select it again and start it. Now, find the `logs` button, right next to the name. This will open the logs output of the container. This can be very useful to debug new containers. In here you might see the error messages if something goes wrong.

With this interface, you can also attach a shell to the container, monitor its memory and cpu usage, and inspect its configuration.

Portainer is really helpful to manage images and containers that are already on the duckiebot, but what about if you want to create a new container or run a new demo. You could still do it from there, but it is not very intuitive. We commonly use the `dt shell`, that you already have installed.

### 6.2. Starting a demo using the DT shell

In the Duckietown world, demos are containers that contain a set of functionalities ready to work, if the rest of the Duckiebot is set up properly (e.g. `dt-car-interface` and `dt-duckiebot-interface` are running). This is also the moment where the work done in Section 3.4 - Calibration finally pays off. In order for the demo to work nicely, every Duckiebot must have undergone a calibration procedure to account for its motors’ and camera’s characteristics. In other words, the calibration procedure ensures that every Duckiebot will behave in the same way when it is given the same set of inputs or commands. The demos all follow the same workflow, which is described here.

### Exercise 10. Try out the lane-following demo.

Let’s now start a lane-following demo. To do so, follow these instructions.

After following the instructions completely, you should have run the lane following demo, and seen the visual output of the lane filter node.

In the duckiebot operation manual, you can find the instructions for the other demos. We mainly use the indefinite_navigation one.
PART B

[RH2] Basic Development

In this part you will get to make your first small program that runs on your Duckiebot! But before that, we will cover some important tool and handy skill you need.

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Unit B-4 - AIDO submissions ..........................................................36
Unit B-5 - Creating Docker containers .............................................38
Working on software in a group is great for development, but it automatically brings many pitfalls and issues. How to handle code that has been modified at the same time by two members of the group? How to keep an eye on what other members write in the code? How to keep enough history of the code to be able to go back to a stable version when something bad was added? How to do that when a few hundred people work on the same code and not go crazy. The answer is simple: code versioning tools. These tools allow communities to swiftly handle these issues. The most used one, and the one we will use, is git.

**UNIT B-1**  
**Git and GitHub**

**Knowledge and Activity Graph**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requires:</th>
<th>Laptop setup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Results:</td>
<td>Know how to extensively use a code versioning tools, git</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Section 1.2 - What is github ............................................................22  
Section 1.3 - Being a good git citizen ..............................................22

**1.1. Learning git**

Git is a great tool, that is mandatory to anyone doing any sort of code. Learning how to use it is essential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise 11. Git tutorial.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To learn how to use all of git’s functionalities, complete this tutorial.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1.2. What is github**

“GitHub is a code hosting platform for version control and collaboration. It lets you and others work together on projects from anywhere.” (source: github.com)

Github is where all the code is stored. It provides tools to handle pull requests, issues, and much more. The duckietown organization github page hosts all relevant code. It is comprised of many different repositories.

**1.3. Being a good git citizen**

Knowing how to use git is the first step. The second step, which is of the same importance, is knowing how to use it well.
1) Commits

- Commits need to be **granular**: One commit contains on fix, or one function. It cannot have two new functions, and three bug fix. This means that it is better to do too many commits that not enough. This is helpful when doing cherry picks, or when checking out a previous version of the code.
- Commits need to have **meaningful messages**: The message of the commit should describe its content.

2) Branches, forks, pull request and peer review

If you are going to work on a new function, but are not sure yet how it is going to go, then you cannot work on the master branch. This master branch needs to only receive code that has been tested, reviewed and approved by the team.

You then have **two solutions**:

- **Branching** On the main remote, you can branch out of the master branch, as explained in the above tutorial. Please give a relevant name to the branch (example: “devel-new-flying-function”). On repositories that you and a small team use a lot, this is the best option.
- **Forking** You can fork the main repo into you own workspace, and work from here. On repositories that are used by a lot of people, or that you very rarely will modify, this is the best option.

No matter the chosen solution, you then do your work, commit it, and then push it to github. On github, your branches will appear in your repository. When you feel like it is ready to be integrated to the master branch, you can open a pull request. This will allow your co workers to see the modifications you made.

**What you need to do:**

- Check that you are not committing wrong things by error.
- Provide a clear description of your work
- explain why it is relevant
- test it before opening the pull request, and explain that the test worked
- assign relevant co-workers to review the code

**What the reviewers need to do (all in the github interface):**

- Go through the modified code
- Comment directly on lines that raise questions and doubts
- Propose modifications
- And then, when all conversation are resolved, approve and merge the pull request

A pull request must never be approved and merged by the person who submitted it. Peer review is one of the most important part of software development. Not only does it allow for error proofing, but also it allows for someone to made a code suggestion alone, that can then be easily discussed and improved, even when it was functional to start with.
UNIT B-2

Python programs and environments

We assume you are already quite comfortable with Python. Nevertheless, when you work with big and complex projects, there are some subtleties that you must consider and some handy tools that can make your life easier. Let’s take a look at some of these now.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requires: Laptop setup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Results: Developer knowledge of Python.</td>
</tr>
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- Section 2.2 - Run a basic program on your Laptop ...................................................... 28
- Section 2.3 - Run a basic program on your Duckiebot ............................................. 29
- Section 2.4 - Install dependencies using package managers (e.g., apt, pip) 31

**2.1. Define a basic project structure**

In Duckietown, everything runs in Docker containers. All you need in order to run a piece of software in Duckietown is a Duckietown-compliant Docker image with your software in it.

A boilerplate is provided by the following repository.

The repository contains a lot of files, but do not worry, we will analyze them one by one.

First of all, you will need to make a copy of the template in your own GitHub account. To do so, go to the repository and click on the fork button.

![Fork](image)

Figure 2.1

Now that you have a copy of the template, you can create new repositories based off of it. In order to do so, go to GitHub and click on the button [+] at the top-right corner of the page and then click on New Repository.
You will see a page that looks like the following:

**Create a new repository**

A repository contains all project files, including the revision history. Already have a project repository elsewhere? Import a repository.

**Repository template**

Start your repository with a template repository’s contents.

---

In the section **Repository template**, select `YOUR_NAME/template-basic`. Pick a name for your repository (say `my-program`) and press the button **Create repository**. Note, you can replace `my-program` with the name of the repository that you prefer, make sure you use the right name in the instructions below.

This will create a new repository and copy everything from the repository `template-basic` to your new repository. You can now open a terminal and clone your newly created repository.

```
$ git clone https://github.com/YOUR_NAME/my-program
$ cd my-program
```

**Note:** Replace `YOUR_NAME` in the link above with your GitHub username.

The repository contains already everything you need to create a Duckietown-compliant Docker image for your program. The only thing we need to change before we can build an image from this repository is the repository name in the file Dockerfile. Open it using the text editor you prefer and change the first line from:

```
ARG REPO_NAME="REPO_NAME_HERE"
```
ARG REPO_NAME="my-program"

Save the changes. We can now build the image, even though there is not going to be much going on inside it until we place our code in it. To do that, we need to enable development features in the duckietown-shell by running the following in a terminal:

```
$ dts install devel
```

Now, in a terminal, move to the directory created by the `git clone` instruction above and run the following command:

```
$ dts devel build -f --arch amd64
```

If you correctly installed Docker and `dts`, you should see a long log that ends with something like the following:
You can now run your container by executing the following command.

```
$ docker run -it --rm duckietown/my-program:v1-amd64
```

This will show the following message:
The environment variable VEHICLE_NAME is not set. Using '774a2521b42e'.
Adding /code/my-program to PYTHONPATH
Adding /code/dt-commons to PYTHONPATH
Activating services broadcast...
Done!

