Mathematics and Problem Solving

Lecture 6

Set Theory

"Since, as is well known, God helps those who help themselves, presumably the Devil helps all those, and only those, who don't help themselves. Does the Devil help himself?"

Douglas Hofstadter

What we will do today

- What Are Sets?
 - Singletons
 - Subsets
 - Supersets

- Set operations
 - Union
 - Intersection
 - Difference



What is a set?

- A set is a collection of objects, which
 - is unordered
 - contains no repetition

Example Sets

- Examples of sets:
 - All the people in the UK
 - All the natural numbers in the set denoted by $\mathbb N$
 - All the counties in Northern Ireland

Typed Sets

- Set theories have to restrict this definition somehow, as a naive approach leads to paradox
 - Consider the set of all sets that don't contain themselves.
 - c.f. a book containing the titles of all books that don't contain their own title
- We will see a strictly typed a set theory
 - All the examples we will look at will all include the same types of object
 - Tends to be most useful for CS



Extension of a Set

- Rather than describe a set in words, e.g.
 - "N is the set containing all the numbers between 4 and 7" (a bit unclear)

we can list the things it contains (very clear!)

$$N = \{5, 6\}$$

- This sort of listing is called a definition by extension
 - Written using curly brackets { }
 - Every element is seperated with a comma

Exercise 1:

The soup served in the canteen today contains the following vegetables:

- Potato
- Carrot
- Onion
- Celery
- Leeks

Express the set of vegetables in todays soup using definition by extension

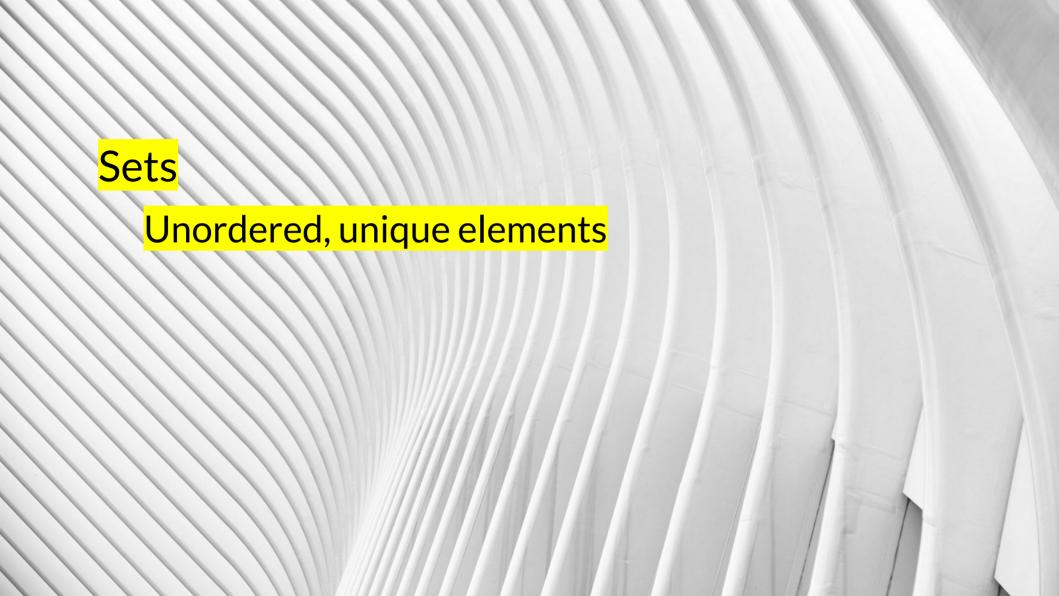
• Hint:

- Definition by extension
 - Written using curly brackets {}
 - Every element is seperated with a comma
- e.g. $N = \{5, 6\}$

Exercise 2:

Define the following sets by extension:

- 1. The set of all even primes greater than 2
- 2. The letters of the alphabet that appear in the phrase 'smell the cheese'
- 3. The numbers between 1 and 10



Repetition

- An element can only occur once in a set – all elements are unique
- Sets are equal (=) if they contain the same elements
 - Order doesn't matter

- If we express the following collections as sets
 - Collection_1 = (apple, pear, banana, banana, banana, plum)
 - Collection_2 = (apple, banana, apple, pear, pear, banana, plum, plum)
- They would be equal
 - Collection_1= { apple, pear, banana, plum }
 - Collection 2= { apple, banana, pear, plum }

Exercise 3:

Which of the following equalities hold if each side is described as a set?

