A SUBSPACE CODE OF SIZE 333 IN THE SETTING OF A BINARY $q$-ANALOG OF THE FANO PLANE

DANIEL HEINLEIN, MICHAEL KIERMAIER, SASCHA KURZ, AND ALFRED WASSERMANN

ABSTRACT. We show that there is a binary subspace code of constant dimension 3 in ambient dimension 7, having minimum distance 4 and cardinality 333, i.e.,

$$333 \leq A_2(7, 4; 3),$$

which improves the previous best known lower bound of 329.

Moreover, if a code with these parameters has at least 333 elements, its automorphism group is in 31 conjugacy classes.

This is achieved by a more general technique for an exhaustive search in a finite group that does not depend on the enumeration of all subgroups.

Keywords: Finite groups, finite projective spaces, constant dimension codes, subspace codes, subspace distance, combinatorics, computer search.

MSC: 51E20; 05B07, 11T71, 94B25

1. Introduction

Since the seminal paper of Kötter and Kschischang [20] there is a still growing interest in subspace codes, which are sets of subspaces of the $\mathbb{F}_q^n$-vector space $\mathbb{F}_q^n$. If all subspaces, which play the role of the codewords, have the same dimension, say $k$, then one speaks of constant dimension codes. The most commonly used distance measures for subspace codes, motivated by an information-theoretic analysis of the Kötter-Kschischang-Silva model [24], are the subspace distance

$$d_S(U, W) = \dim(U + W) - \dim(U \cap W) = \dim(U) + \dim(W) - 2 \dim(U \cap W)$$

and the injection distance

$$d_I(U, W) = \max\{\dim(U), \dim(W)\} - \dim(U \cap W),$$

where $U$ and $W$ are subspaces of $\mathbb{F}_q^n$. For constant dimension codes we have $d_S(U, W) = 2d_I(U, W)$, so that the subsequent results are valid for both distance measures. By $A_q(n, d; k)$ we denote the maximum cardinality of a constant dimension code in $\mathbb{F}_q^n$ with subspaces of dimension $k$ and minimum subspace distance $d$. From a mathematical point of view, one of the main problems of subspace coding is the determination of the exact value of $A_q(n, d; k)$ or the derivation of suitable bounds, at the very least.

Currently, there are just a few, but nevertheless very powerful, general construction methods, see e.g. [9], available. Besides that, several of the best known constant dimension codes for moderate parameters have been found by prescribing a subgroup of the automorphism group of the code, see e.g. [19]. However, the prescribed subgroups have to be chosen rather skillful, since there are many possible choices and some groups turn out to permit only small codes.

* All authors are with the Department of Mathematics, Physics, and Computer Science, University of Bayreuth, Bayreuth, GERMANY. Email: firstname.lastname@uni-bayreuth.de The work was supported by the ICT COST Action IC1104 and grants KU 2430/3-1, WA 1666/9-1 – “Integer Linear Programming Models for Subspace Codes and Finite Geometry” – from the German Research Foundation.
Here, we aim to develop a systematic approach to determine all groups which provide subspace codes with cardinality at least \( \kappa + 1 \), where \( \kappa = 328 \) in this paper, and have the group as an automorphism group. For fixed parameters \( q, n, d, \) and \( k \) this is a finite problem – in theory. Even if the problem for the exact determination of \( A_q(n, d; k) \) is finite too, one quickly reaches computational limits. Also, the generation of all possible groups becomes computationally intractable already for rather moderate parameters.

In this paper we describe a toolbox of theoretical and computational methods how to determine good constant dimension codes admitting an arbitrary automorphism group of reasonable size, partially overcoming the inherent combinatorial explosion of the problem.

Although most of the techniques will be rather general, we will focus on the specific set of parameters of \( A_2(7, 4; 3) \) for our numerical computations, which is the smallest undecided case for binary constant dimension codes. Prior to this paper, the best known bounds were \( 329 \leq A_2(7, 4; 3) \leq 381 \) [6]. See [14] and the corresponding technical manual [15] for an on-line table of known bounds on \( A_q(n, d; k) \).

In the language of projective geometry, see e.g. [10] for a contemporary survey, those codes correspond to collections of planes in \( PG(6, 2) \) mutually intersecting in at most a point. Moreover, the Steiner triple system \( S_2(2, 3, 7) \) would be a constant dimension code for the \( A_2(7, 4; 3) \) setting of maximum size, if it exists, and vice versa.

With respect to the concrete parameters, the main contributions of our paper are:

**Theorem 1.** Let \( C \) be a set of planes in \( PG(6, 2) \) mutually intersecting in at most a point. If \( |C| \geq 329 \), then the automorphism group of \( C \) is conjugate to one of the 33 subgroups of \( GL(7, 2) \) given in Appendix B. The orders of of these groups are \( 1^12^13^24^75^16^37^28^11^29^212^414^116^1 \). Moreover, if \( |C| \geq 330 \) then \( |\text{Aut}(C)| \leq 14 \) and if \( |C| \geq 334 \) then \( |\text{Aut}(C)| \leq 12 \).

**Theorem 2.** In \( PG(6, 2) \), there exists a set \( C \) of 333 planes mutually intersecting in at most a point. Hence,

\[ A_2(7, 4; 3) \geq 333. \]

The set \( C \) is given explicitly in Appendix C. Its automorphism group \( \text{Aut}(C) \) is isomorphic to the Klein four-group. It is the group \( G_{4,6} \) in Appendix B.

The remaining part of the paper is structured as follows. In Section 2 we review the previous work done on binary constant dimension codes for our parameters \( n = 7 \), \( d = 4 \), and \( k = 3 \). The preliminaries and utilized methods are described in Section 3.

