# Chapter 1. The Euclidean Algorithm and Unique Factorization

**1.1 Definition:** For $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ we say that $a$ **divides** $b$ (or that $a$ is a **factor** of $b$, or that $b$ is a **multiple of** $a$), **and we write** $a \big| b$, **when** $b = ak$ **for some** $k \in \mathbb{Z}$**.**

**1.2 Theorem:** *(Basic Properties of Divisors) Let $a, b, c \in \mathbb{Z}$. Then*
*(1) $a|0$ for all $a \in \mathbb{Z}$ and $0|a \Longleftrightarrow a = 0$,*
*(2) $a|1 \Longleftrightarrow a = \pm 1$ and $1|a$ for all $a \in \mathbb{Z}$.*
*(3) If $a|b$ and $b|c$ then $a|c$.*
*(4) If $a|b$ and $b|a$ then $b = \pm a$.*
*(5) If $a|b$ then $|a| \leq |b|$.*
*(6) If $a|b$ and $a|c$ then $a \big| (bx + cy)$ for all $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}$.*

Proof: The proof is left as an exercise.

**1.3 Theorem:** *(The Division Algorithm) Let $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $b \neq 0$. Then there exist unique integers $q$ and $r$ such that*

$$a = qb + r \text{ and } 0 \leq r < |b|.$$

*The integers $q$ and $r$ are called the* **quotient** *and* **remainder** *when $a$ is divided by $b$.*

Proof: To prove this, we shall use the floor and ceiling properties of $\mathbb{Z}$ in $\mathbb{R}$: for every $x \in \mathbb{R}$, there exists a unique positive integer $n$ with $x - 1 < n \leq x$ (this integer $n$ is called the **floor** of $x$ we write $n = \lfloor x \rfloor$), and there exists a unique positive integer $m$ with $x \leq m < x + 1$ (the integer $m$ is called the **ceiling** of $x$ and we write $m = \lceil x \rceil$).

Let $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $b \neq 0$. Case 1: suppose that $b > 0$ and note that $|b| = b$. Choose $q = \left\lfloor \frac{a}{b} \right\rfloor$ then choose $r = a - qb$ so that $a = bq + r$. Since $\frac{a}{b} - 1 < q \leq \frac{a}{b}$ and $b > 0$ we have $a - b < qb \leq a$, hence $-a \leq -qb < -a + b$, and hence $0 \leq a - qb < b$, that is $0 \leq r < |b|$. Case 2: suppose that $b < 0$ and note that $|b| = -b$. Choose $q = \left\lceil \frac{a}{b} \right\rceil$ then choose $r = a - qb$ so that $a = qb + r$. Since $\frac{a}{b} \leq q < \frac{a}{b} + 1$ and $-b > 0$ we have $-a \leq -qb < -a - b$ hence $0 \leq a - qb < -b$, that is $0 \leq r < |b|$. In either case, we have found $q$ and $r$, as required.

It remains to verify that the values of $q$ and $r$ are unique. Suppose that $a = qb + r$ with $0 \leq r < |b|$ and $a = pb + s$ with $0 \leq s < |b|$. Suppose, for a contradiction, that $r \neq s$ and say $r < s$ so that we have $0 \leq r < s < |b|$. Since $a = qb + r = pb + s$ we have $s - r = qb - pb = (q - p)b$ so that $b|(s - r)$. Since $b \big| (s - r)$ we have $|b| \leq |s - r| = s - r$ (by one of the basic properties of divisors). But since $s < |b|$ and $r \geq 0$ we have $s - r < |b|$ giving the desired contradiction. Thus we have $r = s$. Since $r = s$ and $s - r = (q - p)b$ we have $0 = (q - p)b$ hence $p = q$ (since $b \neq 0$).

**1.4 Note:** For $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$, when we write $a = qb + r$ with $q, r \in \mathbb{Z}$ and $0 \leq r < |b|$, we have $b|a$ if and only if $r = 0$. Indeed if $r = 0$ then $a = qb$ so that $b|a$ and, conversely, if $b|a$ with say $a = pb = pb + 0$, then we must have $q = p$ and $r = 0$ by the uniqueness of the quotient and remainder.

**1.5 Definition:** Let $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$. A **common divisor** of $a$ and $b$ is an integer $d$ such that $d|a$ and $d|b$. When $a$ and $b$ are not both 0, we denote the **greatest common divisor** of $a$ and $b$ by $\gcd(a, b)$. For convenience, we also define $\gcd(0, 0) = 0$.

