Introductory Galois Theory Cheat Sheet

Definition of a Field

A field F is a set with two binary operators $(+, \times)$ satisfying the following axioms,

- (F,+) is an abelian group with identity 0.
- The non zero elements of F form an abelian group under multiplication with identity $1 \neq 0$.
- Left and right distributivity

Characteristic of Fields

A characteristic of a field F, denoted by $\mathrm{ch}(F)$ is defined as is the smallest integer p such that $\underbrace{1+1+\cdots+1}_{p \text{ times}} = 0$. If such a p does not, exist $\mathrm{ch}(F) = 0$.

K-algebra

A K-algebra (or algebra over a field) is a ring A which is a module over field K with multiplication being K-bilinear, (i.e., $k_1a_1 \cdot k_2a_2 = k_1k_2a_1a_2$).

Field Extensions

For fields K, L. We say L is a field extension of K if K is a subfield of L. Alternatively, L is a field extension of K, if L is a K-algebra.

Algebraic elements and Algebraic extensions

For a field extension $K \subset L$.
Algebraic element: $\alpha \in L$ is called algebraic if $\exists P \in K[x]$ s.t. $P(\alpha) = 0$.
Transcendental element: If such a P does not exist then α is transcendental.
Consider the following definitions,

- Denote the smallest subfield of L containing K and α to be $K(\alpha)$.
- Denote the smallest sub ring of L containing K and α to be $K[\alpha]$.

The following statements are equivalent,

- α is algebraic over K.
- $K[\alpha]$ is finite dimensional algebra over K.
- $K[\alpha] = K(\alpha)$.

Algebraic extension: L is called algebraic over K if all $\alpha \in L$ are algebraic over K.

- If L is algebraic over K then any K-subalgebra of L is a field.
- Consider $K \subset L \subset M$. If $\alpha \in M$ is algebraic over K, then it is algebraic over L, also its minimal polynomial over L divides its minimal polynomial over K.
- If $K \subset L \subset M$ then M is an algebraic extension over $K \iff M$ is algebraic over L and L is algebraic over K.

Algebraic closure: A subfield L' of L s.t. $L' = \{\alpha \in L \mid \alpha \text{ is algebraic over } K\}$

Minimal Polynomial

If α is an algebraic element then $\exists!$ monic polynomial P of minimal degree such that $P(\alpha) = 0$ such a polynomial is called the **minimal polynomial**.

- The minimal polynomial is irreducible
- Any other polynomial Q s.t. $Q(\alpha) = 0$ will be divisible by P.

Pritmitive polynomials and Gauss' lemma

Primitive polynomial: A polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$ is called primitive if if has a positive degree and the gcd of its coefficients is 1.
Gauss' lemma: A polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$ is irreducible over $\mathbb{Z}[X] \iff$ it is primitive and irreducible over $\mathbb{Q}[x]$

Eisenstein criterion for irreducibility

A polynomial $f(x) = a_nx^n + a_{n-1}x^{n-1} + \cdots + a_0 \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$ is irreducible if $\exists p$ prime s.t. p divides all coefficients except a_n and p^2 does not divide a_0.

Finite extensions

For a field extension $K \subset L$. L is called a **finite extension** of K if the vector space of L over K has a finite dimension.
Degree of finite extension: Denoted as $[L : K] = \dim_K L$

- $K \subset L \subset M$. Then M is finite over $K \iff M$ is finite over L and L is finite over K. Also in this case, $[M : K] = [M : L][L : K]$.
- Let $K(\alpha_1, \ldots, \alpha_n) \subset L$ denote the smallest subfield of L containing K and $\alpha_i \in L$. This $K(\alpha_1, \ldots, \alpha_n)$ is generated by $\alpha_1, \ldots, \alpha_n$.
- L is finite over $K \iff L$ is generated by a finite number of algebraic elements over K .
- $[K(\alpha) : K] = \deg P_{\min}(\alpha, K)$

Stem field

Let $P \in K[X]$ be an irreducible monic polynomial. A field extension E is called a stem field of P if $\exists \alpha \in E$, s.t. α is a root of P and $E = K[\alpha]$

- If E, E' are two stem fields for $P \in K[x]$, s.t. $E = K[\alpha], E' = K[\alpha']$ where α, α' are roots of P. Then $\exists!$ isomorphism $E \cong E'$ of K-algebras which maps α to α'.
- If a stem field contains two roots of P, then $\exists!$ automorphism that maps one root to another.
- If E is a stem field, $[E : K] = \deg P$
- If $[E : K] = \deg P$ and E contains a root of P then E is a stem field.