In Section 4, a method is described how to determine whether a code with a prescribed automorphism group and size exists. In our analysis of the possible groups (eventually) admitting a code of size at least 329, we start with groups of prime power order in Section 5 and continue with groups of composite order in Section 6. The modifications described in Section 7 of a code of size 329 yield the code mentioned in Theorem 2 and Appendix C. We draw a conclusion in Section 8. The groups corresponding to Theorem 1, as well as the code of size 333 of Theorem 2, are listed in the appendix.

## 2. Previous work

The upper bound \( A_2(7, 4; 3) \leq 2667/7 = 381 \) can be concluded by observing that there are 2667 2-dimensional subspaces in \( F_2^7 \) and every codeword contains seven 2-dimensional subspaces.

Equality is attained if each 2-dimensional subspace is covered with exactly one codeword. This would be a binary \( q \)-analog Steiner triple system \( S(2, 3, 7)_2 \). In the set case \( \langle q = 1 \rangle \) such a structure is well known, it is the famous Fano plane. The only known \( q \)-analogs of Steiner systems have parameters \( S(2, 3, 13)_2 \) [4]. The existence question for
A 2-analog Steiner triple system $S(2, 3, 7)_2$ has been tackled in several research papers, see e.g. [7, 8, 11, 13, 16, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26]. In [5, 17] the authors eliminated all but one non-trivial group as possible automorphism groups of a binary $q$-analog of the Fano plane, so that the automorphism group is known to be at most of order two.

Relaxing the condition “equal” to “at most”, we arrive at binary constant dimension codes with parameters $n = 7$, $d = 4$, and $k = 3$. The construction of [9] gives $A_2(7, 4; 3) ≥ 289$. In 2008 Etzion and Vardy [19] found a code of cardinality 294. A code of cardinality 304 was found in [19] via the prescription of a cyclic group of order 15. Prescribing a cyclic group of order 15 and modifying corresponding codes yields $A_2(7, 4; 3) ≥ 329$ [6]. In the sequel, an explicit, computer-free construction of (a different) code of size 329 was presented in [16, 21]. Hitherto, all known examples of codes of cardinality 329 only admit the trivial automorphism.

In the following, we use a similar approach by reformulating the corresponding problem as an integer linear programming problem, see Section 7 and succeed to construct a code of cardinality 333 starting from a code of size 329.

### 3. Preliminaries

Let $V = \mathbb{F}_q^n$ be a vector space of dimension $n ≥ 3$. Let $C$ be a set of subspaces of $V$ and $K$ be a subspace of $V$.

The fundamental theorem of projective geometry [1, 2] states that the set of order preserving isometries is $\text{PGL}(V)$.

Let $q = 2$ throughout this paper. Then we have $\text{PGL}(\mathbb{F}_q^n) = \text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_q^n)$ and, after choosing a basis of $V$, the elements in this group can be represented as matrices.

By

$$U^g = g^{-1}Ug \quad \text{and} \quad U^G = \{U^g \mid g \in G\}$$

we denote the conjugation of $U ≤ \text{PGL}(V)$ with $g \in \text{PGL}(V)$ and $G ≤ \text{PGL}(V)$.

For the bijective map $r$ that maps $[V \atop k]$ to binary $k \times n$ matrices in reduced row echelon form, the operation of $M ∈ \text{GL}(V)$ on $K ∈ [V \atop k]$ is given by matrix multiplication $r^{-1}(r(K) \cdot M)$.

An element $M ∈ \text{PGL}(V)$ is called automorphism of $C$ if the element wise operation holds $C \cdot M = C$. A subgroup $U ≤ \text{PGL}(V)$ is called an automorphism group of $C$ if each $M ∈ U$ is an automorphism of $C$ and it is called the automorphism group of $C$, $\text{Aut}(C)$, if it contains all automorphisms.

For a subgroup $U ≤ \text{PGL}(V)$,

$$K \cdot U = \{K \cdot M \mid M \in U\} \quad \text{and} \quad C \cdot U = \{K \cdot U \mid K \in C\}$$

denote the orbits of $K$ and $C$. The orbit space of all $k$-dimensional subspaces of $V$ and $U ≤ \text{PGL}(V)$ is denoted as $[V \atop k] / U$.

By $A_q(n, d; k; U)$ we denote the maximum size of a constant dimension code $C$ in $[V \atop k]$ with subspace distance at least $d$ and $U ≤ \text{Aut}(C)$. Note that $A_q(n, d; k; I) = A_q(n, d; k)$ where $I$ is the identity subgroup in $\text{PGL}(V)$.

This paper uses two obvious but far reaching observations.

**Observation 3.**

1. $A_q(n, d; k; M) ≥ A_q(n, d; k; N)$ for $M ≤ N ≤ \text{PGL}(V)$ and
2. $A_q(n, d; k; U^g) = A_q(n, d; k; U)$ for all $g ∈ \text{PGL}(V)$.

For example the 32, 252, 031 groups (or elements) of order two in $\text{PGL}(\mathbb{F}_2^n) = \text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_2^n)$ fall in just three conjugacy classes.

Occasionally, we will mention abstract types of groups. We use $C_n$ for the cyclic group, $D_n$ for the dihedral group, $Q_n$ for the quaternion group of order $n$, $A_n$ for the
alternating group, and $S_n$ for the symmetric group on $n$ elements. $\times$ denotes a direct product and $\rtimes$ denotes a (not necessarily unique) semidirect product of groups.

Given the abstract type of a group we can obtain the precise information of the abstract types of its subgroups from the Small Groups library [3], implemented in the computer algebra system Magma, containing all groups with order at most 2000 except 1024.