**1.6 Theorem:** *(Basic Properties of the Greatest Common Divisor) Let* $a, b, q, r \in \mathbb{Z}$.
*(1)* $\gcd(a,b) = \gcd(b,a)$.
*(2)* $\gcd(a,b) = \gcd(|a|,|b|)$.
*(3) If* $a|b$ *then* $\gcd(a,b) = |a|$. *In particular,* $\gcd(a,0) = |a|$.
*(4) If* $b = qa + r$ *then* $\gcd(a,b) = \gcd(a,r)$.

Proof: The proof is left as an exercise.

**1.7 Theorem:** *(Bézout's Identity) Let* $a$ *and* $b$ *be integers and let* $d = \gcd(a,b)$. *Then there exist integers* $s$ *and* $t$ *such that* $as + bt = d$. *The proof provides explicit procedures for finding* $d$ *and for finding* $s$ *and* $t$.

Proof: We can find $d$ using the following procedure, called the **Euclidean Algorithm**. If $b\big|a$ then we have $d = |b|$. Otherwise, let $r_{-1} = a$ and $r_0 = b$ and use the division algorithm repeatedly to obtain integers $q_i$ and $r_i$ such that

$$\begin{array}{cc}
r_{-1} = a = q_1 b + r_1 & 0 < r_1 < |a| \\
r_0 = b = q_2 r_1 + r_2 & 0 < r_2 < r_1 \\
r_1 = q_3 r_2 + r_3 & 0 < r_3 < r_2 \\
\vdots & \vdots \\
r_{k-2} = q_k r_{k-1} + r_k & 0 < r_k < r_{k-1} \\
\vdots & \vdots \\
r_{n-2} = q_n r_{n-1} + r_n & 0 < r_n < r_{n-1} \\
r_{n-1} = q_{n+1} r_n + r_{n+1} & r_{n+1} = 0\,.
\end{array}$$

Since $r_{n-1} = q_{n+1} r_n$ we have $r_n\big|r_{n-1}$ so $\gcd(r_{n-1}, r_n) = r_n$. Since $r_{k-2} = q_k r_{k-1} + r_k$ we have $\gcd(r_{k-2}, r_{k-1}) = \gcd(r_{k-1}, r_k)$ and so

$$d = \gcd(a,b) = \gcd(b, r_1) = \gcd(r_1, r_2) = \cdots = \gcd(r_{n-2}, r_{n-1}) = \gcd(r_{n-1}, r_n) = r_n\,.$$

Having found $d$ using the Euclidean algorithm, as above, we can find $s$ and $t$ using the following procedure, which is known as **Back-Substitution**. If $b\big|a$ so that $d = |b|$, then we can take $s = 0$ and $t = \pm 1$ to get $as + bt = d$. Otherwise, we let

$$s_0 = 1\ ,\ s_1 = -q_n\ , \text{ and } s_{\ell+1} = s_{\ell-1} - q_{n-\ell} s_\ell \text{ for } 1 \le \ell \le n-1$$

and then we can take $s = s_{n-1}$ and $t = s_n$ to get $as + bt = d$, because, writing $k = n - \ell$,

$$\begin{aligned}
d = r_n &= r_{n-2} - q_n r_{n-1} = s_1 r_{n-1} + s_0 r_{n-2} \\
&\ \vdots \\
&= \cdots = s_\ell r_{n-\ell} + s_{\ell-1} r_{n-\ell-1} = s_{n-k} r_k + s_{n-k-1} r_{k-1} \\
&= s_{n-k}\big(r_{k-2} - q_k r_{k-1}\big) + s_{n-k-1} r_{k-1} = \big(s_{n-k-1} - q_k s_{n-k}\big) r_{k-1} + s_{n-k} r_{k-2} \\
&= (s_{\ell-1} - q_{n-\ell} s_\ell) r_{n-\ell-1} + s_\ell r_{n-\ell-2} = s_{\ell+1} r_{n-\ell-1} + s_\ell r_{n-\ell-2} \\
&\ \vdots \\
&= \cdots = s_n r_0 + s_{n-1} r_{-1} = s_n b + s_{n-1} a\,.
\end{aligned}$$

**1.8 Example:** Let $a = 5151$ and $b = 1632$. Find $d = \gcd(a, b)$ and then find integers $s$ and $t$ so that $as + bt = d$.

Solution: The Euclidean Algorithm gives

$$\begin{aligned} 5151 &= 3 \cdot 1632 + 255 \\ 1632 &= 6 \cdot 255 + 102 \\ 255 &= 2 \cdot 102 + 51 \\ 102 &= 2 \cdot 51 + 0 \end{aligned}$$

so $d = 51$. Using the quotients $q_1 = 3$, $q_2 = 6$ and $q_3 = 2$, Back-Substitution gives

$$\begin{aligned} s_0 &= 1 \\ s_1 &= -q_3 = -2 \\ s_2 &= s_0 - q_2 s_1 = 1 - 6(-2) = 13 \\ s_3 &= s_1 - q_1 s_2 = -2 - 3(13) = -41\,, \end{aligned}$$

so we take $s = s_2 = 13$ and $t = s_3 = -41$. (It is a good idea to check that indeed we have $(1632)(-41) + (5151)(13) = 51$).

