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# Discrete Math

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Lecture notes integrated with the book "TODO",  
Author TODO, ...

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# Information and Contacts

Personal notes and summaries collected as part of the *Discrete Math* course offered by the degree in Computer Science of the University of Rome "La Sapienza".

Further information and notes can be found at the following link:

<https://github.com/aflaag-notes>. Anyone can feel free to report inaccuracies, improvements or requests through the Issue system provided by GitHub itself or by contacting the author privately:

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The notes are constantly being updated, so please check if the changes have already been made in the most recent version.

## Suggested prerequisites:

- Differential Calculus
- Integral Calculus

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# 1

## TODO

### 1.1 TODO

#### 1.1.1 TODO

##### Definition 1.1.1.1: Peano's axioms

The **Peano's axioms** are 5 axioms which define the set  $\mathbb{N}$  of the **natural numbers**, and they are the following:

- i)  $0 \in \mathbb{N}$
- ii)  $\exists \text{succ} : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ , or equivalently,  $\forall x \in \mathbb{N} \quad \text{succ}(x) \in \mathbb{N}$
- iii)  $\forall x, y \in \mathbb{N} \quad x \neq y \implies \text{succ}(x) \neq \text{succ}(y)$
- iv)  $\nexists x \in \mathbb{N} \mid \text{succ}(x) = 0$
- v)  $\forall S \subseteq \mathbb{N} \quad (0 \in S \wedge (\forall x \in S \quad \text{succ}(x) \in S)) \implies S = \mathbb{N}$

**Note:** inside this notes, it will be assumed that  $0 \in \mathbb{N}$ .

##### Principle 1.1.1.1: Induction principle

Let  $P$  be a property which is true for  $n = 0$ , thus  $P(0)$  is true; also, for every  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  we have that  $P(n) \implies P(n + 1)$ ; then  $P(n)$  is true for every  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ .

Using symbols, using the formal logic notation, we have that

$$\frac{P(0) \quad P(n) \implies P(n + 1)}{\forall n \quad P(n)}$$

**Observation 1.1.1.1: The fifth Peano's axiom**

Note that the fifth Peano's axiom is equivalent to the induction principle, since, it states that for every subset  $S$  of  $\mathbb{N}$  containing 0 and closed under succ must be equal to  $\mathbb{N}$  itself.

**Definition 1.1.1.2: Integers**

TODO

**Definition 1.1.1.3: Divisor**

TODO

**Example 1.1.1.1** (Divisors). TODO

**Definition 1.1.1.4:  $\mathbb{P}$** 

TODO

**Proposition 1.1.1.1:  $\mathbb{P}$  is infinite**

There are infinitely many primes. Using symbols

$$|\mathbb{P}| = +\infty$$

*Proof.* By way of contradiction, assume that  $\mathbb{P}$  is finite, thus

$$\exists n \in \mathbb{N} \mid \mathbb{P} = \{p_1, \dots, p_n\}$$

and let  $x = p_1 \cdot \dots \cdot p_n$ . Since  $x \neq p_1, \dots, p_n$ , then  $x \notin \mathbb{P}$ , so  $x$  is not a prime number; but  $x$  can't be divided by any of the  $p_1, \dots, p_n$  either, because the remainder will always be 1. This means that  $x$  is neither prime nor non-prime, which is a contradiction  $\nmid$ .  $\square$

**Definition 1.1.1.5: gcd**

The **gcd** (*Greatest Common Divisor*) of two given numbers  $a, b$  is the greatest of the divisors which  $a$  and  $b$  have in common. Using symbols, we say that

$$d = \gcd(a, b) \iff \forall f \in \mathbb{N} : f \mid a \wedge f \mid b \implies f \mid d$$

If the gcd of two numbers is 1, they are said to be **coprime**.

**Example 1.1.1.2** (gcd). Given 15 and 63, we have that  $\gcd(15, 63) = 3$ .

**Algorithm 1.1.1.1: Euclid's algorithm****Input:** Two natural numbers  $a, b$ .**Output:**  $\gcd(a, b)$ .

---

```

1: function GCD( $a, b$ )
2:   TODO
3: end function

```

*Idea.* TODO

**Example 1.1.1.3** (Euclid's algorithm). To compute the  $\gcd(341, 527)$ , using the [Algorithm 1.1.1.1](#), we get the following:

$$\begin{aligned}
 527 &= 341 \cdot 1 + 186 \\
 341 &= 186 \cdot 1 + 155 \\
 186 &= 155 \cdot 1 + 31 \\
 155 &= 31 \cdot 5 + 0
 \end{aligned}$$

hence we have that

$$\gcd(341, 527) = 31$$

**Lemma 1.1.1.1: Bézout's identity**

Given a pair of numbers  $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ , there exists  $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that the  $\gcd(a, b)$  is a [linear combination](#) of  $a$  and  $b$ . Using symbols

$$\forall a, b \in \mathbb{Z} \quad \exists x, y \in \mathbb{Z} \mid \gcd(a, b) = ax + by$$

