

# Computing convex hulls and counting integer points with `polymake`

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**Abstract** The main purpose of this paper is to report on the state of the art of computing integer hulls and their facets as well as counting lattice points in convex polytopes. Using the `polymake` system we explore various algorithms and implementations. Our experience in this area is summarized in ten “rules of thumb”.

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## 1 Introduction

In integer and linear optimization the software workhorses are solvers for linear programs (based on simplex or interior point methods) as well as generic frameworks for branch-and-bound or branch-and-cut schemes. Comprehensive implementations are available both as Open Source, like `SCIP` [2], as well as commercial software, like `CPLEX` [24] and `Gurobi` [38]. While today it is common to solve linear programs with millions of rows and columns and, moreover, mixed integer linear programs with sometimes hundreds of thousands of rows and columns, big challenges remain. For instance, the 2010 version of the `MIPLIB` [30] lists the mixed-integer problem `liu` with 2178 rows, 1156 columns, and a total of only 10,626 non-zero coefficients; this seems to be impossible to solve with current techniques. One way to make progress in the field is to invent new families of cutting planes, either of a general kind or specifically tailored to a class of examples. In the latter situation the strongest possible cuts are obviously those arising from the facets of the (mixed) integer hull. A main purpose of this note is to report on the state of the art of getting at such facets in a brute force kind of way. And we will do so by explaining how our software system `polymake` [55] can help.

Here we focus on integer linear programming (ILP); mixed integer linear programming (MILP) will only be mentioned in passing. To avoid technical ramifications we assume that all our linear programs (LP) are bounded. The brute force method for obtaining all facets of the integer hull is plain and simple, and it has two steps. First, we compute all the feasible integer points. Since we assumed boundedness these are only finitely many. Second, we compute the facets of their convex hull. Of course, the catch is that neither problem is really easy. Deciding if an ILP has an (integer) feasible point is known to be NP-complete [34]. So, we may not even hope for any efficient algorithm for the first step. Most likely, the situation for the second is about equally bad. While it is open whether or not there is a convex hull algorithm which runs in polynomial time measured in the combined sizes of the input and the output, recent work of Khachiyan et al. [46] indicates a negative answer. They show that computing the vertices of an unbounded polyhedron is hard; the difference to the general convex hull problem is that their result does not say anything about the rays of the polyhedron.

Our paper is organized as follows. We start out with a very brief introduction to the `polymake` system and its usage. In Sect. 3 we explore how various convex hull algorithms and their implementations behave on various kinds of input. Our input is chosen according to typical scenarios motivated by questions in optimization. Deliberately we picked data within a manageable range; our goal is to give a feel for what can be done within about one hour of CPU time on a current standard desktop machine. For particularly hard convex hull problems see [4, 42]. Section 4 is devoted to enumerating lattice points in polytopes, which is actually the first step in the procedure

sketched above. Like for the convex hull computations there are several methods which behave quite differently depending on the input. We would like to stress that all the software systems mentioned have their preferred types of input for which they are (often vastly) superior to the others. There are no globally optimal algorithms known, neither for convex hull computations nor for lattice point enumeration. Even worse, in general, it is very difficult to say which method works best on which input. Only a thorough geometric and combinatorial analysis a posteriori allows for precise statements. Yet we will try to sum up our experience in this area in several “rules of thumb”, all of which have to be taken with a grain of salt. The software systems tested are interfaced to by `polymake`, and some of them are even shipped with it. All our experiments are run through `polymake`, which does create very little overhead. The current version of `polymake` does not directly make use of our rules of thumb. Instead the user needs to pick the best method according to her or his judgment (or rely on some default). We close the paper with additional references to the literature and related experimental results. See the Appendix for details on our experimental setup.

Computers of today and the foreseeable future are faster than their predecessors just because they provide more cores. Hence the parallelization of algorithms and software will play an increasingly important role. Yet here we largely restrict our attention to single-threaded computations in order to not stretch our —already quite involved— test scenarios beyond any manageable limits. As an exception we report on one parallel test with `normaliz` [19]. The very recent version 6.0 of `lrs` [3,5] offers single machine shared memory multicore parallelization as well as MPI based multi-machine parallelization. See Avis and Jordan [8] for a computational test of several large examples.

## 2 Example `polymake` session

In this section we will give a few examples on how one can use `polymake` for various tasks, *e.g.*, convex and integer hull computations and linear programming. The main application area of `polymake` are polytopes and polyhedra, but the software can also deal with a number of other kinds of objects. That is why `polymake` is split into different so-called *applications*, for instance, for graphs, fans, ideals, matroids, simplicial complexes, or toric varieties. We will only work with the application polytope here, which is indicated by the corresponding prompt `polytope>` in front of each code line. The `polymake` system employs a rule based mechanism for deciding which algorithms satisfy user requests; this is explained in [35]. However, one may also force the usage of specific algorithms. Thus, a big advantage of `polymake` is that the user can use and compare various algorithms through a common interface. Our special object model, which here is used for the polytopes and the linear programs, is the topic of [36]. The software is available from `polymake.org` [55].

For our first example, a *fractional knapsack polytope*  $P$  is the set of points in the non-negative orthant of, say  $\mathbb{R}^d$ , which satisfies one extra linear inequality, *i.e.*,

$$P = \left\{ x \in \mathbb{R}^d \mid \langle a, x \rangle \leq b, x_i \geq 0 \text{ for all } i \right\} \quad (1)$$

for some integral normal vector  $a \in \mathbb{Z}^d$  and  $b \in \mathbb{Z}$ . Such polytopes are easy to construct in `polymake`. For instance, the command

```
polytope> $k = fractional_knapsack([40,-2,-3,-5,-8,-13]);
```

produces the fractional knapsack polytope for the inequality

$$2x_1 + 3x_2 + 5x_3 + 8x_4 + 13x_5 \leq 40$$

in  $\mathbb{R}^5$ . If all coefficients are positive, as in our example, the polytope is bounded. In this case the combinatorics is not so exciting, as all fractional knapsack polytopes are simplices. Each line in the following output corresponds to one of the six vertices.

```
polytope> print $k->VERTICES;
1 0 0 0 0
1 20 0 0 0
1 0 40/3 0 0
1 0 0 8 0
1 0 0 0 5
1 0 0 0 0 40/13
```

First, note that the coordinates contain rational numbers as `polymake` uses GMP's arbitrary precision rational arithmetic [31] by default. Second, notice the leading 1 of each vertex. This is due to the fact that polyhedra in `polymake` are modeled as the intersection of a cone with the affine hyperplane defined by  $x_0 = 1$ . With this homogenization many algorithms can deal with unbounded polyhedra without much extra effort; e.g., see [44, Sect. 3.4].

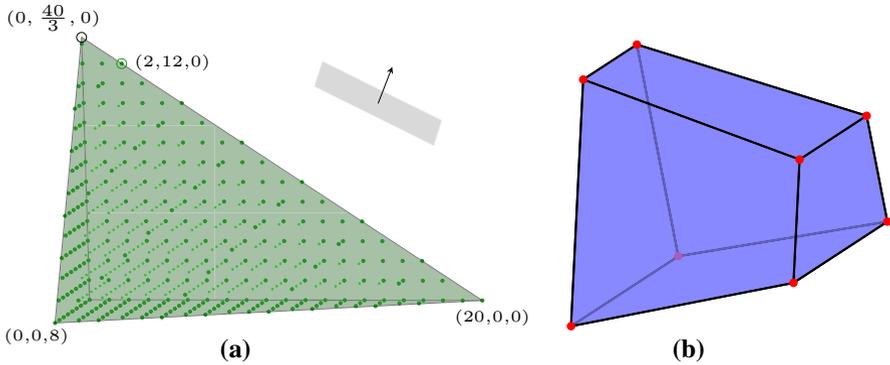
At this point `polymake` already used a (dual) convex hull algorithm to find the vertices of the polytope which was given by an outer description. There are several convex hull implementations to choose from within `polymake`; see Sect. 3 for more details. This particular fractional knapsack polytope belongs to the *Fibonacci fractional knapsack polytopes*. Their integer hulls, the *Fibonacci knapsack polytopes*, will be investigated in Sect. 3.4 below.

Now we want to present how to optimize over this polytope with `polymake`. Like for the convex hull algorithms, there are various (simplex type) implementations for linear programming available. The first step is to create a `LinearProgram` object with an objective function. Then we can ask for the maximal/minimal value and an optimal solution.

```
polytope> $lp = $k->LP(LINEAR_OBJECTIVE=>new Vector
    ([0,1,2,1,2,1]));
polytope> print $lp->MAXIMAL_VERTEX;
1 0 40/3 0 0
polytope> print $lp->MAXIMAL_VALUE;
80/3
```

Observe that the maximal vertex is not integral. To find an integral optimal solution one can repeat this process with the integer hull of that polytope.

```
polytope> $ik = integer_hull($k);
polytope> print $ik->N_POINTS;
1366
polytope> print $ik->N_VERTICES;
16
```



**Fig. 1** Visualization of the two example polytopes, made with `polymake`'s interface to TikZ [60]. **a** Visualization of the integer points of the projection of  $\mathcal{F}k$  onto the first three coordinates with a maximal linear and a maximal integer solution. **b** The Klee-Minty-Cube in dimension 3 with  $t = \frac{1}{4}$

Here `polymake` enumerated all integral points inside the polytope. For this task there are again several different algorithms available, see Sect. 4. Afterwards we define a new polytope with all those integral points as input points, and which is stored in  $\mathcal{F}ik$ . Notice that `polymake` also provides a function `mixed_integer_hull` with the obvious interpretation.

