Discrete Mathematics in Computer Science

A2. Sets: Foundations

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Sets

Important Building Blocks of Discrete Mathematics

- sets
- relations
- functions

These topics will mainly be the content of part B of the course.

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We cover some foundations on sets already now because we will use them for illustrating proof techniques.

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A set is an unordered collection of distinct objects.

German: Menge

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- unorderd: no notion of a “first” or “second” object,
  e. g. $\{Alice, Bob, Charly\} = \{Charly, Bob, Alice\}$
- distinct: each object contained at most once,
  e. g. $\{Alice, Bob, Charly\} = \{Alice, Charly, Bob, Alice\}$

German: Menge

Notation

- Specification of sets
  - explicit, listing all elements, e. g. $A = \{1, 2, 3\}$
  - implicit with set-builder notation,
    specifying a property characterizing all elements,
    e. g. $A = \{x \mid x \in \mathbb{N}_0 \text{ and } 1 \leq x \leq 3\}$,
    $B = \{n^2 \mid n \in \mathbb{N}_0\}$
  - implicit, as a sequence with dots,
    e. g. $\mathbb{Z} = \{\dots, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, \dots\}$
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Question: Is it true that $1 \in \{\{1, 2\}, 3\}$?

German: Element, leere Menge

Special Sets

- Natural numbers $\mathbb{N}_0 = \{0, 1, 2, \ldots\}$

German: Natürliche ($\mathbb{N}_0$), ganze ($\mathbb{Z}$), rationale ($\mathbb{Q}$), reelle ($\mathbb{R}$) Zahlen

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- Rational numbers $\mathbb{Q} = \{n/d \mid n \in \mathbb{Z}, d \in \mathbb{N}_1\}$
- Real numbers $\mathbb{R} = (-\infty, \infty)$
  Why do we use interval notation?
  Why didn't we introduce it before?

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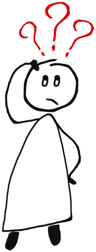
Questions



Questions?

Russell’s Paradox

Excursus: Barber Paradox

Barber Paradox

In a town there is only one barber, who is male.

The barber shaves all men in the town,
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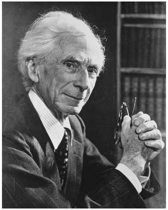
We can exploit the self-reference to derive a contradiction.

Russell's Paradox



Bertrand Russell

Question

Is the collection of all sets that do not contain themselves as a member a set?

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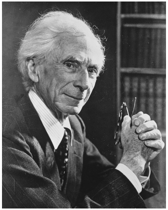

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Is $S = \{M \mid M \text{ is a set and } M \notin M\}$ a set?

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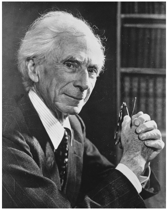

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Assume that S is a set.
If $S \notin S$ then $S \in S \rightsquigarrow$ Contradiction
If $S \in S$ then $S \notin S \rightsquigarrow$ Contradiction
Hence, there is no such set S.

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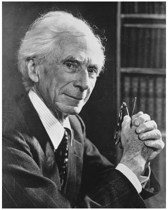

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$\rightarrow$ Not every property used in set-builder notation defines a set.

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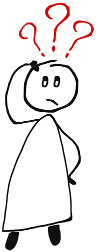

Questions?

Relations on Sets

Equality

Definition (Axiom of Extensionality)

Two sets A and B are equal (written $A = B$)
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We write $A \neq B$ to indicate that A and B are not equal.

Subsets and Supersets

- $A \subseteq B$: A is a subset of B,
  i. e., every element of A is an element of B
- $A \subset B$: A is a strict subset of B,
  i. e., $A \subseteq B$ and $A \neq B$.
- $A \supseteq B$: A is a superset of B if $B \subseteq A$.
- $A \supset B$: A is a strict superset of B if $B \subset A$.

German: Teilmenge, echte Teilmenge, Obermenge, echte Obermenge

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We write $A \not\subseteq B$ to indicate that A is not a subset of B.

Analogously: $\not\subset$, $\not\supseteq$, $\not\supset$

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Power Set

Definition (Power Set)

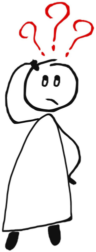
The power set $\mathcal{P}(S)$ of a set S is the set of all subsets of S. That is,

$$\mathcal{P}(S) = \{M \mid M \subseteq S\}.$$

Example: $\mathcal{P}(\{a, b\}) =$

German: Potenzmenge

Questions



Questions?