- 1. (1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) = ?= (1, 2, 3, 4, 4, 5, 5)
- 2. Vowels in the alphabet =?= Vowels in the phrase 'Rain wind and snow tomorrow'
- 3. (dog, cat, parrot) =?= (parrot, parrot, cat, parrot, dog, goldfish)
- 4. Notes (A, A#, etc.) on a piano =?= Notes in an octave

• Hint:

- Sets are unordered
- All elements are unique



Singletons

- A set containing only one member is a **singleton**, e.g.
 - **-** {1}
 - The set of prime numbers between 6 and 10

Singletons

Exercise 4:

Which of the following are singletons if described as sets:

- 1. (1, 1, 1, 1)
- 2. The vowels in the alphabet between 'A' and 'D'
- 3. The prime numbers between 1 and 10
- 4. The Set of all numbers used in the binary system

Hint:

A singleton is a set containing exactly 1 element



The Empty Set

- The set with no elements is called the Empty Set
- All sets with no elements are equal to one another
 - They all have the same elements (nothing!)
 - Hence calling it *the* empty set
- This is notated in either of the following ways
 - } Ø

The Empty Set

Exercise 5:

Which of the following describes the empty set?

- 1. The set of all Natural numbers \mathbb{N} that are not in the set of all integers \mathbb{Z}
- 2. The set of all Integers \mathbb{Z} , less that 0.
- 3. The set of all letters in the alphabet tham come before the letter 'a'

Hint:

The empty set is any set containing no elements

Sets Containing Sets

- Sets can contain other sets as members
 - e.g. The set of sets of numbers
- This is not the same as containing the constituent elements in a flat structure, i.e.
 - $\{\mathbb{Z}, \mathbb{N}, \mathbb{R}, \mathbb{Q}\} \neq \mathbb{Q}$
 - $\{\{1,2\},\{1,3\},\{3,1,2\}\} \neq \{1,2,3\}$

Sets Containing the Empty Set

- The Empty Set is a set, and can be a member of another set, e.g.
 - {Ø, TallCats, AngryLizards }
 - $\{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}\}\}\}$
- Critically, Ø ≠ { Ø } ≠ { { Ø } }, etc.
 - Writing $\{\emptyset\}$ to mean the empty set is a very common error!

Sets Containing Sets

Exercise 6:

Express the following as sets, using set theory notation:

- 1. The set of hibernating giraffes
- 2. (Ø,Ø,{Ø},{{Ø}},Ø},{Ø})
- 3. The set of all sets with 0 elements
- 4. The set with 0 elements



A language to talk about sets

- We want to be able to make statements about the relationships between sets
 - Set A is equal to set B
 - Set A contains set B
 - Set A and Set B contain no elements in common
- We want to make statements about what sets contain
 - Cat is in the set of animals
 - The set of reptiles does not contain dogs
- We want to talk about the sizes of sets
 - The set of students in this class has x members

Set Membership

• We say "x is a member of set Y" using the symbol \in

$$x \in Y$$

For example,

- $-1 \in \mathbb{N}$ 1 is a member of the set of all natural numbers
- −1 $\notin \mathbb{N}$ Negative 1 is not a member of the set of natural numbers
- Note the complimentary use of \in and \notin

Set Elements

Law 1.1:

This gives us our first law of set theory:

$$\neg (s \in S) \iff s \notin S$$

- The negation of the statement that 's is an element of S' is equivalent to stating that 's is not an element of S'
- Note how we can combine propositional logic and set theory

Set Elements

Law 1.2:

Building on law 1.1, as no elements appear in the empty set:

$$x \in \emptyset \iff false$$

 The statement that x is an element of Ø is logically equivalent to False, regardless of what x is

Set Elements

Exercise 7:

Which of the following set theory statements are logically equivalent to true and which are logically equivalent to false?