Solving an integer linear program is the same as doing linear optimization over the integer hull. So we can proceed as before. A projection of this Fibonacci polytope, the integral points, and the optimal vertices is shown in Fig. 1a.

```

polytope> $ilp = $ik->LP(LINEAR_OBJECTIVE=>new Vector
    ([0,1,2,1,2,1]));
polytope> print $ilp->MAXIMAL_VERTEX;
1 2 12 0 0 0
polytope> print $ilp->MAXIMAL_VALUE;
26
    
```

As already mentioned, `polymake` usually works with exact rational coordinates. However, it is also possible to work with other coordinate types, which includes certain extensions of rationals. For instance, fields of Puiseux fractions are relevant in optimization since they can be used to model coordinate perturbations. The (*rational*) *Puiseux fractions* form a field whose elements are univariate rational functions with rational coefficients and rational exponents; they can be equipped with a natural ordering. Computing with Puiseux fractions amounts to computing with the usual rational numbers and an infinitesimally small transcendental number; see [43] for the details. We illustrate this with the 3-dimensional *Klee-Minty* cube [47] which can be constructed as follows.

```

polytope> $monomial=new UniMonomial<Rational,Rational>(1);
polytope> $t=new PuiseuxFraction<Min>($monomial);
polytope> $c = klee_minty_cube(3,$t);
polytope> print_constraints($c);
Facets:
0: x1 >= (0)
1: -x1 >= (- 1)
    
```

```

2: -(t) x1 + x2 >= (0)
3: -(t) x1 - x2 >= (- 1)
4: -(t) x2 + x3 >= (0)
5: -(t) x2 - x3 >= (- 1)

```

The parentheses indicate that the coefficients are Puiseux fractions, rather than rational numbers. Yet it makes sense to contemplate evaluating these expressions for special values. For instance,  $t = 0$  yields the ordinary 0/1-cube; and for  $0 < t < 1/2$  we obtain the Klee–Minty cube. Notice that, by construction, the latter inequality always holds in the field of Puiseux fractions. As a benefit from working over Puiseux fractions we can obtain the volume as a rational function in  $t$  (which is a polynomial in this case):

```

polytope> print $c->VOLUME;
(1 -2*t + t^2)

```

In addition to the various applications shipped with `polymake`, there are also third-party extensions, which add further functionality. Of particular interest in the context of integer linear programming is the `unimodularity-test` extension by Matthias Walter [64], which implements an algorithm of Walter and Trümper [65]. Our wiki page at `polymake.org` contains several tutorials, some of which specialize on topics in optimization. In particular, it features a proof-of-concept implementation of the branch-and-bound algorithm, to solve integer linear programs without relying on computing all lattice points within the feasible domain, which is useful for educational purposes. Via the interface to `normaliz` [19] our software can also compute Hilbert bases. For instance, this allows for computing Gomory–Chvátal closures by calling the function `gc_closure`.

`polymake` also allows to directly read and write data files in the classical `lp`-format for linear programs and in `porta` format for convex hull problems in primal and dual form. This can be done with the commands `lp2poly`, `poly2lp`, `poly2porta`, and `porta2poly`. See the corresponding help text for the correct calling syntax and options (e.g., `help "lp2poly"`; inside the `polymake` shell).

The programming language of the `polymake` shell is essentially Perl. However, we extended the language in several ways. The most important modification is related to our implementation of an interface between Perl and C++, which is based on Perl’s XS interface. For instance, calling the function `new Vector(...)` creates an object via C++ code, and the Perl shell keeps a reference to an opaque object. The C++ code has a template parameter for the coefficients which defaults to `Rational`, which is our wrapper to the GMP. We modified Perl to allow for template parameters in the C++ data type. For instance, `new Vector<Integer>(...)` is legal in `polymake`. New instantiations of data types due to an uncommon choice of template parameters trigger the automatic compilation of the appropriate C++ code. That code is kept such that it does not need to be recompiled again.

### 3 Convex hull computations

The *convex hull problem* in its primal form asks to compute the facets of the convex hull of finitely many given points in  $\mathbb{R}^d$ . By cone polarity this is equivalent to computing

the vertices and rays of a polyhedron which is given in terms of finitely many linear equations and inequalities. The latter form is the *dual convex hull problem*. Both forms occur naturally in the context of linear and integer programming: *e.g.*, to compute the facets of the integer hull of a given polytope is a primal convex hull problem. Dual convex hull problems arise, *e.g.*, in the computation of Voronoi diagrams. Out of the four types of convex hull problems we will investigate two, namely computing the facets of integer hulls and computing Voronoi diagrams. Other applications of convex hull algorithms aim at certain parameterized optimization problems. An example is the search for biologically correct alignments of mRNA data [28].

### 3.1 Complexity status

The precise complexity status of the convex hull problem is unsettled: It is not known whether or not there exists an algorithm whose complexity is bounded by a polynomial in the combined size of the input and the output. This concept is called *polynomial total time*; see [62]. As a measure for the complexity of an algorithm it differs from what is common in theoretical computer science, where algorithms are typically measured in the size of the input only. To evaluate convex hull algorithms from a practical point of view restricting the attention to the input size only is somewhat unsatisfying as the size of the output can vary over several orders of magnitude. To give just one basic example: a cube in dimension  $d$  has  $2^d$  vertices but only  $2d$  facets, while the dual cross polytope has  $2d$  vertices but as many as  $2^d$  facets. By McMullen's Upper Bound Theorem [66, Sect. 8] the number of facets of a  $d$ -polytope with  $n$  vertices is bounded by  $O(n^{d/2})$ , and this bound is tight. For fixed dimension  $d$  the bound  $O(n^{d/2})$  becomes polynomial in  $n$ , and for this setup Chazelle gave a fixed dimension polynomial time algorithm which is worst-case optimal with respect to the size of the input [20]. However, by taking the dimension as a constant, such an algorithm is allowed to "waste" an exponential amount of time on many small convex hull problems.

More recently, Khachiyan et al. showed that it is #P-hard to enumerate the *vertices* of an unbounded polyhedron given in terms of inequalities [46]. However, this result does not say anything about the *rays* of that polyhedron, whence it does not have a direct implication for the complexity status of the convex hull problem. Yet this is a strong hint that a polynomial total time convex hull algorithm does not exist.

### 3.2 Common algorithms

In practice several algorithms and their implementations are used; see [4, 42] for previous computational studies. One purpose of this paper is to point out that essentially all of them are relevant for various convex hull problems arising in linear and integer optimization.

The *beneath-and-beyond* method is best described as a primal convex hull algorithm; it occurs in work of Seidel [59], see also [29, 42]. So the goal is to compute the facets of the convex hull, say  $P$ , of finitely many given points. We may assume that the points affinely span the entire space for otherwise we can restrict our attention to the affine span. Picking an affine basis among the input points yields a simplex  $P_1$  of

full dimension  $d$  which is contained in  $P$ . By solving systems of linear equations we obtain the facets of  $P_1$ . Now the remaining input points are added inductively, yielding a sequence of polytopes  $P_1, P_2, \dots, P_{n-d} = P$ . In the inductive step triangulations of the polytopes  $P_i$  are maintained, and these allow for the computations of the facets. The size of the final triangulation of the polytope  $P$  is the decisive factor in the running time; see [42, Proposition 3.2]. Notice that there are polytopes with few vertices and few facets for which nonetheless all triangulations are large; see [4] and [42, Sect. 3.2]. In our tests we use the implementation included in `polymake`, which is marked as “bb” below.

Algorithms which inductively compute the intermediate convex hulls  $P_i$  for all  $i$  are called *incremental*. Bremner showed that no incremental convex hull algorithm can have a polynomial total running time [16].

A dual method, which is also incremental, is *double description*. It was first described by Motzkin et al. [51]; see also [33] and [44, Sect. 5.2]. This is essentially the same as *Fourier–Motzkin elimination* and *Chernikova’s algorithm* [21]. Given finitely many inequalities, one starts with a subset of the inequalities which enclose a full-dimensional simplex,  $Q_1$ . Up to solving a linear programming feasibility problem and up to a projective transformation, this is not a restriction. The vertices of that simplex are again computed by solving systems of linear equations. In the inductive step, to obtain  $Q_{i+1}$ , the hyperplane defined by a new inequality separates the vertices of  $Q_i$  into those which are also vertices of  $Q_{i+1}$  and those which are not. The new vertices of  $Q_{i+1}$  arise as intersection of that hyperplane with the edges of  $Q_i$ . The extra data structure which needs to be maintained is the vertex-edge graph of the intermediate polytopes. The double description method is implemented, e.g., in `cdd` [32,33], `pp1` [9] and `porta` [23]. Those software packages are tested below. See [15] for an average-case analysis of the beneath-and-beyond and double description methods.

From a certain point of view one can even consider beneath-and-beyond and double description as similar; e.g., see [33]. However, there is a choice which kind of data structures to maintain and how to maintain them during the computation. In our terminology, beneath-and-beyond primarily uses a triangulation (in the primal setting), while double description primarily uses the graph (in the dual setting). As our experiments below show this leads to a very different behavior on various kinds of input.

A third convex hull algorithm which we consider here is *reverse search* by Avis and Fukuda [6]. The only non-incremental algorithm in our selection is based on the simplex method for linear programming. Any linear objective function which is in general position with respect to a given polytope  $R$ , induces a direction on each edge of  $R$ . Starting from some vertex the optimum (which is unique as the objective function is generic) can be reached by following a directed path. The reverse search algorithm in its natural form computes dual convex hulls. It solves one linear program to determine one vertex of the feasible region from the given list of finitely many linear inequalities. By pivoting backwards all vertices can be traced. The non-trivial ingredient in this algorithm is that this can be accomplished with constant memory after the initialization. The reverse search method is implemented in `lrs` [3,5]. There is a multithreaded version of `lrs`, which we did not test; see [8].

There are more convex hull algorithms and implementations. Bruns, Ichim and Söger suggested an interesting hybridization of the beneath-and-beyond method with Fourier–Motzkin elimination, which they called *pyramid decomposition* [18]. As a special feature their `normaliz` implementation supports multithreading; we report on some tests with `normaliz`, and these are marked ‘nmz’. The CGAL library [61] also offers convex hull implementations, but we did not test them here; the reason is that the output is somewhat different. Joswig and Ziegler described a convex hull algorithm based on simplicial homology computation [45], which is interesting from a theoretical point of view only.

Our first two rules of thumb serve as a first approximation, and this is consistent with what had previously been observed by others.

**Rule of Thumb 1** *If you do not know anything about your input to a convex hull problem, try double description.*

While this is useful to keep in mind, a large part of this paper is devoted to discuss *natural* situations in which this simple minded strategy leads astray. A conceptual disadvantage of double description, being an incremental algorithm, is that its entire output is only available at the very end of the computation. Non-incremental techniques, such as reverse search, do not share this disadvantage. This immediately leads to the next rule of thumb.

**Rule of Thumb 2** *Use reverse search if you expect the output to be extremely large, and if partial information is useful.*

`lrs` features options for obtaining an unbiased estimate of the output size (and `lrs` running time), from looking into the first few levels of the search tree. By comparing the number of vertices (or facets) with the number of bases one can also get an idea of how degenerate the input is. Notice, however, that `polymake`’s current interface does not support these advanced features of `lrs`.

