

Separation Axioms

Danny Nygård Hansen

30th July 2022

1 • Introduction

In these notes we give an overview of some of the most important separation axioms in point-set topology. For each axiom we consider the following:

- (1) What the axiom *means* intuitively. Of course we understand what it means to ‘separate’ points or sets in a topological space and how the ability to do so is useful. But many of the axioms are equivalent to properties of a space that (seemingly) have nothing to do with separation, and whose importance are perhaps more intuitively clear.
- (2) How the axiom behaves with respect to topological constructions like subspaces and products.
- (3) Conditions under which a space satisfies a given axiom.
- (4) Other properties of the axioms. Each axiom interacts with the surrounding theory in different ways, sometimes to produce spaces with even more structure.

Our attention is primarily focused on both ends of the spectrum: The weakest axiom we consider, and the one we have most to say about, is T_0 . We say less about the T_1 and Hausdorff axioms since these are well-known, and there is also rather little to say about regular spaces. More interesting are complete regularity and normality on which we spend a lot of time: normality because of its importance and particularly the Urysohn lemma, and complete regularity because of its connection with rings of continuous functions.

1.1. Notation

If X and Y are topological spaces, we denote the set of continuous maps $X \rightarrow Y$ by $C(X, Y)$. If Y is a real/complex topological vector space, then $C(X, Y)$ is a real/complex vector space when addition and scalar multiplication are defined pointwise. In the case $Y = \mathbb{R}$ we simply write $C(X)$, and this is an algebra over \mathbb{R} . We also write $C_b(X)$ for the subalgebra of bounded functions.

1.2. Overview of the axioms

We here summarise the axioms by citing

- T_0 : The topology respects the underlying set structure by distinguishing between distinct points.
- T_1 : Singletons are closed, or in other words, if $(x_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ is a constant net with $x_\alpha = x$ for all $\alpha \in A$, then x is the unique limit of (x_α) .
- Hausdorff: All limits are unique ([Proposition 5.2](#)).
- Regularity: Every open neighbourhood contains a closed neighbourhood ([Proposition 6.2](#)).
- Complete regularity: Has enough bounded continuous functions to determine its topology ([Theorem 7.4](#)).
- Normality: Continuous functions on closed sets can be extended to the entire space ([Theorem 8.6](#)). Why should we restrict to *closed* sets? Continuous functions defined on a non-closed set may not even extend to a continuous function on the *closure* of that set: Take for instance the function $x \mapsto 1/x$ on $\mathbb{R} \setminus \{0\}$.

2 • Preliminary definitions and results

If X is a topological space and $A \subseteq X$, then we say that a set $N \subseteq X$ is a *neighbourhood* of A if there is an open set U in X such that $A \subseteq U \subseteq N$. The family of neighbourhoods of a set A is called the *neighbourhood filter* of A and is denoted \mathcal{N}_A . If $A = \{x\}$ is a singleton we also write \mathcal{N}_x and call N a neighbourhood of x .

We begin by proving a series of results that do not pertain directly to the separability axioms, but that will be used in the sequel.

2.1. Compactness

If X is a topological space, we say that a collection \mathcal{U} of subsets of X is a *cover* of X if $X = \bigcup_{U \in \mathcal{U}} U$. A *subcover* of a cover \mathcal{U} is a subcollection of \mathcal{U} that itself is a cover. An *open cover* is a cover consisting of open sets.

If \mathcal{U} and \mathcal{V} are covers of X , we say that \mathcal{U} *refines* \mathcal{V} and is a *refinement* of \mathcal{V} if each $U \in \mathcal{U}$ is contained in some $V \in \mathcal{V}$. Notice that a subcover is in particular a refinement.

A collection \mathcal{A} of subsets of X is called *locally finite* if every point of X has a neighbourhood that intersects finitely many elements in \mathcal{A} . It is easy to show that if \mathcal{A} is locally finite, then $\overline{\mathcal{A}} = \{\overline{A} \mid A \in \mathcal{A}\}$ is also locally finite: For if $x \in X$ and $U \subseteq X$ is an open neighbourhood of x and $A \in \mathcal{A}$ does not intersect U , then $A \subseteq U^c$, and so $\overline{A} \subseteq U^c$.

DEFINITION 2.1

Let X be a topological space.

- (i) X is *compact* if every open cover of X has a finite subcover.
- (ii) X is *Lindelöf* if every open cover of X has a countable subcover.
- (iii) X is *paracompact* if every open cover of X has an open locally finite refinement.

Clearly a compact space is both Lindelöf and paracompact.

PROPOSITION 2.2

Let X be a topological space. If X is compact/Lindelöf, then every closed subset of X is compact/Lindelöf in the subspace topology.

This result is of course standard for compact spaces, but we include the proof to illustrate that it is identical to the proof for the Lindelöf case.

PROOF. Let X be compact/Lindelöf, and let $A \subseteq X$ be closed. If \mathcal{U} is an open cover of A , then there is a collection \mathcal{V} of sets open in X such that $\mathcal{U} = \{V \cap A \mid V \in \mathcal{V}\}$. By adjoining A^c to \mathcal{V} we obtain an open cover of X , so it has a finite/countable subcover \mathcal{V}' . Discarding A^c and intersecting every other set in \mathcal{V}' with A yields a finite/countable subcover of \mathcal{U} , proving the claim. \square

PROPOSITION 2.3

The continuous image of a compact/Lindelöf space is compact/Lindelöf.

PROOF. Let $f: X \rightarrow Y$ be continuous, and assume that X is compact/Lindelöf. Let \mathcal{U} be an open cover of $f(X)$. Then $f^{-1}(\mathcal{U})$ is an open cover of X , so it has a finite/countable subcover $f^{-1}(\mathcal{U}')$. Notice that

$$f(X) = f\left(f^{-1}\left(\bigcup_{U \in \mathcal{U}'} U\right)\right) \subseteq \bigcup_{U \in \mathcal{U}'} U,$$

so \mathcal{U}' is a finite/countable subcover of \mathcal{U} as desired. \square

If X is a topological space, then we say that two disjoint subsets A and B can be *separated* if there exist disjoint open sets U and V with $A \subseteq U$ and $B \subseteq V$.