- 1. $a \in \{r, a, c, b, \overline{l}, z, k\}$
- 2. $p \in \{r, a, c, b, l, z, k\}$
- 3. $a \notin \{r, a, c, b, l, z, k\}$
- 4. $p \notin \{r, a, c, b, l, z, k\}$



Typed Set Theory

- We're adopting a strictly typed set theory
- In a typed set theory, every set is associated with a type
 - For now, we will have two types:
 - Set of atomic elements
 - Set of sets
- The operators we will see apply only to sets of the same type
 - Attempting otherwise is a syntactic error
 - The 'result' of such an operation is undefined

True, False and undefined

- Let $S = \{1, 2, 3\}$
- Valid in our set theory
 - $-2 \in S$ (true)
 - 5 ∉ *S* (true)
 - $-7 \in S$ (false)

- Invalid in our set theory
 - {2} \in *S* (undefined)
 - {5} \notin S (undefined)

True, False and undefined

Exercise 8:

For the set: Cakes = { cupcake, carrotcake, doughnut }, which of the following are True or False and which ones are undefined?

- 1. Carrot Cake ∈ Cakes
- 2. Doughnut ∈ Cakes
- 3. { cupcake, doghnut } ∈ Cakes
- 4. Ø ∉ Cakes
- 5. cupcake ∉ Cakes

- We have two types:
 - Set of atomic elements
 - Set of sets
- Operators can only apply to sets of the same type



Subsets

- We want to be able to express the idea that "Set A is contained within Set B"
 - We formalise this as subset, using the symbol ⊆
- For example, for the sets
 - $S = \{ 2, 5, 7, 9, 13 \}$
 - $T = { 2, 5, 7, 9}$
- It is true to state that *T* is a subset of *S*, which we notate:
 - $-T\subseteq S$

Subsets

- Imagine we have two sets with the same elements:
 - $S = { 2, 5, 7}$
 - $T = { 2, 5, 7}$
- It is possible to state both:
 - $T \subseteq S$
 - $-S \subseteq T$
- Thus we can also say S = T

Subsets

Law 2.1:

If S is a subset of T and T is also a subset of S, then S and T are equal

$$(S \subseteq T) \land (T \subseteq S) \iff S = T$$

Law 2.2

The empty set is a subset of every set. Thus we can state:

$$\emptyset \subseteq S$$

Law 2.3:

Every set is a subset of itself:

$$S \subseteq S$$

Exercise 9:

Which of the following are True, False, or undefined?

- 1. $A \subseteq \{a, b, c\}$
- 2. $\{a\} \subseteq \{a, b, c\}$
- 3. $\emptyset \subseteq \{a, b, c\}$
- 4. $\{a,b,c\}\subseteq\emptyset$
- 5. $\emptyset \in \{a, b, c\}$

Hint:

- Law 2.1: $(S \subseteq T) \land (T \subseteq S) \iff S = T$
- Law 2.2: Ø⊆ *S*
- Law 2.3: $S \subseteq S$

Not a Subset

• Take 2 sets:

$$S = \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$$

 $T = \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10\}$

• In the case where we have two sets where one is larger than the other and so contained within it we may write that S is a subset of T thus:

$$S \subseteq T$$

• However, as T contains more elements than S, and therefore is not a subset of S we may also write that T is NOT a subset of S as follows:

$$T \nsubseteq S$$

Subset and Not a Subset

Law 2.4:

The negation of the statement "S is a subset of T" is equivalent to stating "S is not a subset of T".

$$\neg (S \subseteq T) \iff S \nsubseteq T$$



Proper Subsets

- To revisit these sets from just a few slides ago:
 - S = { 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 }
 - T = { 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 }
- Because S is a subset of T, and T contains elements not in S, S is said to be a proper subset of T
 - We use the symbol \subset to write proper subset:
 - $S \subset T$

Law 2.5:

If S is a subset of T, S is either a proper subset of, or is equal to, T

$$S \subseteq T \iff (S \subset T) \vee (S = T)$$

Exercise 10:

Which of the following are True and which are False?

