# RECURSIVE DERIVATION OF 2N GON TOPOLOGIES

#### CATHERINE WOLFRAM

ABSTRACT. A compact surface can be presented as a polygon whose edges are identified in pairs with orientation. Some presentations like this are commonly used, such as drawing a torus as a square with opposite edges identified. But there are many other ways to identify the 2n edges of a polygon with orientation. For a given n, the set of possible identifications define a set  $P_n$  of polygons with identified edges. Each element of  $P_n$  is a presentation of a compact surface, determined by two invariants: orientability and Euler Characteristic. We will prove various results about these invariants in the sets  $P_n$ , mostly using an indexed collection of maps from  $P_n \to P_{n+1}$ . Ultimately, we will find a computational formula for the number of elements of  $P_n$  that present a given compact surface S.

## Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Preliminary Definitions	4
3. Topology	5
4. Orientability in $P_n$	7
5. Augment Maps $P_n \to P_{n+1}$	7
6. The Euler Characteristic in $P_n$	10
6.1. Calculating the Euler Characteristic of an Identified Polygon	10
6.2. Graphs	11
6.3. Augments of Graphs	12
6.4. Partitions	14
6.5. Restriction to Orientables	17
7. Results	17
8. Other Questions	20
Acknowledgments	21
References	21

## 1. Introduction

It is often useful to represent a more complicated topological object as something simpler with additional identifications. One example of this is presenting a compact surface as a polygon with "glued" edges. Here are a few examples of commonly used "glued polygons":

# **Example 1.1.** The single torus $T^2$ :

**Example 1.2.** The Klein Bottle K (equivalent to the double projective plane  $2P^2$ ):



**Example 1.3.** The double torus  $2T^2$ :

The notation above isn't standard, but it will be useful later (it comes from Hilbert, [3] pg. 309).

These examples are constructed based on a set of rules about how to glue edges together: every edge must be glued to exactly one other edge (and not to itself) with one of two possible orientations (straight or twisted). To make this precise, we must label the 2n edges of the polygon  $X_n$  with  $e_1, e_2, ..., e_{2n}$  marked clockwise from a basepoint a fixed at the upper left vertex of  $X_n$ . A gluing  $A_n$  is determined by the pairs of labelled edges it identifies, and the orientations of these identifications. We will call  $A_n$  an **identified polygon**, and define the set  $P_n$  to be the set of identified polygons  $A_n$  with 2n edges.

The purpose of this paper is to study the topology of identified polygons  $A_n$ , which are elements of the sets  $P_n$ . Given the rules mentioned above for gluing edges (which are the rules we will consider in this paper), every  $A_n$  is homeomorphic to a compact surface without boundary ([4], pg. 6). Every compact surface without boundary can be triangulated, and even more, can be presented as an identified polygon, and thus is presented by an element of  $P_n$  for some n ([4], pg. 6). A compact surface without boundary is determined by only two invariants: orientability and Euler Characteristic ([4], pg. 18). We can study these invariants in  $P_n$  (which are much easier to deal with computationally) to study the topology of identified polygons  $A_n$ .

In some sense this study might seem like a cataloging exercise, and it may not be clear why it is interesting. And it is not particularly interesting that there are 10 ways to present a torus as an identified hexagon. But there are 42 ways to present a klein bottle as an identified hexagon, and it is interesting that there are comparatively many more ways to present a klein bottle as an identified hexagon than a torus. Studying identified polygons  $A_n$  provides a different and interesting perspective on the surfaces they present.

Before outlining what we will study in more detail, know that the work described here is original to this paper, and aside from some relevant background in topology, does not (so far as I know) appear elsewhere.

In the next section, we will provide more rigorous definitions of identified polygons and the sets of them. In the third section, we will briefly mention a few relevant results in topology (without proof) that will be useful to us. In the fourth section, we will prove the following theorem about orientability in the sets  $P_n$ :

**Theorem 1.4.** (Later **Theorem 4.4.**) Let  $O_n \subset P_n$  be the set of orientable identified polygons. As  $n \to \infty$ ,

$$\frac{|O_n|}{|P_n|} \to 0.$$

In the fifth section, we will define an indexed collection of maps  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}: P_n \to P_{n+1}$  which we will call **augment maps**. We will prove three theorems about properties of these maps which make them useful. This is arguably the most important section, as these maps will be the primary tool used to prove the rest of the results in this paper.

In the sixth section, we will study the behavior of the Euler Characteristic in  $P_n$  using augment maps, and develop a recursive formula that computes the number of elements of  $P_n$  with Euler Characteristic x. We will start by briefly explaining how to compute the Euler Characteristic of an identified polygon. Next, we will define graphs that correspond to each element of  $P_n$ . Together with augment maps, this allows us to show that

**Theorem 1.5.** (Later **Theorem 6.14**.) Let  $A_n$  be an element of  $P_n$ . If  $\chi(A_n) = x$ , then  $\chi(f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n))$  is x, x-1, or x-2.

After that, we will define partitions which correspond to each element of  $P_n$ . Ultimately, we will recursively compute partitions using augment maps, constructing a tree of partitions. This tree of partitions has the following relationship with the distribution of Euler Characteristics in  $P_n$ , which is how we recursively compute the number of  $A_n \in P_n$  with Euler Characteristic x:

**Theorem 1.6.** (Later **Theorem 6.26.**) Let C(n,x) be the number of  $A_n \in P_n$  with Euler Characteristic x. Let Q(n,k) be the number of partitions of length k at level n of the partition tree. Then

$$C(n,x) = \frac{Q(n,k)}{(n-1)!},$$

where x = 1 - n + k.

After that, we note a property of the subset  $O_n \subset P_n$  which allows us to show that

**Corollary 1.7.** (Later Corollary 6.29.) For any n, given the tree of partitions and a compact surface without boundary S, we can compute the number of  $A_n \in P_n$  that present S.

In section seven, we apply these theorems and compute results with a computer. The code used to produce these results is included at the end of the paper. Finally, in section eight, we pose a few further questions.

## 2. Preliminary Definitions

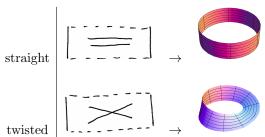
**Definition 2.1.** The space A is a **quotient space** of X if there exists an equivalence relation  $\simeq$  on X such that the elements of A are the equivalence classes of  $\simeq$  on X. This means that there is a surjective map  $p: X \to A$  such that if  $x \simeq y$ , then p(x) = p(y). The map p is strong continuous, meaning that  $U \in A$  is open if and only if  $p^{-1}(U) \in X$  is open. If  $x \simeq y$ , we will say that x is **identified** to y. ([2], pgs. 137, 139).