LEMMA 2.4

Let X be a topological space, and let $A \subseteq X$ be a set that can be separated from points that lie in a set $B \subseteq X$. Then A can be separated from compact sets contained in B .

This is an example of the general principle that compact sets often act like points.

PROOF. Let $K \subseteq X$ be a compact set contained in B . Since A can be separated from points in B , then for every $x \in K$ there are disjoint open sets U_x and V_x such that $x \in U_x$ and $A \subseteq V_x$. The collection $(U_x)_{x \in K}$ is an open cover of K , so there is a finite subcover $(U_{x_i})_{i=1}^n$. Let $U = \bigcup_{i=1}^n U_{x_i}$ and $V = \bigcap_{i=1}^n V_{x_i}$. Then U and V are disjoint open sets containing K and A respectively. \square

2.2. Local compactness

DEFINITION 2.5: Local compactness

A topological space is called *locally compact* if every point has a compact neighbourhood.

There are many different non-equivalent definitions of local compactness, and we have just chosen one for convenience. Locally compact spaces are usually also Hausdorff in which case all the different definitions are equivalent. A locally compact Hausdorff space is also called an *LCH space*. In particular we have the following:

PROPOSITION 2.6

A Hausdorff space is locally compact if and only if every point has a neighbourhood basis of compact sets.

PROOF. Let X be an LCH space and let $x \in U \subseteq X$ with U open. If \bar{U} is not compact, then replace U with $U \cap K^\circ$, where K is a compact neighbourhood of x . Then both $\{x\}$ and ∂U are compact, so by [Proposition 5.4](#) there exist disjoint relatively open sets $V, W \subseteq \bar{U}$ such that $x \in V$ and $\partial U \subseteq W$. Then $V \subseteq U$ so V is open in X , and \bar{V} is a closed and thus compact subset of $\bar{U} \setminus W \subseteq U$.

The converse is obvious. \square

COROLLARY 2.7

Let X be a locally compact Hausdorff space. If $K \subseteq U \subseteq X$ with K compact and U open, then K has a compact neighbourhood contained in U .

Another example of compact sets taking the place of points.

PROOF. For $x \in K$ we may choose a compact neighbourhood N_x of x contained in U by [Proposition 2.6](#). Then $(N_x^\circ)_{x \in K}$ is an open cover of K , so there is a finite subcover $(N_{x_i}^\circ)_{i=1}^n$. Letting $V = \bigcup_{i=1}^n N_{x_i}^\circ$ we have $K \subseteq V$, and $\bar{V} = \bigcup_{i=1}^n N_{x_i} \subseteq U$ is compact as desired. \square

2.3. Metric spaces

LEMMA 2.8

Let (S, ρ) be a pseudometric space, and let $A \subseteq S$ be nonempty. Define a map $\rho(\cdot, A): S \rightarrow [0, \infty)$ by

$$\rho(x, A) = \inf_{a \in A} \rho(x, a).$$

This map has the following properties:

- (i) $\rho(x, A) = 0$ if and only if $x \in \bar{A}$.
- (ii) If $y \in S$, then $\rho(x, A) \leq \rho(x, y) + \rho(y, A)$.
- (iii) $\rho(\cdot, A)$ is continuous.

PROOF. First we prove (i). Notice that $\rho(x, A) = 0$ if and only if for any $r > 0$ there is an $a \in A$ such that $\rho(x, a) < r$. But this is true precisely when any ball $B(x, r)$ intersects A , i.e. when $x \in \bar{A}$.

For any $a \in A$ we have

$$\rho(x, A) \leq \rho(x, a) \leq \rho(x, y) + \rho(y, a),$$

and since this is true for any $a \in A$, (ii) follows.

Finally, (iii) follows immediately from (ii), since

$$\rho(x, A) - \rho(y, A) \leq \rho(x, y)$$

for all $x, y \in S$.

□

3 • The T_0 axiom

3.1. Definition and the T_0 -identification

DEFINITION 3.1

A topological space X satisfies the T_0 axiom and is called a T_0 -space if, for every pair of distinct points $x, y \in X$, either x has a neighbourhood that does not contain y , or vice versa.

We begin by giving an alternative characterisation of T_0 -spaces: Let X be a topological space. We define an ordering on X called the *specialisation preorder* by letting $x \leq y$ if $x \in \overline{\{y\}}$ for $x, y \in X$. It is clear that \leq is in fact a preorder, and so it determines an equivalence relation \equiv ; that is, $x \equiv y$ if and only if $x \leq y$ and $y \leq x$.

It is easy to show that $x \leq y$ if and only if $\mathcal{N}_x \subseteq \mathcal{N}_y$. If $x \equiv y$, then we say that x and y are *topologically indistinguishable* since then x and y have the same neighbourhoods.

It is clear that X is T_0 if and only if the relation \equiv is trivial, that is if x and y are topologically indistinguishable precisely when $x = y$. The quotient space X/\equiv is called the T_0 -identification or the *Kolmogorov quotient* of X , and it is indeed T_0 :

THEOREM 3.2: The T_0 -identification

Let X be a topological space, and let $q: X \rightarrow X/\equiv$ be the quotient map onto the T_0 -identification of X . Then

- (i) open and closed sets are saturated,
- (ii) q is an open and closed map,
- (iii) X/\equiv is T_0 , and
- (iv) if \sim is an equivalence relation on X such that X/\sim is T_0 , then $\equiv \subseteq \sim$.¹

Part (iv) expresses the fact that \equiv is the most conservative equivalence relation on X that makes the corresponding quotient a T_0 -space.

¹ Both \equiv and \sim are subsets of $X \times X$, so this inclusion means that, for all $x, y \in X$, if $x \equiv y$ then $x \sim y$.

PROOF. We first show that all open sets are saturated. Let U be an open set of X , and let $x \in U$. If $x \equiv x'$, then U is also a neighbourhood of x' , so $x' \in U$; in other words, U is a union of fibres. Hence U is saturated with respect to q . Complements of saturated sets are also unions of fibres, hence saturated, so closed sets are also saturated. Since q is a quotient map, it follows that it takes saturated open (closed) subsets of X to open (closed) subsets of X/\equiv ,² and hence it is both open and closed.

