

Number Fields

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-1 Miscellaneous

Book: Number Fields, Marcus

Course notes: www.dpmms.ac.uk/~jat58/nfl2018

0 Motivation

Theorem. If p is an odd prime, then $p = a^2 + b^2$ for $a, b \in \mathbb{Z} \iff p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$.

Proof. If $p = a^2 + b^2$, then $p \equiv 0, 1, 2 \pmod{4}$. So this condition on p is necessary.

Suppose instead $p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$. Then $\left(\frac{-1}{p}\right) = 1$. Thus $\exists a \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $a^2 \equiv -1 \pmod{p}$, or $p \mid a^2 + 1$. We can factor $a^2 + 1 = (a + i)(a - i)$ in the ring $\mathbb{Z}[i]$. Here we introduce a notation: if $R \subseteq S$ are rings and $\alpha \in S$, then

$$R[\alpha] = \left\{ \sum_{i=0}^n a_i \alpha^i \in S \mid a_i \in R \right\}$$

, the smallest subring of S containing both R and α .

We know from IB GRM that $\mathbb{Z}[i]$ is a UFD. Now $p \mid (a + i)(a - i)$. If p is irreducible in $\mathbb{Z}[i]$ then $p \mid a + i$ or $p \mid a - i$, contradiction. Thus p is reducible in $\mathbb{Z}[i]$, hence $p = z_1 z_2$ with $z_1, z_2 \in \mathbb{Z}[i]$. If $z_1 = A + Bi$, $A, B \in \mathbb{Z}$, then $A^2 + B^2 = p$. \square

Another example is when p is an odd prime. Does the equation

$$x^p + y^p = z^p$$

have solutions with $x, y, z \in \mathbb{Z}$ and $xyz \neq 0$?

Theorem. (Kummer, 1850)

If $\mathbb{Z}[e^{2\pi i/p}]$ is a UFD, then there are no solutions.

Strategy: factor $x^p + y^p = \prod_{j=0}^{p-1} (x + e^{2\pi i j/p} y)$ in $\mathbb{Z}[e^{2\pi i/p}]$.

However, we now know $\mathbb{Z}[e^{2\pi i/p}]$ is a UFD $\iff p \leq 19$.

Theorem. (Kummer, 1850)

If p is a *regular* prime, then there are no solutions.

If $p < 100$, then p is regular $\iff p \neq 37, 59, 67$.

We have seen various examples such as $\mathbb{Z} \subseteq \mathbb{Q}$, $\mathbb{Z}[i] \subseteq \mathbb{Q}[i]$, $\mathbb{Z}[e^{2\pi i/p}] \subseteq \mathbb{Q}[e^{2\pi i/p}]$, or in general, $\mathcal{O}_L \subseteq L$, where a ring of "integers" lies in a number field.

1 Ring of integers

Recall: A field extension L/K is an inclusion $K \leq L$ of fields. The degree of L/K is $[L : K] = \dim_K L$. We say L/K is finite if $[L : K] < \infty$.

Definition. (1.1)

A number field is a finite extension L/\mathbb{Q} . Here are two ways to construct number fields:

- (1) Let $\alpha \in \mathbb{C}$ be an algebraic number. Then $L = \mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$ is a number field;
 - (2) Let K be a number field, and let $f(X) \in K[X]$ be an irreducible polynomial. Then $L = K[X]/(f(X))$ is a number field.
- (Recall Tower Law: $[L : \mathbb{Q}] = [L : K][K : \mathbb{Q}] < \infty$).

Definition. (1.2)

- (1) Let L/K be a field extension. Then we say $\alpha \in L$ is algebraic over K if there exists a monic $f(X) \in K[X]$ such that $f(\alpha) = 0$;
- (2) Let L/\mathbb{Q} be a field extension. Then we say $\alpha \in L$ is an algebraic integer if there exists a monic $f(X) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$ such that $f(\alpha) = 0$.

Definition. (1.3)

Let L/K be a field extension, and let $\alpha \in L$ be algebraic over K . We call the minimal polynomial of α over K the monic polynomial $f_\alpha(X) \in K[X]$ of least degree such that $f_\alpha(\alpha) = 0$.

We recall why $f_\alpha(X)$ is well-defined: there exists some monic $f(X) \in K[X]$ with $f(\alpha) = 0$ as α is algebraic. If $f_\alpha(\alpha), f'_\alpha(\alpha) \in K[X]$ both satisfy the definition of minimal polynomial, then we apply the polynomial division algorithm to write

$$f_\alpha(X) = p(X)f'_\alpha(X) + r(X)$$

where $p(X), r(X) \in K[X]$, and $\deg r < \deg f'_\alpha$. Evaluate at $X = \alpha$, we have $0 = f_\alpha(\alpha) = p(\alpha)f'_\alpha(\alpha) + r(\alpha) = r(\alpha)$. By minimality of $\deg f'_\alpha$, we must have $r = 0$. Then $\deg f_\alpha = \deg f'_\alpha$, and $f_\alpha(X), f'_\alpha(X)$ are both monic, i.e. $p(X) = 1$ and $f_\alpha(X) = f'_\alpha(X)$.

Lemma. (1.4)

Let L/\mathbb{Q} be a field extension, and let $\alpha \in L$ be an algebraic integer. Then:

- (1) The minimal polynomial $f_\alpha(X)$ of α over \mathbb{Q} lies in $\mathbb{Z}[X]$;
- (2) If $g(X) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$ satisfies $g(\alpha) = 0$, then there exists $q(X) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$ such that $g(X) = f_\alpha(X)q(X)$;
- (3) The kernel of the ring homomorphism $\mathbb{Z}[X] \rightarrow L$ by $f(X) \mapsto f(\alpha)$ equals $(f_\alpha(X))$, the ideal generated by $f_\alpha(X)$.

