Meccano frames

https://github.com/heptagons/meccano/frames

Abstract

Meccano frames are groups of meccano [1] strips intended to be a base to build diverse meccano larger objects.

1 Triangular frame

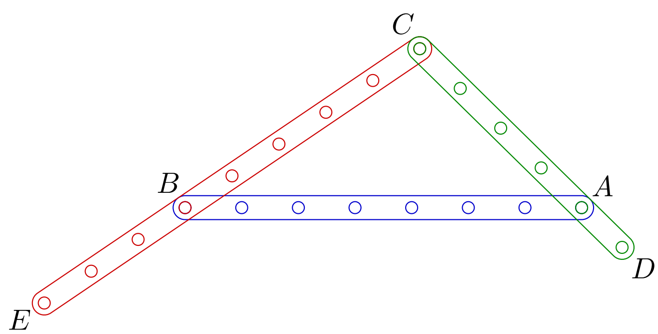


Figure 1: Triangular frame. With three strips we form the triangle $\triangle ABC$. At least we extend one of two strips $\overline{CB}$ and $\overline{CA}$ to become $\overline{CE}$ and $\overline{CD}$. The new vertices D and E are rigid as the triangle and we'll calculate the distance between them.

Figure 1 shows a triangular frame with strips with extentions. First we define five integer distances a, b, c, d, e and calculate the cosine of $\angle BCA$:

$$a \equiv \overline{CB}, \quad b \equiv \overline{CA} \quad c \equiv \overline{AB} \tag{1}$$

$$\theta \equiv \angle BCA \tag{2}$$

$$\cos\theta = \frac{a^2 + b^2 - c^2}{2ab} \tag{3}$$

$$d \equiv \overline{CB} + \overline{BE} = \overline{CE} \geq a \tag{4}$$

$$e \equiv \overline{CA} + \overline{AD} = \overline{CD} \geq b \tag{5}$$

Then we apply the cosine to the triangle $\triangle CED$ to get the extensions distance $\overline{DE}$:

$$\begin{aligned}\overline{DE}^2 &= \overline{CD}^2 + \overline{CE}^2 - 2\overline{CD} \times \overline{CE}\cos\theta \\ &= d^2 + e^2 - 2de\cos\theta \\ &= d^2 + e^2 - de\left(\frac{a^2 + b^2 - c^2}{ab}\right) \end{aligned} \tag{6}$$

[1] Meccano mathematics by 't Hooft

We expect at most a value of the form $\sqrt{s}/t$ where $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ so we define the surd as:

$$
\begin{aligned}
\overline{DE} &= \frac{\sqrt{s}}{t} \\
&= \sqrt{d^2 + e^2 - de\left(\frac{a^2 + b^2 - c^2}{ab}\right)} \\
&= \frac{\sqrt{a^2 b^2 (d^2 + e^2) - abde(a^2 + b^2 - c^2)}}{ab} \\
&= \frac{\sqrt{ab((ad - be)(bd - ae) + c^2 de)}}{ab} \qquad (7)
\end{aligned}
$$

1.1 Software to construct distances $\sqrt{s}/t$

We write a factory to build all the triangles with a given surd $\sqrt{s}$ for a given maximum strips lengths. We reject $t \neq 1$ and s as not square-free, which includes pythagorean triangles. Next list show all the triangles with $s = \sqrt{7}, t = 1$ where $c < a + b$, $a \leq d \leq max$, $b \leq e \leq max$, $c \leq max$:

```
=== RUN   TestFramesTriangleSurds
NewFrames().TriangleSurds surd=7 max=15
  1) a=1 e=1+2 c=1 cos=1/2
  2) d=1+1 e=1+2 c=1 cos=1/2
  3) d=1+2 b=1 c=1 cos=1/2
  4) d=1+2 e=1+1 c=1 cos=1/2
  5) a=2 e=2+1 c=2 cos=1/2
  6) d=2+1 b=2 c=2 cos=1/2
  7) a=3 e=2+2 c=2 cos=3/4 CED=pi/2
  8) d=3+1 e=2+1 c=2 cos=3/4 CDE=pi/2
  9) d=4+2 e=4+4 c=1 cos=31/32
 10) d=4+4 e=4+2 c=1 cos=31/32
 11) a=7 e=5+1 c=3 cos=13/14
 12) a=7 e=5+2 c=3 cos=13/14
```

The code is in folder `github.com/heptagons/meccano/frames`.

