

## 0 Subgroups

### 0.1 Definition and Examples

**Proposition 1.** (The Subgroup Criterion) A subset  $H$  of a group  $G$  is a subgroup if and only if

1.  $H \neq \emptyset$ , and
2. for all  $x, y \in H, xy^{-1} \in H$

### 0.3 Cyclic Groups and Cyclic Subgroups

**Proposition 2.** If  $H = \langle x \rangle$ , then  $|H| = |x|$ . Moreover,

1. if  $|H| = n < \infty$ , then  $x^n = 1$  and  $1, x, x^2, \dots, x^{n-1}$  are all distinct elements of  $H$ , and
2. if  $|H| = \infty$ , then  $x^n \neq 1$  for all  $n \neq 0$  and  $x^a \neq x^b$  for all  $a \neq b \in \mathbb{Z}$ .

**Proposition 3.** Let  $G$  be an arbitrary group,  $x \in G$  and let  $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$ . If  $x^n = 1$  and  $x^m = 1$  then  $x^d = 1$  where  $d = (m, n)$ . In particular, if  $x^m = 1$  for some  $m \in \mathbb{Z}$  then  $|x|$  divides  $m$ .

**Theorem 4.** Any two cyclic groups of the same order are isomorphic. Moreover,

1. if  $n \in \mathbb{Z}^+$  and  $\langle x \rangle$  and  $\langle y \rangle$  are both cyclic groups of order  $n$ , then the map

$$\begin{aligned} \phi: \langle x \rangle &\rightarrow \langle y \rangle \\ x^k &\mapsto y^k \end{aligned}$$

is well defined and is an isomorphism

2. if  $\langle x \rangle$  is an infinite cyclic group, the map

$$\begin{aligned} \phi: \mathbb{Z} &\rightarrow \langle x \rangle \\ k &\mapsto x^k \end{aligned}$$

is well defined and is an isomorphism

**Proposition 5.** Let  $G$  be a group, let  $x \in G$  and let  $a \in \mathbb{Z} - \{0\}$ .

1. If  $|x| = \infty$ , then  $|x^a| = \infty$ .
2. If  $|x| = n < \infty$ , then  $|x^a| = \frac{n}{(n, a)}$ .
3. In particular, if  $|x| = n < \infty$  and  $a$  is a positive integer dividing  $n$ , then  $|x^a| = \frac{n}{a}$ .

**Proposition 6.** Let  $H = \langle x \rangle$ .

1. Assume  $|x| = \infty$ . Then  $H = \langle x^a \rangle$  if and only if  $a = \pm 1$ .
2. Assume  $|x| = n < \infty$ . Then  $H = \langle x^a \rangle$  if and only if  $(a, n) = 1$ . In particular, the number of generators of  $H$  is  $\phi(n)$  (where  $\phi$  is Euler's  $\phi$ -function)

**Theorem 7.** Let  $H = \langle x \rangle$  be a cyclic group.

1. Every subgroup of  $H$  is cyclic. More precisely, if  $K \leq H$ , then either  $K = \{1\}$  or  $K = \langle x^d \rangle$ , where  $d$  is the smallest positive integer such that  $x^d \in K$ .
2. If  $|H| = \infty$ , then for any distinct nonnegative integers  $a$  and  $b$ ,  $\langle x^a \rangle \neq \langle x^b \rangle$ . Furthermore, for every integer  $m$ ,  $\langle x^m \rangle = \langle x^{|m|} \rangle$ , where  $|m|$  denotes the absolute value of  $m$ , so that the nontrivial subgroups of  $H$  correspond bijectively with the integers  $1, 2, 3, \dots$ .
3. If  $|H| = n < \infty$ , then for each positive integer  $a$  dividing  $n$  there is a unique subgroup of  $H$  of order  $a$ . This subgroup is the cyclic group  $\langle x^d \rangle$ , where  $d = \frac{n}{a}$ . Furthermore, for every integer  $m$ ,  $\langle x^m \rangle = \langle x^{(n,m)} \rangle$ , so that the subgroups of  $H$  correspond bijectively with the positive divisors of  $n$ .

## 0.4 Subgroups Generated by Subsets of a Group

**Proposition 8.** If  $\mathcal{A}$  is any nonempty collection of subgroups of  $G$ , then the intersection of all members of  $\mathcal{A}$  is also a subgroup of  $G$ .

**Proposition 9.**  $\overline{A} = \langle A \rangle$ .