**Definition 2.2.** Let  $X_n$  be a polygonal region in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  with 2n edges,  $n \geq 1$  (when n=1, we allow the edges to be curved so that they do not lie on top of each other). Label the edges of  $X_n$  clockwise with  $e_1, e_2, \ldots e_{2n}$ , fixing the left endpoint of  $e_1$  at the upper left vertex of  $X_n$ . Denote this by putting a basepoint a at the upper left vertex of  $X_n$ . Define an **identified polygon**  $A_n$  to be a quotient space of  $X_n$  defined by a quotient map  $p: X_n \to A_n$ , where p follows two rules, mentioned in the introduction and explained further here:

- (1) p identifies every edge  $e_i$  on  $X_n$  with exactly one other edge  $e_j$  on  $X_n$ ,  $i \neq j$ .
- (2) Every edge has an **initial point** and a **final point** induced by the clockwise labelling of  $X_n$ . When edges are identified, they can be identified with the **same orientation** (i.e. initial point to initial point and final point to final point), or with **opposite orientation** (i.e. initial point of one to final point of the other). If two edges with the same orientation are identified, this identification is **twisted**. If two edges with opposite orientation are identified, this identification is **straight**.

Ultimately, the map  $p: X_n \to A_n$  which defines  $A_n$  is determined by which n pairs of labelled edges it identifies, and the orientations of those identifications. ([2], pg. 447-448.)

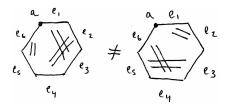
Remark 2.3. Calling an identification **straight** if it connects edges with opposite orientation and **twisted** if it connects edges with the same orientation might seem counterintuitive, but we use it because it lines up with what is happening geometrically:



Gluing edges with opposite orientation makes a regular band, whereas gluing edges with the same orientation makes a band with a half-twist called a **Möbius Strip**.

**Definition 2.4.** For each  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ ,  $n \geq 1$ , let  $P_n$  be the set of distinct identified polygons  $A_n$  with 2n edges, where identified polygons  $A_n$  and  $B_n$  are distinct if they are images of different quotient maps p and q.

Remark 2.5. Note that these two identified polygons are different elements of  $P_3$ :



The hexagon on the left is the image of  $p_l$  which identifies  $e_1$  to  $e_3$ ,  $e_2$  to  $e_4$ , and  $e_5$  to  $e_6$  (all straight), while the hexagon on the right is the image of  $p_r$  which identifies  $e_1$  to  $e_2$ ,  $e_3$  to  $e_5$ , and  $e_4$  to  $e_6$ , (all straight). This might seem strange, since they look the same and are homeomorphic to the same compact surface (which, as it so happens, is  $T^2$ ). But as evidenced by  $p_l$  and  $p_r$  being different maps, they represent different presentations of  $T^2$ . Our goal is to study the set of presentations, and so we consider these different.

**Proposition 2.6.** For a given n, the size of  $P_n$  is

$$(2.7) |P_n| = \frac{(2n)!}{n!}$$

*Proof.* Fix n. Then  $X_n$  has 2n labeled edges  $(e_1, ..., e_{2n})$  which must be identified in pairs. It does not matter what order we choose pairs in, so there are

$$\frac{1}{n!} \binom{2n}{2} \binom{2n-2}{2} \binom{2n-4}{2} \dots \binom{2}{2} = \frac{(2n)!}{2^n(n)!}$$

ways to identify edges in pairs. Next, each identification has two possible orientations (twisted or straight). There are n pairs of edges and so n identifications, and thus this equation should be multiplied by  $2^n$ . Altogether, this gives

$$|P_n| = \frac{2^n(2n)!}{2^n(n)!} = \frac{(2n)!}{n!},$$

as above.  $\Box$ 

Using this formula, the number of elements in  $P_n$  for the first few values of n are:

	n	1 2		3	4	5	6	
ſ	$ P_n $	2	12	120	1,680	30,240	665,280	

#### 3. Topology

We want to study the topology of elements  $A_n \in P_n$ . As such, we need to know a little bit of topology. We will provide references instead of proofs here. Regardless, to understand what we are going to do, there are a few results and definitions from topology that we must note.

**Theorem 3.1.** Every identified polygon is homeomorphic to a compact surface without boundary. ([4], pg. 6 and [2] Thm 74.1, pg. 450.)

This theorem actually goes both ways, and the following is also true:

**Theorem 3.2.** Every compact surface without boundary can be presented as an identified polygon  $A_n \in P_n$  for some n. ([4], pg. 6.)

This relies on the following proposition, which is also worth noting:

**Proposition 3.3.** Every compact surface without boundary can be triangulated. ([4], Appendix E.)

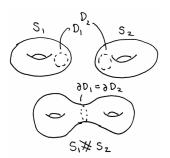
Further, there are only a few types of compact surfaces without boundary:

**Theorem 3.4.** (The Classification Theorem). Let S be a compact surface without boundary. Then S is homeomorphic to one of the following:

- (1) the sphere  $S^2$ ,
- (2) the connected sum of g tori, denoted  $gT^2$ ,
- (3) or the connected sum of p projective planes, denoted  $pP^2$ .
- ([4], Ch 1 or Theorem 6.3, pg. 96, and [2], ch. 12, sec. 77)

Here the **connected sum** of two surfaces  $S_1$  and  $S_2$ , denoted  $S_1 \# S_2$ , is the quotient of  $(S_1 \setminus D_1) \cup (S_2 \setminus D_2)$  where  $D_1$  and  $D_2$  are disks on  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  respectively, and the quotient map identifies the boundaries of  $D_1$  and  $D_2$ . ([4], pg. 95). In simpler terms, the connected sum of two surfaces is the result of cutting a piece off of each and gluing them together on their newly created boundaries.

**Example 3.5.** The connected sum of two tori  $T^2 \# T^2$  is the double torus,  $2T^2$ :



Since every identified polygon is a compact surface without boundary, the Classification Theorem classifies every element of  $P_n$ . Further, if we range over every value of n, we find every compact surface without boundary, since all of them can be presented as an identified polygon. This is part of what makes the sets  $P_n$  interesting. Finally, the Classification Theorem leads to the following corollary:

Corollary 3.6. Every compact surface without boundary is fully determined by two topological invariants: orientability and Euler Characteristic. ([4], Thm 1.2, pg. 18.)

This corollary gives us a computational way to classify every identified polygon, as we can easily compute the orientability and the Euler Characteristic of a given  $A_n$ . But more interestingly, we can ask questions about the property of orientability or the Euler Characteristic in  $P_n$  in general, which tells us about the topology of the elements of  $P_n$  without having to enumerate or compute for every element individually.

Remark 3.7. Before continuing, remember that when we refer to  $A_n$ , we refer to it as an identified polygon, defined by a quotient map p and with oriented edge identifications, not just the surface S that is homeomorphic to  $A_n$ .

## 4. Orientability in $P_n$

We can now prove a quick result about the behavior of orientability in the sets  $P_n$ .

**Definition 4.1.** A surface S is **nonorientable** if there exists a closed curve  $C \in S$  for which it is not possible to choose a consistent orientation. A surface S is **orientable** if no such curve exists.

**Lemma 4.2.** Let  $A_n$  be an identified polygon. Then  $A_n$  is orientable if and only if no pair of edges is identified with a twist.