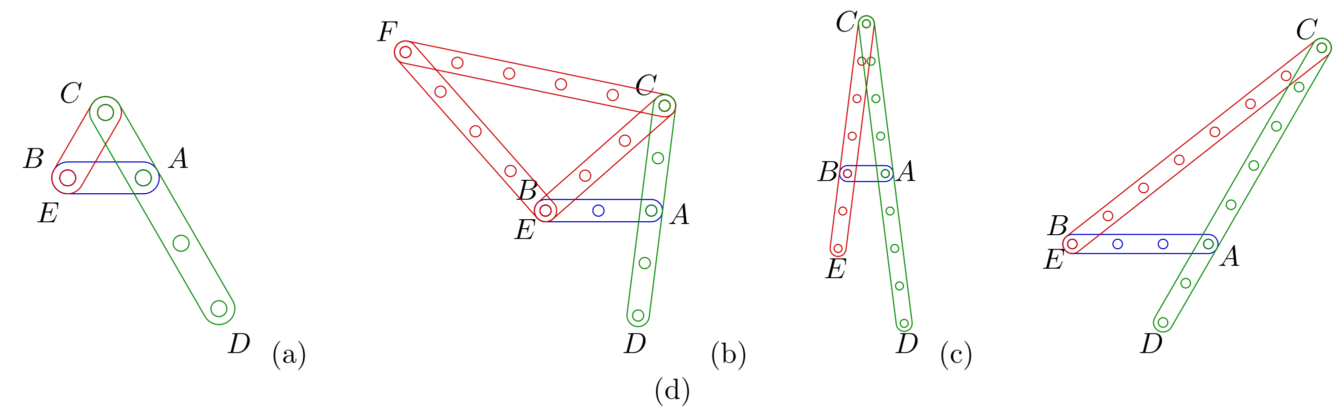
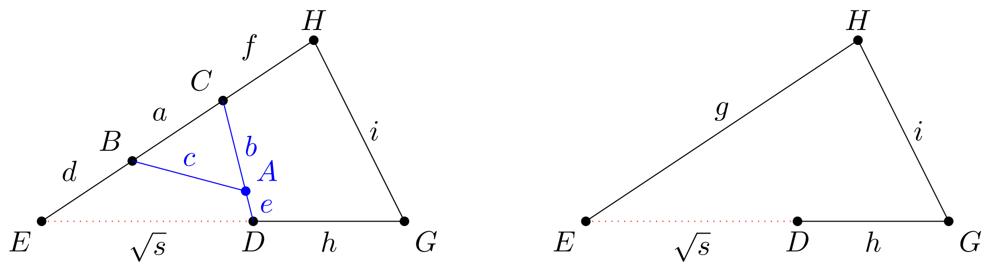


Figure 2: Triangles with extended fixed distance $\overline{DE} = \sqrt{7}$.

2 Distance $\sqrt{s} + h$

From figure 3 (a) we know $\sqrt{s}$ distance between nodes E and D is produced by the three strips frame $a + d$, $b + e$ and c. Using the law of cosines we calculate the angle $\theta = \angle CED$ in terms of $\sqrt{s}$:



(a) (b)

Figure 3: The five strips intented to form an algebraic distance $\overline{EG} = \sqrt{s} + h$.

$$\begin{aligned}
\cos\theta &= \frac{(a+d)^2 + (\sqrt{s})^2 - (b+e)^2}{2(a+d)\sqrt{s}} \\
&= \frac{((a+d)^2 + s - (b+e)^2)\sqrt{s}}{2(a+d)s} \tag{8} \\
&= \frac{m\sqrt{s}}{n} \tag{9} \\
m &= (a+d)^2 + s - (b+e)^2 \tag{10} \\
n &= 2(a+d)s \tag{11}
\end{aligned}$$

