

# Difference Equations

(Differenzgleichungen)

- Part 1 -

## Introduction

*Autor:* Jochen Ziegenbalg

*Email:* ziegenbalg.edu@gmail.com

*Internet:* <https://jochen-ziegenbalg.github.io/materialien/>

### ■ References

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*Second edition:* Mathematik für Computeranwendungen; Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, Paderborn 1989

*Goldberg S.:* Introduction to Difference Equations; John Wiley, New York 1958

*Rommelfanger H.:* Differenzen- und Differentialgleichungen; B.I., Zürich 1977

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### ■ Introduction

Let  $(y_k)_{k=0,1,\dots,\infty}$  be an arbitrary sequence of numbers. An equation establishing a relation between any successive  $n + 1$  values  $y_k, y_{k+1}, \dots, y_{k+n}$  of the sequence  $(y_k)$  is called a *difference equation* of order  $n$ .

### ■ First examples

#### ■ 1. Arithmetic sequence (*German: arithmetische Folge*)

Let  $d$  be an arbitrary real number. A sequence satisfying the difference equation (of order 1)

$$y_{k+1} = y_k + d \quad (\text{for } k \in \mathbb{N})$$

is called an *arithmetic sequence* (or *arithmetic progression*).

## ■ 2. Geometric sequence (*German: geometrische Folge*)

Let  $q$  be an arbitrary real number. A sequence satisfying the difference equation (of order 1)

$$y_{k+1} = q \cdot y_k \quad (\text{for } k \in \mathbb{N})$$

is called a *geometric sequence* (or *geometric progression*).

## ■ 3. Fibonacci numbers

The sequence satisfying the difference equation (of order 2)

$$y_{k+2} = y_{k+1} + y_k \quad (\text{with initial conditions } y_0 = 0 \text{ and } y_1 = 1)$$

is called the sequence of *Fibonacci numbers*.

## ■ Some more classifications

The above three examples represented very special types of difference equations. In general, the defining relation of a difference equation is of the form

$$F(y_k, y_{k+1}, \dots, y_{k+n}) = 0 \quad (\text{where } F \text{ is an arbitrary function of } n+1 \text{ arguments})$$

If a difference equation is given in this form (which is the most general form representing a difference equation) it is said to be given in the *implicit form*.

If the difference equation is given in the form

$$y_{k+n} = f(y_k, y_{k+1}, \dots, y_{k+n-1}) \quad (\text{where } f \text{ is an arbitrary function of } n \text{ arguments})$$

it is said to be given in the *explicit form*. Difference equations given in the explicit form are also called *recursive equations* (or *recurrence relations*).

In the following definition we take the set  $M$  to be a suitable set of numbers (usually  $M = \mathbb{R}$  or  $M = \mathbb{C}$ ).

Let  $n$  be a (fixed) natural number and  $f_i: \mathbb{N} \rightarrow M$  ( $i = 0, \dots, n$ ) and  $g: \mathbb{N} \rightarrow M$  arbitrary functions. Then a difference equation of the form

$$f_n(k) \cdot y_{k+n} + f_{n-1}(k) \cdot y_{k+n-1} + \dots + f_2(k) \cdot y_{k+2} + f_1(k) \cdot y_{k+1} + f_0(k) \cdot y_k = g(k)$$

is called a *linear* difference equation (because the  $y$ -terms appear only in the first power).

If all of the functions  $f_i$  ( $i = 0, \dots, n$ ) are constant, e.g.

$$f_i(k) = a_i \quad (i = 0, \dots, n)$$

then the difference equation

$$a_n \cdot y_{k+n} + a_{n-1} \cdot y_{k+n-1} + \dots + a_2 \cdot y_{k+2} + a_1 \cdot y_{k+1} + a_0 \cdot y_k = g(k)$$

is called a *linear difference equation with constant coefficients*.

In the last examples the function  $g$  is called the *inhomogeneity function* (German: Inhomogenität).

If the inhomogeneity function is constant, e.g.

$$g(k) = b$$

then the difference equation

$$a_n \cdot y_{k+n} + a_{n-1} \cdot y_{k+n-1} + \dots + a_2 \cdot y_{k+2} + a_1 \cdot y_{k+1} + a_0 \cdot y_k = b$$

is called a *linear difference equation with constant coefficients and constant inhomogeneity*.