*Proof.* If a pair of edges is identified with a twist, then there are half-twist curves (like the Mobiüs Strip) on the surface S determined by  $A_n$ . Thus there exists a curve on the S which has no consistent orientation, and S is nonorientable. If every pair of edges on  $X_n$  is identified straight, then every curve on S has a consistent orientation, and S is orientable.  $A_n$  is homeomorphic to S, and therefore orientable if and only if no pair of edges is identified with a twist.

Remark 4.3.  $gT^2$  and  $S^2$  are orientable for all g, and  $pP^2$  is nonorientable for all p.

This lemma allows us to prove one of the theorems mentioned in the introduction.

**Theorem 4.4.** Let  $O_n \subset P_n$  be the set of orientable identified polygons. As  $n \to \infty$ ,

$$\frac{|O_n|}{|P_n|} \to 0.$$

*Proof.* By Lemma 4.2,  $A_n$  is orientable if and only if all of its edges are identified straight. Thus the number of elements of  $P_n$  which are orientable is

$$|O_n| = \frac{1}{2^n} |P_n|,$$

meaning that

$$\frac{|O_n|}{|P_n|} = \frac{1}{2^n}.$$

As  $n \to \infty$ ,

$$\frac{1}{2^n} \to 0.$$

Therefore as  $n \to \infty$ , almost no element of  $P_n$  is orientable.

The following corollary also follows immediately:

Corollary 4.5. As  $n \to \infty$ , almost every element of  $P_n$  is nonorientable.

5. Augment Maps 
$$P_n \to P_{n+1}$$

Here will we develop and study **augment maps**, which will be the primary tool in the rest of our investigations. While this section is not directly about the topology of elements of  $P_n$ , it is likely the most important. Without it, none of the results in later sections of this paper would be possible.

Fix n, and label the vertices of the unidentified polygon  $X_n$  with  $a_1, a_2, a_3, ... a_{2n}$ , where  $a_1$  is the basepoint a (i.e. the upper left vertex). Choose two of these vertices  $a_i$  and  $a_j$ ,  $i \leq j$  (they can be the same vertex) and an orientation, either straight

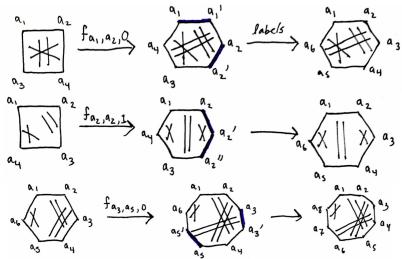
or twisted. Denote this choice  $(a_i, a_j, z)$ , where z is 0 if the chosen orientation is straight and 1 if it is twisted. The choice of orientation z is independent of the choice of vertices  $(a_i, a_j)$ .

**Definition 5.1.** Let  $\{\alpha_n\}$  be set of pairs of vertices  $(a_i, a_j)$  on  $X_n$ .

**Definition 5.2.** Define the **augment map**  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}: P_n \to P_{n+1}$ , where  $(a_i,a_j) \in \{\alpha_n\}$  and z is 0 or 1, by the following process:

Split the vertices  $a_i$  and  $a_j$ , adding a new edge clockwise after each of them. This creates two new unidentified edges. Identify the new edges with the orientation determined by z. Note that this induces a shift in the labels of vertices (and edges) after  $a_i$  and  $a_j$ .

**Examples 5.3.** Here are three examples of augment maps, two from  $P_2 \to P_3$  and one from  $P_3 \to P_4$ , including relabellings:



The bold edges are the ones added by  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}$ . Note that they always appear clockwise after the split vertices.

## Proposition 5.4. There are

$$2n(2n+1)$$

augment maps  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}:P_n\to P_{n+1}$ .

*Proof.* The number of ways to choose pairs of vertices  $(a_i, a_j)$  is

$$2n + \binom{2n}{2} = n(2n+1),$$

since there are 2n ways to choose the same vertex twice, and  $\binom{2n}{2}$  ways to choose two different vertices. There are two possible values of z (0 or 1), and so there are

$$2n(2n+1)$$

augment maps from  $P_n$  to  $P_{n+1}$ .

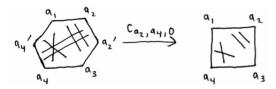
**Theorem 5.5.**  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}: P_n \to P_{n+1}$  is injective for every  $(a_i,a_j) \in \{\alpha_n\}, z, and n.$ 

Proof. Fix n, and pick arbitrary  $(a_i, a_j) \in \{\alpha_n\}, z \in \{0, 1\}$ . Suppose that  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}(A_n) = f_{a_i, a_j, z}(B_n)$  for some  $A_n, B_n \in P_n$ . Then  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}(A_n)$  and  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}(B_n)$  are images of the same quotient map p, and have exactly the same identifications. The map  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}$  adds one identification, identifying the edges which start with  $a_i$  and  $a_{j+1}$  (because of the label shift) with orientation determined by z on both  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}(A_n)$  and  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}(B_n)$ . Thus the identification added by  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}$  is the same on both, and the remaining identifications which make up  $A_n$  and  $B_n$  must be the same. Therefore  $A_n$  and  $B_n$  have the same identifications, and are images of the same quotient map. Hence  $A_n = B_n$ , and they are the same element of  $P_n$ . Thus  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}$  is injective.  $(a_i, a_j) \in \{\alpha_n\}, z \in \{0, 1\}$ , and n were all arbitrary, and so this is true for all  $(a_i, a_j), z$ , and n.

**Theorem 5.6.** Every  $A_{n+1} \in P_{n+1}$  has exactly n preimages in  $P_n$  (not necessarily distinct) under the indexed collection of augment maps  $\{f_{a_i,a_j,z}\}: P_n \to P_{n+1}$ , where the indexes range over all combinations of  $(a_i, a_j) \in \{\alpha_n\}$  and  $z \in \{0, 1\}$ .

*Proof.* Pick some  $A_{n+1} \in P_{n+1}$ . Then  $A_{n+1}$  is defined by n+1 identifications of pairs of edges with orientation. To prove this theorem, we will show that exactly n of the n+1 identifications that compose  $A_{n+1}$  could have been added by an augment map, and therefore that it has n preimages under the indexed collection of augment maps  $P_n \to P_{n+1}$ .

By Theorem 5.5, every augment map  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}$  has an inverse on its image in  $P_{n+1}$ . Call this inverse the **collapse** map  $c_{a_i,a_j,z}$  corresponding to  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}$ . As an example, fix  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}$ . Any element in the image of this map has an identification between the edge whose left endpoint is  $a_i$  and the edge whose left endpoint is  $a_{j+1}$  (augmenting induces a relabeling that shifts the labels of points after  $a_i$ , as  $a_i'$  becomes  $a_{i+1}$ ). The collapse map deletes this identification, leaving n identifications and 2n edges. Here is an illustration of a collapse map  $P_3 \to P_2$ . Vertices on  $A_{n+1} \in P_{n+1}$  are relabeled to avoid confusion.



Given that  $A_{n+1}$  has n+1 identifications, it remains to show that exactly n of them can be collapsed.

