

# Computation of the Solution of $x^3 + Dy^3 = 1$

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**Abstract.** A computer technique for finding integer solutions of

$$x^3 + Dy^3 = 1$$

is described, and a table of all integer solutions of this equation for all positive  $D \leq 50000$  is presented. Some theoretic results which describe certain values of  $D$  for which the equation has no nontrivial solution are also given.

**1. Introduction.** Let  $D$  be an integer which is not a perfect cube; let  $K = Q(\sqrt[3]{D})$ , the field formed by adjoining  $\sqrt[3]{D}$  to the rationals  $Q$ ; and let  $\epsilon (> 1)$  be the fundamental unit of  $K$ . By a nontrivial solution of

$$(1) \quad x^3 + Dy^3 = 1,$$

we mean a pair of integers  $(e, f)$  such that  $e$  and  $f$  satisfy (1) and  $ef \neq 0$ . We say that (1) is solved when we have either found all its nontrivial solutions or we have shown that no nontrivial solutions of (1) exist. If (1) has a nontrivial solution, we say that  $D$  is *admissible*; otherwise, we say that  $D$  is *inadmissible*.

It has long been known that the solution of (1) can be obtained from the following theorem.

**THEOREM (DELONE-NAGELL [6], [7]).** *The equation (1) has at most one nontrivial solution. If  $(e, f)$  is such a solution, then  $e + f\sqrt[3]{D}$  is either  $\epsilon$  or  $\epsilon^2$ , the latter case occurring only for  $D = 19, 20, 28$ .*

By using this theorem, Williams and Zarnke [9] determined all nontrivial solutions of (1) for all  $D$  such that  $1 < D \leq 15000$ . The difficulty in using this theorem to solve (1) lies in the fact that the calculation of  $\epsilon$  is frequently very difficult and time consuming. The best algorithm for computing  $\epsilon$ , which is currently available, still seems to be that of Voronoi (see, for example, [4] and [2]); however, this algorithm is both intricate and lengthy. For example, when  $D = 34607$ , the number of iterations required to find  $\epsilon$  is 66931 and  $\epsilon > 10^{32873}$ .

There appear to be relatively few values of  $D$  which are admissible and, when a value of  $D$  is admissible, the corresponding  $\epsilon$  is usually quite small. Consequently, the best strategy for solving (1) would seem to consist of finding simpler techniques than the calculation of  $\epsilon$  for determining when  $D$  is inadmissible. The purpose of this paper is to develop some of these techniques. We also present an extended version of the table in [9] for all  $D \leq 50000$ . Finally, some theorems are given which can be used for showing that certain values of  $D$  are inadmissible.

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2. **Some Criteria for Determining When  $D$  is Inadmissible.** Since  $x^3 + d_1d_2^3y^3 = x^3 + d_1(d_2y)^3$ , we need only consider those values of  $D$  which have no perfect cube divisor; hence, we assume that  $D = cd^2$ , where  $c, d$  are square-free integers. We also let  $D = 3^tAB$ , where  $0 \leq t \leq 2$ , every prime divisor of  $A$  is congruent to  $-1$  modulo 3, and every prime divisor of  $B$  is congruent to  $+1$  modulo 3. Cohn [3] has shown that, if  $D \neq 2, 9, 17, 20$ , then  $D$  is inadmissible whenever  $B = 1$ . In what follows we will assume that  $D \neq 2, 9, 17, 20$ . The following simple result is also frequently useful.

**THEOREM.** *If  $D \equiv \pm 4, \pm 3 \pmod{9}$  and  $B > 1$ , then  $D$  is inadmissible if no factor ( $\neq 1$ ) of  $B$  is of the form  $1 + 9t$ .*

*Proof.* Suppose  $D$  is admissible and suppose  $(e, f)$  is the nontrivial solution of (1). Since  $e^3 + Df^3 = 1$  and  $e^3 \equiv 0, 1, -1, f^3 \equiv 0, 1, -1 \pmod{9}$ , we must have  $3 \mid f$ . Since  $e^2 + e + 1 \not\equiv 0 \pmod{9}$  and  $(A, e^2 + e + 1) = 1$ , we get  $e \equiv 1 \pmod{9}$ ,

$$e^2 + e + 1 = 3B'g^3,$$

where  $B' > 1$  and  $B' \mid B$ . It follows that  $B' \equiv 1 \pmod{9}$ .