If, furthermore,  $b = 0$ , the difference equation is called a *homogeneous difference equation*.

*Example:* The "Fibonacci" difference equation

$$y_{k+2} - y_{k+1} - y_k = 0$$

can thus be classified as a homogeneous linear difference equation of order 2 with constant coefficients (the coefficients being 1, -1 and -1). As is shown in Example 3 (above) it can easily be presented in an explicit form.

## ■ First examples in *Mathematica*

### ■ Arithmetic sequence

```
ArithmeticSequence[y0_, d_, k_] :=
  (For[{y = y0; i = 0}, i < k, i = i + 1, y = y + d]; Return[y])
```

```
ArithmeticSequence[1, 3, 5]
```

```
16
```

```
ArithmeticSequence[1, 2, 15]
```

```
31
```

```
Table[ArithmeticSequence[1, 2, i], {i, 0, 15}]
```

```
{1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31}
```

```
ArithmeticSequence[y0, d, 15]
```

```
15 d + y0
```

```
Table[ArithmeticSequence[y0, d, i], {i, 0, 15}]
```

```
{y0, d + y0, 2 d + y0, 3 d + y0, 4 d + y0, 5 d + y0, 6 d + y0, 7 d + y0,
 8 d + y0, 9 d + y0, 10 d + y0, 11 d + y0, 12 d + y0, 13 d + y0, 14 d + y0, 15 d + y0}
```

## ■ Geometric sequence

```
GeometricSequence[y0_, q_, k_] :=
  (For[(y = y0; i = 0), i < k, i = i + 1, y = q * y]; Return[y])
```

```
GeometricSequence[1, 2, 15]
```

```
32768
```

```
2^15
```

```
32768
```

```
Table[GeometricSequence[1, 2, i], {i, 0, 25}]
```

```
{1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, 1024, 2048, 4096, 8192, 16384, 32768, 65536,
 131072, 262144, 524288, 1048576, 2097152, 4194304, 8388608, 16777216, 33554432}
```

```
GeometricSequence[y0, q, 15]
```

```
q15 y0
```

```
Table[GeometricSequence[1, q, i], {i, 0, 15}]
```

```
{1, q, q2, q3, q4, q5, q6, q7, q8, q9, q10, q11, q12, q13, q14, q15}
```

## ■ Fibonacci numbers

```
FibonacciSequence[k_] :=
  (For[(y0 = 0; y1 = 1; y = 0; i = 0), i < k, i = i + 1, y0 = y1; y1 = y; y = y0 + y1]; Return[y])
```

```
FibonacciSequence[5]
```

```
5
```

```
Table[FibonacciSequence[i], {i, 0, 15}]
```

```
{0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, 233, 377, 610}
```

```
Table[{i, FibonacciSequence[i]}, {i, 0, 15}] // TableForm
```

0	0
1	1
2	1
3	2
4	3
5	5
6	8
7	13
8	21
9	34
10	55
11	89
12	144
13	233
14	377
15	610

**Exercise:** Implement the above *Mathematica* functions *ArithmeticSequence*, *GeometricSequence* and *FibonacciSequence* by only using the *Module* and *While* constructs of *Mathematica*.

## ■ The annuity equation

By combining the difference equations leading to the arithmetic and the geometric sequence in a straightforward way we get a sequence of the following type:

$$y_{k+1} = q \cdot y_k + d$$

It is of the form

$$a_1 \cdot y_{k+1} + a_0 \cdot y_k = b \quad (\text{where } a_0, a_1 \text{ and } b \text{ are fixed constants; } a_1 \neq 0)$$

Hence it is a linear inhomogeneous difference equation of order 1 with constant coefficients and constant inhomogeneity.

