

Sphere packings, cyclotomic fields, and subconvexity bounds

M. Viazovska

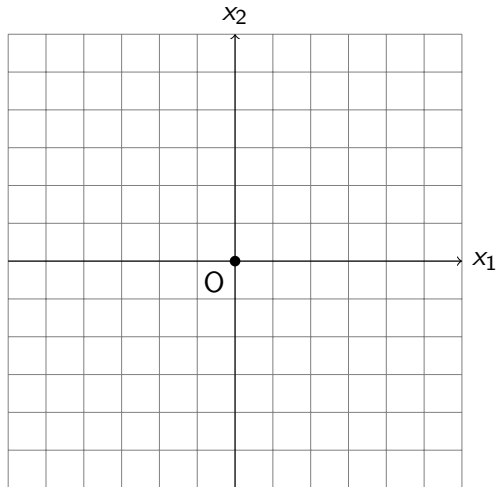
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Joint work with Nihar Gargava, Vlad Serban and Ilaria Viglino

Lattice packings

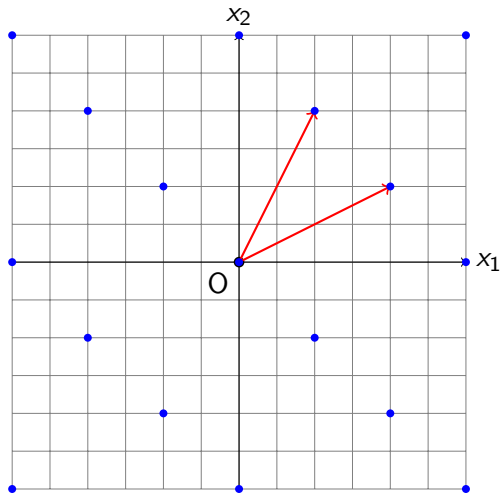
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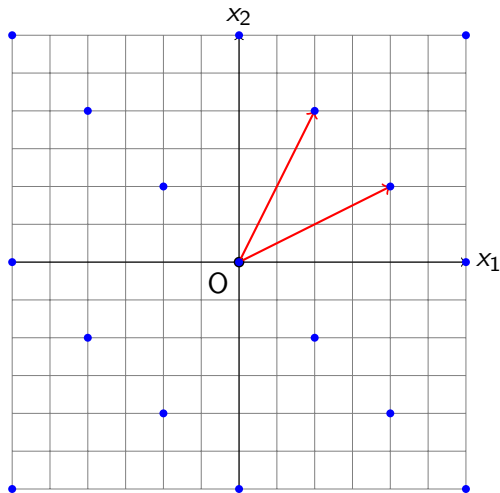


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We define $r_{\min}(\Lambda) := \min_{\ell \in \Lambda \setminus \{0\}} \|\ell\|$.