*Proof.* Omitted. □

**Example 1.1.1.4** (Bézout's identities). Using the [Example 1.1.1.3](#), in order to compute the Bézout's identity of 341 and 527, we need to do the following:

$$31 = 186 - 155 \cdot 1 = 186 - (341 - 186 \cdot 1) = 2 \cdot 186 - 341 = 2 \cdot (527 - 341) - 341 = 2 \cdot 527 - 3 \cdot 341$$

thus the Bézout's identity is

$$31 = 2 \cdot 527 - 3 \cdot 341$$

**Corollary 1.1.1.1: Prime divisors**

Given a natural number  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  and a prime number  $p \in \mathbb{P}$ , it holds that

$$p \nmid n \iff \gcd(p, n) = 1$$

*Proof.*

*First implication.* Instead of proving that  $p \nmid n \implies \gcd(p, n) = 1$ , we will prove the contrapositive, namely that  $\gcd(p, n) > 1 \implies p \mid n$ . Hence, since  $\gcd(p, n) \mid p$

by definition, because  $p \in \mathbb{P}$  then  $\gcd(p, n)$  must be either 1 or  $p$  itself, and we assumed that  $\gcd(p, n) > 1$ ,  $\gcd(p, n)$  must be  $p$ , which means that  $p \mid n$ .

*Second implication.* Note that  $\gcd(p, n) = 1 \implies \exists x, y \in \mathbb{Z} \mid 1 = px + ny$  by the [Lemma 1.1.1.1](#), hence if  $p \mid a$  then  $p \mid 1$  by the [Definition 1.1.1.5](#), which is impossible because  $p \in \mathbb{P}$  by the [Definition 1.1.1.4](#).

□

### Lemma 1.1.1.2: Prime divisors

Given a pair of numbers  $a, b \in \mathbb{N}$ , and a prime number  $p \in \mathbb{P}$  such that  $p \mid ab$ , then either  $p \mid a$  or  $p \mid b$ . Using symbols

$$\forall a, b \in \mathbb{N} \quad \exists p \in \mathbb{P} : p \mid ab \implies p \mid a \vee p \mid b$$

*Proof.* Without loss of generality, assume that  $p \nmid a$ , thus  $\gcd(p, a) = 1$  by the [Corollary 1.1.1.1](#); hence, for the [Lemma 1.1.1.1](#), we have that

$$\exists x, y \in \mathbb{Z} \mid 1 = px + ay \iff b = bpx + bay$$

Note that  $p \mid ab \iff \exists k \in \mathbb{Z} \mid pk = ab$  which means that

$$b = bpx + pky = p(bx + ky) \iff p \mid b$$

The same argument can be used to show that  $p \nmid b \implies p \mid a$ .

□

### Theorem 1.1.1.1: Fundamental theorem of arithmetic

The **fundamental theorem of arithmetic**, also known as the **UPF** theorem (*Unique Prime Factorization*) states that for every natural number  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  there exists a unique prime factorization for  $n$ . Using symbols

$$\forall n \in \mathbb{N} \quad \exists! p_1, \dots, p_k \in \mathbb{P}, e_1, \dots, e_k \in \mathbb{N} \mid n = p_1^{e_1} \cdot \dots \cdot p_k^{e_k}$$

*Proof.* Omitted.

□

### 1.1.2 Continued fractions

#### Definition 1.1.2.1: Continued fraction

A **continued fraction** is an expression obtained through an iterative process of representing a number as the sum of its *integer part*, and the reciprocal of another number. Continued fractions can be both **finite** and **infinite**, and are represented with the following notation:

$$a_0 + \frac{1}{a_1 + \frac{1}{a_2 + \frac{1}{\ddots + \frac{1}{a_n}}}} = [a_0; a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n]$$

for finite continued fractions, and

$$a_0 + \frac{1}{a_1 + \frac{1}{a_2 + \frac{1}{\ddots}}} = [a_0; a_1, a_2, \dots]$$

for infinite continued fractions.