- { monkey } ⊆ { monkey, elephant, zebra}
- 2. monkey ∈ { monkey, elephant, zebra}
- 3. $\emptyset \subset \{\text{elephant}, \text{monkey}, \text{zebra}\}$
- 4. { monkey, elephant, zebra } ⊂{ monkey, elephant, zebra}

Hint:

- Law 2.1: $(S \subseteq T) \land (T \subseteq S) \iff S = T$
- Law 2.2: Ø⊆ *S*
- Law 2.3: $S \subseteq S$
- Law 2.4: $\neg (S \subseteq T) \iff S \not\subseteq T$
- Law 2.5: $S \subseteq T \iff (S \subset T) \lor (S = T)$



Law 2.6:

The claim that "S is not a proper subset of T" is equivalent to the negation of the statement "S is a proper subset of T"

$$S \not\subset T \iff \neg (S \subset T)$$

Law 2.7:

It follows that S can never be a proper subset of itself. Thus:

$$S \not\subset S$$

Law 2.8:

If set S is a proper subset of another set T then T can not also be a proper subset of S. We can therefore state that, given two sets S and T:

$$S \subset T \Rightarrow T \not\subset S$$

Exercise 11:

Given the set *S*

$$S = \{ a, b, c, d \}$$

- 1. List all the subsets for *S*
- 2. List all the proper subsets S
- 3. Can you conceive of a mathematical formula for working out the number of proper subsets of a exist for a given set of *n* elements?

Exercise 12:

We can apply the laws of set theory in the same way we learned to apply the laws of propositional logic. For now lets do this in plain English before we look at ways to do this through equational reasoning.

Prove the following assertion with reference to the laws covered so far:

$$S \subseteq \emptyset \Rightarrow S = \emptyset$$

Hint:

- Law 2.1: $(S \subseteq T) \land (T \subseteq S) \iff S = T$
- Law 2.2: $\emptyset \subseteq S$
- Law 2.3: $S \subseteq S$
- Law 2.4: $\neg (S \subseteq T) \iff S \not\subseteq T$
- Law 2.5: $S \subseteq T \iff (S \subseteq T) \vee (S = T)$
- Law 2.6: $S \not\subset T \iff \neg (S \subset T)$
- Law 2.7: *S* ⊄ *S*
- Law 2.8: $S \subset T \Rightarrow T \not\subset S$



- "Superset" is the inverse of "Subset"
 - A superset contains all the elements of its subset
 Uses the symbol ⊇ (the subset symbol backwards)
- If S is a subset of T $S \subseteq T$
 - then T is a superset of S

$$T \supseteq S$$

- Proper Supersets is like the inverse of Proper Subset
 - Contain all the elements of their subset, and more
 - Proper subset is written with a backwards proper subset symbol: ⊃
- We can also negate superset and proper superset
 - Not Superset: ⊉
 - Not Proper Superset: or ⊅



Law 3.1:

For any sets *S* and *T*. Stating that *S* is a superset of *T* is logically equivalent to stating that *T* is a subset of *S*. Thus the following logical equivalence:

$$S \subseteq T \iff T \supseteq S$$

Exercise 13:

Work out the truth value of the following statements given set $S = \{Berlin, Belfast, Bratislava, Burnley\}$:

- 1. {Berlin} $\subset S$
- 2. {Berlin} $\subseteq S$
- 3. $S \supseteq \{Berlin, Bratislava, Burnely\}$
- 4. $\emptyset \supseteq S$
- 5. $S \supseteq \emptyset$
- 6. {Berlin, Belfast, Burnely} $\supset S$

Hint

- Law $3.1: S \subseteq T \iff T \supseteq S$



Set operators

- When dealing with Strict Type set theory, it's possible to perform
 mathematical operations upon different sets so long as the elements of those
 sets are of the same type. For example it's possible to perform operations on
 two or more sets of number, or two or more sets of letter or two or more
 collections of cakes.
- It is however not possible to perform operations on a collection of cakes and a collection of numbers.

Set operators

- Set operators are as follows:
 - Union: U
 - Intersection: ∩
 - Difference: \
 - Cartesian Product: ×
- We're going to look at the first three of these and leave the last operator to next week owing to its relationship to more advanced areas of set theory.



