MATHEMATICAL INDUCTION

Proving Inequalities

Example: Use mathematical induction to prove that $n < 2^n$ for all positive integers n.

Solution: Let $P(n)$ be the proposition that $n < 2^n$.

- BASIS STEP: $P(1)$ is true since $1 < 2^1 = 2$.
- INDUCTIVE STEP: Assume $P(k)$ holds, i.e., $k < 2^k$, for an arbitrary positive integer k.
- Must show that $P(k + 1)$ holds. Since by the inductive hypothesis, $k < 2^k$, it follows that:

$$k + 1 < 2^k + 1 \leq 2^k + 2^k = 2^k\ (1+1) = 2 \cdot 2^k = 2^{k+1}$$

Therefore $n < 2^n$ holds for all positive integers n.

Proving Inequalities

Example: Use mathematical induction to prove that $2^n < n!$, for every integer $n \geq 4$.

Solution: Let $P(n)$ be the proposition that $2^n < n!$.

- BASIS STEP: $P(4)$ is true since $2^4 = 16 < 4! = 24$.
- INDUCTIVE STEP: Assume $P(k)$ holds, i.e., $2^k < k!$ for an arbitrary integer $k \geq 4$. To show that $P(k + 1)$ holds:

$$\begin{aligned} 2^{k+1} &= 2 \cdot 2^k \\ &< 2 \cdot k! \qquad \textit{(by the inductive hypothesis)} \\ &< (k+1)k! \\ &= (k+1)! \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $2^n < n!$ holds, for every integer $n \geq 4$.

Note that here the basis step is $P(4)$, since $P(0)$, $P(1)$, $P(2)$, and $P(3)$ are all false.

5.2

Strong Induction

Strong Induction

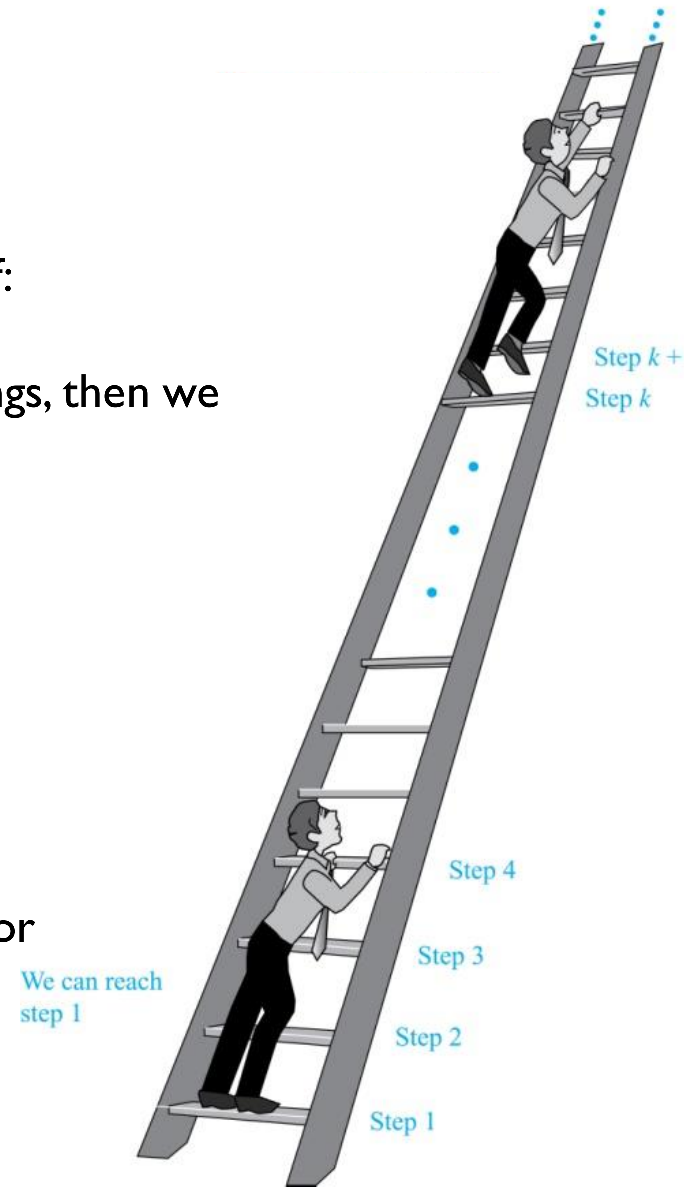
- *Strong Induction:* To prove that $P(n)$ is true for all positive integers n, where $P(n)$ is a propositional function, complete two steps:
  - *Basis Step:* Verify that the proposition $P(1)$ is true.
  - *Inductive Step:* Show the conditional statement $[P(1) \land P(2) \land \cdots \land P(k)] \rightarrow P(k + 1)$ holds for all positive integers k.

