1. **Definition.**

Let $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$. Let $c \in \mathbb{Z}$. c is said to be a **common divisor of** *m, n if both of m, n are divisible by c.*

2. **Definition.**

Let $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$.

(1) *Suppose m, n are not both zero. Let $g \in \mathbb{N}$. g is said to be a* **greatest common divisor of** *m, n if both of the following conditions are satisfied:*

(1a) *g is a common divisor of m, n.*

(1b) *For any $d \in \mathbb{Z}$, if d is a common divisor of m, n then $|d| \leq g$.*

(2) *(Suppose $m = n = 0$.) We define the greatest common divisor of $0, 0$ is defined to be 0.*

Remark. Two questions arise naturally:

Existence question. Does each pair of integers, have at least one greatest common divisor?

Uniqueness question. Does each pair of integers, have at most one greatest common divisor?

3. **Lemma (1). (Uniqueness of greatest common divisor.)**

Each pair of integers which are not both zero has at most one greatest common divisor.

Proof of Lemma (1).

Let $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$. Without loss of generality, suppose $m \neq 0$.

Let $g, g' \in \mathbb{N}$. Suppose each of g, g' is a greatest common divisor of m, n.

[Hope to deduce: $g = g'$.]

By definition, each of g, g' is a common divisor of m, n.

Since g is a greatest common divisor of m, n

and g' is a common divisor of m, n,

we have $g' = |g'| \leq g$.

Similarly, we also deduce that $g = |g| \leq g'$. Therefore $g = g'$. □

Notation. From now on, for any $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$, for any $g \in \mathbb{N}$, if g is a greatest common divisor of m, n then we write $\gcd(m, n)$.

Remark. The importance of Lemma (1) is that it guarantees the uniqueness of greatest common divisor: it makes sense to use the article '*the*' when we write '*the* greatest common divisor of so-and-so'. and to write '$\gcd(m, n) = \ldots$'.

4. **Lemma (2).**

Let $b \in \mathbb{Z}$ and p be a prime number. The statements below hold:

(1) *If b is divisible by p then* $\gcd(b, p) = |p|$.

(2) *If b is not divisible by p then* $\gcd(b, p) = 1$.

Proof of Lemma (2).

Let $b \in \mathbb{Z}$ and p be a prime number.

p is divisible by these integers only: $1, -1, p, -p$.

(1) Suppose b is divisible by p.

Then the only common divisors of b, p are $1, -1, p, -p$.

The greatest of them is $|p|$.

So $\gcd(b, p) = |p|$.

(2) Suppose b is not divisible by p.

Then the only common divisors of b, p are $1, -1$.

The greatest of them is 1.

So $\gcd(b, p) = 1$. $\square$

5. **Lemma (3)**.

Let $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$. The statements below hold:

(1) $\gcd(a, b) = \gcd(-a, b) = \gcd(a, -b) = \gcd(-a, -b)$.

(2) $\gcd(a, b) = \gcd(b, a)$.

(3) $\gcd(a, a) = a$.

(4) $\gcd(a, 1) = 1$.

(5) $\gcd(a, 0) = a$.

Proof of Lemma (3). Exercise.

Remark. Lemma (2), Lemma (3) combine to tell us that we need only concern ourselves with the existence question of greatest common divisor for a pair of distinct positive integers both of which are not prime numbers. (Why?)

6. **Theorem (EAN). (Euclidean Algorithm for positive integers.)**

Let $a_0, a_1 \in \mathbb{N}\backslash\{0\}$. Suppose $a_0 > a_1$.

For each $j \in \mathbb{N}\backslash\{0, 1\}$,

if $a_{j-1} \neq 0$, then define $a_j \in \mathbb{N}$ to be the remainder obtained after dividing a_{j-2} by a_{j-1};

if $a_{j-1} = 0$, then define $a_j = 0$.

Then, there exists some $N \in \mathbb{N}\backslash\{0\}$ such that the following statements hold:

(1) $a_0 > a_1 > a_2 > ... > a_N > 0$ and $a_j = 0$ whenever $j > N$.

(2) There exist some $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $a_N = sa_0 + ta_1$.

(3) a_N is a common divisor of a_0, a_1.

(4) For any $d \in \mathbb{Z}$, if d is a common divisor of a_0, a_1 then $|d| \leq a_N$.

(5) $\gcd(a_0, a_1) = a_N$.

Proof of Theorem (EAN). Postponed.