The basepoint  $a=a_1$  could never have been added by an augment map, since  $A_n$  must have a basepoint for every n to induce the labelling of its edges. Augment maps always add clockwise, and so always add the right endpoint of the edges they add.  $a_1$  is the right endpoint of the edge  $e_{2(n+1)}$  on  $A_{n+1}$ , and therefore this edge could never be added by an augment map (if it were, then the map would have added the basepoint, which is not possible). Hence whichever identification includes  $e_{2(n+1)}$  cannot be collapsed; and one identification on  $A_{n+1}$  cannot be collapsed.

Every other pair of identified edges has right endpoints which are not  $a_1$ . Choose an arbitrary identification on  $A_{n+1}$  that does not have right endpoint  $a_1$ . Call the

right endpoints of the identified edges  $a_i$  and  $a_{j+1}$  ( $a_{j+1}$  must be a vertex on  $X_{n+1}$  for  $1 \leq j \leq 2n$ , since we have excluded the last edge), and suppose the identification has orientation z. Then the collapse  $c_{a_i,a_j,z}: P_{n+1} \to P_n$  is defined. We chose an arbitrary identification from the remaining n, and hence there are n identifications on  $A_{n+1}$  which can be collapsed.

**Theorem 5.7.** The indexed collection of augment maps  $\{f_{a_i,a_j,z}\}: P_n \to P_{n+1}$  n-fold uniformly covers  $P_{n+1}$ .

*Proof.* Every augment map  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}$  is injective. Since every  $A_{n+1} \in P_{n+1}$  has exactly n preimages in  $P_n$  by the indexed collection of augment maps, the indexed collection of maps must cover every element of  $P_{n+1}$  exactly n times. Therefore the indexed collection of maps  $\{f_{a_i,a_j,z}\}: P_n \to P_{n+1}$  n-fold uniformly covers  $P_{n+1}$ .  $\square$ 

# 6. The Euler Characteristic in $P_n$

Studying the Euler Characteristic in  $P_n$  will be an application of the augment maps defined in the previous section. First, some definitions:

**Definition 6.1.** The Euler Characteristic of a surface S is

$$\chi(S) = F - E + V$$

where F is the number of faces in a triangulation of S, E is the number of edges, and V is the number of vertices.

*Remark* 6.2. The Euler Characteristic has to be calculated based on a triangulation, but it does not depend on the triangulation.

**Proposition 6.3.** The **genus** of  $A_n$  is g if  $A_n$  is homeomorphic to  $gT^2$ , p if  $A_n$  is homeomorphic to  $pP^2$ , and 0 if  $A_n$  is homeomorphic to  $S^2$ . The Euler Characteristic of  $A_n$  has the following relationship with its genus:

$$\chi(A_n) = 2 - 2g$$

if  $A_n$  is orientable and has genus g, and

$$\chi(A_n) = 2 - p$$

if  $A_n$  is nonorientable and has genus p.

Remark 6.4. Note that since the minimum genus of  $A_n$  is 0, the maximum Euler Characteristic is 2.

In this section, we will develop a computable recursive formula for the number of elements of  $P_{n+1}$  with a given Euler Characteristic x.

6.1. Calculating the Euler Characteristic of an Identified Polygon. Calculating the Euler Characteristic of  $A_n$  requires choosing a triangulation of  $A_n$  (being careful to choose one that is still a triangulation of the surface  $A_n$  presents). Some calculation from a triangulation shows that

$$\chi(A_n) = 1 - n + k,$$

where k is the number of vertices of  $A_n$ . The k vertices of  $A_n$  are equivalence classes of the vertices of  $X_n$  induced by the map  $p: X_n \to A_n$ . Each of these k equivalence classes is a loop: every vertex  $a_i$  of  $X_n$  is part of two edges, each of which is identified to another edge. As such,  $a_i$  is identified to two vertices (possibly the same vertex twice), one by each of its edges. There are only finitely many edges,

and so this process must terminate, leaving k loops which contain all 2n vertices of  $X_n$ .

Remark 6.6. The number of vertices k of  $A_n$  is always between the bounds

$$1 \le k \le n + 1$$

Every vertex could be in the same equivalence class, giving us the lower bound. Then the upper bound comes from the fact that the Euler Characteristic of a surface is never greater than 2.

Given how to calculate the Euler Characteristic, we can prove that which surfaces are presented by elements of  $P_n$  depends on n:

**Proposition 6.7.** The maximum genus of a surface presented by an element of  $P_n$  is  $\frac{n}{2}$  if the surface is orientable, and n if the surface is nonorientable.

*Proof.* Let n be given, and choose  $A_n \in P_n$ .  $\chi(A_n) = 1 - n + k$ , where k is the number of vertices of  $A_n$ . Recall that

$$\chi(A_n) = 2 - 2g$$

if  $A_n$  is orientable and has genus g, and

$$\chi(A_n) = 2 - p$$

if  $A_n$  is nonorientable and has nonorientable genus p. Hence the smallest possible value of k gives the largest possible genus. The smallest possible value of k is k = 1. Thus for an orientable surface, the largest possible genus is

$$2 - 2g = 1 - n + 1$$
$$g = n/2$$

And for a nonorientable surface,

$$2 - p = 1 - n + 1$$
$$p = n$$

## 6.2. Graphs.

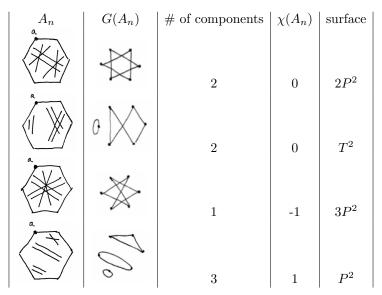
**Definition 6.8.** Given an identified polygon  $A_n = p(X_n)$ , let  $G(A_n)$  be a graph on the 2n vertices of  $X_n$  where two points in  $G(A_n)$  are connected by a single line if and only if they were connected by a single identification in  $A_n$ .

Remark 6.9. Let  $p: X_n \to A_n$  be the quotient map which defines  $A_n$ .  $G(A_n)$  is a graph on 2n points with 2n identifications, where each of these points is a vertex of  $X_n$ . Every point in  $G(A_n)$  is connected to another point if and only if it is identified to that point by p, and so each component of  $G(A_n)$  is a vertex of  $A_n$ . Note that this means that every component of  $G(A_n)$  is a loop, and more importantly that

# of vertices of 
$$A_n = k = \#$$
 of components of  $G(A_n)$ .

So instead of trying to count the vertices of  $A_n$  as equivalence classes of vertices on  $X_n$ , we can count components of  $G(A_n)$ .

**Example 6.10.** Here are a few examples of identified hexagons and their graphs:

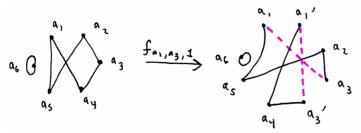


6.3. **Augments of Graphs.** Graphs give us a visual way to determine the Euler Characteristic of an identified polygon. The question we will answer in this section is:

**Question 6.11.** What is the relationship between  $G(A_n)$  and  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n))$ ? If  $G(A_n)$  has k components, how many components can  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n))$  have?