From figure 3 (a) we notice two sets of points are collinear: $\{E, B, C, H\}$ and $\{E, D, G\}$. Using the law of cosines we calculate the angle $\theta = \angle HEG$ in terms of distances g, h, i:

$$\begin{aligned}
\cos\theta &= \frac{g^2 + (\sqrt{s}+h)^2 - i^2}{2g(\sqrt{s}+h)} \\
&= \frac{g^2 + s + 2\sqrt{s}h + h^2 - i^2}{2g(\sqrt{s}+h)} \\
&= \frac{g^2 + s + h^2 - i^2 + 2\sqrt{s}h}{2g(\sqrt{s}+h)} \tag{12}
\end{aligned}$$

We multiply both numerator and denominator by $\sqrt{s} - h$ to eliminate the surd from denominator:

$$\begin{aligned}
\cos\theta &= \frac{(s + g^2 + h^2 - i^2)(\sqrt{s} - h) + 2\sqrt{s}h(\sqrt{s} - h)}{2g(\sqrt{s}+h)(\sqrt{s}-h)} \\
&= \frac{(s + g^2 + h^2 - i^2)(\sqrt{s} - h) + 2sh - 2\sqrt{s}h^2}{2g(s-h^2)} \\
&= \frac{-h(s + g^2 + h^2 - i^2 - 2s) + (s + g^2 + h^2 - i^2 - 2h^2)\sqrt{s}}{2g(s-h^2)} \\
&= \frac{h(s - g^2 - h^2 + i^2) + (s + g^2 - h^2 - i^2)\sqrt{s}}{2g(s-h^2)} \\
&= \frac{o + p\sqrt{s}}{q} \tag{13} \\
o &= h(s - g^2 - h^2 + i^2) \tag{14} \\
p &= s + g^2 - h^2 - i^2 \tag{15} \\
q &= 2g(s - h^2) \tag{16}
\end{aligned}$$

We compare both cosines equations 9 and 13:

$$\frac{m\sqrt{s}}{n} = \frac{o + p\sqrt{s}}{q} \tag{17}$$

Since all variables are integers we need two conditions. First o should be zero. And second $\frac{m}{n} = \frac{p}{q}$.

For condition 1, we force o to be zero:

$$\begin{aligned} o &= 0 \\ h(s - g^2 - h^2 + i^2) &= 0 \\ s &= g^2 + h^2 - i^2 \end{aligned} \tag{18}$$

For condition2, we force m, n, p, q as:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{m}{n} &= \frac{p}{q} \\ \frac{(a+d)^2 + s - (b+e)^2}{2(a+d)s} &= \frac{s + g^2 - h^2 - i^2}{2g(s - h^2)} \end{aligned} \tag{19}$$

We replace the value of s of last equation RHS with the value of equation 18 of condition 1:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{(a+d)^2 - (b+e)^2 + s}{(a+d)s} &= \frac{s + g^2 - h^2 - i^2}{g(s - h^2)} \\ &= \frac{g^2 + h^2 - i^2 + g^2 - h^2 - i^2}{g(g^2 + h^2 - i^2 - h^2)} \\ &= \frac{2(g^2 - i^2)}{g(g^2 - i^2)} \\ &= \frac{2}{g} \\ ((a+d)^2 - (b+e)^2 + s)g &= 2(a+d)s \end{aligned} \tag{20}$$

3 Five strips frame

Figure 4 shows a frame with five strips. The frame has eleven variables:

$$a = \overline{BC}, \quad b = \overline{AC}, \quad c = \overline{AB} \tag{21}$$

$$d = \overline{AD}, \quad e = \overline{AE} \tag{22}$$

$$f = \overline{AG} \tag{23}$$

$$g = \overline{HI}, \quad h = \overline{GI}, \quad i = \overline{GH} \tag{24}$$

$$j = \overline{HJ}, \quad k = \overline{HK} \tag{25}$$

Assume vertex A is at the origin. Let $\alpha = \angle BAC$, and D_x, D_y the abscissa and orditate of vertex D