7. **Euclidean Algorithm.**

1. We determine gcd(10000000011, 10101):

$$\begin{array}{lllllll} 10000000011 & = & 990000 & \times & 10101 & + & 10011 \\ 10101 & = & 1 & \times & 10011 & + & 90 \\ 10011 & = & 111 & \times & 90 & + & 21 \\ 90 & = & 4 & \times & 21 & + & 6 \\ 21 & = & 3 & \times & 6 & + & 3 \\ 6 & = & 2 & \times & 3 & + & 0 \end{array}$$

By Theorem (EAN), we have $\gcd(10000000011, 10101) = 3$. From the definition, we also have

$$\gcd(-10000000011, 10101) = \gcd(10000000011, -10101) = \gcd(-10000000011, -10101) = 3.$$

2. We determine gcd(960, 825):

$$\begin{array}{lllllll} 960 & = & 1 & \times & 825 & + & 135 \\ 825 & = & 6 & \times & 135 & + & 15 \\ 135 & = & 9 & \times & 15 & + & 0 \end{array}$$

By Theorem (EAN), we have $\gcd(960, 825) = 15$. From the definition, we also have

$$\gcd(-960, 825) = \gcd(960, -825) = \gcd(-960, -825) = 1.$$

3. We determine $\gcd(2468008642, 1357997531)$:

$$
\begin{array}{lcrcll}
2468008642 & = & 1 & \times & 1357997531 & + \ 1110011111 \\
1357997531 & = & 1 & \times & 1110011111 & + \ 247986420 \\
1110011111 & = & 4 & \times & 247986420 & + \ 118065431 \\
247986420 & = & 2 & \times & 118065431 & + \ 11855558 \\
118065431 & = & 9 & \times & 11855558 & + \ 11365409 \\
11855558 & = & 1 & \times & 11365409 & + \ 490149 \\
11365409 & = & 23 & \times & 490149 & + \ 91982 \\
490149 & = & 5 & \times & 91982 & + \ 30239 \\
91982 & = & 3 & \times & 30239 & + \ 1265 \\
30239 & = & 23 & \times & 1265 & + \ 1144 \\
1265 & = & 1 & \times & 1144 & + \ 121 \\
1144 & = & 9 & \times & 121 & + \ 55 \\
121 & = & 2 & \times & 55 & + \ 11 \\
55 & = & 5 & \times & 11 & + \ 0
\end{array}
$$

By Theorem (EAN), we have $\gcd(2468008642, 1357997531) = 11$. From the definition, we also have

$$
\begin{aligned}
\gcd(-2468008642, 1357997531) &= \gcd(2468008642, -1357997531) \\
&= \gcd(-2468008642, -1357997531) = 11.
\end{aligned}
$$

$a_0 = \underline{2468008642}$, $a_1 = \underline{1357997531}$.

$$\underset{a_0}{2468008642} = \underset{q_1}{1} \cdot \underset{a_1}{1357997531} + \underset{a_2}{1110011111}$$

$$\underset{a_1}{1357997531} = \underset{q_2}{1} \cdot \underset{a_2}{1110011111} + \underset{a_3}{247986420}$$

$$\underset{a_2}{1110011111} = \underset{q_3}{4} \cdot \underset{a_3}{247986420} + \underset{a_4}{118065431}$$

$$\underset{a_3}{247986420} = \underset{q_4}{2} \cdot \underset{a_4}{118065431} + \underset{a_5}{11855558}$$

$$\underset{a_4}{118065431} = \underset{q_5}{9} \cdot \underset{a_5}{11855558} + \underset{a_6}{11365409}$$

$$\underset{a_5}{11855558} = \underset{q_6}{1} \cdot \underset{a_6}{11365409} + \underset{a_7}{490149}$$

$$\underset{a_6}{11365409} = \underset{q_7}{23} \cdot \underset{a_7}{490149} + \underset{a_8}{91982}$$

$$\underset{a_7}{490149} = \underset{q_8}{5} \cdot \underset{a_8}{91982} + \underset{a_9}{30239}$$

$$\underset{a_8}{91982} = \underset{q_9}{3} \cdot \underset{a_9}{30239} + \underset{a_{10}}{1265}$$

$$\underset{a_9}{30239} = \underset{q_{10}}{23} \cdot \underset{a_{10}}{1265} + \underset{a_{11}}{1144}$$

$$\underset{a_{10}}{1265} = \underset{q_{11}}{1} \cdot \underset{a_{11}}{1144} + \underset{a_{12}}{121}$$

$$\underset{a_{11}}{1144} = \underset{q_{12}}{9} \cdot \underset{a_{12}}{121} + \underset{a_{13}}{55}$$

$$\underset{a_{12}}{121} = \underset{q_{13}}{2} \cdot \underset{a_{13}}{55} + \underset{a_{14}}{11}$$

$$\underset{a_{13}}{55} = \underset{q_{14}}{5} \cdot \underset{a_{14}}{11} + \underset{a_{15}}{0}$$

Stop.

$$\underset{a_{14}}{} = \underset{q_{15}}{} \cdot \underset{a_{15}}{} + \underset{a_{16}}{}$$

$$\underset{a_{15}}{} = \underset{q_{16}}{} \cdot \underset{a_{16}}{} + \underset{a_{17}}{}$$

Claim (α): Each of a_0, a_1 is divisible by a_N.

