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# Cadabra

*A field-theory motivated approach to symbolic computer algebra*

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## Tutorial and reference guide

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Cadabra is a computer algebra system for the manipulation of tensorial mathematical expressions such as they occur in “field theory problems”. It is aimed at, but not necessarily restricted to, high-energy physicists. It is constructed as a simple tree-manipulating core, a large collection of standalone algorithmic modules which act on the expression tree, and a set of modules responsible for output of nodes in the tree. All of these parts are written in C++. The input and output formats closely follow  $\text{\TeX}$ , which in many cases means that cadabra is much simpler to use than other similar programs. It intentionally does not contain its own programming language; instead, new functionality is added by writing new modules in C++.

This document contains a description of the core program as well as a detailed listing of the functionality of the currently available algorithm modules. Given the origin of cadabra, the bias is currently towards algorithms for problems in (quantum) field theory, general relativity, group theory and related areas. The last part of this text consists of a user guide on how to implement new algorithmic and display modules and thereby extend the functionality of cadabra.

The software is available for download under the terms of the GNU General Public License from <http://www.aei.mpg.de/~peekas/cadabra/>.

A paper introducing cadabra to high-energy physicists is available as

*“Introducing Cadabra: a symbolic computer algebra system for field theory problems”*,

Kasper Peeters, preprint SPIN-06/46, ITP-UU-06/56, hep-th/0701238.

Furthermore, a short paper describing the motivation and key technical aspects of cadabra is available as

*“A field-theory motivated approach to symbolic computer algebra”*,

Kasper Peeters,

*Comp. Phys. Comm.* **176** (2007) 550-558 (title changed in print),

cs.CS/0608005.

Both papers can be obtained from the cadabra web site or the arXiv.

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# Overview and motivation

*“I think that several of you are missing the obvious. The majority of people use these programs as symbolic calculators – occasionally. As such they want their input and output to match what they would have written with pencil and paper.”* `soft-sys.math.maple`, 2002

Cadabra is a computer algebra system for the manipulation of what could loosely be called *tensorial expressions*. It is aimed at, but not necessarily restricted to, theoretical high-energy physicists. The program’s interface, storage system and underlying philosophy differ substantially from other computer algebra systems. Its main characteristics are:

- ▶ Usage of  $\text{\TeX}$  notation for both input and output, which eliminates many errors in transcribing problems from paper to computer and back.
- ▶ Built-in understanding of dummy indices and dummy symbols, including their automatic relabelling when necessary. Powerful algorithms for canonicalisation of objects with index symmetries, both mono-term and multi-term.
- ▶ A new way to deal with products of non-commuting objects, enabling a notation which is identical to standard physicist’s notation (i.e. no need for special non-commuting product operators).
- ▶ A flexible way to associate meaning (“type information”) to tensors by attaching them to “properties”.
- ▶ An optional unlimited undo system. Interactive calculations can be undone to arbitrary level without requiring a full re-evaluation of the entire calculation.
- ▶ A simple and documented way to add new algorithms in the form of C++ modules, which directly operate on the internal expression tree.
- ▶ A command line interface as well as a graphical one, and a  $\text{\TeX}$ macs frontend.

This document contains a small tutorial, an extensive reference guide and a technical summary of the program’s internals together with a guide on how to write new algorithm modules in C++.

## Acknowledgements

This program uses code written by several other people. The tensor monomial canonicalisation routines rely on the `xPerm` code written by José Martin-Garcia [1]). All representation-theory related problems are handled by the `LiE` software by Marc van Leeuwen, Arjeh Cohen and Bert Lisser [2].

The name Cadabra is an implicit acknowledgement to Mees de Roo, who introduced me to his (so far unpublished) Pascal program `Abra` in the fall of 2000. This program has an extremely physicist-friendly way of dealing with fermions and tensor symmetries, and a formula history mechanism still not found in any other comparable computer algebra system. Cadabra was originally planned to be “my private C++ version of `Abra`”, and even though it does not show much similarity anymore, the development was to a large extent inspired by `Abra`.

# Tutorial

The best way to explain the advantages of a new computer algebra system is to demonstrate its ease-of-use for a real-world problem. But if you lack the patience to even read the tutorial on the next few pages, at least read the remainder of this page for an absolute minimum of information. All input in the examples is prefixed with a “▷” symbol.

- ▶ Start the program by typing “prompt cadabra”. Quit with the “@quit” command.
- ▶ Tensor expressions are entered as in  $\text{\TeX}$ , with subscripts and superscripts as you know them, e.g.

---

```
▷ A_{m n} B^{m q} R^{n}_{q};
```

---

Input lines are terminated with “;”, “:” or “.” punctuation; see section 4.2 on page 14 for information on what these characters mean.

- ▶ Tensors carry properties, such as “being a Riemann tensor”. These properties are attached by using a double-double dot notation,

---

```
▷ R_{m n p q}::RiemannTensor.
▷ g_{m n}::Metric.
▷ \psi::Spinor.
```

---

A list of all properties and the place where they are described in this manual can be found on page 30.

- ▶ For many operations cadabra needs to know about the names which it can use for ‘dummy’ indices. You declare dummy indices as

---

```
▷ {m,n,p,q}::Indices(vector).
```

---

where “vector” is a chosen name for this index set. See section 4.6 on page 20.

- ▶ For many other operators, cadabra needs to know the range over which indices run. Set these index ranges by attaching the `Integer` property to the indices, e.g.

---

```
▷ {m,n,p,q}::Integer(0..10).
```

---

- ▶ Expressions can be given a label so you can refer to them again later; you do this by writing the label before the expression and a “:=” in between,

---

```
▷ MaxwellEom:= \diff{F^{m n}}_{n} = 0;
```

---

- ▶ All things starting with ‘@’ are commands (also called “active nodes”). Some of the frequently used commands are `@substitute` (page 55), `@canonicalise` (page 40) and `@collect_terms` (page 39).

## 2.1 Tutorial 1: Tensor monomials and multi-term symmetries

Cadabra contains powerful algorithms to bring any tensorial expression into a canonical form. For multi-term symmetries, cadabra relies on Young tableau methods to generate a canonical form for tensor monomials.<sup>1</sup>

As an example, consider the identity

$$W_{pqrs}W_{ptru}W_{tvqw}W_{uvsw} - W_{pqrs}W_{pqtu}W_{rvtw}W_{svuw} \\ = W_{mnab}W_{npbc}W_{mscd}W_{spda} - \frac{1}{4}W_{mnab}W_{psba}W_{mpcd}W_{nsdc}. \quad (2.1)$$

in which  $W_{mnpq}$  is a Weyl tensor (all contracted indices have been written as subscripts for easier readability). Proving this identity requires multiple uses of the Ricci cyclic identity,

$$W_{m[npq]} = 0. \quad (2.2)$$

With cadabra's Young tableau methods the proof is simple. We first declare our objects and input the identity which we want to prove,

---

```

> {m,n,p,q,r,s,t,u,v,w,a,b,c,d,e,f}::Indices(vector).
> W_{m n p q}::WeylTensor.

> W_{p q r s} W_{p t r u} W_{t v q w} W_{u v s w}
  - W_{p q r s} W_{p q t u} W_{r v t w} W_{s v u w}
  - W_{m n a b} W_{n p b c} W_{m s c d} W_{s p d a}
  + (1/4) W_{m n a b} W_{p s b a} W_{m p c d} W_{n s d c};

```

---

Using a Young projector to project all Weyl tensors onto a form which shows the Ricci symmetry in manifest form is done with

---

```

> @young_project_tensor!(%){ModuloMonoterm};

```

---

This algorithm knows that the Weyl tensor sits in the  $\tilde{\boxplus}$  representation of the rotation group  $SO(d)$ , and effectively leads to a replacement

$$W_{mnpq} \rightarrow \frac{2}{3}W_{mnpq} - \frac{1}{3}W_{mqnp} + \frac{1}{3}W_{mpnq}. \quad (2.3)$$

We then expand the products of sums and canonicalise using mono-term symmetries,

---

```

> @distribute!(%):
> @canonicalise!(%):
> @rename_dummies!(%):
> @collect_terms!(%);

```

---

The last line produces the expected “zero”. A slightly more complicated multi-term example can be found in  $\TeX$ macs format in `texmacs/showcase1.tm`.

---

<sup>1</sup>The user interface for multi-term symmetries is under active development and will simplify substantially in upcoming releases.

## 2.2 Tutorial 2: Tensor monomials, part two

It is easy to generate complete bases of tensor monomials, for any arbitrary tensors (not necessarily for tensors in irreps, as in the previous example). As an example, let us show how this works for a basis constructed from three powers of the Riemann tensor. All that is required is

---

```

> {m,n,p,q,r,s,t,u,v,w,a,b}::Indices(vector).
> {m,n,p,q,r,s,t,u,v,w,a,b}::Integer(0..9).

> R_{m n p q}::RiemannTensor.

> basisR3:= R_{m n p q} R_{r s t u} R_{v w a b};
> @all_contractions(%);

```

---

The result can be further simplified using

---

```

> @canonicalise!(%):
> @substitute!(%)( R_{m n m n} -> R ):
> @substitute!(%)( R_{m n m p} -> R_{n p} ):
> @substitute!(%)( R_{n m p m} -> R_{n p} ):
> @substitute!(%)( R_{n m m p} -> R_{n p} );

```

---

which leads something like<sup>2</sup>

---

```

basisR3:= \{ R_{m n p q} * R_{m p r s} * R_{n r q s},
            R * R_{q r} * R_{q r},
            R_{n p} * R_{n q p r} * R_{q r},
            R_{n p} * R_{n q r s} * R_{p r q s},
            R * R_{p q r s} * R_{p q r s},
            R_{n p} * R_{n r} * R_{p r},
            R_{m n p q} * R_{m r p s} * R_{n r q s},
            R * R * R \};

```

---

This result is equivalent to the basis given in the “ $\mathcal{R}_{6,3}^0$ ” table on page 1184 of [3].

## 2.3 Tutorial 3: World-sheet supersymmetry

Cadabra not only deals with bosonic tensors, but also with fermionic objects, i.e. anti-commuting variables. A simple example on which to illustrate their use is the Ramond-Neveu-Schwarz superstring action. We will here show how one uses cadabra to show invariance of this action under supersymmetry (a calculation which is easy to do by hand, but illustrates several aspects of cadabra nicely). We will use a conformal gauge and complex coordinates.

We first define the properties of all the symbols which we will use,

---

<sup>2</sup>The algorithm involves a random step which implies that the basis is not always the same, though it is always complete. Further improvements are in preparation which will eliminate this randomness (and also lead to a speedup).



---

```

▷ {\del{#}, \delbar{#}}::Derivative.
▷ {\Psi_\mu, \Psibar_\mu, \eps, \epsbar}::AntiCommuting.
▷ {\Psi_\mu, \Psibar_\mu, \eps, \epsbar}::SelfAntiCommuting.
▷ {\Psi_\mu, \Psibar_\mu, X_\mu}::Depends(\del,\delbar).
▷ {\Psi_\mu, \Psibar_\mu, \eps, \epsbar, X_\mu, i}::SortOrder.

```

---

All objects are by default commuting, so the bosons do not have to be declared separately. You can at any time get a list of the declared properties by using the command `@proplist`.

Now we have to input the action density (see [4] for the conventions used here)

---

```

▷ action:= \del{X_\mu} \delbar{X_\mu}
          + i \Psi_\mu \delbar{\Psi_\mu} + i \Psibar_\mu \del{\Psibar_\mu};

```

---

Observe how we wrapped the `\del` and `\delbar` operators around the objects on which they are supposed to act. We are now ready to perform the supersymmetry transformation. This is done by using the `@substitute` algorithm,

---

```

▷ @vary!(%)( X_\mu      ->  i \epsbar \Psi_\mu + i \eps \Psibar_\mu,
             \Psi_\mu   -> - \epsbar \del{X_\mu},
             \Psibar_\mu -> - \eps \delbar{X_\mu} );

▷ @distribute!(%);
▷ @prodrule!(%);

```

---

The `@prodrule` command has applied the Leibnitz rule on the derivatives, so that the derivative of a product becomes a sum of terms. We expand again the products of sums, and use `@unwrap` to take everything out of the derivatives which does not depend on it,

---

```

▷ @distribute!(%);
▷ @unwrap!(%);
▷ @prodsort!(%);

```

---

At this stage we are left with an expression which still contains double derivatives. In order to write this in a canonical form, we eliminate all double derivatives by doing one partial integration. This is done by first marking the derivatives which we want to partially integrate, and then using `@pintegrate`,

---

```

▷ @substitute!(%)( \del{\delbar{X_{\mu}}}} -> \pdelbar{\del{X_{\mu}}}) );
▷ @substitute!(%)( \delbar{\del{X_{\mu}}}} -> \pdel{\delbar{X_{\mu}}}) );
▷ @pintegrate!(%){ \pdelbar };
▷ @pintegrate!(%){ \pdel };
▷ @rename!(%){"\pdelbar"}{"\delbar"};
▷ @rename!(%){"\pdel"}{"\del"};
▷ @prodrule!(%);
▷ @distribute!(%);
▷ @unwrap!(%);
▷ @prodsort!(%);

```

---

Notice how, after the partial integration, we renamed the partially integrated derivatives back to normal ones (and again apply Leibnitz' rule). If we now collect terms,

---

```
▷ @collect_terms!(%);
```

---

we indeed find that the total susy variation vanishes.

## 2.4 Tutorial 4: Super-Maxwell

The following example illustrates the use of a somewhat more complicated set of object properties. A  $\text{\TeX}$ macs version of this problem can be found in the distribution tarball in the file `texmacs/showcase3.tm`. We start with the super-Maxwell action, given by

$$S = \int d^4x \left[ -\frac{1}{4}(F_{ab})^2 - \frac{1}{2}\bar{\lambda}\gamma^a\partial_a\lambda \right], \quad (2.4)$$

It is supposed to be invariant under the transformations

$$\delta A_a = \bar{\epsilon}\gamma_a\lambda, \quad \delta\lambda = -\frac{1}{2}\gamma^{ab}\epsilon F_{ab}. \quad (2.5)$$

The object properties for this problem are

---

```
▷ { a,b,c,d,e }::Indices(vector).
▷ \bar{#}::DiracBar.
▷ { \partial{#}, \ppartial{#} }::PartialDerivative.
▷ { A_{a}, f_{a b} }::Depends(\partial, \ppartial).
▷ { \epsilon, \gamma_{#} }::Depends(\bar).
▷ \lambda::Depends(\bar, \partial).
▷ { \lambda, \gamma_{#} }::NonCommuting.
▷ { \lambda, \epsilon }::Spinor(dimension=4, type=Majorana).
▷ { \epsilon, \lambda }::SortOrder.
▷ { \epsilon, \lambda }::AntiCommuting.
▷ \lambda::SelfAntiCommuting.
▷ \gamma_{#}::GammaMatrix(metric=\delta).
▷ \delta_{#}::Accent.
▷ f_{a b}::AntiSymmetric.
▷ \delta_{a b}::KroneckerDelta.
```

---

Note the use of two types of properties: those which apply to a single object, like `Depends`, and those which are associated to a list of objects, like `AntiCommuting`. Clearly  $\partial_a\lambda$  and  $\bar{\epsilon}$  are anti-commuting too, but the program figures this out automatically from the fact that `\partial` has an associated `PartialDerivative` property associated to it.<sup>3</sup>

The actual calculation is an almost direct transcription of the formulas above. First we define the supersymmetry transformation rules,

---

```
▷ susy:= { \delta{A_{a}} = \bar{\epsilon}\gamma_{a}\lambda,
          \delta{\lambda} = -(1/2)\gamma_{a b}\epsilon f_{a b} };
```

---

<sup>3</sup>This is similar to Macsyma's types and features: the property which is attached to a symbol is like a 'type', while all properties which the symbol inherits from child nodes are like 'features'.

