

CR13: Computational Topology

Exercises #5

1. Let G be the group $\langle a, b \mid a^4, b^2a^{-2}, abab^{-1} \rangle$. Show that $aba^3b = 1$, that a and b are distinct and non-trivial and that a and a^{-1} are conjugate.
2. Show that the groups $G = \langle x, y \mid x^3, y^2, (xy)^2 \rangle$ and $G' = \langle y, z \mid (zy)^3, y^2, z^2 \rangle$ are isomorphic. Can you recognize that group?
3. Let G be the group $\langle x, y \mid x^5, y^3, yxy^{-1}x^{-3} \rangle$. How many elements does G have?
Hint: It's not 15.
4. Let T be a torus, and recall that its fundamental group is $\pi_1(T) = \mathbb{Z}^2$. A closed curve on the torus is **simple** if it has no self-intersections. Show that an element $(p, q) \in \pi_1(T)$ can be represented by a simple closed curve if and only if p and q are relatively prime. *Hint: Look at the curves in the universal cover of the torus.*