An Algorithm for Prime Factorization

Fact: If a is the smallest number > 1 that divides n, then a is prime.

Proof: By contradiction. (Left to the reader.)

- A *multiset* is like a set, except repetitions are allowed
  - $\{\{2, 2, 3, 3, 5\}\}$ is a multiset, not a set

PF(n): A prime factorization procedure

Input: $n \in N^+$
Output: PFS - a multiset of n's prime factors
PFS := $\emptyset$
for $a = 2$ to $\sqrt{n}$ do
    if $a \mid n$ **then** PFS := PF(n/a) $\cup\{\{a\}\}$ **return** PFS
if PFS $= \emptyset$ **then** PFS := $\{\{n\}\}$ [n is prime]

Example:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{PF}(7007) &= \{\{7\}\}\cup \text{PF}(1001)\\ &= \{\{7,7\}\}\cup \text{PF}(143)\\ &= \{\{7,7,11\}\}\cup \text{PF}(13)\\ &= \{\{7,7,11,13\}\}.\end{aligned}$$

The Complexity of Factoring

Algorithm PF runs in exponential time:

- We're checking every number up to $\sqrt{n}$

Can we do better?

- We don't know.
- Modern-day cryptography implicitly depends on the fact that we can't!

How Many Primes Are There?

Theorem 4: [Euclid] There are infinitely many primes.
Proof: By contradiction.

- Suppose that there are only finitely many primes: $p_1, \ldots, p_n$.
- Consider $q = p_1 \times \cdots \times p_n + 1$
- Clearly $q > p_1, ..., p_n$, so it can't be prime.
- So q must have a prime factor, which must be one of $p_1, \ldots, p_n$ (since these are the only primes).
- Suppose it is p_i.
  - Then $p_i \mid q$ and $p_i \mid p_1 \times \cdots \times p_n$
  - So $p_i \mid (q - p_1 \times \cdots \times p_n)$; i.e., $p_i \mid 1$ (Corollary 1)
  - Contradiction!

Largest currently-known prime (as of 5/04):

- $2^{24036583} - 1$: 7235733 digits
- Check www.utm.edu/research/primes

Primes of the form $2^p - 1$ where p is prime are called *Mersenne primes*.

- Search for large primes focuses on Mersenne primes

The distribution of primes

There are quite a few primes out there:

- Roughly one in every $\log(n)$ numbers is prime

Formally: let $\pi(n)$ be the number of primes $\leq n$:

Prime Number Theorem Theorem: $\pi(n) \sim n/\log(n)$; that is,

$$\lim_{n\to\infty} \pi(n)/(n/\log(n)) = 1$$

Why is this important?

- Cryptosystems like RSA use a secret key that is the product of two large (100-digit) primes.
- How do you find two large primes?
  - Roughly one of every 100 100-digit numbers is prime
  - To find a 100-digit prime;
    - ∗ Keep choosing odd numbers at random
    - ∗ Check if they are prime (using fast randomized primality test)
    - ∗ Keep trying until you find one
    - ∗ Roughly 100 attempts should do it

(Some) Open Problems Involving Primes

- Are there infinitely many Mersenne primes?
- *Goldbach's Conjecture*: every even number greater than 2 is the sum of two primes.
  - E.g., $6 = 3 + 3$, $20 = 17 + 3$, $28 = 17 + 11$
  - This has been checked out to 6×10^{16} (as of 2003)
  - Every sufficiently large integer ($> 10^{43,000}!$) is the sum of four primes
- Two prime numbers that differ by two are *twin primes*
  - E.g.: (3,5), (5,7), (11,13), (17,19), (41,43)
  - also $4,648,619,711,505 \times 2^{60,000} \pm 1$!

  Are there infinitely many twin primes?

All these conjectures are believed to be true, but no one has proved them.

Greatest Common Divisor (gcd)

Definition: For $a \in Z$ let $D(a) = \{k \in N : k \mid a\}$

- $D(a) = \{\text{divisors of } a\}$.

Claim. $|D(a)| < \infty$ if (and only if) $a \neq 0$.

Proof: If $a \neq 0$ and $k \mid a$, then $0 < k < a$.

Definition: For $a, b \in Z$, $CD(a, b) = D(a) \cap D(b)$ is the set of common divisors of a, b.