Proof. (1) Recall that if $f(X) = a_n X^n + \dots + a_0 \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$, then we define from GRM, the content $c(f) = \gcd(a_n, \dots, a_0)$. Recall Gauss' Lemma: If $f(X), g(X) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$, then $c(fg) = c(f)c(g)$. Since $\alpha \in L$ is an algebraic integer, there exists monic $f(X) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$ such that $f(\alpha) = 0$, i.e. $c(f) = 1$. Apply polynomial division in $\mathbb{Q}[X]$ to get $f(X) = p(X)f_\alpha(X) + r(X)$, where $p(X), r(X) \in \mathbb{Q}[X]$, $\deg r < \deg f_\alpha$. The definition of $f_\alpha(X)$ implies that $r(X) = 0$, hence $f(X) = p(X)f_\alpha(X)$. Now choose integers $n, m \geq 1$ such that $np(X) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$, $c(np) = 1$, and $mf_\alpha(X) \in$

$\mathbb{Z}[x]$, $c(mf_\alpha) = 1$. Then $nmf(x) = (np(x))(mf_\alpha(x)) \implies c(nmf(x)) = nm = 1$. So $n = m = 1$, hence $f_\alpha(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$.

(2) Let $g(X) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]$ be such that $g(\alpha) = 0$. WLOG $g(x) \neq 0$ and $c(g) = 1$. Now apply polynomial division to write $g(x) = q(x)f_\alpha(x) + s(x)$ where $q(x), s(x) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$, $\deg s < \deg f_\alpha$. Again by definition we have $s(x) = 0$. Choose an integer $k \geq 1$ such that $kq(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$ and $c(kq) = 1$. Then $kg(x) = kq(x)f_\alpha(x) \implies k = c(kg) = c(kq)c(f_\alpha) = 1$. So $k = 1$, hence $q(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$.

(3) is a reformulation of (2). \square

Let L/\mathbb{Q} be a field extension. Last time we said $\alpha \in L$ is an algebraic integer if \exists monic polynomial $f(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$ such that $f(\alpha) = 0$. We proved that if $\alpha \in L$ is an algebraic integer and $f_\alpha(x) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ is the minimal polynomial of α over \mathbb{Q} , then $f_\alpha(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$. However there is a small problem, so we'll prove again.

Proof. Choose $f(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$ monic with $f(\alpha) = 0$, and write

$$f(x) = q(x)f_\alpha(x) + r(x)$$

where $q(x), r(x) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$, $\deg r < \deg f_\alpha$. Then $r(\alpha) = 0 \implies r(x) = 0$, by minimality of $\deg f_\alpha$. I said that we can find integer $n, m \geq 1$ s.t. $nf_\alpha(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$, $c(nf_\alpha) = 1$, $mq(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$, $c(mq) = 1$. However we need to explain why do they exist. Note $f_\alpha(x)$ and $q(x)$ are both monic. Choose integers $N, M \geq 1$ such that $Nf_\alpha(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$, $Mq(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$. Then $c(Nf_\alpha)|N$, $c(Mq)|M$ as those are the leading term of the polynomial. Now let $N/c(Nf_\alpha) = n \in \mathbb{Z}$, $M/c(Mq) = m \in \mathbb{Z}$. Now $nmf(x) = (nf_\alpha(x))(mq(x))$, so $c(nmf(x)) = nm = 1 \implies n = m = 1$. \square

Corollary. (1.5)

If $\alpha \in \mathbb{Q}$, then α is an algebraic integer $\iff \alpha \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Proof. By lemma 1.4, α is an algebraic integer $\iff f_\alpha(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$. But if $\alpha \in \mathbb{Q}$, then $f_\alpha(x) = x - \alpha$, and the first needs to divide the second polynomial. \square

Notation. If L/\mathbb{Q} is any field extension, we write $\mathcal{O}_L = \{\alpha \in L | \alpha \text{ is an algebraic integer}\}$.

Now we proceed to the first non-trivial result of the course:

Proposition. (1.6)

If L/\mathbb{Q} is a field extension, \mathcal{O}_L is a ring.

Proof. Clearly $0, 1 \in \mathcal{O}_L$. Now if $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $f_{-\alpha}(x) = (-1)^{\deg f_\alpha} f_\alpha(-x) \implies -\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$.

The hard part is to show that if $\alpha, \beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\alpha + \beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$ and $\alpha\beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$.

Observe that if $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha] \subseteq L$ is a finitely generated \mathbb{Z} -module. By definition, $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha]$ is generated by $1, \alpha, \alpha^2, \alpha^3, \dots$. Let $f_\alpha(x) = x^d + a_1x^{d-1} + \dots + ad$, $a_i \in \mathbb{Z}$. Then $\alpha^d = -(a_1\alpha^{d-1} + \dots + ad)$, so $\alpha^d \in \sum_{i=0}^{d-1} \mathbb{Z}\alpha^i$. By induction, we see that $\alpha^n \in \sum_{i=0}^{d-1} \mathbb{Z}\alpha^i$ for all $n \geq d$. Hence $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha] = \sum_{i=0}^{d-1} \mathbb{Z}\alpha^i$. Now take $\alpha, \beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$ and let $d = \deg f_\alpha$, $e = \deg f_\beta$.

By definition, $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta] = \mathbb{Z}[\alpha][\beta]$ is generated as a \mathbb{Z} -module by $\{\alpha^i \beta^j\}_{i,j \in \mathbb{N}}$. The same argument show that in fact this ring is generated as a \mathbb{Z} -module by $\{\alpha^i \beta^j\}$ for $0 \leq i \leq d-1, 0 \leq j \leq e-1$. So $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta]$ is finitely generated. From GRM we know the classification of finitely generated \mathbb{Z} -modules implies that there's an isomorphism $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta] \cong \mathbb{Z}^r \oplus T$ for some $r \geq 1$ and finite abelian group T . In fact, $T = 0$: if $\gamma \in T$, then $|T|\gamma = 0$, by Lagrange's theorem. But $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta] \subseteq L$, a \mathbb{Q} -vector space, so this forces $\gamma = 0$. Now we can therefore fix an isomorphism $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta] \cong \mathbb{Z}^r$ ($r \geq 1$). There's an endomorphism $m_{\alpha\beta} : \mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta] \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta]$ by $\gamma \rightarrow \alpha\beta\gamma$ (as a \mathbb{Z} -module). $m_{\alpha\beta}$ corresponds to an $r \times r$ matrix $A_{\alpha\beta} \in M_{r \times r}(\mathbb{Z})$. Let $F_{\alpha\beta}(x) = \det(x \cdot 1_r - A_{\alpha\beta}) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$, a monic polynomial. By the Cayley-Hamilton theorem, $F_{\alpha\beta}(m_{\alpha\beta}) = 0$ as endomorphisms of $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta]$. Write $F_{\alpha\beta}(x) = x^r + b_1 x^{r-1} + \dots + b_r$ for $b_i \in \mathbb{Z}$. Thus $m_{\alpha\beta}^r + b_1 m_{\alpha\beta}^{r-1} + \dots + b_r \cdot 1_r = 0$ as endomorphisms of $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta]$. Now the image of 1 is $(\alpha\beta)^r + b_1(\alpha\beta)^{r-1} + \dots + b_r = F_{\alpha\beta}(\alpha\beta) = 0$. So $\alpha\beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$. The argument to show $\alpha + \beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$ is identical, replacing $m_{\alpha\beta}$ by $m_{\alpha+\beta} : \mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta] \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}[\alpha, \beta]$ by $\gamma \rightarrow (\alpha + \beta)\gamma$. The detail is omitted here. \square

