

# Fast square and multiply modular exponentiation (FSMMEA)

## Abstract

Modular exponentiation:  $(a^b) \bmod n$  can be computed using square and multiply exponentiation algorithm<sup>1</sup>. The present algorithm in this repository describes a faster variant stopping the computation when intermediary modulus is 0.

## Observations

**The modulus of a number by a number that begins with a number it begins with is the same as the modulus of the number by the number it ends with**

$$2555 \bmod 25 = 55 \bmod 25$$

The number begins 25, so the modulus of 2555 by 25 is the same as the modulus of 55 by 25. Both are 5.

---

<sup>1</sup>Christof Paar, Jan Pelzl, Understanding Cryptography, section 7.4



**Why?**

Because  $2555 = 25 * 100 + 55$  and modulus of  $25 * 100$  by  $25$  is  $0$ , so the modulus of  $2555$  by  $25$  is the same as the modulus of  $55$  by  $25$ .

**A generalization of the previous observation is that a modulus of a number is equal to the modulus of this number plus another number which modulus is equal to  $0$**

$$5055 \bmod 25 = 55 \bmod 25$$

**So can we compute only the smaller number modulus to be faster?**

Yes, using the square and multiply modular exponentiation algorithm and storing the last modulus. If the current one is equal to  $0$ , the computation can stop, and the algorithm can return the last modulus stored.

## Python implementation

Prototyping is done in Python for the ease of development and testing. The corresponding module is `pysma.py`. The reference implementation is `pow` Python built-in method.

## C implementation

For a portable implementation and low-level profiling of the executables, C is used to test than new implementation. It is a transpile of the Python code. The classic square and multiply modular exponentiation is implemented in `sma.c`. The fast square and multiply modular exponentiation is implemented in `fsma.c`. Again the reference implementation is `pow` Python built-in method.

## Dependencies

Compilation and tests need LLVM, cmake, Clang/cc/gcc or any compiler, Valgrind and Python3 for tests and analysis.

## Compilation

Both sources are compiled as an executable to be used in CLI and shared library to be loaded using Python for testing purposes. The compilation is done using the following command:

```
$ make all
```

## Testing

The tests are done using a number inferior to a C unsigned 64-Bit integer, the type used in C programs, as base, exponent, and modulus. Running the corresponding Python module should end in return code 0 if the result is the same as the reference implementation `pow` otherwise an `assertionError` is raised.

## Test results

Both `sma.c` and `fsma.c` compiled shared libraries returned results equal to the reference implementation `pow` for all the numbers inferior to a C unsigned 64-Bit integer tested.

## Hypothesis

The FSMMEA algorithm is generally faster than the SMA algorithm because of the computation ending sooner in case a temporary modulus is equal to 0. The impact of storing the last modulus and comparing the current to 0 is negligible.

## Performance analysis

### Counting instructions using Valgrind

Has expected, comparing the temporary remainder to 0 has a cost in terms of instructions. When no intermediate remainder is 0, the computing function itself execute 20% more instructions. In this case the percentage is constant.

The classic implementation counts 567 instructions:

```
$ valgrind --tool=callgrind --toggle-collect=sma ./sma-prof <<<"97032574325492 4294965003 38"
==1559769== Callgrind, a call-graph generating cache profiler
==1559769== Copyright (C) 2002-2017, and GNU GPL'd, by Josef Weidendorfer et al.
==1559769== Using Valgrind-3.19.0 and LibVEX; rerun with -h for copyright info
==1559769== Command: ./sma-prof
==1559769==
==1559769== For interactive control, run 'callgrind_control -h'.
1040
==1559769==
==1559769== Events      : Ir
==1559769== Collected : 567
==1559769==
==1559769== I    refs:      567
```

The currently described implementation counts 679 instructions:

```
$ valgrind --tool=callgrind --toggle-collect=fsma ./fsma-prof <<<"97032574325492 4294965003 38"
...
==1559866== I    refs:      679
```

When there is an intermediary remainder equal to 0, the number of instructions is reduced by a proportion that changes depending on the number of square and multiply left to compute. Here above an example with an 82% decrease of the number of instructions executed.