Now we show that X/\equiv is T_0 . Assume that $x \neq y$. Without loss of generality we may assume the existence of an element $U \in \mathcal{N}_x \setminus \mathcal{N}_y$, and that U is open. Since q is open, $q(U)$ is a neighbourhood of $q(x)$ in X/\equiv . And U is saturated so $U = q^{-1}(q(U))$, and because $y \notin U$ it follows that $q(y) \notin q(U)$. Hence $q(U)$ is a neighbourhood of $q(x)$ that is not a neighbourhood of $q(y)$, and thus X/\equiv is T_0 .

Finally, let X/\sim be T_0 , and let $p: X \rightarrow X/\sim$ be the quotient map. If $x \neq y$ then $p(x) \neq p(y)$, so without loss of generality we may choose an open set $U \subseteq X/\sim$ with $p(x) \in U$ and $p(y) \notin U$. Then $x \in p^{-1}(U)$ and $y \notin p^{-1}(U)$, i.e. $p^{-1}(U)$ is a neighbourhood of x that is not a neighbourhood of y , so $x \neq y$. \square

COROLLARY 3.3

Let (X, \mathcal{T}) be a topological space, and let $q: X \rightarrow X/\equiv$ be the quotient map onto the T_0 -identification of X . Denote the topology on X/\equiv by \mathcal{T}_\equiv . Then q induces a bijection $q_*: \mathcal{T} \rightarrow \mathcal{T}_\equiv$ given by $q_*(U) = q(U)$ whose inverse q^* is given by $q^*(V) = q^{-1}(V)$.

PROOF. Since q is surjective we have $q(q^{-1}(V)) = V$ for all $V \in \mathcal{T}_\equiv$, and by Theorem 3.2(i) every $U \in \mathcal{T}$ is saturated, so $q^{-1}(q(U)) = U$. \square

This corollary implies that most topological properties are preserved in the T_0 -identification. Taking the T_0 -identification of a space that is already T_0 leaves the space unchanged but, preempting terminology we will introduce later, the T_0 -identification of a regular space is regular, and the same is true for completely regular, normal and paracompact spaces. The proofs are trivial.

One might also expect that continuous functions on a space are unchanged in the T_0 -identification, and this is in fact the case:

PROPOSITION 3.4

Let X be a topological space, and let $q: X \rightarrow X/\equiv$ be the quotient map onto its

² If $U \subseteq X$ is saturated, then $q(U)$ is open in Y if and only if $q^{-1}(q(U)) = U$ is open in X . See also Lee (2011, Proposition 3.60).

T_0 -identification. For every T_0 -space Y the pullback map

$$\begin{aligned} q^*: C(X/\equiv, Y) &\rightarrow C(X, Y), \\ f &\mapsto f \circ q, \end{aligned}$$

is a bijection. If Y is a T_0 topological vector space³, then q^* is a linear isomorphism, and it is an algebra isomorphism in the case $Y = \mathbb{R}$.

PROOF. Let $q: X \rightarrow X/\equiv$ be the quotient map, and let $g \in C(X, Y)$. We claim that if $x \equiv y$ in X , then $g(x) = g(y)$. For if $g(x) \neq g(y)$, then since Y is T_0 we can, without loss of generality, choose a neighbourhood U of $g(x)$ not containing $g(y)$. Then $g^{-1}(U)$ is a neighbourhood of x not containing y , so $x \not\equiv y$.

Thus every $g \in C(X, Y)$ descends to a unique map $\tilde{g} \in C(X/\equiv, Y)$ with $g = \tilde{g} \circ q$. Conversely, every $f \in C(X/\equiv, Y)$ uniquely determines a map $f \circ q \in C(X, Y)$. Hence q^* is a bijection.

Now let Y be a T_0 topological vector space over \mathbb{R} . Let $f, g \in C(X/\equiv, Y)$ and $\alpha \in \mathbb{R}$. Then

$$q^*(\alpha f + g) = (\alpha f + g) \circ q = \alpha(f \circ q) + (g \circ q) = \alpha q^*(f) + q^*(g).$$

Hence q^* is linear and thus a linear isomorphism.

Finally, if $Y = \mathbb{R}$ then q^* respects multiplication by a similar argument to the above and is thus an algebra isomorphism. \square

We explore the T_0 -identification in the context of metric spaces: Let (S, ρ) be a pseudometric space, and define a relation \sim on S by $x \sim y$ if and only if $\rho(x, y) = 0$. This is clearly an equivalence relation. Let $\tilde{S} = S/\sim$ and define a map $\tilde{\rho}: \tilde{S} \times \tilde{S} \rightarrow [0, \infty)$ by $\tilde{\rho}([x], [y]) = \rho(x, y)$. This is well-defined, since if $x \sim x'$ and $y \sim y'$ then

$$\rho(x, y) \leq \rho(x, x') + \rho(x', y') + \rho(y', y) = \rho(x', y').$$

It is obvious that $\tilde{\rho}$ is then a metric on \tilde{S} , and we call $(\tilde{S}, \tilde{\rho})$ the *metric identification* of (S, ρ) .

PROPOSITION 3.5

Let (S, ρ) be a pseudometric space. Then the relation \sim defined above and the topological indistinguishability relation \equiv coincide.

PROOF. It suffices to show that $x \sim y$ if and only if $\mathcal{N}_x = \mathcal{N}_y$ for all $x, y \in S$. Assume that $x \sim y$ and let $U \in \mathcal{N}_x$. Then there is an $r > 0$ such that $B(x, r) \subseteq U$.

³ One can show that a topological group is T_1 if it is T_0 , and furthermore is always regular, so a T_0 topological group is T_3 .

But we clearly have $y \in B(x, r)$, so $U \in \mathcal{N}_y$. This shows that $\mathcal{N}_x \subseteq \mathcal{N}_y$, and the opposite inclusion follows by symmetry.

Conversely, assume that $x \not\sim y$. Then $0 < r < \rho(x, y)$ for some r , and $B(x, r)$ is a neighbourhood of x but not of y . \square

3.2. Operations on T_0 -spaces

PROPOSITION 3.6

Let X carry the initial topology induced by maps $f_\alpha: X \rightarrow X_\alpha$ for $\alpha \in A$. Assume that each X_α is T_0 , and that the f_α separate points in X . Then X is also T_0 .