We call \mathcal{O}_L the ring of algebraic integers of L .

Lemma. (1.7)

Let L/\mathbb{Q} be a number field, and let $\alpha \in L$. Then $\exists n \geq 1$ an integer such that $n\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$.

Proof. Let $f(x) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ be a monic polynomial such that $f(\alpha) = 0$. Then $\exists n \in \mathbb{Z}, n \geq 1$ such that $g(x) = n^{\deg f} f(x/n) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$ is monic. But then $g(n\alpha) = n^{\deg f} f(\alpha) = 0$. So $n\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$. \square

2 Complex embeddings

Let L be a number field.

Definition. (2.1)

A *complex embedding* of L is a field homomorphism $\sigma : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$. Note: in this case, σ is injective, and $\sigma|_{\mathbb{Q}}$ is the usual embedding $\mathbb{Q} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$.

Proposition. (2.2)

Let L/K be an extension of number fields, and let $\sigma_0 : K \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be a complex embedding. Then there exist exactly $[L : K]$ embeddings $\sigma : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ which extends σ_0 ($\sigma|_K = \sigma_0$).

Proof. Induction on $[L : K]$. If $[L : K] = 1$, then $L = K$, so σ_0 determines σ . In general, choose $\alpha \in L - K$ and consider $L/K(\alpha)/K$. By the Tower law, $[L : K] = [L : K(\alpha)][K(\alpha) : K]$ and $[K(\alpha) : K] > 1$. By induction, it's enough to show there are exactly $[K(\alpha) : K]$ embeddings $\sigma : K(\alpha) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ extending σ_0 . Let $f_\alpha(x) \in K[x]$ be the minimal polynomial of α over K . Observe there's an isomorphism $K[x]/(f_\alpha(x)) \rightarrow K(\alpha)$ by sending $x \rightarrow \alpha$. To give a complex embedding $\sigma : K(\alpha) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ extending σ_0 , it's equivalent to give a root β of $(\sigma_0 f)(x)$ in \mathbb{C} ($\sigma_0 f(x) \in \mathbb{C}[x]$ means apply σ_0 to the coefficients of $f(x)$). Dictionary: $\sigma \rightarrow \beta = \sigma(\alpha)$. We have $[K(\alpha) : K] = \deg f_\alpha = \deg \sigma_0 f_\alpha$. It's enough to show $\sigma_0 f_\alpha$ has distinct roots in \mathbb{C} . The polynomial $f_\alpha(x) \in K[x]$ is irreducible, so is prime to its derivative $f'_\alpha(x)$ ($\text{char } K = 0$). So α is separable over K . \square

Recall from last lecture, let L be a number field, a complex embedding is a field homomorphism $\sigma : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$. The number of such embeddings is $[L : \mathbb{Q}]$. If $L = \mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$, and $f_\alpha(x) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ is the minimal polynomial, then there is a bijection $\{\sigma : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}\} \leftrightarrow \{\text{roots } \beta \in \mathbb{C} \text{ of } f_\alpha(x)\}$ by sending $\sigma \rightarrow \beta = \sigma(\alpha)$.

Notation: if $\sigma : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ is a complex embedding, then $\bar{\sigma} : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ is also a complex embedding, where $\bar{\sigma}(\alpha) = \overline{\sigma(\alpha)}$ (complex conjugation). If $\sigma = \bar{\sigma}$, then $\sigma(L) \subseteq \mathbb{R}$. Otherwise $\sigma \neq \bar{\sigma}$ and $\sigma(L) \not\subseteq \mathbb{R}$.

We write r for the number of complex embedding σ such that $\sigma = \bar{\sigma}$, s for the number of pairs of embeddings $\{\sigma, \bar{\sigma}\}$ where $\sigma \neq \bar{\sigma}$. Then $r + 2s = [L : \mathbb{Q}]$.

Example. Let $d \in \mathbb{Z}$ be square-free, $d \neq 0, 1$. Let $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d}) = \mathbb{Q}[x]/(x^2 - d)$. If $d > 0$, then $r = 2, s = 0$ (real quadratic field). If $d < 0$, then $r = 0, s = 1$ (imaginary quadratic field).

Example. Let $m \in \mathbb{Z}$ cube-free, $m \neq 0, 1, -1$. Let $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt[3]{m}) = \mathbb{Q}[x]/(x^3 - m)$. Then $r = 1, s = 1$, since $x^3 - m$ has one real and two complex roots.

Definition. (2.3)

Let L/K be an extension of number fields, and let $\alpha \in L$. Let $m_\alpha : L \rightarrow L$ be the K -linear map defined by $m_\alpha(\beta) = \alpha\beta$. Then we define

$$\begin{aligned} \text{tr}_{L/K}(\alpha) &= \text{tr } m_\alpha \in K \\ N_{L/K}(\alpha) &= \det m_\alpha \in K \end{aligned}$$

the trace and norm of α respectively.