Definition: The *greatest common divisor* of a and b is

$$\gcd(a, b) = \max(CD(a, b)).$$

Examples:

- $\gcd(6, 9) = 3$
- $\gcd(13, 100) = 1$
- $\gcd(6, 45) = 3$

Def.: a and b are *relatively prime* if $\gcd(a, b) = 1$.

- **Example:** 4 and 9 are relatively prime.
- Two numbers are relatively prime iff they have no common prime factors.

Efficient computation of $\gcd(a, b)$ lies at the heart of commercial cryptography.

Least Common Multiple (lcm)

Definition: The *least common multiple* of $a, b \in N^+$, $\mathrm{lcm}(a, b)$, is the smallest $n \in N^+$ such that $a \mid n$ and $b \mid n$.

- Formally, $M(a) = \{ka \mid k \in N\}$ – the multiples of a
- Define $CM(a, b) = M(a) \cap M(b)$ – the common multiples of a and b
- $\mathrm{lcm}(a, b) = \min(CM(a, b))$
- **Examples:** $\mathrm{lcm}(4, 9) = 36$, $\mathrm{lcm}(4, 10) = 20$.

Computing the GCD

There is a method for calculating the gcd that goes back to Euclid:

- **Recall:** if $n > m$ and q divides both n and m, then q divides $n - m$ and $n + m$.

Therefore $\gcd(n, m) = \gcd(m, n - m)$.

- Proof: Show $CD(m, n) = CD(m, n-m)$; i.e., that q divides both n and m iff q divides both m and $n-m$. (If q divides n and m, then q divides $n - m$ by the argument above. If q divides m and $n - m$, then q divides $m + (n - m) = n$.)
- This allows us to reduce the gcd computation to a simpler case.

We can do even better:

- $\gcd(n, m) = \gcd(m, n - m) = \gcd(m, n - 2m) = \ldots$
- keep going as long as $n - qm \geq 0$ — $\lfloor n/m \rfloor$ steps

Consider $\gcd(6, 45)$:

- $\lfloor 45/6 \rfloor = 7$; remainder is 3 ($45 \equiv 3 \pmod 6$)
- $\gcd(6, 45) = \gcd(6, 45 - 7 \times 6) = \gcd(6, 3) = 3$

We can keep this up this procedure to compute $\gcd(n_1, n_2)$:

- If $n_1 \geq n_2$, write n_1 as $q_1 n_2 + r_1$, where $0 \leq r_1 < n_2$
  - $q_1 = \lfloor n_1/n_2 \rfloor$
- $\gcd(n_1, n_2) = \gcd(r_1, n_2)$; $r_1 = n_1 \bmod n_2$
- Now $r_1 < n_2$, so switch their roles:
- $n_2 = q_2 r_1 + r_2$, where $0 \leq r_2 < r_1$
- $\gcd(r_1, n_2) = \gcd(r_1, r_2)$
- Notice that $\max(n_1, n_2) > \max(r_1, n_2) > \max(r_1, r_2)$
- Keep going until we have a remainder of 0 (i.e., something of the form $\gcd(r_k, 0)$ or $(\gcd(0, r_k))$
  - This is bound to happen sooner or later

Euclid's Algorithm

Input m, n [m, n natural numbers, $m \geq n$]
  $num \leftarrow m$; $denom \leftarrow n$ [Initialize num and $denom$]
  repeat until $denom = 0$
    $q \leftarrow \lfloor num/denom \rfloor$
    $rem \leftarrow num - (q * denom)$ [$num \bmod denom = rem$]
    $num \leftarrow denom$ [New num]
    $denom \leftarrow rem$ [New $denom$; note $num \geq denom$]
  endrepeat
Output num [$num = \text{gcd}(m, n)$]

Example: $\text{gcd}(84, 33)$

Iteration 1: $num = 84$, $denom = 33$, $q = 2$, $rem = 18$
Iteration 2: $num = 33$, $denom = 18$, $q = 1$, $rem = 15$
Iteration 3: $num = 18$, $denom = 15$, $q = 1$, $rem = 3$
Iteration 4: $num = 15$, $denom = 3$, $q = 5$, $rem = 0$
Iteration 5: $num = 3$, $denom = 0 \Rightarrow \text{gcd}(84, 33) = 3$

$\text{gcd}(84, 33) = \text{gcd}(33, 18) = \text{gcd}(18, 15) = \text{gcd}(15, 3) = \text{gcd}(3, 0) = 3$

Euclid's Algorithm: Correctness

How do we know this works?