The action is also written just as it is typed in  $\text{\TeX}$ ,

---

```

> S:= -(1/4) f_{a b} f_{a b}
      - (1/2) \bar{\lambda} \gamma_a \partial_a \lambda;

```

---

Showing invariance starts by applying a variational derivative,

---

```

> @vary!(%)( f_{a b} -> \partial_a \delta A_b
              - \partial_b \delta A_a ),
      \lambda -> \delta \lambda );

> @distribute!(%):
> @substitute!(%)( @susy ): @prodrule!(%): @distribute!(%): @unwrap!(%);

```

---

After these steps, the result is (shown exactly as it appears in the  $\text{\TeX}$ macs [5] frontend)

$$S = \bar{\epsilon} \gamma_a \partial_b \lambda f_{ab} + \frac{1}{4} \overline{\gamma_{cb}} \epsilon \gamma_a \partial_a \lambda f_{cb} + \frac{1}{4} \bar{\lambda} \gamma_a \gamma_{cd} \epsilon \partial_a f_{cb}. \quad (2.6)$$

Since the program knows about the properties of gamma matrices it can rewrite the Dirac bar, and then we do one further partial integration,

---

```

> @rewrite_diracbar!(%);
> @substitute!(%)( \partial_c f_{a b} -> \ppartial_c f_{a b} ):
> @pintegrate!(%){\ppartial}:
> @rename!(%){"\ppartial"}{"\partial"}:
> @prodrule!(%): @unwrap!(%);

```

---

What remains is the gamma matrix algebra, sorting of spinors (which employs inheritance of the `Spinor` and `AntiCommuting` properties as already alluded to earlier) and a final canonicalisation of the index contractions,

---

```

> @join!(%){expand}: @distribute!(%): @eliminate_kr!(%): @prodsort!(%);
> @substitute!(%)( \partial_a \bar{\lambda}
                  -> \bar{\partial_a \lambda} );

> @spinorsort!(%):
> @rename_dummies!(%): @canonicalise!(%): @collect_terms!(%);

```

---

The result is a Bianchi identity on the field strength, and thus invariance of the action.

# Graphical user interface

## 3.1 General information

The graphical user interface is called `xcadabra`.

## 3.2 Editing, loading, saving

The file format used by the front-end is a  $\LaTeX$  compatible file. If necessary, it can be edited by hand using a text editor.

## 3.3 Evaluating cells

In order to evaluate cells, press `ctrl-enter` in an input cell. This will send the input to the kernel and display any results or informal messages below the input cell.

## 3.4 Printing and exporting

As the file format which the front-end uses to save notebooks is a  $\LaTeX$  compatible file, it is simple to print a notebook: simply save it and run it through  $\LaTeX$  as usual. You will need two special-purpose packages, `breqn` (which is separately packaged and also available from the AMS) and `tableaux` (which is included with the `cadabra` distribution).

Notebooks can be exported to a normal `cadabra` text input file. This results in a file which contains only the input cells of the notebook. Such a file can be fed into the command line version of `cadabra` by using

---

```
▷ cadabra --input [filename]
```

---

## 3.5 Cutting and pasting

You can select output cells and paste them back into input cells or into some other application. The program offers two formats for pasting, a  $\LaTeX$  one which is useful to paste into a paper, and a `cadabra` one which represents the way in which the expression can be pasted back into the program.

In most cases, the format will be selected correctly automatically. Under Emacs, you can choose either one. The list of formats can be inspected using

---

```
▷ (x-get-selection-internal 'PRIMARY 'TARGETS)
[TIMESTAMP TARGETS MULTIPLE cadabra UTF8_STRING TEXT]
```

---

If e.g. an output cell with the content  $1/2 A_{\{m\}}^{\{n\}}$  is selected, the two different paste formats can be obtained by evaluating the following two LISP expressions in a scratch buffer,

---

```
▷ (x-get-selection-internal 'PRIMARY 'cadabra)
#("1/2 A_{m}^{n};" 0 14 (foreign-selection STRING))
```

---

---

```
▷ (x-get-selection-internal 'PRIMARY 'TEXT)
  #("1 := \frac{1}{2}\, A_{m}\,\hat{n};" 0 31 (foreign-selection COMPOUND_TEXT))
```

---

Note that the TEXT format contains markup such as spacing commands which make it more useful for papers. This is the default format when the middle mouse button is pressed.

### 3.6 The $\TeX$ macs frontend

The program also comes with a  $\TeX$ macs frontend (which is now no longer actively maintained because the native graphical frontend is in many ways easier to use and more adapted to cadabra). If everything is installed correctly, the “Insert → Session” submenu of  $\TeX$ macs should contain an entry for Cadabra. A few sample  $\TeX$ macs files can be found in the texmacs subdirectory of the source tarball.

Cadabra sends its output more-or-less unchanged to the  $\TeX$ macs frontend. It is therefore useful to use tensor names which have a meaning in  $\TeX$ . For example, if you declare a derivative operator, you might be tempted to use

---

```
▷ \diff{#}::Derivative.
```

---

(perhaps because you want to mimic Maple’s notation). However, this will lead to ugly output since `\diff` is not a  $\TeX$  symbol and  $\TeX$ macs does not know what to do with it. A better choice would be

---

```
▷ \nabla{#}::Derivative.
```

---

since `\nabla` actually prints as a nice symbol in  $\TeX$ macs.

If you want to cut-and-paste formulas from a  $\TeX$  document into a  $\TeX$ macs notebook, you will encounter the problem that all backslashes get swallowed. To avoid this, choose the menu entry

Edit → Paste from → Verbatim

which pastes text unmodified. You can make this the default for middle-button paste by choosing

Tools → Selections → Import → Verbatim

which will remain active during the current session.

In order to make PDF output work, you have to have `pdfbtops` installed (it is usually part of the `groff` package).

# Reference guide

## 4.1 Startup and program options

If present, a startup file `~/ .cadabra` will be read when the program is started. This file can contain any cadabra input.

- `--bare`  
Disable reading of the startup file `~/ .cadabra`.
- `--silent`  
Disable normal output (so that the only remaining output is through output redirection into files).
- `--input [filename]`  
Before switching to interactive mode, first read and process the indicated file.
- `--prompt [string]`  
Set the cadabra prompt to the given string.
- `--silentfail`  
Silently fail (i.e. do not complain) if an algorithm is activated which cannot be applied.
- `--logininput`  
Write the input into the debug file as well.
- `--nowarnings`  
Suppress displaying of any warnings which are not fatal errors.
- `--texmacs`  
Send output in TeXmacs format.

In order to have command-line editing functionality, the `prompt` program is provided. So the two ways of starting cadabra are

---

```
cadabra
prompt cadabra
```

---

the second of which gives cursor control and an editing history. There are various other settings of cadabra which can be influenced through environment variables; see section 4.17 for details.

## 4.2 Basics about the input format

The input format of cadabra is closely related to the notation used by  $\text{\TeX}$  to denote tensorial expressions. That is, one can use not only bracketed notation to denote child objects, like in

---

```
object [child, child]
```

---

but also the usual sub- and superscript notation like

---

```
object{child child}{child}
```

---

One can use backslashes in the names of objects as well, just as in  $\text{\TeX}$ . All of the symbols that one enters this way are considered “passive”, that is, they will go into the expression tree just like one has entered them.

“Active nodes”, on the other hand, are symbols pre-fixed with a “@” symbol. These are nodes which lead to an algorithm being applied to their children; they will thus not end up in the actual tree stored in memory, but instead get replaced with the output that their algorithm produces (if any). Finally, every non-empty expression that one enters will be labelled by a number. Additionally, one can give an expression a label by entering it as “label-text:= expression;”. One can use either the expression number or the label to refer to an expression.

Names of objects can contain any printable character, except for brackets, sub- and super-script symbols and backslash characters (the latter can only occur at the beginning of a name). The sole exception to this rule is the names of active nodes: these names *can* contain underscores to separate words. The program can also deal with “accents” added to symbol names, like

---

```
\hat{A}
\bar{B}
\prime{Q}
```

---

The precise way in which this works is explained in section 4.12.

Input lines always have to be terminated with either a “;”, a “:” or a “.”. The first two of these delimiting symbols act in the same way as in Maple: the second form suppresses the output of the entered expression (see section 4.14 for additional information on how to redirect output to files). The last delimiter has the effect of evaluating the resulting expression, and immediately discarding it, also disabling printing. Long expressions can, because of these delimiters, be spread over many subsequent input lines. Any line starting with a “#” sign is considered to be a comment (even when it appears within a multi-line expression). Comments are always ignored completely (they do not end up in the expression tree).

All internal storage is in prefix notation, but a converter is applied to the input which transforms normal infix notation for products and sums to prefix notation.

### 4.3 Active nodes or “commands”

Active nodes are nodes which lead to immediate evaluation after the input has been entered; these could thus be called “commands”. Commands always start with a “@” symbol, to distinguish them from normal, unevaluated input. Used in the standard “notebook” way, active nodes act on their first argument and get replaced with the result that they compute. This form uses square brackets to denote the argument on which to act:

---

```
@command[expression]{arg1}{arg2}...{argn}
```

---

If you want to re-use an existing expression as the argument, this can be cloned by using the “@” operator itself:

---

```
@[equation number or label]
```

---

or (for convenience, as a single exception to the square bracket rule)

---

```
@(equation number or label)
```

---

both evaluate to a copy of the expression to which they refer (one can use the “%” character to denote the number of the last-used expression). Note that all of these forms create a *new* expression. One is advised *not* to refer to equation numbers using this command, as this makes expressions tied together in a rather fragile way.

Algorithms can also be made to act on existing expressions such as to modify the expression history (i.e. in the language of the previous section, to stay within a “mini-notebook”). This is done by using round brackets instead of square ones:

---

```
@command(expression number or label){arg1}{arg2}...{argn}
```

---

Here it is no longer problematic to refer to equation numbers, as the result of this command will appear in the history list of the indicated expression (and is therefore not tied to the particular number of the expression).

All of these commands act on the top of the argument subtree. You can make them act subsequently on all nodes to which they apply by postfixing the name with an exclamation mark, as in

---

```
@command![expression]{arg1}{arg2}...{argn}
```

---

This will search the tree in pre-order style, applying the algorithm on every node to which the algorithm applies.

If you want an algorithm to act until the expression no longer changes, use a double exclamation mark. Compare the single-exclamation mark version,

---

```
▷ A_{m} B_{m} A_{n} B_{n};
▷ @substitute!(%)( A_{m} B_{n} -> Q );
Q A_{n} B_{n};
```

---

with the double-exclamation mark one,

---

```
▷ A_{m} B_{m} A_{n} B_{n};
▷ @substitute!!(%)( A_{m} B_{n} -> Q );
Q Q;
```

---



Be careful with this functionality, as there is currently no safeguard in case the expression keeps changing forever.

Instead of acting only at the top of the argument subtree, or acting on all nodes individually, it is also possible to act only a specific level of the expression. The notation for this is an exclamation mark with an extra number attached to it, which indicates the level (starting at 1 for the highest level),

---

```
@command!level(expression number of label){arg1}{arg2}...{argn}
```

---

Note that `\sum` and `\prod` nodes in the expression tree also count as a level.

## 4.4 Object properties and declaration

Symbols in `cadabra` have no a-priori “meaning”. If you write `\Gamma`, the program will not know that it is supposed to be, for instance, a Clifford algebra generator. You will have to declare the properties of symbols, i.e. you have to tell `cadabra` explicitly that if you write `\Gamma`, you actually mean a Clifford algebra generator. This indirect way of attaching a meaning to a symbol has the advantage that you can use whatever notation you like; if you prefer to write `\gamma`, or perhaps even `\rho` if your paper uses that, then this is perfectly possible (object properties are a bit like “attributes” in `Mathematica` or “domains” in `Axiom` and `MuPAD`).

Properties are all written using capitals to separate words, as in `AntiSymmetric`. This makes it easier to distinguish them from commands (the fact that they do not have underscores also helps for the parser). Properties of objects are declared by using the “:.” characters. This can be done “at first use”, i.e. by just adding the property to the object when it first appears in the input. As an example, one can write

---

```
▷ F_{m n p}::AntiSymmetric;
```

---

This declares the object to be anti-symmetric in its indices and at the same time creates a new expression with this object. The property information is stored separately, so that further appearances of the “`F_{m n p}`” object will automatically share this property. It is of course also possible to keep object property declarations separated (for instance at the top of an input file). This is done as follows:

---

```
▷ F_{m n p}::AntiSymmetric.
▷ F_{m n p};
```

---

For more information about this and other commands related to object properties, refer to the documentation about the `properties` module in section 5.6.

Note that properties are attached to patterns. Therefore, you can have

---

```
▷ R::RicciScalar.
▷ R_{m n p q}::RiemannTensor.
```

---

at the same time. The program will not warn you if you use incompatible properties, so if you make a declaration like above and then later on do

---

```
▷ R::Coordinate.
```

---

this may lead to weird results.

The fact that objects are attached to patterns also means that you can use something like wildcards. In the following declaration,

---

```
▷ { m#, n# }::Indices(vector).
```

---

the entire infinite set of objects  $m_1, m_2, m_3, \dots$  and  $n_1, n_2, n_3, \dots$  are declared to be in the dummy index set “vector”.<sup>4</sup> Range wildcards can also be used to match one or more objects of a specific type. In this case, they always start with a “#” sign, followed by optional additional information to specify the type of the object and the number of them. The declaration

---

```
{m,n,p,q,r,s}::Indices(vector).
A_{ #{m, 1..3} }::AntiSymmetric.
B_{ #{m} }::Symmetric.
```

---

indicates that whenever the object A appears with one to three indices of the vector type, it is antisymmetric. If the index type does not match, or if there are zero or more than three indices, the property does not apply. Similarly, B is always symmetric when all of its indices are of the vector type.