Let  $\rho$  be a primitive cube root of unity; let  $Q(\rho)$  be the field formed by adjoining  $\rho$  to the rationals; let  $Q[\rho]$  be the ring of integers in  $Q(\rho)$ ; and let  $Z$  be the set of rational integers. Put  $\lambda = 1 - \rho$  and, if  $p (\equiv 1 \pmod{3})$  is any rational prime, define  $\pi_p = a + b\rho, \bar{\pi}_p = a + b\rho^2$ , where  $a \equiv -1 \pmod{3}, 3 \mid b$ , and  $p = N(\pi_p) = N(\bar{\pi}_p) = a^2 - ab + b^2$ . If  $P = p_1p_2 \cdots p_j$ , where  $p_i (\equiv 1 \pmod{3})$  is prime for  $i = 1, 2, \dots, j$ , we define  $\Gamma(P) = \{\gamma \mid \gamma = \pi_1\pi_2\pi_3 \cdots \pi_m\}$  where  $\pi_i = \pi_{p_i}$  or  $\bar{\pi}_{p_i}$ ; and if  $p_k = p_h$ , then  $\pi_k = \pi_h$ . Thus, if there are  $l$  distinct prime factors of  $P$ , we have  $2^l$  elements in  $\Gamma(P)$ .

With these conventions we can now give the following four theorems.

**THEOREM 1.** *Let  $D = AB \not\equiv \pm 1 \pmod{9}$ . If  $D$  is admissible, there must be a unitary\* factor  $B_2$  of  $B$  such that  $B_2 > 1$  and either*

$$(2) \quad \rho^2\gamma\tau^3 + B_1Ar^3 = \lambda$$

or

$$(3) \quad \gamma\tau^3 + 3\rho^2\lambda B_1Ar^3 = 1 \quad (B_2 \equiv 1 \pmod{9})$$

must have a solution where  $\tau \in Q[\rho], r \in Z, B_1 = B/B_2$ , and  $\gamma \in \Gamma(B_2)$ .

**THEOREM 2.** *Let  $D = AB \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{9}$ . If  $D$  is admissible, there must be a unitary factor  $B_2$  of  $B$  such that  $B_2 > 1$  and either*

$$(4) \quad \rho\gamma\tau^3 + B_1Ar^3 = \lambda$$

or

$$(5) \quad \gamma\tau^3 + 3\rho^2\lambda B_1Ar^3 = 1 \quad (B_2 \equiv 1 \pmod{9})$$

must have a solution, where  $\tau \in Q[\rho], r \in Z, B_1 = B/B_2$ , and  $\gamma \in \Gamma(B_2)$ .

**THEOREM 3.** *Let  $D = 3AB$ . If  $D$  is admissible, there must be a unitary factor  $B_2$  of  $B$  such that  $B_2 > 1$  and*

\*We say that  $m$  is a unitary factor of  $n$  if  $(m, m/n) = 1$ .

$$(6) \quad \gamma\tau^3 + 9\lambda\rho^2 B_1 A r^3 = 1$$

must have a solution, where  $\tau \in Q[\rho]$ ,  $r \in Z$ ,  $B_1 = B/B_2$ , and  $\gamma \in \Gamma(B_2)$ .

**THEOREM 4.** Let  $D = 9AB$ . If  $D$  is admissible, there must be a unitary factor  $B_2$  of  $B$  such that  $B_2 > 1$ ,  $B_2 \not\equiv 4 \pmod{9}$ , and

$$(7) \quad \rho\gamma\tau^3 + \rho^2\lambda AB_1 r^3 = 1 \quad (B_2 \equiv 7 \pmod{9}),$$

$$(8) \quad \rho^2\gamma\tau^3 + \rho^2\lambda AB_1 r^3 = 1 \quad (B_2 \equiv 1 \pmod{9})$$

or

$$(9) \quad \gamma\tau^3 + \rho^2\lambda AB_1 r^3 = 1 \quad (B_2 \equiv 1 \pmod{9}),$$

must have a solution, where  $\tau \in Q[\rho]$ ,  $r \in Z$ ,  $B_1 = B/B_2$ , and  $\gamma \in \Gamma(B_2)$ .