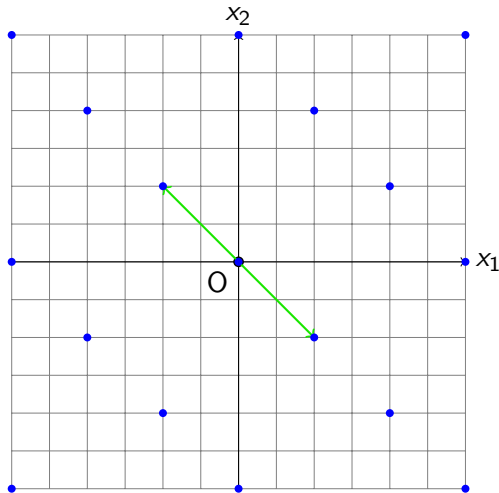


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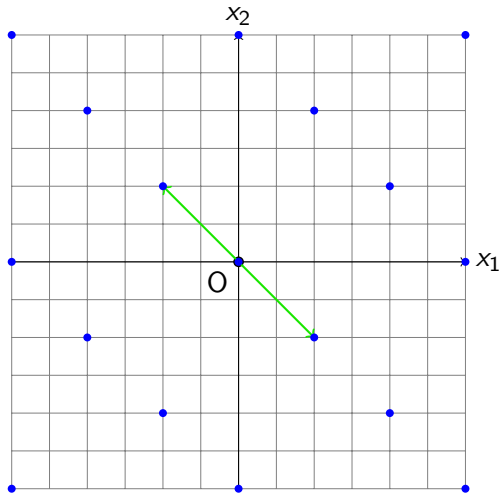
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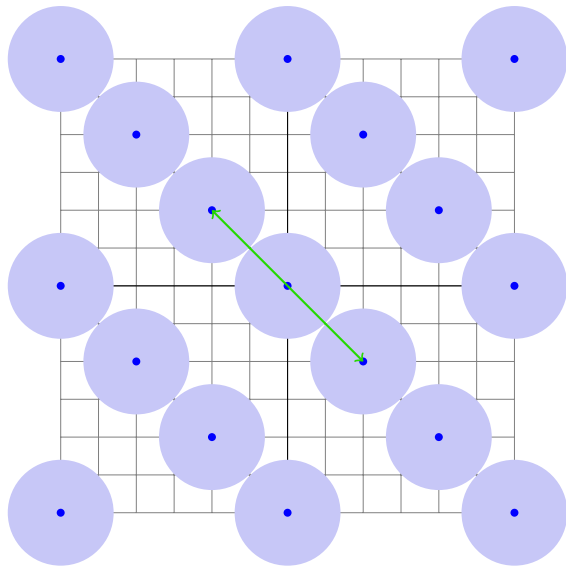
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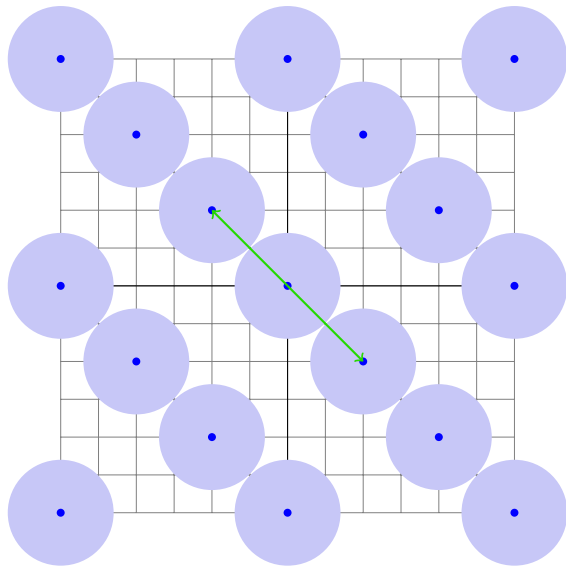
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We denote by $\Delta(\Lambda)$ the density of this packing.

For each dimension d we would like to know $\Delta_d^L := \sup_{\text{lattice } \Lambda \subset \mathbb{R}^d} \Delta(\Lambda)$.



Lattice packings

The densest lattice packing is known in dimensions:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 24.

Asymptotic bounds for the sphere packing constant

Theorem (Minkowski 1905, Hlawka 1920s)

$$\Delta_d^L \geq 2^{-d+1}.$$

Theorem (Rogers 1947)

$$\Delta_d^L \geq c 2^{-d+1} d(1 + o(1)), \quad d \rightarrow \infty.$$

Theorem (Venkatesh 2013)

$$\Delta_d^L \geq 2^{-d} d \log \log(d)$$

for a sequence of dimensions d ($d = 2\phi(n)$ and $n = p_1 \cdot p_2 \cdots p_k$ has many prime factors.)

Asymptotic bounds for the sphere packing constant

Theorem (M.Campos, M. Jensen, M. Michelin, and J. Sahasrabudhe 2023)

$$\Delta_d \geq 2^{-d-1} d \log(d) (1 + o(1)), \quad d \rightarrow \infty.$$

Theorem (B. Klartag 2025)

$$\Delta_d^L \geq c 2^{-d} d^2.$$

Theorem (E. B. Abuya, N. Gargava, Y. Zhao 2026)

There exists a universal constant $c > 0$ and a finite sequence of dimensions d in which

$$\Delta_d^L \geq c 2^{-d} d^2 \log \log(d).$$

Random lattices

The space of random unimodular lattices in $\mathbb{R}^d$:

$$\mathcal{L}_d := \{\Lambda \subset \mathbb{R}^d \mid \text{vol}(\mathbb{R}^d/\Lambda) = 1\} \simeq \text{SL}_d(\mathbb{R})/\text{SL}_d(\mathbb{Z}).$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mu_d &:= \text{Haar measure normalized so that} \\ \mu_d(\text{SL}_d(\mathbb{R})/\text{SL}_d(\mathbb{Z})) &= 1. \end{aligned}$$

Consider a random variable on $\mathcal{L}_d$:

$$N_r(\Lambda) := \#(\Lambda \cap B(0, r)) - 1, \quad r > 0.$$

What is the expected value of N_r ?