When we augment the identified polygon that lies under the graph, we add two points by splitting two existing points  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  into  $a_i$  and  $a_j'$  and  $a_j'$ . Then we identify one of the  $a_i$ 's to one of the  $a_j$ 's, where which one is identified to which depends on the orientation determined by z. On the graph, this looks like we picked two points  $a_i$  and  $a_j$ , and cut a hole in a component of the graph at each of them. Then we connect the holes in one of two possible ways as determined by z.

**Example 6.12.** Consider this example of an augment map  $P_3 \to P_4$  in the graph presentation:



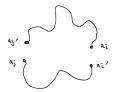
The pink dotted lines are the ones added by the augment map. In this case, the augment map took a graph with 2 components to one with 3 components.

In the graph presentation, there are two possible relationships that the points  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  can have: either they are in the same component of  $G(A_n)$  or they are in different components. This amount of information about  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  is enough to know what happens when they are augmented:

**Theorem 6.13.** Let  $A_n \in P_n$  and  $G(A_n)$  be its graph. Suppose  $G(A_n)$  has k components. If  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in the same component, then one of  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,0}(A_n))$  and  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,1}(A_n))$  has k components, and the other has k+1. If  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in different components, then  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,0}(A_n))$  and  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,1}(A_n))$  both have k-1 components.

*Proof.* Suppose  $G(A_n)$  has k components. There are two cases; consider them one at a time.

(1) Suppose  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in the same component. Then the new edges create two holes in the same loop, making something that looks like this:

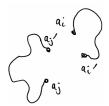


One endpoint of the  $a_i$  hole must be identified to one endpoint of the  $a_j$  hole, since edges cannot be identified to themselves. Both pieces of the divided component have one endpoint that is an  $a_i$  point and the one that is an  $a_j$  point. Thus one type of identification splits the original component in two, and the other joins it back together again:

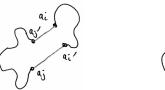


In the example illustrated above, a twist rejoins and a straight identification breaks apart. But this is not always true (if the two disjoint pieces crossed once, for example, it would be the other way around). Regardless, in every situation, one identification joins endpoints of the same piece, and the other joins endpoints of opposite pieces. As a result, one of  $f_{a_i,a_j,0}$  and  $f_{a_i,a_j,1}$  takes  $G(A_n)$  to a graph with k components and one takes it to a graph with k+1 components.

(2) Suppose  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in different components. Then we add one new edge to each component, effectively cutting a hole in each and create something like this:



The endpoints of these pieces are both from the same edge, and so cannot be identified together. Thus no matter which orientation we identify the edges with, we combine the two components:





Hence both  $f_{a_i,a_j,0}$  and  $f_{a_i,a_j,1}$  take  $G(A_n)$  to graphs with k-1 components.

This theorem shows that the number of components in the graph of  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n) = A_{n+1} \in P_{n+1}$  depends on the number of components in the graph of  $A_n$ . Since  $\chi(A_n)$  is determined by the number of components in  $G(A_n)$ , this gives us the following result about  $\chi(f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n))$ :

**Theorem 6.14.** Let  $A_n$  be an element of  $P_n$ . If  $\chi(A_n) = x$ , then  $\chi(f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n))$  is x, x-1, or x-2.

*Proof.* We know that

$$x = \chi(A_n) = 1 - n + k.$$

Augments of  $A_n$  have n+1 edges instead of n. Further, by the previous theorem, we have that since  $G(A_n)$  has k components,  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n))$  has k-1, k, or k+1 components. Thus

$$\chi(f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n)) = 1 - (n+1) + v$$

where v = k - 1, k, or k + 1. Therefore

$$\chi(f_{a_i,a_i,z}(A_n)) = x$$

if v = k + 1, and

$$\chi(f_{a_i,a_i,z}(A_n)) = x - 1$$

if v = k, and

$$\chi(f_{a_i,a_i,z}(A_n)) = x - 2$$

if 
$$v = k - 1$$
.

6.4. **Partitions.** Augment maps and graphs together show that the Euler Characteristics of elements of  $P_{n+1}$  depend on the Euler Characteristics of elements of  $P_n$ . But they also depend on how many augment maps are based on vertices in the same component and how many are based on vertices in the different components, which clearly depends on individual graphs and how they are composed. This is still information that we have and can generate recursively, and in this section we will explain how.

**Example 6.15.** Consider the following two graphs, which correspond to elements of  $P_2$ :



Both of these graphs have k=2 components, which means that they both have Euler Characteristic x=1. But there are 6 ways to choose two points in the same component from the graph on the left, and 7 ways to choose two points in the same component from the graph on the right. As a result, augments of these graphs in  $P_3$  will not have the same distribution of Euler Characteristics.

**Definition 6.16.** Fix  $A_n \in P_n$ . The graph  $G(A_n)$  has k components, which together contain 2n points. We can write the graph as a **partition**  $(p_1, p_2, ..., p_k)$  of 2n of length k, where each  $p_i$  in the partition is the number of points in a component of  $G(A_n)$ . We will call each  $p_i$  a **piece** of the partition.

**Examples 6.17.** The graphs in Example 6.10 have the following partitions: (3,3), (1,5), (6), and (1,2,3), respectively. The two graphs in Example 6.15 have partitions (2,2) and (1,3).

**Proposition 6.18.** Given a partition  $(p_1, p_2, ..., p_k)$  of 2n, the number of ways to choose two points in the same piece of this partition (and so the same component of the graph it represents) is

(6.19) 
$$S(A_n) = n + \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{p_i^2}{2}$$

Consequently, the number of ways to choose two points in different pieces of this partition is

(6.20) 
$$D(A_n) = n(2n+1) - \left(n + \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{p_i^2}{2}\right) = 2n^2 - \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{p_i^2}{2}.$$

It is already clear that knowing the partitions for  $P_n$  is sufficient to know the distribution of Euler Characteristics in  $P_n$ , as the number of partitions of length k corresponds to the number of elements of  $P_n$  with Euler Characteristic x = 1 - n + k. But we want to show that we can recursively compute partitions. As such, our goal with be to prove that

Claim 6.21. The partition of  $A_n$  together with the augment map  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}$  determines the partition of  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}(A_n)$ , and therefore augment maps recursively generate partitions.

Given that, we will lay out the process for computing the partitions for  $P_{n+1}$  from the partitions for  $P_n$ , and apply this to count elements of  $P_{n+1}$  with a specified Euler Characteristic.

There are three possible situations an augmented partition can be in, corresponding to a partition (or graph) of length k being mapped to one of length k-1, k, or k+1. Two correspond to  $(a_i,a_j)$  being in the same piece of the partition, and one to them being in different pieces.