### 3.3 Non-symmetric cut polytopes

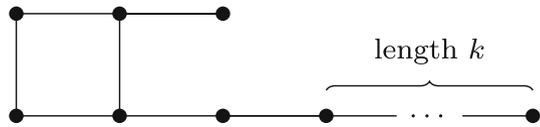
Let us start out with a class of examples where the first rule above works to our advantage. Consider a finite simple graph  $G = (V, E)$  which is undirected, i.e., the *nodes* form a finite set  $V$  and the set  $E$  of edges consists of two-element subsets of  $V$ . A (possibly trivial) partition  $V = A + B$  of the node set induces a *cut*  $C(A, B) := \{e \in E \mid |e \cap A| = |e \cap B| = 1\}$  in  $G$ . We can encode such a cut via its *incidence vector*  $\chi^C \in \{0, 1\}^{|E|}$ , i.e., the 0/1-vector of length  $|E|$  with  $\chi_e^C = 1$  if and only if  $e \in C(A, B)$ . The *cut polytope* of  $G$  is the polytope

$$\text{Cut}(G) := \text{conv}(\chi^C \mid C \text{ is a cut in } G).$$

A classical line of research in combinatorial optimization asks to determine the facets of cut polytopes; see Schrijver [58, Sect. 75.7].

*Remark 1* Each automorphism of  $G$  gives rise to a linear automorphism of its cut polytope  $\text{Cut}(G)$ .

**Fig. 2** Asymmetric graph  $G_k$  on  $k + 6$  nodes



For our first experiment we look at graphs with few nodes and which are completely asymmetric, *i.e.*, their automorphism group is trivial. In Sect. 3.6 below we will discuss cut polytopes of graphs which *are* symmetric. Let  $G_k$  be the connected graph with  $k + 6$  nodes and  $k + 6$  edges shown in Fig. 2. For  $k \geq 1$  the graph  $G_k$  is completely asymmetric, while  $G_0$  admits one involutory automorphism.

The relevant parameters for the cut polytopes of the graph  $G_k$  are easy to determine. The dimension,  $d = \dim(\text{Cut}(G_k))$ , equals the number of edges, which is  $k + 6$ . There are  $n = 2^{k+5}$  many cuts (including the empty cut), all of which form vertices, as cut polytopes are 0/1-polytopes. The values  $d$  and  $n$  describe the size of the input. In this case, since the graph  $G_k$  does not contain a  $K_5$ -minor, the facets of  $\text{Cut}(G_k)$  can be determined via a result of Barahona [11]; see also [58, Corollary 75.4f]. This yields  $m = 2d + 8 = 2k + 20$  facets.

Our experiment investigates the primal convex hull computations for the polytopes  $\text{Cut}(G_k)$ , where  $k$  ranges from 0 to 14, and for which we tried the six implementations `bb`, `cdd`, `lrs`, `nmz`, `porta`, and `ppl`. The polytopes were given to `polymake` in reduced vertex description via `VERTICES` and `LINEALITY_SPACE`. See the accompanying web page [54] for full details.

`polymake` has default options for computing convex hulls etc. but one can directly influence the choice of algorithm for various tasks within the `polymake` shell by issuing `prefer` statements. To choose, e.g., `ppl` as the default method for convex hull computations one can use

```
polytope> prefer "ppl";
```

This choice will be stored in the preferences file of `polymake` (`.polymake/prefer.pl` in the home folder) and is valid until one sets another default. To switch only temporarily one can use `prefer_now`, which is only valid on the line it is contained in, e.g.,

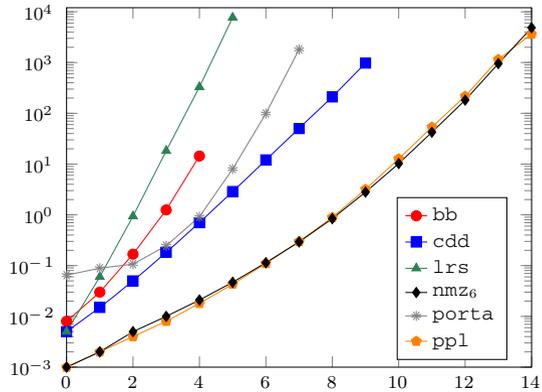
```
polytope> prefer_now "lrs"; print $p->FACETS;
```

This can be fine tuned with minor keys in the form `ppl.convex_hull`, see the `polymake` wiki for more details. By the way, omitting the “`print`” in the second command above will trigger the convex hull computation without producing output. This is instrumental, e.g., for proper timings.

The programs `cdd`, `lrs`, `nmz` and `ppl` are interfaced via their library versions, hence there is virtually no overhead from testing through the `polymake` system. However, our interface to `porta` is based on an exchange of text files. This does create some overhead, which is visible in `porta`’s curve in Fig. 3, for small input. For large input, however, this effect can be neglected (at least on a logarithmic scale).

Every code was tried ten times on each input with the same parameters. The average running times are displayed in Table 3 in the Appendix and Fig. 3. Note that `bb` runs

**Fig. 3** Timings (in seconds, logarithmically scaled) for convex hull computations of non-symmetric cut polytopes  $\text{Cut}(G_k)$ ; see Table 3 in the Appendix. The curves for  $\text{nmz}_6$  and  $\text{ppl}$  almost agree. (bb: beneath-beyond,  $\text{nmz}_6$ : libnormaliz with 6 cores)



out of memory quite early. More precisely, our imposed memory limitation to 4GB does not suffice for  $\text{Cut}(G_5)$  and beyond; see the Appendix for details on our experimental setup. The reason is that the triangulations grow very quickly. For instance, the triangulation of  $\text{Cut}(G_4)$  which was computed by `bb` already has 1,040,517 facets. For  $\text{Cut}(G_5)$  we even get 11,199,900 facets within like 200s but requiring about 10GB of main memory. The asymptotic behavior of `cdd` is quite good, but it is clearly outperformed by `ppl` and `nmz`. The only parallel code is `normaliz`, which here we tested with six cores. Our experiments (undocumented here) suggest a factor of three in performance versus the single-threaded version of `nmz`.

**Rule of Thumb 3** *Do use double description for computing the facets of 0/1-polytopes.*

The curves for the six-threaded `nmz` and the single-threaded `ppl` match quite well. For practical purposes this seems to suggest that `nmz` parallelization, which employs the `OpenMP` protocol, is particularly interesting for more than six cores.

### 3.4 Knapsack integer hulls

For our second test we look at the kind of knapsack polytopes introduced in Sect. 2. Consider the Fibonacci sequence

$$a_1 = 2 \qquad a_2 = 3 \qquad a_i = a_{i-2} + a_{i-1} .$$

Then the *Fibonacci fractional knapsack polytope* in dimension  $d$  for the parameter  $b > 0$  is defined as

$$F_d(b) = \{x \in \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}^d \mid a^T x \leq b\} ,$$

where  $a = (a_1, \dots, a_d)$  is the vector of the first  $d$  elements of the Fibonacci sequence. As pointed out before, as mere polytopes these are boring as all of them are  $d$ -dimensional simplices. What makes a more interesting computational experiment is to

**Table 1** Properties of the Fibonacci fractional knapsack polytopes  $F_d(b)$ 

$d \setminus b$	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Number of integer points							
4	1021	2145	4008	6879	11,069	16,929	24,853
5	1366	3173	6509	12,182	21,245	35,025	55,157
6	1481	3626	7853	15,516	28,544	49,570	82,090
Number of facets of the integer hull							
4	6	7	7	8	6	6	8
5	12	15	12	12	8	13	15
6	25	20	21	25	21	18	22
Number of vertices of the integer hull							
4	8	11	9	12	8	8	12
5	16	25	19	23	13	19	25
6	35	37	35	40	35	31	40

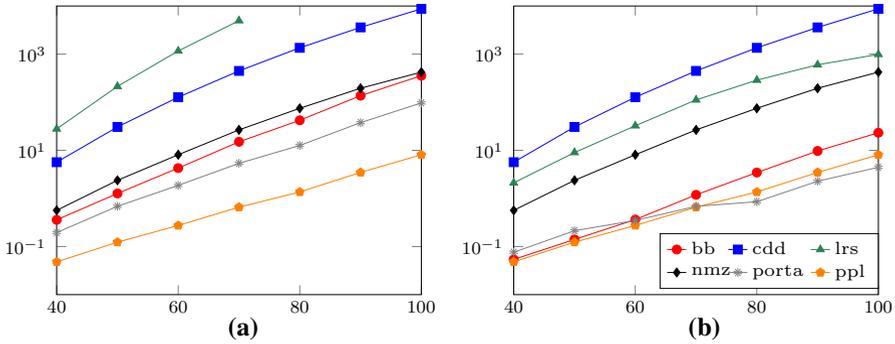
look at the set of integer points in  $F_d(b)$  and to compute their convex hull, which yields the corresponding *Fibonacci knapsack polytope*. So, as in Sect. 3.3, we are computing the facets of sets of integer points. As a key difference, however, here the vast majority of the input points is redundant, *i.e.*, they do not form vertices of the integer hull. See Sect. 4.3 below for a discussion about how to compute these integer points. Each polytope for this set of experiments was defined in *redundant* vertex description via the property POINTS, see [54] for details.

To get an idea about the input and output sizes Table 1 lists the number of lattice points (which provide the input), the number of facets (which form the output) and the number of vertices depending on  $d$  and  $b$ . By a result of Hayes and Larman [39] the number of vertices of the integer hull of any knapsack  $d$ -polytope is bounded by  $\sigma^d$ , where  $\sigma$  is the length of the binary encoding of the knapsack inequality; our examples are rather far from this bound.

Looking at the timings in Fig. 4a and Table 4 in the Appendix this experiment seems to be showing something similar to the previous one: `pp1` outperforms the other codes, and `lrs` is far behind. As a major difference to the previous experiment here `porta` can nearly compete with `pp1`. For proper comparison, notice that in Fig. 3 the dimension of the input increases with  $k$ , which is the parameter on the  $x$ -axis, while Fig. 4 reports on results in fixed dimension 5. The most interesting aspect of the Fibonacci knapsack examples, however, is that they support the following.

**Rule of Thumb 4** *For iterative convex hull algorithms the insertion order often makes a difference. This is particularly true if the input contains redundant points. If it is easy to recognize redundant input, it usually pays to remove that first. This is not restricted to convex hull codes.*

An extreme approach to remove redundant input would be to solve one linear program per input point to decide whether or not this is a vertex. In most circumstances, this is more expensive than computing the convex hull with redundancies.