Random lattices

Theorem(Siegel)

Let $f : \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a compactly supported bounded integrable function. Then

$$\int_{\mathcal{L}_d} \left(\sum_{\ell \in \Lambda \setminus \{0\}} f(\ell) \right) d\mu_d(\Lambda) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^d} f(x) dx.$$

Corollary

$$\mathbb{E}(N_r) = \int_{\mathcal{L}_d} \left(\sum_{\ell \in \Lambda \setminus \{0\}} \mathbb{I}(\ell \in B(0, r)) \right) d\mu_d(\Lambda) = \text{vol}(B(0, r)).$$

Corollary(Minkowski-Hlawka)

$$\Delta_d^L \geq 2^{-d+1}.$$

Geometry of numbers

Let K be a number field and let $\mathcal{O}_K$ denote its ring of integers.

Suppose that K has r_1 real embeddings and $2r_2$ complex embeddings.

Then $r_1 + 2r_2 = [K : \mathbb{Q}]$.

Minkowski embedding:

$$K_{\mathbb{R}} := K \otimes_{\mathbb{Q}} \mathbb{R}$$

$$K \rightarrow K_{\mathbb{R}}, \quad x \mapsto (\sigma(x))_{\sigma},$$

where σ runs over r_1 real and r_2 complex (one for each pair of complex conjugates) embeddings of K .

Geometry of numbers. Lattices constructed from number fields

Let K be a number field and let $\mathcal{O}_K$ denote its ring of integers. Let $K_{\mathbb{R}} = K \otimes_{\mathbb{Q}} \mathbb{R}$ denote the $[K : \mathbb{Q}]$ -dimensional Euclidean space associated to K , the Minkowski space.

The scalar product is defined by $\langle x, y \rangle = \Delta_K^{-\frac{2}{[K:\mathbb{Q}]}} \text{tr}(x\bar{y})$.

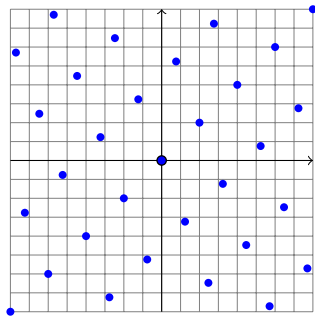
Here Δ_K is the absolute value of the discriminant of the number field K . The normalization in the above equation ensures that $\mathcal{O}_K \subset K_{\mathbb{R}}$ is a lattice with unit covolume.

Examples:

$$K = \mathbb{Q}, \mathcal{O}_K = \mathbb{Z}$$



$$K = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{5}), \mathcal{O}_K = \mathbb{Z} + \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2}\mathbb{Z}$$



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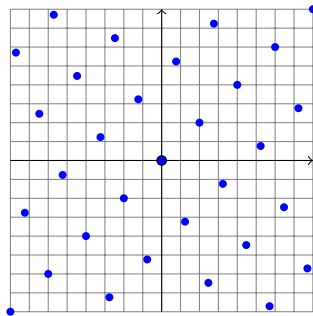
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The lattice obtained by embedding of $\mathcal{O}_K$ is invariant under the action of $\mathcal{U}_K$, the units in $\mathcal{O}_K$.

$$K = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{5}), \mathcal{O}_K = \mathbb{Z} + \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2}\mathbb{Z}$$



Lattices with the symmetry of a number field

We consider the space of rank t free unimodular $\mathcal{O}_K$ -lattices

$$\mathcal{L}_{K,t} := \mathrm{SL}_t(K_{\mathbb{R}})/\mathrm{SL}_t(\mathcal{O}_K).$$

$$\mathrm{SL}_t(K_{\mathbb{R}}) \simeq \mathrm{SL}_t(\mathbb{R})^{r_1} \times \mathrm{SL}_t(\mathbb{C})^{r_2}.$$

When K does not have class number one and $\mathcal{O}_K$ is not a principal ideal domain, one may consider more general $\mathcal{O}_K$ -modules.

Random lattices with the symmetry of a number field

Obviously, $\mathcal{L}_{K,t}$ can be seen as a subset of $\mathcal{L}_{[K:\mathbb{Q}]t}$.

Each lattice $\Lambda \subset \mathcal{L}_{K,t}$ is invariant under the action of μ_K , the finite units in $\mathcal{O}_K$. Therefore $\#(\Lambda \cap B(0, r)) - 1$ is divisible by $\omega_K := \#\mu_K$.

Theorem (Siegel-Weil)

For $t \geq 2$

$$\mathbb{E}(\#(\Lambda \cap B(0, r))) = \text{vol}(B(0, r)) + 1.$$

Corollary (Venkatesh)

$$\Delta_d^L \geq 2^{-d} d \log \log(d).$$

What about $t = 1$?