- (1) Suppose  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in the same partition piece  $p_i$ . Then
  - (a) The partition of  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}(p_1,...,p_i,...,p_k)$  is  $(p_1,...,p_i+2,...,p_k)$ , a partition of 2n+2 of length k,
  - (b) The partition of  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}(p_1,...,p_i,...,p_k)$  is  $(p_1,...,q_1,q_2,p_{i+1},...,p_k)$ , a partition of 2n+2 of length k+1, where  $q_1+q_2=p_i+2$ .

Both of these outcomes occur, one for z = 0 and one for z = 1.

(2) Suppose  $(a_i, a_j)$  are in different partition pieces  $p_i$  and  $p_j$ . Then the partition of  $f_{a_i, a_j, z}(p_1, ..., p_k)$  is  $(p_1, ..., p_i + p_j + 2, ..., p_k)$ , a partition of 2n + 2 of length k - 1, for both z = 0 and z = 1.

These calculations are a consequence of Theorem 6.13 (about graphs) which we proved in the previous section. Given this, to make partitions for  $P_{n+1}$  computable from partitions for  $P_n$ , we have to determine the frequency with which these three situations occur. Consider them one at a time.

**Proposition 6.22.** The partition of  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}(p_1,...,p_i,...,p_k)$  is  $(p_1,...,p_i+2,...,p_k)$  with frequency

$$p_i + \binom{p_i}{2} = \frac{p_i(p_i+1)}{2}$$

for each  $p_i$ .

**Proposition 6.23.** For every pair of positive integers  $q_1$ ,  $q_2$  with  $q_1 + q_2 = p_i + 2$ , the partition of  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}(p_1,...,p_i,...,p_k)$  is  $(p_1,...,q_1,q_2,p_{i+1},...,p_k)$  with frequency

 $if \ q_1 
eq q_2, \ and$   $if \ q_1 = q_2.$ 

**Proposition 6.24.** The partition of  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}(p_1,...,p_k)$  is  $(p_1,...,p_i+p_j+2,...,p_k)$  with frequency

$$2p_ip_j$$

for every pair  $p_i$ ,  $p_j$ .

**Example 6.25.** Consider the graphs in Example 6.15 and their respective partitions, (2,2) and (1,3). Each has 20 augments.

Augments of (2,2): (2,4) 6 times, (1,2,3) 4 times, (2,2,2) 2 times, (6) 8 times. Augments of (1,3): (3,3) 1 time, (1,5) 6 times, (1,1,4) 3 times, (1,2,3) 4 times, (6) 6 times.

Given these formulas which construct the partitions for  $P_{n+1}$  from the partitions for  $P_n$ , we can construct a tree of partitions. The first layer of this tree is the partitions for  $P_1$ ,

$$(1,1)$$
 and  $(2)$ .

Each following layer is composed of all the augments of the partitions on the layer before it, preserving multiplicities. The second layer is then

$$(1,3), (1,2,1), (4), (4), (1,3), (1,2,1), (1,3), (4), (2,2), (4), (1,3), (4).$$

Note that since we preserve multiplicities, each (4) in the second layer of the tree is its own unique node, and the third layer of the tree will include every augment of all five (4)s. This tree has a relationship with the Euler Characteristic that makes the distribution of Euler Characteristics in  $P_{n+1}$  computable:

**Theorem 6.26.** Let C(n,x) be number of  $A_n \in P_n$  with Euler Characteristic x. Let Q(n,k) be the number of partitions of length k at level n of the partition tree. Then

$$C(n,x) = \frac{Q(n,k)}{(n-1)!},$$

where x = 1 - n + k.

*Proof.* Since x = 1 - n + k, a partition of length k at level n corresponds to an element of  $P_n$  with Euler Characteristic x. Since the next level of the partition tree is constructed by applying augment maps to the partitions at the previous level, by Theorem 5.7 we must divide by (n-1)!.

## 6.5. Restriction to Orientables.

**Lemma 6.27.** Suppose that  $A_n$  is orientable and  $G(A_n)$  has k components. If  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in the same component, then  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,0}(A_n))$  has k+1 components. If  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in different components, then  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,0}(A_n))$  has k-1 components.

*Proof.* Let  $G(A_n)$  be a graph with k components.

- (1) Suppose that  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in the same component.  $A_n$  is orientable, and so the two pieces of this component have endpoint  $a_i$  and  $a'_j$  and  $a_j$  and  $a'_i$ .  $f_{a_i,a_j,0}(A_n)$  adds a straight identification, and so identifies  $a_i$  to  $a'_j$  and  $a_j$  to  $a'_i$ . Hence  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,0}(A_n))$  has k+1 components.
- (2) Suppose that  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in different components. Then by Theorem 6.13,  $G(f_{a_i,a_j,0}(A_n))$  has k-1 components.

**Theorem 6.28.** The tree of partitions corresponding to elements of  $O_n \subset P_n$  is a subtree of the tree of partitions.

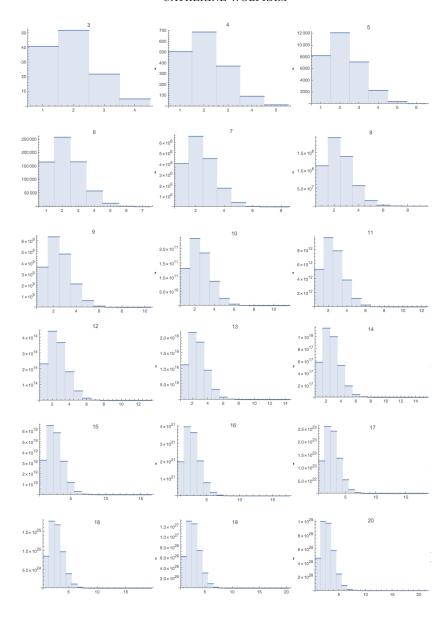
*Proof.* By Lemma 4.2,  $A_n \in P_n$  is orientable if and only if none of its identifications are twists. Therefore elements of  $O_n$  must follow a path down the tree of only straight augments  $f_{a_i,a_j,0}$ . By Lemma 6.27, these paths are always determined, taking a k-1 path if  $a_i$  and  $a_j$  are in different components and the k+1 path if they are in the same component.

**Corollary 6.29.** For any n, given the tree of partitions and a compact surface without boundary S, we can compute the number of  $A_n \in P_n$  that present S.

#### 7. Results

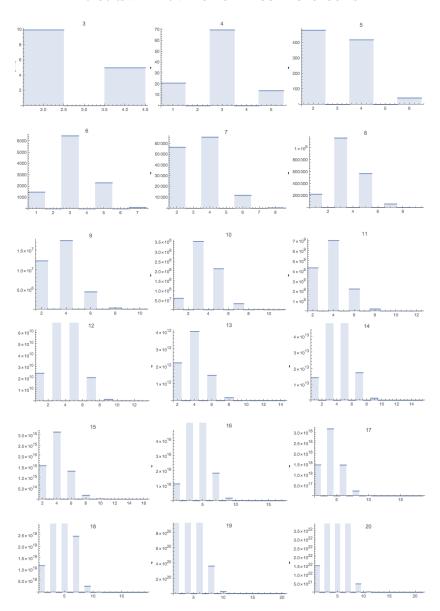
For n > 3, it isn't realistic to do these computations by hand. But they are well-suited to be done by a computer. Using the initial conditions defined by  $P_1$  (two elements, with partitions (1,1) and (2). (1,1) is orientable, and (2) is not), we can compute the number of  $A_n \in P_n$  with a given Euler Characteristic, and the number that present each compact surface S. Here are some interesting results found by a computer.

