

## Why

We want to talk about several objects in order.

#### **Definition**

Suppose A is a set. A list (or finite sequence, n-tuple, string, dataset) in A (or of elements from or of A) is a function

$$a:\{1,\ldots,n\}\to A.$$

In other words, a list is a family whose index set is  $\{1, ..., n\}$ . The length (or size) of the list is the size of its domain. The kth entry (or term, record) of A is the result  $a_k$  of k; here  $k \in \{1, ..., n\}$ .

#### **Notation**

Since the natural numbers are naturally ordered, we denote lists using this order, from left to right, between parentheses. For example, we denote the function  $a:\{1,\ldots,4\}\to A$  by  $(a_1,a_2,a_3,a_4)$ .

#### Orderings and numberings

Let A be a set with |A| = n. A sequence  $a : \{1, ..., n\} \to A$  is an ordering of A if a is invertible. In this case, we call the inverse a numbering of A. An ordering associates with each number a unique object and a numbering associates with each object a unique number (the object's index).

#### Relation to Direct Products

A natural direct product is a product of a list of sets. We denote the direct product of a list of sets  $A_1, \ldots, A_n$  by  $\prod_{i=1}^n A_i$ . If each  $A_i$  is the same set A, then we denote the product  $\prod_{i=1}^n A_i$  by  $A^n$ . The direct product  $A^n$  is the set of lists in A.

### Natural unions and intersections

We denote the family union of the list of sets  $A_1, \ldots, A_n$  by  $\bigcup_{i=1}^n A_i$ . Similarly, we denote the intersection by  $\bigcap_{i=1}^n A_i$ .

# Slices

An index range for a list s of length n is a pair (i,j) for which  $1 \leq i < j \leq n$ . The slice corresponding to (i,j) is the length j-i list s' defined by  $s'_1 = s_i, s'_2 = s_{i+1}, \ldots, s'_j = s_{i+j-1}$ .

We denote the (i, j)-slice of s by  $s_{i:j}$ . If i = 1 we use  $s_{:j}$  and if j = n we use  $s_{i:}$  as shorthands for the slices  $s_{1:j}$  and  $s_{i:n}$ .

