One, two, three, we're…

Counting

Basic Counting Principles

Counting problems are of the following kind:

"**How many** different 8-letter passwords are there?"

"**How many** possible ways are there to pick 11 soccer players out of a 20-player team?"

Most importantly, counting is the basis for computing **probabilities of discrete events**.

("What is the probability of winning the lottery?")

Basic Counting Principles

The sum rule:
If a task can be done in n_1 ways and a second task in n_2 ways, and if these two tasks cannot be done at the same time, then there are $n_1 + n_2$ ways to do either task.

Example:
The department will award a free computer to either a CS student or a CS professor.
How many different choices are there, if there are 530 students and 15 professors?

There are 530 + 15 = 545 choices.

Basic Counting Principles

Generalized sum rule:

If we have tasks $T_1, T_2, \ldots, T_m$ that can be done in $n_1, n_2, \ldots, n_m$ ways, respectively, and no two of these tasks can be done at the same time, then there are $n_1 + n_2 + \ldots + n_m$ ways to do one of these tasks.

Basic Counting Principles

The product rule:

Suppose that a procedure can be broken down into two successive tasks. If there are n_1 ways to do the first task and n_2 ways to do the second task after the first task has been done, then there are $n_1 n_2$ ways to do the procedure.

Basic Counting Principles

Example:

How many different license plates are there that containing exactly three English letters ?

Solution:

There are 26 possibilities to pick the first letter, then 26 possibilities for the second one, and 26 for the last one.

So there are $26 \cdot 26 \cdot 26 = 17576$ different license plates.

Basic Counting Principles

Generalized product rule:

If we have a procedure consisting of sequential tasks $T_1, T_2, \ldots, T_m$ that can be done in $n_1, n_2, \ldots, n_m$ ways, respectively, then there are $n_1 \cdot n_2 \cdot \ldots \cdot n_m$ ways to carry out the procedure.

Basic Counting Principles

The sum and product rules can also be phrased in terms of **set theory**.

Sum rule: Let $A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_m$ be disjoint sets. Then the number of ways to choose any element from one of these sets is $|A_1 \cup A_2 \cup \ldots \cup A_m| = |A_1| + |A_2| + \ldots + |A_m|$.

Product rule: Let $A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_m$ be finite sets. Then the number of ways to choose one element from each set in the order $A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_m$ is $|A_1 \times A_2 \times \ldots \times A_m| = |A_1| \cdot |A_2| \cdot \ldots \cdot |A_m|$.

Inclusion-Exclusion

How many bit strings of length 8 either start with a 1 or end with 00?

Task 1: Construct a string of length 8 that starts with a 1.

There is one way to pick the first bit (1),
two ways to pick the second bit (0 or 1),
two ways to pick the third bit (0 or 1),
.
.
.
two ways to pick the eighth bit (0 or 1).

Product rule: Task 1 can be done in $1 \cdot 2^7 = 128$ ways.

Inclusion-Exclusion

Task 2: Construct a string of length 8 that ends with 00.

There are two ways to pick the first bit (0 or 1),
two ways to pick the second bit (0 or 1),
.
.
.
two ways to pick the sixth bit (0 or 1),
one way to pick the seventh bit (0), and
one way to pick the eighth bit (0).

Product rule: Task 2 can be done in $2^6 = 64$ ways.

Inclusion-Exclusion

Since there are 128 ways to do Task 1 and 64 ways to do Task 2, does this mean that there are 192 bit strings either starting with 1 or ending with 00 ?

No, because here Task 1 and Task 2 can be done **at the same time**.

When we carry out Task 1 and create strings starting with 1, some of these strings end with 00.

Therefore, we sometimes do Tasks 1 and 2 at the same time, so **the sum rule does not apply**.

Inclusion-Exclusion

If we want to use the sum rule in such a case, we have to subtract the cases when Tasks 1 and 2 are done at the same time.

How many cases are there, that is, how many strings start with 1 **and** end with 00?

There is one way to pick the first bit (1),
two ways for the second, …, sixth bit (0 or 1),
one way for the seventh, eighth bit (0).

Product rule: In $2^5 = 32$ cases, Tasks 1 and 2 are carried out at the same time.

Inclusion-Exclusion

Since there are 128 ways to complete Task 1 and 64 ways to complete Task 2, and in 32 of these cases Tasks 1 and 2 are completed at the same time, there are

128 + 64 – 32 = 160 ways to do either task.

