

Exploring Metamath Proof Structures

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We Investigate Ways of Structuring Proofs by Lemmas, Relating Two Aspects

1. **Practice by humans** for formalized proofs
Metamath: 42,500 proven theorems
2. **Mechanizable possibilities**
A tree compression algorithm: *TreeRePair*

Questions

- Can we **understand human practice** as a form of structure compression?
- Can automated tools **find structurings of interest** that were overlooked by humans?

Our Approach is Driven by Proof Structures, in Contrast to Formulas

- Nice technical foundation: **condensed detachment**, by Carew A. Meredith – mid 1950s
 - Associates simple proof structures and formulas proven by them
 - Foundation of Metamath

- Simple and flexible computer-processable language for **verifying, archiving, and presenting proofs**
- Contributors include **Norman Megill** (founder, since early 1990s), David A. Wheeler, Mario Carneiro
- **set.mm (Metamath Proof Explorer)**: mathematics from scratch, starting from ZFC set theory axioms
 - Currently 42,500 proven theorems
 - **A single text file (“database”)**
- Technical basis is substitution – or **condensed detachment**
[Norman Megill: *A Finitely Axiomatized Formalization of Predicate Calculus with Equality*, 1995]
- Not tied to any particular set of axioms, instead, axioms are defined in the database
- Syntax is similarly defined via substitution rules in the database
- Specification and introduction: **Metamath book** (available as free PDF)
[Megill & Wheeler: *Metamath – A Computer Language for Mathematical Proofs*, 2nd ed., 2019]
- **Many tools** support Metamath, instead of requiring a “canonical” tool
- Ranks well in “Formalizing 100 Theorems”:
Isabelle 90; HOL Light 87; Coq 79; Lean 76; **Metamath 74**; Mizar 69; nqthm/ACL2 45

Background

- **Explicit proof structures** in a simple and convenient form
- Basis for **fresh views on structure-oriented ATP** (Prawitz, connection method, clausal tableaux), which operates by enumerating proof structures, constrained by unification of associated formulas

Recent CD-Related Efforts

- **Lemmas**: proof structure as useful information for **Machine Learning** (unit lemmas) [Rawson, W, Z & Bibel TABLEAUX 2023], related AITP 2022-2024 contributions
- **Structure-driven provers**: SGCD, solves LCL073-1 and gives a short proof of LCL038-1 [Rawson, W, Z & Bibel TABLEAUX 2023], [W AReCCA 2023], [W & Bibel JAR 2024]
- CCS integrates **combinator compression into proof search** [W PAAR 2022]
- **Abstract framework, reductions/regularities**, relations with the connection method [W & Bibel CADE 2021; JAR 2024]
- **CD Tools** – Implemented Prolog system with utilities, interfaces, provers and a Metamath interface <http://cs.christophwernhard.com/cdtools/>

The Metamath Interface of *CD Tools*

- Written from scratch in **SWI-Prolog**, included in *CD Tools*
- Formulas: Metamath's sequence representation is parsed to terms
Yields the same first-order formulas as *mm-hammer* [Carneiro, Brown & Urban 2023]
- Also **proofs are translated to Prolog terms**, with various options
 - Raw form preserves Metamath's compression through factorized terms
 - With and without Metamath's syntax processing steps
 - Forms compatible with *CD Tools*, which offers utilities to process and reduce CD proofs
- Prolog fact base generated from *set.mm*: 120 s; after compilation it loads in 0.5 s
- Not yet addressed
 - Disjoint variable conditions
 - Special handling for *df-cleq*, *weq*, *wceq*, *wcel*, *df-clel*, *wel*, *ax-prv1* and *ax-tgoldbachgt*
 - Translation of proofs to Metamath format (requires introduction of syntax processing steps)

CD: A Technical First-Order Meta-Level Perspective

- CD is traditionally used to establish **completeness of axiomatizations of propositional logics**, by reasoning on a **first-order “meta-level”**
 - **A single unary first-order predicate P** , for *provable* (written \vdash in Metamath)
 - **Operators of the object logic are first-order function symbols**, e.g. \Rightarrow

