



**NTNU – Trondheim**  
Norwegian University of  
Science and Technology

# ChirpSim

A Prototype of a Simulator for the Chirp  
Swarm Robot

**Robert Versvik**

Master of Science in Computer Science

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Supervisor: Pauline Haddow, IDI

Norwegian University of Science and Technology  
Department of Computer and Information Science



# Abstract

This project attempts to create a simulator for the Chirp robot capable of running a large amount of robots concurrently in real-time. It also needs to be realistic enough to be used for prototyping experiments meant to run on the physical robots, while being simple enough to be able to handle the amount of objects in the simulated world. To achieve these goals, different approaches for each subsystem of the simulator have been evaluated against each other.

Experiments showed that the simulator was able to run a couple of hundred robots simultaneously while still having some computational time to spare each frame. Due to time constraints it lacks some realism in how certain objects behave, like friction on movable objects. It is possible to improve the realism of the simulation relatively easily.

A simple networking interface was added to allow controllers to run completely separate of the simulation, communicating through UDP to control a robot. This allows users to quickly get a controller interfacing with the simulator to start experimenting.

## Sammendrag

Dette prosjektet prøver å lage en simulator for Chirp-roboten. Den skal være kapabel til å simulere flere hundre roboter samtidig i sanntid. Det er viktig at simulatoren er realistisk nok til å kunne brukes til å prototype eksperimenter som til slutt skal kunne kjøre uten å måtte endre grunnprinsippene bak ideen, samtidig som den er enkel nok til å kunne håndtere alle objektene i den simulerte verden. For å oppnå disse målene ble flere forskjellige metoder testet mot hverandre for hvert subsystem i simulatoren.

Forsøk har vist at simulatoren klarte å kjøre et par hundre roboter samtidig med beregningstid til overs hvert steg i simulasjonen. På grunn av tidsbegrensninger i prosjektet er deler av simulasjonen for lite realistisk, f.eks. friksjonsmodellen til objekter som kan dyttes. Dette burde kunne forbedres relativt lett.

Simulatoren bruker et relativt enkelt nettverksgrensesnitt for å la kontrollere kjøre helt separat av simulasjonen. Kontrollere kan kun kommunisere med simulatoren ved å bruke en UDP-socket til å styre en robot. Dette lar brukere komme igang med en kontrollert relativt raskt.

## Preface

This report has been written by Robert Versvik as part of a master's thesis at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) during the spring of 2013. The master's thesis concludes my five year integrated study at the Department of Computer and Information Science (IDI). The purpose of the project is to build a simulator for the Chirp robot capable of running hundreds of robots concurrently at near real-time, each controlled by a separate controller.

I would like to thank my teaching supervisor, Pauline Haddow (Professor), for her support and guidance throughout the project.

Robert Versvik

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Motivation

The Chirp robot needed a simulator able to run a full swarm experiment without slowing down too much. After looking at a few simulators capable of simulating custom robots, I found a few issues stopping me from creating a model for the Chirp robot for these simulators. Some simulators are simply too slow, trying to be too realistic to be able to run many hundreds of robots concurrently in near real-time. Others are too complex to quickly jump into, requiring the user to understand yet another layer of abstractions or requiring a complex setup to build and run the simulator.

I wanted to make a simulator capable of running hundreds of robots concurrently while being relatively simple to use and learn. It needs to be accurate enough to be useful in experiments, but simple enough to be able to handle many objects moving at once.