Properties can be assigned to an entire list of symbols with one command, namely by attaching the property to the list. For example,

---

```
▷ {n, m, p, q}::Integer(1..d).
```

---

This associates the property “Integer” to each and every symbol in the list. However, there is also a concept of “list properties”, which are properties which are associated to the list as a whole. Examples of list properties are “AntiCommuting” or “Indices”. See for a discussion of list properties section 4.5.

Objects can have more than one property attached to them, and one should therefore not confuse properties with the “type” of the object. Consider for instance

---

```
▷ x::Coordinate.
▷ W_{m n p q}::WeylTensor.
▷ W_{m n p q}::Depends(x).
```

---

This attaches two completely independent properties to the pattern  $W_{mnpq}$ .

In the examples above, several properties had arguments (e.g. “vector” or “1..d”). The general form of these arguments is a set of key-value pairs, as in

---

<sup>4</sup>This way of declaring ranges of objects is similar to the “autodeclare” declaration method of FORM [6].

---

```
▷ T_{m n p q}::TableauSymmetry(shape={2,1}, indices={0,2,1}).
```

---

In the simple cases discussed so far, the key and the equal sign was suppressed. This is allowed because one of the keys plays the role of the default key. Therefore, the following two are equivalent,

---

```
▷ { m, n }::Integer(range=0..d).
▷ { m, n }::Integer(0..d).
```

---

See the detailed documentation of the individual properties for allowed keys and the one which is taken as the default.

Finally, there is a concept of “inherited properties”. Consider e.g. a sum of spinors, declared as

---

```
▷ {\psi1, \psi2, \psi3}::Spinor.
▷ \psi1 + \psi2 + \psi3;
```

---

Here the sum has inherited the property “Spinor”, even though it does not have normal or intrinsic property of this type. Properties can also inherit from each other, e.g.

---

```
▷ \Gamma_{#}::GammaMatrix.
▷ \Gamma_{p o i u y};
▷ @indexsort!(%);
```

---

The `GammaMatrix` property inherits from `AntiSymmetric` property, and therefore the `\Gamma` object is automatically anti-symmetric in its indices.

A list of all properties known to `cadabra` can be obtained by using the `@proplist` command.

## 4.5 List properties and symbol groups

Some properties are not naturally associated to a single symbol or object, but have to do with collections of them. A simple example of such a property is `AntiCommuting`. Although it sometimes makes sense to say that “ $\psi_m$  is anticommuting” (meaning that  $\psi_m\psi_n = -\psi_n\psi_m$ ), it happens just as often that you want to say “ $\psi$  and  $\chi$  anticommute” (meaning that  $\psi\chi = -\chi\psi$ ). The latter property is clearly relating two different objects.

Another example is dummy indices. While it may make sense to say that “ $m$  is a dummy index”, this does not allow the program to substitute  $m$  with another index when a clash of dummy index names occurs (e.g. upon substitution of one expression into another). More useful is to say that “ $m$ ,  $n$ , and  $p$  are dummy indices of the same type”, so that the program can relabel a pair of  $m$ ’s into a pair of  $p$ ’s when necessary.

In `cadabra` such properties are called “list properties”. You can associate a list property to a list of symbols by simply writing, e.g. for the first example above,

---

```
▷ { \psi, \chi }::AntiCommuting.
```

---

Note that, as described in section 4.4, you can also attach normal properties to multiple symbols in one go using this notation. The program will figure out automatically whether you want to associate a normal property or a list property to the symbols in the list.

Lists are ordered, although the ordering does not necessarily mean anything for all list properties (it is relevant for e.g. `SortOrder` but irrelevant for e.g. `AntiCommuting`).

## 4.6 Indices, dummy indices and automatic index renaming

In `cadabra`, all objects which occur as subscripts or superscripts are considered to be “indices”. The names of indices are understood to be irrelevant when they occur in a pair, and automatic relabelling will take place whenever necessary in order to avoid index clashes.

`Cadabra` knows about the differences between free and dummy indices. It checks the input for consistency and displays a warning when the index structure does not make sense. Thus, the input

---

```
▷ A_{m n} + B_{m} = 0;
```

---

results in an error message.

The location of indices is, by default, not considered to be relevant. That is, you can write

---

```
▷ A_{m} + A^{m};
▷ A_{m} B_{m};
```

---

as input and these are considered to be consistent expressions. If, however, the position of an index means something (like in general relativity, where index lowering and raising implies contraction with a metric), then you can declare index positions to be “fixed”. This is done using

---

```
▷ {m, n, p}::Indices(position=fixed).
```

---

When substituting an expression into another one, dummy indices will automatically be relabelled when necessary. To see this in action, consider the following example:

---

```
▷ {p,q}::Indices(vector).
▷ F_{m n} F^{m n};
  F_{m n} F^{m n}

▷ G_{m n} @ (1);
  G_{m n} F_{p q} F^{p q}
```

---

The  $m$  and  $n$  indices have automatically been converted to  $p$  and  $q$  in order to avoid a conflict with the free indices on the  $G_{mn}$  object.

Refer to section 5.7 for commands that deal with dummy indices.

argument	whitespace	dummy	example
{}	separator		$\text{alg}\{a\ b\} = \text{alg}\{a\}\{b\}$
()	product		$\sin(a\ b) = \sin(a * b)$
_{}_	separator	yes	$M_{\{a\ b\}} = M_{\{a\}}_{\{b\}}$
^{}^	separator	yes	$M^{\{a\ b\}} = M^{\{a\}}^{\{b\}}$
_()	separator		$M_{(a\ b)} = M_{(a)}_{(b)}$
^()	separator		$M^{(a\ b)} = M^{(a)}^{(b)}$
[]	product		$[a\ b,\ c] = [a * b,\ c]$

**Table 1:** The implicit meaning of objects and whitespace inside the various types of brackets.

## 4.7 Exponents, indices and labels

Exponents, indices and labels are traditionally all placed using super- or subscript notation, making these slightly ambiguous for a computer algebra system. Since this situation can become quite complex (how do you represent the third power of the first element of a vector?) cadabra requires all powers to be entered with a double-star “\*\*” notation:

---

```
▷ a**2;
▷ a**(2 + 3b);
```

---

In addition, all sub- or superscripts with *curly* braces indicate indices, to which the summation convention applies. In particular, there are not allowed to be more than two identical indices in a single product. The summation convention does not apply to arguments with any other bracket types. In particular, sub- or superscripts with *square* or *pointy* brackets have (as of yet) no fixed meaning.

## 4.8 Spacing and brackets

Cadabra is reasonably flexible as far as spacing and brackets are concerned, but the fact that objects do not have to be declared before they can be used means that spaces have to be introduced in some cases to avoid ambiguity. As a general rule, all terms in a product have to be separated by at least one whitespace character. Thus,

```
A(B+C)   incorrect, (interpreted as A with argument B+C),
AB       incorrect, (interpreted as one object, not two)
A (B+C)  correct,
A*(B+C)  correct.
```

If a whitespace character is absent, all brackets are interpreted as enclosing *argument* groups. Products of variables (e.g.  $AB$ ) have to be separated by a space, otherwise the input will be read as the name of a single variable. However, spaces will automatically be inserted after numbers, between a closing bracket and a name or number, and between two names if the second name starts with a backslash. The following expressions are therefore interpreted as one would expect:

3A	interpreted as 3*A
(A+B)C	interpreted as (A+B)*C
(A+B)3	interpreted as (A+B)*3
A\Gamma	interpreted as A*\Gamma

This conversion is done by the preprocessor. Finally, note that brackets in the input *must* be balanced (a decision made to simplify the parser; it means that cadabra uses a different way to indicate groups of symmetric or anti-symmetric indices than one often encounters in the literature; see section 5.9).

## 4.9 Implicit versus explicit indices

### 4.10 Indexbrackets

Indices can be associated to tensors, as in  $T_{\mu\nu}$ , but it often also happens that we want to associate indices to a sum or product of tensors, without writing all indices out explicitly. Examples are

$$(A + B + C)_{\alpha\beta}, \quad \text{or} \quad (\psi\Gamma_{mn}\Gamma_p)_{\beta}. \quad (4.1)$$

Here the objects  $A$ ,  $B$ ,  $C$  and  $\Gamma$  are matrices, while  $\psi$  is a vector. Their explicit components are labelled with  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  indices, but the notation above keeps most of these vector indices implicit.

Cadabra can deal with such expressions through a construction which is called the “indexbracket”. It is possible to convert from one form to the other by using the @combine and @expand algorithms. Combining terms goes like this,

---

```

> (\Gamma_r)_{\alpha\beta} (\Gamma_{s t u})_{\beta\gamma}:
> @combine!(%);
(\Gamma_r \Gamma_{s t u})_{\alpha\gamma};

```

---

or as in

---

```

> (\Gamma_r)_{\alpha\beta} Q_{\beta}:
> @combine!(%);
(\Gamma_r Q)_{\alpha};

```

---

If the index bracket has only one index, either the first or the last argument should be a matrix, but not both:

---

```

> A::Matrix.
> {m,n,p}::Indices(vector).
(A B)_{m};
> @expand(%);
A_{m n} B_{n};

```

---

If the index bracket has two indices, all arguments should be matrices,

---

```

▷ {A,B}::Matrix.
▷ {m,n,p}::Indices(vector).
▷ (A B)_{m n};
  @expand(%);
  A_{m p} B_{p n};

```

---

If there are more arguments inside the bracket, these of course all need to be matrices (and are assumed to be so by default).

## 4.11 Derivatives and implicit dependence on coordinates

There is no fixed notation for derivatives; as with all other objects you have to declare derivatives by associating a property to them, in this case the `Derivative` property.

---

```

▷ \nabla{#}::Derivative.

```

---

Derivative objects can be used in various ways. You can just write the derivative symbol, as in

---

```

▷ \nabla{ A_{\mu} };

```

---

(a notation used e.g. in the tutorial example in section 2.3). Or you can write the coordinate with respect to which the derivative is taken,

---

```

▷ s::Coordinate.
▷ A_{\mu}::Depends(s).
▷ \nabla_{s}{ A_{\mu} };

```

---

Finally, you can use an index as the subscript argument, as in

---

```

▷ { \mu, \nu }::Indices(vector).
▷ \nabla_{\nu}{ A_{\mu} };

```

---

(in which case the first line is, for the purpose of using the derivative operator, actually unnecessary).

The main point of associating the `Derivative` property to an object is to make the object obey the Leibnitz or product rule, as illustrated by the following example,

---

```

▷ \nabla{#}::Derivative.
▷ \nabla{ A_{\mu} * B_{\nu} };
▷ @prodrule!(%);
  \nabla{A_{\mu}} B_{\nu} + A_{\mu} \nabla{B_{\nu}};

```

---

This behaviour is a consequence of the fact that `Derivative` derives from `Distributable`. Note that the `Derivative` property does not automatically give you commuting derivatives, so that you can e.g. use it to write covariant derivatives.

More specific derivative types exist too. An example are partial derivatives, declared using the `PartialDerivative` property. Partial derivatives are commuting and therefore automatically symmetric in their indices,

---

```

▷ \partial{#}::PartialDerivative.
▷ {a,b,m,n}::Indices(vector).
▷ C_{m n}::Symmetric.

▷ T^{b a} \partial_{a b}( C_{m n} D_{n m} );
▷ @canonicalise!(%);
▷ T^{a b} \partial_{a b}( C_{m n} D_{m n} );

```

---

## 4.12 Accents

It often occurs that you want to put a hat or tilde or some other accent on top of a symbol, as a means to indicate a slightly different object. In most of these cases, the properties of the normal symbol and the accented symbol are identical. Such accents are declared using the `Accent` property, as in

---

```
\hat{#}::Accent.
```

---

This automatically makes all symbols with hats inherit the properties of the unhatted symbols,

---

```

▷ \hat{#}::Accent.
▷ {\psi, \chi}::AntiCommuting.
▷ {\psi, \chi}::SortOrder.
▷ \hat{\chi} \psi:
▷ @prodsort!(%);
▷ (-1) \psi \hat{\chi};

```

---

If you want to put an accent on an object with indices, wrap the accent around the entire object, do not leave the indices outside.

Note that it is also possible to mark objects by attaching sub- or superscripted symbols to them, as in e.g.  $A^\dagger$ . This can be done by declaring these symbols explicitly using the `Symbol` property,

---

```
\dagger::Symbol.
```

---

If you do not do this, `\dagger` will be seen as an index and an error will be reported if it appears more than twice.



### 4.13 Symbol ordering and commutation properties

A conventional way to sort factors in a product is to use lexicographical ordering. However, this is almost never what one wants when transcribing a physics problem to the computer. Therefore, *cadabra* allows you to specify the sort order of symbols yourself. This is done by associating the `SortOrder` list property to a list of symbols, as in

---

```

▷ {X,G,Y,A,B}::SortOrder.
▷ A*B*G*X*A*X:
▷ @prodsort(%);
  X*X*G*A*A*B;

```

---

More complicated objects with indices are of course also allowed, such as in

---

```

▷ { W_{m n}, W_{m} }::SortOrder.
▷ W_{m n} W_{p} W_{q r} W_{s} W_{t}:
▷ @prodsort(%);
  W_{m n} * W_{q r} * W_{p} * W_{s} * W_{t};

```

---

For the time being, it is not allowed to have more than one such set contain the same symbol. Thus,

---

```

▷ {X,G}::SortOrder.
▷ {X,A,B}::SortOrder.

```

---

is not allowed (and will, in fact, take  $X$  out of the first list).

Apart from the preferred sort order, there are more properties which influence the way in which products can be sorted. In particular, sort order is influenced by whether symbols commute or anti-commute with each other. Physicists in general use a very implicit notation as far as commutativity of objects in a product is concerned. Consider for instance a situation in which we deal with two operators  $\hat{M}$  and  $\hat{N}$ , as well as some constants  $q$  and  $p$ . These two expressions are equivalent:

$$2q \hat{M} p \hat{N} \quad \text{and} \quad 2pq \hat{M} \hat{N}. \quad (4.2)$$

But this is not obvious from the notation that has been used to indicate the product. In fact, the product symbol is usually left out completely.

In many other computer algebra systems, you have to introduce special types of “non-commuting” products (e.g. the `&*` operator in Maple or the `**` operator in Mathematica). This can be rather cumbersome, for a variety of reasons. The main reason, however, is that it does not match with what you do on paper. On paper, you never write special product symbols for objects which do not commute. You just string them together, and know from the properties of the symbols whether objects can be moved through each other or not.