In particular, any subspace of a T_0 -space is T_0 , and a product of T_0 -spaces is T_0 . Furthermore, if a nonempty product space is T_0 , then every factor is T_0 .

PROOF. Let $x, y \in X$ with $x \neq y$. Since the f_α separate points in X , there is a $\beta \in A$ such that $x_\beta \neq y_\beta$. Without loss of generality pick a neighbourhood U of x_β in X_β that does not contain y_β . Then $f_\beta^{-1}(U)$ is a neighbourhood of x that does not contain y .

For the final claim, assume that $X = \prod_{\alpha \in A} X_\alpha$ is a nonempty T_0 product space, and let $\beta \in A$. Pick a point $y \in X$, and let

$$Y = X_\beta \times \prod_{\alpha \neq \beta} \{y_\alpha\} = \{x \in X \mid x_\alpha = y_\alpha \text{ for } \alpha \neq \beta\}.$$

Then Y is T_0 since it is a subspace of X , so $X_\beta \cong Y$ is also T_0 . \square

Notice that we could also have proved the first result above by proving it separately for subspaces and products, and then using the fact that X could be embedded in the product $\prod_{\alpha \in A} X_\alpha$ since the f_α separate points.

PROPOSITION 3.7

Let $(X_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ be a collection of T_0 -spaces. Then the disjoint union $X = \coprod_{\alpha \in A} X_\alpha$ is also T_0 .

This proposition in fact holds for all final topologies on a set X with the property that the coinducing maps $(f_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ are injective, and the property that the images $f_\alpha(X_\alpha)$ form a partition of X . Under these assumptions the f_α cover X and are both open and closed (the latter of which we shall not use below). I am not aware of any other interesting final topologies with these properties.

PROOF. First recall that the canonical injections ι_α are open, and that their images form a partition of X . For $x, y \in X$ with $x \neq y$, if $x \in X_\alpha$ and $y \in X_\beta$ for $\alpha \neq \beta$ then e.g. X_α is a neighbourhood of x not containing y . If instead $\alpha = \beta$, then since X_α is T_0 the point x has a neighbourhood not containing y . \square

4 • The T_1 axiom

4.1. Definition and equivalent properties

DEFINITION 4.1

A topological space X satisfies the T_1 axiom and is called a T_1 -space if, for every pair of distinct points $x, y \in X$, x has a neighbourhood disjoint from y , and y has a neighbourhood disjoint from x .

Clearly every T_1 -space is T_0 . We begin by giving some properties of topological spaces that are equivalent to the T_1 axiom:

PROPOSITION 4.2

The following are equivalent for a topological space X :

- (i) X is T_1 ,
- (ii) each singleton of X is closed, and
- (iii) each subset of X is the intersection of all open sets containing it.

PROOF. (i) \Rightarrow (ii): If X is T_1 and $x \in X$, then every point $y \in X \setminus \{x\}$ has a neighbourhood disjoint from $\{x\}$ so $X \setminus \{x\}$ is open.

(ii) \Rightarrow (iii): If $A \subseteq X$, then

$$A = X \setminus \bigcup_{x \notin A} \{x\} = \bigcap_{x \notin A} X \setminus \{x\},$$

so A is an intersection of open sets.

(iii) \Rightarrow (i): If $x, y \in X$ with $x \neq y$, then there is an open subset containing x and not y , and vice versa. \square

4.2. Operations on T_1 -spaces

PROPOSITION 4.3

Let X carry the initial topology induced by maps $f_\alpha: X \rightarrow X_\alpha$ for $\alpha \in A$. Assume that each X_α is T_1 , and that the f_α separate points in X . Then X is also T_1 .

In particular, any subspace of a T_1 -space is T_1 , and a product of T_1 -spaces is T_1 . Furthermore, if a nonempty product space is T_1 , then every factor is T_1 .

PROOF. We omit the proof since it is almost identical to the proof of Proposition 3.6. \square

PROPOSITION 4.4

Let $(X_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ be a collection of T_1 -spaces. Then the disjoint union $X = \coprod_{\alpha \in A} X_\alpha$ is also T_1 .

PROOF. Similar to the proof of Proposition 3.7. \square

PROPOSITION 4.5

A quotient space X/\sim is T_1 if and only if every \sim -equivalence class is closed in X .

PROOF. Fibres of the quotient map are precisely the equivalence classes, so by the definition of the quotient topology, singletons of X/\sim are closed if and only if the corresponding equivalence class is closed as a subset of X . \square

4.3. Conditions for the T_1 axiom**PROPOSITION 4.6**

The closed image⁴ of a T_1 -space is T_1 .

PROOF. Let $f: X \rightarrow Y$ be a closed map from a T_1 -space X to a topological space Y , and let $y \in f(X)$. Then there is some $x \in X$ with $f(x) = y$, and since $\{x\}$ is closed in X and f is closed, $\{y\}$ is closed in Y and hence closed in $f(X)$. \square

5 • Hausdorff spaces

5.1. Definition and equivalent properties

DEFINITION 5.1

A topological space X satisfies the T_2 axiom and is called a T_2 -space or *Hausdorff space* if, for every pair of distinct points $x, y \in X$, x has a neighbourhood U and y a neighbourhood V with $U \cap V = \emptyset$.

Again, a T_2 -space is clearly T_1 . We give a series of conditions that are equivalent to the T_2 axiom.

PROPOSITION 5.2

The following are equivalent for a topological space X :

- (i) X is Hausdorff,

⁴ By ‘closed image’ we mean the image of a closed (not necessarily continuous) map.

(ii) *limits of nets (and hence of filters) in X are unique, and*

(iii) *the diagonal $\Delta = \{(x, x) \mid x \in X\}$ is closed in $X \times X$.*

PROOF. (i) \Rightarrow (ii): Let $(x_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ be a net in X , and assume that $x_\alpha \rightarrow x$ and $x_\alpha \rightarrow y$. For every pair of neighbourhoods U of x and V of y , (x_α) is eventually in $U \cap V$. Hence x and y have no pair of disjoint neighbourhoods, so $x = y$.

(ii) \Rightarrow (iii): If Δ were not closed, then there would exist a net $(x_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ in X such that $(x_\alpha, x_\alpha) \rightarrow (x, y)$ where $x \neq y$, so the limit of (x_α) would not be unique.