Lemma. (2.4)

If L/K is an extension of number fields and $\alpha \in L$, then

$$\begin{aligned}\mathrm{tr}_{L/K}(\alpha) &= [L : K(\alpha)] \mathrm{tr}_{K(\alpha)/K}(\alpha) \\ N_{L/K}(\alpha) &= N_{K(\alpha)/K}(\alpha)^{[L:K(\alpha)]}\end{aligned}$$

Proof. There's an isomorphism $L \cong K(\alpha)^{[L:K(\alpha)]}$ of $K(\alpha)$ -vector spaces(?). \square

Lemma. (2.5)

Let L/K be an extension of number fields and let $\alpha \in L$. Let $\sigma_0 : K \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be a complex embedding, and let $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be the embeddings of L extending σ_0 .

Then

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma_0(\mathrm{tr}_{L/K}(\alpha)) &= \sigma_1(\alpha) + \dots + \sigma_n(\alpha) \\ \sigma_0(N_{L/K}(\alpha)) &= \sigma_1(\alpha) \dots \sigma_n(\alpha).\end{aligned}$$

Proof. WLOG let $L = K(\alpha)$. Let $f_\alpha(x) \in K[x]$ be the minimal polynomial of α over K . Then

$$(\sigma_0 f_\alpha)(x) = (x - \sigma_1(\alpha))(x - \sigma_2(\alpha)) \dots (x - \sigma_n(\alpha))$$

If $f(x) = x^n + a_1 x^{n-1} + \dots + a_n$, then $\sigma_0(a_1) = -(\sigma_1(\alpha) + \dots + \sigma_n(\alpha))$, $\sigma_0(a_n) = (-1)^n \sigma_1(\alpha) \dots \sigma_n(\alpha)$.

Let $g(x) \in K[x]$ be the characteristic polynomial of m_α . If $g(x) = x^n + b_1 x^{n-1} + \dots + b_n$, then $b_1 = -\mathrm{tr} m_\alpha = -\mathrm{tr}_{L/K}(\alpha)$, $b_n = (-1)^n \det m_\alpha = (-1)^n N_{L/K}(\alpha)$. By Cayley-Hamilton, $g(m_\alpha) = 0 \implies g(\alpha) = 0 \implies f_\alpha(x) = g(x)$. \square

Corollary. (2.6)

If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\mathrm{tr}_{L/K}(\alpha), N_{L/K}(\alpha) \in \mathcal{O}_K$.

Proof. If $\beta \in K$ then $\beta \in \mathcal{O}_K \iff \sigma_0(\beta) \in \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{C}}$ (as $\forall f(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x], f(\beta) = 0 \iff f(\sigma_0(\beta)) = 0$).

By the lemma, $\sigma_0 \mathrm{tr}_{L/K}(\alpha) = \sigma_1(\alpha) + \dots + \sigma_n(\alpha)$. If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\sigma_1(\alpha), \dots, \sigma_n(\alpha) \in \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{C}} \implies \sigma_1(\alpha) + \dots + \sigma_n(\alpha) \in \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{C}} \implies \sigma_0 \mathrm{tr}_{L/K}(\alpha) \in \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{C}} \implies \mathrm{tr}_{L/K}(\alpha) \in \mathcal{O}_K$.

The same argument works for the norm. \square

Proposition. (2.7)

Let $d \in \mathbb{Z}$ be squarefree, $d \neq 0, 1$, and let $L = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d})$. Then

$$\mathcal{O}_L = \begin{cases} \mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{d}] & d \equiv 2, 3 \pmod{4} \\ \mathbb{Z}[\frac{1+\sqrt{d}}{2}] & d \equiv 1 \pmod{4} \end{cases}$$

Proof. If $\alpha \in L$, then $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$ if and only if both trace and norm (over L/\mathbb{Q}) of α is in \mathbb{Z} . Why? Forward direction is the previous corollary; if $\alpha \in L$, then $f(\alpha) = 0$, where $f(x) = (x - \sigma_1(\alpha))(x - \sigma_2(\alpha)) = x^2 - \mathrm{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha)x + N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$, where σ_1, σ_2 are complex embeddings of L . So backward holds too.

Let $\alpha \in L$. Write $\alpha = \frac{u}{2} + \frac{v}{2}\sqrt{d}$ where $u, v \in \mathbb{Q}$. If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha) = u \in \mathbb{Z}$, and $N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha) = \frac{1}{4}(u + \sqrt{d}v)(u - \sqrt{d}v) = \frac{1}{4}(u^2 - dv^2) \in \mathbb{Z} \implies u^2 - dv^2 \in 4\mathbb{Z} \implies dv^2 \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Write $v = \frac{r}{s}$ where $r, s \in \mathbb{Z}, s \neq 0, (r, s) = 1$. Then we get $dr^2 \in s^2\mathbb{Z} \implies s^2 | dr^2$. If p is a prime and $p | s$ then $p^2 | d$. But we assumed d is square-free. So $s = 1$, so $v \in \mathbb{Z}$.

We've shown if $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\alpha = \frac{u}{2} + \frac{v}{2}\sqrt{d}$ where $u, v \in \mathbb{Z}$ and $u^2 \equiv d^2 \pmod{4}$.

Case 1: $d \equiv 2, 3 \pmod{4}$. Then $u^2, v^2 \equiv 0, 1 \pmod{4}$. Considering the congruence $u^2 \equiv dv^2 \pmod{4}$ shows that both $u, v \in 2\mathbb{Z}$. Hence $\alpha \in \mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{d}] = \{a + b\sqrt{d} | a, b \in \mathbb{Z}\}$, and $\mathcal{O}_L = \mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{d}]$.

Case 2: $d \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$. Hence $u^2 \equiv v^2 \pmod{4}$, so $u \equiv v \pmod{2}$. Hence $\mathcal{O}_L \subseteq \{\frac{u}{2} + \frac{v}{2}\sqrt{d} | u, v \in \mathbb{Z}, u \equiv 1 \pmod{2}\} = \mathbb{Z} \oplus \mathbb{Z}(\frac{1+\sqrt{d}}{2})$. It remains to show that $\frac{1+\sqrt{d}}{2}$ is an algebraic integer.