**1.9 Example:** Let $a = 754$ and $b = -3973$. Find $d = \gcd(a, b)$ then find integers $s$ and $t$ such that $as + bt = d$.

Solution: The Euclidean Algorithm gives

$3973 = 5 \cdot 754 + 203\,,\ 754 = 3 \cdot 203 + 145\,,\ 203 = 1 \cdot 145 + 58\,,\ 145 = 2 \cdot 58 + 29\,,\ 58 = 2 \cdot 29 + 0$

so that $d = 29$. Then Back-Substitution gives rise to the sequence

$$1\,,\quad -2\,,\quad 3\,,\quad -11\,,\quad 58$$

so we have $(754)(58) + (3973)(-11) = 29$, that is $(754)(58) + (-3973)(11) = 29$. Thus we can take $s = 58$ and $t = 11$.

**1.10 Theorem:** *(More Properties of the Greatest Common Divisor) Let $a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{Z}$.*
*(1) If $c|a$ and $c|b$ then $c \big| \gcd(a, b)$.*
*(3) We have $\gcd(a, b) = 1$ if and only if there exist $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $ax + by = 1$.*
*(4) If $d = \gcd(a, b) \neq 0$ then $\gcd\left(\frac{a}{d}, \frac{b}{d}\right) = 1$.*
*(5) If $a|bc$ and $\gcd(a, b) = 1$ then $a|c$.*

Proof: These properties all follow from Bézout's Identity. We shall prove Parts 1 and 5 and leave the proofs of the remaining parts as an exercise. To prove Part 1, suppose that $c|a$ and $c|b$, say $a = ck$ and $b = cl$. Let $d = \gcd(a, b)$ and choose $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ so that $as + bt = d$. Then we have $d = as + bt = cks + clt = c(ks + lt)$ and so $c|d$.

To prove Part 5, suppose that $a|bc$ and $\gcd(a, b) = 1$. Since $a|bc$ we can choose $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ so that $bc = ak$. Since $\gcd(a, b) = 1$, by the Bézout's Identity, we can choose $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $as + bt = 1$. Then we have

$$c = c \cdot 1 = c(as + bt) = acs + bct = acs + akt = a(cs + kt),$$

and so $a|c$, as required.

**1.11 Definition:** A **diophantine equation** is a polynomial equation in which the variables represent integers. Some diophantine equations are fairly easy to solve while others can be extremely difficult.

**1.12 Theorem:** *(Linear Diophantine Equations) Let $a, b, c \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $(a, b) \neq (0, 0)$. Let $d = \gcd(a, b)$ and note that $d \neq 0$. Consider the Diophantine equation $ax + by = c$.*

*(1) The equation has a solution $(x, y) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$ if and only if $d|c$, and*

*(2) if $(u, v) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$ is one solution to the equation then the general solution is given by*

$$(x, y) = (u, v) + k\left(-\tfrac{b}{d}, \tfrac{a}{d}\right) \text{ for some } k \in \mathbb{Z}.$$

Proof: Suppose that the equation $ax+by = c$ has a solution $(x, y) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$. Choose $(s, t) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$ so that $as + bt = c$. Since $d|a$ and $d|b$, it follows that $d|(ax + by)$ for all $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}$, so in particular $d|(as + bt)$, that is $d|c$. Conversely, suppose that $d|c$, say $c = d\ell$ with $\ell \in \mathbb{Z}$. Use the Euclidean Algorithm with Back-Substitution to find $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $as + bt = d$. Multiply by $\ell$ to get $a(s\ell) + b(t\ell) = d\ell = c$. Thus we can take $x = e\ell$ and $y = t\ell$ to obtain a solution $(x, y) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$ to the equation $ax + by = c$. This proves Part (1)

Now suppose that $(u, v) \in \mathbb{Z}^2$ is a solution to the given equation, so we have $au+bv = c$. To prove Part (2), we need to prove that for all $k \in \mathbb{Z}$, if we let $(x, y) = (u, v) + k\left(-\frac{b}{d}, \frac{a}{d}\right)$ then $(x, y)$ is a solution to $ax + by = c$ and, conversely, that if $(x, y)$ is a solution then there exists $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $(x, y) = (u, v) + k\left(-\frac{b}{d}, \frac{a}{d}\right)$.