$\forall pq [P(p \Rightarrow q) \wedge P(p) \rightarrow P(q)] \wedge$	Detachment - a Horn clause
$\forall pqr s P(((p \Rightarrow q) \Rightarrow r) \Rightarrow ((r \Rightarrow p) \Rightarrow (s \Rightarrow p)))$	Axiom Łukasiewicz
$\vDash \forall pq P(p \Rightarrow (q \Rightarrow p)) \wedge$	Axiom Simp
$\forall pq P(((p \Rightarrow q) \Rightarrow p) \Rightarrow p) \wedge$	Axiom Peirce
$\forall pqr P((p \Rightarrow q) \Rightarrow ((q \Rightarrow r) \Rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r)))$	Axiom Syll

- Metamath goes further
 - “Condensed generalization”: $\forall px [P(p) \rightarrow P(\forall(x, p))]$
 - Syntax is handled with the same mechanism as proving

Definition. The *proves* relation is defined inductively:

1. c proves $P\sigma$ if c is an axiom name with formula P
2. $D(A, B)$ proves $Q\sigma$ if A proves $P \Rightarrow Q$ and B proves P
3. $G(A)$ proves $\forall(x, P)\sigma$ if A proves P

- If DG-term A proves some formula at all, then there is a most general formula P proven by A , called *the most general theorem (MGT)* of A
- The MGT of a DG-term for an axiom assignment is *unique* up to renaming of variables
- Type theory view: D is application, the MGT is the principal type

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Prolog View: Computing the MGT

```
mgt( $c_1$ , AxiomFormula $_1$ ).
...
mgt( $c_k$ , AxiomFormula $_k$ ).
mgt(d(A,B), Q) :-
    mgt(A, (P=>Q)),
    mgt(B, P).
mgt(g(A), forall(X,P)) :-
    mgt(A, P).
```

Example

```
mgt('ax-1', (P=>(Q=>P))). % clause for axiom ax-1

?- mgt(d('ax-1', 'ax-1'), F).
F = (P=>(Q=>(R=>Q))).
```

The Horn MGT of a DG-Term with Variables

Definition. The **Horn MGT** of a DG-term $A[v_1, \dots, v_n]$ with variables v_1, \dots, v_n is the most general Horn clause

$$(P_1 \wedge \dots \wedge P_n) \rightarrow Q$$

s.t. for all σ it holds that if A_1, \dots, A_n are DG-terms s.t.

$$A_1 \text{ proves } P_1\sigma \dots A_n \text{ proves } P_n\sigma, \text{ then } A[A_1, \dots, A_n] \text{ proves } Q\sigma$$

Computing the Horn MGT

```
mgt(V, P) :-  
    var(V), !, V = P.  
mgt(c1, AxiomFormula1).  
...  
mgt(ck, AxiomFormulak).  
mgt(d(A,B), Q) :-  
    mgt(A, (P=>Q)),  
    mgt(B, P).  
mgt(g(A), forall(X,P)) :-  
    mgt(A, P).
```

Example

```
?- mgt(d('ax-1', d(V, 'ax-1')), F).  
V = ((P=>(Q=>P))=>R),  
F = (S=>R).
```

The Horn MGT of $D(ax-1, D(v, ax-1))$ is the Horn clause
 $((p \Rightarrow (q \Rightarrow p)) \Rightarrow r) \rightarrow (s \Rightarrow r)$.

```
?- mgt('ax-1', F).  
F = (P=>(Q=>P)).  
?- mgt(d('ax-1', d('ax-1', 'ax-1')), F).  
F = (P=>(Q=>(R=>(S=>R)))).
```

Extending the Definition of *proves*.

1. c *proves* $P\sigma$ if c is an axiom name with formula P
2. $D(A, B)$ *proves* $Q\sigma$ if A *proves* $P \Rightarrow Q$ and B *proves* P
3. $G(A)$ *proves* $\forall(x, P)\sigma$ if A *proves* P
4. $f(A_1, \dots, A_n)$ *proves* $Q\theta\sigma$ if f is a **Horn lemma name** with clause $(P_1 \wedge \dots \wedge P_n) \rightarrow Q$ and A_1 *proves* $P_1\theta$... A_n *proves* $P_n\theta$

