

Algebraic Systems

A set G together with a binary operation $+$: $G \times G \rightarrow G$ is called a **group** provided the following hold.

- (1) $(a + b) + c = a + (b + c)$ for all $a, b, \&c$ in G .
- (2) There exists $0 \in G$ such that $a + 0 = 0 + a = a$ for all $a \in G$.
- (3) For all $a \in G$ there exists a $-a \in G$ such that $a + -a = 0$.

If in addition $a + b = b + a$ for a and b in G then G is a **commutative** or **abelian group**.

Examples. $(\mathbb{R}, +)$, $(\mathbb{Z}, +)$, $(\mathbb{R} - \{0\}, \cdot)$, any vector space is an abelian group, $(2 \times 2, +)$, but not $(2 \times 2, \cdot)$, yet $(2 \times 2$ with $\det \neq 0, \cdot)$ is a group. Also $(\mathbb{Z}/n, +)$.

A set R together with two binary operations $+$ and \cdot from $R \times R$ to R is called a **ring** provided the following hold.

- (1) $(R, +)$ is an abelian group.
- (2) $(a \cdot b) \cdot c = a \cdot (b \cdot c)$ for all $a, b, \&c$ in R .
- (3) $a \cdot (b + c) = a \cdot b + a \cdot c$ for all $a, b, \&c$ in R .
- (4) $(a + b) \cdot c = a \cdot c + b \cdot c$ for all $a, b, \&c$ in R .

If there exists an element $1 \in R$ such that $a \cdot 1 = 1 \cdot a = a$ for all $a \in R$ then R is a **ring with a unit**.

If $a \cdot b = b \cdot a$ for all a and b in R then R is a **commutative ring**.

Examples. $(\mathbb{R}, +, \cdot)$, $(\mathbb{C}, +, \cdot)$, $(\mathbb{Q}, +, \cdot)$, $(\mathbb{Z}, +, \cdot)$. $(2 \times 2, +, \cdot)$. Polynomials. $(\mathbb{Z}/n, +, \cdot)$.

A set F together with two binary operations $+$ and \cdot from $F \times F$ to F is called a **field** provided the following hold.

- (1) $(F, +, \cdot)$ is a commutative ring with a unit.
- (2) $(F - \{0\}, \cdot)$ is an abelian group.

Examples. $(\mathbb{R}, +, \cdot)$, $(\mathbb{C}, +, \cdot)$, $(\mathbb{Q}, +, \cdot)$, but not $(\mathbb{Z}, +, \cdot)$. $(\mathbb{Z}/n, +, \cdot)$ iff n is prime.

Let (V, \oplus) be an abelian group and let $(F, +, \cdot)$ be a field. Then V is a **vector space** over F if there is a binary operation \odot : $F \times V \rightarrow V$, called **scalar multiplication** where the following hold.

- (1) $1 \odot v = v$ for all $v \in V$.
- (2) $(r \cdot s) \odot v = r \odot (s \odot v)$ for all r and s in F and v in V .
- (3) $r \odot (v \oplus w) = (r \odot v) \oplus (r \odot w)$ for all $r \in F$, v and w in V .
- (4) $(r + s) \odot v = (r \odot v) \oplus (s \odot v)$

The elements of V are called **vectors**. The elements of F are called **scalars**.