In what follows we will rather call it the *annuity equation* (*German*: Tilgungsgleichung), for short and write it in the form

$$y_{k+1} = A \cdot y_k + B \quad (\text{where } A = -\frac{a_0}{a_1} \text{ and } B = \frac{b}{a_1})$$

## ■ Implementation in *Mathematica*

```

Annuity[y0_, A_, B_, k_] :=
Module[{y = y0, i = 0},
While [i < k,
i = i + 1;
y = A * y + B];
Return[y] ]

Annuity[100000 , 1.05, -10000, 4]

78449.4

Table[{i, Annuity[100000, 1.05, -10000, i]}, {i, 1, 15}]

{{1, 95000.}, {2, 89750.}, {3, 84237.5}, {4, 78449.4}, {5, 72371.8},
{6, 65990.4}, {7, 59290.}, {8, 52254.5}, {9, 44867.2}, {10, 37110.5},
{11, 28966.1}, {12, 20414.4}, {13, 11435.1}, {14, 2006.84}, {15, -7892.82}}
```



```
Table[{i, Annuity[y0, A, B, i]}, {i, 1, 10}] // Simplify // TableForm
```

```
1      B + A y0
2      B + A (B + A y0)
3      B + A (B + A (B + A y0))
4      (1 + A + A^2 + A^3) B + A^4 y0
5      (1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4) B + A^5 y0
6      (1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5) B + A^6 y0
7      (1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6) B + A^7 y0
8      (1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6 + A^7) B + A^8 y0
9      (1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6 + A^7 + A^8) B + A^9 y0
10     (1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6 + A^7 + A^8 + A^9) B + A^10 y0
```

```
(1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6 + A^7 + A^8 + A^9) // Simplify
```

```
1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6 + A^7 + A^8 + A^9
```

```
(1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6 + A^7 + A^8 + A^9) * (1 - A) // Simplify
```

```
1 - A^10
```

```
(1 - A^10) / (1 - A) // Factor // Simplify
```

```
1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6 + A^7 + A^8 + A^9
```

```
(1 + A + A^2 + A^3 + A^4 + A^5 + A^6 + A^7 + A^8 + A^9) == (1 - A^10) / (1 - A) // Simplify
```

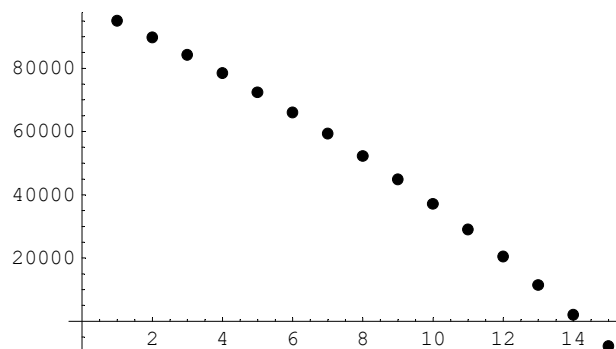
```
True
```

## ■ Graphical presentation of the annuity equation

More on the topic of graphical presentation will be covered in the *Mathematica* notebook "Difference-Equations-2-Cobweb.nb".

## ■ Timeline diagrams

```
ListPlot[Table[{i, Annuity[100000, 1.05, -10000, i]}, {i, 1, 15}],
PlotStyle -> PointSize[0.02]]
```



- Graphics -

## ■ Cobweb diagrams

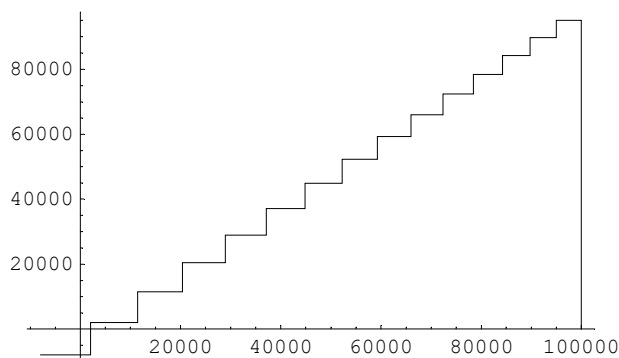
```
AL = Table[Annuity[100000, 1.05, -10000, i], {i, 0, 15}]
{100000, 95000., 89750., 84237.5, 78449.4, 72371.8, 65990.4, 59290.,
 52254.5, 44867.2, 37110.5, 28966.1, 20414.4, 11435.1, 2006.84, -7892.82}
```

```
CobList[AL_] := (* AL for: Annuity List *)
Module[{L = AL, CL = {}},
  (If[Length[L] > 0, CL = {{First[L], 0}} ];
  While[
    Length[L] > 1,
    CL = Append[CL, {L[[1]], L[[2]]} ];
    CL = Append[CL, {L[[2]], L[[2]]} ];
    L = Delete[L, 1] ];
  Return[CL] ]
```

```
CobList[AL]
```

```
{{100000, 0}, {100000, 95000.}, {95000., 95000.}, {95000., 89750.},
 {89750., 89750.}, {89750., 84237.5}, {84237.5, 84237.5}, {84237.5, 78449.4},
 {78449.4, 78449.4}, {78449.4, 72371.8}, {72371.8, 72371.8}, {72371.8, 65990.4},
 {65990.4, 65990.4}, {65990.4, 59290.}, {59290., 59290.}, {59290., 52254.5},
 {52254.5, 52254.5}, {52254.5, 44867.2}, {44867.2, 44867.2}, {44867.2, 37110.5},
 {37110.5, 37110.5}, {37110.5, 28966.1}, {28966.1, 28966.1}, {28966.1, 20414.4},
 {20414.4, 20414.4}, {20414.4, 11435.1}, {11435.1, 11435.1}, {11435.1, 2006.84},
 {2006.84, 2006.84}, {2006.84, -7892.82}, {-7892.82, -7892.82}}
```

```
ListPlot[CobList[AL], PlotJoined → True]
```



