

3x+1 Problem

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The Collatz Problem, also known as the $3x + 1$ problem, is defined as:

$$c(x) = \begin{cases} x/2, & \text{if } x \equiv 0 \pmod{2} \\ 3x + 1, & \text{if } x \equiv 1 \pmod{2} \end{cases}, x \in \mathbb{N}^+$$

Or the "shortcut" version:

$$t(x) = \begin{cases} x/2, & \text{if } x \equiv 0 \pmod{2} \\ (3x + 1)/2, & \text{if } x \equiv 1 \pmod{2} \end{cases}, x \in \mathbb{N}^+$$

This process will eventually reach the number 1, regardless of which positive integer is chosen initially.

1 Proving odd inputs of Problem are even

The second part of the Collatz Conjecture ($3x+1$) applies to every number in the set: $\{x \in \mathbb{N}^+ \mid 2x + 1\}$.

Let c be a random number from this set. $c(c) = 3(2x + 1) + 1$

Factor out the variables: $6x + 3 + 1 = 6x + 4 = 2(3x + 2)$

Since the expression does not follow the form for an odd number, $2x + 1$, it is an even number. Therefore, all odd inputs of the Collatz Conjecture are even.

2 Proving the Collatz Problem for the set 2^n

$\{x \in \mathbb{N}^+ : 2^x\}$

In this case, $c^{(\log_2 x)}(x) = 1$.

Ex. $x = 2, c(2) = \frac{2}{2} = 1$

Therefore, the conjecture for the set 2^n is true.

3 Finding functions $c^2(x)$ and beyond

Since $c(x)$ is a recursive function, we can represent it as $c(c(x))$ or $c^2(x)$ and beyond. Let's start with the case of $\{x \in \mathbb{N}^+ : 2x + 1\}$

$c^2(x) = \frac{3x+1}{2}$

Using the proof discussed earlier, as odd inputs of $c(x)$ always return an even value, we can deduce that $c^2(x) = \frac{3x+1}{2}, x \in \mathbb{N}^+ \mid 2x + 1$.

4 Finding the worst case number for $3x + 1$

Given a number $\{x \in \mathbb{N}^+ : 2x + 1\}$ after $t(x) = \frac{3x+1}{2}$ will still be part of this set, over time, the number will look like this (change infinity to one less times you should run the Collatz shortcut function).

$$w^r(x) = \frac{3x+1}{2} + \sum_{i=1}^{r-1} \frac{3^i x + 3^i}{2^{(i+1)}}$$

Example: 31

$$w^5(31) = \frac{3x+1}{2} + \sum_{i=1}^{5-1} \frac{3^i x + 3^i}{2^{(i+1)}} = 242$$

Since 31 leads to an even number, it will not break the Collatz Conjecture.

5 Finding the average case number for $3x + 1$

Given a number $\{x \in \mathbb{N}^+ : 2x + 1\}$

6 Finding the prime factors for $3x + 1 = 2^n$

Is there a pattern when it comes to prime factors of numbers of this format?
 $\{x \in \mathbb{N}^+ : \frac{2^{2n}-1}{3}\}$