

Seitz notation for symmetry operations of space groups

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Space-group symmetry operations are given a geometric description and a shorthand matrix notation in *International Tables for Crystallography*, Volume A, *Space-Group Symmetry*. We give here the space-group symmetry operations subtables with the corresponding Seitz (R|t) notation for each included symmetry operation.

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International Tables for Crystallography, Volume A, *Space-Group Symmetry* (2005) (abbreviated here as *ITC-A*) and its forerunner *International Tables for X-ray Crystallography*, Volume I, *Symmetry Groups* (1976) (abbreviated here as *ITC52*) have provided the scientific community with its main source of information on crystallographic symmetry in direct or physical space. These volumes have been widely used, designed, as stated on the home page of the online version of *International Tables for Crystallography*, Volume A, 'not only for professional crystallographers, but also for chemists, physicists, mineralogists, biologists and material scientists who employ crystallographic methods and who are concerned with the structure and the properties of crystalline materials.'

One of the central properties of the space groups given in these volumes is the set of symmetry operations of each of the space groups. Let \mathbf{G} denote a space group and \mathbf{T} its translational subgroup. The space group \mathbf{G} can be written as a left *coset decomposition* with respect to its translational subgroup \mathbf{T} as

$$\mathbf{G} = \mathbf{T} + g_1\mathbf{T} + \dots + g_n\mathbf{T}, \quad (1)$$

i.e. decomposed into n cosets $g_i\mathbf{T}$, $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$. The elements g_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ are referred to as *coset representatives*. To specify the symmetry operations of a space group \mathbf{G} , one can specify the translational subgroup \mathbf{T} , and the symmetry operations g_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$, *i.e.* the symmetry operations corresponding to the set of coset representatives g_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$.

In *ITC52* the symmetry operations of the space groups were provided only indirectly by symbols representing translational groups \mathbf{T} and by the general positions representing the symmetry operations g_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ of equation (1): the general positions are interpreted as a shorthand description of the symmetry operations in matrix notation. For example, a general position ' $\bar{x}, y + \frac{1}{2}, \bar{z}$ ' is a shorthand description of the matrix notation describing the symmetry operation of a rotation of 180° about the y axis followed by a translation of one-half the shortest lattice translation along the y axis. For centered space groups, the translational subgroup \mathbf{T} is decomposed as

$$\mathbf{T} = \mathbf{T}_P + t_2\mathbf{T}_P + \dots + t_m\mathbf{T}_P, \quad (2)$$

where the t_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, m$ are the *centering translations*, and the notation

$$(t_1)+ \quad (t_2)+ \quad \dots \quad (t_m)+ \quad (3)$$

with each centering translation given as a trio of numbers is placed above the general positions. For example, above the general positions of the face-centered space group $F23$ one finds:

$$(0, 0, 0)+ \quad (0, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2})+ \quad (\frac{1}{2}, 0, \frac{1}{2})+ \quad (\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2}, 0)+ \quad (4)$$

In *ITC-A*, in addition to representing the symmetry operations indirectly by symbols representing translational groups \mathbf{T} and by general positions representing the symmetry operations g_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ of equation (1), a second *geometric description* of the symmetry operations g_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ was introduced under the heading 'Symmetry operations'. In this geometric description the previous symmetry operation is given as ' $2 \quad (0, \frac{1}{2}, 0) \quad 0, y, 0$ ', where the '2' denotes a rotation of $360^\circ/2 = 180^\circ$, ' $0, y, 0$ ' the orientation and position of the axis of rotation, *i.e.* along the y direction passing through $x = z = 0$, and ' $(0, \frac{1}{2}, 0)$ ' a translation of one-half the shortest lattice translation along the y axis. For space groups without centering translations, the format of a 'Symmetry operations' subtable is

Symmetry operations

$$g_i, i = 1, 2, \dots, n \quad (5)$$

with the g_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ given in this geometric description notation. For space groups with centering translations, the format is:

Symmetry operations

$$(0, 0, 0)+ \quad \text{set}$$

$$g_i, i = 1, 2, \dots, n$$

$$(t_2)+ \quad \text{set}$$

$$t_2g_i, i = 1, 2, \dots, n$$

$$\vdots$$

$$(t_m)+ \quad \text{set}$$

$$t_mg_i, i = 1, 2, \dots, n. \quad (6)$$

In addition to this general-position shorthand description of the matrix notation of symmetry operations and the geometric description of symmetry operations, there is a third notation which has been adopted and is used by solid-state physicists (Burns & Glazer, 2007). This is the so-called *Seitz notation* (R|t) introduced by Seitz (1934, 1935*a,b*, 1936) in a series of papers on the matrix–algebraic development of the crystallographic groups. In this notation 'R' denotes a

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