### 1.2 Existing Simulators

#### 1.2.1 Webots

Webots was originally started as an attempt to improve the Khepera Simulator by adding realistic vision sensors and allowing for more robotics architectures.[1] It comes with a few example worlds showing several robots in use, like a gantry robot

playing the towers of Hanoi, a hexapod robot walking, a swimming salamander robot, a stewart platform robot and more.[2]

It supports writing controller code for both simulator and a physical robot through a single API, compiling it to either target through makefiles linking against the correct library. Webots comes with support for cross-compiling code to multiple existing robots, like the e-puck, Khepera, Hemisson, LEGO Mindstorms and Aibo. Users are able to extend this to their own robots, providing an implementation of the API that runs on their design and a makefile able to cross-compile to the architecture.[3]

Webots has a Fast2D simulation mode that uses the Enki simulator as a backend. This removes a lot of the features Webots have, but speeds up the simulation drastically by simplifying the environment being simulated. Enki is sadly not integrated too well, being unable to simulate many objects used in normal Webots because of how they are defined.

While the Fast2D mode definitively enables Webots to be used with swarm experiments, it is relatively hard to use. The world can only have a restricted set of items in it for the simulator to recognize them, otherwise they will be ignored. Webots is also very expensive to license, and with Fast2D it is merely a frontend for the free Enki simulator.

### 1.2.2 Enki

Enki is a fast 2D robot simulator created by Stephane Magnenat. It is used in Webots as a Fast2D-plugin, but can be run alone as a standalone simulator. Enki supports several robots out of the box, like the Alice, the e-puck, the khepera and the s-bot. It is also possible to extend Enki to add support for custom robots and the sensors used by this.

### 1.2.3 Player/Stage

The Player/Stage project consists mainly of two applications: The *Player* robot device server and the *Stage* multiple robot simulator.

**Player** works as an abstraction layer over the hardware, giving a predefined set of interfaces to interact with devices on a robot. It contains client libraries in multiple languages to help write controllers for the robots, but any language able to do TCP networking can communicate with Player.

**Stage** is a multi-robot simulator able to simulate a simple 2D environment. The environment is simplified to be able to run many robots concurrently, or run a few computation heavy controllers without being limited by the simulator itself.

It exposes all sensors and actuators through Player interfaces so that clients are able to run through these interfaces on both the simulator and the physical robot.

See [4] for more details on the Player/Stage project.

## 1.3 The ChirpSim Project

ChirpSim is a simulator written for the Chirp robot, developed for use in swarm experiments, and aims to be capable of running several hundreds of robots simultaneously in a simple 2D environment.

### 1.3.1 Goals

The goals of the ChirpSim project are:

- The ability to run hundreds of Chirp robots concurrently in real-time.
- A simulation that is quick, but realistic enough to be useful to simulate experiments.
- A simple interface to code controllers against.

The questions I needed to answer were:

- Which programming language should I use?
- What can I use to create the user interface?
- How can I scale the controller system to be able to run hundreds of controllers concurrently against robots in the simulation?
- What are my options for simulating a physical world?
- How can I enable extensibility?



# Chapter 2

## Choices

### 2.1 Programming Language

I had a couple of requirements to help me select a programming language for the simulator. I wanted a language that can be used for writing high-performance applications, stable, mature and that I have some experience in.

#### 2.1.1 C++

C++ is a language often used for real-time games, simulations and in software crunching numbers. It is able to use many C libraries directly, and can also export a C interface if needed for other languages to make use of. There are also many C++ libraries and frameworks to help implement desired functionality like networking, GUI and physics simulation. It compiles into native code for the CPU, which gives it high performance but forces it to be recompiled for each platform it targets.

ChirpSim has around 16 ms between each frame to simulate and draw the environment while handling messages sent by controllers to the robots. C++ has libraries to solve that efficiently and quickly, making it a good choice to achieve the requirements set. Because of this I settled on C++ as my language of choice.

### 2.1.2 Alternatives

**Java** is another language that can reach the speed requirements set by the program. It runs on a virtual machine, enabling it to run on multiple platforms without having to be compiled separately for each. Java is slower than C++, but comes with a much larger standard library to help ease development.

I chose C++ over Java because the Qt framework gave me the convenience of the Java standard library, along with QGraphicsView and its related classes allowing me to build a moving scene more easily than in Java.

