

Problem

Let $n \in \mathbb{N}$ be an even number, say $n = 2m$. Also let $\mathbb{I}_n = \{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\}$.

Let $f : \mathbb{I}_n \rightarrow \mathbb{I}_n$ be a bijection; in other words, it represents a permutation of length n .

If $i \in \mathbb{I}_n$ such that $f(i) = i$, then i is called a *fixed point* of f .

If $i \in \mathbb{I}_n$ such that $f(i) = n + 1 - i$, then i is called a *mirror point* of f .

Let X_n denote the number of permutations of length n with no fixed points and no mirror points. Find the value of X_n .

Solution

We wish to apply the Principle of Inclusion-Exclusion (PIE).

Let our universal set be S_n , the set of all permutations of length n ; hence $|S_n| = n!$.

For all $i \in \mathbb{I}_n$, we define $A_i = \{f \in S_n | f(i) = i\}$, and $B_i = \{f \in S_n | f(i) = n + 1 - i\}$.

In other words, A_i is the set of all permutations for which i is a fixed point, and B_i is the set of all permutations for which i is a mirror point.

We note the following lemma, which will help us to make suitable cases later on:

Lemma: For any $i, j \in \mathbb{I}_n$ such that $i + j = n + 1$, $|A_i \cap B_i| = |A_i \cap B_j| = 0$.

Proof: It suffices to note that n is even, hence no element can be a fixed point as well as a mirror point of the same permutation.

(If n is odd, then only the middle element $\frac{n+1}{2}$ can be a fixed point as well as a mirror point.

The reader is encouraged to suitably modify this solution to work for odd values of n as well.)

By PIE, what we want to calculate is:

$$X_n = |S| - |A_1 \cup A_2 \cup \dots \cup A_n \cup B_1 \cup B_2 \cup \dots \cup B_n| = |S| + \sum_{t=1}^{2n} (-1)^t E_t \quad (1)$$

where E_t denotes the sum of the sizes of all t -set intersections from the A_i, B_j families.

In other words, $E_t = \sum |A_{i_1} \cap A_{i_2} \cap \dots \cap A_{i_k} \cap B_{j_1} \cap B_{j_2} \cap \dots \cap B_{j_l}|$, where the summation is taken over all $1 \leq i_1 < i_2 < \dots < i_k \leq n$ and $1 \leq j_1 < j_2 < \dots < j_l \leq n$ such that $k + l = t$; including the possibility that either of k, l could be zero.

To calculate E_t , all such t -set intersections $I = |A_{i_1} \cap A_{i_2} \cap \dots \cap A_{i_k} \cap B_{j_1} \cap B_{j_2} \cap \dots \cap B_{j_l}|$ can be partitioned into the following cases:

Case 1: There exist some $1 \leq r \leq k$ and $1 \leq s \leq l$, such that $i_r = j_s$, or $i_r + j_s = n + 1$. Due to the above lemma, we note that $|A_{i_r} \cap B_{j_s}| = 0$; hence $|I| = 0$.

Case 2: There do not exist any $1 \leq r \leq k$ and $1 \leq s \leq l$, for which $i_r = j_s$ or $i_r + j_s = n + 1$. For any permutation f that belongs to the t -set intersection I as defined above, the following values of f are forced:

$f(i_r) = i_r$ for all r from 1 to k , and $f(j_s) = n + 1 - j_s$ for all s from 1 to l .

All the above values in the domain and codomain are distinct, which is consistent with f being a bijection.

All the remaining $n - k - l = n - t$ values of f can be chosen in $(n - t)!$ ways; so $|I| = (n - t)!$.

Now we only need to count the t -set intersections that belong to case 2.

Noting that $n = 2m$, we partition the $2n$ sets of A_i, B_j families into m groups of 4 sets each:

$\{A_1, A_n, B_1, B_n\}, \{A_2, A_{n-1}, B_2, B_{n-1}\}, \dots$

$\dots, \{A_i, A_{n+1-i}, B_i, B_{n+1-i}\}, \dots, \{A_m, A_{m+1}, B_m, B_{m+1}\}$

As per the constraint imposed by case 2, no two A_i, B_j from the same group can be used in any given t -set intersection. So we can use at most 2 out of the 4 elements from each group.