Since the proofs of these four theorems are similar, we will prove Theorem 1 only.

*Proof of Theorem 1.* Suppose  $D$  is admissible and that  $(e, f)$  is the nontrivial solution of (1). We divide the proof into two cases.

*Case 1.*  $3 \nmid f$ . Since  $D \not\equiv \pm 1 \pmod{9}$  and  $3 \nmid f$ , we must have  $e \equiv -1 \pmod{3}$  and

$$e - 1 = B_1 A r^3, \quad e^2 + e + 1 = B_2 t^3,$$

where  $r, t \in Z$ ,  $B_1 B_2 = B$ ,  $(B_1, B_2) = 1$ . Since  $D \neq 17, 20$ , we have  $B_2 > 1$  (Ljunggren [5]).

In  $Q(\rho)$ ,

$$(e - \rho)(e - \rho^2) = B_2 t^3;$$

and it follows that  $e - \rho = \beta\tau^3$ , where  $\beta = \rho^j\gamma$  for some  $\gamma \in \Gamma(B_2)$  and  $\tau \in Q[\rho]$ .

Since  $e \equiv -1$ ,  $\gamma \equiv \pm 1$ , and  $\tau^3 \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{3}$ , we must have  $j = 2$ . Since

$$e = B_1 A r^3 + 1 \quad \text{and} \quad e = \rho^2\gamma\tau^3 + \rho,$$

we get (2).

*Case 2.*  $3 \mid f$ . In this case we have  $e \equiv 1 \pmod{9}$  and

$$e - 1 = 9B_1 A r^3, \quad e^2 + e + 1 = 3B_2 t^3.$$

It follows that  $e - \rho = \rho^j\lambda\gamma\tau^3$ , where  $\tau \in Q[\rho]$ . Since  $e \equiv 1 \pmod{9}$  and  $\gamma\tau^3 \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{3}$ , we find that  $j = 0$ . It is now easy to deduce (3).

Let  $\pi$  be any prime of  $Q[\rho]$ ; and define the cubic character of  $\nu \in Q[\rho]$  by

$$[\nu|\pi] = 1, \rho \text{ or } \rho^2$$

when

$$\nu^{(N(\pi)-1)/3} \equiv 1, \rho \text{ or } \rho^2 \pmod{\pi},$$

respectively. Suppose, for example, that  $D = AB \not\equiv \pm 1 \pmod{9}$ . If  $D$  is admissible, we must have some unitary factor  $B_2$  of  $B$  such that  $B_2 > 1$ ; and we must also have some  $\gamma \in \Gamma(B_2)$  such that either (2) or (3) is solvable. If (2) is solvable,

$$(10) \quad \left[ \frac{\lambda^2 \rho \gamma}{q} \right] = 1 \quad \text{for each prime } q \text{ which divides } A,$$

$$(11) \left[ \frac{\lambda^2 \rho \gamma}{\pi_p} \right] = \left[ \frac{\lambda^2 \rho \gamma}{\pi_p} \right] = 1 \quad \text{for each rational prime } p \text{ which divides } B_1,$$

$$(12) \left[ \frac{\lambda^2 B_1 A}{\pi_i} \right] = 1 \quad \text{for } i = 1, 2, 3, \dots, m, \text{ where } \gamma = \pi_1 \pi_2 \cdots \pi_m.$$

If (3) is solvable,

$$(13) \quad B_2 \equiv 1 \pmod{9},$$

$$(14) \quad \left[ \frac{\gamma}{q} \right] = 1 \quad \text{for each prime } q \text{ which divides } A,$$

$$(15) \quad \left[ \frac{\gamma}{\pi_p} \right] = \left[ \frac{\gamma}{\pi_p} \right] = 1 \quad \text{for each rational prime } p \text{ which divides } B_1,$$

$$(16) \quad \left[ \frac{3\rho^2 \lambda B_1 A}{\pi_i} \right] = 1 \quad \text{for } i = 1, 2, 3, \dots, m, \text{ where } \gamma = \pi_1 \pi_2 \cdots \pi_m.$$

If, for every possible unitary divisor  $B_2 > 1$  of  $B$  there does not exist a value for  $\gamma$  such that either (10)–(12) or (13)–(16) are all true, then neither (2) nor (3) has a solution; thus,  $D$  is inadmissible.