Arakelov class group

The Arakelov class group $\tilde{\text{Cl}}(K)$ is defined as the set of ideal lattices $(g, \mathcal{I})$ where $\mathcal{I} \subseteq K$ is a finitely generated $\mathcal{O}_K$ -module and $g \in K_{\mathbb{R}}^{\times}$. We identify two ideal lattices as per the rule

$$(g_1, \mathcal{I}_1) = (g_2, \mathcal{I}_2) \Leftrightarrow g_1 \mathcal{I}_1 = c \cdot g_2 \mathcal{I}_2 \text{ for some } c > 0.$$

Here the equality on the right is the equality of sublattices in $K_{\mathbb{R}}$.

The following sequence of topological abelian groups is exact.

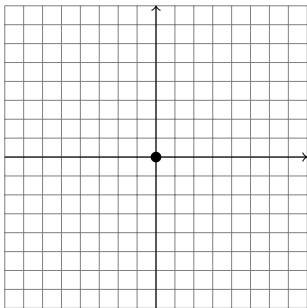
$$0 \rightarrow K_{\mathbb{R}}^{(1)} / \mathcal{O}_K^{\times} \rightarrow \tilde{\text{Cl}}(K) \rightarrow \text{Cl}(K) \rightarrow 0$$

Here $K_{\mathbb{R}}^{(1)}$ is the group

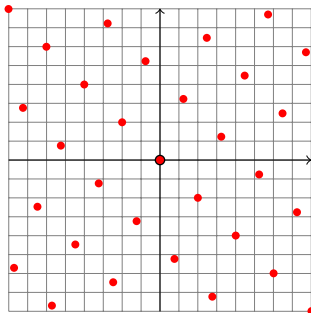
$$K_{\mathbb{R}}^{(1)} = \{a \in K_{\mathbb{R}} \mid |N(a)| = 1\}.$$

The map $N : K_{\mathbb{R}} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{\times}$ is the norm map. Dirichlet's unit theorem tells us that $K_{\mathbb{R}}^{(1)} / \mathcal{O}_K^{\times}$ is a compact torus.

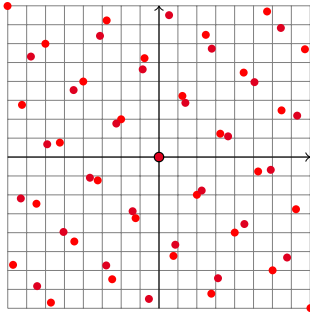
Lattices constructed from number fields



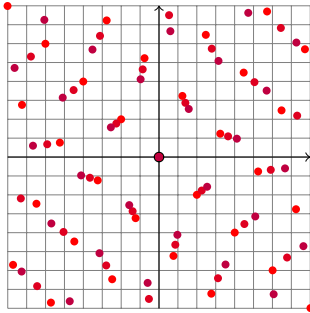
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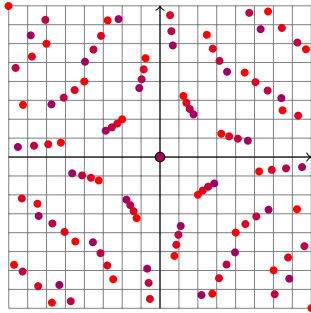
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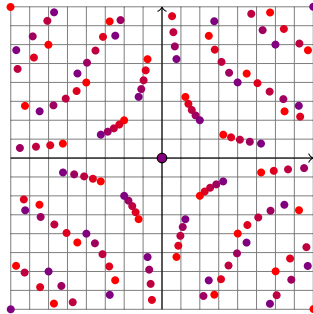
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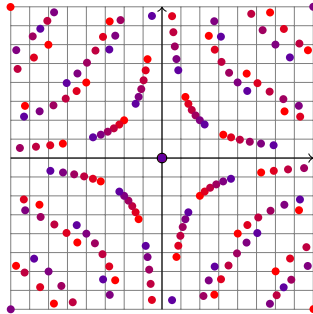
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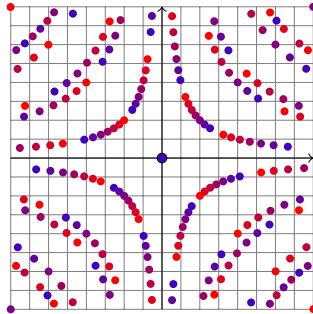
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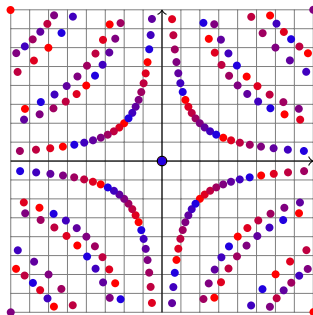
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Random ideal lattices