For an orbit space $X \cdot G$ the orbit type is a number $c_1^{n_1} \cdot \ldots \cdot c_m^{n_m}$ with the meaning that $X \cdot G$ contains exactly $n_i$ orbits of cardinality $c_i$ for $i \in \{1, \ldots, m\}$ and no other orbits.

Using the observations above one can exclude all supergroups and their conjugates of a group $U$ as automorphism group of a subspace code of size at least 329, as soon as $U$ can be excluded as possible automorphism group of such a code with the Kramer-Mesner like computation method of Section 4. With this, the general idea is to (implicitly) consider all possible groups of automorphisms.

In order to formalize our approach from a more general point of view, we introduce a mapping $\mathcal{P}$. For a group $U \leq G$ we set

\begin{itemize}
  \item $\mathcal{P}(U) = 0$, if $A_2(7, 4; 3, U) \leq \kappa$, where we use $\kappa = 328$ in this paper,
  \item $\mathcal{P}(U) = 1$, if there is a code such that $U$ is contained in its automorphism group or the computation was aborted after a reasonable amount of time.
\end{itemize}

Our strategy now is to systematically determine $P(U)$ for all subgroups $U \leq G$ from the bottom up where we can stop the search, i.e. set $P(U) = 0$, in the following cases:

1. If $U$ contains a subgroup whose order is in $S \subseteq \mathbb{N}$ and $\mathcal{P}(H) = 0$ for all groups $H \leq G$ of order $t \in S$.
2. If $U$ contains a subgroup whose abstract type is in the set $T$ and $\mathcal{P}(H) = 0$ for all groups $H \leq G$ of type $t \in T$.
3. If $U$ contains a subgroup $H$ with $\mathcal{P}(H) = 0$.

Since only cardinalities of subgroups of $U$ need to be known in Step (1), the theorems of Sylow and Hall, see [12, Section 4.2 and Thm. 9.3.1] are applied. If the abstract type of $U$ is known, the Small Groups library can give the desired information for Step (1). If Step (1) was not successful, then one can refine to the abstract type of $U$ in Step (2). Finally, the concrete conjugacy class of $U$ has to be known for Step (3).

If $\mathcal{P}(U)$ is still undecided after all three steps, then the optimization problem from Section 4 has to be solved.

From the group-theoretic point of view it remains to describe how the conjugacy classes of groups are generated. For $p$-Sylow groups we need a single example since all of these groups are conjugate. For cyclic subgroups we describe some shortcuts in Section 3.2. Except for orders 16, 32, and 64 the built-in functions of Magma are sufficient to produce the required list of conjugacy classes of groups for our parameters. For the remaining powers of two we provide a general algorithmic tool in Subsection 3.1. Here, the idea is to extend a list of groups, having $\mathcal{P}(\cdot) = 1$, to a complete list $L$ of larger groups of a desired order $u$ such that all groups of order $u$ which are not conjugate to elements of $L$ have $\mathcal{P}(\cdot) = 0$.

3.1. Generating groups up to conjugacy. Let $f : \{A \leq G\} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$ be a map such that $f(A) \geq f(B)$ for all $A \leq B$ and $f(A) = f(A^g)$ for all $g \in G$.

Lemma 4. Let $G$ be a finite group. Further, let $t, u$ be integers with $t \mid u \mid \#G$ such that any subgroup of $G$ of order $u$ contains a normal subgroup of order $t$.

Suppose that the set $T$ consists of all conjugacy classes of subgroups $T \leq G$ of order $t$ such that $f(T) = 1$. Let $T_N$ be a transversal of the conjugacy classes of the set
\{(T, N_G(T)) \mid T^G \in T \}\) under the action of \(G\). Let \(U = \{U^{N_G(T)} \mid (T, N_G(T)) \in \mathcal{T}_N, T \leq U \leq N_G(T), \#U = u\}\). Then, \(f(U) = 0\) for all \(U \leq G\) with \(\#U = u\) and \(U^G \notin U\).

**Proof.** Assume there is a \(U \leq G\) with cardinality \(u\) and \(f(U) = 1\), then it contains a normal subgroup \(T\) of cardinality \(t\) and by monotony \(f(T) = 1\). It follows that \((T, N_G(T))\) represents a conjugacy class of \(T\). Moreover, since \(T\) is a normal subgroup in \(U\) and \(N_G(T)\) is the largest subgroup of \(G\) having \(T\) as normal subgroup, \(U \leq N_G(T)\). Hence, \(U^{N_G(T)} \in U\), contradicting the assumption. \(\square\)

**Remark:** If \(u/t\) is a prime, then \(\mathcal{T}_N\) can be restricted to the conjugacy classes of \(N_G(T)\) operating on its cyclic subgroups.

The requirements of this lemma on \(t\) and \(u\) may be fulfilled in certain constellations with the help of the Sylow Theorems see e.g. [12, Section 4.2] or the Theorem of Hall, see [12, Theorem 9.3.1]. If neither the Sylow theorems nor the Hall theorems can be applied, the Small Groups library [3] may be of help. For example, it contains the information that any group of order 20 has a normal subgroup of order 5 and 10. Also, any group of order 40 has a normal subgroup of order 2, 5, 10, and 20.

We will use Lemma 4 to handle the possible automorphism groups of order 16.

**3.2. Techniques for an exhaustive search in a finite group.** Since we apply this technique to \(G = \text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_q^n)\), we profit from the special group structure of the \(\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_q^n)\).

First, all elements up to conjugacy can be generated by the normal forms, e.g., the Frobenius normal form [5].

Second, given an element \(c \in G\), the check if a group \(U \leq G\) contains a cyclic subgroup \(C = \langle c \rangle\) is easy.

