

Problem

Let p be a prime number. Consider the set $\mathbb{P} = \{0, 1, \dots, p^2 + p\}$.

Construct a set $\mathbb{L} = \{L_0, L_1, \dots, L_{p^2+p}\}$ where each L_i is a subset of \mathbb{P} , such that:

1. For each $L_i \in \mathbb{L}$, $|L_i| = p + 1$;
2. For each $i \in \mathbb{P}$, there are exactly $p + 1$ sets from \mathbb{L} that contain i ;
3. For each distinct $L_i, L_j \in \mathbb{L}$, $|L_i \cap L_j| = 1$;
4. For each distinct $i, j \in \mathbb{P}$, there is exactly one set from \mathbb{L} that contains both i and j .

Solution

We introduce the following notation:

For each $q \in \{0, 1, 2, \dots, p - 1\}$, let $A_q = \{qp + r | 0 \leq r < p\}$; and let $B = \{p^2, p^2 + 1, \dots, p^2 + p\}$.

Clearly, $A_0, A_1, \dots, A_{p-1}, B$ form a disjoint partition of \mathbb{P} ; and each A_q is a complete set of residues modulo p .

For any $q \in \{0, 1, 2, \dots, p - 1\}$ and any $n \in \mathbb{Z}$; let $r_q(n)$ denote the unique element $d \in A_q$ such that $n \equiv d \pmod{p}$.

We claim that the following construction satisfies the given requirements:

For each $n \in \mathbb{P}$, either $n \in A_q$ for some $q \in \{0, 1, 2, \dots, p - 1\}$, or $n \in B$.

If $n \in A_q$, we define: $L_n = \{r_0(n), r_1(n + q), r_2(n + 2q), \dots, r_k(n + kq), \dots, r_{p-1}(n + (p - 1)q), p^2 + q\}$

Else if $n \in B$, then $n = p^2 + r$ for some $r \in \{0, 1, 2, \dots, p\}$. Then we define: $L_n = A_r \cup \{p^2 + p\}$.

For an illustration of this construction, refer to the example diagram below:

		Points																																		
		A0					A1					A2					A3					A4					B									
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				
Lines	Q R																																			
0	0 0 0	0					5				10					15					20					25										
	0 1 1	1					6				11					16					21					26										
	0 2 2		2				7				12					17					22					27										
	0 3 3			3			8				13					18					23					28										
	0 4 4				4					9					14						19					24	25									
	1 0 5	0					6				12					18					24					26										
	1 1 6	1					7				13					19	20				25					27										
	1 2 7		2				8				14	15				20	21				26					28										
	1 3 8			3			9	10			15	16				21	22				27					29										
	1 4 9				4	5				11					17						22					28										
	2 0 10	0					7				14	16				23					29					30										
	2 1 11	1					8	10			17					24					30															
	2 2 12		2				9	11			18	20				25					30															
	2 3 13			3	5					12					19	21					30															
	2 4 14				4	6				13	15				22						30															
	3 0 15	0					8	11			19	22				28					30															
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	4 0 20	0					9			13	17				21						30															
	4 1 21	1			5					14	18				22						30															
	4 2 22		2		6					15	19				23						30															
	4 3 23			3	7					16	20				24						30															
	4 4 24				4	8				17	21				25						30															
	25	0	1	2	3	4																									30					
	26						5	6	7	8	9																				30					
	27											10	11	12	13	14															30					
	28																15	16	17	18	19									30						
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	30																														25	26	27	28	29	30