Theorem(Gargava, V. 2024)

Let K be a cyclotomic number field. For each K , choose $B \subseteq K \otimes \mathbb{R}$ to be a ball of volume V with respect to the trace form. Then, as $\deg K \rightarrow \infty$, we have for some $\eta > 0$

$$\mathbb{E}(\# B \cap \Lambda) = 1 + V + \varepsilon(V, K) \text{ for a Haar-random unit covolume } \Lambda \in \tilde{\text{Cl}}(K),$$

where $\varepsilon(V, K)$ is an error term, that behaves like

$$|\varepsilon(V, K)| \ll \sqrt{V} \Delta_K^{-\eta} \text{ as } \deg K \rightarrow \infty.$$

The discriminant Δ_K of a cyclotomic field K with $\deg K = d$ is at least $e^{cd \log d}$ for some constant $c > 0$. Therefore, there exist constants $c_1, c_2 > 0$ chosen uniformly for all cyclotomic number fields K such that

$$|\varepsilon(V, K)| \leq V^{1/2} \exp(-c_1 d \log(d) + c_2 d).$$

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Corollary

Improvement on the result by Venkatesh by a factor of $1/2$.

Idea of the proof: Hecke's integration formula

Theorem

Let $f_r : \mathbb{R}_{>0} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a compactly supported smooth function and $f : K_{\mathbb{R}} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be $f(x) = f_r(\|x\|)$. Then

$$\int_{\Lambda \in \widetilde{\text{Cl}}(K)} \left(\sum_{v \in \Lambda \setminus \{0\}} f(v) \right) d\Lambda = \int_{x \in K_{\mathbb{R}}} f(x) dx + \varepsilon(K, f),$$

where

$$\varepsilon(K, f) = \frac{(2\pi)^{r_2}}{\text{vol}(\widetilde{\text{Cl}}(K))\pi i} \int_{\frac{1}{2}-i\infty}^{\frac{1}{2}+i\infty} \Delta_K^{\frac{s}{2}} \zeta_K(s) \mathcal{M}f_r(sd) \left(\frac{\Gamma(\frac{s}{2})^{r_1} \Gamma(s)^{r_2}}{2^{sr_2} \Gamma(\frac{sd}{2})} \right) ds.$$

Idea of the proof: Hecke's integration formula + Subconvexity bounds for Dirichlet zeta function

Corollary

Let K be a totally imaginary number field, that is $r_1 = 0$. Let $B_R \subseteq K_{\mathbb{R}}$ be an origin-centered ball of radius R . Then we have that if $r_2 \geq 4$, then

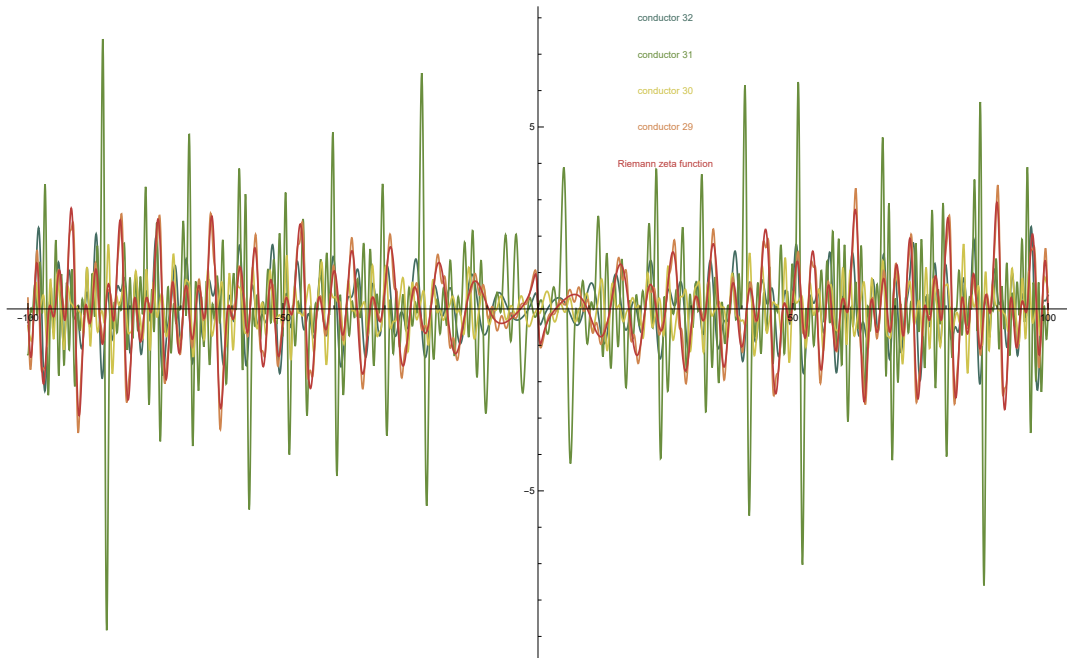
$$\int_{\Lambda \in \tilde{\text{Cl}}(K)} \#(B_R \cap \Lambda) d\Lambda = 1 + \text{vol}(B_R) + \varepsilon(R, K).$$