The dimension of the eigenspace for the eigenvalue 1 is equal for all generators of \(C\) and invariant in the conjugacy class \(C^G\). Hence, we will use \(\text{dim}(\text{eig}(C, 1))\) instead \(\text{dim}(\text{eig}(c, 1))\) for \(C = \langle c \rangle\).

If for fixed integer \(m\) and \(n\) all cyclic subgroups \(C \leq G\) with \(|C| = m\) and \(\text{dim}(\text{eig}(C, 1)) = n\) are excluded, then all groups \(U \leq G\) having an element \(c\) of order \(m\) and \(\text{dim}(\text{eig}(c, 1)) = n\) can be excluded as well. Furthermore this test replaces the expensive test for conjugacy.

In the remainder of this paper, we will simply speak of the dimension of the eigenspace and use it in the context of cyclic groups and their conjugacy classes.

**4. An integer linear programming formulation for constant dimension codes with prescribed automorphisms**

In [19], a computational method based on the Kramer-Mesner approach for large subspace codes with prescribed automorphism group is presented. We adopt a similar method using an integer linear program (ILP) that provides lower and upper bounds on \(A_2(7, 4; 3; U)\) for a prescribed automorphism subgroups \(U \leq G\).

Let \([\mathbb{F}_3^7]\) and \([\mathbb{F}_2^7]\) denote the set of all 3-dimensional subspaces and 2-dimensional subspaces in \(\mathbb{F}_7^n\). For a given group \(U\) of prescribed automorphisms, let \(T_3(U)\) be a transversal of the orbit space \([\mathbb{F}_3^7]/U\) and \(T_2(U)\) be a transversal of the orbit space \([\mathbb{F}_2^7]/U\). By \(t(K, U) \in T_3(U)\) we denote the representative of the orbit containing \(K \in [\mathbb{F}_3^7]\). As variables we choose \(x_K \in \{0, 1\}\), where \(x_K = 1\) if and only if the entire
An orbit $K \cdot U$ for $K \in T_3(U)$ is contained in the code. The incidences are modeled with $M^U = (m_{T,K})_{T \in T_2(U), K \in T_3(U)}$ where

$$m_{T,K} = |\{W \in K \cdot U \mid T \leq W\}|.$$  

Finding a best subspace code having this group of automorphisms can be formulated as an ILP:

$$\text{ILP}(U) = \max \sum_{K \in T_3(U)} |K \cdot U| \cdot x_K$$

s.t. 

$$M^U x \leq 1$$

$$x_K \in \{0, 1\} \quad \forall K \in T_3(U)$$

By replacing the binary $x_K \in \{0, 1\}$ by the weaker constraint $0 \leq x_K \leq 1$ we obtain the so-called linear programming (LP) relaxation.

In case $m_{T,K} \geq 2$, the corresponding variable $x_K$ is trivially zero and consequently the orbit $K \cdot U$ is not in the code.

In order to compute $P(U)$ for a given group, we first compute the optimal target value $z$ of the LP-relaxation, which can always be done in reasonable time. If for the LP, $z < \kappa + 1 = 329$, $P(U) = 0$. Otherwise we try to solve ILP($U$). If the upper bound of ILP($U$) is $< \kappa + 1$, then $P(U) = 0$. If an integral solution with target value at least $\kappa + 1$ is found, or the computer search is abandoned after reaching a certain time limit, then $P(U) = 1$.

4.1. Using the automorphisms of the orbit space. The prescription of a group $U \leq \text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_3^2)$ yields the orbit space $[\mathbb{F}_3^2]/U$, which in turn has automorphisms. It is well known that $N_{\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_3^2)}(U) \leq \text{Aut}([\mathbb{F}_3^2]/U)$. This automorphisms can be used to reduce the overall solving time of the ILP.

For this, let $O(U) := ([\mathbb{F}_3^2]/U)/N_{\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_3^2)}(U)$ and $t(o, U)$ be an arbitrary orbit of $O(U)$ containing an orbit $o \in ([\mathbb{F}_3^2]/U)$. For a $K$ in $t(o, U)$ the ILP from above is extended to $\text{ILP}_o$ by adding the constraint $x_{t(K, U)} = 1$.

We will solve the $|O(U)|$ problems $\text{ILP}_o$. Thanks to the automorphisms this is sufficient to solve the initial ILP: $P(U) = 0 \Leftrightarrow \max\{z(\text{ILP}_o) \mid o \in O\} < \kappa + 1$, where $z(\cdot)$ denotes the objective value. After choosing an ordering $\{o_1, \ldots, o_{|O(U)|}\} = O(U)$, processing $\text{ILP}_{o_i}$ yields additional information for the problems $\text{ILP}_{o_{i+1}}, \ldots, \text{ILP}_{o_{|O(U)|}}$. If $z(\text{ILP}_{o_i}) \geq \kappa + 1$ then we finish with $P(U) = 1$, else no orbit in $o_i$ is part of any code with size at least $\kappa + 1$ and can be excluded in the following $\text{ILP}_o$ by adding the constraint

$$x_{t(K, U)} = 0 \text{ for a } K \in \text{'}o \text{'} \text{ for all } \text{'}o \text{' } \in o.$$  

(1)

Therefore, the order of these subproblems is important. The goal is to have a small overall solving time, hence we sort $\{\text{ILP}_o \mid o \in O\}$ in decreasing size of $|o|$ and in case of equality decreasing in the number of forced codewords. The first sorting criterion ensures few remaining automorphisms, due to the orbit-stabilizer theorem, whereas the second criterion ensures small computation times due to the fixtures.

To decrease the overall solving time even further, after determining the order of $\text{ILP}_o$, we assume that $P(U)$ will be 0 and generate all problems with the implied exclusions of (1) beforehand and start solving them in parallel. If there is an $o \in O$ with $z(\text{ILP}_o) \geq \kappa + 1$, then our assumption was wrong and we return $P(U) = 1$. 