## 2.2 Graphical User Interface Framework

### 2.2.1 Qt

Qt is a cross-platform application and UI framework for C++. It contains many features like networking, threading, database connectors, multimedia and camera playback, unit testing along with classes to build a graphical user interface. It also contains an implementation of JavaScript extended with support for signals and slots. This allows applications to be scriptable, having scripts react to events happening in the application.[5] It extends C++ through a preprocessor they call the *Meta-Object System*, enabling signals and slots, reflection, *qobject.cast* which is a more efficient version of the standard C++ *dynamic.cast*.[6]

I chose Qt because of the QGraphicsView class and related classes, a scene graph with built in scaling, moving and rotation of the view. Every node in the scene can respond to mouse events, keyboard events when selected and more, making it easier to interact with the scene compared to having to implement it all manually. I can also create my own items for the scene that draw themselves to achieve the look I want.

### 2.2.2 Alternatives

**wxWidgets** is a cross-platform library for building GUIs. It is available for Windows, OS X, Linux and UNIX, along with some mobile and embedded operating systems like iOS and Windows CE. Along with the core library there are several libraries bundled with the download. These include networking, extra widgets for GUIs, animations and widget layout, making it a good alternative to Qt.[7]

I chose Qt over wxWidgets because I was unable to find a widget similar to the QGraphicsView of Qt. This would mean I would've needed to implement scaling, rotation, and translation of the scene myself, along with mouse and keyboard handling for each item.

**GTKMM** is the C++ bindings to the Gtk+ toolkit used in the GNOME desktop environment. It only offers classes for making a GUI, meaning the user has to find other libraries for any other functionality required by the application. The GNOME project provides two companion projects in *glibmm* and *libsigc++*.<sup>[8]</sup> *glibmm* is a C++ wrapper around *glib* and provides threading, networking, smart pointers, a main event loop, asynchronous IO and more.<sup>[9]</sup> *libsigc++* provides a signal/slot system similar to Qt, but implemented without a preprocessor step.<sup>[10]</sup>

A GUI can be quickly created in *GLADE*, a software specialized in creating a GTK+ GUI and saving it as an XML file. These XML files can be read by GTKMM to rebuild the GUI as designed in GLADE. This makes it easier to rapidly evolve the user interface, and allows stakeholders to see a close mockup of the user interface without having to flesh out the whole application. It is also possible to create the GUI directly in code where needed.

I chose Qt over GTKMM and *glibmm* because it, like wxWidgets, lacks an answer to QGraphicsView. It also fails to create a native-looking GUI, instead opting for its own look and feel.

## 2.3 Controller Architecture

A swarm of robots is a highly distributed computing platform, containing a controller for each robot that runs separate from the rest of the swarm. For a simulator this means each robot must have at least one controller running with no method of directly reading any state but its own from the simulator. Due to the amount of robots often employed in a swarm experiment it is unfeasible to run the controllers synchronously and sequentially with the simulation as this would scale poorly.

### 2.3.1 UDP Socket

The simulator will start a new thread listening on messages from a UDP socket, forwarding any message read to the controller interface of a robot based on id. The controller processes the message further before calling the correct setter or

getter to finish handling the message, returning the string "ok" plus any data expected. This is kept simple intentionally because I wanted the least amount of overhead for controllers as they communicate with the simulator.

I elected to use a UDP socket to read short messages over localhost on a separate thread from the simulation. It is a very simple protocol that most languages have some support for, which makes it possible to start creating controllers for the simulator relatively quickly.

### 2.3.2 Alternatives

**Zero Message Queue** is a library for implementing a fast message queue between threads, processes and machines. It is available in many languages, works on most operating systems and implements multiple message carriers. It tries to abstract away where the recipient of the message is, whether it is over a local socket to another thread or process, or to a completely different machine on the local network.[11]

I chose not to use this because it feels like overkill for the project, especially when the simulator is intended to run on one computer with very simple interfaces for the controllers. It also requires more setup compared to the UDP socket solution, making it harder to jump in and start making controllers for the simulator.

See [11] for more information.

