

M.Sc. Sem-I. Paper IV
Discrete Mathematics

Boolean Algebra :- A Boolean Algebra of sets is a non-empty class \mathcal{A} of subsets of the universal set U which has the following properties

(a) $A, B \in \mathcal{A} \Rightarrow A \cup B \in \mathcal{A}$

(b) $A, B \in \mathcal{A} \Rightarrow A \cap B \in \mathcal{A}$

(c) $A \in \mathcal{A} \Rightarrow A' \in \mathcal{A}$

\mathcal{A} is assumed to be non-empty, so it contains at least one set A .

From property (c), A' is in \mathcal{A} along with A .

$\therefore A \cap A' = \phi$ and $A \cup A' = U$

$\Rightarrow \mathcal{A}$ contains the empty set and the universal set.

Consider the collection \mathcal{C} consisting only of the empty set and the universal set.

obviously it is a Boolean algebra of sets.

These two distinct sets are the only ones which every Boolean algebra of sets must contain

Another Example

The class (or collection) of all subsets of U is also a Boolean algebra of sets.

Let \mathcal{A} be a Boolean algebra of sets.

Let $\{A_1, A_2, \dots, A_n\}$ is a non-empty finite subclass of \mathcal{A} . Then

(2)

$A_1 \cup A_2 \cup \dots \cup A_n$ and $A_1 \cap A_2 \cap \dots \cap A_n$, are both sets in \mathcal{A} .

Since \mathcal{A} contains the empty set and the universal set.

$\Rightarrow \mathcal{A}$ is a class of sets which is ~~closed~~ ^{closed} under the formation of finite unions, finite intersections and complements.

Let \mathcal{A} be a class of sets which is closed under the formation of finite unions, finite intersections and complements.

$\Rightarrow \mathcal{A}$ contains the empty set and the universal set.

i.e. \mathcal{A} is non-empty

$\Rightarrow \mathcal{A}$ is a Boolean algebra of sets.

Hence, Boolean algebra of sets can be described alternatively as classes of sets which are closed under the formation of finite unions, finite intersections and complements.