**Example 1.1.2.1** (Finite continued fractions). Consider the [Example 1.1.1.3](#); note that the Euclid algorithm can be used to derive the finite continued fraction of  $\frac{527}{341}$ , as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{527}{341} &= 1 + \frac{186}{341} \\ \frac{341}{186} &= 1 + \frac{155}{186} \\ \frac{186}{155} &= 1 + \frac{31}{155} \\ \frac{155}{31} &= 5 \end{aligned}$$

and then, rearranging

$$\frac{527}{341} = 1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{155}{186}} = 1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{31}{155}}} = 1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{5}}} = [1; 1, 1, 5]$$

**Example 1.1.2.2** (Infinite continued fractions). Assume that there exists an  $x$  such that

$$\sqrt{2} = 1 + \frac{1}{x}$$

then rearrange as follows:

$$\sqrt{2} = 1 + \frac{1}{x} \iff \sqrt{2} - 1 = \frac{1}{x} \iff x = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2} - 1} = \frac{\sqrt{2} + 1}{(\sqrt{2} - 1)(\sqrt{2} + 1)} = \sqrt{2} + 1$$



and now we can substitute  $\sqrt{2}$  with  $1 + \frac{1}{x}$ , yielding the following:

$$x = 1 + \frac{1}{x} + 1 = 2 + \frac{1}{x}$$

Finally, this equation can be used to construct the infinite continued fraction of  $\sqrt{2}$ , like this:

$$x = 2 + \frac{1}{x} = 2 + \frac{1}{2 + \frac{1}{x}} = 2 + \frac{1}{2 + \frac{1}{2 + \frac{1}{\ddots}}}$$

implying that

$$\sqrt{2} = 1 + \frac{1}{x} = 1 + \frac{1}{2 + \frac{1}{2 + \frac{1}{\ddots}}} = [1; 2, 2, 2] = [1; \overline{2}]$$

#### Algorithm 1.1.2.1: Continued fractions

Given a continued fraction  $[a_0; a_1, \dots, a_n]$ , the corresponding number can be computed by constructing the following table (note that  $N_0 := 1$  and  $D_0 := 0$ , meaning that  $a$  and  $N, D$  differ by 1 position at each column)

C.F.		$a_0$	$a_1$	$a_2$	$\dots$	$a_n$
$N$	1	$a_0$	$a_1 \cdot N_1 + N_0$	$a_2 \cdot N_2 + N_1$	$\dots$	$a_n \cdot N_n + N_{n-1}$
$D$	0	1	$a_1 \cdot D_1 + D_0$	$a_2 \cdot D_2 + D_1$	$\dots$	$a_n \cdot D_n + D_{n-1}$

then, the answer is

$$[a_0; a_1, \dots, a_n] = \frac{N_{n+1}}{D_{n+1}}$$

*Idea.* TODO

**Example 1.1.2.3.** To compute the number corresponding to the continued fraction  $[2; 1, 3, 1, 5, 4]$ , the following table can be constructed:

C.F.		2	1	3	1	5	4
$N$	1	2	3	11	14	81	338
$D$	0	1	1	4	5	29	121

meaning that

$$[2; 1, 3, 1, 5, 4] = \frac{338}{121}$$

**Definition 1.1.2.2: The golden ratio**

The **golden ratio** is defined as the positive solution of the following equation:

$$x^2 - x - 1 = 0 \iff x = \frac{1 \pm \sqrt{5}}{2} \implies \varphi := \frac{1 + \sqrt{5}}{2}$$

and it's commonly denoted with the greek letter  $\varphi$ .

**Observation 1.1.2.1: Continued fraction of  $\varphi$** 

Given the definition of the golden ratio, we have that

$$\varphi^2 - \varphi - 1 = 0 \iff \varphi^2 = \varphi + 1 \iff \varphi = 1 + \frac{1}{\varphi}$$

and then from this equation we can repeatedly substitute  $\varphi$  as follows:

$$\varphi = 1 + \frac{1}{\varphi} = 1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{\varphi}} = 1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{\ddots}}}$$

which means that

$$\varphi = [1; \overline{1}]$$

**Definition 1.1.2.3: The Fibonacci sequence**

TODO

**Observation 1.1.2.2: Continued fraction of  $\varphi$** 

Consider the following table of the continued fraction of the golden ratio, constructed via the [Algorithm 1.1.2.1](#) by using the result discussed inside the [Observation 1.1.2.1](#):