**Fig. 4** Timings (in s) for integer hull computations of Fibonacci fractional knapsack polytopes  $F_5(b)$  depending on  $b$ , on a logarithmic scale, **a** in default order, **b** in individual best order; see Table 4 in the Appendix for exact timings

The key to understanding the computational results is the observation that, for  $d = 6$  and  $b = 100$ , less than 0.5 % of the input points are vertices. The best possible scenario for any incremental convex hull algorithm is to process a sequence of points with the vertices coming first. In more complicated cases the ordering among the vertices may also matter.

To illustrate the situation we ran extensive tests on the Fibonacci knapsack examples with various insertion orders; see the rather lengthy Table 4 in the Appendix. The `cdd` and `ppl` implementation are almost insensitive to this variation since they employ heuristics to process the input in their preferred order. Also `normaliz` orders the input in an initial step, so we did not run tests with varying order for it. All other codes are very sensitive to the insertion order, even `lrs`, which is not an iterative algorithm. However, the ordering of the input affects the traversal of the search tree. Figure 4b is an overly condensed version of Table 4 in the Appendix; for each implementation we took the timing of the best ordering that we found. `porta` and `bb` quite clearly want the vertices first, while `lrs` prefers a randomized order. In practice, for a specific input, it will often be unrealistic to tell in advance which ordering will work best for which method. The purpose of this test is to underline that, in addition to choosing the proper algorithm, it may be worth-while to spend a thought on the input order, too.

### 3.5 Voronoi diagrams

A completely different convex hull set up comes about as follows. Consider a configuration  $S$  of  $m$  points in  $\mathbb{R}^{d-1}$ . The *Voronoi region* of a site  $s \in S$  is the set of points in  $\mathbb{R}^{d-1}$  whose distance to  $s$  does not exceed the distance to any other point in  $S$ . Conceptually, the distance can be measured in terms of any fixed metric, but here we are looking at the Euclidean case only. Then the Voronoi region of  $s$  is a convex polyhedron which may be bounded or not. An immediate inequality description of a Voronoi region arises from bisecting hyperplanes between pairs of sites. Ranging over all sites in  $S$  the Voronoi regions form a *polyhedral complex*, i.e., a set of polyhedra meeting face-to-face, and this polyhedral complex is the *Voronoi diagram* of  $S$ . By

construction the Voronoi diagram covers the entire space  $\mathbb{R}^{d-1}$ . Voronoi diagrams are an indispensable tool in computational geometry and its applications.

The (Euclidean) Voronoi diagram of  $S$  can be computed by solving a dual convex hull problem. This is due to the fact that the Voronoi diagram of  $S$  is the orthogonal projection of the unbounded polyhedron in  $\mathbb{R}^d$  whose  $m$  facets are those tangent hyperplanes to the standard paraboloid  $\{(x, \|x\|^2) \mid x \in \mathbb{R}^{d-1}\}$  in  $\mathbb{R}^d$  which lie above the sites in  $S$ . This way the 0-dimensional cells of the Voronoi diagram of  $S$  are the projections of the vertices of the unbounded polyhedron

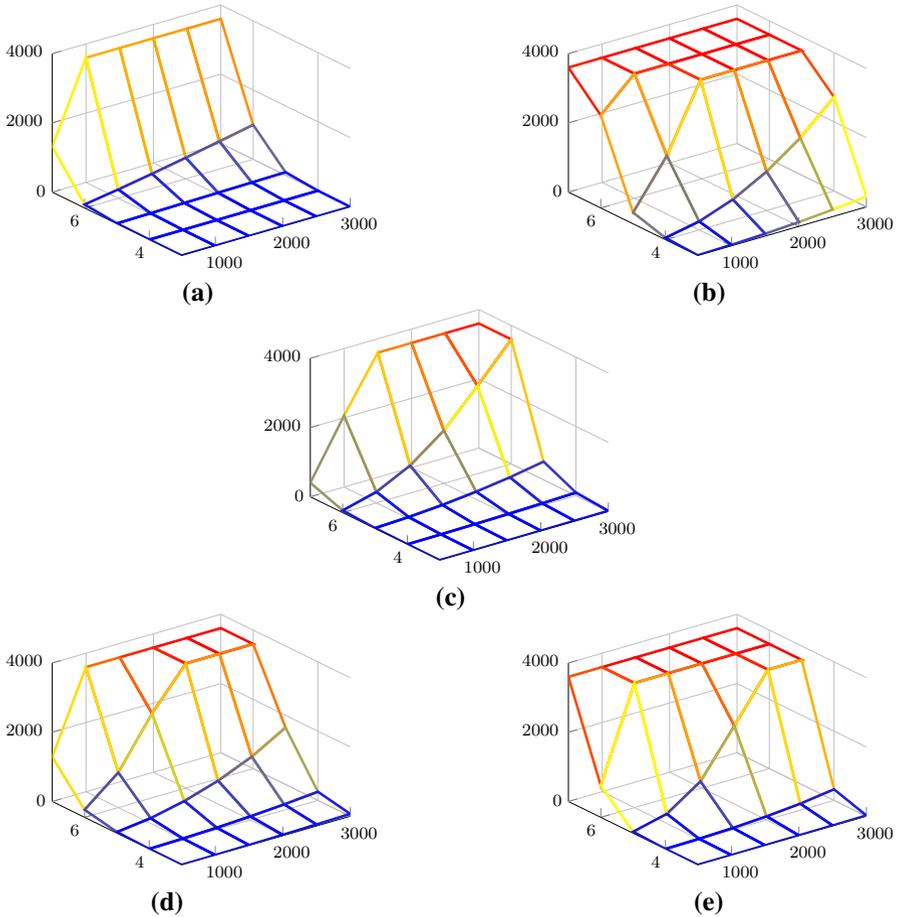
$$V(S) := \left\{ (x, \delta) \in \mathbb{R}^{d-1} \times \mathbb{R} \mid 2\langle s, x \rangle - \|s\|^2 \leq \delta \text{ for all } s \in S \right\},$$

which is full-dimensional. From the vertices and the facets (which are given by the sites) of  $V(S)$  one can, for instance, compute a facet description of each Voronoi region by a combinatorial procedure. The same is true for other additional information that might be desired. In this sense, solving the dual convex hull problem for the polyhedron  $V(S)$  is the key step; e.g., see [44, Sect. 6.3].

For our experiment we choose  $m$  points uniformly at random within the cube  $[-1, 1]^{d-1}$ . The polytopes  $V(S)$  were given to `polymake` in reduced facet description via `FACETS`, derived from the sites given by the random points. Except for `bb` where we added an explicit polarization step because this implementation originally worked for primal convex hull only, thus the input was `VERTICES`. See the accompanying web page [54] for full details. For each choice of parameters we do this experiment ten times. The timings in Table 5 in the Appendix give the average values. We tried  $m \in \{500, 1000, 1500, \dots, 3000\}$  and  $3 \leq d \leq 7$ , but we restricted our attention to those cases which could be computed within one hour of single-threaded CPU time. While Table 5 in the Appendix also lists a few timings which are longer, everything is truncated to one hour in Fig. 5. Notice that the polyhedron  $V(S)$  is simple (*i.e.*, each vertex is contained in  $d$  facets) almost surely.

On this non-degenerate input `cdcd` does not work so well and can only solve a few small problems. Reverse search is a method which is designed for non-degenerate input, and so its implementation `lrs` performs quite well. In fact, the worst case running time of reverse search is bounded by  $O(dmn)$  on non-degenerate input; and this fits with our experiment. It is plausible (but not proved, as far as we know) that  $n$  grows only slightly larger than linearly in  $m$  in this case, and so the running time in fixed dimension approximately grows quadratically. Yet this is outperformed by the beneath-and-beyond method `bb`, implemented in `polymake`. Its worst case running time was estimated at  $O(d^5 m t^2)$  in [42], where  $t$  is the size of a triangulation of the polar of  $V(S)$  which `bb` implicitly computes on the way. While it is plausible (but again not proved, as far as we know) that  $t$  is small in this case, possibly even about linear in  $m$ , the above bound seems to be too pessimistic. The empirical running times on this input grow almost linearly in fixed dimension. Notice also that, for any  $d$  and very small  $m$  `lrs`, `normaliz` and `ppl` beat `bb`.

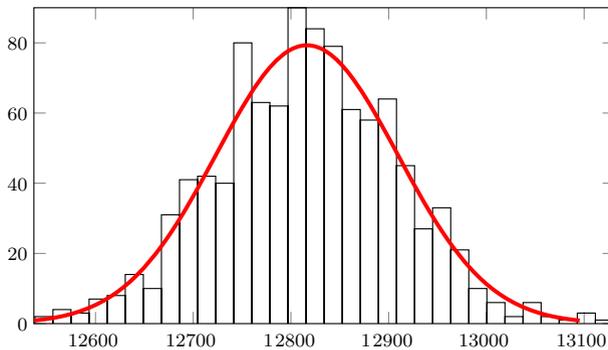
**Rule of Thumb 5** *On random input the beneath-and-beyond algorithm often behaves very well.*



**Fig. 5** Running times (in seconds) for Voronoi diagrams of random point sets depending on the dimension  $d \in [3, 7]$  and the number of points  $m \in [500, 3000]$ , for **a** bb, **b** cdd, **c** lrs, **d** normaliz, **e** ppl. See Table 5 in the Appendix for exact timings

We conclude the report on this experiment with an explanation why it suffices to list the average over only ten runs per parameter set via a simple statistical analysis. To this end we fix one set of parameters for which we do the random sampling one thousand times. We pick  $d = 5$  and  $m = 500$  because all algorithms terminate within a reasonable time-span.

The first random variable to look at is the number  $n$  of vertices of the Voronoi diagram, whose distribution is plotted in Fig. 6. The numbers range from 12,538 to 13,130 with average value 12,816.352, median 12,816 and standard deviation 93.037. For comparison the diagram also shows a normal distribution with the given expected value and standard deviation. To get an idea, it follows from the Generalized Lower Bound Theorem of Murai and Nevo [52] that  $n \geq 1982$  (provided that the input is in



**Fig. 6** Histogram of the numbers of vertices in 1000 random Voronoi diagram experiments, the boundaries of the  $x$ -axis correspond to the minimum and maximum values

general position). On the other hand McMullen's Upper Bound Theorem [50] yields  $n \leq 246,512$ .