Let $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ and let $(x, y) = (u, v) + k\left(-\frac{b}{d}, \frac{a}{d}\right)$. Then $x = u - \frac{kb}{d}$ and $y = v + \frac{ka}{d}$ and so

$$ax + by = a\left(u - \tfrac{kb}{d}\right) + b\left(v + \tfrac{ka}{d}\right) = (au + bv) - \tfrac{kab}{d} + \tfrac{kab}{d} = au + bv = c.$$

Conversely, let $(x, y)$ be a solution to the given equation, so we have $ax + by = c$. Suppose that $a \neq 0$ (we leave the case $a = 0$ as an exercise). Since $ax + by = c$ and $au + bu = c$ we have $ax + by = au + bv$ and so $a(x - u) = -b(y - v)$. Divide both sides by $d$ to get $\frac{a}{d}(x - u) = -\frac{b}{d}(y - v)$. Since $\frac{a}{d}\,\Big|\,\frac{b}{d}(y - v)$ and $\gcd\left(\frac{a}{d}, \frac{b}{d}\right) = 1$, it follows that $\frac{a}{d}\,\Big|\,(y - v)$. Choose $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ so that $y - v = \frac{ka}{d}$. Since $a \neq 0$ and $a(x - u) = -b(y - v) = -\frac{kab}{d}$, we have $x - u = -\frac{kb}{d}$ and so $(x, y) = (u, v) + k\left(-\frac{b}{d}, \frac{a}{d}\right)$, as required.

**1.13 Example:** Let $a = 426$, $b = 132$ and $c = 42$. Find all $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $ax + by = c$.

Solution: The Euclidean Algorithm gives

$$426 = 3 \cdot 132 + 30\ ,\ \ 132 = 4 \cdot 30 + 12\ ,\ \ 30 = 2 \cdot 12 + 6\ ,\ \ 12 = 2 \cdot 6 + 0$$

so that $d = \gcd(a, b) = 6$. Note that $d|c$, indeed $c = d\ell$ with $\ell = 7$, so a solution does exist. Back-Substitution gives the sequence

$$1\ ,\ -2\ ,\ 9\ ,\ -29$$

so we have $a(9) + b(-29) = d$. Multiply by $\ell = 7$ to get $a(63) + b(-203) = c$, so one solution is given by $(x, y) = (63, -203)$. Since $\frac{a}{d} = \frac{426}{6} = 71$ and $\frac{b}{d} = \frac{132}{6} = 22$, The general solution is $(x, y) = (63, -203) + k(-22, 71)$.

**1.14 Exercise:** Let $a = 4123$, $b = 17689$ and $c = 798$. Find all $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $0 \leq y \leq 100$ such that $ax + by = c$.

**1.15 Definition:** Let $n$ be a positive integer. We say that $n$ is a **prime number** when $n \geq 2$ and $n$ has no factor $a \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $1 < a < n$. We say that $n$ is **composite** when $n \geq 2$ and $n$ is not prime, that is when $n$ does have a factor $a \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $1 < a < n$.

**1.16 Theorem:** *(Basic Properties of Primes) Let $p$ be a prime number.*

*(1) For all $a \in \mathbb{Z}$ we have $\gcd(a,p) \in \{1,p\}$ with $\gcd(a,p) = p$ if and only if $p|a$.*

*(2) For all $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$, if $p|ab$ then either $p|a$ or $p|b$.*

Proof: Part 1 follows directly from the definition of a prime number the definition of $\gcd(a,p)$. Part 2 then follows from Part 5 of Theorem 1.10.

**1.17 Theorem:** *Every integer $n \geq 2$ has a prime factor. Every composite integer $n \geq 2$ has a prime factor $p$ with $p \leq \sqrt{n}$.*

Proof: Let $n \geq 2$. Suppose, inductively, that every integer $k$ with $2 \leq k < n$ has a prime factor. If $n$ is prime, then $n$ is a prime factor of itself, so $n$ has a prime factor. Suppose that $n$ is composite. Let $a$ be a factor of $n$ with $1 < a < n$. By the induction hypothesis, $a$ has a prime factor. Let $p$ be a prime factor of $a$. Since $p|a$ and $a|n$ we have $p|n$, and so $p$ is a prime factor of $n$. It follows, by induction, that every integer $n \geq 2$ has a prime factor.

Now suppose that $n$ is composite. Write $n = ab$ where $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $1 < a \leq b < n$. Note that $a \leq \sqrt{n}$ because if we had $a > \sqrt{n}$ then we would also have $b \geq a > \sqrt{n}$ so that $n = ab > \sqrt{n}\sqrt{n} = n$ which is impossible. Let $p$ be a prime factor of $a$. Since $p|a$ and $a|n$ we have $p|n$ so that $p$ is a prime factor of $n$. Since $p|a$ and $a \leq \sqrt{n}$ we have $p \leq a \leq \sqrt{n}$.