- We have two *loop invariants*, which are true each time we start the loop:
    - $\gcd(m, n) = \gcd(num, denom)$
    - $num \geq denom$
- At the end, $denom = 0$, so $\gcd(num, denom) = num$.

Euclid's Algorithm: Complexity

Input m, n [m, n natural numbers, $m \geq n$]
  $num \leftarrow m$; $denom \leftarrow n$ [Initialize num and $denom$]
  repeat until $denom = 0$
    $q \leftarrow \lfloor num/denom \rfloor$
    $rem \leftarrow num - (q * denom)$
    $num \leftarrow denom$ [New num]
    $denom \leftarrow rem$ [New $denom$; note $num \geq denom$]
  endrepeat
Output num [$num = \gcd(m, n)$]

How many times do we go through the loop in the Euclidean algorithm:

- Best case: Easy. Never!
- Average case: Too hard
- Worst case: Can't answer this exactly, but we can get a good upper bound.
    - See how fast *denom* goes down in each iteration.

Claim: After two iterations, *denom* is halved:

- Recall $num = q * denom + rem$. Use $denom'$ and $denom''$ to denote value of *denom* after 1 and 2 iterations. Two cases:

  1. $rem \leq denom/2 \Rightarrow denom' \leq denom/2$ and $denom'' < denom/2$.
  2. $rem > denom/2$. But then $num' = denom$, $denom' = rem$. At next iteration, $q = 1$, and $denom'' = rem' = num' - denom' < denom/2$

- How long until *denom* is ≤ 1?
  - $< 2\log_2(m)$ steps!
- After at most $2\log_2(m)$ steps, $denom = 0$.

The Extended Euclidean Algorithm

Theorem 5: For $a, b \in N$, not both 0, we can compute $s, t \in Z$ such that

$$\gcd(a, b) = sa + tb.$$

- **Example:** $\gcd(9, 4) = 1 = 1 \cdot 9 + (-2) \cdot 4$.

Proof: By strong induction on $\max(a, b)$. Suppose without loss of generality $a \leq b$.

- If $\max(a, b) = 1$, then must have $b = 1$, $\gcd(a, b) = 1$
  - $\gcd(a, b) = 0 \cdot a + 1 \cdot b$.
- If $\max(a, b) > 1$, there are three cases:
  - If $a = 0$, then $\gcd(a, b) = b = 0 \cdot a + 1 \cdot b$
  - If $a = b$, then $\gcd(a, b) = a = 1 \cdot a + 0 \cdot b$
  - If $0 < a < b$, then $\gcd(a, b) = \gcd(a, b - a)$. Moreover, $b = \max(a, b) > \max(a, b - a)$. Thus, by IH, we can compute s, t such that

    $$\gcd(a, b) = \gcd(a, a-b) = sa+t(b-a) = (s-t)a+tb.$$

Note: this computation basically follows the "recipe" of Euclid's algorithm.

Example

Recall that $\gcd(84, 33) = \gcd(33, 18) = \gcd(18, 15) = \gcd(15, 3) = \gcd(3, 0) = 3$

We work backwards to write 3 as a linear combination of 84 and 33:

$$\begin{aligned}
3 &= 18 - 15 \\
&\qquad \text{[Now 3 is a linear combination of 18 and 15]} \\
&= 18 - (33 - 18) \\
&= 2(18) - 33 \\
&\qquad \text{[Now 3 is a linear combination of 18 and 33]} \\
&= 2(84 - 2 \times 33)) - 33 \\
&= 2 \times 84 - 5 \times 33 \\
&\qquad \text{[Now 3 is a linear combination of 84 and 33]}
\end{aligned}$$

Some Consequences

Corollary 2: If a and b are relatively prime, then there exist s and t such that $as + bt = 1$.

Corollary 3: If $\gcd(a, b) = 1$ and $a \mid bc$, then $a \mid c$.

Proof:

- Exist $s, t \in Z$ such that $sa + tb = 1$
- Multiply both sides by c: $sac + tbc = c$
- Since $a \mid bc$, $a \mid sac + tbc$, so $a \mid c$

Corollary 4: If p is prime and $p \mid \Pi_{i=1}^{n} a_i$, then $p \mid a_i$ for some $1 \leq i \leq n$.