## 2.4 Physical Simulation

I decided to use a library for the physics of the simulation. Some of the key features I was looking for were speed, ease of use and amount of code examples and tutorials available. The speed requirement enabled me to quickly discard physics engines made for 3D simulations as the extra dimension would go to waste and would increase the simulation complexity.

### 2.4.1 Box2D

Box2D is a physics engine written in C++ with a focus on speed. It simulates a 2D environment, with or without gravity, filled with bodies and sensors that interact with each other.[12] It has been used to simulate 2D environments in many applications requiring high speed per step, making it a good match for



my goals with the simulator. It has been ported to many languages, e.g. Java, C#, Python, Javascript, which means the simulator can be ported to another language without having to rewrite the physics layer.

Box2D has an active community behind it, helping new users through well-written tutorials and helpful discussions on the official forums of Box2D. This makes it very easy to get started on the physics engine and understand how to implement desired behavior.

See <http://box2d.org> for more information.

I chose Box2D because of the amount of example code and tutorials explaining the concepts available. It is sufficiently fast, has a mature API, and is relatively easy to customize. I also have more experience using it from past projects.

### 2.4.2 Alternatives

**Chipmunk2D** is an alternative 2D physics engine often used in real-time environments. It is based on an early version of Box2D, but has since departed in many areas to distinguish it from Box2D.[13] It is written in the C language, enabling many languages to use it with relative ease without having to write a port. It comes in a commercial pro version optimized for use on ARM processors and contains tools for generating collision geometry from images and procedural data.[14] Neither of these is important for ChirpSim due to it running on x86 processors and only using relatively simple shapes for most objects.

I decided against Chipmunk2D because I found less tutorials easily available, I prefer an object-oriented API and I have less experience using it.

## 2.5 Plugin Architecture

I considered a plugin architecture for the root objects in the world, so that each object is implemented as a plugin loaded dynamically from a plugin-folder. Qt has support for loading plugins at runtime through the class `QPluginLoader`, as long as it implements an interface class available in the core. This enables an application to search for plugins in a folder and load them all dynamically at run time. For ChirpSim this would mean loading new physical objects through a plugin folder, extending the simulator without having to recompile it all.

I decided against using plugins because any plugin has to be compiled once per platform it will be used on, and against the specific version of Qt the core appli-

cation uses. This will become somewhat of a maintenance nightmare over time, as plugins has to be updated to keep compatibility with the core application on new releases. It's better to simply keep it as one application that is open sourced and open for contributions.

# Chapter 3

## Results

The simulator is able to run many robots concurrently without slowing down much. Figure 3 and table 3.1 show the performance of the simulator while running 200 robots simultaneously, in a close quarters world where the robots collide with the walls or each other frequently. The controller architecture ensures that many controllers can run asynchronously of the simulator, only affecting the simulator through bottlenecking the CPU.

I have tried to keep the code relatively clean, simple, straight forward and documented so it is easier to understand the structure of the code and start extending it to support features needed for new experiments.

The simulator has a fast forward function that will allow the user to speed up 2x and 3x real-time. It is important to note that controllers run asynchronously from the simulator and will get less computation time between frames to work.

### 3.1 Benchmark

The benchmark was run on a laptop with a dual core Intel i7-3520M processor running at 2.90GHz. I let it run for about 5000 frames, then discarded a couple of hundred frames at the start and end to avoid measuring unstable frames as it starts up and shuts down. The goal is to keep each frame within 16 milliseconds, allowing the simulation to run at real-time speeds. The world contained 200 robots with a controller each, two small static obstacles in the middle and the walls surrounding the arena. Table 3.1 contains the results of this benchmark.

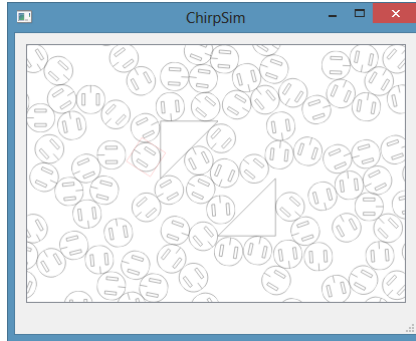


Figure 3.1: 200 robot experiment.