where

$$\varepsilon(R, K) = \frac{(2\pi)^{r_2}}{\text{vol}(\tilde{\text{Cl}}(K))\pi i} \int_{\frac{1}{2}-i\infty}^{\frac{1}{2}+i\infty} \Delta_K^{\frac{s}{2}} \zeta_K(s) \frac{R^{2sr_2}}{2sr_2} \left(\frac{\Gamma(s)^{r_2}}{2^{sr_2} \Gamma(sr_2)} \right) ds.$$

Here the $\frac{1}{2}$ may be replaced by any other real in the interval $(\frac{1}{2}, 1)$.

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Theorem (Petrov-Young, 2023)

For any Dirichlet character χ with conductor $q = q(\chi)$, for $t \in \mathbb{R}$ and any $\epsilon > 0$

$$|L(\tfrac{1}{2} + it, \chi)| \ll_{\epsilon} q^{\frac{1}{6} + \epsilon} (|t| + 1)^{\frac{1}{6} + \epsilon}. \quad (1)$$

Corollary

There exist positive numbers η_1, η_2 such that for cyclotomic number fields K and for all $t \in \mathbb{R}$

$$\zeta_K(\tfrac{1}{2} + it) \ll_{\eta_1, \eta_2} \Delta_K^{\frac{1}{4} - \eta_1} (|t| + 1)^{\deg K \cdot (\frac{1}{4} - \eta_2)}.$$

Here Δ_K is the discriminant and $\deg K$ is the degree of a number field K . The positive numbers η_1, η_2 can be chosen arbitrarily close to $\frac{1}{12}$.

Conclusion for Part 1

Random ideal lattices for cyclotomic fields are almost as good as random lattices.

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Part 2

Let us look closer at modular lattices over number fields.

Moments of the number of lattice points in a bounded set

Theorem (Rogers, 1956)

Let $\Lambda \subseteq \mathbb{R}^t$ be a random unit covolume lattice and let S be a centrally symmetric Borel set of volume V . Consider the random variable

$$\rho(\Lambda) = \#(S \cap (\Lambda \setminus \{0\})). \quad (2)$$

Then, provided $t \geq \lceil \frac{1}{4}n^2 + 3 \rceil$, it follows that the n -th moment of the number of non-zero lattice points in S satisfies

$$2^n \cdot m_n\left(\frac{V}{2}\right) \leq \mathbb{E}[\rho(\Lambda)^n] \leq 2^n \cdot m_n\left(\frac{V}{2}\right) + E_{n,t} \cdot (V+1)^n,$$

where

$$m_n(\lambda) = e^{-\lambda} \sum_{r=0}^{\infty} \frac{\lambda^r}{r!} r^n = \mathbb{E}_{X \sim \mathcal{P}(\lambda)}(X^n),$$

is the n th moment of a Poisson distribution with parameter λ and where $E_{n,t}$ is an error term decaying exponentially as t increases:

$$E_{n,t} \leq 2 \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{n^2}{4} \rceil} \cdot \left(\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}\right)^t + 21 \cdot 5^{\lceil \frac{n^2}{4} \rceil} \cdot \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^t.$$

Poisson distribution on Wikipedia



Chewing gum on a sidewalk. The number of chewing gums on a single tile is approximately Poisson distributed.

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What is the distribution of

$$\frac{\#(\Lambda \cap B(0, r) \setminus \{0\})}{\#\mu_K}, \Lambda \in \mathcal{L}_{K,t} ?$$

Is it close to the Poisson distribution?