This is an empty launch script. Update it to launch your application.

Deactivating services broadcast...
Done!

Congratulations! You just built and run your first Duckietown-compliant Docker image.

2.2. Run a basic program on your Laptop

Now that we know how to build a Docker image for Duckietown, let’s put some code in one of them.

We will see how to write a simple Python program, but any language should do it.

Open a terminal and go to the directory my-program created above. In Duckietown, Python code must belong to a Python package. Python packages are placed inside the directory code in my-program. Let go ahead and create a directory called my_package inside code.

```bash
$ mkdir -p ./code/my_package
```

A Python package is simply a directory containing a special file called __init__.py. So, let’s turn that my_package into a Python package.

```bash
$ touch ./code/my_package/__init__.py
```

Now that we have a Python package, we can create a Python script in it. Use your favorite text editor to create the file ./code/my_package/my_script.py and place the following code inside it.

```python
message = "Hello World!"
print(message)
```

We now need to tell Docker we want this script to be the one executed when we run the command docker run. In order to do so, open the file launch.sh and replace the line

```bash
echo "This is an empty launch script. Update it to launch your application."
```
with the line

dt_exec python3 -m "my_package.my_script"

**Note:** Always prepend `dt_exec` to the main command in `launch.sh`.

If you are curious about why that is important, we can tell you that it helps us deal with an interesting problem called “The zombie reaping problem” (more about this in this article).

Let us now re-build the image:

```
$ dts devel build -f --arch amd64
```

and run it:

```
$ docker run -it --rm duckietown/my-program:v1-amd64
```

This will show the following message:

```
The environment variable VEHICLE_NAME is not set. Using '774a2521b42e'.
Adding /code/my-program to PYTHONPATH
Adding /code/dt-commons to PYTHONPATH
Activating services broadcast...
Done!

Hello World!

Deactivating services broadcast...
Done!
```

Congratulations! You just built and run your own Duckietown-compliant Docker image.

### 2.3. Run a basic program on your Duckiebot

Now that we know how to package a piece of software into a Docker image for Duckietown, we can go one step further and write code that will run on the robot instead of our laptop.

This part assumes that you have a Duckiebot up and running with hostname `MY_ROBOT`.

Of course you don’t need to change the hostname to `MY_ROBOT`, just replace it with your robot name in the instructions below. You can make sure that your robot is ready by executing the command

```
$ ping MY_ROBOT.local
```

If we can ping the robot, we are good to go.
Before we start, we need to configure the Duckiebot to accept new code. This is necessary because the Duckiebot by defaults runs only code released by the Duckietown community. In order to configure the robot to accept custom code, run the following command,

```
$ dts devel watchtower stop -H MY_ROBOT.local
```

**Note:** You need to do this once and the effect will be lost when the Duckiebot reboots.

Let us go back to our script file my_script.py and change it to:

```python
import os
message = "Hello from %s!" % os.environ['VEHICLE_NAME']
print(message)
```

We can now modify slightly the instructions for building the image so that the image gets built directly on the robot instead of your laptop or desktop machine. Run the command

```
$ dts devel build -f --arch arm32v7 -H MY_ROBOT.local
```

As you can see, we changed two things, one is `--arch arm32v7` which tells Docker to build an image that will run on ARM architecture (which is the architecture the CPU on the robot is based on), the second is `-H MY_ROBOT.local` which tells Docker where to build the image.

Once the image is built, we can run it on the robot by running the command

```
$ docker -H MY_ROBOT.local run -it --rm --net=host duckietown/my-program:v1
```

If everything worked as expected, you should see the following output,

```
The environment variable VEHICLE_NAME is not set. Using 'MY_ROBOT'.
Adding /code/my-program to PYTHONPATH
Adding /code/dt-commons to PYTHONPATH
Activating services broadcast...
Done!

Hello from MY_ROBOT!

Deactivating services broadcast...
Done!
```

Congratulations! You just built and run your first Duckietown-compliant and Duckiebot-compatible Docker image.
2.4. Install dependencies using package managers (e.g., *apt*, *pip*)

It is quite common that our programs need to import libraries, thus we need a way to install them. Since our programs reside in Docker images, we need a way to install libraries in the same image.

The template provided by Duckietown supports two package managers out of the box:

- Advanced Package Tool (*apt*)
- Pip Installs Packages for Python3 (*pip3*)

List your *apt* packages or *pip3* packages in the files *dependencies-apt.txt* and *dependencies-py3.txt* respectively before running the command *dts devel build*.

---

**Exercise 12. Basic NumPy program.**

Write a program that performs the sum of two numbers using NumPy. Add *numpy* to the file *dependencies-py3.txt* to have it installed in the Docker image.

Here you go! Now you can handle pip dependencies as well!
UNIT B-3

Become a Docker Power-User

We already introduced in Unit A-5 - Docker basics what Docker containers are and how you can start them and do basic operations. Recall that a Docker container is a closed environment and any change you do there cannot affect your host system or other containers. This can be great if you want to protect your laptop from possible mischief coming from inside a container, but at the same time limits what you can do with it. Thankfully, Docker has some very powerful ways to interact with your system and the outside world.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

- **Requires:** Laptop setup
- **Requires:** Docker basics
- **Results:** Advanced knowledge of using Docker images and containers

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- Section 3.2 - Docker and networking .................................................................................33
- Section 3.3 - Handling devices ..............................................................................................33
- Section 3.4 - Other fancy option ...........................................................................................33

### 3.1. Getting data in and out of your container

Docker provides a few ways to extract and import files from and to a container. We will look only at volume mounting as it is the most used and versatile way. In the simplest terms, mounting a volume to a container essentially means that you make a directory on your host machine available in the container. Then, you can think of these two directories as perfect copies of each other: if you change something in one of them, it will be changed in the other as well. Therefore, if your container needs some data or configuration files to operate properly, or if you need to export your results out of it, volume mounting is the way to go. So, how does it work?

You can use `docker run` with the `-v host_dir:container_dir` option. Here `-v` is a shortcut for `--volume`. This specifies that `container_dir` in the container will be replaced with `host_dir` from your computer. Give it a try:

**Exercise 13. Docker volume mounting.**

Run a new Ubuntu container where you mount your home directory in the container’s home directory:
In bash `~` is a shortcut for your home directory (`/home/your_username`). Now if you check which files are in the container’s home directory by running `ls /home` you’d see the files you have on your host machine. Try to change one of them (hopefully one not that important file) or to create a new one. Check in your host home folder if the changes appear there as well. Now do the opposite: make a change in your host and observe if there’s a corresponding change in the container.

### 3.2. Docker and networking

The default network environment of a Docker container (a bridge network driver) gives your container access to the Internet but not much more. If you run, for example, a web server in the container, you wouldn’t be able to access it from your host. This is not ideal for us as most of the Duckietown code-base actually uses similar technologies to connect the various parts of the code.

However, by adding `--network host` to the `docker run` command, we can remove the network isolation between the container and the Docker host and therefore, you can use the full range of networking capabilities that your host has within the convenient environment in the container.

### 3.3. Handling devices

The Docker containers do not have access to the devices on your computer by default. Yup, if you put your code in a container it cannot use the camera, wheels and LEDs of your Duckiebot. No fun, right? Thankfully, just like with the network, Docker has a solution for that! You can manually allow each device to be available to your container or you can allow all of them by simply passing the `--privileged` option to `docker run`. You will see that option being often used in Duckietown.