(iii) \Rightarrow (i): Let $x, y \in X$ be distinct points so that $(x, y) \notin \Delta$. If Δ is closed, then (x, y) has a neighbourhood $U \times V$ in $X \times X$ disjoint from Δ . But then U and V are disjoint neighbourhoods of x and y respectively, so X is Hausdorff. \square

5.2. Operations on Hausdorff spaces

PROPOSITION 5.3

Let X carry the initial topology induced by maps $f_\alpha: X \rightarrow X_\alpha$ for $\alpha \in A$. Assume that each X_α is Hausdorff, and that the f_α separate points in X . Then X is also Hausdorff.

In particular, any subspace of a T_0 -space is T_0 , and a product of T_0 -spaces is T_0 . Furthermore, if a nonempty product space is T_0 , then every factor is T_0 .

PROOF. TODO \square

5.3. Further properties of Hausdorff spaces

PROPOSITION 5.4

In a Hausdorff space, disjoint compact sets can be separated.

PROOF. Let K_1 and K_2 be disjoint compact sets in a Hausdorff space X , and fix a point $x \in K_1$. Since X is Hausdorff, x can be separated from every $y \in K_2$. It follows from [Lemma 2.4](#) that x can be separated from K_2 . But then K_2 can be separated from every point in K_1 , so another application of [Lemma 2.4](#) yields the desired claim. \square

PROPOSITION 5.5

If $f, g: X \rightarrow Y$ are continuous and Y is Hausdorff, then the set $\{f = g\} = \{x \in X \mid f(x) = g(x)\}$ is closed. In particular, if f and g agree on a dense subset of X , then $f = g$.

PROOF. Let $x \in X$ be such that $f(x) \neq g(x)$. Since Y is Hausdorff, $f(x)$ and $g(x)$ have disjoint neighbourhoods U and V respectively. Then $f^{-1}(U) \cap g^{-1}(V)$ is a neighbourhood of x on which f and g differ. Thus $\{f \neq g\}$ is open which proves the claim.

Alternatively we may argue using nets⁵: Let $(x_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ be a net in $\{f = g\}$ such that $x_\alpha \rightarrow x$. By continuity we have $f(x_\alpha) \rightarrow f(x)$ and $g(x_\alpha) \rightarrow g(x)$, and since limits are unique in Y by Proposition 5.2(ii) and $f(x_\alpha) = g(x_\alpha)$ we have $f(x) = g(x)$. \square

6 • Regular and T_3 -spaces

6.1. Definition and equivalent properties

DEFINITION 6.1

A topological space X is *regular* if, for every point $x \in X$ and closed subset $A \subseteq X$ with $x \notin A$, x has a neighbourhood U and A a neighbourhood V with $U \cap V = \emptyset$.

If furthermore X is T_1 , then X is said to satisfy the T_3 axiom and is called a T_3 -space.

Notice that a regular space is *not* necessarily Hausdorff since singletons are not closed. Of course a T_3 -space is Hausdorff.

PROPOSITION 6.2

A topological space X is regular if and only if every $x \in X$ has a neighbourhood basis of closed sets.

PROOF. Assume that X is regular, and let U be an open neighbourhood of $x \in X$. Then U^c is closed, so there exist disjoint open sets V and W with $x \in V$ and $U^c \subseteq W$. Then $x \in V \subseteq W^c \subseteq U$, so W^c is the desired closed neighbourhood.

Conversely, let $x \in X$ and $A \subseteq X$ closed with $x \notin A$. Then A^c is an open neighbourhood of x , so A^c contains a closed neighbourhood B of x . Then B° and B^c are disjoint open neighbourhoods of x and A respectively. \square

⁵ We refrain from using nets (or filters) as far as possible, or at least also provide proofs that do not depend on them. In this case nets do in fact clarify the necessity of the Hausdorff assumption, so we also include a proof using nets.

6.2. Operations on regular spaces

PROPOSITION 6.3

Let X carry the initial topology induced by maps $f_\alpha: X \rightarrow X_\alpha$ for $\alpha \in A$. Assume that each X_α is regular. Then X is also regular.

In particular, any subspace of a regular space is regular, and a product of regular spaces is regular. Furthermore, if a nonempty product space is regular, then every factor is regular.

Notice that we do *not* require that the f_α separate points in X since we do not need to distinguish individual points. If the f_α do separate points in X , then by Proposition 4.3 the above also holds with ‘regular’ replaced with ‘ T_3 ’.

PROOF. Assume that each X_α is regular. We prove that each $x \in X$ has a neighbourhood basis of closed sets in accordance with Proposition 6.2, so let U be an open neighbourhood of x . Then x lies in some basic neighbourhood $\bigcap_{i=1}^n f_{\alpha_i}^{-1}(U_{\alpha_i}) \subseteq U$, where U_{α_i} is open in X_{α_i} . Hence $f_{\alpha_i}(x) \in U_{\alpha_i}$, and since X_{α_i} is regular $f_{\alpha_i}(x)$ has a closed neighbourhood F_{α_i} contained in U_{α_i} . But then $f_{\alpha_i}^{-1}(F_{\alpha_i}) \subseteq f_{\alpha_i}^{-1}(U_{\alpha_i})$ is a closed neighbourhood of x , and finally $\bigcap_{i=1}^n f_{\alpha_i}^{-1}(F_{\alpha_i})$ is a closed neighbourhood of x contained in U as desired.

The final claim follows as in the proof of Proposition 3.6 since each factor is homeomorphic to a subspace of the product. \square

PROPOSITION 6.4

Let $(X_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ be a collection of regular spaces. Then the disjoint union $X = \bigsqcup_{\alpha \in A} X_\alpha$ is also regular.

As with Proposition 3.7 we may immediately generalise this result to a larger class of final topologies: Namely those coinduced by maps $(f_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ that are both open and closed, and that cover X . Note that this assumption is weaker than the previous assumptions, just as the assumptions in Proposition 6.3 were weaker than those of Proposition 3.6. Again I am not aware of any interesting applications of this fact.