- Case 4 could (theoretically) cover cases 1-3
 1. f with arity 0
 2. f with Horn clause $((p \Rightarrow q) \wedge p) \rightarrow q$
 3. f with Horn clause $p \rightarrow \forall(x, p)$
- In Metamath proofs, previously proven theorems appear as Horn lemma names

Metamath Proofs in Prolog Term Representation

```
MM> show proof a1i /lemmon /renumber
1 a1i.1      $e |- ph
2 ax-1      $a |- ( ph -> ( ps -> ph ) )
3 1,2 ax-mp $a |- ( ps -> ph )
```

```
MM> show proof a2i
```

```
1 a2i.1      $e |-
2 ax-2      $a |-
3 1,2 ax-mp $a |-
```

```
MM> show proof mpd
```

```
1 mpd.1      $e |-
2 mpd.2      $e |-
3 2 a2i      $p |-
4 1,3 ax-mp $a |-
```

```
MM> show proof mpi
```

```
1 mpi.1      $e |-
2 1 a1i      $p |-
3 mpi.2      $e |-
4 2,3 mpd    $p |-
```

Translation to DGH-Terms

Proof macro

Horn MGT

a1i(X) -> d('ax-1', X)

$p \rightarrow (q \Rightarrow p)$

a2i(X) -> d('ax-2', X)

$(p \Rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r)) \rightarrow ((p \Rightarrow q) \Rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r))$

mpd(X, Y) -> d(a2i(Y), X)

$[(p \Rightarrow q) \wedge (p \Rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r))] \rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r)$

mpi(X, Y) -> mpd(a1i(X), Y)

$[p \wedge (q \Rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r))] \rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r)$

Expansion to DG-Terms

a1i(X) -> d('ax-1', X)

a2i(X) -> d('ax-2', X)

mpd(X, Y) -> d(d('ax-2', Y), X)

mpi(X, Y) -> d(d('ax-2', Y), d('ax-1', X))

Some Statistics for *set.mm*

- 42,548 proven theorems
- For 10% the stated theorem is a **strict instance** of the Horn MGT of the (unexpanded) proof
- For 59% the associated Horn clause has a **non-empty body**
- Fully expanding the proofs to obtain a DG-term can yield quite large results, e.g. for *peano5*
 - 1,415 different theorems used in total
 - DG-term has $7.52e \times 10^{46}$ inner nodes, DAG representation has 42,830 inner nodes

Proof macro

Horn MGT

$\text{a1i}(X) \rightarrow \text{d}(\text{'ax-1'}, X)$

$p \rightarrow (q \Rightarrow p)$

$\text{a2i}(X) \rightarrow \text{d}(\text{'ax-2'}, X)$

$(p \Rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r)) \rightarrow ((p \Rightarrow q) \Rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r))$

$\text{mpd}(X, Y) \rightarrow \text{d}(\text{a2i}(Y), X)$

$[(p \Rightarrow q) \wedge (p \Rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r))] \rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r)$

$\text{mpi}(X, Y) \rightarrow \text{mpd}(\text{a1i}(X), Y)$

$[p \wedge (q \Rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r))] \rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r)$

Expansion to DG-term

$\text{mpd}(X, Y) \rightarrow \text{d}(\text{d}(\text{'ax-2'}, Y), X)$

$\text{mpi}(X, Y) \rightarrow \text{d}(\text{d}(\text{'ax-2'}, Y), \text{d}(\text{'ax-1'}, X))$

Correspondences – Ways to Understand these “Proof Macros”

- Proof of a Horn lemma formula
- DGH-term with variables
- Rewrite rule for DGH-terms
- Structural building block for proof search
- **Tree grammar rule of a compressed tree representation**

Proof macro

Horn MGT

$a1i(X) \rightarrow d('ax-1', X)$

$p \rightarrow (q \Rightarrow p)$

$a2i(X) \rightarrow d('ax-2', X)$

$(p \Rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r)) \rightarrow ((p \Rightarrow q) \Rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r))$

$mpd(X, Y) \rightarrow d(a2i(Y), X)$

$((p \Rightarrow q) \wedge (p \Rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r))) \rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r)$