Lattices constructed from number fields

Theorem (Gargava, Serban, Viazovska 2023)

Let K be any number field of fixed degree d . There is an explicit constant $t_0(K, n) = O(n^2 \log \log n / \sqrt{d})$ for large n , as well as constants $C_K, \varepsilon_K > 0$, such that the n -th moment $\mathbb{E}[\rho(\Lambda)^n]$ of the number of nonzero $\mathcal{O}_K$ -lattice points in an origin-centered sphere of volume V over the probability space of $\mathcal{O}_K$ -lattices of rank t and unit covolume satisfies

$$\omega_K^n \cdot m_n\left(\frac{V}{\omega_K}\right) \leq \mathbb{E}[\rho(\Lambda)^n] \leq \omega_K^n \cdot m_n\left(\frac{V}{\omega_K}\right) + C_K \cdot e^{-\varepsilon_K(t-t_0+1)} \cdot (V+1)^n.$$

provided $t \geq t_0(K, n)$.

Cyclotomic fields

Theorem (Gargava, Serban, Viazovska 2024)

Consider a sequence of cyclotomic number fields given by $K_i = \mathbb{Q}(\zeta_{k_i})$ of degree $d_i = \varphi(k_i)$ and let $t_0 = 27$. There then exist uniform constants $C, \varepsilon > 0$ such that for any $t \geq t_0$ and for any degree $d_i > (\frac{252}{t})^2$ the second moment $\mathbb{E}[\rho(\Lambda)^2]$ of the number of nonzero $\mathcal{O}_K$ -lattice points in an origin-centered sphere of volume V over the space of $\mathcal{O}_K$ -lattices of rank t and unit covolume satisfies:

$$V^2 + V \cdot \omega_{K_i} \leq \mathbb{E}[\rho(\Lambda)^2] \leq V^2 + V \cdot \omega_{K_i} \cdot (1 + C \cdot e^{-\varepsilon \cdot d_i(t-t_0+1)}).$$

Mahler measures and the Bogomolov property

For an algebraic number $\alpha \in K^\times$, recall that the Mahler measure (or unnormalised exponential Weil height) is given by the product over the set of places M_K of K :

$$H_M(\alpha) := \prod_{v \in M_K} \max\{1, |\alpha|_v\}.$$

We also define, keeping only the infinite places, the closely related

$$H_W(\alpha) = \prod_{\sigma: K \rightarrow \mathbb{C}} \max\{1, |\sigma(\alpha)|\}$$

which will be more directly relevant for estimates in the Euclidean space associated to K . The two coincide for algebraic integers and in general differ by a denominator. We also recall that the **absolute** Mahler measure (or exponential Weil height) of an algebraic integer α is given by $H_M(\alpha)^{1/\deg(\alpha)}$ and we shall denote by

$$h(\alpha) = \log(H_W(\alpha)^{1/\deg(\alpha)})$$

the **Weil height** of an algebraic integer. More generally for non-integers, we shall write $h_M(\alpha)$ for the Weil height $\log(H_M(\alpha)^{1/\deg(\alpha)})$ and keep $h(\alpha) = \log(H_W(\alpha)^{1/\deg(\alpha)})$.

Note that the absolute Mahler measure and Weil heights are independent of the subfield over which one is considering an algebraic integer. That is, if $\beta \in K$ we have $\deg \beta = \#\{\sigma : \mathbb{Q}(\beta) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}\}$ and

$$\frac{\log \left(\prod_{\sigma: K \rightarrow \mathbb{C}} \max\{1, |\sigma(\beta)|\} \right)}{[K : \mathbb{Q}]} = \frac{\log \left(\prod_{\sigma: \mathbb{Q}(\beta) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}} \max\{1, |\sigma(\beta)|\} \right)}{[\mathbb{Q}(\beta) : \mathbb{Q}]}.$$

Lehmer's famous problem asks for a uniform lower bound for $h_M(\alpha) \deg(\alpha)$. We shall consider algebraic numbers related to the stronger property:

Definition

A subset $S \subset \overline{\mathbb{Q}}$ is said to satisfy the **Bogomolov property** if there exists a constant $C > 0$ such that

$$h_M(\alpha) \geq C$$

provided $\alpha \in S$ has infinite multiplicative order.

Hypothesis

As K varies among the number fields considered, there exist uniform constants $c_0 \geq c_1 > 0$ such that the absolute (logarithmic) Weil heights satisfy

$$h(\alpha) > c_0 \text{ for } \alpha \in \mathcal{O}_K \setminus \mu_K$$

and

$$h_M(\alpha) > c_1 \text{ for } \alpha \in K^\times \setminus \mu_K.$$

We now recall some important examples from the literature when the Bogomolov property is satisfied:

Theorem (Schinzel 1973)

Assume that an algebraic number α of infinite multiplicative order is contained in a totally real field. Then, denoting by $\varphi = \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2}$ the golden ratio, we have

$$h_M(\alpha) \geq \frac{1}{2} \log \varphi \approx 0.2406 \dots$$

Moreover, the same is true for α in a CM field provided one (and equivalently, all) of its Archimedean embeddings satisfy $|\alpha| \neq 1$.