In set theory, this corresponds to sets A_1 and A_2 that are **not** disjoint. Then we have:

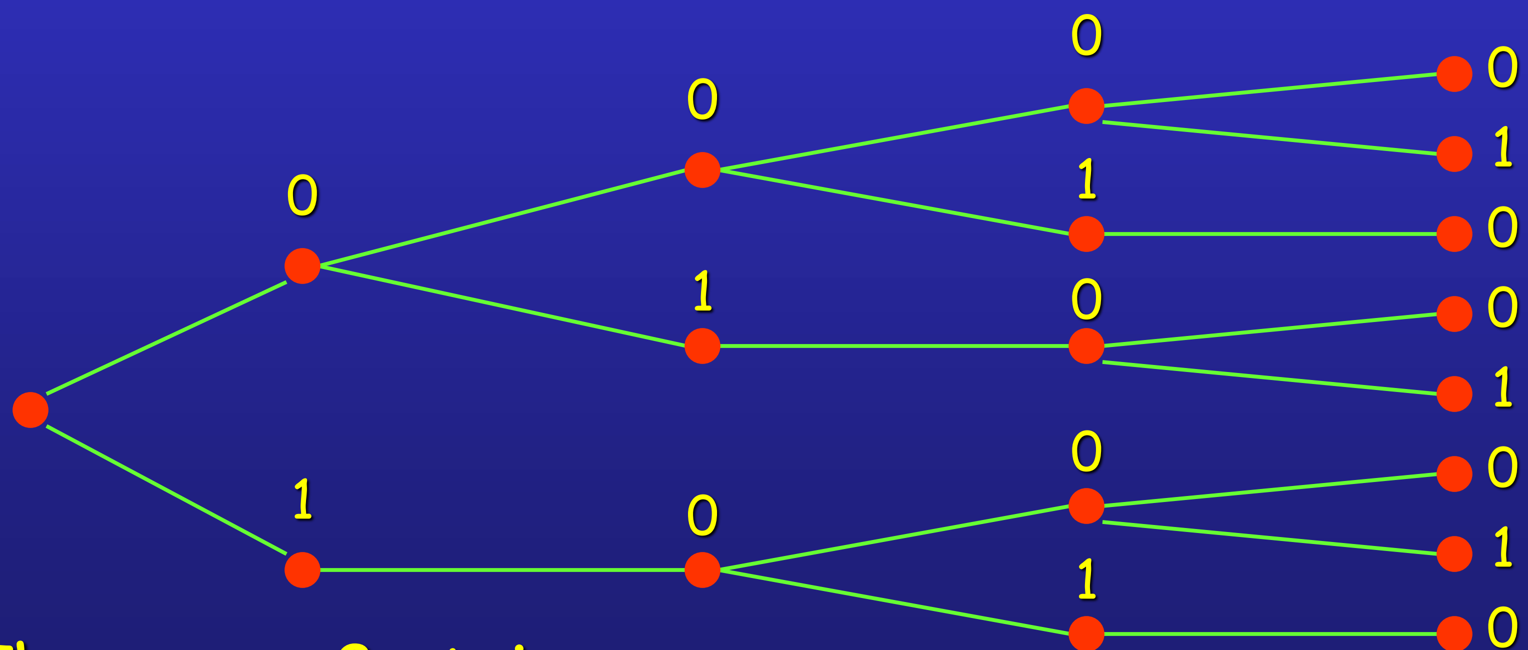
$$|A_1 \cup A_2| = |A_1| + |A_2| - |A_1 \cap A_2|$$

This is called the **principle of inclusion-exclusion**.

Tree Diagrams

How many bit strings of length four do not have two consecutive 1s?

Task 1 (1st bit) | Task 2 (2nd bit) | Task 3 (3rd bit) | Task 4 (4th bit)



There are 8 strings.

The Pigeonhole Principle

The pigeonhole principle: If (k + 1) or more objects are placed into k boxes, then there is at least one box containing two or more of the objects.

Example 1: If there are 11 players in a soccer team that wins 12-0, there must be at least one player in the team who scored at least twice.

Example 2: If you have 6 classes from Monday to Friday, there must be at least one day on which you have at least two classes.

The Pigeonhole Principle

The generalized pigeonhole principle: If N objects are placed into k boxes, then there is at least one box containing at least $\lceil N/k \rceil$ of the objects.

Example 1: In our 60-student class, at least 12 students will get the same letter grade (A, B, C, D, or F).