

# Homework

There will be approximately 11 problem sets, posted on Canvas.

Homework #1 will be released on Tuesday, Jan 14. It will be due on Jan 20 at 11:59pm.

Homework answers have to be justified. No justification—no credit.

Collaboration in small groups (up to four people total in a group) is allowed—but each case of collaboration has to be explicitly acknowledged on every homework submission.

# Boolean functions

## Problem

How many Boolean functions in  $k$  variables are there?

## Solution

Each of the  $k$  input bits can take value 0 or 1. There are  $2^k$  possible input binary strings. A Boolean function can send each of them to either 0 or 1. So the total number of possibilities is  $2^{2^k}$ .

## Exercise

Count microchips with  $k$  binary inputs and  $\ell$  binary outputs. Two microchips are considered identical if they compute the same function  $\{\text{binary strings of length } k\} \rightarrow \{\text{binary strings of length } \ell\}$ . For  $\ell = 1$ , you should recover the previous answer.

# Homework submission and grading

Homework submission and grading will be done via [Gradescope](#).

On each problem set, only 5 problems will be graded.

Late homework will not be accepted.

The lowest homework score will be dropped in the final calculation.

Gradescope has a built-in mechanism for regrade requests.

Any questions about the administrative aspects of the course?

# Proofs

This is a **proof-based** course. Students are expected to understand rigorous mathematical proofs, and perhaps even more importantly, supply their own proofs when asked.

Some specific prerequisites:

- proofs by induction,

- proofs by contradiction,

- basic set theory terminology (intersection, union, etc.),

- basic function terminology (one-to-one, onto, composition, etc.).

If you are not familiar with Mathematical Induction, read either [Bóna, Chapter 2] or [Shahriari, Sections 1.1–1.2].

# Counting words

An **alphabet** is a finite set of symbols (letters).

A **word** in an alphabet is a string (i.e., finite sequence) of letters.

Theorem
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The number of  $k$ -letter words in an  $n$ -letter alphabet is  $n^k$ .

$k = 2$	AA	AB	AC	BA	BB	BC	CA	CB	CC
$n = 3$									

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$k = 3$	AAA	AAB	ABA	ABB	BAA	BAB	BBA	BBB
$n = 2$								

# Subsets and binary strings

## Theorem

A  $k$ -element set has  $2^k$  subsets.

$k = 3$	$\emptyset$	$\{A\}$	$\{B\}$	$\{C\}$	$\{A, B\}$	$\{A, C\}$	$\{B, C\}$	$\{A, B, C\}$
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## Proof

The subsets of a  $k$ -element set are encoded by binary strings of length  $k$ , i.e., by  $k$ -letter words in a 2-letter alphabet:

$\emptyset$	$\{A\}$	$\{B\}$	$\{C\}$	$\{A, B\}$	$\{A, C\}$	$\{B, C\}$	$\{A, B, C\}$
000	100	010	001	110	101	011	111

The number of such words is  $2^k$ .

# Content overview

This course introduces the fundamental notions, techniques, and theorems of **enumerative combinatorics** and **graph theory**.

Level: undergraduate. Next level courses: **Math 565**, **Math 566**.

Recommended texts (neither is required):

M. Bóna, *A walk through combinatorics*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., World Scientific, 2016-17.

S. Shahriari, *Invitation to Combinatorics*, Cambridge University Press, 2022.

We will roughly cover Part II (**Enumerative Combinatorics**) and Part III (**Graph Theory**) of Bóna's textbook, plus some other topics.

We will not follow either textbook too closely. The lectures and the books will often provide slightly different approaches.

# Grading

The grade will be based on:

- homework (45%),
- quizzes (15%), and
- two 1.5-hour exams (20% each).

This course will **not** be graded on a curve, i.e., there are not a set percentage of each grade to be given out.

Final grade cutoffs:

- total score of 90% guarantees the final grade of A or higher;
- total score of 80% guarantees the final grade of B or higher;
- total score of 70% guarantees the final grade of C or higher;
- total score of 60% guarantees the final grade of D.



# The Subtraction Principle

The Subtraction Principle is used in situations where it is more practical to count the objects of interest together with some other objects, and then subtract the number of those extra objects.

## Problem

How many ways are there to place 5 people named Amy, Bernie, Cory, Donald, and Elizabeth on the stage so that Amy and Bernie are *not* adjacent to each other?

## Solution

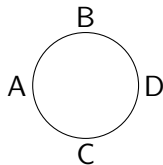
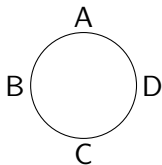
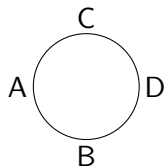
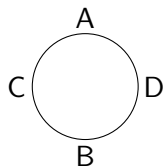
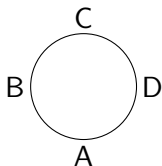
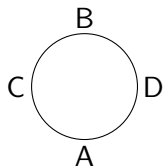
$$5! - 4! \cdot 2 = 72.$$

# Cyclic permutations

## Problem

How many ways are there to arrange  $n$  distinct objects in a circle, up to rotation?

Example: seating a party of  $n$  people around a round table.