Similar results can also be obtained from Theorems 2, 3 and 4.

**3. Computer Algorithms.** In order to make use of the results described above, we must have a method for evaluating  $[\nu|\pi]$ . To do this we use an algorithm analogous to that of Jacobi for evaluating the Legendre Symbol. To evaluate  $[(A + B\rho)|(C + D\rho)]$ , where  $A, B, C, D \in \mathbb{Z}$  and  $3 \nmid C, 3 \nmid D$ , we first find  $E + F\rho$ , where  $E = A - xC + yD$ ,  $F = B - yC - xD + yD$ ,

TABLE 1

D	e	f	D	e	f
2	-1	1	422	-15	2
7	2	-1	511	8	-1
9	-2	1	513	-8	1
17	18	-7	614	17	-2
19	-8	3	635	361	-42
20	-19	7	651	-26	3
26	3	-1	728	9	-1
28	-3	1	730	-9	1
37	10	-3	813	28	-3
43	-7	2	999	10	-1
63	4	-1	1001	-10	1
65	-4	1	1330	11	-1
91	9	-2	1332	-11	1
124	5	-1	1521	-23	2
126	-5	1	1588	-35	3
182	-17	3	1657	-71	6
215	6	-1	1727	12	-1
217	-6	1	1729	-12	1
254	19	-3	1801	73	-6
342	7	-1	1876	37	-3
344	-7	1	1953	25	-2

TABLE 1 (Continued)

D	e	f	D	e	f
2196	13	-1	17145	361	-14
2198	-13	1	17575	26	-1
2743	14	-1	17577	-26	1
2745	-14	1	18745	1036	-39
3155	-44	3	18963	-80	3
3374	15	-1	19441	-242	9
3376	-15	1	19682	27	-1
3605	46	-3	19684	-27	1
3724	-31	2	19927	244	-9
3907	-63	4	20421	82	-3
4095	16	-1	20797	-55	2
4097	-16	1	21951	28	-1
4291	65	-4	21953	-28	1
4492	33	-2	23149	57	-2
4912	17	-1	24388	29	-1
4914	-17	1	24390	-29	1
5080	361	-21	26110	-89	3
5514	-53	3	26999	30	-1
5831	18	-1	27001	-30	1
5833	-18	1	27910	91	-3
6162	55	-3	29790	31	-1
6858	19	-1	29792	-31	1
6860	-19	1	31256	-63	2
7415	-39	2	32006	-127	4
7999	20	-1	32042	667	-21
8001	-20	1	32767	32	-1
8615	41	-2	32769	-32	1
8827	-62	3	33542	129	-4
9260	21	-1	34328	65	-2
9262	-21	1	34859	-98	3
9709	64	-3	35936	33	-1
10647	22	-1	35938	-33	1
10649	-22	1	37037	100	-3
12166	23	-1	39303	34	-1
12168	-23	1	39305	-34	1
12978	-47	2	42874	35	-1
13256	-71	3	42876	-35	1
13538	-143	6	44739	-71	2
13823	24	-1	45372	-107	3
13825	-24	1	46011	-215	6
14114	145	-6	46655	36	-1
14408	73	-3	46657	-36	1
14706	49	-2	47307	217	-6
15253	-124	5	47964	109	-3
15624	25	-1	48627	73	-2
15626	-25	1	48949	4097	-112
16003	126	-5			

$$x = Ne\left(\frac{AC + BD - AD}{C^2 - CD + D^2}\right), \quad y = Ne\left(\frac{BC - AD}{C^2 - CD + D^2}\right),$$

and, by  $Ne(\alpha)$  ( $\alpha$  real), we denote the nearest rational integer to  $\alpha$ .

If  $E \equiv -F \pmod{3}$ , divide  $E + F\rho$  by  $1 - \rho$   $m$  times until

$$\frac{E + F\rho}{(1 - \rho)^m} = \bar{E} + \bar{F}\rho,$$

where  $\bar{E} \not\equiv -\bar{F} \pmod{3}$ . This can be easily done by using the result that, if  $E = -F + 3Q$ , then  $(E + F\rho)/(1 - \rho) = 2Q - F + Q\rho$ .

