14.4 The Division Rule

Counting ears and dividing by two is a silly way to count the number of people in a room, but this approach is representative of a powerful counting principle.

A *k-to-1 function* maps exactly k elements of the domain to every element of the codomain. For example, the function mapping each ear to its owner is 2-to-1. Similarly, the function mapping each finger to its owner is 10-to-1, and the function mapping each finger and toe to its owner is 20-to-1. The general rule is:

Rule 14.4.1 (Division Rule). If $f : A \rightarrow B$ is k-to-1, then $|A| = k \cdot |B|$.

For example, suppose A is the set of ears in the room and B is the set of people. There is a 2-to-1 mapping from ears to people, so by the Division Rule, $|A| = 2 \cdot |B|$. Equivalently, |B| = |A|/2, expressing what we knew all along: the number of people is half the number of ears. Unlikely as it may seem, many counting problems are made much easier by initially counting every item multiple times and then correcting the answer using the Division Rule. Let's look at some examples.

14.4.1 Another Chess Problem

In how many different ways can you place two identical rooks on a chessboard so that they do not share a row or column? A valid configuration is shown in Figure 14.2(a), and an invalid configuration is shown in Figure 14.2(b).

Let A be the set of all sequences

$$(r_1, c_1, r_2, c_2)$$

where r_1 and r_2 are distinct rows and c_1 and c_2 are distinct columns. Let *B* be the set of all valid rook configurations. There is a natural function *f* from set *A* to set *B*; in particular, *f* maps the sequence (r_1, c_1, r_2, c_2) to a configuration with one rook in row r_1 , column c_1 and the other rook in row r_2 , column c_2 .

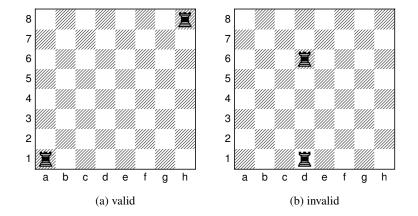


Figure 14.2 Two ways to place 2 rooks (Ξ) on a chessboard. The configuration in (b) is invalid because the rooks are in the same column.

But now there's a snag. Consider the sequences:

$$(1, a, 8, h)$$
 and $(8, h, 1, a)$

The first sequence maps to a configuration with a rook in the lower-left corner and a rook in the upper-right corner. The second sequence maps to a configuration with a rook in the upper-right corner and a rook in the lower-left corner. The problem is that those are two different ways of describing the *same* configuration! In fact, this arrangement is shown in Figure 14.2(a).

More generally, the function f maps exactly two sequences to *every* board configuration; f is a 2-to-1 function. Thus, by the quotient rule, $|A| = 2 \cdot |B|$. Rearranging terms gives:

$$|B| = \frac{|A|}{2} = \frac{(8 \cdot 7)^2}{2}.$$

On the second line, we've computed the size of A using the General Product Rule just as in the earlier chess problem.

14.4.2 Knights of the Round Table

In how many ways can King Arthur arrange to seat his n different knights at his round table? A seating defines who sits where. Two seatings are considered to be the same *arrangement* if each knight sits between the same two knights in both

14.4. The Division Rule

seatings. An equivalent way to say this is that two seatings yield the same arrangement when they yield the same sequence of knights starting at knight number 1 and going clockwise around the table. For example, the following two seatings determine the same arrangement:



A seating is determined by the sequence of knights going clockwise around the table starting at the top seat. So seatings correspond to permutations of the knights, and there are n! of them. For example,

$$(k_2, k_4, k_1, k_3) \longrightarrow k_3 \underbrace{k_2}_{k_1} k_4$$

Two seatings determine the same arrangement if they are the same when the table is rotated so knight 1 is at the top seat. For example with n = 4, there are 4 different sequences that correspond to the seating arrangement:

This mapping from seating to arrangements is actually an n-to-1 function, since all n cyclic shifts of the sequence of knights in the seating map to the same arrangement. Therefore, by the division rule, the number of circular seating arrangements is:

$$\frac{\#\text{seatings}}{n} = \frac{n!}{n} = (n-1)!.$$

14.5 Counting Subsets

How many k-element subsets of an n-element set are there? This question arises all the time in various guises:

- In how many ways can I select 5 books from my collection of 100 to bring on vacation?
- How many different 13-card bridge hands can be dealt from a 52-card deck?
- In how many ways can I select 5 toppings for my pizza if there are 14 available toppings?