Answer:  $(n - 1)!$ .

Exercise

# Exams and quizzes

## Exams (20% each)

There will be two exams, each covering one half of the course. These exams will **not** be cumulative.

## Quizzes (15% total)

There will be three quizzes, administered via [Canvas](#):

- at the end of next week, on [Friday-Saturday, January 17–18](#);
- at the end of the week after, on [Friday-Saturday, January 24–25](#);
- in the first week after spring break.

The goal of the first two quizzes is to help you decide whether this course is a good match for you.

# Course management

I am teaching Math 465 section 3 this Fall

Location: East Hall B737

Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 2:30-3:50 PM.

The best way to communicate with me is by email.

Most of the course management will occur on Canvas.

Office hours will be conducted in my office, EH 3827:

Tuesday/Thursdasy 3:50–5:20 PM

# Math 465: Introduction to Combinatorics

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These slides will be posted on Canvas.

# Permutations of subsets

## Problem

Given 34 people, how many ways are there for *at most* 4 of them to wait in line?

## Solution

Let us divide the set of possibilities into *cases*:

The line has 0 people. There is 1 way this can happen.

The line has 1 person. There are 34 ways this can happen.

The line has 2 people. There are  $34 \cdot 33 = 1122$  ways.

The line has 3 people. There are  $34 \cdot 33 \cdot 32 = 35904$  ways.

The line has 4 people. There are  $34 \cdot 33 \cdot 32 \cdot 31 = 1113024$  ways.

Hence the total number of ways is

$$1 + 34 + 1122 + 35904 + 1113024 = \mathbf{1150085}.$$

Note that we used both Addition and Multiplication Principles.

# The Division Principle

The Division Principle is used in situations where each object of interest is counted several times (a fixed number).

## Problem

How many diagonals are there in a convex  $n$ -gon?

*Polygon illustration with all  
diagonals*

*Polygon illustration with  
diagonals from one vertex*

## Solution

For each of the  $n$  vertices, there are  $n - 3$  diagonals connecting to it. Each diagonal is counted twice. **Answer:**  $n(n - 3)/2$ .

# Counting permutations

## Theorem

An  $n$ -element set has  $n!$  permutations.

$n = 3$	123	132	213	231	312	321
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Proof #1: selecting the entries, left to right

$n$  choices for the 1<sup>st</sup> entry, then  $n - 1$  choices for the 2<sup>nd</sup> entry, etc.

Proof #2: inserting the entries, in increasing order

	123	132	213	231	312	321
$n = 3$						
$n = 4$	1234	1324	2134	2314	3124	3214
	1243	1342	2143	2341	3142	3241
	1423	1432	2413	2431	3412	3421
	4123	4132	4213	4231	4312	4321



# The Multiplication Principle, continued

## Problem

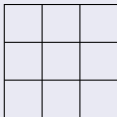
How many divisors does the number 600 have?

## Solution

Since  $600 = 2^3 \cdot 3 \cdot 5^2$ , the answer is  $4 \cdot 2 \cdot 3 = 24$ .

## Problem

How many rectangles are there in this picture?



## Solution

$(3 + 2 + 1) \times (3 + 2 + 1) = \mathbf{36}$ .

# The golden rule

## The golden rule of counting

Count everything **exactly** once.

That is: count everything, and don't count anything more than once. As we develop more sophisticated methods of counting, it will be important to make mental checks that everything is accounted for, and nothing is overcounted.

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# Problem-solving challenges

In past years, many students ended up dropping out of Math 465.

Why? Much of the content is quite elementary.

However, many problems are “one of a kind,” with no off-the-shelf algorithmic solution.

The first two quizzes will give you some idea of where you stand.

How do I prepare for quizzes/exams/homework?

Use problems in the textbooks to practice!

Also, come to office hours.

Questions?

# The Multiplication Principle (=Product Rule)

## Problem

Jimmy John's **Slim Roast Beef Sandwich** can be ordered:

- on **French** bread, **wheat** bread, or **without** bread;
- with **regular**, **extra**, or **small** amount of roast beef;
- with **regular**, **extra**, **small**, or **no** amount of avocado spread;
- with **regular**, **extra**, **small**, or **no** amount of provolone cheese;
- with, **without**, or with **extra** Dijon mustard;
- with or **without** tomato.

How many ways are there to order the *Slim Roast Beef Sandwich*?

## Solution

$$3 \cdot 3 \cdot 4 \cdot 4 \cdot 3 \cdot 2 = 864.$$

# Unordered set partitions

## Problem

In how many ways can a 4-element set be partitioned into nonempty subsets (=blocks)?

Example: distributing students among Zoom breakout rooms.

## Solution

There are 4 cases, depending on the number of blocks:

1 block:  $abcd$

2 blocks:  $abc|d$   $abd|c$   $acd|b$   $bcd|a$   $ab|cd$   $ac|bd$   $ad|bc$

3 blocks:  $ab|c|d$   $ac|b|d$   $ad|b|c$   $bc|a|d$   $bd|a|c$   $cd|a|b$

4 blocks:  $a|b|c|d$

Total:  $1 + 7 + 6 + 1 = 15$ .

Exercise: Solve the analogous problem for a 5-element set.