We have $\text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\frac{1+\sqrt{d}}{2}) = 1$, $N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\frac{1+\sqrt{d}}{2}) = \frac{1-d}{4} \in \mathbb{Z}$. □

Recall that if R is a ring, then a unit in R is an element $u \in R$ such that there exists $v \in R$ such that $uv = 1$.

The set $\mathbb{R}^* = \{u \in R | u \text{ is a unit}\}$ forms a group under multiplication.

Lemma. (2.8)

If L is a number field, then the units in \mathcal{O}_L are $\mathcal{O}_L^* = \{\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L | N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha) = \pm 1\}$.

Proof. next time.

It's next time now! Let's prove this lemma.

$N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha\beta) = N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha)N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\beta)$ for any $\alpha, \beta \in L$.

If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L^*$, then $\exists \beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$ such that $\alpha\beta = 1 \implies N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha)N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\beta) = 1$. Since $N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha), N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\beta) \in \mathbb{Z}$, we get $N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha) \in \{\pm 1\}$.

Conversely, suppose $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$ and $N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha) = \pm 1$. Then $\alpha^{-1} \in L$. Let $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be the distinct complex embeddings of L . Then

$$\begin{aligned} N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha) &= \sigma_1(\alpha) \dots \sigma_n(\alpha) = \pm 1 \\ \implies \sigma_1(\alpha^{-1}) &= \pm \sigma_2(\alpha) \dots \sigma_n(\alpha) \in \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{C}} \\ &\implies \alpha^{-1} \in \mathcal{O}_L \end{aligned}$$

□

Remark. We'll prove later in the course that \mathcal{O}_L^* is a finite group \iff either $L = \mathbb{Q}$ or L is an imaginary quadratic field.

3 Discriminants and integral bases

Let L be a number field, $n = [L : \mathbb{Q}]$, $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be distinct complex embeddings.

Definition. (3.1)

Let $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in L$. Then their discriminant is $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = \det(D)^2$, where $D = M_{n \times n}(F)$ is $D_{ij} = \sigma_i(\alpha_j)$. Note: this is independent of the choice of ordering of $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n$ and $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$, as that's just permuting the rows or columns, hence changing only possibly signs; but we took a square in the definition.

Lemma. (3.2)

Let $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in L$. Then $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = \det(T)$, where $T \in M_{n \times n}(\mathbb{Q})$ is $T_{ij} = \text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha_i \alpha_j)$.

Proof. $T_{ij} = \sum_{k=1}^n \sigma_k(\alpha_i \alpha_j) = \sum_{k=1}^n D_{ki} D_{kj} = (D^T D)_{ij}$. □

Corollary. (3.3)

$\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) \in \mathbb{Q}$. If $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Proof. $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = \det(T)$, and entries of T is trace of some elements of L (over \mathbb{Q}) so is in the base field \mathbb{Q} (think a bit). So this must be rational. If $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\forall i, j, D_{ij} \in \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{C}} \implies \text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) \in \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{C}} \cap \mathbb{Q} = \mathbb{Z}$. □

Proposition. (3.4)

Let $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in L$. Then $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) \neq 0 \iff \alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ form a basis of L as \mathbb{Q} -vector space.

Proof. First suppose $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ are linearly dependent. Then the columns of the matrix $D_{ij} = \sigma_i(\alpha_j)$ are linearly dependent $\implies \text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = 0$ (determinant is 0).

Now suppose $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ are linearly independent. Then $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) \neq 0 \iff \det(T) \neq 0 \iff$ the symmetric bilinear form $\phi : L \times L \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}$ by $\phi(\alpha, \beta) = \text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha\beta)$ is non-degenerate, i.e. $\forall \alpha \in L^*, \exists \beta \in L$ such that $\phi(\alpha, \beta) \neq 0$.

If $\alpha \in L^*$, then $\phi(\alpha, \alpha^{-1}) = \text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(1) = n \neq 0$. □

Definition. (3.5)

We say elements $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in L$ form an *integral basis* for \mathcal{O}_L , if:

- (i) $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in \mathcal{O}_L$;
- (ii) $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ generate \mathcal{O}_L as a \mathbb{Z} -module.

Lemma. (3.6)

If $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ form an integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L , then the function

$$f : \mathbb{Z}^n \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_L$$

$$(m_1, \dots, m_n) \mapsto \sum_{i=1}^n m_i \alpha_i$$

is an isomorphism of \mathbb{Z} -module.

Proof. f is a homomorphism, we must show it's bijective. Observe that $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ form a basis of L as \mathbb{Q} -vector space. We know that if $\beta \in L$, then $\exists N \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ such that $N\beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$ (I think (1.7)). So we can write $N\beta = \sum_{i=1}^n m_i \alpha_i$ for some $m_i \in \mathbb{Z} \implies \beta = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{m_i}{N} \alpha_i$. Hence $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ span L , so they form a basis of L .

If $f(m_1, \dots, m_n) = 0$, then $\sum_{i=1}^n m_i \alpha_i = 0 \implies (m_1, \dots, m_n) = (0, \dots, 0)$, as $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ are independent over \mathbb{Q} . This shows f is injective. It's surjective by definition. \square

Lemma. (3.7, sandwich lemma)

- (i) If $H \leq G$ are groups and $G \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$ for some $a \geq 0$, then $H \cong \mathbb{Z}^b$ for some $b \leq a$.
- (ii) If $K \leq H \leq G$ are groups and $K \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$, $G \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$ for some $a \geq 0$, then $H \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$.
- (iii) If $H \leq G$ are groups and $H \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$, $G \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$ for some $a \geq 0$, then G/H is finite.

Proof. (i) $H \leq G$, $G \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$. Then G/H is f.g abelian group. By the classification, there's an isomorphism $G/H \cong \mathbb{Z}^N \oplus A$, A finite abelian group. Choose p prime, $p \nmid |A|$. Then the map $f : G/H \rightarrow G/H$ by $x + H \rightarrow px + H$ is injective, so $f' : H/pH \rightarrow G/pG$ by $x + pH \rightarrow x + pG$ is injective – why? If $x \in H, x \in pG$, then $x = py$ for some $y \in G$; then $y + H \in \ker(f) = H$. Hence $x \in pH$. So indeed f' is injective. By the classification, $H \cong \mathbb{Z}^b$. f' injective $\implies |H/pH| \leq |G/pG|$, i.e. $p^b \leq p^a$ so $b \leq a$.