**1.18 Note:** Given an integer $n \geq 2$, we can list all primes $p$ with $p \leq n$ using the following procedure, which is called the **Sieve of Eratosthenes**. We begin by listing all the integers from 1 to $n$, and we cross off the number 1 (1 is a unit; it is not a prime). We circle the smallest remaining number $p_1$ (namely $p_1 = 2$, which is prime) then we cross off all other multiples of $p_1$ (which are composite). We circle the smallest remaining number $p_2$ (namely $p_2 = 3$, which is prime) then we cross off all other multiples of $p_2$ (which are all composite). At the $k^{\text{th}}$ step of the procedure, when we circle the smallest remaining number $p_k$, it must be prime because if $p_k$ was composite then it would have a prime factor $p_i$ with $p_i < p_k$, but we have already found all primes $p_i < p_k$ and we have already crossed off all their multiples. We continue the procedure until we have circled a prime $p_\ell$ with $p_\ell \geq \sqrt{n}$ and crossed off its multiples. At this stage we circle all of the remaining numbers in the list because they are all prime. Indeed, if a remaining number $m$ was composite then it would have a prime factor $p$ with $p \leq \sqrt{m} \leq \sqrt{n}$, but we have already found all primes $p$ with $\leq \sqrt{n}$ and crossed off all their multiples.

**1.19 Exercise:** Use the Sieve of Eratosthenes to list all primes $p$ with $p \leq 100$.

**1.20 Theorem:** *(Euclid) There exist infinitely many prime numbers.*

Proof: Suppose, for a contradiction, that there exist finitely many prime numbers. Let $p_1, p_2, \cdots, p_\ell$ be all of the prime numbers. Consider the number $n = p_1 p_2 \cdots p_\ell + 1$. By Theorem 1.17, the number $n$ has a prime factor and so $p_k|n$ for some index $k$. But $p_k$ is not a factor of $n$ because when we write $n = qp_k + r$ as in the Division Algorithm, we find that the remainder is $r = 1 \neq 0$ (and the quotient is $q = \prod_{i \neq k} p_i$).

**1.21 Example:** Note that there exist arbitrarily large gaps between consecutive prime numbers because, given a positive integer $m \geq 2$, we have $2\big|(m!+2)$, $3\big|(m!+3)$, $4\big|(m!+4)$ and so on, so the consecutive numbers $m!+2$, $m!+3$, $m!+4$, $\cdots$, $m!+m$ are all composite.

**1.22 Remark:** Here are a few facts about prime numbers which are difficult to prove.

(1) Bertrand's Postulate: for every integer $n \geq 1$ there exists a prime $p$ with $n < p \leq 2n$.

(2) Dirichlet's Theorem: for all positive integers $a, b$ with $\gcd(a,b) = 1$, there exist infinitely many primes of the form $p = a + kb$ for some $k \in \mathbb{N}$.

(3) The Prime Number Theorem: for $x \in \mathbb{R}$, let $\pi(x)$ be the number of primes $p$ with $p \leq x$. Then $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\pi(x)}{x/\ln x} = 1$.

**1.23 Remark:** Here are a few statements about prime numbers which are conjectured to be true, but for which no proof has, as yet, been found.

(1) Legendre's Conjecture: for every $n \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ there exists a prime $p$ with $n^2 < p < (n+1)^2$.

(2) Goldbach's Conjecture: every even integer $n \geq 4$ is the sum of two prime numbers.

(3) Twin Primes Conjecture: there exist infinitely many $p$ for which $p$ and $p+2$ are prime.

(4) The $n^2+1$ Conjecture: there exist infinitely many primes $p = n^2+1$ with $n \in \mathbb{Z}^+$.

(5) Mersenne Primes Conjecture: there exist infinitely many primes $p = 2^k - 1$ with $k \in \mathbb{Z}^+$.

(6) Fermat Primes Conjecture: there exist finitely many primes $p = 2^k + 1$ with $k \in \mathbb{N}$.