In order to make these sort of things possible in *cadabra*, it is necessary to declare “sets” of objects which mutually do not commute (i.e. for which the order inside a product cannot be changed without consequences) but which commute with objects of other

sets. Many computer algebra systems only use one such set: objects are either “commuting” or “non-commuting”. This is often too restrictive. For instance, when  $\Psi$  is a fermion and  $\Gamma$  denotes a Clifford algebra element, a system with only one set of non-commuting objects is unable to see that

$$\bar{\Psi}_a(\Gamma_n\Gamma_m)_{ab}\Psi_b \quad \text{and} \quad \bar{\Psi}_a\Psi_b(\Gamma_n\Gamma_m)_{ab} \quad (4.3)$$

are equivalent. In cadabra, one would simply put  $\Psi_a$  and  $\Gamma_m$  in two different sets, mutually commuting, but non-commuting among themselves. To be precise, the example above is reproduced by

---

```

> \bar{#}::Accent.
> \Psi_{a}::SelfNonCommuting.
> \Gamma_{#}::GammaMatrix.
> \bar{\Psi}_a (\Gamma_n \Gamma_m)_{ab} \Psi_b:
> @prodsort(%);
> \bar{\Psi}_a \Psi_b (\Gamma_n \Gamma_m)_{ab};

```

---

(see section 4.12 for an explanation of the Accent property).

Commutation properties always refer to components. If you associate an `ImplicitIndex` property to an object, then it will never commute with itself or with any other such object. You can see this in the example above, as the `@prodsort` command kept the order of the two gamma matrices unchanged.

## 4.14 Input and output redirection

By default, all generated output is displayed on the screen. As mentioned in section 4.2, the delimiter of a line determines whether output is suppressed or not. It is, however, also possible to write output to a file, by appending a file name to the line delimiter, as in

---

```

> a^2+b^2 = c^2; "output_file"

```

---

(note that there is no semi-colon following the file name). This shows the filename “output\_file” on the display, and writes to this file the expression

---

```

1:= a^{2}+b^{2}=c^{2}

```

---

This is exactly as it would have appeared on the display. If you need a different kind of output, use the algorithms provided in the output module (see section 5.10).

It is also possible to read input from files instead of from the terminal:

---

```

> < "input_file"

```

---

reads from the file “input\_file” until the end or until a line `@end;` is found, whichever comes first. Input redirect can be nested. In case an error occurs, reading from the file is also aborted and input is taken from the terminal again.

## 4.15 Default rules

By default, cadabra does very few things “by itself” with your expressions. This goes as far as not collecting equal terms, so that you can write

---

```
▷ A + A;
```

---

and have this stored as a sum of two terms. However, you can add an arbitrary number of default commands, which are run just after you have entered an expression on the command line (`PreDefaultRules`) or just before the output is returned to you (`PostDefaultRules`). So if you want terms to be collected automatically, just enter

---

```
▷ ::PostDefaultRules( @@collect_terms!(%) ).
```

---

Note the double “@@” symbol, which prevents immediate execution of the command. This post default rule will collect equal terms before they ever make it to internal storage.

Many more complicated things can be achieved with this feature. You can, for instance, also use complicated substitution commands as arguments to `PreDefaultRules` or `PostDefaultRules`. An example is

---

```
▷ {m,n,p,q}::Indices(vector).
▷ ::PreDefaultRules( @@substitute!(%)( A_{m n} -> B_{m q} B_{q n} ) ).

▷ A_{m n} A_{n m};
```

---

which immediately returns

---

```
B_{m q} B_{q n} B_{n p} B_{p m};
```

---

As usual dummy indices have been relabelled appropriately.

## 4.16 Patterns, conditionals and regular expressions

Patterns in cadabra are quite a bit different from those in other computer algebra systems, because they are more tuned towards the pattern matching of objects common in tensorial expressions, rather than generic tree structures.

Name patterns are constructed by writing a single question mark behind the name, as in

---

```
▷ @substitute!(%)( A? + B? -> 0 );
```

---

which matches all sums with two terms, each of which is a single symbol without indices or arguments. If you want to match instead any object, with or without indices or arguments, use the double question mark instead. To see the difference more explicitly, compare the two substitute commands in the following example:

---

```

▷ A_{m n} + B_{m n}:
▷ @substitute!(%)( A? + B? -> 0 );
  A_{m n} + B_{m n};
▷ @substitute!(%)( A?? + B?? -> 0 );
  0;

```

---

Note that it does not make sense to add arguments or indices to object patterns; a construction of the type “ $A??_{\mu}(x)$ ” is meaningless and will be flagged as an error.

There is a special handling of objects which are dummy objects in the classification of section 4.6 (see table 1). Objects of this type do not need the question mark, as their explicit name is never relevant. You can therefore write

---

```

▷ @substitute!(%)( A_{m n} -> 0 );

```

---

to set all occurrences of the tensor  $A$  with two subscript indices to zero, regardless of the names of the indices (i.e. this command sets  $A_{pq}$  to zero).

When replacing object wildcards with something else that involves these objects, use the question mark notation also on the right-hand side of the rule. For instance,

---

```

▷ @substitute!(%)( A? + B? -> A? A? );

```

---

replaces all sums with two elements by the square of the first element. The following example shows the difference between the presence or absence of question marks on the right-hand side:

---

```

▷ C + D:
▷ @substitute!(%)( A? + B? -> A? A? );
  C * C;
▷ @pop(%);
▷ @substitute!(%)( A? + B? -> A A );
  A * A;

```

---

In many algorithms, patterns can be supplemented by so-called conditionals. These are constraints on the objects that appear in the pattern. For instance, the substitution command

---

```

▷ @substitute!(%)( A_{m n} B_{p q} | n!=p -> 0 );

```

---

applies the substitution rule only if the second index of  $A$  and the first index of  $B$  do not match. Note that the conditional follows directly after the pattern, not after the full substitution rule. A way to think about this is that the conditional is part of the pattern, not of the rule. The reason why the conditional follows the full pattern, and not directly the symbol to which it relates, is clear from the example above: the conditional is a “global” constraint on the pattern, not a local one.

These conditions can be used to match names of objects using regular expressions. Consider the following example:

---

```

▷ A + B3 + C7:
▷ @substitute!(%)( A + M? + N? | { \regex{M?}{"B[0-9]*"},
                                \regex{N?}{"[A-Z]7"} } -> sin(M? N?)/N? );
sin(B3 C7)/C7;

```

---

It is also possible to select objects based on whether or not they are associated with a particular property, e.g.<sup>5</sup>

---

```

▷ A::SelfAntiCommuting.
▷ A A + B B;
▷ @substitute!(%)( Q?? Q?? | \hasprop{Q??}{SelfAntiCommuting} -> 0 );
B B;

```

---

Combinations of different types of conditionals are of course also possible.

## 4.17 Environment variables

There are a few environment variables which may be set to influence the behaviour of cadabra:

1. **CDB\_LOG** When set, debug logging will be enabled.
2. **CDB\_ERRORS\_ARE\_FATAL** If this variable is set, errors (inconsistency of the tree or attempted use of non-existing algorithm) will abort the program (the default action, when this variable is unset, is to ignore the offending input line).
3. **CDB\_PARANOID** Perform extensive consistency checks on the internal data format after each algorithm has been applied (only useful for debugging).
4. **CDB\_PRINTSTAR** Determines whether or not multiplication star symbols are displayed.
5. **CDB\_TIGHTSTAR** Make output of multiplication symbols more compact.
6. **CDB\_TIGHTBRACKETS** Make output of bracketed expressions more compact.
7. **CDB\_USE\_UTF8** Use UTF8 line breaking characters in the output.

## 4.18 Future plans

Now that the program is beginning to reach a usable and stable state, a number of directions for future work suggest themselves:

- A new parser; the current one was hand-written for many reasons, and is messy and not entirely correct. Now that the input format has stabilised it is time for a parser which is easier to debug, e.g. one based on `lex` & `yacc`.
- Inclusion of proper program flow including loops and subroutines.

Any suggestions on these or other topics are welcome.

---

<sup>5</sup>More compact notations may look tempting, but were abandoned in favour of the constraint-based notation because it makes patterns potentially much harder to read.

# Algorithm modules

All algorithms are stored in modules separate from the core of the program. These are at present all distributed together with the main program, but will in the future be available separately as binary or source plugin modules that can be loaded on demand.

Any expression that starts with a name beginning with an “@” symbol is interpreted as a command. Commands act on the currently selected objects in an expression or on the expression for which the label or number is given as the first argument. See section 4.3 for more details on how to apply algorithms to expressions.

@	55	@length	42
@acanonicalorder	46	@list_sum	43
@algorithms	32	@lsolve	57
@all_contractions	41	@number_of_terms	51
@amnesia	32	@output_format	32
@assert	51	@pop	32
@asym	46	@print	51
@asymprop	46	@prodflatten	37
@canonicalise	40	@prodrule	39
@canonicalorder	46	@prodsort	39
@collect_factors	39	@product_shorthand	49
@collect_terms	39	@projweyl	59
@combine	50	@proplist	51
@decompose	57	@quit	32
@depprint	51	@range	42
@distribute	39	@reduce	40
@drop	38	@reduce_gendelta	49
@dualise_tensor	49	@remove_indexbracket	37
@einsteinify	50	@remove_weyl_traces	53
@eliminate_kr	49	@rename	55
@eliminateeps	49	@rename_dummies	45
@end	32	@reset	32
@epsprod2gendelta	49	@rewrite_diracbar	59
@expand	50	@rewrite_indices	53
@expand_power	38	@ricci_can_order	54
@expand_product_shorthand	50	@ricci_identity	54
@extract_properties	44	@riemann_index_regroup	54
@factorise	40	@spinorsort	60
@from_math	61	@split_index	54
@gamma_split	59	@substitute	55
@impose_asym	46	@sumflatten	37
@impose_bianchi	50	@sumsort	39
@indexlist	52	@sym	46
@inner	43	@take	42
@join	59	@take_match	56
@join	59	@to_math	61
@keep	38	@tree	52

@unwrap	48	::InverseMetric	53
@weyl_index_order	53	::InverseVielbein	53
@xterm_title	33	::KeepHistory	32
@young_project	40	::KroneckerDelta	36
::Accent	48	::Matrix	35
::AntiCommuting	35	::Metric	53
::AntiSelfDual	47	::NonCommuting	35
::AntiSymmetric	35	::PartialDerivative	37
::Commuting	36	::PostDefaultRules	32
::CommutingAsProduct	35	::PreDefaultRules	32
::CommutingAsSum	35	::Real	34
::Complex	34	::RiemannTensor	53
::Coordinate	47	::SelfAntiCommuting	35
::DAntiSymmetric	36	::SelfCommuting	35
::Depends	47	::SelfDual	47
::Derivative	37	::SelfNonCommuting	35
::DifferentialForm	44	::SigmaBarMatrix	58
::DiracBar	58	::SigmaMatrix	58
::Distributable	35	::SortOrder	37
::EpsilonTensor	36	::Spinor	58
::GammaMatrix	58	::Symbol	47
::GammaTraceless	58	::Symmetric	35
::Imaginary	34	::TableauSymmetry	36
::ImaginaryI	34	::Traceless	36
::ImplicitIndex	35	::Vielbein	53
::Indices	45	::Weight	47
::Integer	34	::WeylTensor	53

## 5.1 Builtin core algorithms

There is a very small number of properties and algorithms built into the core program. These have to do with global memory management and global output settings.

### properties:

`::KeepHistory(true|false)`

When set to false, only the last version of each expression is kept in memory, thereby reducing memory usage for very large expressions. The default is “true”.

`::PreDefaultRules(expression list)`

Set the default rules to be executed on all input *before* the active nodes in that input are expanded.

`::PostDefaultRules(expression list)`

Set the default rules, to be applied *after* every new input has been processed and active nodes have been executed. Use the inert form of active nodes for those ones that only have to become active upon actual evaluation of the rule, i.e. `@@collect_terms!(%)`.

### algorithms:

`@pop`

Remove the last step of the indicated expression history.

`@amnesia`

Forget the history of the indicated expression, that is, remove all previous forms of the expression from memory.

`@algorithms`

Shows a list of all algorithms in the various modules, together with the time spent in them since the start of the program.

`@output_format`

Sets the output format type according to the argument given. This can take one of the three values `cadabra`, `mathematica` or `reduce`.

`@print_status{true|false}`

Toggles printing of status information. Status output is always enclosed inside easily distinguished `<status>` and `</status>` marks.

`@quit`

Exits the program.

`@end`

Stop reading the current input file/stream.

`@reset`

Erases all expressions and object properties (but does not change any of the global flags).



`@utf8_output{true|false}`

Determines whether the output should contain UTF8 encoded Unicode control characters for line-breaking and object grouping. This output format is used by the graphical front-end.

`@xterm_title`

Set the title of the xterm to the given argument.

## 5.2 Rationals, complex numbers and other numerics

### properties:

`::ImaginaryI`

Indicates that the object squares to  $-1$ .

`::Real`

`::Imaginary`

`::Complex`

`::Integer`

Indicates that the object takes values in the integers. An optional range can be specified,

---

```
▷ p::Integer;  
▷ m::Integer(1..10);  
▷ n::Integer(1..d-p);
```

---

### 5.3 Sums and products

This module handles expansion of sums and products as well as distributing products over sums and similar algorithms. It recognises

#### properties:

`::ImplicitIndex`

Indicates that the object carries implicit indices, e.g. for objects representing matrices or vectors. Such objects will not be moved through each other, i.e. they are mutually noncommuting.

`::Matrix`

`::CommutingAsProduct`

`::CommutingAsSum`

`::AntiCommuting`

`::NonCommuting`

`::SelfCommuting`

`::SelfAntiCommuting`

`::SelfNonCommuting`

Properties which determine the exchange properties of objects with indices. Example,

---

```

▷ \psi^{\mu}::SelfAntiCommuting.
▷ \psi^{\nu} \psi^{\mu}:
▷ @prodsort!(%);
  (-1) \psi^{\mu} \psi^{\nu};
▷ \psi^{\mu} \psi^{\mu}:
▷ @canonicalise!(%);
  0;

```

---

`::Distributable`

Makes the object distributable. When the object has a sum as argument, it can be distributed over the terms with `@distribute`, as in

---

```

▷ \hat{#}::Distributable.
▷ \hat{A+B+C D}:
▷ @distribute!(%);
  \hat{A} + \hat{B} + \hat{C D};

```

---

`::Symmetric`

`::AntiSymmetric`

Makes an object symmetric resp. antisymmetric in all its indices. For more complicated symmetries, use `TableauSymmetry`.