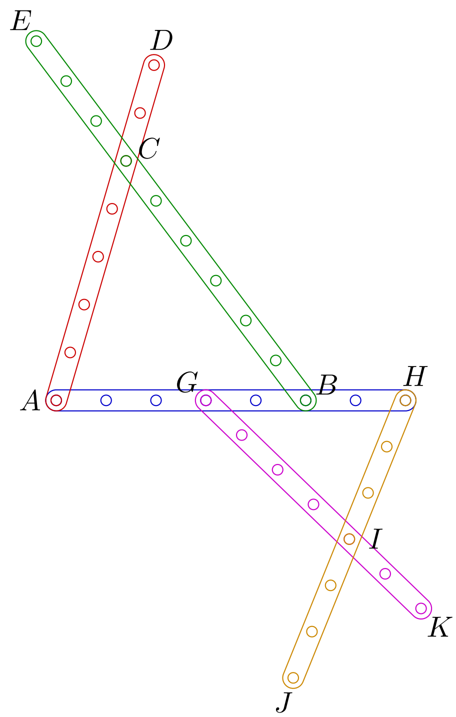


Figure 4: Five strips frame. We construct two triangles $\triangle ABC$ and $\triangle GHI$. Extending the strips we get four vertices E, D, J, K which can form four rigid distances of surd type: $\overline{DJ}, \overline{DK}, \overline{EJ}, \overline{EK}$.

so we have:

$$t \equiv b^2 + c^2 - a^2 \tag{26}$$

$$x \equiv 4b^2c^2 - t^2 \tag{27}$$

$$\cos\alpha = \frac{t}{2bc} \tag{28}$$

$$\sin\alpha = \frac{\sqrt{x}}{2bc} \tag{29}$$

$$D_x = d\sin\alpha = \frac{d\sqrt{x}}{2bc} \tag{30}$$

$$D_y = d\cos\alpha = \frac{dt}{2bc} \tag{31}$$

$$D_x^2 + D_y^2 = d^2 \tag{32}$$

Let $\delta = \angle HGI$ and K_x, K_y the abscissa and ordinate of vertex K so we have:

$$v \equiv h^2 + i^2 - g^2 \tag{33}$$

$$y \equiv 4h^2 i^2 - v^2 \tag{34}$$

$$\cos\delta = \frac{v}{2hi} \tag{35}$$

$$\sin\delta = \frac{\sqrt{y}}{2hi} \tag{36}$$

$$K_x = f + k\sin\delta = f + \frac{k\sqrt{y}}{2hi} \tag{37}$$

$$K_y = -k\cos\delta = -\frac{kv}{2hi} \tag{38}$$

$$K_x^2 + K_y^2 = f^2 + 2fk\sin\delta + k^2 \tag{39}$$

$$= f^2 + k^2 + \frac{fk\sqrt{y}}{hi} \tag{40}$$

We calculate the distance $\overline{DK}$:

$$\begin{aligned}
\overline{DK}^2 &= (D_x + K_x)^2 + (D_y + K_y)^2 \\
&= D_x^2 + 2D_xK_x + K_x^2 + D_y^2 + 2D_yK_y + K_y^2 \\
&= (D_x^2 + D_y^2) + (K_x^2 + K_y^2) + 2D_xK_x + 2D_yK_y \\
&= d^2 + f^2 + k^2 + \frac{fk\sqrt{y}}{hi} + 2\left(\frac{d\sqrt{x}}{2bc}\right)\left(f + \frac{k\sqrt{y}}{2hi}\right) + 2\left(\frac{dt}{2bc}\right)\left(-\frac{kv}{2hi}\right) \\
&= d^2 + f^2 + k^2 - \frac{dtkv}{2bchi} + \frac{fk\sqrt{y}}{hi} + \frac{df\sqrt{x}}{bc} + \frac{dk\sqrt{xy}}{2bchi}
\end{aligned} \tag{41}$$