### 3.4. Other fancy option

Docker provides many more options for configuring your containers. Here’s a list of the most common ones:
### Table 3.1. Docker Run Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short command</th>
<th>Full command</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-i</td>
<td>--interactive</td>
<td>Keep STDIN open even if not attached, typically used together with -t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-t</td>
<td>--tty</td>
<td>Allocate a pseudo-TTY, gives you terminal access to the container, typically used together with -i.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-d</td>
<td>--detach</td>
<td>Run container in background and print container ID.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--name</td>
<td>Sets a name for the container. If you don’t specify one, a random name will be generated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-v</td>
<td>--volume</td>
<td>Bind mount a volume, exposes a folder on your host as a folder in your container. Be very careful when using this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-p</td>
<td>--publish</td>
<td>Publish a container’s port(s) to the host, necessary when you need a port to communicate with a program in your container.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-d</td>
<td>--device</td>
<td>Similar to -v but for devices. This grants the container access to a device you specify. Be very careful when using this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--privileged</td>
<td>Give extended privileges to this container. That includes access to all devices. Be extremely careful when using this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--rm</td>
<td>Automatically remove the container when it exits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-H</td>
<td>--hostname</td>
<td>Specifies remote host name, for example when you want to execute the command on your Duckiebot, not on your computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--help</td>
<td>Prints information about these and other options.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Examples

Set the container name to joystick:

```
--name joystick
```

Mount the host’s path `/home/myuser/data` to `/data` inside the container:

```
-v /home/myuser/data:/data
```

Publish port 8080 in the container as 8082 on the host:

```
-p 8082:8080
```
Allow the container to use the device /dev/mmcblk0:

-d /dev/mmcblk0

Run a container on the Duckiebot:

-H duckiebot.local
UNIT B-4
AIDO submissions

The duckietown platform is one of many possibilities. In particular it is used for an international competition named AIDO. You will probably have part in it in one way or the other. You need to be able to participate in it.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requires: Laptop setup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Results: Know how to participate in AIDO.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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- Section 4.2 - Make a simple submission .................................................. 36
- Section 4.3 - Customize a solution .......................................................... 37

**4.1. Getting started**

The AIDO book is complete and already has all the necessary instructions.

**Exercise 14. Setup your account and software.**

Follow the instructions here and here.

**4.2. Make a simple submission**

To first get started and understand the workflow of AIDO submission, you will submit one with its default version.

**Exercise 15. Make a simple submission.**

Follow the instructions here. You will have to:

- retrieve a submission repository
- submit the default solution
- monitor your submission
- explore the leaderboard

On the AIDO website, find your submissions jobs, and play around with the following parameters:

- priority: changes the order of evaluation priority amongst your various submissions
- resetting: reset a job to make it restart
4.3. **Customize a solution**

Of course, the idea is not to submit the default solutions, but to improve them. This part is not mandatory, but you can go around and try to do better, by following the quick-start instructions.
UNIT B-5
Creating Docker containers

We spent a lot of time looking at how to use Docker containers and the image that they start from. But that still leaves a very important question open: how can you make your own image? Now you will have the opportunity to make your first image that will do some basic computer vision processing on your Duckiebot!

**Knowledge and activity graph**

- **Requires:** Laptop setup
- **Requires:** Duckiebot initialization
- **Requires:** Docker basics
- **Requires:** Docker poweruser skills
- **Results:** Advanced knowledge of using Docker images and containers.

**Contents**

- Section 5.1 - Where do Docker containers come from? .............................................. 38
- Section 5.2 - Environment variables and Docker containers ........................................... 40
- Section 5.3 - Guide to the Dockerfile keywords ............................................................ 41
- Section 5.4 - Creating your first functional Docker image ......................................... 41
- Section 5.5 - Pushing to DockerHub ............................................................................ 43

5.1. Where do Docker containers come from?

So far we saw that you can get a Docker image from the DockerHub by knowing its name. How do these images get on DockerHub? Well, the simple answer is that you register an account and then similarly to git, you can push one of your images to DockerHub. And how do you create an image in the first place?

A simple, though rarely practiced way is to convert a container in which you have made some changes into a new image. This can be done through the docker commit command. However, as this is not the preferred mode of operation we won’t discuss it further. But you can find more details in the official documentation.

The more popular and accepted way is to build an image from a “recipe”, called a Dockerfile. A Dockerfile is a text file that specifies the commands required to create a Docker image, typically by modifying an existing container image using a scripting interface. They also have special keywords (which are always CAPITALIZED), like `FROM`, `RUN`, `ENTRYPOINT`, and so on. For example, create a file called Dockerfile with the following content:
FROM ubuntu
RUN touch new_file1
CMD ls -l

The first line above defines the base image on top of which we will build our container. The second line simply executes the Linux command `touch new_file1` which creates a new file with this name. And the last line is the default command that will be run when the container is started (unless the user provides a different command).

Now, to build the image we can simply run:

```sh
$ docker build -t my_first_container:v1.
```

The last part of this command denotes the directory (called `context`) which contains your Dockerfile. The `.` shorthand refers to the current directory.

You should see something like:

```
Sending build context to Docker daemon 2.048kB
Step 1/3 : FROM ubuntu
--- ea2f90g8de9e
Step 2/3 : RUN touch new_file1
--- e3b75gt9zyc4
Step 3/3 : CMD ls -l
--- Running in 14f834yud59
Removing intermediate container 14f834yud59
--- 05a3bd381fc2
Successfully built 05a3bd381fc2
Successfully tagged my_first_container:v1
```

Now run the command `docker images` in your terminal, and you should see an image called `my_first_container` with tag `v1`:

```
$ docker images
REPOSITORY          TAG       IMAGE ID           CREATED              SIZE
my_first_container   v1        05a3bd381fc2       2 seconds ago       88.9MB
```

An interesting observation is that the container size is 88.9MB. Now, instead of needing to carry around a 88.9MB file, we can just store the 4KB text file and rest assured that all our important setup commands are contained within. In a sense, a whole OS, with our custom file inside is compressed to 3 lines of code.

Now, similarly to before, we can simply run:
Notice that as soon as we run the container Docker will execute the `ls -l` command as specified by the Dockerfile, revealing that `new_file1` was indeed stored in the image. However, we can still override `ls -l` by passing a command line argument: `docker run -it your/duck:v3 [custom_command]`.

### 5.2. Environment variables and Docker containers

Environment variables are often used to control the behavior of one or more programs. As the name hints, these variables are associated with a particular (terminal) environment and are shared among processes. In fact, all processes started from an environment inherit its set of environment variables. If you are curious, you can check out the Wikipedia article about them.

In bash you can set an environment variable with `export VAR_NAME=var_value`, and to check a variable’s current value use `echo \$VAR_NAME`. Python allows you to easily get the environment variable of the environment where the program was started in through the `os` module and its dictionary `os.environ['VAR_NAME']`.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise 16. Environment variables in Docker.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open a terminal and set a new environment variable <code>MY_VAR</code> with any value you like. Then start an interactive Python session in the same terminal and check the value of <code>MY_VAR</code> using the above function.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Docker universe environment variables are particularly useful to configure a
container when you run it. Imagine that your code can be run with different configuration variables (e.g. gain for the motors, exposure mode of the camera, etc.). Then you can set the value of this variable when you run the container, e.g.

```
$ docker run -e CAMERA_EXPOSURE='sport' my_fancy_camera:alpha
```

Then the Python code in the container can obtain the value you passed via the `os.environ` dictionary. In this way you make a single Docker image that can initialize containers with all sorts of configurations. Quite powerful, right?