Some irreducibility criteria,

- $P \in K[X]$ is irreducible over $K \iff$ it does not have roots in L/K of degree $\leq \deg P/2$.
- $P \in K[X]$ is irreducible over K with $\deg P = n$. If L/K with $[L : K] = m$ if $\gcd(m, n) = 1$ then P is irreducible over L.

Splitting field

Let $P \in K[X]$. The splitting field of P over K is an extension of L where P is split into linear factors and the roots of P generate L (alternatively if P cannot be factored into any intermediate field).

- Splitting field L exists and its degree is $\leq d!$, where $d = \deg P$. And it is unique up to isomorphism.

Algebraic closure

- A field K is algebraically closed if any non-constant polynomial $P \in K[X]$ has a root in K.
- L is called an **algebraic closure** of K if it is algebraically closed and a field extension over K.
- Every field has an algebraic closure.
- Algebraic closures of K are unique up to isomorphism as $K-$algebras.

Properties of finite fields

Let p be a prime integer and let $q = p^r$ for some positive integer r. Then the following statements hold.

- There exists a field of order q.
- Any two fields of order q are isomorphic.
- Let K be a field of order q. The multiplicative group $K^\times$ of non-zero elements of K is a cyclic group of order $q - 1$.
- Let K be a field of order q. The elements of K are the roots of $x^q - x \in \mathbb{F}_p[x]$.
- A field of order p^r contains a field of order $p^k \iff k|r$
- The irreducible factors of $x^q - x$ over $\mathbb{F}_p$ are the irreducible polynomials in $\mathbb{F}_p[x]$ whose degree divides r.
- The splitting field of $x^q - x$ has q elements.
- $\mathbb{F}_q$ is a stem field and a splitting field of any irreducible polynomial $P \in \mathbb{F}_p$ of degree n.

Frobenius homomorphism

Let K be a field, $\mathrm{ch}(K) = p > 0$. There exists a homomorphism $\varphi : K \to K$, s.t. $\varphi(x) = x^p$. This is Frobenius homomorphism.

- The group of automorphisms over $\mathbb{F}_{p^r}$ over $\mathbb{F}_p$ is cyclic and is generated by the Frobenius map.

Separability

- **Separable polynomial:** A irreducible polynomial $P \in K[X]$ is called seperable if $\gcd(P, P') = 1$.
- **Degree of separability:** $\deg_{\text{sep}} P = \deg Q$ for some $P(X) = Q(X^p)$
- **Degree of inseparability:** $\deg_i P = \frac{\deg P}{\deg Q}$
- **Purely inseparable polynomial:** P is purely inseparable if $\deg_i P = \deg P$. Also if P is purely inseparable $P = X^{p^r} - a$
- **Separable element:** If L/K is an algebraic extension, then $\alpha \in L$ is called separable if its minimal polynomial over K is separable. And vice versa.
- If $\alpha \in K$ is separable then $|\mathrm{Hom}(K(\alpha), \overline{K}| = \deg P_{\min}(\alpha, K))$
- **Separable degree:** For L/K, we have $[L : K]_{\text{sep}} = |\mathrm{Hom}_K(K(\alpha), \overline{K})|$. Inseparable degree is degree of extension divded by separable degree.
- **Separable extension:** L is separable over K if $[L : K]_{\text{sep}} = [L : K]$.
  - If $\mathrm{ch}(K) = 0$ then any extension of K is separable.
  - If $\mathrm{ch}(K) = p$ then pure inseparable extension has degree p^r with degree of inseparability p^r
- Separable degrees obey the multiplicative property.
- TFAE
  - L is separable over K
  - Any element of L is separable over K
  - $L = K(\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \ldots, \alpha_n)$, where each α_i is separable over K.
  - $L = K(\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \ldots, \alpha_n)$, then α_i is separable over $K(\alpha_1, \ldots, \alpha_{i-1})$.
- **Separable closure:** $L^{\text{sep}} = \{x \mid x \text{ separable over } K\}$