$mpi(X, Y) \rightarrow mpd(a1i(X), Y)$

$(p \wedge (q \Rightarrow (p \Rightarrow r))) \rightarrow (q \Rightarrow r)$

Expansion to DG-term

$mpd(X, Y) \rightarrow d(d('ax-2', Y), X)$

$mpi(X, Y) \rightarrow d(d('ax-2', Y), d('ax-1', X))$

Tree Compression Algorithm *TreeRePair*: Background

- By [Lohrey, Maneth & Mennicke, 2010, 2013]
- Originally addressed XML compression
- Adaptation to trees of **RePair** for strings [Larsson & Moffat, 1999]
- The compressed tree is represented by an SLCF **tree grammar**
 - Straight-line: each nonterminal has exactly one production; acyclic
 - Nonterminals with parameters (rank ≥ 0)

Examples of such Grammar Rules

```
a1i(X) -> d('ax-1', X)
a2i(X) -> d('ax-2', X)
mpd(X, Y) -> d(a2i(Y), X)
mpi(X, Y) -> mpd(a1i(X), Y)
```

- RePair for strings: **replace most frequent digram (2 consecutive letters) by new nonterminal**

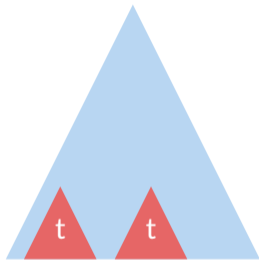
$xabcabdabc$
 $xAcAdAc \quad A \rightarrow ab$
 $xBAdB \quad B \rightarrow Ac$
 $Start \rightarrow xBAdB$

- TreeRePair: **digrams are triples $\langle \text{parent-symbol}, \text{child-index}, \text{child-symbol} \rangle$**

$f(g(e, e), f(g(e, e), e))$	$f(g(_, _), _)$	$\langle f, 1, g \rangle$
$f(g(e, e), f(g(e, e), e))$	$g(e, _)$	$\langle g, 1, e \rangle$
$f(g(e, e), f(g(e, e), e))$	$g(_, e)$	$\langle g, 2, e \rangle$

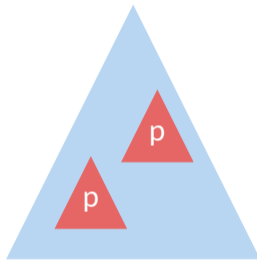
$f(g(e, e), f(g(e, e), e))$
 $A(e, e, A(e, e, e)) \quad A(x_1, x_2, x_3) \rightarrow f(g(x_1, x_2), x_3)$
 $B(e, B(e, e)) \quad B(x_1, x_2) \rightarrow A(e, x_1, x_2)$
 $C(C(e)) \quad C(x_1) \rightarrow B(e, x_1)$
 $Start \rightarrow C(C(e))$

DAG: sharing repeated **subtrees**



```
biimp -> syl(d(simplim,'df-bi'),simplim)
simplim -> conli('pm2.21')
```

Grammar: sharing repeated **tree patterns**
(connected subgraphs of the tree)



```
'pm3.48' -> jao(imim2i(orc),imim2i(olc))
imim2i(X) -> a2i(a1i(X))
```

Basic Idea

- For a **set of theorems from Metamath**, take all their **fully expanded proofs** (DG-terms)
- **Apply TreeRePair to compress the set of trees into a grammar**
- **The grammar represents DGH-terms that prove Horn lemmas**
- **Inspect the generated lemmas:**
 - Are they among the theorems present in Metamath?
Can usefulness in terms of human practice be explained by compression?
 - Are they new?
Do they suggest overlooked economic ways to structure the proofs?

But

- Fully expanded proofs can be really large: peano5: $7.52e \times 10^{46}$ (tree), 42,830 (DAG), 1,415 lemmas

Approach

- Process the proof set **in accumulating subsets** and **don't expand all lemmas** – strategies:
 - Don't expand if it was a rediscovered Metamath theorem
 - Expand only a few steps with limit of expansion size

Our Variation of TreeRePair

- Implemented in SWI-Prolog
- Adapted to our needs: accumulative processing of sets of proof structures
- Heuristic possibilities:
 - Controlling frequency threshold of digrams to be chosen as nonterminal
 - Controlling choice among equally frequent digrams

