

# Minimal Polynomials of Real Parts of Roots of Unity

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What are the coordinates of the vertices of a regular  $n$ -gon of radius 1? The simple answer comes from trigonometry: the vertices are points on the unit circle, separated by angles of  $\frac{\tau}{n}$  (where  $\tau$  is the number of radians in a full turn), so their coordinates are

$$\left(\cos\left(\frac{m}{n}\tau\right), \sin\left(\frac{m}{n}\tau\right)\right)$$

for all  $0 \leq m < n$ . However, this formula makes symbolic manipulation unwieldy when trying to reduce expressions involving these terms to their simplest form. For example, when  $n = 5$  and  $m = 1$ , the x-coordinate of the point is  $\cos\left(\frac{1}{5}\tau\right) = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \varphi)$ , where  $\varphi = \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2}$  is the golden ratio, the positive solution to  $\varphi^2 = \varphi + 1$ . Writing the coordinate in terms of  $\varphi$  is easier than the trigonometric way, since products involving it can easily be simplified by replacing  $\varphi^2$  with  $\varphi + 1$ .

$$r = 2 \cos\left(\frac{m}{n}\tau\right)$$

$$p(r) = 0$$

$$z = \text{cis}\left(\frac{m}{n}\tau\right)$$

$$z^{-1} = \text{cis}\left(-\frac{m}{n}\tau\right)$$

$$r = z + z^{-1}$$

$$q(z) = 0$$

$$n = 7$$

$$0 = z^3 + z^2 + z + 1 + z^{-1} + z^{-2} + z^{-3}$$

$$= a + br + cr^2 + dr^3$$

$$= a + b(z + z^{-1}) + c(z + z^{-1})^2 + d(z + z^{-1})^3$$

$$= a + b(z + z^{-1}) + c(z^2 + 2 + z^{-2}) + d(z^3 + 3z + 3z^{-1} + z^{-3})$$

$$= dz^3 + cz^2 + (b + 3d)z + (a + 2c) + (b + 3d)z^{-1} + cz^{-2} + dz^{-3}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a \\ b \\ c \\ d \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \\
\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} a \\ c \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \\
\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 3 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} b \\ d \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \\
\begin{bmatrix} a \\ c \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} -1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} \\
\begin{bmatrix} b \\ d \end{bmatrix} &= \begin{bmatrix} -2 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}
\end{aligned}$$

$$r^3 + r^2 - 2r - 1 = 0$$

1	$r - 2$
2	$r + 2$
3	$r + 1$
4	$r$
5	$r^2 + r - 1$
6	$r - 1$
7	$r^3 + r^2 - 2r - 1$
8	$r^2 - 2$
9	$r^2 - 3r + 1$
10	$r^2 \pm r - 1$