First, here are histograms of the number of elements of  $P_n$  with each possible number of graph components k for n=3 to n=20. Note that to k=1 corresponds to  $A_n$  which is homeomorphic to a surface with the maximum possible genus presentable in  $P_n$ , and k=n+1 corresponds to  $A_n$  which is homeomorphic to the sphere  $S^2$ .

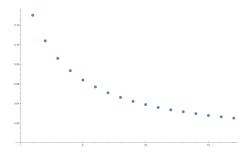


Interestingly, observe that the number of elements of  $P_n$  that present the maximal genus surface is lower than the number that present second maximal surfaces. Also observe that by n=20, k=2 and k=3 are almost equally frequent.

Here are similar histograms for the subset of orientables,  $O_n$  (note that the scale on these histograms is different from the ones for all of  $P_n$ ). Combining this data with the data for all of  $P_n$  is what would allow us to compute the number of elements of  $P_n$  which present S for a given compact surface S.



Finally, observe a plot of the difference between the expected number of components in  $P_n$  and  $P_{n+1}$  as a function of n.



This plot suggests that difference between the expected number of components for  $P_n$  and  $P_{n+1}$  might converge to 0, and so the expected number of components might converge as  $n \to \infty$ . If it does converge, that would imply that the average Euler Characteristic decreases by 1 from  $P_n$  to  $P_{n+1}$  for large n.

## 8. Other Questions

The results in the previous section ask more questions than they answer. A few of the questions they ask are asked here. There are also other interesting ways to look at the sets  $P_n$ , other ways to filter these sets with additional restrictions, or generalize them by taking some of those restrictions away. A few of these questions are also asked here.

- 1. Is there a distribution that fits the distribution of Euler Characteristics in  $P_n$ ? If it converges, what does the distribution of Euler Characteristics in  $P_n$  limit to as  $n \to \infty$ ?
- 2. Does the second maximal genus continue to be the most frequent as  $n \to \infty$ ? Does it become second and third maximal, or does the most frequent band continue to widen? Why?
- 3. Does the expected number of components k of  $A_n \in P_n$  converge as  $n \to \infty$ ? Does it have any otherwise predictable behavior?
- 4. What are the answers to questions 1, 2, and 3 for  $O_n \subset P_n$ ? How are the answers for  $O_n$  similar (or not) to the answers for  $P_n$ ?
- 5. A set with a preorder is a finite topological space. Is there an interesting preorder structure that we can put on the sets  $P_n$  to turn them into spaces? One possible preorder is to order the elements of  $P_n$  based on how many twists they have. Is this the most interesting structure we can put on the sets  $P_n$ ?
- 6. What happens if we allow the identification of different numbers of edges (such as identifying three edges together, or letting the number of edges identified together vary), or allow some edges to not be identified at all?
- 7. What happens if we invoke other restrictions on the orientation of identifications, such as requiring that every identified polygon have exactly one twist?
- 8. The augment maps  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}$  from  $P_n$  to  $P_{n+1}$  define limiting "paths" through the space of compact surfaces, based on a sequence of choices of  $(a_i,a_j)$  and z. Using a sequence of choices (which could be something simple like choosing  $(a_1,a_1,0)$  every time, or something more complicated), we can iterate the maps  $f_{a_i,a_j,z}$  determined by the chosen sequence. Each sequence defines a "limit" of  $A_n \in P_n$  as  $n \to \infty$ . What are the "limit" surfaces  $\{f_{a_i,a_j,z}\}^{\infty}(A_n)$ ? Does every infinite path defined by a sequence of augment maps have a unique resulting object, or are some of them the same? What are they?

9. As  $n \to \infty$ , each  $A_n$  approaches a circle with infinitely many identifications of different "points" (edges with side lengths  $< \epsilon$ ). If we direct the graph of vertices induced by the identified polygon, we can think of the components of  $G(A_n)$  as orbits on the circle. What sort of dynamical systems on the circle do the identifications of  $A_n$  define? Do most points have a dense orbit?

Acknowledgments. It is my pleasure to thank my mentors, Sean Howe and Yun Cheng, for listening to many ideas, reading multiple drafts, and keeping me on track. I would also like to thank my brother, Christopher Wolfram, for turning these ideas into code, allowing us to compute much more interesting results. Finally, I am happy to thank Peter May for organizing the REU program at the University of Chicago and making this possible.