`::TableauSymmetry`

Takes lists of two key-value pairs as arguments, indicating the shape of the Young tableau and the index slots associated to each box in the tableau. For instance

---

```
▷ R_{a b c d}::TableauSymmetry( shape={2,2}, indices={0,2,1,3} ).
```

---

yields the symmetries of the Riemann tensor. Note that indices are counted from zero.

`::DAntiSymmetric`

For objects which are derivatives of fully anti-symmetric objects and satisfy a Bianchi identity, i.e. which are zero when anti-symmetrised over all indices. This is a shorthand for a `TableauSymmetry` with a “hook” shape.

`::Commuting`

Makes components commuting. Note that this property always refers to components; if you attach it to an object with `ImplicitIndex` property, the commutation property does not refer to the object as a whole, but rather to its components.

`::Traceless`

Indicates that the tensor is traceless: any internal index contraction makes the tensor vanish.

`::KroneckerDelta`

Denotes a generalised Kronecker delta symbol. When the symbol carries two indices, it is the usual Kronecker delta. When the number of indices is larger, the meaning is

$$\delta_{m_1}^{n_1} \delta_{m_2}^{n_2} \dots \delta_{m_k}^{n_k} = \delta_{[m_1}^{n_1} \delta_{m_2}^{n_2} \dots \delta_{m_k]}^{n_k}, \quad (5.1)$$

with unit weight anti-symmetrisation. A symbol which is declared as a Kronecker delta has the property that it can be taken in and out of derivatives. The algorithm `@eliminate_kr` eliminates normal Kronecker deltas by appropriately renaming indices (in order to eliminate Kronecker deltas with more than two indices, first use `@breakgendelta`).

`::EpsilonTensor(metric=tensor, delta=tensor)`

A fully anti-symmetric tensor, defined by

$$\epsilon_{m_1 \dots m_k} := \varepsilon_{m_1 \dots m_k} \sqrt{|g|}, \quad (5.2)$$

where the components of  $\varepsilon_{m_1 \dots m_k}$  are 0, +1 or -1 and  $\varepsilon_{01 \dots k} = 1$ , independent of the basis, and  $g$  denotes the metric determinant. Optionally takes a tensor which indicates the `Metric` (so that the signature can be extracted) or a `KroneckerDelta` (so that the product of two epsilon tensors can be written in terms of `KroneckerDeltas`, see the `@epsprod2gendelta` command). When the indices are in different positions it is understood that they are simply raised with the metric. This in particular implies

$$\epsilon^{m_1 \dots m_k} := g^{m_1 n_1} \dots g^{m_k n_k} \epsilon_{n_1 \dots n_k} = \frac{\varepsilon^{m_1 \dots m_k}}{\sqrt{|g|}}, \quad (5.3)$$

again with  $\varepsilon^{m_1 \dots m_k}$  taking values 0, +1 or -1 and  $\varepsilon^{01 \dots k} = \pm 1$  depending on the signature of the metric.

`::SortOrder`

A list property which determines the preferred order of objects when a `@prodsort` command is used. See section 4.13 for examples.

`::Derivative`

An generic derivative object, satisfying the Leibnitz rule. These generic derivatives do not have to commute.

`::PartialDerivative`

Makes an object a partial derivative, i.e. a derivative which commutes. The object on which it acts has to be a non-sub/superscript child, while all the sub- or superscript child nodes are interpreted to be the variables with respect to which the derivative is taken.

---

```

▷ \partial{\#}::PartialDerivative.
▷ A_{\mu}::Depends(\partial).
▷ \partial_{\nu}\{A_{\mu} B_{\rho}\};
▷ @prodrule!(%);
  \partial_{\nu}\{A_{\mu} B_{\rho}\}

```

---

Note that derivative objects do not necessarily need to have a sub- or superscript child, they can be abstract derivatives as in

---

```

▷ D(d?)::Derivative.
▷ D(c d e);
▷ @prodrule!(%);
  D(c) d e + c D(d) e + c d D(e);

```

---

### algorithms:

`@prodflatten`

Removes brackets in a product, that is, makes changes of the type

$$a * (b * c) \rightarrow a * b * c. \quad (5.4)$$

Also performs the same flattening for nested `@diff` nodes.

`@sumflatten`

Removes brackets in a sum, that is, makes changes of the type

$$a + (b + c) \rightarrow a + b + c. \quad (5.5)$$

`@remove_indexbracket`

When a single symbol-with-indices is entered as

---

```

▷ (A)_{\mu\nu};

```

---

it gets wrapped in an `\indexbracket` node. In order to remove this node again, and produce

---

```
A_{\mu\nu}
```

---

again, use `@remove_indexbracket`. This is also useful after a `@distribute` has been called on an `\indexbracket` node which contained a sum; the command `@remove_indexbracket` will then remove the superfluous brackets around the single symbols.

#### `@expand_power`

Expand powers into repeated products, e.g.

---

```
▷ (A B)**3:
▷ @expand_power!(%);
  (A * B) * (A * B) * (A * B);
▷ @prodflatten!(%):
▷ @prodsort!(%);
  A A A B B B;
▷ @collect_factors!(%);
  A**3 * B**3;
```

---

This command automatically takes care of index relabelling when necessary, as in the following example,

---

```
▷ {m,n,p,q,r}::Indices(vector).
▷ (A_m B_m)**3:
▷ @expand_power!(%):
▷ @prodflatten!(%);
  A_{m} * B_{m} * A_{n} * B_{n} * A_{p} * B_{p};
```

---

#### `@drop`

Removes terms for which a product contains the indicated number of factors, with indicated weight factors. Example:

---

```
▷ A B B + A A A + A B + B:
▷ @drop!(%){A,B}{1,2}{3};
  A B B + B;
```

---

In this example, the weight of A is 1 and the weight of B is 2, and all terms for which the total weight adds up to 3 have been removed.

#### `@keep`

The opposite of `@drop`: keep only those terms for which a product contains the indicated number of factors.

---

```

> A B B + A A A + A B + B:
> @keep! (%) {A,B} {1,2} {3};
A A A + A B;

```

---

**@distribute**

Rewrite a product of sums as a sum of products, as in

$$a(b+c) \rightarrow ab+ac. \quad (5.6)$$

For this rule to apply, the selection should contain a product, each factor of which can be a sum. All sums will be distributed.

**@prodrule**

Apply the product rule or “Leibnitz identity” to an object which has the “Derivative” property, i.e.

$$D(fg) = D(f)g + fD(g). \quad (5.7)$$

**@sumsort**

Sort terms in a sum, taking into account any `SortOrder` properties, or else sorting lexicographically.

---

```

> a**(-1+d) - a**(d-1);
> @collect_terms! (%);
a**(-1+d) - a**(d-1);
> @sumsort! (%);
> @collect_terms! (%);
0;

```

---

**@prodsort**

Sort factors in a product, taking into account any `SortOrder` properties. Also takes into account commutativity properties, such as `Commuting` and `SelfCommuting`. If no sort order is given, it first does a lexicographical sort based on the name of the factor, and if two names are identical, does a sort based on the number of children and (if this number is equal) a lexicographical comparison of the names of the children. **[KP: Warning! Does not yet know about `\pow`]**

**@collect\_terms**

Collect terms in a sum that differ only by their numerical pre-factor. This is called automatically on all new input, and also by some algorithms (in which case it will be indicated in the description of the command), but in general has to be called by hand.

Note that this command only collects terms which are identical, it does not collect terms which are different but mathematically equivalent. See `@sumsort` on page 39 for an example.

**@collect\_factors**

Collect factors in a product that differ only by their exponent. Note that factors containing sub- or superscripted indices do not get collected (i.e.  $A_m A^m$  does not get reduced to  $(A_m)^2$ ).

**@factorise**

Given a list of symbols, this algorithm collects terms in a sum that only differ by pre-factors consisting of these given symbols. As an example,

---

```

> a b + a c + a d:
> @factorise!({b,c});
(b + c) a + a d;

```

---

This is like the antibracket statement of FORM.

**@canonicalise**

Canonicalise a product of tensors, using the mono-term index symmetries of the individual tensors and the exchange symmetries of identical tensors. Tensor exchange takes into account commutativity properties of identical tensors.

Note that this algorithm does not take into account multi-term symmetries such as the Ricci identity of the Riemann tensor.

If you have symmetric or anti-symmetric tensors with many indices, it sometimes pays off to sort them to the end of the expression (this may speed up the canonicalisation process considerably).

**@reduce**

Reduce a sum of tensor monomials of the same type, taking into account mono-term as well as multi-term symmetries. This does not aim for a canonical form, but rather for a form in which no monomials occur which can be expressed (using mono- and multi-term symmetries) as a linear combination of other monomials appearing in the sum. An example makes this more clear:

---

```

> {m,n,p,q}::Indices(vector).
   {m,n,p,q}::Integer(0..10).
   R_{m n p q}::RiemannTensor.

   R_{m n q p} R_{m n p q} + R_{m p n q} R_{m n p q};
   @reduce!({%});

```

---

**@young\_project**

Project the indicated expression onto a Young tableau representation. This includes the normalisation factor, such that applying the operation twice does not change the result anymore. For example,

---

```

> A_{m n} B_{p}:
> @young_project!({2,1}{0,1,2});
   1/3 A_{m n} B_{p} + 1/3 A_{n m} B_{p}
   - 1/3 A_{p n} B_{m} - 1/3 A_{n p} B_{m};
> @young_project!({2,1}{0,1,2}):
> @collect_terms!({%});
   1/3 A_{m n} B_{p} + 1/3 A_{n m} B_{p}
   - 1/3 A_{p n} B_{m} - 1/3 A_{n p} B_{m};

```

---



The index positions given in the second argument count from zero. [7] .

`@all_contractions`

Construct all full contractions of the given tensors, taking into account mono-term symmetries. Example,

---

```
▷ A_{m n}::Symmetric.  
▷ A_{m n}::Traceless.  
▷ {m,n,p,q,r,s,t,u}::Indices(vector).  
▷ {m,n,p,q,r,s,t,u}::Integer(0..9).  
▷ obj14:= A_{m n} A_{p q} A_{r s} A_{t u};  
  @all_contractions(%){2};  
  A_{m n} A_{m n} A_{p q} A_{p q} + A_{m n} A_{m p} A_{n q} A_{p q};
```

---

## 5.4 Lists and ranges

When using list algorithms, be aware of the fact that when they act on an argument, they actually replace the argument, not generate a new one. Therefore, to generate a new expression which contains the length of another expression,

---

```

▷ A+B+C+D;
  1:= A+B+C+D;
▷ @length[@(1)];
  2:= 4;

```

---

This is to be compared with

---

```

▷ A+B+C+D;
  1:= A+B+C+D;
▷ @length(1);
  1:= 4;

```

---

in which case the first expression gets replaced by its length.

### algorithms:

#### @length

Replaces the expression with its length, that is, the number of terms in a sum, the number of factors in a product or the number of elements in a list.

#### @take

Replace a sum, product or list with a subset of its terms, factors or elements. Example,

---

```

▷ A+B+C+D+E;
▷ @take(%) {1,3};
  B+D;
▷ {A,B,C,D,E};
▷ @take(%) {4};
  \{ E \};
▷ A*B*C*D*E;
▷ @take(%) {2..\infty};
  C*D*E;

```

---

As usual, a range can be open by setting the second boundary to `\infty`. See also `@take_match`.

#### @range

Replaces a two-element list of integers with the elements in the range,

---

```

▷ {-3,2};
  @range(%) ;
▷ \{ -3,-2,-1,0,1,2 \}
  @range[{1,3}];
  \{ 1,2,3 \}

```

---

When the list has three elements, the algorithm generates a list consisting of a number of copies of the third element of the given list,

---

```
▷ @range[{1,3,c}];
   {c,c,c};
```

---

When the list contains four elements, the first one is used as a counter, and can appear in the fourth element to generate different list elements,

---

```
▷ @range[{i, 1, 5, c_{i} }];
   { c_1, c_2, c_3, c_4, c_5 }
```

---

#### @inner

Construct an inner product between two lists appearing in a list,

---

```
▷ lst1:= {a_m, b_m ,c_m ,d_m ,e_m };
▷ lst2:= @range[{1, @length[@(lst1)]}];
   \{ 1,2,3,4,5 \};
▷ @inner[ { @(lst1), @(lst2) } ];
   a_m + 2 b_m + 3 c_m + 4 d_m + 5 e_m;
```

---

#### @list\_sum

In an expression containing sums of identical-length lists, create one new list constructed by adding the elements at the same position in each list. Example,

---

```
▷ {a, b, 7c + q, d, e} - {-f, g, h, i, j}:
▷ @list_sum!(%):
▷ @sumflatten!(%);
   \{ a + f, b - g, 7c + q - h, d - i, e - j \};
```

---

## 5.5 Differential geometry

### properties:

`::DifferentialForm`

## 5.6 Properties

### algorithms:

`@extract_properties`

An algorithm mainly useful in internal routines: it extracts properties attached to a symbol and adds them to the global property list. Gets called automatically on input.

## 5.7 Dummy indices

Dummy indices are a subject by itself. There are various problems with most implementations of dummy indices in computer algebra software. In many cases, dummy indices are added as an afterthought, leading to situations where illegal expressions (e.g. with a more than twice repeated dummy index) can be entered. Even if this is flagged, most programs do not know about different index types (which leads to problems when there is more than one type of contraction, or a sum over only part of the index range). In *cadabra*, the system knows about dummy index *sets*, and all algorithms can request new dummy indices very easily. This is handled through the `dummies` module.

### properties:

`::Indices`

Declare index names to be usable for dummy index purposes. Typical usage is of the form

---

```
▷ {r,s,t}::Indices(vector).
▷ {a,b,c,d}::Indices(spinor).
```

---

This indicates the name of the index set (“vector” resp. “spinor” in the example above).

### algorithms:

`@rename_dummies`

Rename the dummy indices in an expression.

## 5.8 Symmetrisation and anti-symmetrisation

This module contains algorithms for the symmetrisation or anti-symmetrisation of expressions in their elements, and for the inverse procedure, whereby object trees are identified when they differ only by certain symmetrisations or anti-symmetrisations.

### algorithms:

`@sym`

Symmetrise a product in the indicated objects.

`@asym`

Anti-symmetrise a product in the indicated objects.

`@canonicalorder`

`@acanonicalorder`

Orders the indicated objects in the expression in canonical order, taking into account permutation signs (symmetric in case of `@canonicalorder`, antisymmetric in case of `@acanonicalorder`). Example:

---

```

> A^{m n p} B^{q r} + A^{q m} B^{n p r};
> @acanonicalorder!(%)( ^{m}, ^{n}, ^{p}, ^{r}, ^{q} );
- A^{m n p} B^{r q} + A^{m n} B^{p r q};

```

---

`@impose_asym`

Impose anti-symmetry in external indices, that is, remove terms in the expression which have anti-symmetry imposed on more than one index sitting on a symmetric object.