The classical implementation counts 457 instructions:

```
$ valgrind --tool=callgrind --toggle-collect=sma ./sma-prof <<<"294 98725745 98"
...
==1577575== Events      : Ir
==1577575== Collected : 457
==1577575==
==1577575== I    refs:      457
```

The currently described implementation counts 84 instructions:

```
$ valgrind --tool=callgrind --toggle-collect=fsma ./fsma-prof <<<"294 98725745 98"
...
==1577460== Events      : Ir
==1577460== Collected : 84
```

```
==1577460==  
==1577460== I    refs:      84
```

### Measuring time using clock()

More instructions are required but instructions time cost can vary of several orders of magnitude. On an x86\_64 Intel machine, the time cost of the comparison is negligible. The programs `sma-chrono` (classical implementation) and `fsma-chrono` (this implementation) are used to measure the time cost in seconds using `time.h` library `clock()` function. Both functions are executed 10 millions times to spread the possible time variations. The results when no intermediary remainder is equal to 0 are almost the same:

```
chrichri@chrichri-HKD-WXX:~/left-right-modulo$ ./fsma-chrono <<< "2945 98725745 98"  
59  
Time: 3.804948  
chrichri@chrichri-HKD-WXX:~/left-right-modulo$ ./sma-chrono <<< "2945 98725745 98"  
59  
Time: 3.835387
```

Quite often this new implementation is slightly faster than the classical one, but it is surely not relevant on a Linux desktop PC.

When there is an intermediary remainder equal to 0, the time cost of the comparison is significant:

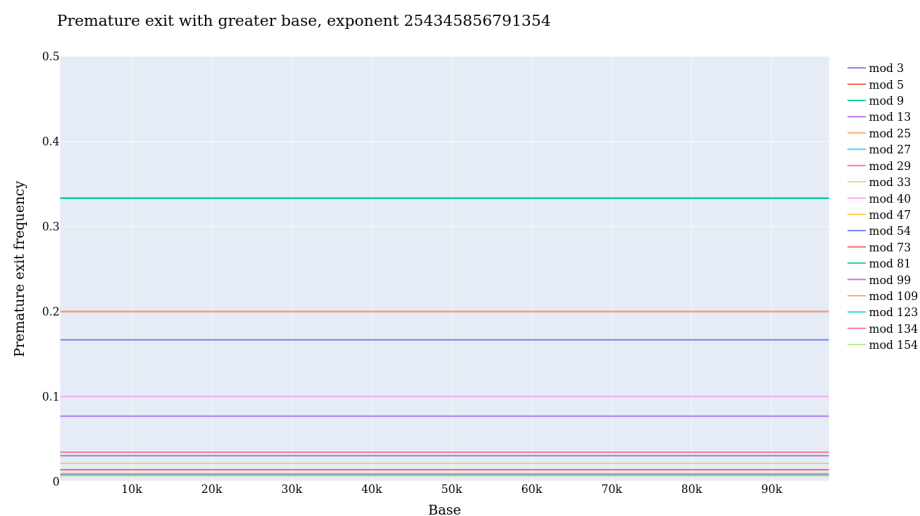
```
chrichri@chrichri-HKD-WXX:~/left-right-modulo$ ./fsma-chrono <<< "294 98725745 98"  
0  
Time: 0.048704  
chrichri@chrichri-HKD-WXX:~/left-right-modulo$ ./sma-chrono <<< "294 98725745 98"  
0  
Time: 3.754375
```

The new implement represent 1.3% of the time of the classical one, therefore the name of the algorithm is Fast Square and Multiply Modular Exponentiation Algorithm Modular Exponentiation...

### Analysing the premature exit of the algorithm

The proportion of instructions executed is not constant, nore the time, and the chance of having an intermediary remainder equal to 0 is not constant either. It surely increases with the number of square and multiply to compute. To measure those phenomenons, the C is not adapted. A more high-level language like Python with its data science tools is needed.

The frequency of the premature exit, i.e., intermediary remainder equal to 0 of the algorithm does not change why the base. But it changes with the modulus. The following graph shows the frequency (linear regression to suppress variations du to sampling) of premature exit of the algorithm function of the base.



But the frequency of premature exit tend to zero with the modulo getting greater.