**1.24 Theorem:** *(The Fundamental Theorem of Arithmetic, or The Unique Factorization Theorem) Every integer $n \geq 2$ can be written uniquely in the form $n = \prod_{k=1}^{\ell} p_k = p_1 p_2 \cdots p_\ell$ where $\ell \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ and the $p_k$ are primes with $p_1 \leq p_2 \leq \cdots \leq p_\ell$.*

Proof: First we prove the existence of such a factorization. Let $n$ be an integer with $n \geq 2$ and suppose, inductively, that every integer $k$ with $2 \leq k < n$ can be written in the required form. If $n$ is prime then we can write $n = \prod_{k=1}^{\ell} p_k = p_1$ with $\ell = 1$ and $p_1 = n$. Suppose that $n$ is composite. Write $n = ab$ where $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $1 < a < n$ and $1 < b < n$. By the induction hypothesis, we can write $a = q_1 q_2 \cdots q_\ell$ and $b = r_1 r_2 \cdots r_m$ where $\ell, m \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ and the $p_i$ and $q_i$ are primes with $p_1 \leq p_2 \leq \cdots \leq p_\ell$ and $q_1 \leq q_2 \leq \cdots \leq q_m$. Then $n = q_1 q_2 \cdots q_\ell r_1 r_2 \cdots r_m = p_1 p_2 \cdots p_{\ell+m}$ where the ordered $(\ell+m)$-tuple $(p_1, p_2, \cdots, p_{\ell+m})$ is obtained from the ordered $(\ell+m)$-tuple $(q_1, q_2, \cdots, q_\ell, r_1, r_2, \cdots, r_m)$ by rearranging the terms into non-decreasing order.

Let us prove uniqueness. Suppose that $n = p_1 p_2 \cdots p_\ell = q_1 q_2 \cdots q_m$ where $\ell, m \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ and the $p_i$ and $q_j$ are primes with $p_1 \leq p_2 \leq \cdots \leq p_\ell$ and $q_1 \leq q_2 \leq \cdots \leq q_m$. We need to prove that $\ell = m$ and that $p_i = q_i$ for every index $i$. Since $n = p_1 p_2 \cdots p_\ell$ we see that $p_1 | n$ and so $p \big| q_1 q_2 \cdots q_m$. By applying Part (2) of Theorem 5.12 repeatedly, it follows that $p_1 \big| q_i$ for some index $i$. Since $p_1 | q_i$ and $q_i$ is prime, we must have $p_1 \in \{\pm 1, \pm q_i\}$. Since $p_1$ is prime, we have $p_1 > 1$. Since $p_1 > 1$ and $p_1 \in \{\pm 1, \pm q_i\}$ it follows that $p_1 = q_i$. A similar argument shows that $q_1 = p_j$ for some index $j$. Since $p_1 = q_i \geq q_1 = p_j \geq p_1$, it follows that $p_1 = q_1$.

Since $p_1 p_2 \cdots p_\ell = q_1 q_2 \cdots q_m$ and $p_1 = q_1$, we can divide both sides by $p_1$ to get $p_2 p_3 \cdots p_\ell = q_2 q_3 \cdots q_m$. By repeating the above argument, we can show that $p_2 = q_2$, then we can divide both sides by $p_2 = q_2$ to get $p_3 \cdots p_\ell = q_3 \cdots q_m$ and so on.

If we had $\ell \neq m$, say $\ell < m$, repeating the above procedure would eventually yield $p_\ell = q_\ell q_{\ell+1} \cdots q_m$ with $p_\ell = q_\ell$ and then $1 = q_{\ell+1} \cdots q_m$ which is not possible since each $q_i > 1$. Thus we must have $\ell = m$ and repeating the above procedure gives $p_i = q_i$ for all indices $i$, as required.

**1.25 Note:** Here are two alternate ways of expressing the Unique Factorization Theorem.

(1) Every integer $n \geq 2$ can be written uniquely in the form $n = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} {p_i}^{m_i} = {p_1}^{m_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{m_\ell}$ where $\ell \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ and the $p_i$ are distinct primes with $p_1 < p_2 < \cdots < p_\ell$ and each $m_i \in \mathbb{Z}^+$.

(2) Given distinct primes $p_1, p_2, \cdots, p_\ell$, every $n \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ whose prime factors are included in $\{p_1, \cdots, p_\ell\}$ can be written uniquely in the form $n = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} {p_i}^{m_i} = {p_1}^{m_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{m_\ell}$ with $m_i \in \mathbb{N}$.

**1.26 Theorem:** *(Unique Factorization and Divisors) Let $n = {p_1}^{m_1}{p_2}^{m_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{m_\ell}$ where $\ell \in \mathbb{Z}^+$, the $p_i$ are distinct primes, and each $m_i \in \mathbb{N}$. Then the positive divisors of $n$ are the numbers of the form $a = {p_1}^{j_1}{p_2}^{j_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{j_l}$ where each $j_i \in \mathbb{Z}$ with $0 \leq j_i \leq m_i$.*

Proof: Suppose that $n = {p_1}^{m_1}{p_2}^{m_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{m_\ell}$ and $a = {p_1}^{j_1}{p_2}^{j_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{j_\ell}$ where $p_1, p_2, \cdots, p_\ell$ are distinct primes and $0 \leq j_i \leq m_i$ for all indices $i$. Let $b = {p_1}^{k_1}{p_2}^{k_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{k_\ell}$ where $k_i = m_i - j_i$ (note that $k_i \geq 0$ since $j_i \leq m_i$). Then

$$ab = ({p_1}^{j_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{j_\ell})({p_1}^{k_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{k_\ell}) = {p_1}^{j_1+k_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{j_\ell+k_\ell} = {p_1}^{m_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{m_\ell} = n$$

and so $a|n$.