The other natural random variables are the running times for the various convex hull codes. Like for the output sizes, these are strongly concentrated around their respective mean. We omit the details.

*Remark 2* We do not report `porta` timings here since `porta` dies with an error message on each input of this kind. This seems to be related to a flaw in `porta`'s implementation of the arithmetic. The most recent version [23] of `porta` was published in 2009.

### 3.6 Symmetric cut polytopes

We continue to examine primal convex hull computations arising from cut polytopes. The difference to Sect. 3.3 is that here we look into graphs with non-trivial symmetry. A symmetric convex hull problem can be solved in various ways by graph based search techniques up to symmetry which need to be combined with some standard convex hull algorithm applied to subproblems of smaller size; see Bremner et al. [17]. This has been implemented in `sympol` by Rehn [57], and this is also available in `polymake`, through which `sympol` can currently be combined with `bb`, `cdd`, `lrs` and `pp1`.

Our first example is the path  $P_k$  on  $k$  nodes, which has  $k - 1$  edges. The cut polytope  $\text{Cut}(P_k)$  is the 0/1-cube of dimension  $k - 1$ . It has  $n = 2^{k-1}$  vertices and  $m = 2k - 2$  facets. The graph  $P_k$  is symmetric with respect to exchanging both ends, which yields an automorphism group of order two. Clearly, the 0/1-cube has a much larger group of automorphisms (of order  $2^{k-1} \cdot (k - 1)!$ ), but most of its elements are not induced by graph automorphisms.

The second example is the cycle  $C_k$  of length  $k$ . The cut polytope  $\text{Cut}(C_k)$  is the convex hull of all 0/1-vectors of length  $k$  with an even number of 1's. It has  $n = 2^{k-1}$  vertices and  $m = 2k + 2^{k-1}$  facets. The automorphism group of the graph  $C_k$  is the dihedral group of order  $2k$ .

The third example is the complete graph  $K_k$  on  $k$  nodes, which has  $\binom{k}{2} = k(k-1)/2$  edges. The number of vertices of  $\text{Cut}(K_k)$  equals  $2^{k-1}$ . The facet descriptions are known for  $k \leq 8$ ; see [7, 14, 22]. For  $k = 6$  the cut polytope has 368 facets, for  $k = 7$  it has 116,764 facets, for  $k = 8$  it has 217,093,472 facets, and at least 12,246,651,158,320 facets for  $k = 9$  [14]. The latter number is conjectured to be the true number of facets. The automorphism group of  $K_k$  is the full symmetric group of degree  $k$ .

As for the case of non-symmetric cut polytopes the input was given as a reduced list of vertices. However, in this case we also passed a list of generators of the symmetry group to `polymake` for the computations. See [54] for the complete setup.

Table 2 gives the average time in seconds used by the algorithms in `bb`, `cdd`, `lrs`, `pp1` and their combinations with `sympol` for the convex hull computations of the three classes of cut polytopes. Independent of the algorithm, at least for large input the advantage of taking symmetry into account is evident. The larger the group of automorphisms the greater is the gain.

**Rule of Thumb 6** *If the input is large but symmetric do compute convex hulls up to symmetry.*

The differences in performance of the convex hulls codes on this input are consistent with the non-symmetric cut polytopes from Sect. 3.3. We take this as an indication that the rule of thumb above is independent of the choice of the basic algorithm.

## 4 Integer points

In this section we compare various methods to count the integer points in a polytope. This is a fundamental task which appears in various different areas of mathematics, among them number theory, statistics, algebraic geometry, and representation theory (see e.g. [25] for an overview). In the context of optimization this most frequently occurs as a first step if one is interested in computing the facets of integer hulls.

### 4.1 Complexity status

While this was already mentioned in the introduction, we wish to repeat: Even to decide if a polyhedron contains some integer point is NP-complete [34]. On top of this there is no polynomial bound on the number of lattice points with respect to the input size. Hence all algorithms that enumerate the lattice points easily show an (at least) exponential worst case behavior with respect to time and memory. Also note that in dimensions at least three, a lattice polytope without any lattice points, except for the vertices, can have arbitrarily large volume. In contrast, for a fixed positive number of interior lattice points the volume is bounded.

Despite these obstacles the number of lattice points can be determined in polynomial time in fixed dimension with Barvinok's algorithm [12]. For a short explanation of the algorithm see the next section. Variations of this algorithm have been implemented in two different software packages. This leads to the first rule of thumb for this section.

**Table 2** Computation times (in seconds) for the convex hull of several cut polytopes where the symbol  $\infty$  stands for *out of memory* and \* means that we have only done one iteration of the test

$G$	$d$	$n$	$m$	bb	cdd	lrs	pp1	bb <sub>sym</sub>	cdd <sub>sym</sub>	lrs <sub>sym</sub>	pp1 <sub>sym</sub>
$P_9$	8	256	16	0.38	0.18	5.36	0.07	0.29	0.23	1.36	0.08
$P_{10}$	9	512	18	3.09	0.52	90.80	0.07	2.04	0.95	26.12	0.25
$C_9$	9	256	274	2.05	0.88	29.46	0.09	1.07	0.97	2.86	0.56
$C_{10}$	10	512	532	24.99	4.70	602.04	0.20	6.76	4.22	62.70	2.40
$K_6$	15	32	368	6.80	0.25	1.74	0.09	1.04	0.20	0.20	0.10
$K_7$	21	64	116,764	$\infty$	14,329.75*	31,309.01*	2212.73*	$\infty$	129.98	1217.96	32.00

**Rule of Thumb 7** *If you do not know anything about your input and you are only interested in the number of lattice points, try `LatTE` [26] or `barvinok` [63].*

The reason for this general recommendation is that in practice any method which explicitly enumerates the lattice points will often feel the limit of the amount of memory available.

## 4.2 Common algorithms

Algorithms to solve the enumeration or counting problem in practice basically fall into four different categories.

The basic form of Barvinok's algorithm computes the rational multivariate generating function for the lattice points in an affine polyhedral cone  $C$  using a *signed* decomposition of  $C$  into simplicial unimodular cones whose generating functions are easy to determine. The key feature of this algorithm is that we can bound the number of unimodular cones and their faces in this decomposition by a polynomial in the input size if the dimension is fixed. In its original form the algorithm has to care for lattice points in intersections of cones in the decomposition using inclusion-exclusion. There are two commonly used variations that avoid this, either working with the dual of the cone or using *irrational decomposition* [49]. The first approach is based on the observation that duals of low-dimensional cones are non-pointed and the rational generating function of a non-pointed cone vanishes. In the second approach one translates the cone by a small vector in such a way that no lattice point is contained in a lower-dimensional face (this can be done without explicitly computing the shift). See [12] for details.

By Brion's Theorem the generating function of the integer points in a rational polytope  $P$  is given by the sum of the generating functions of all vertex cones. Via Barvinok's algorithm we obtain an algorithm to compute a polynomial size representation of the generating function of  $P$  in polynomial time, if the dimension is fixed. Evaluation at 1 returns the number of lattice points. This algorithm has been implemented in the software packages `LatTE` [26,27] and `barvinok` [63]. The latter package also contains several modifications of the original algorithm (see, e.g., [48]). Here we only test `LatTE`, since currently there is no interface between `polymake` and `barvinok`.

Historically, `LatTE` uses decomposition in dual space as the default method for triangulating the vertex cones. However, the current version `LatTE integrale` also implements irrational decomposition and a mix of dual and irrational decomposition. It also allows to stop the signed decomposition if the determinant of a cone falls below a threshold. This is motivated by the observation that determinants initially drop fast in the decomposition process, but breaking down cones with small determinant into unimodular ones often takes a considerable amount of time. `LatTE` also allows to compute the generating function of the homogenization cone  $\sigma_P := \text{cone}(P \times \{1\})$  via Barvinok's algorithm.

By default, `polymake` calls the default version of `LatTE` using decomposition in dual space. This can be changed by setting command line options for the call to `LatTE`. In `polymake`, this can be done with the command `set_custom`, e.g.

```
polytope> set_custom($latte_count_param="--irrational-all-
  primal --maxdet=25 --exponential");
```

For more options see the manual of `LatTE integrale`. The parameters chosen may have a tremendous influence on the running time. As for the convex hulls there is no a priori way to determine which algorithm works best on a given instance. The manual of `LatTE integrale` gives some hints. We demonstrate this in our experiments by running them once with the default options and once with the above choice (denoted by `LatTEV`).

The second type of algorithm directly enumerates the lattice points of a polytope. Two such methods are implemented in `polymake`.

1. The algorithm `bbox` encloses a polytope into a scaled cube with edges parallel to the coordinate axes. It then checks for every point in the cube whether it is contained in the polytope.
2. The algorithm `projection` recursively enumerates lattice points in the fibers over lattice points in the projection of the polytope into one of the coordinate hyperplanes. This uses an optimized Fourier–Motzkin elimination to create irredundant descriptions for the polytopes which are the images of the projection.

The third method that can be used to enumerate lattice points in fact solves the more general problem of finding a Hilbert basis in the cone  $\sigma_P$ . As all lattice points in  $P \times \{1\}$  must be in the Hilbert basis we can filter out all generators with a higher last coordinate to obtain a list of lattice points. Various algorithms exist for enumeration of Hilbert bases, but there are only two large software projects that have implemented some of the methods. To both software projects `polymake` provides an interface.

1. The program `4ti2` [1] uses a project-and-lift approach to compute Hilbert bases of polyhedral cones intersected with arbitrary lattices [40]. Computation of integer points in polyhedra is treated as a special case by bounding the height of the generators.
2. The program `normaliz` [19] computes (among other things) Hilbert bases of cones and enumerates lattice points in polytopes. Roughly speaking, the algorithm constructs a triangulation of a cone (e.g., via a placing triangulation similar to the beneath-and-beyond method explained above), then computes a Hilbert basis of each simplicial cone and finally reduces the union of all Hilbert bases of the simplicial cones to a Hilbert basis of the original cone. Computation of a Hilbert basis of a simplicial cone is done by enumerating all lattice points in the fundamental parallelepiped using a transformation to the positive orthant. For the enumeration of the lattice points of a polytope `normaliz` considers the homogenization cone and discards all generators of height 2 or above in the computation of the Hilbert basis.