## References

- [1] Hatcher, Allen. Algebraic Topology. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002.
- [2] Munkres, James R. Topology. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000.
- [3] Hilbert, David, and S. Cohn-Vossen. Geometry and the Imagination. Providence, RI: AMS Chelsea, 1999.
- [4] Gallier, Jean H., and Dianna Xu. A Guide to the Classification Theorem for Compact Surfaces. Heidelberg: Springer, 2013.
- [5] Gallian, Joseph A. Contemporary Abstract Algebra. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1986.

```
In[312]:= partitions[partition: {__Integer}] := Merge[Join[
         Flatten[MapIndexed[{p, i} →
             Join[
              {Sort@ReplacePart[partition, i \rightarrow p + 2] \rightarrow (1/2*p*(p+1))},
              Sort@Flatten[ReplacePart[partition, i → #], 1] →
                  If[#[[1]] = #[[2]], p/2, p] & /@ IntegerPartitions[p+2, {2}]
            1
            , partition], 1],
         (*Pairs*)
         Map[
          j \mapsto
           Sort@Append[Delete[partition, j[[All, 2]]], j[[1, 1]] + j[[2, 1]] + 2] →
            j[[1, 1]] * j[[2, 1]] * 2,
          DeleteDuplicates[Sort /@ DeleteCases[
              Tuples[MapIndexed[List, partition], 2], {n_, n_}]]]
        ],
        Total]
     Table[Block[{counts = Total /@
           GroupBy[Normal@Nest[p \mapsto Merge[KeyValueMap[partitions[#1] * #2 &, p], Total],
               partitions[\{\{1, 1\}, \{2\}\}\}], n], Length@*First \rightarrow Last]\},
        Table[Lookup[counts, v, 0] / (n + 1)!, {v, Min@Keys[counts], Max@Keys[counts]}]],
       {n, 1, 18}]
     Table[Block[{counts = Total /@
           GroupBy[Normal@Nest[p → Merge[KeyValueMap[partitions[#1] * #2 &, p], Total],
               partitions[{{1, 1}, {2}}], n], Length@*First → Last]}, DiscretePlot[
         Lookup[counts, v, 0] / (n + 1) !, {v, Min@Keys[counts], Max@Keys[counts]},
         ExtentSize \rightarrow Full, PlotLabel \rightarrow n + 2, ImageSize \rightarrow 300]], {n, 1, 18}]
In[314]:= orientablepartitions[orientablepartition: {__Integer}] := Merge[Join[
         Flatten[
          MapIndexed[\{p, i\} \mapsto Sort@Flatten[ReplacePart[orientablepartition, i \to \#], 1] \to
                If[\#[[1]] = \#[[2]], p/2, p] \&/@
              IntegerPartitions[p+2, {2}], orientablepartition], 1],
         (*Pairs*)
         Map[
          j → Sort@Append[Delete[orientablepartition, j[[All, 2]]],
               j[[1, 1]] + j[[2, 1]] + 2] \rightarrow j[[1, 1]] * j[[2, 1]],
          DeleteDuplicates[Sort /@ DeleteCases[Tuples[
               MapIndexed[List, orientablepartition], 2], {n_, n_}]]]
        ],
        Total]
```

```
Table [Block [{counts = Total /@ GroupBy [Normal@
        Nest[p → Merge[KeyValueMap[orientablepartitions[#1] * #2 &, p], Total],
         orientablepartitions[{1, 1}], n], Length@*First → Last]},
  Table[Lookup[counts, v, 0] / (n + 1)!, {v, Min@Keys[counts], Max@Keys[counts]}]],
 {n, 1, 18}]
Table[Block[{counts = Total /@GroupBy[Normal@
        Nest[p → Merge[KeyValueMap[orientablepartitions[#1] * #2 &, p], Total],
         orientablepartitions[{1, 1}], n], Length@*First → Last]},
  DiscretePlot[Lookup[counts, v, 0] / (n + 1) !, {v, Min@Keys[counts],
    Max@Keys[counts]}, ExtentSize → Full,
   PlotLabel \rightarrow n + 2, ImageSize \rightarrow 300]], {n, 1, 18}]
Table[Block[{counts = Total /@
       GroupBy[Normal@Nest[p → Merge[KeyValueMap[partitions[#1] * #2 &, p], Total],
          partitions[{{1, 1}, {2}}], n], Length@*First → Last]},
   Mean[WeightedData@@Transpose@Table[{v, Lookup[counts, v, 0] / (n + 1) !},
        {v, Min@Keys[counts], Max@Keys[counts]}]]], {n, 1, 18}] // N
ListPlot[Table[Block[{counts = Total /@
        GroupBy[Normal@Nest[p \mapsto Merge[KeyValueMap[partitions[#1] * #2 &, p], Total],
            partitions[{{1, 1}, {2}}], n], Length@*First → Last]},
    Mean[WeightedData@@Transpose@Table[{v, Lookup[counts, v, 0] / (n + 1) !},
         {v, Min@Keys[counts], Max@Keys[counts]}]]], {n, 1, 18}] // N]
ListPlot[Differences[Table[Block[{counts =
        Total /@GroupBy[Normal@Nest[p → Merge[KeyValueMap[partitions[#1] * #2 &, p],
               Total], partitions[\{\{1, 1\}, \{2\}\}], n], Length@*First \rightarrow Last]\},
     Mean[WeightedData@@Transpose@Table[{v, Lookup[counts, v, 0] / (n + 1) !},
           {v, Min@Keys[counts], Max@Keys[counts]}]]], {n, 1, 18}] // N]]
```

# 1 Appendix: Table of Results for Number of Orientable Gluings of a 2n-gon

I learned in August 2018 that the number of orientable gluings of a 2n-gon was also computed (by a different method) in [1] in order to calculate euler characteristics of moduli spaces of curves. The original version of this paper only presented the numerical results we computed as histograms. Below is a table of the precise values computed with the method outlined in this paper, for comparsion with the table of precise values in [1] computed using Gaussian integrals.

genus g (column)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
, 2n-gon (row)											
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	5
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	70	14
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	483	420	42
6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1485	6468	2310	132
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	56628	66066	12012	429
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	225 225	1 169 740	570 570	60060	1430
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	12317 877	17454 580	4390 386	291720	4862
10	0	0	0	0	0	59520825	351 683 046	211083730	31039008	1385 670	16796
11	0	0	0	0	0	4304016990	7034 538 511	2198596400	205 633 428	6466460	58786
12	0	0	0	0	24 325 703 3 <sup>-</sup> . 25	158 959 754 ·. 226	111 159 740 ·. 692	20 465 052 6°. 08	1293 938 646	29745716	208012
13	0	0	0	0	2208 143 02°. 8 375	403473595°. 9800	1480 593 01°. 3 900	174437 377 ·. 400	7808 250 450	135 207 800	742900
14	0	0	0	14 230 536 4°. 45 125	100 940 771 ·. 124 360	79 553 497 7·. 60 100	17 302 190 6°. 25 720	1384 928 66°. 6550	45 510 945 4°. 80	608 435 100	2674440
15	0	0	0	1564 439 68°. 6929 000	3 130 208 76°. 9783 780	130277271°. 8028600	182 231 849 ·. 209 410	10 369 994 0°. 05 800	257 611 421 ·. 340	2714 556 600	9 694 845
16	0	0	11 288 163 7. 62 500 62. 5	85 775 385 8°. 35 387 80°. 0	74 520 697 7°. 07 149 58°. 0	18 475 997 0°. 06 212 20°. 0	1763 18457. 1730010	73 920 866 3 <sup>-</sup> . 62 200	1422 15620°. 2740	12 021 607 8 <sup>.</sup> .	35357 670
17	0	0	_	3 160 912 92 ·. 2719 805 ·. 880	-	233 454 817 ·. 237 201 5 ·. 60	15 894 791 3 <sup>-</sup> . 12 284 17 <sup>-</sup> . 0	505 297 829 ·. 133 240	7683 009 54 <sup>-</sup> . 4980	52 895 074 3 <sup>-</sup> . 20	129 644 790
18	0	11 665 426 0°. 77 721 04°. 0 625	94 035 726 1°. 63 975 53°. 8 250					333130974 <sup>-</sup> . 1059300	40 729 207 2°. 26 400	231415 950 ·. 150	477 638 700
19	0		4031 976 19°. 8236 643°. 244 665					21 280 393 6°. 66 593 60°. 0	212347275: 857640	1007 340 01: 8 300	1767 263 190
20	15 230 046 9°. 89 184 65°. 5753 125	129 268 273 ·. 737 506 8 ·. 15 518 75 ·. 0	130723 600 ·. 7017074 ·. 0456117 ·. 0	39 470 026 9°. 30 000 17°. 7711 200	4848 655 67. 9592076. 350 570	281 858 111 ·. 998 039 4 ·. 76 900	8391 311 31 · . 6938 069 · . 520	132216351 · . 4533576 · . 00	1090 848 50°. 5 817 070	4365 140 07 <sup>-</sup> . 9300	6564 120 420

# References

[1] J. Harer, D. Zagier. The Euler characteristic of the moduli space of curves. Invent. Math. 85 (1986), 457–485.