Here $N = \underline{14}$.

$$
\begin{cases}
a_{N-1} = q_N a_N \\
a_{N-2} = q_{N-1} a_{N-1} + a_N \\
a_{N-3} = q_{N-2} a_{N-2} + a_{N-1} \\
a_{N-4} = q_{N-3} a_{N-3} + a_{N-2} \\
\vdots \\
a_4 = q_5 a_5 + a_6 \\
a_3 = q_4 a_4 + a_5 \\
a_2 = q_3 a_3 + a_4 \\
a_1 = q_2 a_2 + a_3 \\
a_0 = q_1 a_1 + a_2
\end{cases}
$$

a_{N-1} is divisible by a_N.

Then a_{N-2} is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Then a_{N-3} is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Then a_{N-4} is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

$\vdots$

Then a_4 is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Then a_3 is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Then a_2 is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Then a_1 is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Then a_0 is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Claim (β): There exist some $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $a_N = s a_0 + t a_1$.

Here $N = \underline{\ 14\ }$.

$$\begin{cases} a_{N-1} = q_N a_N \\ a_{N-2} = q_{N-1} a_{N-1} + a_N \\ a_{N-3} = q_{N-2} a_{N-2} + a_{N-1} \\ a_{N-4} = q_{N-3} a_{N-3} + a_{N-2} \\ \vdots \\ a_4 = q_5 a_5 + a_6 \\ a_3 = q_4 a_4 + a_5 \\ a_2 = q_3 a_3 + a_4 \\ a_1 = q_2 a_2 + a_3 \\ a_0 = q_1 a_1 + a_2 \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{aligned} a_N &= 1 \cdot a_{N-2} - q_{N-1} a_{N-1} \\ &= 1 \cdot a_{N-2} - q_{N-1} \left(a_{N-3} - q_{N-2} a_{N-2} \right) \\ &= -q_{N-1} a_{N-3} + \left(1 + q_{N-1} q_{N-2} \right) a_{N-2} \\ &= -q_{N-1} a_{N-3} + \left(1 + q_{N-1} q_{N-2} \right) \left(a_{N-4} - q_{N-3} a_{N-3} \right) \\ &= \left(1 + q_{N-1} q_{N-2} \right) a_{N-4} \\ &\quad - \left[q_{N-1} + \left(1 + q_{N-1} q_{N-2} \right) q_{N-3} \right] a_{N-3} \\ &\vdots \\ &= s a_0 + t a_1, \end{aligned}$$

in which each of s, t is a sum of products of integers with $q_1, q_2, \ldots, q_{N-1}$. So s, t are integers as well.

Claim (γ): $a_N = \gcd(a_0, a_1)$.

- Each of a_0, a_1 is divisible by a_N.
  Then a_N is a common divisor of a_0, a_1.
- We verify that for any $d \in \mathbb{Z}$, if d is a common divisor of a_0, a_1 then $|d| \leq a_N$.

* Pick any $d \in \mathbb{Z}$.
Suppose d is a common divisor of a_0, a_1.
Then there exist some $s', t' \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $a_0 = s'd$ and $a_1 = t'd$.
Now $a_N = sa_0 + ta_1 = ss'd + tt'd = (ss' + tt')d$.
Note that $a_N > 0$. Then $ss' + tt' \neq 0$.
Then $a_N = |a_N| = |ss' + tt'| \cdot |d| \geq 1 \cdot |d| = |d|$.

- It follows that $a_N = \gcd(a_0, a_1)$.

8. **Proof of Theorem (EAN).**

Let $a_0, a_1 \in \mathbb{N}\backslash\{0\}$. Suppose $a_0 > a_1$.

For each $j \in \mathbb{N}\backslash\{0,1\}$, if $a_{j-1} \neq 0$, then define $a_j \in \mathbb{N}$ to be the remainder obtained after dividing a_{j-2} by a_{j-1}; if $a_{j-1} = 0$, then define $a_j = 0$.

(0) We apply proof-by-contradiction to argue that there exists some $M \in \mathbb{N}$ such that $a_M = 0$.