There exists an option to run `normaliz` in a *dual mode* which is based on an algorithm by Pottier [56]. As for the convex hulls there is no a priori way to determine which algorithm works best on a given instance. Still, the authors recommend this mode when only an outer description is given as input. We demonstrate this in our experiments by running them once with the default options and once in dual mode (denoted by `normalizV`).

Generally, as Barvinok's algorithm is polynomial in fixed dimension it should be used if only the number of lattice points needs to be determined. We will see an example supporting this recommendation in the following section, where we pick up the fractional knapsack polytopes from Sect. 3.4 again and discuss the computation of the lattice points used as input above. However, in the subsequent section we will introduce *random box* polytopes and show that `LATTE` fails on those, seemingly simply structured, polytopes. At the same time the theoretically inferior methods work quite well. We will shortly discuss further examples in Sect. 4.6.

Clearly, one can tailor implementations to address special cases. For purposes related to integer linear programming it is most interesting to count or to enumerate the 0/1-points in a polytope which is given in terms of inequalities. The prototypical implementation is `azove` [13], which is also interfaced in `polymake` (via text file exchange). `azove` traverses all paths in a binary decision diagram to enumerate the 0/1-points.

*Remark 3* The latest version of `azove` was published in 2007. To use it with a modern Linux kernel requires some patching, as otherwise the initial memory allocation fails.

### 4.3 Knapsack polytopes

We evaluate the different algorithms for counting and enumerating the lattice points in Fibonacci fractional knapsack polytopes as introduced in Eq. (1) of Sect. 2. This enumeration is the first step of the integer hull computation in Sect. 3.4. According to our Rule of Thumb 7 we would expect `LATTE` to perform significantly better than the other algorithms, but as we will see, the picture is slightly more complex.

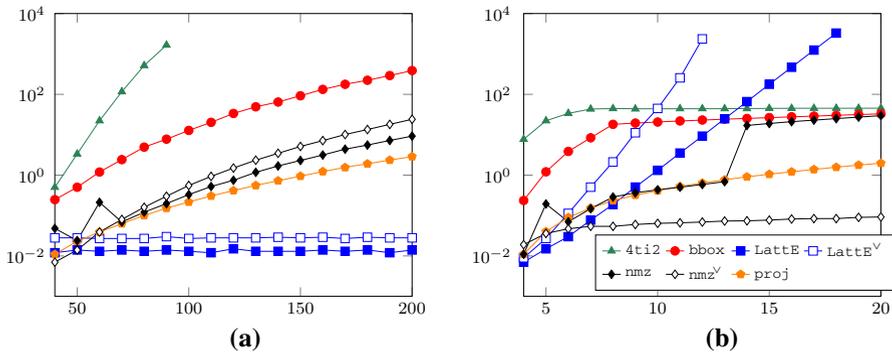
*Remark 4* By adding a slack variable a fractional knapsack polytope can also be written as the set of non-negative solutions to a single linear equation. In this context Baldoni et al. [10] described a polynomial time algorithm to compute the top coefficients of a quasi-polynomial which counts the integer solutions.

We performed two series of experiments. In the first we fixed the dimension to  $d = 5$  and varied the right hand side of the knapsack equation. Geometrically speaking, this corresponds to shifting one of the facets of a simplex. In the second series we fixed the right hand side  $b = 60$  and varied the dimension. In both cases, we provided the full lists of vertices and facets of the polytope as input to the algorithms, see [54]. All timings are listed in Tables 6 and 7 in the Appendix and plotted in Fig. 7. Note that in both cases the `projection` algorithm performs pretty well.

We also determined what our memory restriction of 4 GB implies as an upper limit on the number of points depending on the dimension. This corresponds roughly to 17 million points in  $F_5(350)$  and 5 million points in  $F_8(200)$ . In both cases the `projection` algorithm finishes in about a minute.

#### 4.3.1 Varying the right hand side

First, note that when increasing the right hand side the number of lattice points  $\ell$  in the polytope will increase significantly. The values of  $\ell$  for our examples are also given



**Fig. 7** Timings (in seconds) for counting lattice points in Fibonacci knapsack polytopes  $F_d(b)$  depending either on  $d$  or on  $b$ , on a logarithmic scale, **a**  $F_5$  (b), **b**  $F_d(60)$ . See Tables 6 and 7 in the Appendix for exact timings

in Table 6 in the Appendix. Hence, the amount of work naturally increases for all algorithms but `LattE`. More precisely, the running time for the Barvinok algorithm as implemented in `LattE` seems constant. This is plausible, since changing the right hand side only gives a dilation of the same polytope, the amount of work to compute the generating functions at each vertex stays exactly the same.

This experiment, displayed in Fig. 7a, shows the strength of Barvinok’s algorithm, and this is why we suggest the Rule of Thumb 7.

### 4.3.2 Varying the dimension

In this series of tests, we fix the right hand side, *i.e.*, the size of the knapsack, and the coefficients, *i.e.*, the object sizes, are the Fibonacci numbers. At first sight the behavior of the implementations tested may seem erratic; see Fig. 7b. In fact, it correlates with various strategies to avoid the “curse of dimension”. If the dimension gets high enough the size of the additional objects will be bigger than the knapsack. For our test this means that the number of lattice points,  $\ell$ , in the Fibonacci fractional knapsack polytopes becomes constant for  $d \geq 8$ ; see Table 7 in the Appendix. Moreover, all lattice points lie in the subspace corresponding to the first seven coordinates.

The lifting approach used in `4ti2` detects this and the running times are constant starting from  $d = 8$ . The `bbbox` algorithm determines zero – rounded down from some rational value less than one – as the upper bound for each further coordinate and thus the only additional work comes from the increasing number of zero-entries in the lattice vectors. The slight growth in the running time of the `projection` algorithm mainly comes from the number of lifting steps that are needed to generate the lattice points.

Here, one can see that the dimension has a strong impact on the running time of `LattE`, because of the increasing number of vertices and the more complicated generating functions, both with all primal and default parameters. For high dimension, `4ti2`, `bbbox`, `normaliz`, and `projection` perform a lot better. Since version 2.99.4, `normaliz` employs a special strategy to reduce the size of the funda-

mental parallelepipeds, which is triggered above a certain threshold. This is the reason for the bumps at very low input parameters. The jump at dimension 14 is caused by an automatic coordinate upgrade that switches from 64 bit `long` arithmetic to arbitrary precision. Further, the dual mode of `normaliz` performs extremely well for this type of input.

**Rule of Thumb 8** *If most of the lattice points lie in a low-dimensional subspace then `normaliz` (both in default and dual mode) or `projection` can still find them all.*

#### 4.4 Random box

We also considered a second class of polytopes that show a completely different behavior with respect to the different algorithms. For parameters  $d$  and  $n$  we define a *random box polytope*  $R(d, n)$  as the convex hull of  $n$  lattice points chosen uniformly at random from the cube  $C_5^d := [0, 5]^d$ .

For each of the algorithms `bbox`, `LatTE`, `normaliz`, and `projection` we did the following experiment: for each dimension  $d$  between 4 and 9, and for each  $n$  in the set  $\{20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70\}$  we generated 10 random polytopes  $R(d, n)$  and tried to count the lattice points in the convex hull with each of the algorithms. Again, we provided the full lists of vertices and facets of the polytope as input to the algorithms, see [54]. The average running times are plotted in Fig. 8 and are listed in Table 8 in the Appendix. We did not include `4ti2` and `normaliz` in dual mode in these experiments; for details see Remark 5.

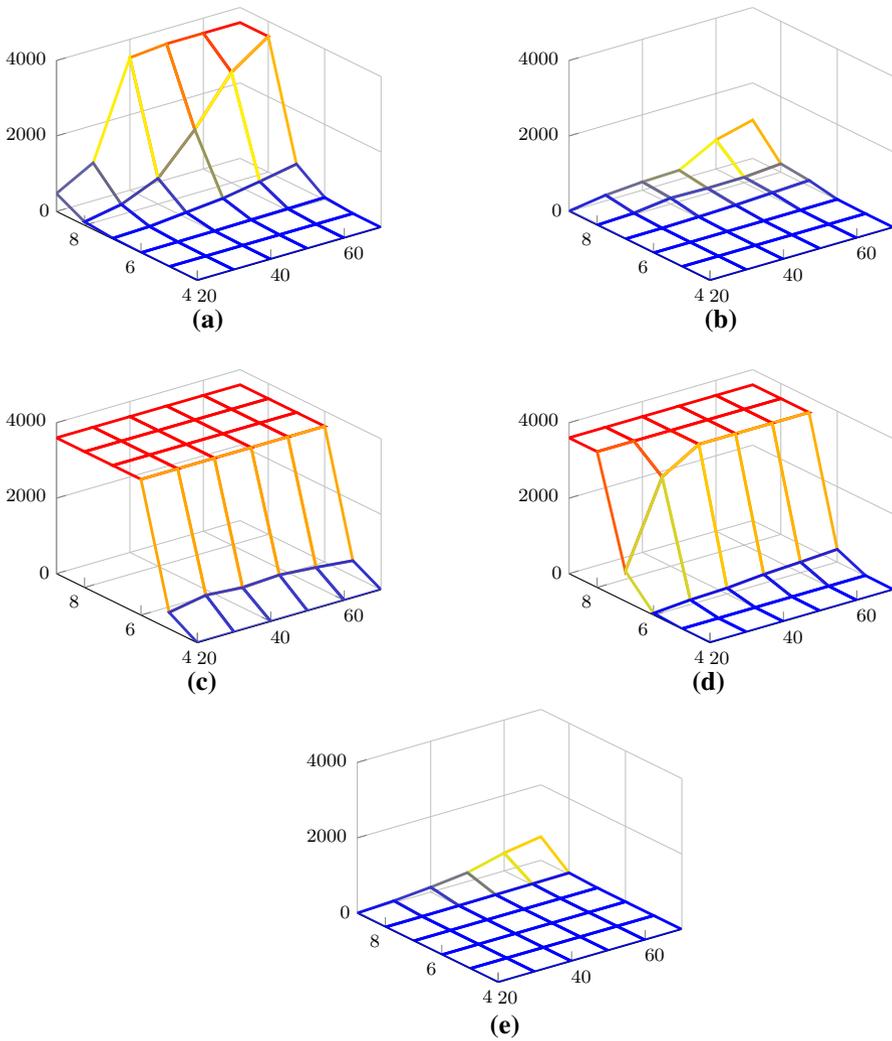
In this experiment only `normaliz` and `projection` finished all tests within the given time and memory restrictions.