5. Symmetry groups of prime power order

We first start to consider groups of prime power order. Due to $|\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)| = 2^{21} \cdot 3^4 \cdot 5 \cdot 7^2 \cdot 31 \cdot 127$, it suffices to consider the primes 2, 3, 5, 7, 31, 127.

All necessary conjugates of subgroups were computed using Magma.

5.1. Symmetry groups of order 5, 31 and 127. From the factorization of $|\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)|$, it follows that there is exactly one subgroup of $\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)$ up to conjugacy of order 5, 31, and 127.

The group of order 127 yields codes of maximum size 254 [19, 25].

The group of order 31 yields an orbit space of the 3-dimensional subspaces of type $31^{381}$. The orbit space on the 2-dimensional subspaces has the type $1^{1}31^{86}$. Solving the corresponding ILP yields a code of size 279 which is also the maximum cardinality for this automorphism group.

The group of order 5 has orbit type $1^{1}5^{2362}$ on the 3-dimensional subspaces and $1^{75532}$ on the 2-dimensional subspaces. Unfortunately, this ILP is too difficult to solve in reasonable time. Thus only $G_{5,1}$ (cf. Appendix B) remains.

5.2. Symmetry groups of order divisible by 3 and 7. All groups of order 7 are cyclic so that they can be computed using the Frobenius normal form. There are three non-conjugate groups. One of them can only yield codes of size at most 296 whereas the other two could not be excluded in reasonable time. A nontrivial element in the excluded group has a 4-dimensional eigenspace and any element of the non-excluded groups has 1-dimensional eigenspaces.

Since the maximum power of the prime 7 is 49 in $|\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)|$, there is exactly one subgroup of order 49 up to conjugacy. Using the Sylow theorems, it has to contain at least one subgroup of any conjugacy class of order 7. In particular it has to contain a conjugate to the previously excluded group of order 7. Therefore the group of order 49 cannot yield larger codes than 296.

The same can be performed for the groups of order 3. There are exactly three conjugacy classes of subgroups of order 3. One yields codes of cardinality at most 255. The other two groups could not be excluded in reasonable time.

There are exactly 4 groups of order 9 in the $\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)$ up to conjugacy. Two of them contain the previously excluded group of order 3 and hence can only yield a largest code cardinality of 255. The other two groups of order 9 cannot be excluded. They have abstract type $C_9$ and $C_3 \times C_3$.

There are 3 conjugacy classes of groups of order 27. One of them contains a conjugate of the excluded group of order 3. With the methods of Section 4, we see that both groups yields codes of maximum size 309.

The unique conjugacy class of groups of order 81 contains a conjugate to the excluded group of order 3 and can therefore yield only codes of size at most 255.

Thus only $G_{7,1}$, $G_{7,2}$, $G_{3,1}$, $G_{3,2}$, $G_{9,1}$, and $G_{9,2}$ (cf. Appendix B) remain.

5.3. Symmetry groups of order divisible by 2. There are 3 conjugacy classes of groups of order 2 in $\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)$. The first cannot be excluded and has a 4-dimensional eigenspace. The second can only yield codes of size 298 and has an 5-dimensional eigenspace. The third can only yield codes of size 106 and has a 6-dimensional eigenspace, cf. [19].

There are 42 conjugacy classes of subgroups of order 4 in the $\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)$. All but 8 contain at least one already excluded group of order 2, cf. [5]. One of them can yield codes of size at most 327.
There are 867 conjugacy classes of subgroups of order 8 in the $GL(\mathbb{F}_2^7)$. All but 38 contain an already excluded group of order 2. All but 11 of the remaining groups can be excluded computationally.

For the subgroups of order 16, we apply the technique described in the Section 3.1. Since a subgroup of index 2 is necessarily a normal subgroup, see e.g. [12, Cor. 2.2.1], Lemma 4 can be applied for $t = 8$ and $u = 16$. Up to conjugacy there are exactly 50 subgroups of order 16 of the $GL(\mathbb{F}_2^7)$ such that no contained 2-subgroup is already excluded. Solving the corresponding ILPs from Section 4 shows that these 50 subgroups can yield codes of cardinality at most 329 and exactly one group attains this bound.

This group is of type $(C_4 \times C_2) \times C_2$, see $G_{16,1}$ in the appendix, and it will play a major role in the process of finding the code of cardinality 333. In fact, there are up to isomorphism exactly 12 codes of size 329 under prescription of $G_{16,1}$. Each code has the orbit type $1^12^24^88^16^{14}$ and each of the 12 isomorphism classes has 16 codes, summing up to a total of 192 codes, which have $G_{16,1}$ as automorphism group.

Stepping the 2-Sylow ladder further up by applying Lemma 4 to $G_{16,1}$ with $t = 16$ and $u = 32$, we found a group of order 32 that yields a code of size 327 and by applying Lemma 4 to this group, we found a group of order 64 that yielded a code of size 317.

Thus only $G_{2,1}$, $G_{4,1}$, \ldots, $G_{4,7}$, $G_{8,1}$, \ldots, $G_{8,11}$ (cf. Appendix B) remain.

6. Symmetry groups of composite order

Using the Sylow theorems [12, Thm. 4.2.1], we conclude from the results in Section 5 that we only have to consider groups with an order that divides $2^4 \cdot 3^2 \cdot 5 \cdot 7$.

In the following we give a summary of the computer search. The full list of remaining orders in the sequence that we utilized can be found in Appendix A.