PROOF. Let $y \in X$, and let U be a neighbourhood of y . There is then an $\alpha \in A$ and an $x \in X_\alpha$ such that $\iota_\alpha(x) = y$. Then $\iota_\alpha^{-1}(U)$ is an open neighbourhood of x , so x has a closed neighbourhood F contained therein. It follows that $y \in \iota_\alpha(F) \subseteq U$, and $\iota_\alpha(F)$ is a closed neighbourhood of y since ι_α is open and closed. \square

6.3. Further properties of regular spaces

PROPOSITION 6.5

In a regular space, compact sets can be separated from disjoint closed sets.

PROOF. This is a direct consequence of [Lemma 2.4](#). □

PROPOSITION 6.6

A regular Lindelöf space is paracompact.

PROOF. Let X be a regular Lindelöf space, and let \mathcal{U} be an open cover of X . For every $x \in X$ pick a $U_x \in \mathcal{U}$ with $x \in U_x$. By regularity x has a neighbourhood V_x such that $\overline{V_x} \subseteq U_x$. Then $\{V_x \mid x \in X\}$ is also an open cover of X , so it has countable subcover $\{V_{x_n} \mid n \in \mathbb{N}\}$ since X is Lindelöf.

For $n \in \mathbb{N}$ define sets

$$W_n = U_{x_n} \setminus \bigcup_{k < n} \overline{V_{x_k}}.$$

For $x \in X$ there is a smallest $k \in \mathbb{N}$ such that $x \in \overline{V_{x_k}}$, so $x \in W_k$. Hence $\{W_n \mid n \in \mathbb{N}\}$ is also an open cover of X , and it is clearly a refinement of \mathcal{U} . It is also locally finite, since $x \in V_{x_k}$ for some $k \in \mathbb{N}$, but V_{x_k} does not intersect W_n for $n > k$. Hence X is paracompact. □

6.4. Conditions for regularity

COROLLARY 6.7

Pseudometric spaces are regular.

PROOF. This will follow from [Proposition 7.5](#) since completely regular spaces are regular. □

COROLLARY 6.8

Locally compact Hausdorff spaces are regular.

PROOF. This will follow from [Theorem 7.6](#) since completely regular spaces are regular.

Alternatively, by [Proposition 2.6](#) every point of an LCH space has a neighbourhood basis of compact (and hence closed) sets, which implies regularity by [Proposition 6.2](#). □

7 • Completely regular and Tychonoff spaces

7.1. Definition and equivalent properties

DEFINITION 7.1

A topological space X is *completely regular* if, for every point $x \in X$ and closed subset $A \subseteq X$ with $x \notin A$, there is a continuous function $f: X \rightarrow [0, 1]$ with $f(x) = 0$ and $f(A) = 1$. Such a function is said to *separate* x and A .

If furthermore X is T_1 , then X is said to satisfy the $T_{3\frac{1}{2}}$ -axiom and is called *Tychonoff*.

A completely regular space is indeed regular: If f separates x and A , then $f^{-1}([0, 1/2))$ and $f^{-1}((1/2, 1])$ are disjoint neighbourhoods of x and A respectively.

We now prove that a space is completely regular precisely when the bounded continuous functions on the space induce the topology. Of course, these functions are already continuous, so this says that there are *enough* continuous functions for them to characterise the topology.

To prove this we take a small detour by studying the defining property of completely regular spaces in greater generality. We say that a collection $(f_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ of functions $f_\alpha: X \rightarrow X_\alpha$ between topological spaces *separates points from closed sets* if whenever $C \subseteq X$ is closed and $x \notin C$, then $f_\alpha(x) \notin \overline{f_\alpha(C)}$ for some $\alpha \in A$.

PROPOSITION 7.2

A collection $(f_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ of functions $f_\alpha: X \rightarrow X_\alpha$ between topological spaces separates points from closed sets if and only if the sets $f_\alpha^{-1}(V)$, for $\alpha \in A$ and $V \subseteq X_\alpha$ open, form a basis for the topology on X .

PROOF. First assume that (f_α) separates points from closed sets, let $U \subseteq X$ be open and let $x \in U$. Then U^c is closed, so there is some $\alpha \in A$ such that $f_\alpha(x) \notin \overline{f_\alpha(U^c)}$. Then

$$U^c \subseteq f_\alpha^{-1}(f_\alpha(U^c)) \subseteq f_\alpha^{-1}(\overline{f_\alpha(U^c)}).$$

So letting $V = \overline{f_\alpha(U^c)}^c$ we find that $x \in f_\alpha^{-1}(V) \subseteq U$ as desired.

Conversely, assume that the sets $f_\alpha^{-1}(V)$ form a basis for the topology on X . Let $x \in X$ and $C \subseteq X$ closed with $x \notin C$. There is an $\alpha \in A$ and an open $V \subseteq X_\alpha$ such that $x \in f_\alpha^{-1}(V) \subseteq C^c$. Then V is a neighbourhood of $f_\alpha(x)$ disjoint from $f_\alpha(C)$, so $f_\alpha(x) \notin \overline{f_\alpha(C)}$. \square

COROLLARY 7.3

If $(f_\alpha)_{\alpha \in A}$ is a collection of functions $f_\alpha: X \rightarrow X_\alpha$ between topological spaces which separates points from closed sets, then X carries the weak topology induced by the

maps f_α .

PROOF. Proposition 7.2 shows that the collection of preimages $f_\alpha^{-1}(V)$, for $\alpha \in A$ and $V \subseteq X_\alpha$ open, forms a basis for the topology on X , so it in particular generates the topology. \square

THEOREM 7.4

A topological space X is completely regular if and only if it has the weak topology induced by $C_b(X)$.

PROOF. If X is completely regular, then $C_b(X)$ separates points from closed sets by definition, so Corollary 7.3 shows that X carries the the weak topology induced by $C_b(X)$.