`bbox` failed on some of the 9-dimensional examples, while `LatTE` basically only worked for dimension 4 and 5. With the *all primal* mode, `LatTE` was able to compute some of the 7-dimensional examples.

Observe that the number of lattice points inside  $C_5^d$  grows exponentially in  $d$  (in fact, there are  $6^d$  lattice points). Hence, the fraction of the lattice points chosen decreases with the dimension. Yet, we expect that coordinate projections of the polytope  $R(d, n)$  use the full range  $[0, 5]$  for its coordinates, which forces `bbox` to enumerate many lattice points that do not contribute to the final result. This clarifies why this algorithm runs into problems on this class of polytopes for higher dimensions.

We see from the experiments that `LatTE` basically only works for the low dimensional examples. This particularly bad behavior can be explained by the specific version of Barvinok's algorithm employed.

We have already outlined the basic idea of this algorithm above. In its original form it starts with some initial triangulation of the vertex cones of the polytope. The index of such a simplicial cone in the triangulation is the determinant of its generators. The algorithm now successively lowers the maximum index of a cone in the triangulation by replacing cones with a signed decomposition into cones of lower index. The number of steps used by the algorithm heavily depends on the initial maximal index of a cone. Once we have a signed decomposition we can add up the rational generating functions for each cone. A drawback of this approach is that we count lattice points in intersections of cones multiple times, once for each cone they

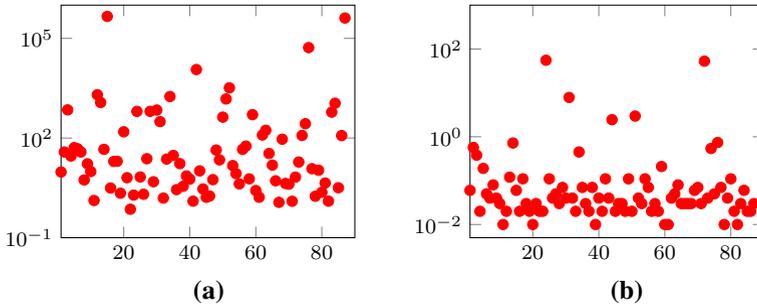


**Fig. 8** Running times (in s) for counting lattice points in random polytopes depending on the dimension  $d \in [4, 9]$  and the number of points  $m \in [20, 70]$ , **a** bbox, **b** projection, **c** LattE, **d** LattE<sup>V</sup>, **e** normaliz. See Table 8 in the Appendix for exact timings

are in. LattE implements both options discussed above to avoid this problem. We can choose to work with the dual cone, or we can use *irrational decomposition*.

By default, LattE chooses the first of the two variants and does a triangulation in dual space. For our experiments we can now observe that the index of an initial triangulation of the dual of a random polytope  $R(d, n)$  is quite large. This explains that LattE won't finish on these examples within our given time limit.

We see, however, that the index of an initial triangulation in primal space is much lower. So the performance of LattE significantly improves on these examples if we



**Fig. 9** Plot of the running times of counting lattice points in 87 random polytopes using **a** 4ti2 and **b** normaliz in dual mode, for  $d = 4, m = 20$ . The figures show that this kind of algorithm is very sensitive to the actual input

ask LattE to use *irrational decomposition* and do a signed triangulation in primal space; compare Fig. 8c, d.

Since we are dealing with random polytopes we did a similar statistical analysis as at the end of Sect. 3.5, to explain why it suffices to list the average over only ten runs per parameter set. The natural random variables are the running times for the various algorithms. For bbox, LattE, normaliz, and projection, they are strongly concentrated around their respective mean. We omit the details.

*Remark 5* We omit the timings for 4ti2 and normaliz in dual mode because for this experiment the statistical analysis found that they behave erratically, normaliz to a lesser extent than 4ti2; see Fig. 9. We do not have an explanation for this phenomenon.

### 4.5 Matching polytopes

Consider a finite simple undirected graph  $G = (V, E)$ . For a vertex  $v \in V$  we let  $\delta(v) \subseteq E$  be the set of edges incident with  $v$ . A vector  $x \in \mathbb{R}^E$  which satisfies

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{e \in \delta(v)} x_e &\leq 1 && \text{for all } v \in V && \text{and} \\ x_e &\geq 0 && \text{for all } e \in E \end{aligned}$$

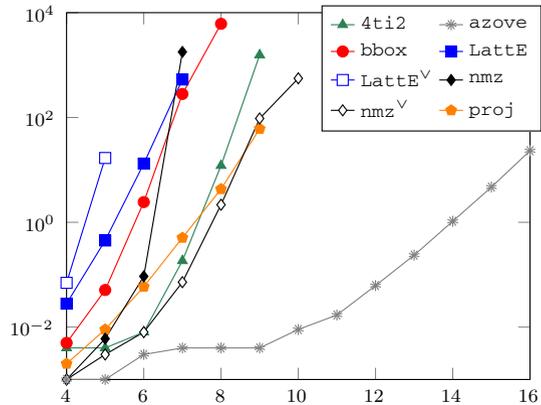
is called a *fractional matching*. This gives rise to the *fractional matching polytope*

$$M(G) := \text{conv}(x \in \mathbb{R}^E \mid x \text{ is a fractional matching of } G)$$

of the graph  $G$ . The dimension  $d$  of  $M(G)$  is easy to determine, it is the same as the number of edges  $d = |E|$ . Further the number  $m$  of constraints on  $M(G)$  is equal to  $|V| + |E|$ .

A *matching* of  $G$  is a subset of the edge set  $E$  which covers each vertex at most once. By construction the matchings are in bijection with the integer points in  $M(G)$ , all of which have 0/1-coordinates. Finding matchings, e.g., of maximum cardinality, has a variety of applications. Thus, it is generally desirable to solve integer linear

**Fig. 10** Timings (in seconds) of counting lattice points in the matching polytope of  $K_n$ , on a logarithmic scale; see Table 9 in the Appendix for exact timings



programs over  $M(G)$ . This is our motivation to look into counting and enumerating matchings, i.e., the lattice points in fractional matching polytopes.

Our test graph is the complete graph  $K_n$  with  $n$  nodes. In this case  $d = \binom{n}{2}$  is the dimension of  $M(K_n)$ , and the number of inequalities equals  $m = \binom{n}{2} + n$ . In addition to the five implementations used before, we also tested `azove`. This is a special implementation for enumerating 0/1-vectors. Each code was tried ten times on each input with the same parameter. In each experiment, the polytopes were given by their list of facets and, for the `projection` algorithm, also the vertices, see [54].

The average running times are displayed in Fig. 10 and Table 9 in the Appendix.

Note that `projection` could go slightly further but this algorithm does not only require the inequalities of the polytope but also the vertices. As  $M(K_9)$  already has as many as 79,892 vertices it was not possible in our setup to compute the vertices of  $M(K_{10})$ : we expect around 700,000 vertices which exceed our memory constraint of 4 GB.

Since we start with an outer description, the dual algorithm of `normaliz` again performs significantly better.

It is no surprise that `azove` outperforms all other methods, as it was specifically designed to solve this kind of problem. No other code can obtain the result in less than one hour for  $n \geq 10$ . For comparison, it takes 2916.652 seconds for `azove` to finish the task for  $M(K_{19})$ .

**Rule of Thumb 9** Use `azove` to enumerate the 0/1-points in a polytope.

Notice, however, that `azove` might need to be patched; see Remark 3.

### 4.6 Additional comments

The above examples show that the performance of the various algorithms does depend on properties of the polytopes that are difficult to check a priori. The following example also shows that a high initial index need not necessarily lead to problems for `LattE`.

Let

$$P := \text{conv}(0, e_1, e_2, e_1 + e_2 + a \cdot e_3, e_1 + e_2 + b \cdot e_4, e_1 + e_2 + c \cdot e_5)$$

for large pairwise co-prime  $a, b, c$ . This polytope is a simplex whose only lattice points are the vertices. Its index is  $abc$ . Still `LatTE` finishes fast, `projection` at least finishes, while `bbox`, `4ti2`, and `normaliz` either do not complete the computation within reasonable time or run into numerical problems.

This example also demonstrates that the problem of counting or enumerating lattice points in polytopes has a distinctive number theoretic flavor. Small changes in the input which, from a linear programming point of view, have only little impact on the problem may behave completely different with respect to the counting problem, as small changes may greatly influence the number of *integer solutions* of an equation. The algorithms used in `4ti2`, `LatTE`, and `normaliz` all implicitly depend on such number theoretic influences, which explains some of the results we observed. In contrast, the `projection` method implemented in `polymake` uses a plain convex geometric approach. This suggests why the latter approach is usually not the best on any given input but often behaves quite well.

**Rule of Thumb 10** *If you want to enumerate lattice points in a general polytope and do not have any further information then try `projection`.*

## 5 Summary

For our discussion on polyhedral and optimization algorithms and their implementations we have focused on two key problems. The *representation conversion problem* is a central task in classical polyhedral geometry, while the problem of *counting or enumerating* lattice points is a main task in integer or combinatorial optimization, number theory and algebra. Commonly used algorithms and implementations for these two problems are conveniently available through `polymake`. For each of the problems `polymake` itself adds additional algorithms, the *beneath-and-beyond method* for the conversion problem and both the *projection* as well as the *bounding box method* for the enumeration of lattice points.

We have explained with various examples that in particular our implementation for the projection method behaves surprisingly well on a wide range of problems, while many of the other algorithms show a much stronger dependence on the type of the input. For the convex hull algorithms the picture is less clear as each algorithm and each implementation has its particular class of problems where it is most successful.

In our Rule of Thumb 1 we advertised the double description method. Many of our tests seem to suggest that its implementation in `pp1` is superior to the one in `cdd`. It should be noted, however, that there are instances known where that superiority is reversed. For instance, Avis and Jordan [8] report on cases where `pp1` is a hundred times slower than `cdd`.

For lack of maintenance the software packages `porta` and `azove` are essentially outdated, but they can still sometimes be useful. However, any naive usage may result in crashes.

Our examples were chosen with the desire to look into a small number of plausible scenarios. The main message is that very often it is difficult to predict which convex hull algorithm performs best on a specific input. Nonetheless, we hope that our ten “rules of thumb” can serve as a guideline.