Idea of argument:

Repeated application of Division Algorithm gives:

$$\left.\begin{array}{l} a_0 = q_1 a_1 + a_2 \\ a_1 = q_2 a_2 + a_3 \\ a_2 = q_3 a_3 + a_4 \\ a_3 = q_4 a_4 + a_5 \\ \quad \vdots \end{array}\right\}$$

in which:

$a_0 > a_1 > a_2 > a_3 > \underbrace{\cdots\cdots}$

Ask: Will this ever 'stop'?

Answer:

$a_0 > a_1$. Then $a_1 \leq a_0 - 1$.

$a_1 > a_2$. Then $a_2 \leq a_1 - 1 \leq a_0 - 2$.

$a_2 > a_3$. Then $a_3 \leq a_2 - 1 \leq a_1 - 2 \leq a_0 - 3$.

$a_3 > a_4$. Then $a_4 \leq a_3 - 1 \leq a_2 - 2 \leq a_1 - 3 \leq a_0 - 4$.

$\vdots \qquad \vdots$

Hence $a_{a_0} \leq a_{a_0 - 1} - 1 \leq a_{a_0 - 2} - 2 \leq \cdots \leq a_0 - a_0 = 0$.

Define $S = \{j \in \mathbb{N} : a_j = 0\}$.

Note that $a_{a_0} = 0$. (Why?)

Then $S \neq \emptyset$.

By the Well-ordering Principle for Integers, S has a least element, say ν.

Take $N = \nu - 1$. Then $a_0 > a_1 > a_2 > \cdots > a_N > a_\nu = 0$.

(1) From the argument above, $a_0, a_1, a_2, \cdots, a_N$ is a strictly decreasing finite sequence of positive integers.
By definition of N, $a_k = 0$ whenever $k > N$.

(2) By definition, there exist some $q_1, q_2, \cdots q_N \in \mathbb{N}$ such that

$$\begin{aligned}
a_0 &= q_1 \times a_1 + a_2, \\
a_1 &= q_2 \times a_2 + a_3, \\
&\vdots \\
a_{N-3} &= q_{N-2} \times a_{N-2} + a_{N-1}, \\
a_{N-2} &= q_{N-1} \times a_{N-1} + a_N, \\
a_{N-1} &= q_N \times a_N + 0.
\end{aligned}$$

We have $a_N = 1 \cdot a_{N-2} - q_{N-1}a_{N-1}$. Here $1, -q_{N-1} \in \mathbb{Z}$. Then

$$a_N = a_{N-2} - q_{N-1}(a_{N-3} - q_{N-2}a_{N-2}) = -q_{N-1}a_{N-3} + (1 + q_{N-1}q_{N-2})a_{N-2}.$$

Here $-q_{N-1}, 1 + q_{N-1}q_{N-2} \in \mathbb{Z}$.
Repeating this argument finitely many times, we deduce that there exist some $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $a_N = sa_0 + ta_1$.

(3) a_{N-1} is divisible by a_N.

Since $a_{N-2} = q_{N-1}a_{N-1} + a_N$, a_{N-2} is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Since $a_{N-3} = q_{N-2}a_{N-2} + a_{N-1}$, a_{N-3} is divisible by a_N. (Why?)

Repeating this argument for finitely many times, we deduce that a_0, a_1 are both divisible by a_N.

(4) Pick any $d \in \mathbb{Z}$. Suppose d is a common divisor of a_0, a_1.

Then there exist some $s', t' \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $a_0 = s'd$ and $a_1 = t'd$.

Now $a_N = sa_0 + ta_1 = (ss' + tt')d$.

Note that $ss' + tt' \in \mathbb{Z}$. Since $a_N > 0$, we have $ss' + tt' \neq 0$.

Then $a_N = |a_N| = |ss' + tt'||d| \geq |d|$.

(5) The result follows from (3) and (4) combined.

9. **Theorem (4). (Bézout's Identity.)**

Let $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$. There exist some $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $sm + tn = \gcd(m, n)$.

Proof of Theorem (4). A very tedious exercise. [Needed: {Lemma (3). Statement (2) of Theorem (EAN).]

10. **Lemma (5).**

Let $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$. Let $c \in \mathbb{Z}$.

c is a common divisor of m, n iff $\gcd(m, n)$ is divisible by c.

Proof of Lemma (5). Let $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$. Let $c \in \mathbb{Z}$.

[Hope: Name some appropriate $r \in \mathbb{Z}$ which satisfies $\gcd(m,n) = rc$!]

[Ask: How to relate $\gcd(m,n)$ with m, n through an equality?]