`@asymprop`

Remove all traces of anti-symmetric tensors.

## 5.9 Field theory

### properties:

`::SelfDual`

`::AntiSelfDual`

These two properties declare that a tensor is fully anti-symmetric, but in addition satisfies a selfduality or anti-selfduality condition.

`::Depends`

Makes an object implicitly dependent on other objects, i.e. assumes that the indicated object is a function of the arguments of the property. For example,

---

```
▷ x::Coordinate.
▷ \phi::Depends(x).
```

---

makes  $\phi$  an implicit function of  $x$ . Instead of indicating the coordinate on which the object depends, it is also possible to indicate which derivatives would yield a non-zero answer, as in

---

```
▷ \nabla{#}::Derivative.
▷ \phi::Depends(\nabla).
```

---

Finally, it is possible to use an index name to indicate on which coordinates a field depends,

---

```
▷ {m,n,p,q}::Indices(vector).
▷ \phi::Depends(m).
```

---

`::Weight`

`::Symbol`

If you want to attach symbols to tensors in sub- or superscript, as in  $A^\dagger$ , you need to tell cadabra that this symbol is not an index (otherwise it may interpret  $A^\dagger A^\dagger$  as two contracted vectors with vector indices  $\dagger$ ). This is done by associating the `Symbol` property to the symbol; in this example

---

```
▷ \dagger::Symbol.
▷ A^\dagger A^\dagger;
```

---

`::Coordinate`

Declare a symbol to be a coordinate label (useful in combination with `Depends`). This is required if you want to write a derivative with respect to a coordinate: the input

---

```
▷ A(x,x') + \diff{B(x,x')}_x;
```

---

will by default be seen as incorrect because the  $x$  in the second term will be considered an index label, not a coordinate. The input

---

```
▷ { x, x' }::Coordinate.
▷ A(x,x') + \diff{B(x,x')}_x;
```

---

is allowed and interpreted in the right way.

::Accent

### algorithms:

#### @unwrap

Move objects out of Derivatives or Accents when they do not depend on these operators. Accents will get removed, as in the following example,

---

```
▷ \hat{#}::Accent.
▷ \hat{#}::Distributable.
▷ B::Depends(\hat).

▷ \hat{A+B+C}:
▷ @distribute!(%);
  \hat{A} + \hat{B} + \hat{C};
▷ @unwrap!(%);
  A + \hat{B} + C;
```

---

Derivatives will be set to zero if an object inside does not depend on it,

---

```
▷ \partial{#}::PartialDerivative.
▷ x::Coordinate.
  B::Depends(\partial).
▷
▷ \partial_x( A B C ):
  @unwrap!(%);
  A C \partial_x{B};
```

---

Here is another example,

---

```
▷ \del{#}::Derivative.
▷ X::Depends(\del).
▷ \del{X*Y*Z}:
▷ @prodrule!(%);
  \del{X} * Y * Z + X * \del{Y} * Z + X * Y * \del{Z};
▷ @unwrap!(%);
  \del{X}*Y*Z;
```

---



Note that all objects are by default constants for the action of Derivative operators. If you want objects to stay inside derivative operators you have to explicitly declare that they depend on the derivative operator or on the coordinate with respect to which you take a derivative.

#### @eliminate\_kr

Eliminates kronecker delta symbols in the selection by performing index contractions. Also replaces contracted kronecker delta symbols with the range over which the index runs, if known.

#### @eliminateeps

**[KP: Stupid name]** Given an epsilon tensor and a self-dual tensor contracted with it, rewrite the self-dual tensor as epsilon times itself, so that at a further stage one can use the command @epsprod2gendelta to remove the epsilons altogether (the arguments contain a list of all tensors for which self-duality can be applied). Uses the the tensor with the largest number of indices in common with the epsilon symbol (can be more than one, in which case more terms are generated).

#### @epsprod2gendelta

Replace a product of two epsilon tensors with a generalised delta according to the expression

$$\epsilon^{r_1 \dots r_d} \epsilon_{s_1 \dots s_d} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{|g|}} \epsilon^{r_1 \dots r_d} \sqrt{|g|} \epsilon_{s_1 \dots s_d} = \text{sgn } g \, d! \, \delta_{s_1 \dots s_d}^{r_1 \dots r_d}, \quad (5.8)$$

where  $\text{sgn } g$  denotes the signature of the metric  $g$  used to raise/lower the indices (see Epsilon for conventions on the epsilon tensor). When the indices are not occurring up/down as in this expression, and the index position is not free, metric objects will be generated instead.

Contracted indices inside the generalised delta are automatically eliminated, as the command @reduce\_gendelta is called automatically; if you do not want this use the optional argument “noreduce”.

#### @dualise\_tensor

Dualises tensors which have been declared SelfDual according to the formula

$$F_{\mu_{n+1} \dots \mu_d} \rightarrow *F_{\mu_{n+1} \dots \mu_d} = \frac{1}{n!} \epsilon_{\mu_{n+1} \dots \mu_d}^{\mu_1 \dots \mu_n} F_{\mu_1 \dots \mu_n}. \quad (5.9)$$

In order for this to work the indices on the tensor have to be declared with Indices and their range should have been specified with Integer.

#### @reduce\_gendelta

Convert generalised delta symbols which contain contracted indices to deltas with fewer indices, according to the formula

$$n! \delta_{b_1 \dots b_n}^{a_1 \dots a_n} \delta_{a_1}^{b_1} \dots \delta_{a_m}^{b_m} = \left[ \prod_{i=1}^m (d - (n - i)) \right] (n - m)! \delta_{b_{m+1} \dots b_n}^{a_{m+1} \dots a_n}. \quad (5.10)$$

#### @product\_shorthand

Rewrites the product of two fully symmetric or anti-symmetric tensors in a compact form by removing the contracting dummy indices.

---

```

> F_{m n p q}::Symmetric.
> G_{m n p q}::Symmetric.
> @product_shorthand! [ F_{a b c d} G_{a b d f} ] {F}{G};
  F_{c} G_{f};

```

---

The two arguments denote the tensors to which the algorithm should apply.

#### @expand\_product\_shorthand

Reverse of the previous algorithm. In addition to the two tensor names, it takes a number denoting the total number of indices.

#### @impose\_bianchi

Removes terms which are proportional to the (Garnir generalised) Bianchi identity. It removes all products for which a set of indices in Garnir hook form is contracted with an anti-symmetric set.

#### @einsteinify

In an expression containing dummy indices at the same position (i.e. either both subscripts or both superscripts), raise one of the indices.

If an additional argument is given to this command, it instead inserts “inverse metric” objects, with the name as indicated by the additional argument.

#### @combine

Combine two consecutive objects with indexbrackets and consecutive contracted indices into one object with an indexbracket. Example

---

```

> (\Gamma_r)_{\alpha\beta} (\Gamma_{s t u})_{\beta\gamma};
> @combine!(%);
  (\Gamma_r \Gamma_{s t u})_{\alpha\gamma};

```

---

#### @expand

Write out products of matrices inside indexbrackets, inserting new dummy indices for the contraction.

## 5.10 Output routines

The core of cadabra only knows how to output its internal tree format in infix notation, and by default displays the result of every input line in this way (labelled by the expression number and label, if any). For more complicated output, for instance to feed cadabra expressions to other programs, or to see the internal tree form, routines are available in the `output` module. Note that these modules do not transform the tree or generate new expressions; they *only* generate output.

Related but *different* functionality is present in the `convert` module, which contains transformation algorithms which transform the internal tree to other conventions (e.g. in order to convert a cadabra tree to a tree which can be understood by Maple or Mathematica).

### algorithms:

#### @depprint

Display an expression together with all properties of the symbols that appear in this expression. This is a very useful command if you want to extract a result from a long calculation and write it in a separate file for further processing.

#### @print

Construct output from strings and cadabra expressions. As an example, the command

---

```
▷ @print["tst := " ~ @join[\Gamma^{a b}\Gamma_{c}] ~ "];
```

---

will show the output

---

```
tst := \Gamma^{a b}*\Gamma_{c};
```

---

As you can see in this example, expressions are joined together into one printable string by using the tilde character.

Note that this completely overrides the normal output of expressions: there is no expression number for instance. Also note that all active nodes are (as usual) completely expanded before the print algorithm is called.

#### @number\_of\_terms

Returns the number of terms in a sum.

#### @proplist

Show all properties and the patterns to which they are associated.

#### @assert

Checks whether the indicated expression equals zero. If not, the program will be terminated. This command is used e.g. in the test suite.

Furthermore, there are a few algorithms which are mainly useful for debugging purposes, as they display information about the internal representation of the expression tree. More information on the internal data structures can be found in section 6.2.

**algorithms:****@tree**

Display the internal tree form of a given expression. Can be used on a single expression or on an entire tree,

- 
- ▷ @tree(3);
  - ▷ @tree;
- 

shows the tree form of expression (3) and the whole expression tree respectively. Most expressions lead to extremely lengthy output, so it is useful to redirect it to a file using the standard output redirection mechanism described in section 4.14.

**@indexlist**

Displays a list of all indices in an expression, together with their type (dummy or free).

## 5.11 General relativity

This module deals with special tensors relevant for general relativity. See in particular also the `canonicalise` algorithm in section 5.3.

### properties:

```
::Metric(signature=integer)
  Labels the object as a symmetric tensor, and optionally gives it the indicated signature. Objects declared as Metrics can be used to automatically raise or lower indices using the @eliminate_metric command.

::InverseMetric

::Vielbein

::InverseVielbein

::WeylTensor

::RiemannTensor
```

### algorithms:

```
@remove_weyl_traces
  Removes terms containing the trace of a Weyl tensor, i.e. a Weyl tensor with two indices contracted.
```

```
@rewrite_indices
  Rewrite indices on an object by contracting it with a second object which contains indices of both the old and the new type (a vielbein, in other words). Example,
```

---

```
> {m,n,p}::Indices(flat).
> {\mu,\nu,\rho}::Indices(curved).
> T_{m n p};
> @rewrite_indices!(%){ T_{\mu\nu\rho} }{ e_{\mu}^{\nu} };
  T_{\mu \nu \rho} e_{\mu}^{\nu} e_{\nu}^{\rho} e_{\rho}^{\mu};
```

---

However, this also works for other type of index conversions, for instance if you want to raise or lower an index with a metric,

---

```
> {m,n,p,q,r,s}::Indices(curved, position=fixed).
> H_{m n p};
> @rewrite_indices!(%){ H^{m n p} }{ g_{m n} };
  H^{q r s} g_{m q} g_{n r} g_{p s};
```

---

```
@weyl_index_order
```

Sorts the indices on a Riemann or Weyl tensor by first applying anti-symmetry in each pair, and subsequently sorting the pairs by using symmetry under pair exchange. This alphabetical sorting can be prohibited by giving a list of indices which is preferred to be in the first pair. **deprecated**

---

```

> R_{s2 s1 s3 r1};
> @weyl_index_order(%) {s1};
  R_{s1 s2 r1 s3}
> @weyl_index_order(%) ;
  R_{r1 s3 s1 s2}

```

---

**@riemann\_index\_regroup**

Given a set (or multiple sets) of indices in which to anti-symmetrise, this routine determines whether the indicated Riemann tensor has an index distribution with two of the anti-symmetrised indices on two different pairs. If so, it performs the substitution

$$R_{m[p|n|q]} \rightarrow \frac{1}{2} R_{mnpq}, \quad (5.11)$$

which is valid by virtue of the Riccy cyclic identity  $R_{m[npq]} = 0$ .

**@ricci\_identity**

Remove all objects of type “riemann” or “weyl” which are contracted with 3 or more indices on an anti-symmetric tensor. This therefore implements the Ricci identity

$$R_{[\mu\nu\rho]\sigma} = 0, \quad (5.12)$$

and a similar one for the Weyl tensor.

**@ricci\_can\_order**

Rewrites all terms with two Weyl or Riemann tensors which are doubly contracted in a canonical form, that is, with the contracted indices sitting on mixed pairs. The identity that is used is

$$R_{abmn} R_{cdmn} = 2 R_{amnb} (R_{cmnd} - R_{dmnc}). \quad (5.13)$$

**@split\_index**

Replace a sum by a sum-of-sums, abstractly. Concretely, replaces all index contractions of a given type by a sum of two terms, each with indices of a different type. Useful for Kaluza-Klein reductions and the like.

---

```

> {M,N,P,Q,R}::Indices(full).
> {m,n,p,q,r}::Indices(space1).
> {a,b,c,d,e}::Indices(space2).
> A_{M p} B_{M p};
> @split_index(%) {M,m,a};
  A_{m p} B_{m p} + A_{a p} B_{a p};
> @pop(%) ;
> @split_index(%) {M,m,4};
  A_{m p} B_{m p} + A_{4 p} B_{4 p};

```

---

## 5.12 Substitution

Substitution of expressions into other ones is a subtle issue. One problem, namely that of relabelling of dummy indices, is addressed by the core routines and has been discussed in section 5.7. Here we will discuss how `cadabra` handles the issue of pattern matching.

### algorithms:

Ⓒ

Given an expression number of label, this node replaces itself with a copy of this expression. As with any active node, this one takes care of dummy index relabelling automatically (see section 5.7).

@rename

**(documentation no longer correct!)** Renames objects and numbered objects, but only on a fixed level, i.e. does not do pattern matching at all. For instance,

---

```

> F_{m1 m2 m3};
F_{m1 m2 m3}
> @rename!(%){m}{r};
F_{r1 r2 r3}

```

---

It will not prevent you from introducing dummy pairs:

---

```

> F_{m n};
> @rename!(%){m}{n};
F_{n n};

```

---

However, it will relabel already existing dummy pairs if you rename an open index in such a way that it would conflict with the dummy pair:

---

```

> {m,n,p,q,r,s}::Indices(vector).
> F_{m n} G_{n q};
> @rename!(%){m}{n};
F_{n p} G_{p q};

```

---

@substitute

Generic substitution command. Takes a rule or a set of rules according to which an expression should be modified. If more than one rule is given, it tries each rule in turn, until the first working one is encountered, after which it continues with the next node.

---

```

> G_{mu nu rho} + F_{mu nu rho};
> @substitute!(%)( F_{mu nu rho} -> A_{mu nu} B_{rho} );
G_{mu nu rho} + A_{mu nu} B_{rho};

```

---

---

```

> A_{mu nu} B_{nu rho} C_{rho sigma};
> @substitute!(%)( A_{m n} C_{p q} -> D_{m q} );
D_{mu sigma} B_{nu rho};

```

---

This command takes full care of dummy index relabelling, as the following example shows:

---

```

> {m,n,q,d1,d2,d3,d4}::Indices(vector).
> a_{m} b_{n};
> @substitute!(%)( a_{q} -> c_{m n} d_{m n q} );
c_{d1 d2} * d_{d1 d2 m} * b_{n};

```

---

By postfixing a name with a question mark, it becomes a pattern.