We considered all remaining orders in the sequence of increasing size. All groups with the orders 6, 10, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 24, 28, and 56 had to be computed and the ILP in Section 4 had to be applied to show that all of these orders except 6, 12, and 14 cannot yield codes larger than 328. In particular all groups of type $A_4$ were excluded, i.e. none of them is an automorphism group of a code of size at least 329. The groups of order 36 were computed but then theoretically excluded since they contain a subgroup of prime order or contain a subgroup of type $A_4$.

Next, using the Theorem of Hall [12, Thm. 9.3.1] each group of the solvable orders 30, 42, 70, 84, 90, 105, 126, 140, 210, 252, 280, 315, 560, and 630 has a subgroup that was previously excluded. The groups of order 20, 40, 45, 60, 63, 120, 144, 168, 180, 240, 360, 420, 720, 840, 1008, 1260, and 1680 could be excluded using the Small Groups library [3]. The orders 48, 72, 80, 112, 336, and 504 could be excluded along the same lines using a refined analysis, e.g. the groups of order 48 contain a subgroup of the excluded order 24 or a subgroup of type $A_4$. The group orders 35, 2520, and 5040 had to be computed but all of them contain an excluded group of prime order. The last two orders, i.e. 2520 and 5040, had to be computed because the Hall Theorem [12, Thm. 9.3.1] is not applicable since these orders are non-solvable numbers and the Small Groups library does not contain data about groups of these orders.

Thus, only $G_{6,1}$, $G_{6,2}$, $G_{6,3}$, and $G_{12,1}$ (cf. Appendix B) remain.

7. Modifying codes to get cardinality 333

Since we found an automorphism group of order 16 that yielded a code $C$ of size 329, i.e., $G_{16,1}$ in Appendix B, we searched for codes having large intersection with $C$ and automorphism group $U \leq G_{16,1}$.
Therefore, using nonnegative integers \( c \) and \( c' \), we add either the constraint
\[
\sum_{T \in \{ t(K,U) | K \in C \}} |T \cdot U| \cdot x_T \geq c
\]
to ILP(\( U \)). This constraint restricts the exchangeability of \( U \)-orbits.

By choosing the neighborhood parameter \( c = 300 \) and \( U = I \), this ILP yielded a code of size 333, cf. Appendix C. Further investigation showed that the code of size 333 has the automorphism group \( G_{4,6} \leq G_{16,1} \) of order 4, see Appendix B.

It turned out that it would have been sufficient to choose \( U = G_{4,6} \) and \( c = 327 \) to get a code that is extensible to a code of cardinality 333 having \( G_{4,6} \) as automorphism group. In fact, removing two fixed spaces allows to add two other fixed spaces and two orbits of size two.

35 3-subspaces of this code of size 333 are subspaces of the hyperplane in which each vector has zero as first entry. Omitting these 35 subspaces yields a code of size 298 in the affine geometry AG(6, 2) [27].

8. Conclusions

In this paper we present techniques for the exhaustive enumeration of all automorphism groups with a specific property. Clearly, it is possible to use this approach in other problem settings as well, as long as the property is independent of conjugacy and monotone as defined above. Moreover, by modification of large symmetric constant dimension codes, we found the new best lower bound of 333 in the binary Fano setting.

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As stated in Section 6, we list here all composite numbers which divide $2^4 \cdot 3^2 \cdot 5 \cdot 7$. They have to be considered as size of a subgroup in the $GL(F_7^2)$ to determine an exhaustive list of groups such that no other group of composite order than these listed here is an automorphism group of a code of size at least 329. In parentheses we note the line of reasoning: “Small Groups library” means that the abstract type is used to show the existence of already excluded subgroups. “Hall, solvable order” means that the Theorem of Hall [12, Theorem 9.3.1] is used to show the existence of already excluded subgroups. Moreover “due to groups of prime order” means that a subgroup is implied that is excluded within Section 5.

6 there are 12 subgroups of order 6 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. 9 are excluded due to groups of prime order. The 3 remaining groups cannot be excluded.

10 there are 3 subgroups of order 10 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. 2 are excluded due to groups of prime order. The remaining group yields codes of size up to 306.

12 there are 96 subgroups of order 12 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. 80 are excluded due to groups of prime order. All but 1 group could be excluded, it is of type $C_3 \rtimes C_4$.

14 there are 4 subgroups of order 14 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. 2 are excluded due to groups of prime order. One could be excluded and the other yields codes of size at most 332. The remaining group is of abstract type $C_{14}$. One of these two groups could be solved in less then 60 seconds with an optimal value of 301. The other one was much harder and the technique described in Subsection 4.1 was applied. The orbit type is $1 \cdot 2^4 \cdot 7^{30} \cdot 14^{628}$ and after removing the trivially forbidden orbits $1 \cdot 2^4 \cdot 7^{28} \cdot 14^{632}$. The normalizer has order 168 and the normalizer-orbit type is $1 \cdot 4 \cdot 13 \cdot 2 \cdot 12 \cdot 50$ making a total of 66 subproblems.

15 there are 3 subgroups of order 15 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. 1 is excluded due to groups of prime order. The remaining groups could be excluded.

18 there are 16 subgroups of order 18 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. 13 are excluded due to groups of prime order. The remaining groups could be excluded.

20 each group of order 20 contains a group of order 10 (Small Groups library)

21 there are 8 subgroups of order 21 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. 5 are excluded due to groups of prime order. The remaining groups could be excluded.

24 there are 525 subgroups of order 24 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. 488 are excluded due to groups of prime order. The types of these groups are: 14 times
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$S_4$, 19 times $C_2 \times A_4$, 2 times $\text{SL}(2,3)$, and 2 times $(C_5 \times C_2) \times C_2$. All but the two groups of type $\text{SL}(2,3)$ contain an excluded $C_{12}$, $C_6 \times C_2$, or $A_4$. The remaining two groups could be excluded computationally.

