

# **An introduction to error correcting codes**

*Mathematics sin fronteras*

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## Error-Correction Codes achievements [\[ edit \]](#)

To control for errors in the reception of the [grayscale](#) image data sent by Mariner 9 (caused by a low [signal-to-noise ratio](#)), the data had to be encoded before transmission using a so-called [forward error-correcting code](#) (FEC). Without FEC, noise would have made up roughly a quarter of a received image, while the FEC encoded the data in a redundant way which allowed for the reconstruction of most of the sent image data at reception.

Since the flown hardware was constrained with regards to weight, power consumption, storage, and computing power, some considerations had to be put into choosing an FEC, and it was decided to use a [Hadamard code](#) for Mariner 9. Each image pixel was represented as a six-bit binary value, which had 64 possible [grayscale](#) levels. Because of limitations of the transmitter, the maximum useful data length was about 30 bits. Instead of using a [repetition code](#), a [32, 6, 16] Hadamard code was used, which is also a 1st-order [Reed-Muller code](#). Errors of up to seven bits per each 32-bit word could be corrected using this scheme.<sup>[10][11]</sup> Compared to a five-repetition code, the error correcting properties of this Hadamard code were much better, yet its data rate was comparable. The efficient decoding [algorithm](#) was an important factor in the decision to use this code. The circuitry used was called the "Green Machine", which employed the [fast Fourier transform](#), increasing the decoding speed by a factor of three.<sup>[12]</sup>

Figure: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mariner\\_9](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mariner_9)

Mariner 9, 1971



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- If  $\mathcal{B} = \{v_1, \dots, v_k\}$  is a basis of an  $[n, k]$  code  $\mathcal{C}$ , we define the **generator matrix**  $G$  of the code as the matrix  $G_{k \times n}$  for which the rows are the vectors  $v_i$  of the base.
- For an  $[n, k]$  code  $\mathcal{C}$  over  $\mathbb{F}_q$  we can encode using the generator matrix  $G$ :

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathbb{F}_q^k & \longrightarrow & \mathbb{F}_q^n \\ u & \longrightarrow & c = uG \end{array}$$

- Example: Mariner 9

$$u = (a_1, a_2, \dots, a_6) \longrightarrow c = (c_1, c_2, \dots, c_{32})$$

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$$\mathcal{C} = \{(000000), (100011), (010101), (001110), (110110), (011011), (101101), (111000)\}.$$

- If  $G$  is on standard form, i.e.  $G = (I_k|A)$ , then decoding is trivial since

$$u \in \mathbb{F}_q^k \quad \longrightarrow \quad c = uG = (u|uA) \in \mathbb{F}_q^n \quad \longrightarrow \quad u = c|_{\mathbb{F}_q^k} \in \mathbb{F}_q^k.$$

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**How can we detect if a word  
has been transmitted with an error?**

## Parity check matrix and the dual code

The canonical inner product on  $\mathbb{F}_q^n$  is defined by

$$\langle a, b \rangle = \sum_{i=1}^n a_i b_i,$$

for  $a = (a_1, \dots, a_n)$  and  $b = (b_1, \dots, b_n)$  in  $\mathbb{F}_q^n$ .

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- If  $\mathcal{C} \subseteq \mathbb{F}_q^n$  is a code then

$$\mathcal{C}^\perp = \{u \in \mathbb{F}_q^n : \langle u, c \rangle = 0 \text{ for all } c \in \mathcal{C}\}$$

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### Proposition

*If  $\mathcal{C}$  is an  $[n, k]$  code over  $\mathbb{F}_q$  then  $\mathcal{C}^\perp$  is an  $[n, n - k]$  code over  $\mathbb{F}_q$ .*

A generator matrix  $H$  of  $C^\perp$  is said to be a **parity check matrix** for  $C$ . Clearly  $H$  is an  $(n - k) \times n$  matrix.

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$$x \in C \iff Hx^T = 0.$$

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$$G = (I_k | A)$$

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$$H = (-A^T | I_{n-k})$$

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- A matrix  $H$  of this form is said to be in **standard form as a parity check matrix** (although is not in standard form as a generator matrix of  $\mathcal{C}^\perp$ ).

## Example

$$G = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

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### Definition

If  $\mathcal{C}$  is an  $[n, k]$  code over  $\mathbb{F}_q$  and  $H$  is a parity check matrix for  $\mathcal{C}$ , then for any word  $y \in \mathbb{F}_q^n$  the *syndrome* of  $y$  is defined by  $S(y) = yH^T$ .