(ii) Apply (i) to $K \leq H$ and $H \leq G$ to get $H \cong \mathbb{Z}^b$ where $a \leq b \leq a$.

(iii) $H \leq G$, $H \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$, $G \cong \mathbb{Z}^a$. Again G/H is finitely generated, so by the classification $G/H \cong \mathbb{Z}^N \oplus A$ where A is a finite abelian group.

Let p be a prime, $p \nmid |A|$. same proof as in (i) shows that $f' : H/pH \rightarrow G/pG$ is injective. Since $|H/pH| = |G/pG| = p^a$, f' is a group isomorphism $G/H + pG \cong (\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z})^N$. There's a surjective homomorphism $G/pG \rightarrow G/H + pG$ which has kernel containing the image of f' . Hence $G/pG \rightarrow G/H + pG$ is surjective with kernel G/pG . This forces $N = 0$. \square

Let L be a number field, $n = [L : \mathbb{Q}]$, $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be distinct complex embeddings; $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in L$, we defined $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = \det(\sigma_i(\alpha_j))^2$. An alternative notation is $\Delta(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)$. We also said $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ form an integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L if they generate \mathcal{O}_L as a \mathbb{Z} -module.

Proposition. (3.8)

There exists an integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L .

Proof. Let $\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n \in L$ be a basis for L as \mathbb{Q} -vector space. WLOG, $\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n \in \mathcal{O}_L$. Then $\mathcal{O}_L \supset \oplus_{i=1}^n \mathbb{Z}\beta_i$.

Recall $\phi : L \times L \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}$ by sending $(\alpha, \beta) \rightarrow \text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha\beta)$ is a non-degenerate symmetric bilinear form (we showed that last time). Let $\beta_1^*, \dots, \beta_n^*$ be the dual basis. Then $\text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\beta_i \beta_j^*) = \delta_{ij}$ (why?).

If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then we can write $\alpha = \sum_{i=1}^n a_i \beta_i^*$ where $a_i \in \mathbb{Q}$. We know $\alpha \beta_i \in \mathcal{O}_L$, hence $\text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha \beta_i) \in \mathbb{Z}$. However $\text{LHS} = \sum_{j=1}^n \text{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(a_j \beta_j^* \beta_i) =$

$\sum_{j=1}^n a_j \operatorname{tr}_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\beta_j^* \beta_i) = a_j$. So $\mathcal{O}_L \subseteq \bigoplus_{i=1}^n \mathbb{Z} \beta_i^*$. By sandwich lemma there is an isomorphism between \mathbb{Z}^n and \mathcal{O}_L . \square

If $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n, \beta_1, \dots, \beta_n$ are both integral bases for \mathcal{O}_L , then there exists $A \in M_{n \times n}(\mathbb{Z})$ such that $\beta_j = \sum_{i=1}^n A_{ij} \alpha_i$ for each $j = 1, \dots, n$. Moreover, we must have $\det(A) \in \{\pm 1\}$, and $A \in GL_n(\mathbb{Z})$. Then $\operatorname{disc}(\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n) = \det(D')^2$, where $D'_{ij} = \sigma_i(\beta_j)$, $D_{ij} = \sigma_i(\alpha_j)$. We have $D'_{ij} = \sum_{k=1}^n \sigma_i(A_{kj} \alpha_k) = \sum_{k=1}^n \sigma_i(\alpha_k) A_{kj} = (DA)_{ij}$.

We find $\operatorname{disc}(\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n) = \det(D')^2 = \det(DA)^2 = \det(D)^2 = \operatorname{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)$. Therefore we could define:

Definition. (3.9)

The discriminant D_L of the number field L is $\operatorname{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)$, where $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ is any integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L .

Proposition. (3.10)

Let $L = \mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$, and let $f(x) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ be the minimal polynomial of α over \mathbb{Q} . Then

$$\operatorname{disc}(1, \alpha, \alpha^2, \dots, \alpha^{n-1}) = \prod_{i < j} (\sigma_i(\alpha) - \sigma_j(\alpha))^2 = (-1)^{n(n-1)/2} N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(f'(\alpha))$$

In part II Galois theory, we defined the discriminant of a polynomial, $\operatorname{disc} f = \prod_{i < j} (\sigma_i(\alpha) - \sigma_j(\alpha))^2$ where α_i 's are the roots of f .

Proof. If $D_{ij} = \sigma_i(\alpha^{j-1})$, $D \in M_{n \times n}(\mathbb{C})$, then $\operatorname{disc}(1, \alpha, \dots, \alpha^{n-1}) = \det(D)^2$. D is a Vandermonde matrix, so we know $\det(D) = \prod_{i < j} (\sigma_j(\alpha) - \sigma_i(\alpha))$. On the other hand, $N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(f'(\alpha)) = \prod_{i=1}^n \sigma_i(f'(\alpha)) = \prod_{i=1}^n f'(\sigma_i(\alpha))$. Using $f(x) = \prod_{j=1}^n (x - \sigma_j(\alpha))$, we get $\text{RHS} = \prod_{i=1}^n \prod_{j \neq i} (\sigma_i(\alpha) - \sigma_j(\alpha)) = (-1)^{\binom{n}{2}} \prod_{i < j} (\sigma_i(\alpha) - \sigma_j(\alpha))^2$. \square

Note: if $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$ and $\mathbb{Z}[\alpha] = \mathcal{O}_L$, then $1, \alpha, \dots, \alpha^{n-1}$ is an integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L . We can then use proposition to calculate D_L .

