

Ordered Sets

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- ▶ This is read “ a is in the relation R to b .”
- ▶ If $R \subset A \times A$, we say that R is a **relation on A** .

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- ▶ Let $R = \{(a, b), (a, c), (b, c)\}$
- ▶ What relation does R express?
- ▶ aRb : “*a occurs earlier in the alphabet than b.*”

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- ▶ Preorders fall into two fundamental categories, depending on whether or not the relation is symmetric.
- ▶ A *symmetric preorder* is called an **equivalence relation**.
- ▶ A preorder that is *not symmetric* is called an **order relation**.

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- ▶ We often exploit indifference in our theory of choice and equivalence classes help us formalize this.

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- ▶ The equivalence class of \sim is $[x]_{\sim} = \{y \in X : y = x\}$
- ▶ For any x , its equivalence class is a singleton: on \mathbb{R} , each element is equal only to itself.

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- ▶ Equivalence class?
- ▶ $[(a, b)]_{\sim} = \{(c, d) \in X : \frac{c}{d} = \frac{a}{b}\}$
- ▶ With this relation, $\frac{4}{2}$ is equivalent to $\frac{8}{4}$. This is obvious to us precisely because the rational numbers are constructed as equivalence classes such that $(4, 2), (8, 4) \in [(2, 1)]_{\sim}$.

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- ▶ On the previous slide, \sim partitions X into the rational numbers.

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- ▶ \sim is the symmetric part of \preceq
- ▶ *Example* The natural order \geq on \mathbb{R} induces the strict order $>$ and the equivalence relation $=$ on \mathbb{R}

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- ▶ An upper bound is called a **least upper bound** or **supremum** for A if it precedes every other upper bound for A .

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- ▶ Now consider $(1 - \epsilon, \epsilon)$

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- ▶ There exists no $(a, b) \in \Delta^1$ such that $(a, b) > (1, 0)$
- ▶ This follows from the fact that $1 > a$ for all $(a, b) \neq (1, 0)$
- ▶ Now consider $(1 - \epsilon, \epsilon)$
- ▶ Since $\epsilon > b$ for all $(a, b) \neq (1, 0)$, there is no $(a, b) > (1 - \epsilon, \epsilon)$.

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- ▶ Therefore it cannot be true that $(a, b) \succsim (c, d)$ which implies that (a, b) is not a maximum.
- ▶ What is the least upper bound in \mathbb{R}^2 ?

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- ▶ If a maximum exists, the maximum is a least upper bound and is therefore unique.
- ▶ Antisymmetry, however, is not sufficient to guarantee existence, only uniqueness.

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- ▶ *Example* (\mathbb{R}, \geq) is a chain.
- ▶ *Example* (Δ^1, \geq) is not a chain since neither $(1, 0) \geq (0, 1)$ nor $(0, 1) \geq (1, 0)$ is true.

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- ▶ We will see later on that lattices admit a powerful tool for theoretical analysis called “monotone comparative statics.”
- ▶ They also allow us to identify when a subset of \mathbb{R}^n will have a maximum element (or least upper bound).

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- ▶ This ordered set also has a well-defined maximum element: $(1, 1)$.

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- ▶ When working in (\mathbb{R}^n, \geq) is useful to remember that “squares” are lattices, “triangles” are not.

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- ▶ In a weakly ordered set, every element is related to every other element.
- ▶ This is a desirable property for political scientists: we want the actors in our models to be able to compare any action or outcome in the model in terms of their preferences.

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