

A simple **induction**:

$$f(a^m b^n) = a^{\min(n,m)} b^{|m-n|} c^{\min(n,m)}$$

$$f(a^x b^y c^k) = b^{x+y} a^k$$

$$f(a^k) = a^k$$

A simple **series**:

$$U_0 = m, V_0 = n$$

$$U_n = |U_{n-1} - V_{n-1}|, V_n = \min(U_{n-1}, V_{n-1})$$

$$\forall n \geq \gcd(m, n), U_n = 0$$

The **algorithm**:

Input: $a^m b^n$

1- Remove an 'a' an a 'b', otherwise (no a, no b or both) goto 3

2- Add 'c', goto 1

3- Switch all 'a' to 'b'

4- Switch all 'c' to 'a'

5- If there is 'b', goto 1, otherwise halt

Output: $a^x = a^{\gcd(m,n)}$

An explanation:

The main idea is to continuously substruct n from m to get a 'remainder' $|m-n|$ 'b' and 'quotient' $\min(n, m)$ 'a' until we get no more 'b' (remainder is 0) at step 4, therefore $a^x = a^{\gcd(n,m)}$

A sample running:

aaaaaabbbbbbbbbb

aaaaabbbbbbbbbb

aaaaabbbbbbbbbc

aaaabbbbbbbbbc

aaaabbbbbbbbcc

aaabbbbbbbcc

aaabbbbbbbccc

aabbbbbbbccc

aabbbbbbbcccc

abbbbbbbccc

abbbbbbbcccc

bbbbbbccc

bbbbbbcccc

bbbbaaaaaa

bbbbaaaa

bbbbaaaac

bbbaaac

bbbaaac

baaac

baaaccc

aaccc

aacccc

bbccc
bbaaaa
baaa
baaac
aac
aacc
bbaa
ba
bac
cc
aa
HALT
 $\text{GCD}(14, 6) = 2$