### 5.3. Guide to the Dockerfile keywords

Here are some of the most commonly used Dockerfile keywords. You will see them in many of the Duckietown Dockerfiles and you will often make use of them. You can find much more information and details on how to use them on Docker’s official documentation.

**Table 5.1. Dockerfile keywords**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keyword</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FROM</td>
<td>Designates the base image on top of which this container image is built.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUN</td>
<td>Executes any shell command at run time, unless the user specifies another command. This is the default command the container will execute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMD</td>
<td>Executes any shell command at run time, unless the user specifies another command. This is the default command the container will execute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENV</td>
<td>Sets an environment variable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPY</td>
<td>Copies file from the container’s file system to another location within the container.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKDIR</td>
<td>Changes the current working directory of the container.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.4. Creating your first functional Docker image

Now that you know your way around Dockerfiles, it is time to finally build something meaningful that works on your Duckiebot! We are going to build a very basic vision system: we will try to measure how much of the image stream the camera sees is covered with pixels of a particular color.

**Exercise 17. Creating a color detector in Docker.**

**Note:** The following exercise will use the camera on your robot. The `picamera` library allows only one process to access the camera at a time. Therefore, if there is another process on your bot that is already using the camera, your code will likely fail. Make sure that the `dt-duckiebot-interface` and any other container that can use the camera are stopped. You can use Portainer to do that.

We will divide the image that the camera acquires into `N_SPLITS` equal horizontal sectors. `N_SPLITS` will be an environment variable we pass to the container. Think of it as a configuration parameter. The container should find which color is most present in each sector. Or alternatively you can look at the color distribution for each split. It should print the result in a nicely formatted way with a frequency of about 1Hz.
You can start your Dockerfile from duckietown/dt-duckiebot-interface:daffy-arm32v7. Most of the stuff you need should already be in there. Make a requirements.txt file where you list all your pip dependencies. We would expect that you would need at least picamera and numpy. Using a requirements.txt file is a good practice, especially when you work with big projects. The Dockerfile then copies this file and passes it to pip which installs all the packages you specify there. Finally copy your code in the container and specify it should be the starting command. Here’s an example Dockerfile. Make sure you understand what each single line is doing. Keep in mind that you might need to modify it in order to work for you:

```dockerfile
FROM duckietown/dt-duckiebot-interface:daffy-arm32v7

WORKDIR /color_detector

COPY requirements.txt ./

RUN pip install -r requirements.txt

COPY color_detector.py .

CMD python ./color_detector.py
```

Working with picamera can sometimes be tricky so you can use this template for color_detector.py to get started:

```python
import picamera
import picamera.array
from time import sleep

with picamera.PiCamera() as camera:
    camera.resolution = (320, 240)

    while True:
        with picamera.array.PiRGBArray(camera) as output:
            camera.capture(output, 'rgb')
            output = output.array

            # You can now treat output as a normal numpy array
            # Do your magic here

            sleep(1)
```

Once you have your color_detector.py file ready to be tested, you can build it directly on your bot by running:

```
$ docker -H $DUCKIEBOT_NAME.local build -t coloredetector .
```

Do you remember what `-H` does? It takes the context (the folder in which you are)
and ships it to the device specified by `-H` and build the container there. Once the container is built (typically it takes more time the first time), you can test it with:

```bash
$ docker -H DUCKIEBOT_NAME.local run -it --privileged colordetector
```

Again there is the `-H` option (why?) and we also have the `--privileged` option. Do you remember what it does? Try to remove it and see what happens.

We omitted to mention what to do about a lot of implementation details which can significantly affect the performance of your color detector. For example, what should the value of `N_SPLITS` be? Should we consider the whole width of the image or just a central part? How many colors should we detect, which ones and what is the best way to do it? Should you use RGB or HSV color space? All this is left for you to decide. This is typically the case in robotics: you know what the final result should be, but there are multiple ways to get there and it is up to you to decide which is the best solution for the particular case. Experiment and find what makes your color detector really good. We recommend investing some time in this, as this color detector will be a building block in the next module.

### 5.5. Pushing to DockerHub

Say that you want to share your awesome color detector with your friend. How can you do that? You can of course repeat the same procedure as above, just replacing your Duckiebot’s name with theirs. But that is cumbersome and requires them to have the code. DockerHub makes all this much easier. It allows you to push your image to their repository and then anyone can directly use it. That is where all the base images you saw so far come from.

To do this, first make sure you have a DockerHub account. Let’s say your account name is `duckquackermann`. Then sharing your container with the world is as easy as building it under your account name:

```bash
$ docker -H DUCKIEBOT_NAME.local build -t duckquackermann/colordetector
```

Then push it to DockerHub:

```bash
$ docker -H DUCKIEBOT_NAME.local push duckquackermann/colordetector
```

**Note:** You will probably have to first connect your Duckiebot’s Docker client with your DockerHub account. So first open an SSH connection to the robot and then run `docker login` in it. You will be prompted to provide your DockerHub username and password. If you want to be able to push images directly from your laptop, you should do the same there.

After you’ve pushed your image to DockerHub your code can be executed on any single Duckiebot around the world with a single command:
$ docker -H $DUCKIEBOT_NAME local run -it --privileged duckquacker-mann/colordetector
PART C

[RH3] Advanced Software Development

In this section, you will learn how to use the Robot Operating System (ROS) to enable different processes running on your Duckiebot to communicate with each other. You will also learn how to monitor/visualize these communications, change the behaviour of your robot on-the-fly, and work with ROS logs.

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UNIT C-1
Introduction to ROS

The official wiki describes ROS as:

... an open-source, meta-operating system for your robot. It provides the services you would expect from an operating system, including hardware abstraction, low-level device control, implementation of commonly-used functionality, message-passing between processes, and package management. It also provides tools and libraries for obtaining, building, writing, and running code across multiple computers.

You probably have some idea about what the above words mean. However, if this is your first encounter with ROS, you are already overestimating how complicated it is. Worry do not.

Putting it in very simple terms, as a roboticist, ROS is what will prevent you from reinventing the wheel at every step of building a robot. It is a framework which helps you manage the code you write, while providing you with a plethora of tools which will speed up the process.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

| Requires: Laptop setup |
| Requires: Duckiebot initialization |
| Requires: Docker poweruser skills |
| Results: Basic understanding of ROS |

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### 1.1. Why ROS?

Your Duckiebot is a very simple robot which has only one sensor (the camera), and two actuators (the motors). You can probably write all the code for the basic functionality of a Duckiebot yourself. You start by getting images from the camera, processing them to detect lanes, generating suitable motor commands, and finally executing them. You create a single program for all of this which looks like this:
The next day, your Duckiebot crashes into a duckie which was crossing the road, so you want to add duckie detection into your program to prevent such accidents. You modify your program and it now looks like this:

```python
if duckie_detected(img):
    cmd = EMERGENCY_STOP
run_motors(cmd)
```

You realize, however, that your Duckiebot is not at level 5 autonomy yet and you want to add manual control for difficult to navigate regions in the city. Your code now looks like this:

```python
if mode == AUTONOMOUS:
    if duckie_detected(img):
        cmd = EMERGENCY_STOP
else:
    cmd = get_command_from_joystick()
run_motors(cmd)
```

It is easy to see that when you start thinking about having even mode advanced modes of operation such as intersection navigation, Duckiebot detection, traffic sign detection, and auto-charging, your program will end up being a massive stack of if-else statements. What if you could split your program into different independent building blocks, one which only gets images from cameras, one which only detects duckie pedestrians, one which controls the motors and so on. Would that help you with organizing your code in a better way? How would those blocks communicate with each other? Moreover, how do you switch from autonomous mode to manual mode while your Duckiebot is still running? And what will happen once you try to do this for advanced robots with a lot of sensors and a large number of possible behaviors?