Let us count the sub-case in which we use exactly 2 elements from some r groups, and exactly 1 element from some s groups; where $2r + s = t$.

We can choose the first r groups in $\binom{m}{r}$ ways, and the next s groups in $\binom{m-r}{s}$ ways.

For each of the first r groups, we can use either both elements of the A_i family, or both elements of the B_i family, in that group.

For each of the next s groups, we can use any one of the 4 elements in that group.

Thus the number of t -set intersections in this sub-case is $\binom{m}{r} \binom{m-r}{s} 2^r 4^s = \binom{m}{r} \binom{m-r}{t-2r} 2^{2t-3r}$.

Summing up the above sub-cases over all valid values of r , and noting that each such t -set intersection is of size $(n-t)!$, we get:

$$E_t = (n-t)! \sum_{r=0}^{\lfloor \frac{t}{2} \rfloor} \binom{m}{r} \binom{m-r}{t-2r} 2^{2t-3r} \quad (2)$$

We note that if the two binomial coefficients on the RHS are non-zero, then $m \geq r$ and $m-r \geq t-2r$; which forces $t \leq 2m = n$. In other words, $E_t = 0$ for all $t > n$; which makes sense because we cannot force more than n constraints on a function having n inputs.

The above formula also gives $E_0 = n!$ which is the size of our universal set S_n .

We can now combine (1) and (2) to write the formula for X_n , which is the number of n -length permutations with no fixed points and no mirror points:

$$X_n = \sum_{t=0}^n (-1)^t (n-t)! \sum_{r=0}^{\lfloor \frac{t}{2} \rfloor} \binom{m}{r} \binom{m-r}{t-2r} 2^{2t-3r}$$

By exchanging the order of summation, and other simplifications, we can rewrite this as:

$$X_{2m} = \sum_{s=0}^m \binom{m}{s} 2^{m-s} F_1(s)$$

where $F_1(s) = \sum_{k=0}^s (2s-k)! \binom{s}{k} (-4)^k$.

Similarly, the reader is encouraged to derive the following formula for the case when n is odd, say $n = 2m + 1$:

$$X_{2m+1} = \sum_{s=0}^m \binom{m}{s} 2^{m-s} (F_2(s) - F_1(s))$$

where $F_1(s)$ is the same as above, and $F_2(s) = \sum_{k=0}^s (2s-k+1)! \binom{s}{k} (-4)^k$.

It seems difficult to simplify these any further; the reader is encouraged to try the same.

Finally, we provide some initial values of X_n , along with the number of derangements D_n , as well as a sample implementation in Python to count D_n, X_n directly.

n	D_n	X_n
1	0	0
2	1	0
3	2	0
4	9	4
5	44	16
6	265	80
7	1854	672
8	14833	4752
9	133496	48768
10	1334961	440192

```
def get_permutations(n, isValid):
    # use backtracking to generate all permutations recursively
    def perms_step(n, output, available, isValid):
        # output: permutation generated so far
        # available: elements available to append in this step
        # isValid is a function that takes inputs as n, i, p(i),
        # and returns whether it is ok to put element p(i) at position i
        if len(available) == 0:
            return [output]
        all_outputs = []
        for p_i in available:
            if isValid(n, len(output), p_i):
                newOutput = output.copy(); newOutput.append(p_i)
                newAvailable = available.copy(); newAvailable.remove(p_i)
                all_outputs += perms_step(n, newOutput, newAvailable, isValid)
        return all_outputs
    return perms_step(n, [], set(range(n)), isValid)

def isNotFixedPt(n, i, p_i):
    return p_i != i

def isNotMirrorPt(n, i, p_i):
    return p_i != n - 1 - i

def isNotFixedOrMirrorPt(n, i, p_i):
    return isNotFixedPt(n, i, p_i) and isNotMirrorPt(n, i, p_i)

def print_dn_xn_table(N):
    for n in range(1, N):
        D_n = len(get_permutations(n, isNotFixedPt))
        X_n = len(get_permutations(n, isNotFixedOrMirrorPt))
        print(f'n:{n: 3} D_n:{D_n: 9} X_n:{X_n: 9}')

if __name__ == '__main__':
    print_dn_xn_table(11)
```

mirror_pts.py