This number comes up so often that there is a special notation for it:

 $\binom{n}{k}$::= the number of k-element subsets of an n-element set.

The expression $\binom{n}{k}$ is read "*n* choose *k*." Now we can immediately express the answers to all three questions above:

- I can select 5 books from 100 in $\binom{100}{5}$ ways.
- There are $\binom{52}{13}$ different bridge hands.
- There are $\binom{14}{5}$ different 5-topping pizzas, if 14 toppings are available.

14.5.1 The Subset Rule

We can derive a simple formula for the *n* choose *k* number using the Division Rule. We do this by mapping any permutation of an *n*-element set $\{a_1, \ldots, a_n\}$ into a *k*-element subset simply by taking the first *k* elements of the permutation. That is, the permutation $a_1a_2 \ldots a_n$ will map to the set $\{a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_k\}$.

Notice that any other permutation with the same first k elements a_1, \ldots, a_k in any order and the same remaining elements n - k elements in any order will also map to this set. What's more, a permutation can only map to $\{a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_k\}$ if its first k elements are the elements a_1, \ldots, a_k in some order. Since there are k! possible permutations of the first k elements and (n - k)! permutations of the remaining elements, we conclude from the Product Rule that exactly k!(n - k)! permutations of the n-element set map to the particular subset, S. In other words, the mapping from permutations to k-element subsets is k!(n - k)!-to-1.

14.5. Counting Subsets

But we know there are n! permutations of an n-element set, so by the Division Rule, we conclude that

$$n! = k!(n-k)!\binom{n}{k}$$

which proves:

Rule 14.5.1 (Subset Rule). The number of k-element subsets of an n-element set is

$$\binom{n}{k} = \frac{n!}{k! (n-k)!}.$$

Notice that this works even for 0-element subsets: n!/0!n! = 1. Here we use the fact that 0! is a *product* of 0 terms, which by convention² equals 1.

14.5.2 Bit Sequences

How many *n*-bit sequences contain exactly *k* ones? We've already seen the straightforward bijection between subsets of an *n*-element set and *n*-bit sequences. For example, here is a 3-element subset of $\{x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_8\}$ and the associated 8-bit sequence:

Notice that this sequence has exactly 3 ones, each corresponding to an element of the 3-element subset. More generally, the *n*-bit sequences corresponding to a k-element subset will have exactly k ones. So by the Bijection Rule,

Corollary 14.5.2. The number of n-bit sequences with exactly k ones is $\binom{n}{k}$.

Also, the bijection between selections of flavored donuts and bit sequences of Lemma 14.1.1 now implies,

Corollary 14.5.3. *The number of ways to select n donuts when k flavors are available is*

 $\binom{n+(k-1)}{n}.$

²We don't use it here, but a *sum* of zero terms equals 0.

14.6 Sequences with Repetitions

14.6.1 Sequences of Subsets

Choosing a k-element subset of an n-element set is the same as splitting the set into a pair of subsets: the first subset of size k and the second subset consisting of the remaining n - k elements. So, the Subset Rule can be understood as a rule for counting the number of such splits into pairs of subsets.

We can generalize this to a way to count splits into more than two subsets. Let A be an *n*-element set and k_1, k_2, \ldots, k_m be nonnegative integers whose sum is n. A (k_1, k_2, \ldots, k_m) -split of A is a sequence

$$(A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_m)$$

where the A_i are disjoint subsets of A and $|A_i| = k_i$ for i = 1, ..., m.