`@take_match`

Select a subset of terms in a sum or list which match the given pattern.



## 5.13 Linear algebra

### algorithms:

#### @lsolve

Solve a system of linear equations. Example,

---

```

> { a0+2*a2 + a3= 3, -a0 - a2 + a3= - (8/3) , a3 = 3};
> @lsolve(%) {a0,a2,a3};
{a0 = 34/3, a2 = (-17/3), a3 = 3};

```

---

Underdetermined and inconsistent systems are handled as expected: either some coefficients are left unfixed or the system is returned and an error message is printed.

#### @decompose

Decompose a tensor monomial on a given basis of monomials. The basis should be given in the second argument. All tensor symmetries, including those implied by Young tableau Garnir symmetries, are taken into account. Example,<sup>6</sup>

---

```

> {m,n,p,q}::Indices(vector).
> {m,n,p,q}::Integer(0..10).
R_{m n p q}::RiemannTensor.
>
> R_{m n q p} R_{m p n q};
@decompose!(%)( R_{m n p q} R_{m n p q} );
\{ -1/2 \};

```

---

<sup>6</sup>Note that this algorithm does not yet take into account dimension-dependent identities, but it is nevertheless already required that the index range is specified.

## 5.14 Gamma matrix algebra and fermions

This module deals with manipulations of the Clifford algebra, spinor representations of the Lorentz group and related issues. Cadabra follows the conventions of Sevrin's appendix 1.5, except for the fact that we call the time-like component zero and the product of all gamma matrices  $\tilde{\Gamma}$ .

### properties:

`::GammaMatrix`

A generalised generator of a Clifford algebra. With one vector index, it satisfies

$$\{\Gamma^m, \Gamma^n\} = 2\eta^{mn}. \quad (5.14)$$

The objects with more vector indices are defined as

$$\Gamma^{m_1 \dots m_n} = \Gamma^{[m_1 \dots m_n]}, \quad (5.15)$$

where the anti-symmetrisation includes a division by  $n!$ . If you intend to use the `@join` algorithm, you have to add a key/value pair `metric` to set the name of the tensor which acts as the unit element in the Clifford algebra.

`::Spinor`

`::DiracBar`

Declares an object to be the operator which applies the Dirac bar to a spinor, i.e. an operator which acts according to

$$\bar{\psi} = i\psi^\dagger \Gamma^0. \quad (5.16)$$

`::GammaTraceless`

Declares a spinor object with a vector index to be zero when it is contracted with a gamma matrix.

`::SigmaMatrix`

`::SigmaBarMatrix`

These are the invariant tensors relating the  $(\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2})$  to the vector representation of  $SO(3,1)$ . Cadabra uses the Wess & Bagger conventions [8], which means that the metric has signature  $\eta = \text{diag}(-1, 1, 1, 1)$  and

$$(\sigma^\mu)_{\alpha\dot{\beta}} = (-\mathbb{1}, \vec{\sigma})_{\alpha\dot{\beta}}, \quad (\bar{\sigma}^\mu)^{\dot{\alpha}\beta} = (-\mathbb{1}, -\vec{\sigma})^{\dot{\alpha}\beta}. \quad (5.17)$$

When the objects carry two vector indices, they are understood to be

$$(\sigma^{mn})_{\alpha\beta} \equiv \frac{1}{4}(\sigma^m \bar{\sigma}^n - \sigma^n \bar{\sigma}^m)_{\alpha\beta}, \quad (\bar{\sigma}^{mn})^{\dot{\alpha}\dot{\beta}} \equiv \frac{1}{4}(\bar{\sigma}^m \sigma^n - \bar{\sigma}^n \sigma^m)^{\dot{\alpha}\dot{\beta}}. \quad (5.18)$$

See below for algorithms dealing with the conversion from indexed to index-free notation.

### algorithms:

@join

Join two fully anti-symmetrised gamma matrix products according to the expression

$$\Gamma^{b_1 \dots b_n} \Gamma_{a_1 \dots a_m} = \sum_{p=0}^{\min(n,m)} \frac{n!m!}{(n-p)!(m-p)!p!} \Gamma^{[b_1 \dots b_{n-p} [a_{p+1} \dots a_m \eta^{b_{n-p+1} \dots b_n]_{a_1 \dots a_{m-p}}]} . \quad (5.19)$$

Without further arguments, the anti-symmetrisations will be left implicit. The argument “expand” instead performs the sum over all anti-symmetrisations, which may lead to an enormous number of terms if the number of indices on the gamma matrices is large. In order to reduce the number somewhat, one can instruct the algorithm to make use of generalised Kronecker delta symbols in the result; these symbols are defined as

$$\delta^{r_1 r_2 \dots r_n}_{s_1 s_2 \dots s_n} = \delta^{[r_1}_{s_1} \delta^{r_2}_{s_2} \dots \delta^{r_n]}_{s_n} . \quad (5.20)$$

Anti-symmetrisation is implied in the set of even-numbered indices. The use of these symbols is triggered by the “gendelta” option.

Finally, to select only a single term (for a given  $p$ ) in this expansion, give the join an argument with the value of  $p$ .

@gammasplit

The opposite of @join splits off a gamma matrix from a totally anti-symmetrised product, e.g.

$$\Gamma^{mnp} = \Gamma^{mn} \Gamma^p - 2 \Gamma^{[m} \eta^n]_p . \quad (5.21)$$

By default it splits off the one from the back, like in the example above, but with argument front it will split from the front.

@rewrite\_diracbar

Rewrite the Dirac conjugate of a product of spinors and gamma matrices as a product of Dirac and hermitean conjugates. This uses

$$\bar{\psi} = i \psi^\dagger \Gamma^0 , \quad (5.22)$$

together with

$$\Gamma_m^\dagger = \Gamma_0 \Gamma_m \Gamma_0 . \quad (5.23)$$

For example,

---

```

> \bar{#}::DiracBar.
> \psi::Spinor(dimension=10).
> \Gamma{#}::GammaMatrix.
> \bar{\Gamma^{m n p} * \psi};
> @rewrite_diracbar!(%);

```

---

@projweyl

Projects an expression onto Weyl spinors of positive chirality (this algorithm only works in even dimensions). On such a subspace, we have

$$\Gamma^{r_1 \dots r_d} \Big|_{\text{Weyl}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{-g}} \epsilon^{r_1 \dots r_d} , \quad \epsilon^{0 \dots (d-1)} = +1 , \quad (5.24)$$

and therefore all gamma matrices with more than  $d/2$  indices can be converted to their “dual” gamma matrices. By repeated contraction of (5.24) with gamma matrices on the left one deduces that

$$\Gamma^{r_1 \dots r_n} \Big|_{\text{Weyl}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{-g}} \frac{(-1)^{\frac{1}{2}n(n+1)+1}}{(d-n)!} \Gamma_{s_1 \dots s_{d-n}} \Big|_{\text{Weyl}} \epsilon^{s_1 \dots s_{d-n} r_1 \dots r_n}. \quad (5.25)$$

@spinorsort

Sorts Majorana spinor bilinears using the Majorana flip property

$$\bar{\psi}_1 \Gamma_{r_1 \dots r_n} \psi_2 = \alpha \beta^n (-1)^{\frac{1}{2}n(n-1)} \bar{\psi}_1 \Gamma_{r_1 \dots r_n} \psi_2. \quad (5.26)$$

Here  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  determine the properties of the charge conjugation matrix,

$$\mathcal{C}^T = \alpha \mathcal{C}, \quad \mathcal{C} \Gamma_r \mathcal{C}^{-1} = \beta \Gamma_r^T. \quad (5.27)$$

## 5.15 Conversion from/to other formats

Cadabra's syntax is a superset of the Maple and Mathematica formats, in the sense that the internal tree representation of cadabra can store input for both of these systems. However, this may not always be the most convenient way of storage, as cadabra often has more compact or expressive ways to store tensors. The `convert` module provides conversion algorithms from and to these two formats.

### algorithms:

#### `@from_math[expression]`

Reads mathematica input format as used by GAMMA [9]. Fully anti-symmetric tensors are denoted with

---


$$\text{Tensor}[\text{name}, \{\text{indices}\}]$$


---

Tensors with property "weyltensor" are printed as

---


$$\triangleright W_{\{r1\ r2\ r3\ r4\}}$$

$$\text{Weyl}[\{r1, r2\}, \{r3, r4\}]$$


---

(warning, this removes the tensor name).

#### `@to_math[expression]`

Converts the mathematica expression to a cadabra one. See above for details about the conversion process.

# Core functionality

## 6.1 Source file description

The files in the `src` directory build up the core of the program and are described below. Algorithm-specific code is in the `src/modules` subdirectory and a description of those files can be found in section 5. The files below should not be changed when adding new modules.

`main.cc`

Startup routines; initialises the I/O streams, sets up the signal handlers for control-C and window resize signals and starts the main event loop.

`manipulator.cc`, `manipulator.hh`

Contains the object that processes the input line by line, activates the parser on it, and scans the tree for active nodes. A few very low-level commands (see section 5.1) are handled in this class, while the other ones are dispatched to external modules.

`preprocessor.cc`, `preprocessor.hh`

The code for conversion of human editable infix input to the tree-form handled by the other parts of the program. This is a text-to-text filter forming the first pass of the parser. All functionality can be tested using `test_preprocessor.cc`.

`storage.cc`, `storage.hh`

The node and tree classes for storage of the tree form of expressions. These are the classes on which actual symbolic manipulation takes place. See also the separate `tree.hh` class.

`parser.cc`, `parser.hh`

The class which contains the parsing algorithms that turns output of the preprocessor class into a tree form.

`algorithm.cc`, `algorithm.hh`

The base class for all the classes defined in the modules subdirectory. Plus the implementation of scanning for command arguments and the necessary logic to create the undo information, apply an algorithm until it no longer changes the expression and other things which are independent of the particular command.

`combinatorics.hh`

General routines for the generation of combinations and permutations of elements in a vector. Consists of a single class `combinations<...>` templated over the type of the objects to be permuted. This class acts as a container holding both the original vector (in the `storage` member), the permutation patterns (in the `sublengths` vector, more on this later) as well as the resulting permuted vectors (accessible through `operator []`); the total number of combinations is given by `size()`.

## 6.2 Tree representation of expressions

Expressions are internally stored in a tree container class, based on the `tree.hh` library [10]. The present section describes the tree format in some more detail.

Let us start with a couple of remarks on the motivation which has led to the current implementation. An important requirement for the storage format is that symbols should not have a fixed meaning, but rather be like variables in a computer program: they can be declared to represent objects of a certain type. Similarly, the user should be free to use arbitrary bracket types and sub- and superscript indicators (these should in addition be kept during the algebraic manipulations). The first issue is resolved with the property system, but the second one needs support directly in the storage tree.

Secondly, storage should be such that a trivial (often occurring) extensions from one object to another should not lead to blowup. For instance, the difference between  $A_{\mu}$  and  $A_{\mu \nu}$  should preferably not introduce a new layer between the  $A$  node and the  $\mu$  node. This is achieved by adding the bracket type to the *child* node rather than the parent (in the example above, the curly brackets are part of the  $\mu$  and  $\nu$  nodes). This applies also to e.g. sums: in  $(A+B)$  (which is converted by the preprocessor to  $\text{\sum}(A)(B)$ ), the round brackets are part of the child nodes of the  $\text{\sum}$  node.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, extending  $q$  to  $3q$  should not introduce new intermediate layers to group the two symbols together. This has been achieved by giving each node a multiplier field (this holds true even for products, i.e.  $3(a+b)$  is represented as a sum node with multiplier 3 (in addition, such numerical factors are always commuted to the front of the expression)).<sup>8</sup>

It should also be possible to make expressions arbitrarily deeply nested; one should be able to write  $a+b$  as well as  $\sin(a+b)$ . This is in contrast to programs such as *Abra* and *FORM* which store their input as sums of products of factors, i.e. without further nesting.

Finally, it should be possible to store the history of an expression, in order to implement unlimited undo.

The data stored at each tree node is further explained in section 7.4, see in particular the excerpt from the *storage.hh* file in figure 2. The structure of the actual tree is illustrated in figure 1. Each expression starts with a *history* node. The label of the expression is given in a subnode *label*. All remaining child nodes of the *history* nodes represent the history of the expression. The most often encountered node here is the *expression* node, which contains the actual expression. However, there are other nodes as well, for instance *asymimplicit* which contains information about the symmetry structure of an expression (this feature is not yet enabled).

### 6.3 Nested sums, products and pure numbers

Nested sum and product nodes require some explanation, as the way in which *cadabra* handles and stores these determines how brackets can appear in sums and products. As a general rule, sums within sums which are such that all child nodes have the same, non-visible bracket are not allowed, and automatically converted to a single sum. In other words

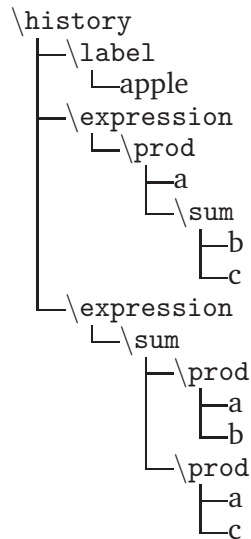
---


$$(\text{\sum}\{a\}\{b\}+\text{\sum}\{c\}\{d\})$$


---

<sup>7</sup>Subsequent child nodes with the same bracket type associated to them are taken to be part of the same group; the input  $A_{\mu}\nu$  will therefore be printed as  $A_{\mu \nu}$ . Similarly, there is no way to represent  $(a) + (b)$  since the internal storage format automatically turns this into  $(a + b)$ .

<sup>8</sup>The multiplier field is a rational, and is intended to stay that way. It is not a good idea to make it complex, otherwise we will end up with octonionic multipliers at some stage.



