

**GCD and Inverses**  
**Exposition by William Gasarch**

How to find the GCD of two numbers.

I give an example:

$$\text{GCD}(270,192)$$

$$270 = 192 \times 1 + 78$$

$$192 = 78 \times 2 + 36$$

$$78 = 36 \times 2 + 6$$

$$36 = 6 \times 6 + 0$$

OKAY, so that means that the answer is 6.

But it means MORE than that! Take the second to last line:

$$6 = 78 - 36 \times 2$$

I CAN write 78 as a combo of 270 and 192

I CAN write 36 as a combo of 192 and 78. I CAN THEN write 78 as a combo of 270 and 192.

POINT: After all of this I can get 6 (the GCD) as a combo of 192 and 270. I will do that NOW:

$$6 = 78 - 36 \times 2$$

$$6 = (270 - 192) - (192 - 78 \times 2) \times 2$$

$$6 = 270 - 192 - 2 \times 192 + 4 \times 78$$

$$6 = 270 - 3 \times 192 + 4 \times 78$$

$$6 = 270 - 3 \times 192 + 4 \times (270 - 192)$$

$$6 = 270 - 3 \times 192 + 4 \times 270 - 4 \times 192$$

$$6 = 5 \times 270 - 7 \times 192$$

Does this help us find inverses. NO. But lets do an example where it does! It will be when the GCD is 1.

GCD(270,193)

$$270 = 193 \times 1 + 77$$

$$193 = 77 \times 2 + 39$$

$$77 = 39 \times 1 + 38$$

$$39 = 38 \times 1 + 1$$

$$38 = 1 \times 38 + 0$$

OKAY, so that means that the answer is 1. it means MORE than that! Look at

$$1 = 39 - 38$$

We write 39 and 38 as combos of prior element and eventually get back to 193 and 270.

$$1 = 39 - 38$$

$$1 = (193 - 77 \times 2) - (77 - 39)$$

$$1 = 193 - 77 \times 2 - 77 + 39$$

$$1 = 193 - 77 \times 3 + 39$$

$$1 = 193 - 77 \times 3 + (193 - 77 \times 2)$$

$$1 = 193 - 77 \times 3 + 193 - 77 \times 2$$

$$1 = 193 \times 2 - 77 \times 5$$

$$1 = 193 \times 2 - (270 - 193) \times 5$$

$$1 = 193 \times 7 - 5 \times 270$$

$$1 = 193 \times 7 - 5 \times 270$$

If I want to find the INVERSE of 193 mod 270, take this equation MOD 270

$$1 \equiv 193 \times 7 - 5 \times 270 \pmod{270}$$

$$1 \equiv 193 \times 7 \pmod{270}$$

GREAT- the inverse of 193 is 7 mod 270.

If I want to find the INVERSE of 270 mod 193 then. NO! WAIT- when dealing mod 193 there is no 270.  $270 \equiv 77 \pmod{193}$ .

OKAY- I want to find the inverse of 77 mod 193. Take the equation above mod 193

$$1 \equiv 193 \times 7 - 5 \times 270 \pmod{193}$$

Two things of interest happen: the 193-terms term is 0 and the 270-term is  $-5 \times 77$ . So we have

$$1 \equiv -5 \times 77 \pmod{193}$$

So -5 is the inverse of 88 mod 193. NO WAIT. We need to find -5 mod 193, which is  $193 - 5 = 188$

So the inverse of 88 mod 193 is 188.