To count the number of splits we take the same approach as for the Subset Rule. Namely, we map any permutation $a_1a_2...a_n$ of an *n*-element set A into a $(k_1, k_2, ..., k_m)$ -split by letting the 1st subset in the split be the first k_1 elements of the permutation, the 2nd subset of the split be the next k_2 elements, ..., and the *m*th subset of the split be the final k_m elements of the permutation. This map is a $k_1! k_2! \cdots k_m!$ -to-1 function from the *n*! permutations to the $(k_1, k_2, ..., k_m)$ -splits of A, so from the Division Rule we conclude the Subset Split Rule:

Definition 14.6.1. For $n, k_1, \ldots, k_m \in \mathbb{N}$, such that $k_1 + k_2 + \cdots + k_m = n$, define the *multinomial coefficient*

$$\binom{n}{k_1, k_2, \dots, k_m} ::= \frac{n!}{k_1! k_2! \dots k_m!}$$

Rule 14.6.2 (Subset Split Rule). The number of $(k_1, k_2, ..., k_m)$ -splits of an n-element set is

 $\binom{n}{k_1,\ldots,k_m}$.

14.6.2 The Bookkeeper Rule

We can also generalize our count of n-bit sequences with k ones to counting sequences of n letters over an alphabet with more than two letters. For example, how many sequences can be formed by permuting the letters in the 10-letter word BOOKKEEPER?

14.6. Sequences with Repetitions

Notice that there are 1 B, 2 O's, 2 K's, 3 E's, 1 P, and 1 R in BOOKKEEPER. This leads to a straightforward bijection between permutations of BOOKKEEPER and (1,2,2,3,1,1)-splits of $\{1, 2, ..., 10\}$. Namely, map a permutation to the sequence of sets of positions where each of the different letters occur.

For example, in the permutation BOOKKEEPER itself, the B is in the 1st position, the O's occur in the 2nd and 3rd positions, K's in 4th and 5th, the E's in the 6th, 7th and 9th, P in the 8th, and R is in the 10th position. So BOOKKEEPER maps to

$$(\{1\}, \{2, 3\}, \{4, 5\}, \{6, 7, 9\}, \{8\}, \{10\}).$$

From this bijection and the Subset Split Rule, we conclude that the number of ways to rearrange the letters in the word BOOKKEEPER is:

total letters					
10!					
1!	2!	2!	3!	1!	1!
$\overline{}$	\smile	$\overline{}$	$\overline{}$	$\overline{}$	\sim
B's	O's	K's	E's	P's	R's

This example generalizes directly to an exceptionally useful counting principle which we will call the

Rule 14.6.3 (Bookkeeper Rule). Let l_1, \ldots, l_m be distinct elements. The number of sequences with k_1 occurrences of l_1 , and k_2 occurrences of l_2, \ldots , and k_m occurrences of l_m is

$$\binom{k_1+k_2+\cdots+k_m}{k_1,\ldots,k_m}.$$

For example, suppose you are planning a 20-mile walk, which should include 5 northward miles, 5 eastward miles, 5 southward miles, and 5 westward miles. How many different walks are possible?

There is a bijection between such walks and sequences with 5 N's, 5 E's, 5 S's, and 5 W's. By the Bookkeeper Rule, the number of such sequences is:

$$\frac{20!}{(5!)^4}$$

A Word about Words

Someday you might refer to the Subset Split Rule or the Bookkeeper Rule in front of a roomful of colleagues and discover that they're all staring back at you blankly. This is not because they're dumb, but rather because we made up the name "Bookkeeper Rule." However, the rule is excellent and the name is apt, so we suggest

that you play through: "You know? The Bookkeeper Rule? Don't you guys know *anything*?"

The Bookkeeper Rule is sometimes called the "formula for permutations with indistinguishable objects." The size k subsets of an n-element set are sometimes called k-combinations. Other similar-sounding descriptions are "combinations with repetition, permutations with repetition, r-permutations, permutations with indistinguishable objects," and so on. However, the counting rules we've taught you are sufficient to solve all these sorts of problems without knowing this jargon, so we won't burden you with it.

14.6.3 The Binomial Theorem

Counting gives insight into one of the basic theorems of algebra. A *binomial* is a sum of two terms, such as a + b. Now consider its 4th power, $(a + b)^4$.