<b>Average</b>	7.81 ms
<b>Stdev</b>	0.94 ms
<b>Minimum</b>	6 ms
<b>Maximum</b>	35 ms

Table 3.1: Time spent per frame with 200 robots and 200 controllers. Data was collected over 3200 frames picked in the middle of a run to avoid warm-up period.

## 3.2 Future Work

### 3.2.1 Communication Between Robots

The IR sensor class used in the Chirp class has a function `objectHit()` that allows the user to get a pointer to the closest object a distance sensor can sense. This can be used to implement a fake communications channel simulating how the real Chirp robots communicate over the distance sensors. A controller message looking something like:

```
<id> sendmessage <message>
```

and

```
<id> getmessages
```

could be used as an API to support message sending.

Alternatively the robot controller can receive the messages through a push functionality, where the simulator receives a message to be sent out on a specific sensor and automatically sends it to the robot being hit by the sensor.

Messages should be in the same format as the physical robot uses, which has yet to be defined at the time of writing.

### 3.2.2 World Editor

The simulator as of now has no way to visually edit a world, relying on users to manually edit the JSON-file detailing the world instead. An editor for simulation worlds would be a very beneficial addition to the simulator, enabling users to visually edit their worlds to suit their experiments.

I think the editor should be a separate program so to not affect the simulator itself, and avoiding complexity in the user interface for the simulator.

### 3.2.3 Automatically Start Controllers

The world concept should be changed from being just a json-file to being a folder with the following items:

- **JSON-file** describing the environment and objects within it.
- **Controller-folder** containing the controller executables attached to this world. These can be referenced by the JSON-file and the simulator *should* automatically start the controller when the world is loaded.

Right now the world file has no way to say which controller is attached to each robot, and assumes instead that the user starts the controllers manually. If the simulator could automatically start the controllers it would be a big improvement to usability.

### 3.2.4 Improve Friction Model

Due to time constraints I was unable to model the friction in `PushableObject` correctly. I set a constant `0.3f` as friction on each part of the body, which is used for both static and kinetic friction. A proper simulation of the friction would model both static and kinetic friction, and apply the correct force to the body to counteract any movement.

### 3.2.5 More Sensor Types

The prototype only supports distance sensors. This is enough to support the full functionality of the base Chirp model, but there will be demand for other types of sensors like line-following, light, heat or alcohol to mention a few.

Light, heat and alcohol sensors can be implemented using very small, circular Box2D sensor bodies to simulate the actual sensors, then a bigger circular Box2D sensor body to simulate the area where detection is possible. Calculating the distance from the sensor to the center of the detection area will give a scale that can be used to calculate the sensor value, e.g.  $\text{distance}^2$  for light sensors. Collision filtering will then be used to make the areas only detectable by the sensor assigned to that type of area.

A line following sensor is slightly different, in that the detectable area isn't a circle but instead a line segment. The first type is the line segments on the ground to follow, categorized so they only collide with line sensor bodies. The other type of sensor are the line sensors themselves, implemented through Box2D sensors to only detect "collisions" with the line segments.

See:

<https://www.iforce2d.net/b2dtut/collision-filtering>,  
<https://www.iforce2d.net/b2dtut/sensors>,  
<https://www.iforce2d.net/b2dtut/raycasting> and  
<https://www.iforce2d.net/b2dtut/world-querying>

in particular to read more about sensors, collision filtering and raycasting the world works in Box2D. World querying is a more efficient way to do a raycast, and is the preferred way to do so.

### 3.2.6 Port Chirp Library to Simulator

The Chirp robot will have a library for ease of programming it, giving a much higher-level view and access of the functionality in the robot. The interface used by this library should be ported to a simulator library, allowing users to use the exact same code for the simulator and the physical robot, only needing to change the library linked to when compiling.