1.2. Basics of ROS
Look at the following system

![Diagram showing the system](image)

Figure 1.1

It performs exactly the same task as before. Unlike before, each of the building blocks is independent from the rest of the blocks, which means that you can swap out certain parts of the code with those written by others. You can write the lane pose extraction algorithm, while your friend works on converting that pose to a motor command. During runtime, the lane pose extractor and duckie detection algorithm run in parallel, just helping you utilize your resources better. The only missing piece to get a working system is making these blocks communicate with each other. This is where ROS comes in. If you don’t want to write your own driver for the camera, you could very easily use one from any ROS robot using the PiCamera.

In ROS terminology, each box is a **node**, and each solid arrow connection is a **topic**. It is intuitive that each topic carries a different type of a **message**. The `img` topic has images which are matrices of numbers, whereas the `pose` topic may have rotation and translation components. ROS provides a lot of standard message types ranging from `Int`, `Bool`, `String` to images, poses, IMU measurements. You can also define your own custom messages.

The nodes which send out data on a topic are called **publishers** of that topic and the ones which receive the data and use it are called **subscribers** of that topic. As you can seem from the diagram above, a node can be a publisher for one topic and subscriber for another at the same time.

You may have noticed a dashed arrow from the `joystick` node to the `mode_handler`. This represents that you can switch from manual to autonomous mode and vice versa using a button on your (virtual) joystick. Unlike sending images, which is a continuous flow of information, you will not keep switching modes all the time. ROS has a framework designed specifically for such case. This is called a **service**. Just like with messages, you can also define your own services. Here, the `mode_handler` node offers a service and the `joystick` node is the client of that service.

What manages the connections between nodes is the **rosmaster**. The **rosmaster** is responsible for helping individual nodes find one another and setting up connections between them. This can also be done over a network. Remember that you are able to see what your Duckiebot sees? That was because your laptop connected to the **rosmaster** of your Duckiebot. So, without knowing, you are already doing distributed robotics! It is important to keep in mind though that a single node can be managed by only one **rosmaster** at a time.
Another key building block of ROS are the parameters for each node. Recall when you calibrated your Duckiebot’s wheels or camera. These calibration parameters need to be stored somewhere so that they are not lost when your Duckiebot powers off. The ROS parameters are also very useful for configuring the nodes and therefore, the behavior of your robot. Say, that you want your lane controller to react faster, then you simply need to change the proportional gain parameter. You can hard-code that, but then changing it would require you to modify the source code. ROS offers a much nicer framework for handling hundreds of parameters for large robotics projects. You will also need parameters in conjunction with services. (Why?)

In ROS, code is organized in the form of packages. Each package is essentially a collection of nodes which perform very specific, related tasks. ROS packages also contain messages, services, and default parameter configuration files used by the nodes. A standard ROS package looks like this:

![ROS Package Structure](image)

When developing a large software stack, you may also find it easier to have all messages, services, and parameter files used by all nodes running on your robot in a single package rather than spread out inside packages which use them to avoid unnecessary redefinitions. The nodes, however, remain in their own packages. (Why? Does it have something to do with the fact that multiple nodes might use the same message, etc.?)

Note that the above diagram is just one of the ways to organize the flow of data. What happens actually on your Duckiebot is a little different.

1.3. Installation (Optional)

If you wish to install ROS on your computer, you can do so using this link. Please note that this might not be possible depending on your OS. Regardless of what OS you use, you should be able to use ROS through Docker (Why?). All ROS development in Duck-
Duckietown happens through Docker. This is why this step is not mandatory. Keep in mind that currently all Duckietown ROS software works in ROS Kinetic Kame and if you want to use a native installation with your Duckiebot, you should install this version, otherwise you will likely run into compatibility issues. However, we strongly recommend using Docker for all ROS related software development.

1.4. ROS Tutorials

Tutorials on using ROS with Duckietown are covered in the next section. These tutorials are tailored to the Duckietown development process. Apart from this, we strongly recommend going through the official ROS tutorials. You should even try out the Beginner Level tutorials yourself if you have a native ROS installation. If not, read through them at least and proceed to the next section

1) Additional Reading

- ROS Graph Concepts
In this section, you will learn everything about creating a Duckietown-compliant Docker image with ROS.

**Knowledge and activity graph**

- **Requires:** Laptop setup
- **Requires:** Duckiebot initialization
- **Requires:** Docker poweruser skills
- **Requires:** Basic understanding of ROS
- **Results:** Developer knowledge of ROS

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**2.1. Basic Project Structure**

In Duckietown, everything runs in Docker containers. All you need in order to run a piece of software that uses ROS in Duckietown is a Duckietown-compliant Docker image with your software in it.

A boilerplate is provided here. The repository contains a lot of files, but do not worry, we will analyze them one by one.

First of all, you will need to make a copy of the template in your own GitHub account. To do so, visit this URL and click on the fork button.

Now that you have a copy of the template, you can create new repositories based off of it. In order to do so, go to GitHub and click on the button [+] at the top-right corner of the page and then click on New Repository.
Figure 2.2
You will see a page that looks like the following:

Create a new repository
A repository contains all project files, including the revision history. Already have a project repository elsewhere? Import a repository.

Repository template
Start your repository with a template repository’s contents.

![New repository options](image)

Figure 2.3
In the section Repository template, select YOUR_NAME/template-ros. Pick a name for your repository (say my-ros-program) and press the button Create repository. Note, you can replace my-ros-program with the name of the repository that you prefer. Note that no capital letters are allowed and make sure you use the right name in the instructions below.

This will create a new repository and copy everything from the repository template-ros to your new repository. You can now open a terminal and clone your newly created repository.

```
$ git clone https://github.com/YOUR_NAME/my-ros-program
$ cd my-ros-program
```
**NOTE:** Replace `YOUR_NAME` in the link above with your GitHub username.

The repository contains already everything you need to create a Duckietown-compliant Docker image for your ROS program. The only thing we need to change before we can build an image from this repository is the repository name in the file `Dockerfile`. Open it using the text editor you prefer and change the first line from:

```
ARG REPO_NAME="<REPO_NAME_HERE>"
```

to

```
ARG REPO_NAME="my-ros-program"
```

Save the changes.

We can now build the image, even though there won’t be much going on inside it until we place our code in it.

Open a terminal and move to the directory created by the git clone instruction above. Run the following command:

```
$ dts devel build -f --arch amd64
```

**Note:** If the above command is not recognized, you will first have to install it with `dts install devel`.

If you correctly installed Docker and the duckietown-shell, you should see a long log that ends with something like the following:
You can now run your container by executing the following command.

```
$ docker run -it --rm duckietown/my-ros-program:v1-amd64
```

This will show the following message:

```
The environment variable VEHICLE_NAME is not set. Using '63734f6b4e7c'.
This is an empty launch script. Update it to launch your application.
```

**CONGRATULATIONS!** You just built and run your first ROS-based Duckietown-compliant Docker image.
2.2. ROS Publisher on Laptop

Now that we know how to build a Docker image for Duckietown, let’s put some code in one of them. We will see how to write a simple ROS program with Python, but any language supported by ROS should do it.

Open a terminal and go to the directory `my-ros-program` created above. In ROS, every ROS node must belong to a ROS package. ROS packages are placed inside the directory `packages` in `my-ros-program`. Let go ahead and create a directory called `my_package` inside `packages`.

```
$ mkdir -p ./packages/my_package
```

A ROS package is simply a directory containing two special files, `package.xml` and `CMakeLists.txt`. So, let’s turn the `my_package` folder into a ROS package by creating these two files.

