

# Euclidean algorithm

## Theorem

Let  $A$  be a commutative ring. Let  $f, g \in A[X]$  be polynomials in one variable of degrees  $\geq 0$ . Assume that the leading coefficient of  $f$  is a unit. There exists unique polynomials  $q, r \in A[X]$  such that

$$g = fq + r$$

and  $\deg r < \deg f$ .

We adopt the convention then  $\deg(0) = -\infty$ .

## Existence

If  $\deg g < \deg f$ , then  $(q, r) = (0, g)$  is the unique pair satisfying the condition. So Assume  $\deg g \geq \deg f$ . Write

$$f = aX^{\deg f} + f_1$$

where  $\deg f_1 < \deg f$  and  $a \in A^\times$ . Similarly, write

$$g = bX^{\deg g} + g_1$$

with  $\deg g_1 < \deg g$ . Then,

$$\deg \left( g - ba^{-1}f \cdot X^{\deg g - \deg f} \right) < \deg(g)$$

Replace  $g$  by

$$g' := g - ba^{-1}f \cdot X^{\deg g - \deg f}$$

and repeat this process.

## Uniqueness

Suppose we have two equations

$$g = fq + r$$

$$g = fq' + r'$$

with  $\deg r, \deg r' < \deg f$ . Taking the difference, we get

$$f(q - q') = r - r'.$$

Considering the degree, we get

$$f(q - q') = 0$$

Since  $f = aX^{\deg f} + f_1$  with  $\deg f_1 < \deg f$  and  $a$  is a non-zero-divisor,  $f$  is not a zero-divisor in  $A[X]$ . We conclude that  $q = q'$  and  $r = r'$ .

## Question

From this, deduce Theorem 1.4 in Lang's Algebra, p. 175.