- $y \in \mathcal{C}$  if and only if  $S(y) = 0$ .
- If  $y \notin \mathcal{C}$  then  $y$  is corrected as  $y - e$  where  $S(y) = S(e)$ .

### Definition

If  $\mathcal{C}$  is an  $[n, k]$  code over  $\mathbb{F}_q$  and  $a \in \mathbb{F}_q^n$ , the *left coset*  $a + \mathcal{C}$  is defined as  $a + \mathcal{C} = \{a + x : x \in \mathcal{C}\}$ .

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- $\mathcal{C} \subset \mathbb{F}_q^n$  is a vector space
- The quotient

$$\mathbb{F}_q^n / \mathcal{C} = \{a + \mathcal{C} : a \in \mathbb{F}_q^n\}$$

is a vector space

$$\alpha(a + \mathcal{C}) = \alpha a + \mathcal{C} \quad (a + \mathcal{C}) + (b + \mathcal{C}) = (a + b) + \mathcal{C}$$

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- $|\mathbb{F}_q^n / \mathcal{C}| = |\mathbb{F}_q^n| / |\mathcal{C}| = q^n / q^k = q^{n-k}$ .

## Theorem

*Every word of  $\mathbb{F}_q^n$  belongs to exactly one left coset of  $C$ . Two cosets are either disjoint or identical.*

- There are  $q^{n-k}$  disjoint cosets (with  $q^k$  words).
- The *coset leader* is any word in the coset of minimum weight.
- To perform error correction we can construct a table with all the coset leaders and their syndromes.

## Example

$$G = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad H = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

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$e_0 = (000000) S(e_0) = (000)$	$e_4 = (000100) S(e_4) = (100)$
$e_1 = (100000) S(e_1) = (011)$	$e_5 = (000010) S(e_5) = (010)$
$e_2 = (010000) S(e_2) = (101)$	$e_6 = (000001) S(e_6) = (001)$
$e_3 = (001000) S(e_3) = (110)$	$e_7 = (100100) S(e_7) = (111)$

$$H^T = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

- $x = (010101) \rightarrow y = (010001)$
- $x = (010101) \rightarrow y = (011101)$
- $x = (011011) \rightarrow y = (011111)$
- $x = (110110) \rightarrow y = (110010)$
- 2 errores:  $x = (110110) \rightarrow y = (110101)$



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## Theorem

Let  $C$  be an  $[n, k, d]$  code and let  $H$  be a parity check matrix for  $C$ . Then

$$d = \min\{r : \text{there are } r \text{ linearly dependent columns in } H\}.$$

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If  $c \in \mathcal{C}$  is a word of minimum weight  $d$  we have that  $H$  has  $d$  linearly dependent columns, but any set of  $d - 1$  or less columns are linearly independent, because in that case we would have non-zero words in  $\mathcal{C}$  with weight less than  $d$ .

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A Hadamard code is an  $[2^r, r, 2^{r-1}]$  linear code over a binary alphabet which can correct many errors. The generator matrix  $G$  can be constructed in the following way: the  $i^{th}$  column of  $G$  is the binary representation of  $i$  for  $i = 0, \dots, 2^r - 1$

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- Example: the  $[8, 3, 4]$  Hadamard code has generator matrix:

$$G = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

# Punctured Hadamard code



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## Punctured Hadamard code

The punctured Hadamard code is a  $[2^{r-1}, r, 2^{r-2}]$  linear code over the binary alphabet. The generator matrix for this code is obtained from the generator matrix of a Hadamard code without the columns starting with 0.

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■ Example:  $r = 3$ :

$$G_{[8,3,4]} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \rightarrow G_{[4,3,2]} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

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- For  $0 \leq r \leq m$  the Reed-Muller denoted by  $\mathcal{R}(r, m)$  is an  $[n, k, d]$  binary code with

$$n = 2^m, \quad k = \sum_{i=0}^r \binom{m}{i}, \quad d = 2^{m-r}.$$

- The generator matrix for  $\mathcal{R}(r, m)$  is

$$G_{r,m} = \begin{pmatrix} G_{r,m-1} & G_{r,m-1} \\ 0 & G_{r-1,m-1} \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{si } 0 < r < m$$

$$G_{0,m} = \underbrace{(1 \ 1 \ \dots \ 1)}_{m+1} \quad G_{m,m} = \begin{pmatrix} G_{m-1,m} \\ 0 \ \dots \ 0 \ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$



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# Challenge

Write the generator matrix of the

$$[32, 6, 16]$$

punctured Hadamard code used by Mariner 9.

## ¿Preguntas?



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