Experiment *Peano*

- The full set consists of the proofs of the 1,415 theorems involved in proving `peano5`
- We generate a well compressing grammar for all proofs in the set; takes 32 s
- We **rediscover around 50%** of the 1,415 processed theorems
- There are also a **handful of novel lemmas, 23**, depending on configuration

Experiment 1600

- The full set consists of the proofs of the first 1,600 theorems in `set.mm`
- 40% of the 1,600 rediscovered; 33 novel lemmas; takes 40 s

Experiment Peano: Newly Found Lemmas – Proofs and Horn MGTs (I)

```
lemma9(X,Y,Z) -> d(Z,d(Y,X)).
```

```
$e |- A $.
```

```
$e |- ( A -> B ) $.
```

```
$e |- ( B -> C ) $.
```

```
$p |- C $.
```

Double modus ponens inference mp2b, which is not used for peano5

```
lemma5486 -> sylbi(ordeleqon,
```

```
  jaoi(nsyl2(mtbii(d(ordirr, ordom), baib(elom)),
```

```
    alrimiv(coml2(conld(syld(ord(mpbid(limomss,
```

```
      sylancr(ordom,
```

```
        limord,
```

```
        ordsseleq))),
```

```
      biimprcd(limeq)))))),
```

```
    mpbiri(mpbir3an(ordon, onn0, eqcomi(unon), 'df-lim'), limeq)))
```

```
$p |- ( Ord _om -> Lim _om ) $.
```

If ω is an ordinal, it is a limit ordinal (ω is the class of natural numbers)

This is limom weakened by the precondition

Appears in the MM proof of limom immediately before the last step

Experiment Peano: Newly Found Lemmas – Proofs and Horn MGTs (II)

lemma2808(X) -> '3bitr4g'(exbidv(anbid(X)),dfclcl,dfclcl).

\$e |- (A -> (B = C <-> B = D)) \$.

\$p |- (A -> (C e. E <-> D e. E)) \$.

If we know that given A, B equals C exactly when B equals D, then it follows that given A, C and D are members of the same sets

lemma3104(X) -> bitr4i(X,albi(nbn(noel))).

\$e |- (A <-> A. B (C <-> D e. (/))) \$.

\$p |- (A <-> A. B -. C) \$.

If we know that A is equivalent to forall B.(C is equivalent to D in emptyset), then it follows that A is equivalent to forall B.(not C)

lemma3108(X,Y) -> eqtr4di(eqtrd(a1i(X),abbidv(Y)),X).

\$e |- A = { B | C } \$.

\$e |- (D -> (C <-> C)) \$.

\$p |- (D -> A = A) \$.

*Let A be the set of elements satisfying formula C; Then, if D implies that C is equivalent to itself, then D implies that A = A
Not clear where this is really used/useful*

Experiment Peano: Newly Found Lemmas – Proofs and Horn MGTs (III)

lemma3193(X,Y) -> eqcomd(eqtrdi(abb2dv(X),eqcomi(Y))).

\$e |- (A -> (B e. C <-> D)) \$.

\$e |- E = { B | D } \$.

\$p |- (A -> E = C) \$.

Given A, if we know that B is a member of C exactly when B satisfies some property D and we also know that E is the set of B satisfying property D, then given A, it follows that E and C are the same set

lemma4618(X) -> sseqtrri(ssstri(sseqtrri(X,'df-pr'),ssun1),'df-tp').

\$e |- A C_ ({ B } u. { C }) \$.

\$p |- A C_ { B , C , D } \$.

If A is a subset of {B} union {C}, then it is a subset of {B,C,D}

Experiment 1600: Newly Found Lemmas – Proofs and Horn MGTs (I)

```
lemma14(X,Y,Z) -> d(d(Z,Y),X).
```

```
$e |- A $.
```

```
$e |- B $.
```

```
$e |- ( B -> ( A -> C ) ) $.
```

```
$p |- C $.
```

```
lemma17(X) -> bicomi(con2bii(X)).
```

```
$e |- ( A <-> -. B ) $.
```

```
$p |- ( -. A <-> B ) $.
```

```
lemma35(X) -> lemma14(impsingle,d(impsingle,X),impsingle).
```

```
$e |- ( ( A -> B ) -> ( ( A -> C ) -> ( D -> C ) ) ) $.
```

```
$p |- ( E -> ( ( A -> C ) -> ( D -> C ) ) ) $.
```

```
lemma79 -> adantl(id).
```

```
$p |- ( ( A /\ B ) -> B ) $.
```