By repeatedly using distributivity of products over sums to multiply out this 4th power expression completely, we get

$$(a+b)^4 = aaaa + aaab + aaba + aabb+ abaa + abab + abba + abbb+ baaa + baab + baba + babb+ bbaa + bbab + bbba + bbbb$$

Notice that there is one term for every sequence of *a*'s and *b*'s. So there are 2^4 terms, and the number of terms with *k* copies of *b* and n - k copies of *a* is:

$$\frac{n!}{k! \ (n-k)!} = \binom{n}{k}$$

by the Bookkeeper Rule. Hence, the coefficient of $a^{n-k}b^k$ is $\binom{n}{k}$. So for n = 4, this means:

$$(a+b)^{4} = \binom{4}{0} \cdot a^{4}b^{0} + \binom{4}{1} \cdot a^{3}b^{1} + \binom{4}{2} \cdot a^{2}b^{2} + \binom{4}{3} \cdot a^{1}b^{3} + \binom{4}{4} \cdot a^{0}b^{4}$$

In general, this reasoning gives the Binomial Theorem:

Theorem 14.6.4 (*Binomial Theorem*). For all $n \in \mathbb{N}$ and $a, b \in \mathbb{R}$:

$$(a+b)^n = \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} a^{n-k} b^k$$

14.7. Counting Practice: Poker Hands

The Binomial Theorem explains why the *n* choose *k* number is called a *binomial coefficient*.

This reasoning about binomials extends nicely to *multinomials*, which are sums of two or more terms. For example, suppose we wanted the coefficient of

$$bo^2k^2e^3pr$$

in the expansion of $(b + o + k + e + p + r)^{10}$. Each term in this expansion is a product of 10 variables where each variable is one of b, o, k, e, p, or r. Now, the coefficient of $bo^2k^2e^3pr$ is the number of those terms with exactly 1 b, 2 o's, 2 k's, 3 e's, 1 p, and 1 r. And the number of such terms is precisely the number of rearrangements of the word BOOKKEEPER:

$$\binom{10}{1, 2, 2, 3, 1, 1} = \frac{10!}{1! \, 2! \, 2! \, 3! \, 1! \, 1!}.$$

This reasoning extends to a general theorem:

Theorem 14.6.5 (Multinomial Theorem). *For all* $n \in \mathbb{N}$,

$$(z_1 + z_2 + \dots + z_m)^n = \sum_{\substack{k_1, \dots, k_m \in \mathbb{N} \\ k_1 + \dots + k_m = n}} \binom{n}{k_1, k_2, \dots, k_m} z_1^{k_1} z_2^{k_2} \cdots z_m^{k_m}.$$

But you'll be better off remembering the reasoning behind the Multinomial Theorem rather than this cumbersome formal statement.

14.7 Counting Practice: Poker Hands

Five-Card Draw is a card game in which each player is initially dealt a *hand* consisting of 5 cards from a deck of 52 cards.³ The number of different hands in

 $(spades) \otimes (hearts) \otimes (clubs) \otimes (diamonds)$

And there are 13 ranks, listed here from lowest to highest:

 $\stackrel{\rm Ace}{A},\ 2\ ,\ 3\ ,\ 4\ ,\ 5\ ,\ 6\ ,\ 7\ ,\ 8\ ,\ 9\ ,\ \stackrel{\rm Jack}{J},\ \stackrel{\rm Queen}{Q},\ \stackrel{\rm King}{K}.$

Thus, for example, $8\heartsuit$ is the 8 of hearts and $A\clubsuit$ is the ace of spades.

³There are 52 cards in a standard deck. Each card has a *suit* and a *rank*. There are four suits:

,

Chapter 14 Cardinality Rules

Five-Card Draw is the number of 5-element subsets of a 52-element set, which is

$$\binom{52}{5} = 2,598,960.$$

Let's get some counting practice by working out the number of hands with various special properties.

14.7.1 Hands with a Four-of-a-Kind

A *Four-of-a-Kind* is a set of four cards with the same rank. How many different hands contain a Four-of-a-Kind? Here are a couple examples:

 $\{ 8 \spadesuit, 8 \diamondsuit, Q \heartsuit, 8 \heartsuit, 8 \clubsuit \}$ $\{ A \clubsuit, 2 \clubsuit, 2 \heartsuit, 2 \diamondsuit, 2 \diamondsuit, 2 \clubsuit \}$

As usual, the first step is to map this question to a sequence-counting problem. A hand with a Four-of-a-Kind is completely described by a sequence specifying:

- 1. The rank of the four cards.
- 2. The rank of the extra card.
- 3. The suit of the extra card.

