

CSCI 124

Discrete Structures II: Groups – Definition and Examples

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In this module, we attempt to look at the similarities between the affine and shift ciphers using the notion of a group

1 A Group

Definition 2: A *group* is a set G with an associated operation \diamond , such that the following hold:

- *Closure*
 G is closed under the operation, i.e. $x, y \in G \Rightarrow x \diamond y \in G$.
- *Associativity*
The operation is associative, i.e. $(x \diamond y) \diamond z = x \diamond (y \diamond z)$
- *Identity*
There is an element $e \in G$ such that $x \diamond e = e \diamond x = x$. The element e is known as the *identity*
- *Inverses exist*
Every element has an inverse in G , i.e. $\forall g \in G, \exists \bar{g} \in G$ such that $\bar{g} \diamond g = g \diamond \bar{g} = e$.

Notice that the operation is very much like addition, however, it is not always commutative. Examples of a group include: \mathbb{R} , the real numbers, with addition as the operation; \mathbb{Q} , the rational numbers with addition as the operation; \mathbb{Z} the integers, with addition as the operation; $\mathcal{R}/\{0\}$ (the real numbers without the number 0) under multiplication; $n \times m$ matrices for any integers m, n , under addition; any vector space under vector addition (including, for example, the integer lattice); the complex n^{th} roots of one under multiplication. All the above examples are *abelian* groups, that is the operation \diamond is also commutative ($a \diamond b = b \diamond a$). The set of invertible $n \times n$ matrices is a non-abelian group under multiplication.

2 An Example

To see that \mathcal{R} with $\diamond = +$ is a group, we check each of the requirements of a group:

- *Closure*
Suppose $x, y \in \mathcal{R}$, i.e. x and y are real numbers. Their sum, $x + y$ is also real, i.e. $x + y \in \mathcal{R}$. Hence the closure condition holds.

- *Associativity*
Addition is associative, i.e. $(x + y) + z = x + (y + z)$ so associativity holds.
- *Identity*
Consider the element 0. $0 \in \mathcal{R}$, and $x + 0 = 0 + x = x$. Hence the identity exists.
- *Inverses exist*
Given $r \in R$, consider $\bar{r} = -r$. It is a member of \mathcal{R} too, and $\bar{r} \diamond r = (-r) + r = 0 = e$. Hence inverses exist.

You should similarly show that the other examples above are groups.

3 \mathbb{Z}_m as a group under addition mod m

An example of a group is the set of remainders mod m , $\mathbb{Z}_m = \{0, 1, \dots, m-1\}$ under addition modulo m . For $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}_m$, $a \diamond b = (a + b) \text{ MOD } m$.

To see that it is a group, we check each of the requirements of a group:

- *Closure*
Suppose $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}_m$. Their sum, $x + y \text{ MOD } m$ is also in \mathbb{Z}_m . Hence the closure condition holds.
- *Associativity*
Addition over the integers is associative, i.e. $(x + y) + z = x + (y + z)$, and hence it is also associative modulo m , and so associativity holds.
- *Identity*
Consider the element $0 \in \mathbb{Z}_m$, and $x + 0 \text{ MOD } m = 0 + x \text{ MOD } m = x \text{ MOD } m$. Hence the identity exists.
- *Inverses exist*
Given $x \in \mathbb{Z}_m$, consider $\bar{x} = m - x \text{ MOD } m$. It is a member of \mathbb{Z}_m , and $\bar{x} \diamond x = m \text{ MOD } m = 0 \text{ MOD } m = e$. Hence inverses exist.

The shift cipher now is as follows:

$$e_K : \mathbb{Z}_m \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_m$$

$$e_K(g) = g \diamond K$$

$$d_K : \mathbb{Z}_m \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_m$$

$$d_K(g) = g \diamond \bar{K}$$

4 \mathbb{Z}_m as a group under multiplication mod m ?

Consider the set of remainders modulo m under *multiplication*. Is this a group?

- *Closure*

Suppose $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}_m$. Their product, $x \times y \text{ MOD } m$ is also in \mathbb{Z}_m . Hence the closure condition holds.

- *Associativity*

Multiplication over the integers is associative, i.e. $(x \times y) \times z = x \times (y \times z)$, and hence it is also associative *modulo* m , and so associativity holds.

- *Identity*

Consider the element $1 \in \mathbb{Z}_m$, and $x \times 1 \text{ MOD } m = 1 \times x \text{ MOD } m = x \text{ MOD } m$. Hence the identity exists.

- *Inverses?*

Given $x \in \mathbb{Z}_m$, \bar{x} is that integer, $0 \leq \bar{x} < m$, such that $x\bar{x} = 1$. Such a value does not always exist.

If it were a group, the affine cipher for $b = 0$ could be expressed as:

$$e_K : \mathbb{Z}_m \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_m$$

$$e_K(g) = g \diamond K$$

$$d_K : \mathbb{Z}_m \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_m$$

$$d_K(g) = g \diamond \bar{K}$$

where \diamond is multiplication *MOD* m .