- If  $3 \mid \bar{F}$ , put  $n = 0, G = \bar{E}, H = \bar{F}$ ;
- if  $3 \mid \bar{E}$ , put  $n = 1, G = \bar{F} - \bar{E}, H = -\bar{E}$ ; and
- if  $3 \nmid \bar{E}\bar{F}$ , put  $n = 2, G = -\bar{F}, H = \bar{E} - \bar{F}$ .

We have

$$\left[ \frac{A + B\rho}{C + D\rho} \right] = \rho^{(2m+n)(C^2-1)/3 - nCD/3} \left[ \frac{C + D\rho}{G + H\rho} \right].$$

We now apply the algorithm again to  $[(C + D\rho)|(G + H\rho)]$ . Since  $N(G + H\rho) < N(C + D\rho)$ , we can repeat this process until we ultimately get a symbol of the form  $[\pm 1|(M + N\rho)] = 1$ . The accumulated power of  $\rho$  will give us the value of  $[(A + B\rho)|(C + D\rho)]$ . By using well-known results concerning the symbol  $[\nu|\pi]$  (see, for example, Bachmann [1]), it is a simple matter to verify that if  $C + D\rho$  is a prime in  $Q(\rho)$ , then this algorithm gives the cubic character of  $A + B\rho$  modulo  $C + D\rho$ .

A computer program was written, which used the results of Section 2 in conjunction with the above algorithm, in order to solve (1). For any given value of  $D = cd^2$ , the program first attempted to prove that  $D$  is inadmissible; if this failed, the program used the algorithm of Voronoi to determine the fundamental unit

$$\epsilon = (u + v\sqrt[3]{D} + w\sqrt[3]{D^2})/t \quad (u, v, w, t \in Z)$$

of  $K$ , where  $u, v, w, t$  were calculated modulo a large prime  $R$  (see [9]). If either  $v$  or  $w$  were zero modulo  $R$ , the program recalculated  $u, v, w, t$  exactly. If, at this stage, the solution of either  $x^3 + cd^2y^3 = 1$  or  $x^3 + c^2dy^3 = 1$  was discovered, the computer printed the solution and the appropriate  $D$  value.

This program was run on all values of  $D$  of the form  $cd^2$ , where  $c, d$  are square-free,  $c > d$ , and  $15000 < D < 50000$ . Over 89% of the  $D$  values considered are inadmissible by the criteria of Section 2 only. In Table 1 above we present all the non-trivial solutions of (1) for every  $D$  such that  $1 \leq D \leq 50000$ .

**4. Some Theoretical Results.** When  $B$  is a single prime or the square of a prime, we can obtain some results concerning the inadmissibility of  $D$  which are similar to results of Sylvester and Selmer (see Selmer [8, Chapter 9]) concerning  $x^3 + y^3 = Dz^3$ . In what follows we denote by  $p$  a rational prime of the form  $3t + 1$  and we denote by  $(n|p)_3$  ( $n \in Z$ ), the least positive residue of  $n^{(p-1)/3} \pmod{p}$ . Note that  $(n|p)_3 = 1$  if and only if  $[n|\pi] = 1$ , where  $\pi = \pi_p$  or  $\bar{\pi}_p$ .

**THEOREM 5.** *If  $D = p^\kappa A$  ( $\kappa = 1$  or  $2$ ),  $D \not\equiv \pm 1 \pmod{9}$ , then  $D$  is inadmissible if either*

$$(q|p)_3 \not\equiv 1 \quad \text{for some prime divisor } q \text{ of } A$$

or

$$p \not\equiv 1 \pmod{9} \quad \text{and} \quad (3|p)_3 = 1.$$

**THEOREM 6.** *If  $D = p^\kappa A$  ( $\kappa = 1$  or  $2$ ),  $D \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{9}$ , then  $D$  is admissible if either*

$$p \not\equiv 1 \pmod{9}, \quad (3 \mid p)_3 = 1;$$

or

$$p \not\equiv 1 \pmod{9}, \quad (3 \mid p)_3 \neq 1, \quad (3^j q \mid p)_3 \neq 1$$

for some prime divisor  $q$  of  $A$ , where  $j \equiv -\kappa(p-1)(q+1)/9 \pmod{3}$ ; or

$$p \equiv 1 \pmod{9}, \quad (3 \mid p)_3 \neq 1, \quad (q \mid p)_3 \neq 1$$

for some prime  $q \mid A$ .