Conversely, suppose that X has the weak topology induced by $C_b(X)$. Let $U \subseteq X$ be open, and let $x \in U$. Then there are functions $f_1, \dots, f_n \in C_b(X)$ and subbasic open sets $V_1, \dots, V_n \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ such that

$$x \in \bigcap_{i=1}^n f_i^{-1}(V_i) \subseteq U.$$

By changing the sign on the f_i if necessary, we may assume that each V_i is on the form (a_i, ∞) . Define functions $g_i: X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ by $g_i(x) = (f_i(x) - a_i) \vee 0$. Then $g_i^{-1}(0, \infty) = f_i^{-1}(a_i, \infty)$, so

$$x \in \bigcap_{i=1}^n g_i^{-1}(0, \infty) \subseteq U.$$

Let $g = g_1 g_2 \cdots g_n$. Then $g(x) > 0$, so $x \in g^{-1}(0, \infty)$. Furthermore, if $g(y) > 0$ then each $g_i(y) > 0$. it follows that

$$x \in g^{-1}(0, \infty) \subseteq U.$$

Then $g(x) \neq 0$, but $g(U^c) = 0$, so X is completely regular. \square

7.2. Conditions for complete regularity

PROPOSITION 7.5

Pseudometric spaces are completely regular.

In Proposition 8.2 we will see that pseudometric spaces are also normal, but since a pseudometric space is not necessarily T_1 , this does not imply that it is (completely) regular. Hence the necessity of the present proposition.

PROOF. Let (S, ρ) be a pseudometric space, $x \in S$, and let $A \subseteq S$ be closed with $x \notin A$. Since A is closed, the map $y \mapsto \rho(y, A)$ is zero on A and nonzero at y , and it is continuous by Lemma 2.8. \square

We now wish to show that locally compact Hausdorff spaces are completely regular. In the presence of the Hausdorff axiom, complete regularity is weaker than normality, and *compact* spaces are normal, so it is perhaps not surprising that *locally* compact spaces are completely regular.

To show this we will prove a version of Urysohn's lemma for locally compact Hausdorff spaces. This relies on the Urysohn lemma for normal spaces covered in the next section, but we place this discussion here since we are interested in it in the context of completely regular spaces.

THEOREM 7.6: Urysohn's Lemma, locally compact version

Let X be a locally compact Hausdorff space, and let $K \subseteq U \subseteq X$ with K compact and U open. Then there exists a continuous function $f: X \rightarrow [0, 1]$ such that $f(K) = 1$ and f vanishes outside a compact subset of U .

PROOF. By Corollary 2.7 there is a precompact open set V with $K \subseteq V \subseteq \bar{V} \subseteq U$. Since compact Hausdorff spaces are normal, we can apply Urysohn's lemma for normal spaces to \bar{V} : This yields a continuous function $f: \bar{V} \rightarrow [0, 1]$ with $f(K) = 1$ and $f(\partial V) = 0$. Extend f to X by letting $f(\bar{V}^c) = 0$.

We claim that f is continuous on X . Let $B \subseteq [0, 1]$ be closed. If $0 \notin B$, then $f^{-1}(B) = (f|_{\bar{V}})^{-1}(B)$ is closed in \bar{V} , hence also in X . On the other hand, if $0 \in B$, then

$$f^{-1}(B) = (f|_{\bar{V}})^{-1}(B) \cup \bar{V}^c = (f|_{\bar{V}})^{-1}(B) \cup V^c,$$

where the last equality follows since $\partial V \subseteq (f|_{\bar{V}})^{-1}(B)$. Again $f^{-1}(B)$ is closed, so f is continuous. \square

COROLLARY 7.7

Locally compact Hausdorff spaces are completely regular, hence Tychonoff.

PROOF. Let X be a locally compact Hausdorff space, let $x \in X$ and $A \subseteq X$ be a closed subset. In the notation of Urysohn's lemma, let $K = \{x\}$ and $U = A^c$, which yields a continuous function $f: X \rightarrow [0, 1]$ with $f(x) = 1$ and $f(A) = 0$. \square

7.3. Further properties of completely regular spaces

PROPOSITION 7.8

Let X be a topological space. There exists a Tychonoff space Y such that $C_b(X)$ and $C_b(Y)$ are isomorphic as rings.

Hence, if one is interested in studying rings of bounded functions, then one may as well assume that the domain is Tychonoff.

PROOF. Let X' be X equipped with the weak topology induced by $C_b(X)$. Then since replacing the topology with a weaker one does not introduce any new continuous functions, we have $C_b(X) = C_b(X')$. Hence X' is completely regular by [Theorem 7.4](#).

Now consider the T_0 -identification X'/\equiv of X' . By [Proposition 3.4](#) we have $C(X') \cong C(X'/\equiv)$, and this isomorphism clearly restricts to an isomorphism $C_b(X') \cong C_b(X'/\equiv)$, proving the claim. \square

8 • Normal and T_4 -spaces

8.1. Definition

DEFINITION 8.1

A topological space X is *normal* if, for every pair of disjoint closed subsets $A, B \subseteq X$, A has a neighbourhood U and B a neighbourhood V with $U \cap V = \emptyset$.

If furthermore X is T_1 , then X is said to satisfy the T_4 axiom and is called a T_4 -space.

We discuss conditions that are equivalent to normality in our discussion of Urysohn's lemma below.

8.2. Conditions for normality

PROPOSITION 8.2

Pseudometric spaces are normal.

PROOF. Let (S, ρ) be a pseudometric space, and let $A, B \subseteq S$ be disjoint closed subsets. For $a \in A$ let $r_a = \rho(a, B)/2 > 0$, and for $b \in B$ let $r_b = \rho(b, A)/2 > 0$. Let

$$U = \bigcup_{a \in A} B(a, r_a) \quad \text{and} \quad V = \bigcup_{b \in B} B(b, r_b).$$

We claim that U and V are disjoint. Let $x \in U$ and $y \in V$. Then $x \in B(a, r_a)$ and $y \in B(b, r_b)$ for some $a \in A$ and $b \in B$. Then

$$\rho(a, b) \leq \rho(a, x) + \rho(x, y) + \rho(y, b) < \rho(x, y) + r_a + r_b,$$

which implies that

$$0 \leq \rho(a, b) - r_a - r_b < \rho(x, y),$$

where the first inequality follows since

$$\rho(a, b) = \frac{\rho(a, b) + \rho(a, b)}{2} \geq \frac{\rho(a, B)}{2} + \frac{\rho(b, A)}{2} = r_a + r_b. \quad \square$$

PROPOSITION 8.3

Every paracompact Hausdorff space is normal, hence T_4 .

In particular, every compact Hausdorff space is T_4 . This also follows easily since two disjoint compact sets can be separated in a Hausdorff space by [Proposition 5.4](#).