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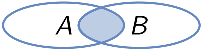
- intersection $A \cap B = \{x \mid x \in A \text{ and } x \in B\}$



If $A \cap B = \emptyset$ then A and B are disjoint.

German: Schnitt, disjunkt

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  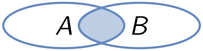

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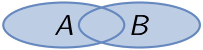
- union $A \cup B = \{x \mid x \in A \text{ or } x \in B\}$

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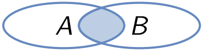

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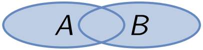
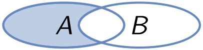


- set difference $A \setminus B = \{x \mid x \in A \text{ and } x \notin B\}$



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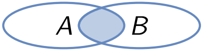

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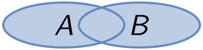

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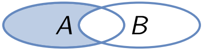
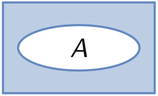


- complement $\overline{A} = B \setminus A$, where $A \subseteq B$ and B is the set of all considered objects (in a given context)



German: Schnitt, disjunkt, Vereinigung, Differenz, Komplement

Properties of Set Operations: Commutativity

Theorem (Commutativity of $\cup$ and $\cap$)

For all sets A and B it holds that

- $A \cup B = B \cup A$ *and*
- $A \cap B = B \cap A$.

German: Kommutativität

Properties of Set Operations: Commutativity

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Question: Is the set difference also commutative,
i. e. is $A \setminus B = B \setminus A$ for all sets A and B?

German: Kommutativität

Properties of Set Operations: Associativity

Theorem (Associativity of $\cup$ and $\cap$)

For all sets A, B and C it holds that

- $(A \cup B) \cup C = A \cup (B \cup C)$ *and*
- $(A \cap B) \cap C = A \cap (B \cap C)$.

German: Assoziativität

Properties of Set Operations: Distributivity

Theorem (Union distributes over intersection and vice versa)

For all sets A, B and C it holds that

- $A \cup (B \cap C) = (A \cup B) \cap (A \cup C)$ *and*
- $A \cap (B \cup C) = (A \cap B) \cup (A \cap C)$.

German: Distributivität

Properties of Set Operations: De Morgan's Law

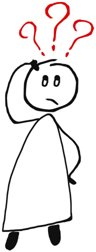
Augustus De Morgan
British mathematician (1806-1871)

Theorem (De Morgan's Law)

For all sets A and B it holds that

- $\overline{A \cup B} = \overline{A} \cap \overline{B}$ *and*
- $\overline{A \cap B} = \overline{A} \cup \overline{B}$.

Questions



Questions?

Cardinality of Finite Sets

Cardinality of Sets

The cardinality $|S|$ measures the size of set S.

A set is finite if it has a finite number of elements.

Definition (Cardinality)

The cardinality of a finite set is the number of elements it contains.

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Definition (Cardinality)

The cardinality of a finite set is the number of elements it contains.

- $|\emptyset| =$
- $|\{x \mid x \in \mathbb{N}_0 \text{ and } 2 \leq x < 5\}| =$
- $|\{3, 0, \{1, 3\}\}| =$
- $|\mathcal{P}(\{1, 2\})| =$

German: Kardinalität oder Mächtigkeit

Cardinality of the Union of Sets

Theorem

For finite sets A and B it holds that $|A \cup B| = |A| + |B| - |A \cap B|$.

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Corollary

If finite sets A and B are disjoint then $|A \cup B| = |A| + |B|$.

Cardinality of the Power Set

Theorem

Let S be a finite set. Then $|\mathcal{P}(S)| = 2^{|S|}$.

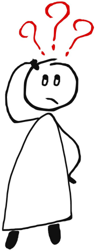
Proof sketch.

We can construct a subset S' by iterating over all elements e of S and deciding whether e becomes a member of S' or not.

We make $|S|$ independent decisions, each between two options. Hence, there are $2^{|S|}$ possible outcomes.

Every subset of S can be constructed this way and different choices lead to different sets. Thus, $|\mathcal{P}(S)| = 2^{|S|}$. □

Questions



Questions?

Summary

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- Sets are unordered collections of distinct objects.
- Important set relations: equality ($=$), subset ($\subseteq$), superset ($\supseteq$) and strict variants ($\subset$ and $\supset$)
- The power set of a set S is the set of all subsets of S.
- Important set operations are intersection, union, set difference and complement.
  - Union and intersection are commutative and associative.
  - Union distributes over intersection and vice versa.
  - De Morgan's law for complement of union or intersection.
- The number of elements in a finite set is called its cardinality.