**Figure 1:** Example history tree for a single expression. Here, the program started with the user entering the expression  $a(b+c)$ . This expression was then manipulated by applying the @distribute algorithm. The nodes at the top of the expression tree are all of the history type.

is not allowed, since it would print as  $(a+b+c+d)$  which is indistinguishable from

---


$$(\sum\{a\}\{b\}\{c\}\{d\}) .$$


---

The first expression is therefore internally always converted to the second one before it is stored. A similar situation occurs with products, where

---


$$\prod\{a\}\{\prod\{b\}\{c\}\}$$


---

is not allowed and “flattened” to the simpler

---


$$\prod\{a\}\{b\}\{c\} .$$


---

The general rule is that nested sums and products are converted to flattened form if these two forms are indistinguishable in the standard output format. Nested sums and products can occur, but they have to have different or non-empty bracket types for their children. An example is

---


$$\prod\{a\}\{\prod(b)(c)\}$$


---

which prints as  $a*(b*c)$ . This is not automatically converted to  $a*b*c$ . Note that this form is *not* represented as

---


$$\prod\{a\}(b)(c) \quad (\text{wrong})$$


---



This is a consequence of the second rule: all child nodes of product or sum nodes must have the same bracket type. In summary, automatic flattening of nested sum or product trees do not automatically occur over bracket boundaries. You can then write and keep  $(\sin(x) + \cos(x)) + (\sin(x) + 3 \cos(x))$ , which will be stored as

---


$$\backslash\text{sum}\{\backslash\text{sum}(\sin(x))(\cos(x))\}\{\backslash\text{sum}(\sin(x))(\cos(x))\}$$


---

In order to remove brackets, one uses the `@sumflatten` and `@prodflatten` commands, see section 5.3.

Products and sums with sub- or superscripts which apply to one or more of the child nodes are internally represented using `\indexbracket` nodes. That is, the input

---


$$q (a+b)_{\mu}$$


---

is represented as

---


$$\backslash\text{prod}\{q\}\{\backslash\text{indexbracket}\{\backslash\text{sum}(a)(b)\}_{\mu}\}$$


---

(note the way in which the bracket types are inherited). In fact, such `indexbracket` constructions apply for any content inside the brackets; in the example above, an `indexbracket` would be generated even without the `\sum` node: the input

---


$$q (\Gamma^r)_{\{a b\}}$$


---

is stored as

---


$$\backslash\text{prod}\{q\}\{\backslash\text{indexbracket}(\Gamma^r)_{\{a b\}}\}$$


---

The result of the `indexbracket` way of storing expressions is that “index free” manipulations apply directly inside the `indexbracket` argument and no special algorithms are needed. Input will automatically be converted to this form. Getting rid of `indexbrackets` around single symbols is done using `@remove_indexbracket`.

Another issue is the storage of numbers. Since pure numerical factors are only allowed to appear in the multiplier field of a node, a pure number is stored as “1” with its multiplier equal to the number. Product nodes with two arguments of which one is a number are not allowed and will be converted to a single node with multiplier field, automatically.

In order to eliminate ambiguities concerning multipliers in sum and product nodes, the following rules should be obeyed: sum nodes always have unit multiplier (i.e. non-trivial multipliers are associated to the children) and children of product nodes should also always have unit multiplier (i.e. the multipliers of all the children should in this case be collected in the prod node itself).

# Module implementation guide

## 7.1 Storage of numbers and strings

There is a special memory area for the storage of rational numbers (with arbitrary-length integers for the numerator and denominator) as well as for the storage of strings.

## 7.2 Accessing indices

Indices are stored as ordinary child nodes. However, there are various ways to iterate over all indices in a factor, which are more useful than a simple iteration over all child nodes.

## 7.3 Object properties

The properties attached to a node in the tree can be queried by using a lookup method in the `properties` namespace. Object properties are child classes of the property class, and contain the property information in a parsed form. The following code snippet illustrates how properties are dealt with:

---

```
AntiSymmetry *s=properties::get<AntiSymmetry>(it)
if(s) {
    // do something with the property info
}
```

---

Here we used a property called `AntiSymmetry`, which is declared in the the module header `modules/algebra.hh` (see the other header files of the various modules for information about the available property types). If the node pointed to by `it` has this property associated to it, the pointer `s` will be set to point to the associated property node. **[KP: Better to use a property example where the property node contains some additional information, which can then be used.]**

It is also possible to do this search in the other direction, that is, to find an object with a given property.

---

```
properties::property_map_t::iterator
    it=properties::get_pattern<GammaMatrix>();
if(it!=properties::props.end()) {
    // Now *(it->first) contains the name of a GammaMatrix object.
}
```

---

**[KP: Instead of checking these things, it is better to throw exceptions, since that will make the code more readable and also the error handling more uniform (it can go in one place instead of being repeated).]**

Sums and products inherit, in a certain way, properties of the terms and factors from which they are built up. This is true also for other functions. If you want to know whether a given node has such *inherited properties*, a simple call to `get<...>` is not sufficient. Instead, use the following construction:

---

```
Matrix *m=properties::get_composite<Matrix>(it)
if(m) {
    // do something with the property info
}
```

---

These inheritance rules for composite objects are at present hard-coded but will be user-defineable at a later stage.

## 7.4 Writing a new algorithm module

All functionality of cadabra that goes beyond storage of the expression trees is located in separate modules, stored in the `src/modules` subdirectory. New functionality can easily be added by writing new modules. All algorithm objects derive from the `algorithm` object defined in `src/algorithm.hh`, and only a couple of virtual members have to be implemented.

The class interface for the algorithm object is shown in figure 3. The members which any class derived from `algorithm` should implement are described below.

`constructor(exptree&, iterator)`

Algorithm objects get initialised with a reference `tr` to the expression tree on which they act, together with an iterator `this_command` pointing to the associated command node. By looking at the child nodes of the latter, the arguments of the command can be obtained. The simplest way to do this is to use the sibling iterators returned by `args_begin()` and `args_end()`; these automatically skip the argument which refers to the equation number (i.e. they skip the (5) argument in `@command(5){arg1}{arg2}`). The constructor is a good place to parse the command arguments, since that will in general only be required once. Do not do anything in the constructor that has to be done on every invocation of the same command on different expressions.

If you discover that the arguments passed to an algorithm are not legal, you have to throw an `algorithm::constructor_error` exception.

`description()`

Should display an explanation of the functionality of the algorithm on the `txtout` stream. Do not add `std::endl` newlines by hand, these will be inserted automatically.

`bool can_apply(iterator)`

`bool can_apply(sibling_iterator, sibling_iterator)`

Determines whether the algorithm has a chance of acting on the given expression. This is an *estimate* but is required to return `true` if there is a possibility that the algorithm would yield a change.

It takes two `sibling_iterators` as arguments, which indicate a node or a range of nodes on which the algorithm is supposed to act.

Since `can_apply` is guaranteed to be called before `apply`, it is allowed for the `can_apply` member to store results for later use in `apply`. However, multiple calls to `can_apply` can be made to this combo, so any data stored should be erased upon each call to `can_apply`.

---

```
class str_node {
public:
    ...
};
```

---

**Figure 2:** The node class.

---

```
class algorithm {
public:
    typedef exptree::iterator      iterator;
    typedef exptree::sibling_iterator sibling_iterator;

    algorithm(exptree&, iterator&);

    virtual void      description() const=0;
    virtual bool      can_apply(iterator&);
    virtual bool      can_apply(sibling_iterator&, sibling_iterator&);
    virtual result_t  apply(iterator&);
    virtual result_t  apply(sibling_iterator&, sibling_iterator&);

    sibling_iterator  args_begin() const;
    sibling_iterator  args_end() const;
    unsigned int     number_of_args() const;

    exptree& tr;
    iterator this_command;
};
```

---

**Figure 3:** The relevant members of the class interface for the algorithm object. The virtual members and the constructor have to be implemented in new algorithm objects; see the main text for an explanation of the two versions of can\_apply and apply.

---

```
class exptree {
public:
    sibling_iterator  arg(iterator, unsigned int) const;
    unsigned int     arg_size(sibling_iterator) const;
    multiplier_t     arg_to_num(sibling_iterator, unsigned int) const;
};
```

---

**Figure 4:** The relevant members of the class interface for the exptree object.

```

apply_result apply(iterator&)
apply_result apply(sibling_iterator&, sibling_iterator&)

```

Before exiting this function, the member variable `expression_modified` has to be set according to whether or not the `apply` call made any changes to the expression.

If the algorithm can take a long time to complete and you want to give the user the option of interrupting it with control-C, you can check (at points where the algorithm can be interrupted) the global variable `interrupted`. If it is set, you should immediately throw an exception of type `algorithm_interrupted`, preferably with a short string describing the location or algorithm at which the interrupt occurred. The exception will be handled at the top level in the `manipulator.cc` code, where the current expression will be removed.

Algorithms can write progress information to the stream `txtout` and debug information (which will go into a separate file on disk) to `debugout`. These are global objects. Do not use the C++ streams `std::cout` and `std::cerr` for this purpose.

An algorithm is *never* allowed to modify the tree above the node or range of sibling nodes which were passed to the `apply` call. In other words, siblings and parent nodes should never be touched, and the nodes should not be removed from the tree directly. If you want to remove nodes, this can be done by setting their multiplier field to zero; the core routines will take care of actually removing the nodes from the tree. It is allowed to inspect the tree above the given nodes, but this is discouraged.

Upon any exit from an algorithm module, the tree is required to be in a valid state. In many cases, it is useful to clean up modifications to the tree by calling the utility function `cleanup_expression` (see section 7.9 for more information).

## 7.5 Adding the module to the system

Once you have written the `.hh` and `.cc` files associated to your new algorithm, it has to be added to the build process and the core program. First, add the header to the master header file `src/modules/modules.hh` file; this one looks like

---

```

src/modules/modules.hh:

#include "algebra.hh"
#include "pertstring.hh"
#include "select.hh"
...

```

---

You also have to add it to the `src/Makefile.in`. Near the top of this file you find a line looking somewhat like

---

```

src/Makefile.in:

...
MOBJS=modules/algebra.o modules/pertstring.o modules/convert.o \
      modules/field_theory.o modules/select.o modules/dummies.o \
      modules/properties.o modules/relativity.o modules/substitute.o
...

```

---

---

```

class property {
public:
    virtual bool      parse(exptree&, iterator pat, iterator prop);
    virtual std::string name() const=0;
    virtual void      display(std::ostream&) const;
};

```

---

**Figure 5:** The relevant members of the class interface for the property object.

and this is where your module has to be added. Finally, you have to make the algorithm visible to the core program. This is done in the `src/manipulator.cc` file. In the constructor of the manipulator class (defined somewhere near the top), you see a map of names to algorithm classes. A small piece is listed below:

---

```

src/manipulator.cc:

...
// pertstring
algorithms["@aticksen"]      =&create<aticksen>;
algorithms["@riemannid"]    =&create<riemannid>;

// algebra
algorithms["@distribute"]   =&create<distribute>;
...

```

---

Add your algorithm here; it does not have to have the same name as the object class name. Once this is all done, rerun `configure` and `make`.

## 7.6 Adding new properties

**[KP: Discuss the various member functions of `property`, in particular the way in which `parse` is supposed to behave, and the way in which properties should be registered.]** Since algorithms rely crucially on a *fixed* set of properties which they provide themselves, we store these things in a C++ way, rather than using strings. Another motivation: we do not want to parse (and check) these property trees every time they are accessed.

Properties typically carry key/value pairs which further specify the characteristics of the property. When the property object is created, the core calls the `parse()` method of the property, in which you are responsible for scanning through the list of key/value pairs. This is rather simple: just call the `find()` member of the `keyval` argument,

---

```

keyval_t::iterator ki=keyvals.find("dimension");
if(ki!=keyvals.end()) {
    // now ki->second is an iterator to an expression subtree
}

```

---

If the new property is derived from existing ones, do not forget to call the `parse()` method of all parent classes at the end.

Once this is all done, register the property with the system by adding an appropriate call to the module's `register_properties()` method, found at the top of each module.

## 7.7 Throwing errors

If, at any stage, an inconsistent expression is encountered, the safe way to return to the top level of the manipulator is to throw the exception class `consistency_error` (defined in `algorithm.hh`).

## 7.8 Manipulating the expression tree

The `exptree` class contains a number of tree access routines which enhance the functionality of the `tree.hh` library.

```
index_iterator
```

```
index_map_t
```

### 7.8.1 Acting on products or single terms

use `is_single_term` and `prod_wrap_single_term`.

### 7.8.2 Reserved node names

There is a small number of node names which is reserved to always mean the same thing, i.e. for which the properties are not determined by the property system. These are

```
\prod
```

```
\div
```

```
\sum
```

```
\pow
```

```
\indexbracket
```

```
\factorial
```

```
\equals
```

```
\unequals
```

```
\sequence
```

```
\comma
```

```
\infty
```

Some properties of these nodes are still obtained from the property system in order to make algorithms look more uniform, but the names of these reserved nodes can not be changed.

## 7.9 Utility functions

There are also various useful helper functions in the `exptree` class, mainly dealing with the conversion of expression numbers or labels to iterators that point to the actual expression in the tree.

`cleanup_expression(exptree&)`

`cleanup_expression(exptree&, iterator)`

Converts an expression (or part of it below the indicated node) to a valid form. That is, it calls various simplification algorithms on the expression, among which `sumflatten` and `prodcollectnum`.

`cleanup_nests`

When called on a product inside a product, or a sum inside a sum, and the bracket types of both node and parent are the same, flatten the tree. Adjusts the iterator to point to the product or sum node which remains.

`equation_by_number_or_name`

Given an iterator to a node that represents an expression number or expression label, this member returns an iterator that points to the actual node (to be precise: to the `\history` node of the expression).

`arg_size(sibling_iterator)`

`arg(iterator, unsigned int)`

Many algorithms require one *or more* objects as arguments. These are usually passed as lists, and therefore end up being of two forms: either they are single objects or they are `comma` objects representing a list. In order to avoid having to check for these two cases, one can use these two member functions.

The iterator arguments of these two member functions should point to the child which is either a single argument or a `\comma` node.

`pushup_multiplier`

Can be called on any node. If the node has a non-unit multiplier and the storage conventions exclude this, the algorithm will push the multiplier up the tree.

## 7.10 Writing a new output module

**[KP: Structure is different now: one inherits from `output_exptree` and then has printing stuff at ones disposal. Still would be nice to be able to change the printing objects for a given node type, i.e. modify the map of node names to printing objects.]**

**[KP: Also do something intelligent with the Mathematica output flags].**

## 7.11 Namespaces and global objects

The following objects are global:

`modglue::opipe txtout`

The normal output stream, to which you should communicate with the user.



`std::ofstream debugout`

The debug output stream, which normally writes to a file, and should only be used to write output which is useful for debugging purposes.

`nset_t name_set`

The global collection of all strings. Nodes in the expression tree contain an iterator into this map (see in particular figure 2).

`rset_t rat_set`

The global collection of all rational numbers. Nodes in the expression tree contain an iterator into this map (see in particular figure 2).

`bool interrupted`

A global flag which indicates that the user has requested the computation to be interrupted. See section 7.4 for more information on this variable.

`stopwatch globaltime`

The wall time since program start.

`unsigned int size_x, size_y`

The size of the current output window.

---

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