Example. Let $d \in \mathbb{Z}$ square-free, $d \neq 0, 1$, $L = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d})$. Then

$$D_L = \begin{cases} 4d & d \equiv 2, 3 \pmod{4} \\ d & d \equiv 1 \pmod{4} \end{cases}$$

To see this, if $d \equiv 2, 3 \pmod{4}$, then $\mathcal{O}_L = \mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{d}]$ (shown previously). Apply proposition to $x^2 - d = f(x)$, we get $D_L = \operatorname{disc}(1, \sqrt{d}) = -N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(2\sqrt{d}) = 4d$.

On the other hand, if $d \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$, then $\mathcal{O}_L = \mathbb{Z}[\frac{1+\sqrt{d}}{2}]$. Apply proposition to the minimal polynomial of this element, $f(x) = x^2 - x + \frac{1-d}{4}$, so $f'(x) = 2x - 1$, so $f'(\alpha) = \sqrt{d}$. Therefore $D_L = -N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\sqrt{d}) = \sqrt{d}$.

Proposition. If $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in \mathcal{O}_L$ are such that $\operatorname{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)$ is a non-zero square-free integer, then $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ form an integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L .

Note: this is a sufficient condition, but is not necessary (the previous example).

Proof. Let β_1, \dots, β_n be an integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L . There exists $A \in M_{n \times n}(\mathbb{Z})$ such that $\alpha_j = \sum_{i=1}^n A_{ij} \beta_i \forall j = 1, \dots, n$. Then $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = \det(A)^2 \text{disc}(\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n)$ (we proved this in the beginning of lecture: $D' = DA$). In particular, if this is square-free and non-zero, then $\det(A)$ must be $\{\pm 1\}$. So $A \in GL_n(\mathbb{Z})$. Hence $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ generate \mathcal{O}_L (as they can generate β_i) and form an integral basis. \square

This could save a lot of calculation if we are lucky.

Example. Let $f(x) = x^3 - x - 1$. Then $\text{disc}f = -4a^3 - 27b^2 = -23$. This is square-free! If $L = \mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$, α a root of $f(x)$, then $\mathcal{O}_L = \mathbb{Z}[\alpha]$.

Definition. (3.12)

Let $I \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ be a non-zero ideal. Then elements $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in I$ form an integral basis for I if:

- (i) $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in I$;
- (ii) $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ generate I as a \mathbb{Z} -module.

Proposition. (3.13)

Let $I \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ be a non-zero ideal. Then there exists an integral basis for I .

Definition. By definition, $I \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L \cong \mathbb{Z}^n$. Let $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in \mathcal{O}_L$ be an integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L . Let $\alpha \in I$ be non-zero. Then $(\alpha) \subseteq I$, hence $\oplus_{i=1}^n \mathbb{Z}\alpha\alpha_i \subseteq I \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$. So by sandwich lemma, there is an isomorphism between I and \mathbb{Z}^n as \mathbb{Z} -module. Hence there exists an integral basis for I .

An interesting consequence of the proof:

Definition. (3.14)

If $I \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ is a non-zero ideal, then we define its norm

$$N(I) = [\mathcal{O}_L : I]$$

which is finite by the sandwich lemma.

Definition. (3.15)

If $I \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ is a non-zero ideal then we define $\text{disc}(I) = \text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)$ where $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ is an integral basis for I . (same argument shows $\text{disc}(I)$ depends only on I).

Lemma. (3.16)

If $I \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ is a non-zero ideal, then $\text{disc}(I) = \text{disc}(\mathcal{O}_L)N(I)^2$.

Proof. Let $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n, \beta_1, \dots, \beta_n$ be integral bases for \mathcal{O}_L and I respectively. Then $\exists A \in M_{n \times n}(\mathbb{Z})$ such that $\beta_j = \sum_{i=1}^n A_{ij} \alpha_i \forall j = 1, \dots, n$, and $\text{disc}(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) \det(A)^2 = \text{disc}(\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n)$. We must show $\det(A)^2 = [\mathcal{O}_L : I]^2$.

In fact, we'll show if $B \in M_{n \times n}(\mathbb{Z})$ and $\det(B) \neq 0$, then $|\mathbb{Z}^n / B\mathbb{Z}^n| = |\det(B)|$. This suffices after identify $\mathcal{O}_L \cong \mathbb{Z}^n$.

Recall: $\exists P, Q \in GL_n(\mathbb{Z})$ such that $PBQ = D = \text{Diag}(d_1, \dots, d_n)$, $d_i \in \mathbb{Z}$ (Smith normal form). Hence we have $\mathbb{Z}^n / B\mathbb{Z}^n \cong \mathbb{Z}^n / D\mathbb{Z}^n \cong \oplus_{i=1}^n \mathbb{Z}/d_i\mathbb{Z} \implies |\mathbb{Z}^n / B\mathbb{Z}^n| = |\mathbb{Z}^n / D\mathbb{Z}^n| = \prod_{i=1}^n |d_i|$.

On the other hand, $|\det(B)| = |\det(D)| = \prod_{i=1}^n |d_i|$. \square

Remember we have L a number field, $n = [L : \mathbb{Q}]$, $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n : L \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ are distinct complex embeddings of L .

Lemma. (3.17)

Let $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L \setminus \{0\}$. Then $N((\alpha)) = |N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha)|$ (Note that's an ideal).

Proof. Let $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ be an integral basis for \mathcal{O}_L . Then $\alpha\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha\alpha_n$ is an integral basis for $I = (\alpha)$. So

$$\begin{aligned} \text{disc}(I) &= \text{disc}(\alpha\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha\alpha_n) \\ &= \det(\sigma_i(\alpha\alpha_j))^2 \\ &= \det(\sigma_i(\alpha)\sigma_i(\alpha_j))^2 \\ &= \left(\prod_{i=1}^n \sigma_i(\alpha)\right)^2 \det(\sigma_i(\alpha_j))^2 \\ &= N_{L/\mathbb{Q}}(\alpha)^2 \text{disc}(\mathcal{O}_L) \end{aligned}$$

And we showed last time that for any non-zero ideal $J \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$, $\text{disc}(J) = N(J)^2 \text{disc}(\mathcal{O}_L)$. \square

Notation: If $\alpha \in \mathcal{L} - \{0\}$, we let $N(\alpha) = N((\alpha))N(0) = 0$. Then $\forall \alpha, \beta \in \mathcal{O}_L$, $N(\alpha\beta) = N(\alpha)N(\beta)$.