Proof: By induction on n:

- If $n = 1$: trivial.

Suppose the result holds for $n \leq N$ and $p \mid \Pi_{i=1}^{N+1} a_i$.

- Note that $p \mid \Pi_{i=1}^{N+1} a_i = (\Pi_{i=1}^{N} a_i)a_{N+1}$.
- If $p \mid a_{N+1}$ we are done.
- If not, $\gcd(p, a_{N+1}) = 1$.
- By Corollary 3, $p \mid \Pi_{i=1}^{N} a_i$
- By the IH, $p \mid a_i$ for some $1 \leq i \leq N$.

The Fundamental Theorem of Arithmetic, II

Theorem 3: Every $n > 1$ can be represented uniquely as a product of primes, written in nondecreasing size.

Proof: Still need to prove uniqueness. We do it by strong induction.

- Base case: Obvious if $n = 2$.

Inductive step. Suppose OK for $n' < n$.

- Suppose that $n = \Pi_{i=1}^{s} p_i = \Pi_{j=1}^{r} q_j$.
- $p_1 \mid \Pi_{j=1}^{r} q_j$, so by Corollary 4, $p_1 \mid q_j$ for some j.
- But then $p_1 = q_j$, since both p_1 and q_j are prime.
- But then $n/p_1 = p_2 \cdots p_s = q_1 \cdots q_{j-1} q_{j+1} \cdots q_r$
- Result now follows from I.H.

Characterizing the GCD and LCM

Theorem 6: Suppose $a = \Pi_{i=1}^{n} p_i^{\alpha_i}$ and $b = \Pi_{i=1}^{n} p_i^{\beta_i}$, where p_i are primes and $\alpha_i, \beta_i \in N$.

- Some α_i's, β_i's could be 0.

Then

$$\begin{aligned} \gcd(a,b) &= \Pi_{i=1}^{n} p_i^{\min(\alpha_i,\beta_i)} \\ \mathrm{lcm}(a,b) &= \Pi_{i=1}^{n} p_i^{\max(\alpha_i,\beta_i)} \end{aligned}$$

Proof: For gcd, let $c = \Pi_{i=1}^{n} p_i^{\min(\alpha_i,\beta_i)}$.
Clearly $c \mid a$ and $c \mid b$.

- Thus, c is a common divisor, so $c \leq \gcd(a,b)$.

If $q^\gamma \mid \gcd(a,b)$,

- must have $q \in \{p_1, \ldots, p_n\}$
  - Otherwise $q \not| \, a$ so $q \not| \, \gcd(a,b)$ (likewise b)

  If $q = p_i$, $q^\gamma \mid \gcd(a,b)$, must have $\gamma \leq \min(\alpha_i, \beta_i)$
  - E.g., if $\gamma > \alpha_i$, then $p_i^\gamma \not| \, a$
- Thus, $c \geq \gcd(a,b)$.

Conclusion: $c = \gcd(a,b)$.

For lcm, let $d = \Pi_{i=1}^{n} p_i^{\max(\alpha_i,\beta_i)}$.

- Clearly $a \mid d$, $b \mid d$, so d is a common multiple.
- Thus, $d \geq \mathrm{lcm}(a, b)$.

But if $p_i^\delta \mid \mathrm{lcm}(a, b)$, must have $\delta \geq \max(\alpha_i, \beta_i)$.

- E.g., if $\delta < \alpha_i$, then $a \not| \mathrm{lcm}(a, b)$.
- Thus, $d \leq \mathrm{lcm}(a, b)$.

Conclusion: $d = \mathrm{lcm}(a, b)$.

Example: $432 = 2^4 3^3$, and $95256 = 2^3 3^5 7^2$, so

- $\gcd(95256, 432) = 2^3 3^3 = 216$
- $\mathrm{lcm}(95256, 432) = 2^4 3^5 7^2 = 190512$.

Corollary 5: $ab = \gcd(a, b) \cdot \mathrm{lcm}(a, b)$
Proof:

$$\min(\alpha, \beta) + \max(\alpha, \beta) = \alpha + \beta.$$

Example: $4 \cdot 10 = 2 \cdot 20 = \gcd(4, 10) \cdot \mathrm{lcm}(4, 10)$.