

Division theorem / Euclidean Division

Viktor Nonov

April 23, 2018

Let a, b be integers, $b > 0$. Then there exist unique integers q and r such that $a = qb + r$ and $0 \leq r < b$.
In notation:
 $(\forall a, b \in \mathbb{Z})(b > 0)(\exists! q, r \in \mathbb{Z})[a = bq + r \wedge 0 \leq r < b]$.

Exploration

Let's start by exploring the description a bit more and add more details about the members of the division:
Reminder is the amount left over after performing division.

Let's say you divide: $a/b = q$ (remainder r), where a can be expressed as $a = bq + r$

q is the quotient which is the integer result of the division, so $q \in \mathbb{Z}$.

r can be expressed as: $r = a - qb$, where $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$, $b > 0$ and $q \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Also in order for r to be the remainder of division: a/b , then r should be between 0 and b : $0 \leq r < b$

I'm going to split the proof into two different sections: proving existence and proving uniqueness.

Proof:

Split the problem into proving existence and proving uniqueness.

Proof of existence of q and r :

To prove existence of r and q , we should prove them one by one:

Let's start with r .

Proof of existence of r :

Let's start exploring by trying out some specific examples, which would help construct the general case.

For example: $a = 27$ and $b = 5$, then the remainder would be $r = 2$ and quotient $q = 5$

having the expression for r : $r = a - bq$, we need to use n (which would have similar properties) instead of q since we don't know if q exists yet: $r = a - bn$, where $n \in \mathbb{Z}$.

let's try to see what are the possible values for $r = a - bn = 27 - 5n$, when we have $n = \{\dots - 1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, \dots\}$:

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$$n = -1 \rightarrow r = 32$$

$$n = 0 \rightarrow r = 27$$

$$n = 1 \rightarrow r = 22$$

$$n = 2 \rightarrow r = 17$$

$$n = 3 \rightarrow r = 12$$

$$n = 4 \rightarrow r = 7$$

$$n = 5 \rightarrow r = 2$$

$$n = 6 \rightarrow r = -3$$

...

So values for r are a progression of numbers: $\{\dots, -3, 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, \dots\}$

Looking at that progression we notice the remainder for division a/b is the smallest non-negative member: *remainder* = 2.

So using this hint, we can try to prove that r exists by proving that a given set has smallest non-negative member. The

Well-ordering principle states that every non-empty set of positive integers contains a least element, which might be useful. Let's consider only the positive values in the progression above, namely: $\{2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, \dots\}$, then the least element of that set is 2, which is the remainder that we are looking for. We need to construct a set for the general case and then prove that the set is non-empty, which would mean that it has least element (by WOP), which will prove that r exists.

Let's consider the following set $S = \{a - nb \mid a - nb \geq 0 \wedge n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$ - contains only positive integers, so we need to prove that is non-empty:

Proof of $(\forall a, b \in \mathbb{Z})(b > 0)(\exists n \in \mathbb{Z})[S = \{a - nb \mid a - nb \geq 0\} \text{ is non-empty}]$:

Using proof by cases:

1) $a \geq 0$:

$(\forall a, b \in \mathbb{Z})(a \geq 0)(b > 0)(\exists n \in \mathbb{Z})[S = \{a - nb \mid a - nb \geq 0\} \text{ is non-empty}]$:

Let $n = 0$. Then a member of the set would look like this:

$a - b \cdot 0 \geq 0 \Leftrightarrow a \geq 0$ for each $a \geq 0$ and b , which means that the set is non-empty.

2) $a < 0$

Adding it to the expression above: $(\forall a, b \in \mathbb{Z})(a < 0)(b > 0)(\exists n \in \mathbb{Z})[S = \{a - nb \mid a - nb \geq 0\} \text{ is non-empty}]$:

Let $n = a$:

A member of the set will be: $a - bn = a - ba = a(1 - b)$

$1 - b \leq 0$, because $b \in \mathbb{Z} \wedge b > 0$, so

$a * (1 - b) \geq 0$, since a is negative and $1 - b$ is non-positive. This shows that the set is non-empty.

By proving both cases we proved that the set S is non-empty and via the WOP it has least element.

Let's name the least element r . Given the definition of a member of the set we have: $r = a - bn_r$ (n_r gets us the least member of the set S). Now it remains to prove that $0 \leq r < b$.

Proof of $0 \leq r < b$:

$r \geq 0$ because $r \in S$.

Proof of $r < b$:

Prove by contradiction:

Assume that $r \geq b$, then substituting r we get:

$a - bn_r \geq b$

$a - bn_r - b \geq 0 \Leftrightarrow a - b(n_r + 1) \geq 0$, which means that $a - b(n_r + 1) \in S$, but at the same time $a - b(n_r + 1) < a - bn_r$, which means that $a - b(n_r + 1) < r$, but r is the smallest element in S , which is contradiction.

So $r \geq b$, which concludes the proof that $0 \leq r < b$.

After we proved that r exists, we can continue to prove that q exists.

Proof of existence of q :

From the expression $a = bq + r$, we get $q = \frac{a-r}{b}$ (1).

Since we proved that r exists and $r = a - bn_r$, we substitute r in (1):

$q = \frac{a-(a-bn_r)}{b} = \frac{bn_r}{b} = n_r$, which shows that q exists.

Proof of uniqueness of q and r :

To prove the uniqueness we are gonna try to show that there's q' and r' , but they are equal to q and r .

Let's assume that we can represent a in two ways:

$a = bq + r = bq' + r'$

$r - r' = bq' - bq$

$r - r' = b(q' - q)$

From the existence proof we know that $0 \leq r' < b$ and $0 \leq r < b$.

Representing $-r'$ using $0 \leq r' < b$, we get $0 \geq -r' > -b$

let's sum both inequalities:

$-b < -r' \leq 0$ / +

$0 \leq r < b$

$-b < r - r' < b$, which means that $|r - r'| < b$

$|b(q' - q)| < b$ (move b out of the module because $b > 0$)

$b|q' - q| < b$ dividing by $b \geq 1$

$|q' - q| < 1$

this means $-1 < q' - q < 1$. Given the fact that both q' and $q \in \mathbb{N}$ the result of their subtraction should also be in \mathbb{N}
The only way for that to be possible $q' - q = 0 \equiv q' = q$, which proves the uniqueness of q and r .