For a C++ implementation this would be relatively easy to do, as the original library will be written in C++. The simulator version of the library would use the same headers, but with a different implementation of all functions in the cpp-files. This way, when a user controller wants to compile against the simulator it

can simply link against the simulator library. Linking against the physical robot library will make the exact same code work on the robot instead.

For other languages the **Simplified Wrapper and Interface Generator** (SWIG) can be used to generate an interface those languages can use. SWIG supports 19 languages as of June 18, 2013, but an up-to-date list can be found at <http://www.swig.org/compare.html>.





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# Appendices

## 3.3 Documentation

The documentation has been attached along with this report, placed in the docs folder of the zip-file. This contains call/caller graphs, inheritance graphs, include graphs and class diagrams. It has been generated with Doxygen, a standard utility for generating documentation of code.

## 3.4 Building and Running ChirpSim

### 3.4.1 Building

ChirpSim has the following requirements to build:

**Box2D** compiled for your platform as a static library, then place the output files in the Libraries/lib folder. For windows the output files are Box2D.lib and Box2Dd.lib. For OS X and Linux the output file is Box2D.a.

**Qt 5** for your platform. Easiest way to get this set up is to download the installer for your platform from <http://qt-project.org/downloads>. This contains Qt Creator, an IDE for C++ able to build and run Qt projects.

Open ChirpSim.pro in Qt Creator and build in release mode. The build button is on the bottom left corner of the IDE window.

### 3.4.2 Running

After starting ChirpSim, click the *FileFile* menu and select *Load World*. In the ChirpSim-win32bin/examples folder there are three worlds containing roughly the same things, but with differing amounts of robots. Select one of these in the *Open File* dialog and put the window back in focus (Yes, it is a bug). Now the world is loaded, and you can move the camera using either the scrollbars or the arrow keys on the keyboard. The *Zoom* menu lets you zoom in or out, but scrolling the mouse wheel (or using the trackpad scrolling gesture) will also zoom.

There is also a file named *runbots.py*, which implements a random controller setting random speeds and reading the sensor values continuously. It accepts the number of robots to run either as a parameter when started, or by manually typing it in when prompted. To run it, execute it as a normal python script.

## 3.5 Controller Server API

The controller server in ChirpSim listens to **port 37875** only. It will receive a message and read the ID number at the start, then forward the rest of the message to the controller attached to the robot with the correct ID. This will be the entry point for all controllers to communicate with any robot in the simulation.

## 3.6 Chirp Robot Controller API

The Chirp robot implements a very simple API with only two messages recognized at this time: *setspeed* and *getsensors*. The returned message will start with *"ok"* if there were no errors completing the request, or *"error"* if an error happened.

The controller server on the simulator requires each message to be prepended with the id of the robot receiving the message. This makes the connection completely stateless, and helps make it easier to understand.

### 3.6.1 "setspeed" Message Details

**Template:**

<id> setspeed <leftWheelSpeed> <rightWheelSpeed>

**Parameters:**

<id> id of the robot being controlled.

<leftWheelSpeed> speed desired on the left wheel

<*rightWheelSpeed*> speed desired on the right wheel

**Returns:**

"ok"

### 3.6.2 "getsensors" Message Details

**Template:**

<id> getsensors

**Parameters:**

<id> id of the robot being controlled.

**Returns:**

"ok <sensor1> <sensor2> ... <sensor8>"

where sensor1 to sensor8 are the sensor values read from each sensor, separated by a space.