28 there are 9 subgroups of order 28 up to conjugacy in the $\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)$. 8 are excluded due to groups of prime order. The remaining group is of type $C_{14} \times C_2$ but could be excluded computationally.

30 each group of order 30 contains a group of order 10 (Hall, solvable order).

35 there is 1 subgroup of order 35 up to conjugacy in the $\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)$. It is excluded due to groups of prime order.

36 there are 61 subgroups of order 36 up to conjugacy in the $\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)$. 59 are excluded due to groups of prime order. The remaining groups are both of type $C_3 \times A_4$ and contains an excluded $A_4$.

40 each group of order 40 contains a group of order 10 (Small Groups library).

42 each group of order 42 contains a group of order 21 (Hall, solvable order).

45 each group of order 45 contains a group of order 15 (Small Groups library).

48 each group of order 48 contains a subgroup of order 24 or a subgroup of abstract type $A_4$ (Small Groups library).

56 there are 38 subgroups of order 56 up to conjugacy in the $\text{GL}(\mathbb{F}_7^2)$. 26 are excluded due to groups of prime order. One group is of type $C_{14} \times C_2 \times C_2$ and contains an excluded $C_{14}$. The remaining 11 groups are of type $C_2 \times C_2 \times C_2 \times C_2$ and could be excluded computationally.

60 each group of order 60 contains a group of order 10 (Small Groups library).

63 each group of order 63 contains a group of order 21 (Small Groups library).

70 each group of order 70 contains a group of order 10 (Hall, solvable order).

72 each group of order 72 contains a group of order 36 or a subgroup of abstract type $C_{12}$ (Small Groups library).

80 each group of order 80 contains a subgroup of order 10 or a subgroup of abstract type $C_2 \times C_2 \times C_2 \times C_2$, which yields codes of size at most 313 (Small Groups library).

84 each group of order 84 contains a group of order 28 (Hall, solvable order).

90 each group of order 90 contains a group of order 10 (Hall, solvable order).

105 each group of order 105 contains a group of order 15 (Hall, solvable order).

112 each group of order 112 contains a subgroup of order 28 or a subgroup of abstract type $C_2 \times C_2 \times C_2 \times C_2$ (Small Groups library).

120 each group of order 120 contains a group of order 10 (Small Groups library).

126 each group of order 126 contains a group of order 63 (Hall, solvable order).

140 each group of order 140 contains a group of order 28 (Hall, solvable order).

144 each group of order 144 contains a group of order 36 (Small Groups library).

168 each group of order 168 contains a group of order 21 (Small Groups library).

180 each group of order 180 contains a group of order 36 (Small Groups library).

210 each group of order 210 contains a group of order 10 (Hall, solvable order).

240 each group of order 240 contains a group of order 10 or order 15 (Small Groups library).

252 each group of order 252 contains a group of order 28 (Hall, solvable order).

280 each group of order 280 contains a group of order 35 (Hall, solvable order).

315 each group of order 315 contains a group of order 63 (Hall, solvable order).

336 each group of order 336 contains a subgroup of order 48 or a subgroup of abstract type $A_4$ or $Q_{16}$ (Small Groups library).

360 each group of order 360 contains a group of order 10 (Small Groups library).

420 each group of order 420 contains a group of order 28 (Small Groups library).

Due to groups of prime order.
504 each group of order 504 contains a subgroup of order 63 or a subgroup of abstract type $D_{14}$ (Small Groups library)
560 each group of order 560 contains a group of order 35 (Hall, solvable order)
630 each group of order 630 contains a group of order 10 (Hall, solvable order)
720 each group of order 720 contains a group of order 10 or order 45 (Small Groups library)
840 each group of order 840 contains a group of order 10 (Small Groups library)
1008 each group of order 1008 contains a group of order 36 or order 63 (Small Groups library)
1260 each group of order 1260 contains a group of order 10 (Small Groups library)
1680 each group of order 1680 contains a group of order 10 or order 15 (Small Groups library)
2520 there are 7 subgroups of order 2520 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. All are excluded due to groups of prime order.
5040 there are 4 subgroups of order 5040 up to conjugacy in the $GL(F_7^2)$. All are excluded due to groups of prime order. None of them is solvable.

**Appendix B. The surviving groups**

By $G_{n,m}$ we denote the groups corresponding to Theorem 1. Here $n$ denotes the order of $G_{n,m}$ and $m$ is a consecutive index.

$G_{1,1} = I$

$C_1$

$G_{2,1} = \langle \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \rangle$

$C_2$

$G_{3,1} = \langle \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \rangle$

$C_3$

$G_{3,2} = \langle \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \rangle$

$C_3$

$G_{4,1} = \langle \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \rangle$

$C_2 \times C_2$

$G_{4,2} = \langle \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \rangle$

$C_2 \times C_2$

$G_{4,3} = \langle \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \rangle$

