

Partial Orders

Def A relation R on a set A is a partial order if the following conditions hold:

1. $a R a$ for all $a \in A$
2. $a R b$ and $b R a \Rightarrow a = b$
3. $a R b$ and $b R c \Rightarrow a R c$

Hasse diagram

Suppose the partial order is " \leq ".

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Example " \leq " (less than or equal to)

on the set \mathbb{Z} is a total order.

Example Hasse diagram for a total order



Example $A = \{1, 2, 3\}$. How many different partial orders are there on A ? How many are total orders?

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Total # of different partial orders
 $= 1 + 6 + 3 + 3 + 6 = 19$
6 are total orders.

Def A set on which a partial order is defined is called a partially ordered set or poset. If the order is total, we have a totally ordered set.

Def Consider a partial order \leq on a set A . We say that x is a maximal element in A if there is no $a \in A$ such that $x < a$. Similarly, y is a minimal element in A if there is no $b \in A$ such that $b < y$.

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Def We say that x is a greatest element in A such that $a \leq x$ for all $a \in A$. Similarly, y is a least element in A such that $y \leq a$ for all $a \in A$.

Example

(a)

maximal 8
 minimal 1
 greatest 8
 least 1

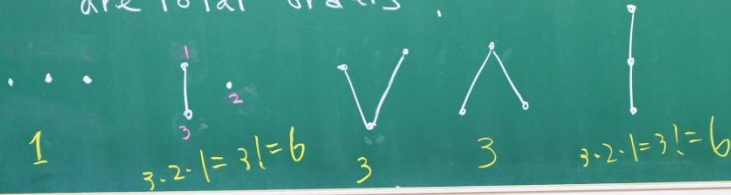
(b)

2, 3, 5, 7
 2, 3, 5, 7
 none
 none

(c)

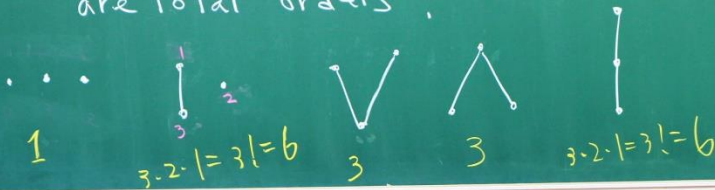
12, 385
 2, 3, 5, 7, 11
 none
 none

partial orders are there on A ? How many are total orders?



Def Consider a partial order \geq on A with $B \subseteq A$.
 A element $x \in A$ is called a **lower bound** of B if $x \geq b$ for all $b \in B$. Similarly, an element $y \in A$ is an **upper bound** of B if $b \geq y$ for all $b \in B$.

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Def A element $x' \in A$ is called a **greatest lower bound** of B if x' is a lower bound of B and $x'' \leq x'$ for all other lower bounds x'' of B . Similarly, an element $y' \in A$ is called a **least upper bound** of B if y' is an upper bound of B and $y' \leq y''$ for all other upper bounds y'' of B .

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\mathbb{Q}, \leq $B = \left\{ \frac{1}{1}, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{4}, \dots \right\}$
 $\text{lub}(B) = 1$ $\text{glb}(B) = 0$
per bound *greatest lower bound*

Example \mathbb{Q}, \leq $B = \left\{ \frac{1}{1}, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{4}, \dots \right\}$
 $\text{lub}(B) = 1$ $\text{glb}(B) = 0$
least upper bound *greatest lower bound*
greatest lower bound *infimum*
least upper bound *supremum*

Def A poset is called a **lattice** if for every pair of elements $\{x, y\}$ there exist both a least upper bound and a greatest lower bound on $\{x, y\}$.

Example Consider \mathbb{N} and \leq .
 The $\text{lub}\{x, y\} = \max\{x, y\}$ and $\text{glb}\{x, y\} = \min\{x, y\}$
 $\therefore (\mathbb{N}, \leq)$ is a lattice.

Example Consider \mathbb{N} and $|$.
 Then $\text{lub}\{x, y\} = \text{lcm}\{x, y\}$ and $\text{glb}\{x, y\} = \text{gcd}\{x, y\}$
 $\therefore (\mathbb{N}, |)$ is a lattice.

least common multiple *greatest common divisor*