- ['$\Rightarrow$-part'.] Suppose c is a common divisor of m, n.
  Then there exist some $h, k \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $m = hc$ and $n = kc$.
  By Theorem (4),
  there exist some $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $sm + tn = \gcd(m, n)$.
  Then $\gcd(m, n) = sm + tn = s \cdot hc + t \cdot kc = (sh + tk)c$.
  Since $h, k, s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$, we have $sh + tk \in \mathbb{Z}$.
  Therefore $\gcd(m, n)$ is divisible by c.

- ['$\Leftarrow$-part'.] Exercise. (Apply some basic properties of divisibility.)

11. **Theorem (6). (Alternative definition of greatest common divisor.)**

Let $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$. Let $g \in \mathbb{N}$.

The statements (†), (‡) are logically equivalent:

(†) $g = \gcd(m, n)$.

(‡) *g is a common divisor of m, n and g is divisible by every common divisor of m, n.*

Proof of Theorem (6). Exercise. (Apply Lemma (5).)

12. **Euclid's Lemma.**

Let $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ and p be a prime number. Suppose ab is divisible by p. Then at least one of a, b is divisible by p.

Proof of Euclid's Lemma. Let $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ and p be a prime number.

Suppose ab is divisible by p. [Want to deduce: at least one of a, b is divisible by p.]

b is divisible by p or b is not divisible by p.

- (Case 1). Suppose b is divisible by p. Then at least one of a, b, namely b, is divisible by p.
- (Case 2). Suppose b is not divisible by p. [Hope to deduce: a is divisible by p.]

By Lemma (2), since p is a prime number, we have $\gcd(b, p) = 1$.

By Theorem (4), there exist some $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $\gcd(b, p) = sb + tp$.

So $1 = \gcd(b, p) = sb + tp$.

Then $a \cdot 1 = a \cdot \gcd(b, p) = a \cdot (sb + tp) = s \cdot ab + at \cdot p$.

Since ab is divisible by p, there exits some $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $ab = kp$.

Then $a = s \cdot kp + at \cdot p = (sk + at)p$.

Since $s, k, a, t \in \mathbb{Z}$, we have $sk + at \in \mathbb{Z}$. Therefore a is divisible by p.

... □

Euclid's Lemma.

Let $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ and p be a prime number. Suppose ab is divisible by p. Then at least one of a, b is divisible by p.

Corollary to Euclid's Lemma. (Generalization of Euclid's Lemma.)

Let p be a prime number.

Let $n \in \mathbb{N}\backslash\{0, 1\}$. Let $a_1, a_2, \cdots, a_n \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Suppose $a_1 a_2 \cdot \ldots \cdot a_n$ is divisible by p.

Then at least one of $a_1, a_2, \cdots, a_n$ is divisible by p.

13. **Theorem (7). (A characterization of prime numbers.)**

Let $p \in \mathbb{Z}\backslash\{-1, 0, 1\}$. The statements (†), (‡) are logically equivalent:

(†) *p is a prime number.*

(‡) *For any $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$, if ab is divisible by p then at least one of a, b is divisible by p.*

Proof of Theorem (7). Exercise.

14. **Fundamental Theorem of Arithmetic.**

Let $n \in [\![2, +\infty)$. The statements below hold:

(1) *n is a prime number or a product of several prime numbers.*

(2) *Let $p_1, p_2, \cdots, p_s$, $q_1, q_2, \cdots, q_t$ be prime numbers. Suppose $0 < p_1 \leq p_2 \leq \cdots \leq p_s$ and $0 < q_1 \leq q_2 \leq \cdots \leq q_t$. Further suppose $n = p_1 p_2 \cdot \ldots \cdot p_s$ and $n = q_1 q_2 \cdot \ldots \cdot q_t$. Then $s = t$ and $p_1 = q_1$, $p_2 = q_2$, $\ldots$, $p_s = q_s$.*

Proof. Exercise in mathematical induction. (You need Euclid's Lemma at some stage.)

Remark. The statement of this result can be 'condensed' as:

Let $n \in [\![2, +\infty)$. There is a factorization of n as a product of positive prime numbers, uniquely determined up to the ordering of the prime factors.

Illustration : $1050 = 2\cdot3\cdot5\cdot5\cdot7 = 2\cdot5\cdot7\cdot3\cdot5 = 7\cdot3\cdot5\cdot2\cdot5 = \ldots$

15. **Appendix.**

As an exercise, check the formal definitions for

> ‘**common multiple**’,
>
> ‘**lowest common multiple**’, and
>
> ‘**relatively prime**’

are, and their basic properties.

Something resembling all the above will appear in *polynomials over fields.*

You will see why it is the case in your *abstract algebra* course.