Set union

- Set Union is a binary operation on sets
 - It uses the symbol U
- The union operator combines two sets to form a set containing all of the elements of each set

Set union

Exercise 14:

Calculate the following:

- 1. { 1, 3, 4 } U { 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9 }
- 2. {rich tea, digestive, jammy dodger} U Ø
- 3. { a, b, c, d } U { a, b, c, d }
- 4. { a, b, c, d } U {1, 2, 3, 4 }



Set Union

Law 4.1:

For any element *a* and sets *S* and *T* we can say that the statement *e* is an element of the union of *S* and *T* is logically equivalent to stating that *a* is an element of *S* or *a* is an element of *T*

$$a \in S \cup T \iff (a \in S \lor a \in T)$$

Set Union Identity

Law 4.2:

S combined with the empty set \emptyset is logically equivalent to S. Thus:

$$SU \varnothing = S$$

Set Union Identity

Law 4.3:

S combined with itself is logically equivalent to S

$$SUS = S$$

Commutativity of Set Union

Law 4.4:

The union of *S* and *T* is equivalent to the union of *T* and *S*

$$SUT = TUS$$

Associativity of Set Union

Law 4.5:

Union is associative. Thus for Sets R, S and T:

$$(RUS)UT = (RUT)US$$

Set Union

Law 4.6:

The Union of two or more sets always at least as big as each set considered individuals. Sets *S* and *T*:

$$S \subseteq S \cup T$$



Set Intersection

- Set Intersection is a binary operator on sets
 - Uses the symbol ∩
- It produces a set containing only the elements contained in both sets
- The intersection of S and T is the set of elements which are in both set S and set T
 - $S = \{ 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 \}$
 - $T = {4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9}$
 - $S \cap T = \{4, 5, 6\}$

Exercise 15:

Calculate the following:

- 1. { 1, 3, 4 } n { 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9 }
- 2. { rich tea, digestive, jammy dodger } $\cap \emptyset$
- 3. $\{a, b, c, d\} \cap \{a, b, c, d\}$
- 4. { a, b, c, d } ∩ { d, c, b, a }



Law 5.1:

If a given element is in the output of a set intersection operation then it must appear in all sets in the operation. Therefore where *a* is an element of the intersection of sets *S* and *T* a must be an element of *S* and must also be an element of *T*. Thus:

$$a \in (S \cap T) \iff (a \in S) \land (a \in T)$$

Null Law

Law 5.2:

The intersection of set S and the empty set \emptyset is always the empty set.

$$S \cap \emptyset = \emptyset$$

Intersection Identity

Law 5.3:

The intersection of set *S* with itself is always *S*. Thus:

$$S \cap S = S$$

Commutativity of Intersection

Law 5.4:

Intersection is commutative. Thus for set *S* and *T*:

$$S \cap T = T \cap S$$

Associativity of Intersection

Law 5.5:

Intersection is associative. Thus for set R, S and T:

$$R \cap (S \cap T) = (R \cap S) \cap T$$

Law 5.6:

The intersection of any given sets is always at least as small as one of the given sets. Thus for set S and T:

$$S \cap T \subseteq S$$

Law 5.7:

Intersection distributes through Union and Union distributes through intersection. Thus for set *S* and *T*:

$$RU(S \cap T) = (RUS) \cap (RUT)$$

$$R \cap (S \cup T) = (R \cap S) \cup (R \cap T)$$

Exercise 16:

Confirm that Law 5.7 Holds. Where set R, S, and T are defined by extension as:

- $R = \{a, b, c\}$
- $S = \{ a, b, c, d, e \}$
- $T = \{c, d, e, f\}$
- By applying it to calculate the following relations:
 - $-RU(S \cap T) = (RUS) \cap (RUT)$

Hint:

If you calculate the left side of the
 and then the right side and the
 results match then you've proven
 that the Law holds.



• Set difference operation takes two inputs and returns as an output the set elements that exists the first set, but not in the latter: Thus for sets S and T:

```
S = { a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j }
T = { f, g, h, i, j, k l, m, n o }
S \ T = { a, b, c, d, e }
```

Exercise 17:

Calculate the following:

- 1. { 1, 3, 4 } \ { 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9 }
- 2. { richtea, digestive, jammy dodger } \ Ø
- 3. $\{a, b, c, d\} \setminus \{a, b, c, d\}$
- 4. $\{a, b, c, d\} \setminus \{d, c, b, a\}$



Law 6.1:

If a is an element of the set difference is $S \setminus T$ then a is a member of S and a is not a member of T

$$a \in S \setminus T \iff (a \in S \land a \notin T)$$

Law 6.2:

The difference in Set S and the empty Set Ø is equal to Set S

$$S \setminus \emptyset = S$$

Law 6.3:

The inverse of the previous law: the difference in the empty Set \emptyset and Set S is equal to the empty set \emptyset

$$\emptyset \setminus S = \emptyset$$

Law 6.4:

The difference in Set *S* and itself produces the empty set as there is nothing in the former that is not in the latter

$$S \setminus S = \emptyset$$

Law 6.5:

The difference in Set R and the union or sets S and T is equivocal to the union of the difference in set R and S and R and T. A similar propery holds for Intersection. Thus:

$$R \setminus (S \cup T) = (R \setminus S) \cap (R \setminus T)$$

 $R \setminus (S \cap T) = (R \setminus S) \cup (R \setminus T)$

Law 6.6:

The difference in Set S and T will result in a set at least as small as set S. Thus:

$$S \setminus T \subseteq S$$

Exercise 18:

Confirm that Law 6.5 Holds. Where set R, S and T are defined by extension as:

$$R = \{a, b, c\}$$

 $S = \{a, b, c, d, e\}$
 $T = \{c, d, e, f\}$

By applying it to calculate the following relations:

1.
$$R \setminus (S \cap T) = (R \setminus S) \cup (R \setminus T)$$

Hint:

If you calculate the left side of the
 and then the right side and the
 results match then you've proven
 that the Law holds.



Set Equality

Law 7.1:

When two different sets have exactly the same elements, they are considered equal if for every x is S is equivalent to every x in T

$$x \in S \iff x \in T$$



Applying the Laws of Set theory

Exercise 19:

Use a combination of the laws of propositional logic and the laws of set theory to prove the following:

- 1. SUS = S
- 2. SUØ = S
- 3. $S \cap \emptyset = \emptyset$

• Law 1.1:
$$\neg (s \in S) \iff s \notin S$$

• Law 4.2: $S \cup \emptyset = S$

• Law 4.1: $a \in S \cup T \iff (a \in S \lor a \in T)$

• Law 4.3: SUS=S

• Law 4.4: $S \cup T = T \cup S$

• Law 4.5: $R \cup (S \cup T) = (R \cup T) \cup S$

• Law 4.6: $S \subseteq S \cup T$

• Law 5.1: $a \in S \cap T \iff (a \in S \land a \in T)$

• Law 5.2: S∩Ø=Ø

• Law 5.3: $S \cap S = S$

• Law 5.6: $S \cap T \subseteq S$

• Law 5.4: $S \cap T = T \cap S$

• Law 5.5: $R \cap (S \cap T) = (R \cap S) \cap T$

• Law 5.7: $R \cup (S \cap T) = (R \cup S) \cap (R \cup T)$

 $R \cap (S \cup T) = (R \cap S) \cup (R \cap T)$

Law 7.1: $x \in S \iff x \in T$

When two sets have the same elements they are equal

Law 6.5: $R\setminus (S\cup T)=(R\setminus S)\cap$

 $R \setminus (S \cap T) = (R \setminus S) \cup (R \setminus T)$

Law 6.1: $\mathbf{a} \in S \setminus T \iff (a \in S \land A)$

 $a \notin T$

 $(R \setminus T)$

• Law 6.2: $S \setminus \emptyset = S$

Law 6.3: $\emptyset \ S = \emptyset$

Law 6.4: $S \setminus S = \emptyset$

• Law 2.3: $(S \subseteq S)$ • Law 2.4: $\neg(S \subseteq T) \iff S \not\subseteq T$

• Law 2.6: $S \not\subset T \iff \neg(S \subset T)$

• Law 2.1: $(S \subseteq T \land T \subseteq S) \iff S = T$

• Law 2.5: $S \subseteq T \iff (S \subset T \lor S = T)$

• Law 1.2: $x \in \emptyset \iff f$ alse

• Law 2.2: $(\emptyset \subseteq S)$

• Law 2.7: $S \not\subset S$

• Law 2.8: $S \subset T \Rightarrow T \not\subset S$

Law 3.1: $S \supseteq T \iff T \subseteq S$

Summary

- What Are Sets?
 - Singletons
 - Subsets
 - Supersets
- Set operations
 - Union
 - Intersection
 - Difference