Discrete Mathematics & Mathematical Reasoning
Arithmetic Modulo m, Primes

Colin Stirling

Informatics

Division

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1. *If $a|b$ and $a|c$, then $a|(b+c)$*
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Proof.

We just prove the first; the others are similar. Assume $a|b$ and $a|c$. So, there exists integers d, e such that $b = da$ and $c = ea$. So $b + c = da + ea = (d + e)a$ and, therefore, $a|(b + c)$. □

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Proof.

Let q be the largest integer such that $dq \leq a$; then $r = a - dq$ and so, $a = dq + r$ for $0 \leq r < d$: if $r \geq d$ then $d(q+1) \leq a$ which contradicts that q is largest. So, there is at least one such q and r. Assume that there is more than one: $a = dq_1 + r_1$, $a = dq_2 + r_2$, and $(q_1, r_1) \neq (q_2, r_2)$. If $q_1 = q_2$ then $r_1 = a - dq_1 = a - dq_2 = r_2$. Assume $q_1 \neq q_2$; now we obtain a contradiction; as $dq_1 + r_1 = dq_2 + r_2$, $d = (r_1 - r_2)/(q_2 - q_1)$ which is impossible because $r_1 - r_2 < d$. □

Congruent modulo m relation

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If a and b are integers and m is a positive integer, then a is congruent to b modulo m, written $a \equiv b \pmod{m}$, iff $m | (a - b)$

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Assume $a \equiv b \pmod{m}$; so $m|(a-b)$. If $a = q_1 m + r_1$ and $b = q_2 m + r_2$ where $0 \leq r_1 < m$ and $0 \leq r_2 < m$ it follows that $r_1 = r_2$ and so $a \bmod m = b \bmod m$. If $a \bmod m = b \bmod m$ then a and b have the same remainder so $a = q_1 m + r$ and $b = q_2 m + r$; therefore $a - b = (q_1 - q_2)m$, and so $m|(a-b)$. □

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- $\equiv \pmod m$ is an equivalence relation on integers

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Proof.

If $a \equiv b \pmod{m}$, then by the definition of congruence $m|(a - b)$. Hence, there is an integer k such that $a - b = km$ and equivalently $a = b + km$. If there is an integer k such that $a = b + km$, then $km = a - b$. Hence, $m|(a - b)$ and $a \equiv b \pmod{m}$. □

Congruences of sums, differences, and products

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Proof.

Since $a \equiv b$ (mod m) and $c \equiv d \pmod{m}$, by the previous theorem, there are integers s and t with $b = a + sm$ and $d = c + tm$. Therefore, $b + d = (a + sm) + (c + tm) = (a + c) + m(s + t)$, and $bd = (a + sm)(c + tm) = ac + m(at + cs + stm)$. Hence, $a + c \equiv b + d \pmod{m}$ and $ac \equiv bd \pmod{m}$ □

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Corollary

- $(a + b) \bmod m = ((a \bmod m) + (b \bmod m)) \bmod m$
- $ab \bmod m = ((a \bmod m)(b \bmod m)) \bmod m$

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- $7 +_{11} 9 = (7 + 9) \bmod 11 \quad = \quad 16 \bmod 11 = 5$
- $-7 \cdot_{11} 9 = (-7 \cdot 9) \bmod 11 \quad = \quad -63 \bmod 11 = 3$

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$765 = 3 \cdot 3 \cdot 5 \cdot 17 = 3^2 \cdot 5 \cdot 17$

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Now result follows

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Proof Suppose towards a contradiction that there are only finitely many primes $p_1, p_2, p_3, \ldots, p_k$. Consider the number $q = p_1 p_2 p_3 \ldots p_k + 1$, the product of all the primes plus one. By hypothesis q cannot be prime because it is strictly larger than all the primes. Thus, by the lemma, it has a prime divisor, p. Because $p_1, p_2, p_3, \ldots, p_k$ are all the primes, p must be equal to one of them, so p is a divisor of their product. So we have that p divides $p_1 p_2 p_3 \ldots p_k$, and p divides q, but that means p divides their difference, which is 1. Therefore $p \leq 1$. Contradiction. Therefore there are infinitely many primes.

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A very inefficient method of determining if a number n is prime

Try every integer $i \leq \sqrt{n}$ and see if n is divisible by i

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Testing if a number is prime can be done efficiently in polynomial time [Agrawal-Kayal-Saxena 2002], i.e., polynomial in the number of bits used to describe the input number. Efficient randomized tests had been available previously.