Thus, there is a bijection between hands with a Four-of-a-Kind and sequences consisting of two distinct ranks followed by a suit. For example, the three hands above are associated with the following sequences:

$$(8, Q, \heartsuit) \leftrightarrow \{ 8 \spadesuit, 8 \diamondsuit, 8 \heartsuit, 8 \clubsuit, Q \heartsuit \}$$
$$(2, A, \clubsuit) \leftrightarrow \{ 2 \clubsuit, 2 \heartsuit, 2 \diamondsuit, 2 \spadesuit, A \clubsuit \}$$

Now we need only count the sequences. There are 13 ways to choose the first rank, 12 ways to choose the second rank, and 4 ways to choose the suit. Thus, by the Generalized Product Rule, there are $13 \cdot 12 \cdot 4 = 624$ hands with a Four-of-a-Kind. This means that only 1 hand in about 4165 has a Four-of-a-Kind. Not surprisingly, Four-of-a-Kind is considered to be a very good poker hand!

14.7. Counting Practice: Poker Hands

14.7.2 Hands with a Full House

A *Full House* is a hand with three cards of one rank and two cards of another rank. Here are some examples:

 $\{2 \spadesuit, 2 \clubsuit, 2 \diamondsuit, J \clubsuit, J \diamondsuit \}$ $\{5 \diamondsuit, 5 \clubsuit, 5 \heartsuit, 7 \heartsuit, 7 \clubsuit \}$

Again, we shift to a problem about sequences. There is a bijection between Full Houses and sequences specifying:

- 1. The rank of the triple, which can be chosen in 13 ways.
- 2. The suits of the triple, which can be selected in $\binom{4}{3}$ ways.
- 3. The rank of the pair, which can be chosen in 12 ways.
- 4. The suits of the pair, which can be selected in $\binom{4}{2}$ ways.

The example hands correspond to sequences as shown below:

$$(2, \{\spadesuit, \clubsuit, \diamondsuit\}, J, \{\clubsuit, \diamondsuit\}) \leftrightarrow \{2\spadesuit, 2\clubsuit, 2\diamondsuit, J\clubsuit, J\diamondsuit\}$$
$$(5, \{\diamondsuit, \clubsuit, \heartsuit\}, 7, \{\heartsuit, \clubsuit\}) \leftrightarrow \{5\diamondsuit, 5\clubsuit, 5\heartsuit, 7\heartsuit, 7\clubsuit\}$$

By the Generalized Product Rule, the number of Full Houses is:

$$13 \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ 3 \end{pmatrix} \cdot 12 \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix}$$
.

We're on a roll-but we're about to hit a speed bump.

14.7.3 Hands with Two Pairs

How many hands have *Two Pairs*; that is, two cards of one rank, two cards of another rank, and one card of a third rank? Here are examples:

$$\{3\diamondsuit, 3\clubsuit, Q\diamondsuit, Q\heartsuit, A\clubsuit\}$$
$$\{9\heartsuit, 9\diamondsuit, 5\heartsuit, 5\clubsuit, K\clubsuit\}$$

Each hand with Two Pairs is described by a sequence consisting of:

- 1. The rank of the first pair, which can be chosen in 13 ways.
- 2. The suits of the first pair, which can be selected $\binom{4}{2}$ ways.

- 3. The rank of the second pair, which can be chosen in 12 ways.
- 4. The suits of the second pair, which can be selected in $\binom{4}{2}$ ways.
- 5. The rank of the extra card, which can be chosen in 11 ways.
- 6. The suit of the extra card, which can be selected in $\binom{4}{1} = 4$ ways.

Thus, it might appear that the number of hands with Two Pairs is:

$$13 \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix} \cdot 12 \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix} \cdot 11 \cdot 4.$$

Wrong answer! The problem is that there is *not* a bijection from such sequences to hands with Two Pairs. This is actually a 2-to-1 mapping. For example, here are the pairs of sequences that map to the hands given above:

The problem is that nothing distinguishes the first pair from the second. A pair of 5's and a pair of 9's is the same as a pair of 9's and a pair of 5's. We avoided this difficulty in counting Full Houses because, for example, a pair of 6's and a triple of kings is different from a pair of kings and a triple of 6's.