4 Unique factorisation in \mathcal{O}_L

Recall: we say a ring R is a unique factorisation domain (UFD) if

- (i) R is an integral domain;
- (ii) if $x \in R$ is non-zero and not a unit, then there exists an expression $x = p_1 \dots p_r$ where $p_i \in R$ are irreducible elements. This expression is unique in the sense that if $x = q_1 \dots q_s$ is another such expression, then $r = s$ and after re-ordering, each q_i is an associate of p_i (i.e. $q_i \in R^* p_i$, where R^* is the field of units).

After 2 years of Cambridge Maths we certainly know \mathbb{Z} is a UFD. However, if L is a number field, \mathcal{O}_L need not be a UFD.

In fact, any non-zero $x \in \mathcal{O}_L$ which is not a unit can be expressed as a product of irreducible elements.

If $x \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then x is a non-zero non-unit $\iff N(x) > 1$. Suppose $x \in \mathcal{O}_L$ is a non-zero non-unit which cannot be written as a product of irreducible elements, and with $N(x)$ minimal among elements with this property. Then $x = yz$ with $N(y) > 1$, $N(z) > 1$, hence $N(y) < N(x)$, $N(z) < N(x)$. By minimality of $N(x)$, both y, z can be written as products of irreducibles; contradiction.

Example. Consider $L = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-5})$, $\mathcal{O}_L = \mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{-5}]$, and $\mathcal{O}_L^* = \{\pm 1\}$. In \mathcal{O}_L we have $6 = 2 \times 3 = (1 + \sqrt{-5})(1 - \sqrt{-5})$, and all of the four are irreducibles, and no two are associates (norms). So \mathcal{O}_L is not a UFD (famous example).

Idea: introduce ideal multiplication in order to reduce elements further.

Recall that if R is a ring and I, J are ideals of R , then we define

$$IJ = \left\{ \sum_{i=1}^k a_i b_i \mid a_i \in I, b_i \in J \right\},$$

$$I + J = \{a + b \mid a \in I, b \in J\}$$

We can define an ideal $I \subsetneq R$ to be irreducible if it does not admit an expression $I = JK$ where J, K are proper ideals of R .

Key point: even if $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_L$ is irreducible, the ideal (α) need not be irreducible. For example in $\mathbb{Z}[\sqrt{-5}]$, we have $(2) = (2, 1 + \sqrt{-5})^2$, $(3) = (3, 1 + \sqrt{-5})(3, 1 - \sqrt{-5})$.

Definition. (4.1)

If R is a ring, we say that an ideal $P \subsetneq R$ is prime if $\forall x, y \in R$, $xy \in P \implies x \in P$ or $y \in P$.

Lemma. (4.2)

Let R be a ring, and let $I, J, P \subseteq R$ be ideals, and suppose P is prime and $IJ \subseteq P$. Then $I \subseteq P$ or $J \subseteq P$.

Proof. WLOG $I \not\subseteq P$. Choose some $x \in I \setminus P$. If $y \in J$, is any element, then $xy \in IJ \subseteq P$. So $y \in P$. So $J \subseteq P$. \square

From now on, L is a number field.

Lemma. (4.3)

Any non-zero prime ideal $P \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ is a maximal ideal.

Proof. Recall: if R is a ring and $I \subsetneq R$ is an ideal, then I is prime $\iff R/I$ is an integral domain, and I is maximal $\iff R/I$ is a field. If you don't remember these statements then I strongly encourage you to review GRM. If $p \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ is a non-zero prime ideal, then \mathcal{O}_L/p is a finite integral domain (of cardinality $N(p)$); any such ring is a field, so p is also maximal. \square

Lemma. (4.4)

If $I \subsetneq \mathcal{O}_L$ is a non-zero ideal, then there exist non-zero prime ideals $P_1, \dots, P_r \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ such that $P_1 \dots P_r \subseteq I$.

Proof. For contradiction, let $I \subsetneq \mathcal{O}_L$ be an ideal which does not have this property, and such that $N(I)$ is minimal among ideals not having this property. Then I is not prime, so there exist elements $x, y \in \mathcal{O}_L$ such that $xy \in I$ but $x \notin I$, $y \notin I$. But then it follows that $I \subsetneq I + (x)$ and $I \subsetneq I + (y)$. So $N(I + (x)), N(I + (y)) < N(I)$. By minimality of $N(I)$, we can find non-zero prime ideals $P_1 \dots P_r \subseteq I + (x)$ and $Q_1 \dots Q_r \subseteq I + (y)$. Then $P_1 \dots P_r Q_1 \dots Q_r \subseteq (I + (x))(I + (y)) \subseteq I^2 + xI + yI + (xy) \subseteq I$. Contradiction. \square

Lemma. (4.5)

If $I \subsetneq \mathcal{O}_L$ is a non-zero ideal, then there exists $\gamma \in L \setminus \mathcal{O}_L$ such that $\gamma I \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$.

Proof. Let $\alpha \in I \setminus \{0\}$. Let $P_1, \dots, P_r \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$ be non-zero prime ideals such that $P_1 \dots P_r \subseteq (\alpha)$. WLOG r is minimal with this property. Let P be a minimal ideal containing I . Then $P \supseteq I \supseteq (\alpha) \supseteq P_1 \dots P_r$, hence $P \supset P_i$ for some i . After relabelling assume $P \supset P_1$. Since non-zero prime ideals are maximal, we have $P = P_1$. Since r is minimal, we have $P_2 \dots P_r \not\subseteq (\alpha)$. Choose $\beta \in P_2 \dots P_r \setminus (\alpha)$. Claim: the element $\gamma = \beta/\alpha$ has the desired property.

If $\gamma \in \mathcal{O}_L$, then $\beta = \alpha\gamma \in (\alpha)$, contradiction;

$\gamma I = \frac{\beta}{\alpha} I \subseteq \frac{1}{\alpha} P_2 \dots P_r \cdot I \subseteq \frac{1}{\alpha} P_1 P_2 \dots P_r \subseteq \mathcal{O}_L$. \square