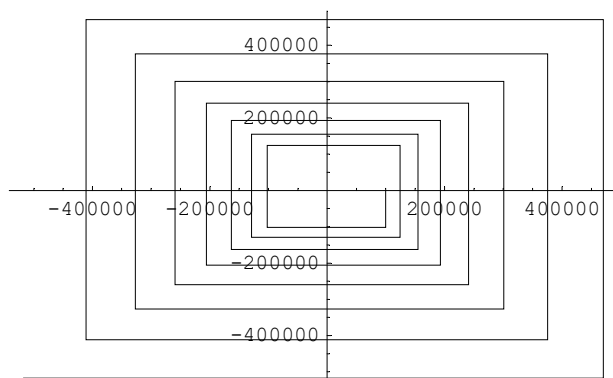
- Graphics -

## ■ Cobweb diagrams - some other parameter values

```
AL = Prepend[Table[Annuity[100000, -1.12, 10000, i], {i, 1, 15}], 100000]
{100000, -102000., 124240., -129149., 154647., -163204., 192789., -205923.,
 240634., -259510., 300652., -326730., 375937., -411050., 470376., -516821.}
```



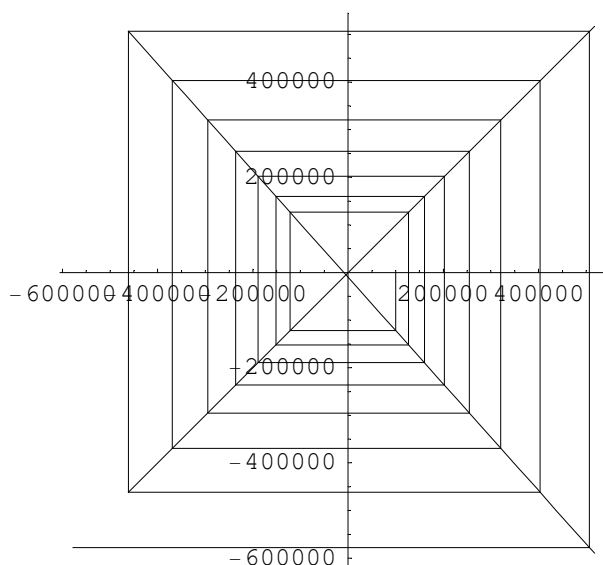
```
ListPlot[CobList[AL], PlotJoined → True]
```



- Graphics -

### ■ Cobweb diagrams - everthing bound together

If you draw the 45-degree-axis and the line given by  $y = A \cdot x + B$  in this diagram, it becomes evident why these diagrams are called cobweb diagrams.



**Exercise:** Write a program for displaying "full-fledged" cobweb diagrams.

### ■ The generalized Fibonacci equation

In this section we will consider the following linear difference equation of order 2 with constant coefficients and constant inhomogeneity

$$a_2 \cdot y_{k+2} + a_1 \cdot y_{k+1} + a_0 \cdot y_k = b \quad (\text{where } a_0, a_1, a_2 \text{ and } b \text{ are fixed constants; } a_2 \neq 0)$$

This equation clearly generalizes the Fibonacci equation; we will, therefore, call it the *generalized Fibonacci equation* for short.

■ **Auxiliary stuff**