**THEOREM 7.** *If  $D = 3p^\kappa A$  ( $\kappa = 1$  or  $2$ ), then  $D$  is inadmissible if either*

$$p \not\equiv 1 \pmod{9};$$

or

$$p \equiv 1 \pmod{9}, \quad (3 \mid p)_3 \neq 1;$$

or

$$p \equiv 1 \pmod{9}, \quad (3 \mid p)_3 = 1 \quad \text{and} \quad (q \mid p)_3 \neq 1$$

for some prime  $q \mid A$ .

**THEOREM 8.** *If  $D = 9p^\kappa A$  ( $\kappa = 1$  or  $2$ ), then  $D$  is inadmissible if*

$$p^\kappa \equiv 4 \pmod{9};$$

or

$$p^\kappa \equiv 7 \pmod{9}, \quad A \equiv \pm 4 \pmod{9}, \quad (3 \mid p)_3 \neq 1;$$

or

$$p^\kappa \equiv 7 \pmod{9}, \quad A \not\equiv \pm 4 \pmod{9}, \quad (3^j q \mid p)_3 \neq 1$$

for some prime of  $q \mid A$ , where  $j \equiv -(q+1)(4A^2-1)/9 \pmod{3}$ .

Since the proofs of these theorems are similar, we give here the proof of Theorem 6 only.

*Proof of Theorem 6.* From Theorem 2 we see that if (1) has a nontrivial solution, we must have either

( $\alpha$ )  $[\lambda^2 A \mid \pi] = 1$  and  $[\rho^2 \lambda^2 \pi^\kappa \mid q] = 1$  for each prime  $q \mid A$  or  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{9}$  and

( $\beta$ )  $[3\rho^2 \lambda A \mid \pi] = 1$  and  $[\pi \mid q] = 1$  for each prime  $q \mid A$ , where  $\pi = \pi_p$  or  $\bar{\pi}_p$ .

If ( $\alpha$ ) is true, we see that

$$\left[ \frac{\rho \lambda^2 \pi^\kappa}{q} \right] = \left[ \frac{\rho^2 \pi^\kappa}{q} \right] = 1;$$

consequently,

$$\left[ \frac{q}{\pi} \right] = \rho^{\kappa(q^2-1)/3}$$

for each prime  $q \mid A$ , and it follows that  $[A \mid \pi] = \rho^{\kappa(A^2-1)/3}$ . Since  $p^\kappa A \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{9}$ , we have  $(A^2-1)/3 \equiv \kappa(p-1)/3 \pmod{3}$  and  $[A \mid \pi] = \rho^{(p-1)/3}$ . From the fact that  $[\lambda^2 A \mid \pi] = 1$ , we get  $[3 \mid \pi] = \rho^{(p-1)/3}$ ; hence  $[3^j q \mid \pi] = \rho^{\kappa(q+1)/3 + j(p-1)/3}$ .

If  $p \not\equiv 1 \pmod{9}$ , then  $D$  is inadmissible if  $(3|p)_3 = 1$  or if  $(3^j q|p)_3 \neq 1$  for some prime  $q|A$  when  $j \equiv -\kappa(p-1)(q+1)/9 \pmod{3}$ .

If  $(\beta)$  is true, we must have  $(p|q)_3 = 1$  for each prime  $q|A$ . Thus, if  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{9}$ ,  $(3|p)_3 \neq 1$  and  $(p|q)_3 \neq 1$  for some prime  $q|A$ , then neither  $(\alpha)$  nor  $(\beta)$  is true.

With these results it is frequently possible to determine the inadmissibility of a value of  $D$  of the form  $3^{\nu} p^{\kappa} A$  by using a table of indices only. For example, if  $D = 95545 = 5 \cdot 97 \cdot 197$ , we have  $p = 97$  and  $p \not\equiv 1 \pmod{9}$ . Also  $(3|p)_3 \neq 1$ ,  $\epsilon = 0$ , and  $(197|97)_3 \neq 1$ ; hence, 95545 is inadmissible.

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