We ran into precisely this difficulty last time, when we went from counting arrangements of *different* pieces on a chessboard to counting arrangements of two *identical* rooks. The solution then was to apply the Division Rule, and we can do the same here. In this case, the Division rule says there are twice as many sequences as hands, so the number of hands with Two Pairs is actually:

$$\frac{13\cdot\binom{4}{2}\cdot 12\cdot\binom{4}{2}\cdot 11\cdot 4}{2}.$$

Another Approach

The preceding example was disturbing! One could easily overlook the fact that the mapping was 2-to-1 on an exam, fail the course, and turn to a life of crime. You can make the world a safer place in two ways:

14.7. Counting Practice: Poker Hands

- Whenever you use a mapping f : A → B to translate one counting problem to another, check that the same number of elements in A are mapped to each element in B. If k elements of A map to each of element of B, then apply the Division Rule using the constant k.
- 2. As an extra check, try solving the same problem in a different way. Multiple approaches are often available—and all had better give the same answer! (Sometimes different approaches give answers that *look* different, but turn out to be the same after some algebra.)

We already used the first method; let's try the second. There is a bijection between hands with two pairs and sequences that specify:

- 1. The ranks of the two pairs, which can be chosen in $\binom{13}{2}$ ways.
- 2. The suits of the lower-rank pair, which can be selected in $\binom{4}{2}$ ways.
- 3. The suits of the higher-rank pair, which can be selected in $\binom{4}{2}$ ways.
- 4. The rank of the extra card, which can be chosen in 11 ways.
- 5. The suit of the extra card, which can be selected in $\binom{4}{1} = 4$ ways.

For example, the following sequences and hands correspond:

$$(\{3, Q\}, \{\diamondsuit, \clubsuit\}, \{\diamondsuit, \heartsuit\}, A, \clubsuit) \leftrightarrow \{3\diamondsuit, 3\clubsuit, Q\diamondsuit, Q\heartsuit, A\clubsuit\}$$
$$(\{9, 5\}, \{\heartsuit, \clubsuit\}, \{\heartsuit, \diamondsuit\}, K, \clubsuit) \leftrightarrow \{9\heartsuit, 9\diamondsuit, 5\heartsuit, 5\clubsuit, K\clubsuit\}$$

Thus, the number of hands with two pairs is:

$$\binom{13}{2} \cdot \binom{4}{2} \cdot \binom{4}{2} \cdot 11 \cdot 4.$$

This is the same answer we got before, though in a slightly different form.

14.7.4 Hands with Every Suit

How many hands contain at least one card from every suit? Here is an example of such a hand:

$$\{7\diamondsuit, K\clubsuit, 3\diamondsuit, A\heartsuit, 2\clubsuit\}$$

Each such hand is described by a sequence that specifies:

1. The ranks of the diamond, the club, the heart, and the spade, which can be selected in $13 \cdot 13 \cdot 13 \cdot 13 = 13^4$ ways.

2. The suit of the extra card, which can be selected in 4 ways.

3. The rank of the extra card, which can be selected in 12 ways.

For example, the hand above is described by the sequence:

 $(7, K, A, 2, \diamondsuit, 3) \leftrightarrow \{7\diamondsuit, K\clubsuit, A\heartsuit, 2\spadesuit, 3\diamondsuit\}.$

Are there other sequences that correspond to the same hand? There is one more! We could equally well regard either the $3\diamond$ or the $7\diamond$ as the extra card, so this is actually a 2-to-1 mapping. Here are the two sequences corresponding to the example hand:

$$(7, K, A, 2, \diamond, 3) \qquad \{7\diamond, K\clubsuit, A\heartsuit, 2\diamondsuit, 3\diamond\}$$
$$(3, K, A, 2, \diamond, 7) \nearrow$$

Therefore, the number of hands with every suit is:

$$\frac{13^4 \cdot 4 \cdot 12}{2}.$$

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