Conversely, suppose that $n = {p_1}^{m_1}{p_2}^{m_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{m_\ell}$, as above, and let $a$ be a positive divisor of $n$. Let $p$ be any prime factor of $a$. Since $p|a$ and $a|n$ we have $p|n$. Since $p|n$ and $n = {p_1}^{m_1}{p_2}^{m_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{m_\ell}$ we have $p|p_i$ for some index $i$. Since $p$ and $p_i$ are both prime and $p|p_i$, we have $p = p_i$. This proves that every prime factor of $a$ is among the primes $p_1, p_2, \cdots, p_\ell$. It follows that $a$ can be written in the form $a = {p_1}^{j_1}{p_2}^{j_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{j_\ell}$ with each $j_i \in \mathbb{N}$. It remains to show that $j_i \leq m_i$.

Since $a|n$ we can choose $b \in \mathbb{Z}$ so that $n = ab$. Since $n$ and $a$ are positive, so is $b$. Since $b$ is a positive factor of $n$, the above argument shows that every prime factor of $b$ is among the primes $p_1, p_2, \cdots, p_\ell$ and so we can write $b = {p_1}^{k_1}{p_2}^{k_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{k_\ell}$ for some $k_i \in \mathbb{N}$. Since $n = ab$ we have

$${p_1}^{m_1}{p_2}^{m_2} \cdots {p_\ell}^{m_\ell} = n = ab = ({p_1}^{j_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{j_\ell})({p_1}^{k_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{k_\ell}) = {p_1}^{j_1+k_1} \cdots {p_\ell}^{j_\ell+k_\ell}.$$

By the uniqueness of prime factorization, it follows that $m_i = j_i + k_i$ for all indices $i$. Since $k_i \geq 0$ it follows that $j_i = m_i - k_i \leq m_i$, as required.

**1.27 Definition:** For $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$, a **common multiple** of $a$ and $b$ is an integer $m$ such that $a|m$ and $b|m$. When $a$ and $b$ are both nonzero, we define the **least common multiple** of $a$ and $b$, denoted by $\text{lcm}(a, b)$, to be the smallest positive common multiple of $a$ and $b$. For convenience, we also define $\text{lcm}(a, 0) = \text{lcm}(0, a) = 0$ for $a \in \mathbb{Z}$.

**1.28 Theorem:** *Let $a = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} {p_i}^{j_i}$ and $b = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} {p_i}^{k_i}$ where $\ell \in \mathbb{Z}^+$, the $p_i$ are distinct primes, and $j_i, k_i \in \mathbb{N}$. Then*

*(1)* $\gcd(a, b) = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} {p_i}^{\min\{j_i, k_i\}}$,

*(2)* $\text{lcm}(a, b) = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} {p_i}^{\max\{j_i, k_i\}}$, *and*

*(3)* $\gcd(a, b) \cdot \text{lcm}(a, b) = ab$.

Proof: The proof is left as an exercise.

**1.29 Exercise:** Define, and find similar formulas for, $\gcd(a_1, \cdots, a_\ell)$ and $\text{lcm}(a_1, \cdots, a_\ell)$.

**1.30 Definition:** For a prime $p$ and a positive integer $n$, the **exponent** of $p$ in (the prime factorization of ) $n$, denoted by $e(p,n)$, is defined as follows. We write $n$ in the form $n = {p_1}^{m_1}{p_2}^{m_2}\cdots{p_\ell}^{m_\ell}$ where the $p_i$ are distinct primes and each $m_i \in \mathbb{N}$, then we define $e(p,n) = m_i$ if $p = p_i$ and we define $e(p,n) = 0$ if $p \neq p_i$ for any index $i$.

**1.31 Exercise:** Show that $e(p,n!) = \lfloor \frac{n}{p} \rfloor + \lfloor \frac{n}{p^2} \rfloor + \lfloor \frac{n}{p^3} \rfloor + \cdots$ and that $\lfloor \frac{n}{p^{k+1}} \rfloor = \left\lfloor \lfloor \frac{n}{p^k} \rfloor \Big/ p \right\rfloor$.