### 3.6.3 Example Controller in Python

This controller simply sets the speed of the robot with id to random numbers between *min\_speed* and *max\_speed*

```
import random, socket, time

def runbot(id):
    min_speed = -10
    max_speed = 30
    host = "127.0.0.1"
    port = 37875

    s = socket.socket(socket.AF_INET, socket.SOCK_DGRAM)
    speed_msg = "{0} setspeed {1} {2}"
    sensor_msg = "{0} getsensors"
    while True:
        left = random.randint(min_speed, max_speed)
        right = random.randint(min_speed, max_speed)

        s.sendto(speed_msg.format(id, left, right),
                 (host, port))
        tmp = s.recv(1024)
        s.sendto(sensor_msg.format(id), (host, port))
        tmp = s.recv(1024)
```

```
time.sleep(0.016) #sleep 16ms
```

## 3.7 World Format

### 3.7.1 Root Object

The root object only contains the attribute "children", which is an array of objects in the world. This allows for attributes to be set on the world at the root object while keeping it easy to access the objects under the world. If the root object was the children array it would be necessary to parse whether each element in the array is an attribute or a physical object of the world.

Listing 3.1: Root object

```
{
  "children": [
    <object1>,
    <object2>,
    <object3>
  ]
}
```

#### Attributes:

**children** contains all the objects currently in the world.

### 3.7.2 Chirp Object

The Chirp object contains all the attributes required to create a Chirp object in the simulator. It can be placed at different places in the world by setting the *position* attribute of the object.

Listing 3.2: Chirp object

```
{
  "type": "Chirp",
  "position": {
    "x": 73.0,
    "y": -84.0
  },
  "id": 0,
```

```

    "angle": 120,
    "noisemax": 0.1
}

```

**Attributes:**

**string type** must be "Chirp" (not case-sensitive)

**object position** has two attributes:

**float x** x component of the position

**float y** y component of the position

**int id** unique id of the robot, used for sending messages to control the robot

**float angle** starting angle of the robot

**float noisemax** affects how much noise is applied to the wheel speeds during simulation.

### 3.7.3 Wall Object

The Wall object is a static body in the world, impossible to move by any means. It is created as a polygon body through vertices stored in the object. These vertices must form a convex shape and be in counterclockwise order for the simulator to accept them. To simulate a concave shape, split it into multiple convex parts and put those in the hulls attribute.

Listing 3.3: Wall object

```

{
  "type": "Wall",
  "position": {
    "x": -10,
    "y": -10
  },
  "angle": 0,
  "hulls": [
    [
      { "x": -10, "y": 10 },
      { "x": -10, "y": -10 },
      { "x": 10, "y": -10 }
    ]
  ]
}

```

```
}

```

**Attributes:**

**string type** must be "Wall" (not case-sensitive)

**object position** has two attributes:

**float x** x component of the position

**float y** y component of the position

**float angle** start rotation in degrees

**list hulls** list containing hull objects, which are lists of position objects:

**object element** position object containing an x and y coordinate:

**float x** x component of the position

**float y** y component of the position

### 3.7.4 PushableObject Object

The PushableObject object is similar to the Wall object, only implemented as a dynamic body instead of a static body. This means that robots and other objects can push them around, unlike the walls that are immovable. It currently uses dampening to emulate a bit of friction, but it should be improved to properly simulate the friction instead.

The difference between the Wall object and the PushableObject object is the density attribute. This is used by Box2D to calculate the mass of the object.

Listing 3.4: PushableObject Object

```
{
  "type": "PushableObject",
  "position": {
    "x": 10,
    "y": 10
  },
  "density": 1.0,
  "angle": 180,
  "hulls": [
    [
      { "x": -10, "y": 10 },

```



```
        { "x": -10, "y": -10 },
        { "x":  0, "y": -10 }
    ],
    [
        { "x":  0, "y": -10 },
        { "x":  0, "y":  10 },
        { "x": 10, "y":  10 }
    ]
]
```

**Attributes:**

**string type** must be "PushableObject" (not case-sensitive)

**object position** has two attributes:

**float x** x component of the position

**float y** y component of the position

**float density** density of the object (used to calculate mass)

**float angle** start rotation in degrees

**list hulls** list containing hull objects, which are lists of position objects:

**object element** position object containing an x and y coordinate:

**float x** x component of the position

**float y** y component of the position