Create the file `package.xml` inside `my_package` using your favorite text editor and place/adjust the following content inside it:

```xml
<package>
  <name>my_package</name>
  <version>0.1.0</version>
  <description>
  This package is a test for RH3.
  </description>
  <maintainer email="YOUR_EMAIL@EXAMPLE.COM">YOUR_FULL_NAME</maintainer>
  <license>None</license>

  <buildtool_depend>catkin</buildtool_depend>
</package>
```

Create the file `CMakeLists.txt` inside `my_package` using your favorite text editor and place/adjust the following content inside it:

```cmake
cmake_minimum_required(VERSION 2.8.3)
project(my_package)

find_package(catkin REQUIRED COMPONENTS rospy)

catkin_package()
```

Now that we have a ROS package, we can create a ROS node inside it. Create the directory `src` inside `my_package` and use your favorite text editor to create the file `.packages/my_package/src/my_node.py` and place the following code inside it:
#!/usr/bin/env python
import os
import rospy
from duckietown import DTROS
from std_msgs.msg import String

class MyNode(DTROS):
    def __init__(self, node_name):
        # initialize the DTROS parent class
        super(MyNode, self).__init__(node_name=node_name)
        # construct publisher
        self.pub = rospy.Publisher('chatter', String, queue_size=10)

    def run(self):
        # publish message every 1 second
        rate = rospy.Rate(1)  # 1Hz
        while not rospy.is_shutdown():
            message = "Hello World!"
            rospy.loginfo("Publishing message: '%s'" % message)
            self.pub.publish(message)
            rate.sleep()

if __name__ == '__main__':
    # create the node
    node = MyNode(node_name='my_node')
    # run node
    node.run()
    # keep spinning
    rospy.spin()

And don't forget to declare the file my_node.py as an executable, by running the command:

$ chmod +x ./packages/my_package/src/my_node.py

We now need to tell Docker we want this script to be the one executed when we run the command docker run .... In order to do so, open the file launch.sh and replace the line

echo "This is an empty launch script. Update it to launch your application."

with the following lines
Let us now re-build the image

```
$ dts devel build -f --arch amd64
```

and run it

```
$ docker run -it --rm duckietown/my-ros-program:v1-amd64
```

This will show the following message:

```
The environment variable VEHICLE_NAME is not set. Using 'b17d5c5d1855'.
... logging to /root/.ros/log/45fb649e-e14e-11e9-afd2-0242ac110004/
roslaunch-b17d5c5d1855-56.log
Checking log directory for disk usage. This may take awhile.
Press Ctrl-C to interrupt
Done checking log file disk usage. Usage is <1GB.
```
```
started roslaunch server http://172.17.0.4:46725/
ros_comm version 1.12.14
```
```
SUMMARY
=======
PARAMETERS
* /rosdistro: kinetic
* /rosversion: 1.12.14
```
```
NODES

auto-starting new master
process [master]: started with pid [67]
ROS_MASTER_URI=http://172.17.0.4:11311/
```
```
setting /run_id to 45fb649e-e14e-11e9-afd2-0242ac110004
process [rosout-1]: started with pid [80]
started core service [/rosout]
```
```
[INFO] [11569606196,137620]: [/my_node] Initializing...
[INFO] [11569606196,148146]: Publishing message: 'Hello World!'
[INFO] [11569606197,149378]: Publishing message: 'Hello World!'
[INFO] [11569606196,149470]: Publishing message: 'Hello World!'
```

**CONGRATULATIONS!** You just built and run your own Duckietown-compliant ROS
If you want to stop it, just use Ctrl+C.

2.3. ROS Publisher on Duckiebot

Now that we know how to package a piece of software into a Docker image for Duckietown, we can go one step further and write code that will run on the robot instead of our laptop.

This part assumes that you have a Duckiebot up and running with hostname `MY_ROBOT`. Of course, you don’t need to change the hostname to `MY_ROBOT`, just replace it with your robot name in the instructions below. You can make sure that your robot is ready by executing the command

$ ping MY_ROBOT.local

If you can ping the robot, you are good to go.

Before you start, you need to configure the Duckiebot to accept new code. This is necessary because the Duckiebot by default runs only code released by the Duckietown community. In order to configure the robot to accept custom code, run the following command,

$ dts devel watchtower stop -H MY_ROBOT.local

**Note:** You need to do this every time you reboot your Duckiebot.

Let us go back to our node file `my_node.py` and change the line:

```python
message = "Hello World!"
```

to,

```python
message = "Hello from %s" % os.environ['VEHICLE_NAME']
```

Since `roscore` is already running on the Duckiebot, we need to remove the following lines from `launch.sh`:

```bash
roscore
sleep 5
```

We can now slightly modify the instructions for building the image so that the image gets built directly on the robot instead of your laptop or desktop machine. Run the command:

```bash
$ dts devel build -f --arch arm32v7 -H MY_ROBOT.local
```
As you can see, we changed two things, one is `--arch arm32v7` which tells Docker to build an image that will run on ARM architecture (which is the architecture the CPU on the robot is based on), the second is `-H MY_ROBOT.local` which tells Docker where to build the image.

Once the image is built, we can run it on the robot by running the command:

```
$ docker -H MY_ROBOT.local run -it --rm --net=host duckietown/my-ros-program:v1
```

If everything worked as expected, you should see the following output,

```
The environment variable VEHICLE_NAME is not set. Using 'riplbot01'.
[INFO] [1569609192.728583]: [/my_node] Initializing...
[INFO] [1569609192.747558]: Publishing message: 'Hello from riplbot01'
[INFO] [1569609193.749251]: Publishing message: 'Hello from riplbot01'
[INFO] [1569609194.749195]: Publishing message: 'Hello from riplbot01'
```

CONGRATULATIONS! You just built and run your first Duckietown-compliant and Duckiebot-compatible ROS publisher.

2.4. ROS Subscriber on Duckiebot

Now that we know how to create a simple publisher, let’s create a subscriber which can receive these messages.

Let us go back to our `src` folder and create a file called `my_node_subscriber.py` with the following content:
#!/usr/bin/env python
import os
import rospy
from duckietown import DTROS
from std_msgs.msg import String

class MyNode(DTROS):
    def __init__(self, node_name):
        # initialize the DTROS parent class
        super(MyNode, self).__init__(node_name=node_name)
        # construct publisher
        self.sub = rospy.Subscriber("chatter", String, self.callback)

    def callback(self, data):
        rospy.loginfo("I heard %s", data.data)

if __name__ == '__main__':
    # create the node
    node = MyNode(node_name='my_node_subscriber')
    # keep spinning
    rospy.spin()

Once again, don’t forget to declare the file `my_node_subscriber.py` as an executable, by running the command:

```bash
$ chmod +x ./packages/my_package/src/my_node_subscriber.py
```

Then edit the following line from `launch.sh`

```
rosrun my_package my_node.py
```

to

```
rosrun my_package my_node.py &
rosrun my_package my_node_subscriber.py
```

Build the image on your Duckiebot again using

```bash
$ dts devel build -f --arch arm32v7 -H MY_ROBOT.local
```

Once the image is built, we can run it on the robot by running the command

```bash
$ docker -H MY_ROBOT.local run -it --rm --net=host duckietown/my-ros-program:v1
```
You should see the following output

```
[INFO] [1569750046.911664]: [/my_node] Initializing...
[INFO] [1569750046.914195]: [/my_node_subscriber] Initializing...
[INFO] [1569750046.924943]: Publishing message: 'Hello from riplbot01'
[INFO] [1569750047.926225]: Publishing message: 'Hello from riplbot01'
[INFO] [1569750047.928526]: I heard Hello from riplbot01
[INFO] [1569750048.926269]: Publishing message: 'Hello from riplbot01'
```

CONGRATULATIONS! You just built and run your first Duckietown-compliant and Duckiebot-compatible ROS subscriber.