Strong Induction is sometimes called the *second principle of mathematical induction* or *complete induction.*

Strong Induction and the Infinite Ladder

Strong induction tells us that we can reach all rungs if:

1. We can reach the first rung of the ladder.
2. For every integer k, if we can reach the first k rungs, then we can reach the $(k + 1)$st rung.



To conclude that we can reach every rung by strong induction:

- BASIS STEP: $P(1)$ holds
- INDUCTIVE STEP: Assume $P(1) \wedge P(2) \wedge \cdots \wedge P(k)$ holds for an arbitrary integer k, and show that $P(k + 1)$ must also hold.

We will have then shown by strong induction that for every positive integer n, $P(n)$ holds, i.e., we can reach the nth rung of the ladder.

Strong Induction

Theorem: If n is an integer greater than 1, then n can be written as the product of primes.

Proof: Let $P(n)$ be the proposition that n can be written as a product of primes.

- BASIS STEP: $P(2)$ is true since 2 itself is prime.
- INDUCTIVE STEP: The inductive hypothesis is $P(j)$ is true for all integers j with $2 \leq j \leq k$. To show that $P(k + 1)$ must be true under this assumption, two cases need to be considered:
  - If $k + 1$ is prime, then $P(k + 1)$ is true.
  - Otherwise, $k + 1$ is composite and can be written as the product of two positive integers a and b with $2 \leq a \leq b < k + 1$. By the inductive hypothesis a and b can be written as the product of primes and therefore $k + 1$ can also be written as the product of those primes.

Hence, it has been shown that every integer greater than 1 can be written as the product of primes.

(*uniqueness proved in Section* 4.3)

Proof using Strong Induction

Example: Prove that every amount of postage of 12 cents or more can be formed using just 4-cent and 5-cent stamps.

Solution: Let $P(n)$ be the proposition that postage of n cents can be formed using 4-cent and 5-cent stamps.

- BASIS STEP: $P(12)$, $P(13)$, $P(14)$, and $P(15)$ hold.
  - $P(12)$ uses three 4-cent stamps.
  - $P(13)$ uses two 4-cent stamps and one 5-cent stamp.
  - $P(14)$ uses one 4-cent stamp and two 5-cent stamps.
  - $P(15)$ uses three 5-cent stamps.
- INDUCTIVE STEP: The inductive hypothesis states that $P(j)$ holds for $12 \leq j \leq k$, where $k \geq 15$. Assuming the inductive hypothesis, it can be shown that $P(k + 1)$ holds.
- Using the inductive hypothesis, $P(k - 3)$ holds since $k - 3 \geq 12$. To form postage of $k + 1$ cents, add a 4-cent stamp to the postage for $k - 3$ cents.

Hence, $P(n)$ holds for all $n \geq 12$.

Proof of the Same Example using Mathematical Induction

Example: Prove that every amount of postage of 12 cents or more can be formed using just 4-cent and 5-cent stamps.

Solution: Let $P(n)$ be the proposition that postage of n cents can be formed using 4-cent and 5-cent stamps.

- BASIS STEP: Postage of 12 cents can be formed using three 4-cent stamps.
- INDUCTIVE STEP: The inductive hypothesis $P(k)$ for any positive integer k is that postage of k cents can be formed using 4-cent and 5-cent stamps. To show $P(k + 1)$ where $k \geq 12$, we consider two cases:
  - If at least one 4-cent stamp has been used, then a 4-cent stamp can be replaced with a 5-cent stamp to yield a total of $k + 1$ cents.
  - Otherwise, no 4-cent stamp have been used and at least three 5-cent stamps were used. Three 5-cent stamps can be replaced by four 4-cent stamps to yield a total of $k + 1$ cents.

Hence, $P(n)$ holds for all $n \geq 12$.