

Computing (with) characters and representations

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Overview

General Systems

Character Tables

Representations

Recognition

Generic character tables

CHEVIE

General systems for computations in group and representation theory, but also many other fields in algebra.

GAP

<http://www.gap-system.org>

strength in group and representation theory, easy to extend (> 70 GAP *packages*, e.g., polycyclic, EDIM, Singular, cohomolo, HAP, QuaGroup, ...), GPL license, open code, no license fee

Magma

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Ordinary character table for finite group G :

C_1, C_2, \dots, C_r labels for conjugacy classes,

$\chi_1, \chi_2, \dots, \chi_r$ labels for irreducible characters,

$\chi_i(C_j)$ matrix of character values,

and *power maps* $f_p : C_i \mapsto C_k$ if $x^p \in C_k$ for $x \in C_i$

GAP package **CTbLib** (Th. Breuer): collection of tables available by name of group (ATLAS and many more, S_n, A_n, \dots)

Dixon-Schneider algorithm: Given a (permutation) group G , this computes the character table. Works for $|G|$ a few thousands, but also some much bigger G . Available in GAP and Magma.

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Example: Alternating group A_5 (from GAP)

A5	2	2	2	.	.	.
	3	1	.	1	.	.
	5	1	.	.	1	1

	1a	2a	3a	5a	5b
2P	1a	1a	3a	5b	5a
3P	1a	2a	1a	5b	5a
5P	1a	2a	3a	1a	1a

X.1	1	1	1	1	1
X.2	3	-1	.	A	*A
X.3	3	-1	.	*A	A
X.4	4	.	1	-1	-1
X.5	5	1	-1	.	.

$$\begin{aligned}A &= -E(5) - E(5)^4 \\ &= (1 - ER(5)) / 2 = -b5\end{aligned}$$

with $A = (1 + \sqrt{5})/2$ und $*A = (1 - \sqrt{5})/2$

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Computing with characters in GAP: linear combinations, tensor products, induction/restriction, scalar products, ...

Brauer character tables: large collection in CTblLib, no general algorithm except brute force for very small groups, ongoing *Modular Atlas Project* - needs sophisticated theoretical and computational techniques (MeatAxe, GAP, ...)
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Recognition of finite groups

Opposite question: Given a faithful permutation/matrix (or ...) representation of a finite group G (by images of generators), what is G ? ($|G| = ?$, composition series, $G < H$ and $x \in H$ is $x \in G$, ...)

Permutation groups: Many good theoretical and practical algorithms.

Matrix and/or black box groups: Ongoing theoretical and implementation work (*Matrix Recognition Project*), ask Ákos Seress for more details.

Finitely presented groups: try to avoid these, mainly tools but not algorithms. (But some specific presentations can be very good, e.g., power commutator presentations of solvable groups.)

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Generic character tables of groups of Lie type

Series of groups of Lie type: e.g., $\{SL_2(q)|q\}$, $\{PGU_5(q)|q\}$,
 $\{E_8(q)|q\}$

Generic character tables for such series:

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Generic character table of $SL_2(q)$ for $q \equiv 0 \pmod 2$

$SL_2(q)$	C_1	C_2	$C_3(a)$	$C_4(a)$
χ_1	1	1	1	1
χ_2	q	0	1	-1
$\chi_3(n)$	$q+1$	1	$\zeta_1^{an} + \zeta_1^{-an}$	0
$\chi_4(n)$	$q-1$	-1	0	$-\xi_1^{an} - \xi_1^{-an}$

$$\zeta_1 := \exp\left(\frac{2\pi\sqrt{-1}}{q-1}\right), \quad \xi_1 := \exp\left(\frac{2\pi\sqrt{-1}}{q+1}\right)$$

Parameter ranges:

$$\chi_3(n): \quad n = 1, \dots, q-2 \quad \left(\frac{1}{2}(q-2) \text{ characters}\right)$$

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There is a bit more complicated table for $q \equiv 1 \pmod 2$.

(By the way: $A_5 \cong SL_2(4)$)

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F.L.: various non-published GAP3/GAP4/Maple programs to compute parts of generic character tables, based on Deligne-Lusztig theory, character sheaves, combinatorics, data collections, algorithmic reductions. See my homepage for some data, e.g., numbers of conjugacy classes, character degrees and more. There are still theoretical gaps for an algorithm to compute generic character tables systematically.

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Generic Brauer tables?

As Bhama Srinivan told us, Brauer- and Deligne-Lusztig theory are somehow compatible. For example, known decomposition matrices in non-defining characteristic l depend only on the order of q modulo l . One could think of generic decomposition matrices and Brauer tables, but this is not yet done.

And in defining characteristic?

For most applications use the characters in the sense of weight multiplicities (for the algebraic group), not Brauer characters for any finite subgroup.

My webpage contains many characters of small degree representations for all simple types of rank smaller 11.

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CHEVIE–GAP3 package

A package for computing with (finite) reflections groups and their root systems, root data, braid groups, Iwahori-Hecke algebras.

Some more keywords: Coxeter groups and finite complex reflection groups, root systems, character tables with labels as used in the literature, reflection subgroups, cosets of Coxeter groups, induce/restrict matrices, character tables of Iwahori-Hecke algebras, translations between bases (T_w , C_w , D_w , . . .) of Iwahori-Hecke algebras.

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