As a fun exercise, open a new terminal and run (without stopping the other process

```
$ dts start_gui_tools MY ROBOT
```

and then inside it, run

```
$ rqt_graph
```

Have you seen a graph like this before?

### 2.5. Launch files

You edited the `launch.sh` file to remove `roscore &` when it was already running. What if there was something which starts a new `rosmaster` when it doesn’t exist?

You also added multiple `rosrun` commands to run the publisher and subscriber. Now imagine writing similar shell scripts for programming multiple robot behaviors. Some basic nodes such as a camera or a motor driver will be running in all operation scenarios of your Duckiebot, but other nodes will be added/removed to run specific behaviors (e.g. lane following with or without obstacle avoidance). You can think of this as an hierarchy where certain branches are activated optionally.

You can obviously write a “master” `launch.sh` which executes other shell scripts for hierarchies. How do you pass parameters between these scripts? Where do you store all of them? What if you want to use packages created by other people?

ROS again saves the day by providing us with a tool that handles all this! This tool is called roslaunch.

In this section, you will see how to use a ROS launch file to start both the publisher and subscriber together.

Create a folder called `launch` inside your package and then create a file inside the folder called `multiple_nodes.launch` with the following content
<launch>
  <node pkg="my_package" type="my_node.py" name="my_node" output="screen"/>
  <node pkg="my_package" type="my_node_subscriber.py" name="my_node_subscriber" output="screen"/>
</launch>

Then replace the following lines inside launch.sh file

```
rosrun my_package my_node.py &
rosrun my_package my_node_subscriber.py
```

with

```
roslaunch my_package multiple_nodes.launch
```

Build and run the image again like above. You should get the same result.

You can read more about how to interpret launch files here

### 2.6. Namespaces and Remapping

If you went through the above link on launch files, you might have come across the terms namespaces and remapping. Understanding namespaces and remapping is very crucial to working with large ROS software stacks.

Consider you have two Duckiebots - donald and daisy. You want them to communicate with each other so you use one rosmaster for both the robots. You have two copies of the same node running on each of them which grabs images from the camera and publishes them on a topic called /image. Do you see a problem here? Would it not be better if they were called /donald/image and /daisy/image? Here donald and daisy are ROS namespaces.

What if you were dealing with a robot which has two cameras? The names /daisy/camera_left/image and /daisy/camera_right/image are definitely the way to go. You should also be able to do this without writing a new Python file for the second camera.

Let's see how we can do this. First of all, we need to make sure that all the topics used by your Duckiebot are within its namespace.

Edit the ./packages/my_package/launch/multiple_nodes.launch to look like this:
Then edit the roslaunch command in `./launch.sh` as follows:

```
roslaunch my_package multiple_nodes.launch veh:=$VEHICLE_NAME
```

Build and run the image. Once again run `rqt_graph` like above. What changed?

As a next step, we need to ensure that we can launch multiple instances of the same node with different names, and publishing topics corresponding to those names. For example, running two camera nodes with names `camera_left` and `camera_right` respectively, publishing topics `/my_robot/camera_left/image` and `/my_robot/camera_right/image`.

Notice how the `node` tag in the launch file has a `name` attribute. You can have multiple `node` tags with different names for the same python node file. The name provided here will override the name you give inside the python file for the node.

Edit the `./packages/my_package/launch/multiple_nodes.launch` file to have two publishers and two subscribers as below:

```
<launch>
  
  <group ns="$(arg veh)">
    
    <node pkg="my_package" type="my_node.py" name="my_node_1" output="screen"/>
    <node pkg="my_package" type="my_node.py" name="my_node_2" output="screen"/>
    <node pkg="my_package" type="my_node_subscriber.py" name="my_node_subscriber_1" output="screen"/>
    <node pkg="my_package" type="my_node_subscriber.py" name="my_node_subscriber_2" output="screen"/>
    
  </group>

</launch>
```
Check `rqt_graph`. All communications are happening on one topic. You still cannot differentiate between topics being published by multiple nodes. Turns out doing that is very simple. Open the file `./packages/my_package/src/my_node.py` and edit the declaration of the publisher from

```
...  
    self.pub = rospy.Publisher('chatter', String, queue_size=10)  
...  
```

to

```
...  
    self.pub = rospy.Publisher('~chatter', String, queue_size=10)  
...  
```

All we did was add a tilde (~) sign in the beginning of the topic. Names that start with a ~ in ROS are private names. They convert the node’s name into a namespace. Note that since the nodes are already being launched inside the namespace of the robot, the node’s namespace would be nested inside it. Read more about private namespaces here.

Do this for the subscriber node as well. Run the experiment and observe `rqt_graph` again. This time, switch the graph type from Nodes only to Nodes/Topics (all) and uncheck Hide: Dead sinks and Hide: Leaf topics. Play with these two “Hide” options to see what they mean.

All looks very well organized, except that no nodes are speaking to any other node. This is where the magic of remapping begins.

Edit the `./packages/my_package/launch/multiple_nodes.launch` file to contain the following:
Check `rqt_graph`. Does it make sense?

Now, replace

```xml
<node pkg="my_package" type="my_node_subscriber.py" name="my_node_subscriber_1" output="screen">
  <remap from="~/chatter" to="/$(arg veh)/my_node_1/chatter"/>
</node>
```

with

```xml
<node pkg="my_package" type="my_node_subscriber.py" name="my_node_subscriber_1" output="screen">
  <remap from="~/chatter" to="/my_node_1/chatter"/>
</node>
```

Does it still work? Why?

How about if you replace it with this:

```xml
<node pkg="my_package" type="my_node_subscriber.py" name="my_node_subscriber_1" output="screen">
  <remap from="~/chatter" to="/my_node_1/chatter"/>
</node>
```
How about this?

```xml
<remap from="my_node_subscriber_1/chatter" to="my_node_1/chatter"/>
<node pkg="my_package" type="my_node_subscriber.py" name="my_node_subscriber_1" output="screen"/>
```

Or this?

```xml
<remap from="~my_node_subscriber_1/chatter" to="~my_node_1/chatter"/>
<node pkg="my_package" type="my_node_subscriber.py" name="my_node_subscriber_1" output="screen"/>
```

Can you explain why some of them worked, while some did not?

### 2.7. Multi-agent Communication

In this subsection, you will learn how to communicate between your laptop and the Duckiebot using ROS. Start by verifying that Portainer is running.

Next, ping your Duckiebot to find its IP address:

```
$ ping MY_ROBOT.local
```

Note down the address. Next, find the IP address of your computer. Note that you may have multiple IP addresses depending on how many networks you are connected to. If you have a Linux computer, you can find your IP using:

```
$ ifconfig
```

From the output, extract the IP address of the interface from which you are connected to your Duckiebot. For example, if you and your Duckiebot are both connected through WiFi, find your IP address from the WiFi connection.