PROOF.

PROPOSITION 8.4

A regular Lindelöf space is normal.

PROOF. Let X be a regular Lindelöf space, and let $A, B \subseteq X$ be disjoint closed subsets. By regularity, every $a \in A$ has a neighbourhood U_a such that $\overline{U_a} \cap B = \emptyset$. Similarly, every $b \in B$ has a neighbourhood V_b separating it from A . Since A and B are themselves Lindelöf by [Proposition 2.2](#), they are covered by countably many U_a and V_b respectively, say $A \subseteq \bigcup_{n \in \mathbb{N}} U_n$ and $B \subseteq \bigcup_{n \in \mathbb{N}} V_n$.

Now define sequences of sets S_n and T_n by

$$S_n = U_n \setminus \overline{\bigcup_{i < n} T_i} \quad \text{and} \quad T_n = V_n \setminus \overline{\bigcup_{i \leq n} S_i}.$$

(Notice the strict and non-strict inequalities.) Define the sets $S = \bigcup_{n \in \mathbb{N}} S_n$ and $T = \bigcup_{n \in \mathbb{N}} T_n$. Clearly S is a neighbourhood of A and T of B . We claim that they are also disjoint: Let $x \in S_n$ for some $n \in \mathbb{N}$. Then $x \notin T_m$ for $m < n$ by the definition of S_n , and $x \notin T_m$ for $m \geq n$ by the definition of T_m . \square

We thus find that compact Hausdorff implies normal, and that regular Lindelöf implies normal. That is, normality follows from a compactness property along with a separability property. We cannot weaken compactness to Lindelöf and still have normality, but also ‘strengthening’ Hausdorff to regularity retains normality. (Of course, it is not regularity but T_3 that is stronger than Hausdorff.)

8.3. Urysohn's Lemma and related results

If X is a topological space and $A, B \subseteq X$ are closed sets, then a continuous function $f: X \rightarrow [0, 1]$ with $f(A) = 0$ and $f(B) = 1$ is called a *Urysohn function* for A and B .

THEOREM 8.5: Urysohn's Lemma

A topological space X is normal if and only if there is a Urysohn function for every pair of closed subsets of X .

PROOF. First assume that X is normal and that $A, B \subseteq X$ are closed. By normality there is an open set $U_{1/2}$ such that

$$A \subseteq U_{1/2} \subseteq \overline{U_{1/2}} \subseteq B^c.$$

Then A and $U_{1/2}^c$ are disjoint closed sets, and so are $\overline{U_{1/2}}$ and B . Hence there exist open sets $U_{1/4}$ and $U_{3/4}$ such that

$$A \subseteq U_{1/4} \subseteq \overline{U_{1/4}} \subseteq U_{1/2} \subseteq \overline{U_{1/2}} \subseteq U_{3/4} \subseteq \overline{U_{3/4}} \subseteq B^c.$$

Let Δ be the set of all dyadic rational numbers⁶ in $(0, 1)$. We may thus recursively define for every $r \in \Delta$ a set U with the following properties:

- (1) $A \subseteq U_r$ and $\overline{U_r} \subseteq B^c$ for each $r \in \Delta$, and
- (2) $\overline{U_r} \subseteq U_s$ if $r < s$, for $r, s \in \Delta$.

We furthermore let $U_1 = X$. Then define a function $f: X \rightarrow [0, 1]$ by $f(x) = \inf\{r \mid x \in U_r\}$. Since $A \subseteq U_r \subseteq B^c$ for all $r \in \Delta$, we clearly have $f(A) = 0$ and $f(B) = 1$, and that $0 \leq f(x) \leq 1$ for all $x \in X$.

It remains to be shown that f is continuous. Let $\alpha \in \mathbb{R}$ and $x \in X$, and notice that $f(x) < \alpha$ if and only if $x \in U_r$ for some $r < \alpha$, which is true just when $x \in \bigcup_{r < \alpha} U_r$. Hence,

$$f^{-1}((-\infty, \alpha)) = \bigcup_{r < \alpha} U_r$$

is open. Similarly $f(x) > \alpha$ if and only if $x \notin U_r$ for some $r > \alpha$, which is equivalent to $x \notin \overline{U_s}$ for some $s > \alpha$ by property [Item \(2\)](#) above. This is the case if and only if $x \in \bigcup_{s > \alpha} (\overline{U_s})^c$. It follows that

$$f^{-1}((\alpha, \infty)) = \bigcup_{s > \alpha} (\overline{U_s})^c$$

is also open. Hence f is continuous.

Conversely, assume that f is a Urysohn function for a pair of disjoint closed sets $A, B \subseteq X$. Then $f^{-1}([0, 1/2))$ and $f^{-1}((1/2, 1])$ are disjoint neighbourhoods of A and B respectively, so X is normal. \square

⁶ Recall that a dyadic rational number is a number on the form $p/2^n$ for $p \in \mathbb{Z}$ and $n \in \mathbb{N}$.

THEOREM 8.6: *The Tietze extension theorem*

A topological space X is normal if and only if any continuous function $f: A \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ on a closed set $A \subseteq X$ can be extended to a continuous function on all of X , i.e. there exists a continuous $F: X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ such that $f = F|_A$.

Furthermore, if $a, b \in \mathbb{R}$ and $f(A) \subseteq [a, b]$ then F can be chosen such that $F(X) \subseteq [a, b]$.

PROOF.

References

- Folland, Gerald B. (2007). *Real Analysis: Modern Techniques and Their Applications*. 2nd ed. Wiley. 386 pp. ISBN: 0-471-31716-0.
- Lee, John M. (2011). *Introduction to Topological Manifolds*. 2nd ed. Springer. 433 pp. ISBN: 978-1-4419-7939-1. DOI: [10.1007/978-1-4419-7940-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-7940-7).
- Munkres, James R. (2000). *Topology*. 2nd ed. Prentice Hall, Inc. 537 pp. ISBN: 0-13-181629-2.
- Pirttimäki, Teemu (2019). *A survey of Kolmogorov quotients*. arXiv: [1905.01157](https://arxiv.org/abs/1905.01157).
- Willard, Stephen (1970). *General Topology*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. 369 pp.