C.F.		1	1	1	1	1	...
$N$	1	1	2	3	5	8	...
$D$	0	1	1	2	3	5	...

we can spot that the pattern this table reveals is exactly the Fibonacci sequence, and this fact can be easily proved by letting

$$x = \lim_{n \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{F_{n+1}}{F_n}$$

note that, clearly,  $x > 0$  – and then, by using the [Definition 1.1.2.3](#), we get the following

$$F_{n+1} = F_n + F_{n-1} \iff \frac{F_{n+1}}{F_n} = 1 + \frac{F_{n-1}}{F_n} = 1 + \frac{1}{\frac{F_n}{F_{n-1}}}$$

**1.1.3 Series****Definition 1.1.3.1: The harmonic series**

The harmonic series is defined as follows:

$$\sum_{k=1}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{k} = 1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} + \dots$$

**Proposition 1.1.3.1: Divergence of the harmonic series**

The harmonic series diverges.

*Proof.* Suppose that the harmonic series converges, thus

$$\exists S \mid \sum_{k=1}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{k} = S$$

then we have that

$$\begin{aligned} S &= 1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{6} \dots = \\ &= \left(1 + \frac{1}{2}\right) + \left(\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{4}\right) + \left(\frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{6}\right) + \dots > \\ &> \left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2}\right) + \left(\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4}\right) + \left(\frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{6}\right) + \dots = \\ &= 1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} + \dots = S \end{aligned}$$

implying that  $S > S'_2$ . □

### Definition 1.1.3.2: Geometric series

A **geometric series** is commonly written as

$$\sum_{k=0}^n ar^k$$

where  $a \in \mathbb{R}$  is a coefficient and  $r \in \mathbb{R}$  is the *ration between adjacent terms*.

### Proposition 1.1.3.2: Convergence of geometric series

For  $r \in \mathbb{R}$  such that  $|r| < 1$ , it holds that

$$\sum_{k=0}^{+\infty} ar^k = \frac{a}{1-r}$$

*Proof.* Omitted. □

### Theorem 1.1.3.1: Reciprocal of primes

The sum of the reciprocal of the prime numbers diverges. Using symbols

$$\sum_{p \in \mathbb{P}} \frac{1}{p} = +\infty$$

*Proof.* Consider the following inequality:

$$\forall n \in \mathbb{N} \quad \prod_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \frac{p}{p-1} > \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{1}{k}$$

We can prove it with as follows:

- for any given  $p \in \mathbb{P}$ , the fraction  $\frac{p}{p-1}$  can be rewritten as follows, by using the [Proposition 1.1.3.2](#):

$$\forall p \in \mathbb{P} \mid p \leq n \quad \frac{p}{p-1} = \frac{1}{\frac{p-1}{p}} = \frac{1}{1 - \frac{1}{p}} = \sum_{k=0}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{p^k} = 1 + \frac{1}{p} + \frac{1}{p^2} + \dots$$

where  $a = 1$  and  $r = \frac{1}{p} : \frac{1}{p^{k-1}} = \frac{1}{p}$  – which is the infinite sum of the reciprocal of the powers of some prime number  $p$

- this means that

$$\exists p_1, \dots, p_j \in \mathbb{P} \mid \prod_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \frac{p}{p-1} = p_1 \cdot \dots \cdot p_j \implies \prod_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \frac{p}{p-1} = \sum_{k=0}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{p_1^k} \cdot \dots \cdot \sum_{k=0}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{p_j^k}$$

- thus, thanks to the [Theorem 1.1.1.1](#) this product expands to the sum of the reciprocal of every natural number that contains  $p_1, \dots, p_j$  in his prime factorization, namely

$$\exists e_1, \dots, e_j \in \mathbb{N} \mid \sum_{k=0}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{p_1^k} \cdot \dots \cdot \sum_{k=0}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{p_j^k} = \sum_{k=0}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{p_1^{e_1} \cdot \dots \cdot p_j^{e_j}}$$

- finally, since  $p_1, \dots, p_j \leq n$  this summation must contain at least every term contained inside  $\sum_{k=1}^n \frac{1}{k}$ , which proves the inequality.