$C_2 \times C_2$
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\[ G_{4,4} = \begin{pmatrix} 1110011 \\ 1110010 \\ 0101111 \\ 1100001 \\ 1101011 \\ 0001101 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} 0010111 \\ 0100111 \\ 0010111 \\ 0110111 \\ 0110111 \\ 1010111 \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_2 \times C_2 \]

\[ G_{4,5} = \begin{pmatrix} 1110101 \\ 0010011 \\ 0101000 \\ 0001000 \\ 0000010 \\ 0001011 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} 0010110 \\ 0010011 \\ 0101010 \\ 0110110 \\ 0110110 \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_2 \times C_2 \]

\[ G_{4,6} = \begin{pmatrix} 0010000 \\ 0001000 \\ 1000000 \\ 0101000 \\ 0100000 \\ 0100100 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} 1100010 \\ 1101011 \\ 0110111 \\ 0111101 \\ 1000101 \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_2 \times C_2 \]

\[ G_{4,7} = \begin{pmatrix} 1100000 \\ 0110000 \\ 0010000 \\ 0001100 \\ 0000110 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_4 \]

\[ G_{5,1} = \begin{pmatrix} 0100000 \\ 0010000 \\ 0001000 \\ 1111000 \\ 0000010 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_5 \]

\[ G_{6,1} = \begin{pmatrix} 0100110 \\ 1100010 \\ 0111000 \\ 0010000 \\ 1001100 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} 0111100 \\ 1110000 \\ 0100110 \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ S_3 \]

\[ G_{6,2} = \begin{pmatrix} 1101010 \\ 1101100 \\ 1110000 \\ 1010110 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} 1011010 \\ 1010100 \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ S_3 \]

\[ G_{6,3} = \begin{pmatrix} 0101110 \\ 0100100 \\ 0011110 \\ 1111010 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} 1001010 \\ 0100100 \\ 0110100 \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_6 \]

\[ G_{7,1} = \begin{pmatrix} 0100000 \\ 0010000 \\ 0001000 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_7 \]

\[ G_{7,2} = \begin{pmatrix} 0100000 \\ 0010000 \\ 0001000 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_7 \]

\[ G_{8,1} = \begin{pmatrix} 1110100 \\ 1000011 \\ 0010000 \\ 0100000 \\ 1111110 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} 0010111 \\ 0100010 \end{pmatrix} \]

\[ C_2 \times C_2 \times C_2 \]
A subspace code of size 333 in the setting of a binary $q$-analogue of the Fano plane

The code of size 333 is printed below. Since the group $G_{4,6}$ of Appendix B is its automorphism group we print only one representative in each orbit. The orbit type is $1^{92}20^46^8$. Each row represents one subspace and each number represents a column in the reduced row echelon form matrix corresponding to the subspace by multiplying the entries in the column with powers of 2: $a \cdot b^1 + c \cdot 2^2$. For example, the first line in the representatives of order 4, i.e., 0102004, is the orbit of subspaces:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ \end{pmatrix} \cdot G_{4,6}$$

Fixed blocks:

0 1 2 4 4 1 2  
1 0 1 2 4 6 0  
1 1 2 4 6 3 3  
1 2 0 4 6 0 1  
1 2 1 3 4 5 7  
1 2 1 4 4 2 5  
1 2 2 4 7 1 3  
1 2 4 0 0 2 0  
1 2 4 2 7 7 0  

Representatives of orbits of length 2:

0 1 0 2 1 4 0  
1 0 2 4 4 5 3  
1 1 1 2 4 3 4  
1 1 2 1 2 1 2 4  
1 1 2 3 3 4 6  
1 2 0 4 5 7 1  
1 2 1 0 4 1 0  
1 2 1 1 4 6 0  
1 2 1 2 4 7 3  
1 2 1 4 3 3 6  
1 2 3 0 4 2 6  
1 2 4 1 1 1 6  
1 2 4 2 3 7 5  
1 2 4 2 4 1 5  

Appendix C. The code of size 333 in the binary Fano setting
Representatives of orbits of length 4:

0 1 0 2 0 0 4
0 1 0 2 4 6 7
0 1 1 0 2 2 4
0 1 1 1 2 4 0
0 1 2 0 3 4
0 1 2 0 2 4 0
0 1 2 1 4 5 7
0 1 2 2 2 4 1
0 1 2 2 3 4 4
0 1 2 4 1 6 1
0 1 2 4 4 3 5
0 1 2 4 4 7 3
1 0 0 2 1 4 6
1 0 0 2 3 4 2
1 0 0 2 4 2 7
1 0 1 2 4 1 3
1 0 2 0 4 6 7
1 0 2 1 0 3 4
1 0 2 1 2 4 7
1 0 2 4 3 5 5
1 0 2 4 4 4 6
1 1 0 2 2 0 4
1 1 0 2 4 5 2
1 1 2 1 4 3 0
1 1 2 2 4 0 5
1 1 2 4 2 1 0
1 1 2 4 2 3 1
1 2 0 0 3 1 4
1 2 0 2 2 4 6
1 2 0 2 4 2 2
1 2 0 3 4 1 3
1 2 1 0 3 2 4
1 2 1 0 4 7 5
1 2 1 1 4 1 5
1 2 1 2 1 4 2
1 2 1 4 0 2 6
1 2 1 4 5 0 7
1 2 2 0 4 3 3
1 2 2 4 2 1 7
1 2 2 4 6 0 5
1 2 3 1 4 6 5
1 2 3 4 2 4 1
1 2 3 4 4 1 3
1 2 3 4 6 1 0
1 2 4 0 2 6 6
1 2 4 0 4 1 6
1 2 4 1 1 5 7
1 2 4 1 2 6 5
1 2 4 1 5 3 3
1 2 4 2 4 3 0
1 2 4 2 6 7 2
1 2 4 3 5 4 4
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1 2 4 3 7 2 7
1 2 4 4 0 6 7
1 2 4 4 3 4 3
1 2 4 4 4 0 1
1 2 4 4 6 0 6
1 2 4 5 1 2 2
1 2 4 5 3 1 1
1 2 4 5 6 6 3
1 2 4 6 0 5 0
1 2 4 6 0 7 3
1 2 4 6 1 3 4
1 2 4 6 2 4 0
1 2 4 6 5 1 7
1 2 4 7 0 0 7
1 2 4 7 4 0 4
1 2 4 7 7 5 4