**1.32 Example:** Since $e(5,100!) = \lfloor \frac{100}{5} \rfloor + \lfloor \frac{100}{25} \rfloor + \lfloor \frac{100}{125} \rfloor + \cdots = 20 + 4 + 0 = 24$ and $e(2,100!) > 24$, it follows that the number 100! ends with exactly 24 zeros in its decimal representation.

**1.33 Definition:** For a positive integer $n$, we write $\tau(n)$ to denote the number of positive divisors of $n$, we write $\sigma(n)$ to denote the sum of the positive divisors of $n$, and we write $\rho(n)$ to denote the product of the positive divisors of $n$. It is common to write

$$\tau(n) = \sum_{d|n} 1 \;,\;\; \sigma(n) = \sum_{d|n} d \;,\text{ and } \rho(n) = \prod_{d|n} d\,.$$

**1.34 Theorem:** *Let* $n = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} {p_i}^{k_i}$ *where* $p_1, p_2, \cdots, p_\ell$ *are distinct primes and each* $k_i \in \mathbb{N}$. *Then we have* $\tau(n) = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell}(k_i + 1)\,,\; \sigma(n) = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} \frac{{p_i}^{k_i+1}-1}{p_i - 1}$ *and* $\rho(n) = n^{\tau(n)/2}$.

Proof: The positive divisors of $n$ are of the form $d = {p_1}^{j_1}{p_2}^{j_2}\cdots{p_\ell}^{j_\ell}$ with $0 \le j_i \le k_i$ for each index $i$. Since there are $(k_i + 1)$ choices for the index $i$, there are a total of $(k_1+1)(k_2+1)\cdots(k_\ell+1)$ choices for the positive divisor $d$, so we have $\tau(n) = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell}(k_i+1)$.

Also, again since the positive divisors of $n$ are of the form $d = {p_1}^{j_1}{p_2}^{j_2}\cdots{p_\ell}^{j_\ell}$ with $0 \le j_i \le k_i$ for each index $i$, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\sigma_n &= \sum_{0\le j_1\le k_1}\sum_{0\le j_2\le k_2}\cdots\sum_{0\le j_{\ell-1}\le k_{\ell-1}}\sum_{0\le j_\ell\le k_\ell} {p_1}^{j_1}{p_2}^{j_2}\cdots{p_{\ell-1}}^{k_{\ell-1}}{p_\ell}^{j_\ell} \\
&= \sum_{0\le j_1\le k_1}\sum_{0\le j_2\le k_2}\cdots\sum_{0\le j_{\ell-1}\le k_{\ell-1}} {p_1}^{j_1}{p_2}^{j_2}\cdots{p_{\ell-1}}^{k_{\ell-1}}\Big(\sum_{0\le j_\ell\le k_\ell}{p_\ell}^{j_\ell}\Big) \\
&= \;\cdots\; = \Big(\sum_{0\le j_1\le k_1}{p_1}^{j_1}\Big)\Big(\sum_{0\le j_2\le k_2}{p_2}^{j_2}\Big)\cdots\Big(\sum_{0\le j_\ell\le k_\ell}{p_\ell}^{j_\ell}\Big) \\
&= \big(1 + p_1 + {p_1}^2 + \cdots + {p_1}^{k_1}\big)\big(1 + p_2 + \cdots + {p_2}^{k_2}\big)\cdots\big(1 + p_\ell + \cdots + {p_\ell}^{k_\ell}\big) \\
&= \Big(\frac{{p_1}^{k_1+1}-1}{p_1-1}\Big)\Big(\frac{{p_2}^{k_2+1}-1}{p_2-1}\Big)\cdots\Big(\frac{{p_\ell}^{k_\ell+1}-1}{p_\ell-1}\Big) = \prod_{i=1}^{\ell}\frac{{p_i}^{k_i+1}-1}{p_i-1}\,.
\end{aligned}$$

To obtain the formula for $\rho(n)$, note that each positive factor $d$ of $n$ can be paired with the corresponding positive factor $\frac{n}{d}$ so we have $\rho(n)^2 = \prod_{d|n} d\cdot\frac{n}{d} = \prod_{d|n} n = n^{\tau(n)}$.

**1.35 Definition:** An **arithmetic function** is any real- or complex-valued function whose domain is the set of positive integers $\mathbb{Z}^+$. For an arithmetic function $f$, we say that $f$ is **multiplicative** when $f(ab) = f(a)f(b)$ for all $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}^+$ with $\gcd(a,b) = 1$, and we say that $f$ is **completely multiplicative** when $f(ab) = f(a)f(b)$ for all $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}^+$.

**1.36 Example:** The divisors function $\tau$ and the sum of divisors function $\sigma$ are both multiplicative arithmetic functions. The product of divisors function $\rho$ is not multiplicative.