

Euclidean Algorithm and Actions on Them

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Abstract. This article covers the basics of the Euclidean algorithm in detail. Euclid proposed an algorithm only for natural numbers and geometric quantities (lengths, areas, volumes).

Keywords: Euclidean algorithm, mathematical properties, polynomials, theorems, proofs, etc.

Euclid's algorithm is an efficient algorithm for finding the greatest common divisor of two integers (or the common measure of two segments). The algorithm is named after the Greek mathematician Euclid (III century BC), who first described it in the VII and X books of the "Beginnings". It is one of the oldest numerical algorithms in use today. At its simplest, Euclid's algorithm is applied to a pair of positive integers and generates a new pair that consists of the smaller number and the difference between the larger and smaller numbers. The process is repeated until the numbers are equal. The found number is the greatest common divisor of the original pair. However, in the 19th century it was generalized to other types of mathematical objects, including Gaussian integers and polynomials in one variable. This led to the appearance in modern general algebra of such a concept as the Euclidean ring. Later, Euclid's algorithm was generalized to other mathematical structures such as knots and multidimensional polynomials. There are many theoretical and practical applications for this algorithm. In particular, it is the basis for the RSA public key cryptographic algorithm, which is widely used in e-commerce. The algorithm is also used in solving linear Diophantine equations, in constructing continued fractions, in the Sturm method. Euclid's algorithm is the main tool for proving theorems in modern number theory, such as Lagrange's four-square theorem and the fundamental theorem of arithmetic. Ancient Greek mathematicians called this algorithm ἀνθυφαίρεσις or ἀνταναίρεσις - "mutual subtraction". This algorithm was not discovered by Euclid, since there is already a mention of it in the Topic of Aristotle (4th century BC). It is described twice in Euclid's Elements - in Book VII for finding the greatest common divisor of two natural numbers and in Book X for finding the greatest common measure of two homogeneous quantities. In both cases, a geometric description of the algorithm is given to find the "common measure" of two segments.

Historians of mathematics have suggested that it was with the help of Euclid's algorithm (the procedure of successive mutual subtraction) that the existence of incommensurable quantities (the sides and diagonals of a square, or the sides and diagonals of a regular pentagon) was first discovered in ancient Greek mathematics. However, this assumption does not have sufficient documentary evidence. The algorithm for finding the greatest common divisor of two natural numbers is also described in Book I of the ancient Chinese treatise Mathematics in nine books. The computational complexity of the Euclid algorithm has been fully studied. This complexity can be described as the product of the number of division steps required by the algorithm times the computational complexity of one step. The first known analysis of Euclid's algorithm was proposed by Reinaud in 1811. He showed that the number of algorithm steps for a pair of numbers (u, v) is limited to v . He later improved the estimate to $v/2 + 2$. Émile Léger in 1837 studied the worst case, when successive Fibonacci numbers are used to compute the gcd. Then, in 1841, Pierre Joseph Fink showed that the number of steps in the algorithm does not exceed $2 \log_2 v + 1$. Therefore, the

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