Run the following command:

```
$ docker run -it --rm --net host duckietown/dt-ros-commons:daffy-amd64 /bin/bash
```

Right now, you are inside a ROS-enabled container which is connected to the rosmaster running on your laptop. But you want to connect to the rosmaster on your duckiebot. To do this, inside the container, run:

```
$ export ROS_MASTER_URI=http://MY_ROBOT_IP:11311/
$ export ROS_IP=MY_IP
```

Replace `MY_ROBOT_IP` and `MY_IP` from the IP addresses extracted above, in that or-
der. More information about these environment variables here.

Now, run:

```
$ rostopic list
```

You should see topics from your Duckiebot appearing here. Viola! You have successfully established connection between your laptop and Duckiebot through ROS!

Are you confused about the 11311 above? You should not be. This is simply the default port number that ROS uses for communication. You can change it for any other free port.
Robotics is innately married to hardware. However, when we develop and test our robots’ software, it is often the case that we don’t want to have to waste time to test on hardware after every small change. With bigger and more powerful robots, it might be the case that a software can result in a robot actuation that breaks it or even endanger human life! But if one can evaluate how a robot or a piece of code would behave before deploying on the actual platform then quite some headaches can be prevented. That is why working in simulation and from logs is so important in robotics. In this section you will learn how to work with logs in ROS.

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Section 3.4 - Rosbag Python API: Writing

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**3.1. Rosbag**

A bag is a file format in ROS for storing ROS message data. Bags, named so because of their `.bag` extension, have an important role in ROS. Bags are typically created by a tool like `robag`, which subscribes to one or more ROS topics, and stores the serialized message data in a file as it is received. These bag files can also be played back in ROS to the same topics they were recorded from, or even remapped to new topics.

Please go through this link for more information.

**3.2. Rosbag: Recording**

You can use the following command to record bag files

```
$ robag record TOPIC_1 TOPIC_2 TOPIC_3
```
or simply

```
$ rosbag record -a
```

to record all messages being published.

### 3.3. Rosbag Python API: Reading

The following code snippet is a basic usage of the `rosbag` API to read bag files:

```python
import rosbag

bag = rosbag.Bag('test.bag')
for topic, msg, t in bag.read_messages(topics=['chatter', 'numbers']):
    print(msg)

bag.close()
```

### 3.4. Rosbag Python API: Writing

The following code snippet is a basic usage of the `rosbag` API to create bag files:

```python
import rosbag
from std_msgs.msg import Int32, String

bag = rosbag.Bag('test.bag', 'w')

try:
    s = String()
    s.data = 'foo'

    i = Int32()
    i.data = 42

    bag.write('chatter', s)
    bag.write('numbers', i)

finally:
    bag.close()
```

### 3.5. Exercises

All containers in the exercises below should be run on your laptop, i.e. without `-H MY_ROBOT.local`.

**Exercise 18. Record bag file.**

Using the following concepts,

- Getting data in and out of your container
- Communication between laptop and Duckiebot
create a Docker container on your laptop with a folder mounted on the container. You can use the image `duckietown/dt-ros-commons:daffy-amd64`. This time, however, instead of exporting the `ROS_MASTER_URI` and `ROS_IP` after entering the container, do it directly with the `docker run` command. You already know it from here.

Run the lane following demo. Once your Duckiebot starts moving, record the camera images and the wheel commands from your Duckiebot using `rosbag` in the container you just created (the one with the folder mounted). To do that navigate to the mounted folder using the `cd` command and then run

```
$ rosbag record /MY_ROBOT/camera_node/image/compressed
           /MY_ROBOT/wheels_driver_node/wheels_cmd
```

Record the bag file for 30 seconds and then stop the recording using `Ctrl`+`C`. Use the `rosbag info filename.bag` command to get some information about the bag file. If the bag does not have messages from both the topics, check if you ran the container correctly.

Stop the demo before proceeding.

**Exercise 19. Analyze bag files.**

Download this bag file.

Start by creating a new repository from the template, like in the previous section. Inside, the `.packages` folder, create a python file for this exercise. You do not need to create a ros package for this, however, you can still choose to do so. Since reading a bag file does not require ROS, you can do this without setting the necessary environment variables. Using the following concepts,

- Getting data in and out of your container
- Creating a basic Duckietown ROS enabled Docker image

create a Docker image which can analyze bag files and produce an output similar to the one shown below. The min, max, average, and median values printed are statistics of the time difference between two consecutive messages. The `NNN` and `N.NN` are just placeholders, eg. `NNN` could be 100 and `N.NN` could be 0.05.
Note: Make sure to mount the folder containing the bag file to the Docker container, instead of copying it.
Run the same analysis with the bag file you recorded in the previous exercise.

Exercise 20. Processing bag files.
Use the bag file which you recorded earlier for this exercise. Using the following concepts,
• Getting data in and out of your container
• Creating a basic Duckietown ROS enabled Docker image
• Converting between ROS Images and OpenCV Images
create a Docker image which can process a bag file. Essentially, you will extract some data from a bag file, process it, and write the results to a new bag file. Once again, create a new repository, and the necessary python file for this exercise inside the
./packages folder. For the image message in the bag file, do the following:
• Extract the timestamp from the message
• Extract the image data from the message
• Draw the timestamp on top of the image
• Write the new image to the new bag file, with the same topic name, same timestamp, and the same message type as the original message
The new bag file should be generated in the mounted folder.
To verify your results, create a docker container exactly like you did in the first exer-
exercise of this section. Make sure you place your processed bag file in the folder being mounted. Run the following command:

```
$ rosbag play processed_bag.bag --loop /MY_ROBOT/camera_node/image/compressed:=/new_image/compressed
```

In a new terminal, use `start_gui_tools` and run `rqt_image_view` inside it. Can you see `/new_image/compressed`?

Stop the `rosbag play` using `CTRL+C` and now run the following command inside the same container:

```
$ rosbag play processed_bag.bag --loop
```

Again, use `start_gui_tools` but this time check `/MY_ROBOT/camera_node/image/compressed`. What’s going on? Why? What does the last part of the first command do?
UNIT C-4
Robot behaviour with ROS

In this section you will extend an earlier exercise to work with ROS.

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4.1. ROS based color detector

**Exercise 21. Converting the color detector to ROS nodes.**

Using the following concepts:
- Creating a basic Duckietown ROS Publisher
- Creating a basic Duckietown ROS Subscriber
- Launch Files
- Namespaces and remapping
- Multi agent communication
- Recording bag files

do the following:
- Create two repositories from the ROS template.
- Add all your python dependencies to the file .dependencies-py.txt
- In the first one, add the code to extract images using a PiCamera and publish it on a topic. This will run on your Duckiebot. The node should run using a launch file. Remember to turn off duckiebot-interface (can exist under different names) and any other container which can use the camera.
- In the second one, add the code to subscribe to that topic and extract color. Using concepts from roslaunch, create two nodes in your .launch file. Note that you are not allowed to have different Python files for each node. The first node detects the color red and the second detects yellow. You should use params within your node tag to let your detector know whether it is supposed to detect red/yellow. These nodes will run on your laptop. Once again, pass the required environment variables to connect your laptop to the rosmaster of your duckiebot using docker run.
- You should publish some debug images from within the color detection node. These debug images should have rectangles drawn in the region where the colors are detected. Note that we are not looking for perfect color detectors, as long as they pro-
duce reasonable output. You can draw multiple rectangles in the image if the multiple regions in the image have the required color.

- If you are using `sensor_msgs/CompressedImage`, make sure that your image topic names end with `/compressed`. For example, instead of naming the topic `/my_image`, name it `/my_image/compressed`

- Record a bag file containing the original and debug images.

A sample debug image stream for the yellow color detector is shown here:

![Sample Yellow Color Detector](image)

Figure 4.1. Sample Yellow Color Detector