Experiment 1600: Newly Found Lemmas – Proofs and Horn MGTs (II)

```
lemma89(X) -> lemma14(impsingle,impsingle,lemma35(D(impsingle,X))).  
$e |- ( ( ( A -> ( ( B -> C ) -> ( D -> C ) ) ) -> E ) -> ( ( C -> F ) -> B ) ) $.  
$p |- ( A -> ( ( B -> C ) -> ( D -> C ) ) ) $.
```

```
lemma205(X,Y) -> impd(syld(X,expd(ancomsd(Y)))).  
$e |- ( A -> ( B -> C ) ) $.  
$e |- ( A -> ( ( D /\ C ) -> E ) ) $.  
$p |- ( A -> ( ( B /\ D ) -> E ) ) $.
```

```
lemma266(X,Y) -> bitri(xchbinx(X,Y),bitru(fal)).  
$e |- ( A <-> -. B ) $.  
$e |- ( B <-> F. ) $.  
$p |- ( A <-> T. ) $.
```

```
lemma347 -> lemma14(impsingle,  
                    lemma89('impsingle-step4'),  
                    lemma89(d(impsingle,lemma89('impsingle-step4')))).  
$p |- ( ( ( ( ( A -> B ) -> C ) -> D ) -> ( E -> A ) ) ->  
        ( ( C -> A ) -> ( E -> A ) ) ) $.
```


Experiment 1600: Newly Found Lemmas – Proofs and Horn MGTs (III)

```
lemma728 -> com12(con4d(ex(sylc(ancoms(syl2an(id,sylib(olc,con2bii(bicomi(ioran))),id)),  
                           sylib(syl(simpl,orc),con2bii(bicomi(ioran))),  
                           con3d('pm2.27'))))))).
```

```
$p |- ( ( ( -. A /\ -. ( -. B /\ -. C ) ) -> ( -. C /\ -. D ) ) -> ( C -> A ) ) $.
```

```
lemma734(X) -> '3bitri'('3anbi123i'('3anass',  
                                   bitri('3anass',biancomi(bianass(ancom))),  
                                   bitri(bitr4i('3ancoma',bitri('3ancoma','3ancomb')),  
                                   '3anass')),  
               bicomi(an6),anbi2i(X)).
```

```
$e |- ( ( ( A /\ B ) /\ ( C /\ D ) /\ ( E /\ F ) ) <-> G ) $.
```

```
$p |- ( ( ( H /\ A /\ B ) /\ ( C /\ I /\ D ) /\ ( F /\ E /\ J ) ) <->  
       ( ( H /\ I /\ J ) /\ G ) ) $.
```

Agenda and Speculations

- Further experiments, deeper analysis of the generated lemmas
- Heuristics and refinements of TreeRePair
- Bringing provers and learning into play
- **Combinators** in proof-terms provide a further representation of lemmas; it is variable-free

```
mpi(X, Y) -> d(d('ax-2', Y), d('ax-1', X))  
mpi -> d(d(b, d(c, 'ax-2')), 'ax-1')
```

- Can we **categorize lemmas**, e.g., general inference rule or specific for a certain application area, based on compressing effects and occurrences in given sets of proofs?
- Do **mechanically observed redundancies** in human-made proofs (they are at least in many small Metamath proof) have a beneficial purpose?

Conclusion

- We observed a **correspondence** of
 - **Condensed detachment proof structures, generalized to allow variables**
 - **Horn clauses** proven by these structures
 - **Metamath proofs**
 - **Grammar rules representing compressed trees**
- We utilize this for **lemma synthesis purely from proof structure**
 - **A lemma is justified by its compressing effect on the proof structure**
 - The lemma *formula* comes second, it is computed from the proof structure
- We **implemented** all this: our programs can directly read-in Metamath database files
- First **experiments** with Metamath's *set.mm* database show:
 - About one half of the human-made lemmas can be justified by mechanically reproducible compression effects
 - Mechanical compression suggests a few novel lemmas

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