□

Now consider the following:

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k=1}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{k} &< \prod_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \frac{p}{p-1} \iff \\ &\iff \log \left( \sum_{k=1}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{k} \right) < \log \left( \prod_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \frac{p}{p-1} \right) = \\ &= \sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \log \left( \frac{p}{p-1} \right) = \sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} (\log p - \log(p-1)) = \sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \int_{p-1}^p \frac{1}{x} dx \end{aligned}$$

and consider the area under the curve  $\frac{1}{x}$  within the  $[p-1, p]$  interval, for some prime number  $p$ :

TODO METTI GRAFICO

since

$$\forall x_1, x_2 \in \mathbb{R} \quad x_1 < x_2 \iff \frac{1}{x_1} > \frac{1}{x_2}$$

the function  $\frac{1}{x}$  is monotonically decreasing, and in particular

$$\forall p \in \mathbb{P} \mid p \leq n \quad p-1 < p \implies \frac{1}{p-1} > \frac{1}{p}$$

whic implies that the area under the curve  $\frac{1}{x}$  within the  $[\frac{1}{p}-1, p]$  must be smaller than the area of the rectangle that has a base of of  $p - (p-1) = p - p + 1 = 1$  and an height of  $\frac{1}{p-1}$ , namely an area of  $1 \cdot \frac{1}{p-1} = \frac{1}{1-p}$ . This implies that

$$\sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \int_{p-1}^p \frac{1}{x} dx < \sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} | p \leq n} \frac{1}{p-1}$$

Suppose that

$$\frac{1}{p-1} > \frac{2}{p}$$

then we have that

$$\frac{1}{p-1} > \frac{2}{p} \iff p > 2 \cdot (p-1) \iff p > 2p-2 \iff 2 > 3p$$

which is not possible because  $p \in \mathbb{P} \mid p \leq n$ . This implies that

$$\frac{1}{p-1} < \frac{2}{p} \implies \sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} \mid p \leq n} \frac{1}{p-1} < \sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} \mid p \leq n} \frac{2}{p}$$

and finally, this means that

$$\log \left( \sum_{k=1}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{k} \right) < \sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} \mid p \leq n} \frac{2}{p} \iff \frac{1}{2} \log \left( \sum_{k=1}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{k} \right) < \sum_{p \in \mathbb{P} \mid p \leq n} \frac{1}{p}$$

and because  $\sum_{k=1}^{+\infty} \frac{1}{k}$  diverges, the left-hand side of the inequality diverges, thus the right-hand side must diverge too. This proves the statement, because the primes  $p \in \mathbb{P}$  such that  $p \leq n$  form a subset of  $\mathbb{P}$ .

## 1.2 Solved exercises

### 1.2.1 Number theory

#### Problem 1.2.1.1: $n^2 + n$ is even

Show that for every  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ ,  $n^2 + n$  is an even number.

*Proof.* Note that  $n^2 + n = n \cdot (n + 1)$ , hence:

- if  $n$  is even, then

$$\exists k \in \mathbb{N} \mid n = 2k \implies n(n+1) = 2k(2k+1) = 4k^2 + 2k = 2(k^2 + k)$$

which is an even number;

- if  $n$  is odd, then

$$\exists k \in \mathbb{N} \mid n = 2k+1 \implies n(n+1) = (2k+1)(2k+2) = 4k^2 + 6k + 2 = 2(2k^2 + 3k + 1)$$

which is an even number.

□

**Problem 1.2.1.2:  $4n - 1$  is not prime**

Show that there are infinitely many numbers of the form  $4n - 1$  that are not prime.

*Proof.* Note that

$$\forall x^2 \in \mathbb{N} - \{0\} \quad 4x^2 - 1 = (2x + 1)(2x - 1)$$

which is a proper factorization of  $4x^2 - 1$ , hence every perfect square yields a number of the form  $4n - 1$  which is not a prime number. Note that the number of perfect squares is infinite since the set of perfect square has the same cardinality of  $\mathbb{N}$  since it's possible to construct a bijective function as follows:

$$f : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N} : x \mapsto x^2$$

Also, note that this proof does not show *every non-prime number of the form  $4n - 1$* , since that is outside the scope of the problem.  $\square$

**Problem 1.2.1.3: The  $4n - 3$  set**

Consider the following set:

$$S := \{4n - 3 \mid n \in \mathbb{N}\}$$

1. Show that  $S$  closed under multiplication.
2. A number  $p$  is said to be *S-prime* if and only if  $p$  is the product of exactly two factors of  $S$ ; for example, even though  $3^2 = 9 \notin \mathbb{P}$  we have that  $9 = 1 \cdot 9$ , and since  $1 = 4 \cdot 1 - 3 \in S$  and  $9 = 4 \cdot 3 - 3 \in S$ , then 9 is *S-prime*. Is the set of *S-prime* numbers infinite?
3. TODO

*Proof.*

1. To show that  $S$  is closed under multiplication, it suffices to show that

$$\forall a, b \in \mathbb{N} \quad (4a - 3)(4b - 3) = 16ab - 12a - 12b + 9 = 4(4ab - 3a - 3b + 3) - 3 \in S$$

2. TODO

$\square$

**1.2.2 Induction****Problem 1.2.2.1: Cardinality of the power set**

Show that for every given set  $S$  such that  $n := |S|$  it holds that  $|\mathcal{P}(S)| = 2^n$ .