Theorem (Amoroso–Dvornicich 2000)

Assume that an algebraic number α of infinite multiplicative order is contained in an abelian extension of $\mathbb{Q}$. Then we have

$$h_M(\alpha) \geq \frac{\log 5}{12} \approx 0.1341 \dots$$

We may therefore record as a special case:

Any tower of cyclotomic fields satisfies Hypothesis with constants $c_0 = \frac{1}{2} \log \varphi \approx 0.2406$ and $c_1 = \frac{\log 5}{12} \approx 0.1341$.

Theorem (Gargava, Serban, V. 2023)

Let $\{K_i\}_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$ denote a sequence of number fields such that the absolute Weil height for infinite order units in $\mathcal{O}_{K_i}^\times$ has a uniform lower bound $c_0 > 0$. Then, there are explicit constants $t_0(n) = O(n^2 \log \log n)$ and $d_0(n) = O(n^2)$ for large n as well as $C, \varepsilon > 0$, all uniform in i , such that for any $t \geq t_0$ and for any $d = [K_i : \mathbb{Q}] \geq d_0$ the n -th moment $\mathbb{E}[\rho(\Lambda)^n]$ of the number of nonzero $\mathcal{O}_K$ -lattice points in an origin-centered sphere of volume V over the space of $\mathcal{O}_K$ -lattices of rank t and unit covolume satisfies:

$$\begin{aligned} \omega_i^n \cdot m_n\left(\frac{1}{\omega_i} V\right) &\leq \mathbb{E}[\rho(\Lambda)^n] \leq \omega_i^n \cdot m_n\left(\frac{1}{\omega_i} V\right) \\ &\quad + C \cdot e^{-\varepsilon d(t-t_0+1)} \cdot (V+1)^n \cdot Z(K_i, t, n). \end{aligned}$$

Here $\omega_i = \omega_{K_i}$ are the number of roots of unity in K_i , $Z(K_i, t, n)$ denotes a finite product of Dedekind zeta values ζ_{K_i} at certain real values > 1 and m_n is as before.

No limiting Poisson distribution

Proposition (Gargava, Serban, Viazovska 2023)

Let f_n be a sequence of irreducible polynomials of degree n such that their Mahler measures are uniformly bounded from above. Let $K_n := \mathbb{Q}(f_n)$ be the resulting sequence of number fields. Then for any fixed number of copies $t > 2$ there exists $C_t > 0$ such that over any number field K_n the second moment satisfies

$$\mathbb{E}[\rho(\Lambda)^2] \geq C_t + \omega_{K_n}^2 m_2\left(\frac{V}{\omega_{K_n}}\right)$$

There are many sequences satisfying the assumptions of the proposition. For example, one has limiting results for Mahler measures such as :

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} H_W(\alpha_n) = 1.3815 \dots, \text{ where } \alpha_n^n - \alpha_n + 1 = 0,$$

so where α_n is a root of $f_n(x) = x^n - x + 1$.

An application of second moment estimates

Theorem (Jianwei Li, Phong Q Nguyen 2020)

Let $\Lambda \subseteq \mathbb{R}^d$ be a Haar-random lattice chosen from the space $\mathrm{SL}_d(\mathbb{R})/\mathrm{SL}_d(\mathbb{Z})$. Then, as $d \rightarrow \infty$, with probability $1 - o(1)$ we have

$$1 - \frac{\log \log d}{d} \leq \frac{\lambda_1(\Lambda)}{\gamma(d)} \leq 1 + \frac{\log \log d}{d},$$

where $\gamma(d)$ is radius of a ball of unit volume in d dimensions.

Remark

For large d , $\gamma(d) \simeq \sqrt{\frac{d}{2\pi e}}$ by Stirling's approximation.

Theorem (Gargava, Serban, V., Viglino 2024)

Let $t \geq 11$ be fixed. Let $K = \mathbb{Q}(\mu_k)$ be a cyclotomic number field and let $d = t \cdot \deg K = t\varphi(k)$. Consider a Haar-random unit covolume module lattice $\Lambda \subseteq K^t \otimes \mathbb{R}$ in the moduli space of rank- t module lattices over K . Then, as $k \rightarrow \infty$, we have with probability $1 - o(1)$ that

$$1 - \frac{\log \log k}{d} \leq k^{-\frac{1}{d}} \frac{\lambda_1(\Lambda)}{\gamma(d)} \leq 1 + \frac{\log \log k}{d}.$$