*Proof.* The statement will be shown by induction over  $n$ , the number of elements contained into  $S$ .

*Base case.*  $n = 0 \implies S = \emptyset \implies \mathcal{P}(S) = \mathcal{P}(\emptyset) = \{\emptyset\} \implies |\mathcal{P}(S)| = 1 = 2^0 = 2^n$ .

*Inductive hypothesis.* Assume that the statement is true for some fixed integer  $n$ .

*Inductive step.* It must be shown that, for a given set of elements  $S$  such that  $|S| = n + 1$ , it holds true that  $|\mathcal{P}(S)| = 2^{n+1}$ . Consider a subset  $S' \subseteq S$  such that  $|S'| = |S| - 1 = n + 1 - n = n$ , hence for the inductive hypothesis we have that  $|\mathcal{P}(S')| = 2^n$ . Thus, to get the cardinality of  $\mathcal{P}(S)$  the  $(n + 1)$ -th element inside  $S - S'$  must be paired with every of the sets contained inside  $\mathcal{P}(S')$ , hence

$$\mathcal{P}(S) = 2 \cdot \mathcal{P}(S') = 2 \cdot 2^n = 2^{n+1}$$

□

### 1.2.3 Continued fractions

#### Problem 1.2.3.1: Limits of continued fractions

1. What is the value that the following limit approaches?

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow +\infty} [2; 1, 4, n]$$

2. Consider the following sequence:

$$\frac{25}{16}, \frac{49}{36}, \frac{81}{64}, \frac{121}{100}, \dots$$

Compute the continued fractions of these ratios; what is the limit of this sequence?

*Proof.*

1. By using the [Algorithm 1.1.2.1](#), we get the following table:

C.F.		2	1	4	$n$
$N$	1	2	3	14	$14 \cdot n + 3$
$D$	0	1	1	5	$5 \cdot n + 1$

which means that

$$[2; 1, 4, n] = \frac{14n + 3}{5n + 1} \implies \lim_{n \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{14n + 3}{5n + 1} = \frac{14}{5}$$

2. We can convince ourselves that the sequence is

$$\left( \frac{2k + 1}{2k} \right)^2$$



for some  $k \in \mathbb{N}$ . Thus, by following the [Example 1.1.2.1](#), we can compute the continued fractions of the given ratios (calculations omitted) and get the following results:

$$\begin{aligned} k = 2 &\implies \left(\frac{2 \cdot 2 + 1}{2 \cdot 2}\right)^2 = \left(\frac{5}{4}\right)^2 = \frac{25}{16} = [1; 1, 1, 3, 2] \\ k = 3 &\implies \left(\frac{2 \cdot 3 + 1}{2 \cdot 3}\right)^2 = \left(\frac{7}{6}\right)^2 = \frac{49}{36} = [1; 2, 1, 3, 3] \\ k = 4 &\implies \left(\frac{2 \cdot 4 + 1}{2 \cdot 4}\right)^2 = \left(\frac{9}{8}\right)^2 = \frac{81}{64} = [1; 3, 1, 3, 4] \\ k = 5 &\implies \left(\frac{2 \cdot 5 + 1}{2 \cdot 5}\right)^2 = \left(\frac{11}{10}\right)^2 = \frac{121}{100} = [1; 4, 1, 3, 5] \end{aligned}$$

and we can easily prove that

$$\left(\frac{2k+1}{2k}\right)^2 = [1; k-1, 1, 3, k]$$

by using the [Algorithm 1.1.2.1](#) and constructing the following table:

C.F.		1	$k-1$	1	3	$k$
$N$	1	1	$k$	$k+1$	$4k+3$	$4k^2+4k+1$
$D$	0	1	$k-1$	$k$	$4k-1$	$4k^2$

Ultimately, the limit approaches

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{4k^2 + 4k + 1}{4k^2} = \frac{4}{4} = 1$$

□