**Acknowledgements** We thank Thomas Opfer for contributing his implementation of the dual simplex method, originally written for his Master’s Thesis [53], to the `polymake` project, and this includes the code maintenance until today. Moreover, we are very grateful to the developers of `cdd`, `lrs`, `normaliz` and `ppl` as they gave us various kind of valuable feedback. The comments by David Avis and Winfried Bruns were particularly detailed. What we found most rewarding is the fact that, partially in reaction to the 2014 preprint version of this paper, the teams of `lrs` and `normaliz` published new releases of their codes. Throughout these show improvements which are sometimes very substantial, e.g., for `normaliz`’ handling of non-symmetric cut polytopes. The interested reader may find it worth-while to compare the results below with that preprint version (which is still available as [arXiv:1408.4653v1](https://arxiv.org/abs/1408.4653v1)).

## Appendix 1: Experimental setup

Everything was calculated on identical Linux machines with the memory limit set to 4 GB (via `ulimit`). All tests in one section were done on the same machine. Any test exceeding this bound is marked as  $\blacktriangle$  in the respective tables. All timings were measured in CPU seconds, except for tests on non-symmetric cut polytopes where we used `wallclock` time to show the performance of the multithreaded version of `normaliz`. Those entries marked with a \* ran only one iteration. The hardware for all tests was:

CPU: AMD Phenom(tm) II X6 1090T  
 bogomips: 6421.34  
 MemTotal: 8191520 kB

All tests were done on `openSUSE 13.1 (x86_64)`, with Linux kernel 3.11.10-25, `gcc 4.9.3` and `perl 5.18.1`.

All tests were run through `polymake` version 2.15-beta3 via the respective interfaces. This creates some overhead, for instance, due to data conversion. While `bb` is the only implementation which is actually part of `polymake`, this does not constitute a principal technical advantage over the other convex hull codes tested. The libraries `cddlib 0.94h`, `lrslib 6.0` and `libnormaliz 2.99.4` (which contains the same code as version 3.0) are shipped with `polymake` under the GNU General Public License (GPL). As far as `ppl` is concerned the `polymake` distribution only comes with a bare interface, *i.e.*, without the `ppl` code. We used the `ppl` library version 1.1.

The external software packages used via a file based interfaces are `4ti2` version 1.6.6, `azove` version 2.0, `LattE` version 1.7.3 and `porta` version 1.4.1-20090921.

The GMP was configured to use the standard memory allocator `malloc`. Employing a different memory allocator, such as `TCMalloc` [37], can have a great impact, in particular, in a multi-threaded setting. However, the precise behavior depends on numerous factors. For instance, we observed that `TCMalloc` was clearly superior to `malloc` in an `openSUSE 12.2` environment, while the difference is only marginal in our setup with `openSUSE 13.1`, on the same hardware.

The histogram in Fig. 6 was created with `MATLAB` [41].

Appendix 2: Tables with detailed computational results

Table 3 Timings (in s) for convex hull computations of non-symmetric cut polytopes  $\text{Cut}(G_k)$ , see Sect. 3.3

$k$	$d$	$n$	$m$	bb	cdd	lrs	normaliz 1 Thread	6 Threads	porta	ppl
0	6	32	20	0.00	0.005	0.005	0.001	0.001	0.065	0.001
1	7	64	22	0.03	0.015	0.060	0.001	0.002	0.089	0.002
2	8	128	24	0.16	0.050	0.937	0.003	0.005	0.107	0.004
3	9	256	26	1.25	0.184	18.195	0.006	0.010	0.246	0.008
4	10	512	28	14.41	0.700	329.093	0.014	0.021	0.916	0.018
5	11	1024	30	✗	2.877	7699.132*	0.038	0.047	7.980	0.043
6	12	2048	32	-	12.086	-	0.114	0.114	98.987	0.110
7	13	4096	34	-	50.064	-	0.390	0.293	1810.960	0.298
8	14	8192	36	-	210.074	-	1.425	0.841	36,729.820*	0.890
9	15	16,384	38	-	974.681	-	5.514	2.799	-	3.182
10	16	32,768	40	-	-	-	22.310	10.233	-	12.680
11	17	65,536	42	-	-	-	93.935	42.461	-	53.547
12	18	131,072	44	-	-	-	399.652	181.790	-	216.302
13	19	262,144	46	-	-	-	1681.473	952.263	-	1148.847
14	20	524,288	48	-	-	-	7173.680*	4843.120*	-	3641.770

**Table 4** Running times (in seconds) for integer hull computations of Fibonacci knapsack polytopes  $F_d(b)$ , see Sect. 3.4.

$d \setminus b$	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
bb							
4	0.128	0.339	0.873	1.921	3.127	7.507	16.265
5	0.358	1.268	4.273	15.039	42.077	136.823	355.191
6	0.843	3.878	21.148	76.548	305.121	1071.274	3294.703
bb (random permutation of input)							
4	0.069	0.138	0.295	0.572	1.035	2.023	3.738
5	0.220	0.555	1.203	2.901	6.861	16.215	35.602
6	0.596	1.844	4.495	11.417	27.508	59.907	152.199
bb (vertices first)							
4	0.026	0.052	0.107	0.239	0.448	0.933	2.080
5	0.054	0.140	0.363	1.188	3.457	9.689	23.175
6	0.109	0.253	0.813	3.193	10.093	29.070	86.741
cdd							
4	2.022	8.992	30.877	90.281	231.238	537.414	1173.495
5	5.667	30.601	126.978	447.216	1352.025	3594.319	8737.240*
6	9.392	58.682	274.606	1092.438	3787.679	–	–
cdd (random permutation of input)							
4	2.168	9.794	34.103	100.972	266.833	717.830	1600.367
5	6.195	33.444	139.920	555.176	1837.662	4928.060	–
6	10.379	64.724	313.493	1501.114	5145.730	–	–
cdd (vertices first)							
4	2.229	9.800	33.682	99.496	282.405	717.921	1482.070
5	6.162	33.009	137.282	579.661	1707.650	4614.850	–
6	10.132	63.107	307.064	1448.336	4777.220	–	–
lrs							
4	5.949	32.270	132.774	448.725	1262.392	3244.181	7583.130*
5	27.849	213.319	1163.065	4957.700*	–	–	–
6	63.492	648.386	4527.030*	–	–	–	–
lrs (random permutation of input)							
4	0.385	1.317	3.829	8.170	20.089	39.051	78.252
5	2.108	9.002	32.371	111.586	287.381	599.524	987.394
6	5.343	32.730	170.878	644.030	1624.175	4069.540*	–
lrs (vertices first)							
4	6.765	40.089	160.902	549.346	1837.019	5302.860*	–
5	32.923	259.961	1516.097	7975.330*	–	–	–
6	75.724	818.549	6345.470*	–	–	–	–
nmz							
4	0.275	0.805	2.103	5.622	13.681	29.505	65.861
5	0.565	2.377	8.096	26.586	74.743	194.972	421.936
6	0.949	3.910	17.758	68.364	184.154	438.641	1100.974

**Table 4** continued

$d \setminus b$	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
porta							
4	0.070	0.180	0.410	0.965	1.734	3.495	7.696
5	0.195	0.685	1.868	5.363	12.614	37.579	96.675
6	0.416	1.471	5.581	21.792	64.878	180.298	521.574
porta (random permutation of input)							
4	0.176	0.534	1.302	2.930	5.555	8.624	15.973
5	0.533	2.208	5.117	17.558	37.111	99.375	181.517
6	1.163	5.903	22.705	78.768	245.711	656.937	1634.647
porta (vertices first)							
4	0.035	0.073	0.133	0.258	0.337	0.501	0.940
5	0.076	0.213	0.349	0.685	0.854	2.278	4.443
6	0.169	0.311	0.793	2.073	3.141	5.174	9.992
ppl							
4	0.028	0.050	0.096	0.181	0.302	0.524	0.945
5	0.048	0.123	0.274	0.647	1.361	3.472	8.084
6	0.077	0.215	0.647	2.074	5.531	14.517	40.975

**Table 5** Running times (in seconds) for Voronoi diagrams of random point sets, see Sect. 3.5

$d \setminus m$	500	1000	1500	2000	2500	3000
bb						
3	0.261	0.621	1.040	1.517	2.010	2.569
4	1.415	3.102	4.875	6.705	8.622	10.547
5	11.144	25.280	40.011	55.229	69.848	85.517
6	100.962	255.429	425.652	608.085	800.647	995.853
7	1318.488	4245.600*	–	–	–	–
cdd						
3	6.604	28.420	67.606	124.657	200.765	295.799
4	53.436	246.447	599.624	1124.073	1817.252	2712.942
5	326.138	1686.490	4315.200*	–	–	–
6	2679.876	–	–	–	–	–
7	–	–	–	–	–	–
lrs						
3	0.496	2.149	5.034	9.147	14.741	21.264
4	1.955	8.677	20.541	37.901	60.886	89.300
5	11.744	50.578	119.551	220.404	354.748	526.344
6	63.601	318.346	798.688	1530.386	2537.572	3801.890*
7	404.055	2063.702	–	–	–	–

**Table 5** continued

$d \setminus m$	500	1000	1500	2000	2500	3000
normaliz						
3	0.605	3.683	11.179	24.950	44.928	68.525
4	3.108	21.365	52.959	100.007	165.561	249.134
5	33.374	151.977	365.866	671.886	1085.843	1644.610
6	219.029	1013.544	2436.256	–	–	–
7	1287.456	–	–	–	–	–
ppl						
3	0.289	1.355	3.757	7.876	13.947	22.495
4	2.508	14.480	45.456	100.803	186.210	319.268
5	41.547	277.779	935.003	2255.994	4334.870*	–
6	917.853	6762.370*	–	–	–	–
7	–	–	–	–	–	–

**Table 6** Timings (in sec.) for counting lattice points in  $F_5(b)$ ; Sect. 4.3

$b$	$n$	$\ell$	4ti2	bbox	LattE		normaliz		proj
					Default	All primal	Primal	Dual	
40	6	1366	0.500	0.247	0.012	0.028	0.048	0.007	0.011
50	6	3137	3.331	0.501	0.014	0.028	0.024	0.014	0.023
60	6	6509	22.171	1.193	0.013	0.027	0.212	0.039	0.039
70	6	12,182	116.258	2.420	0.014	0.027	0.069	0.080	0.063
80	6	21,245	515.834	4.928	0.013	0.027	0.121	0.160	0.100
90	6	35,025	1657.244	7.766	0.014	0.030	0.197	0.300	0.152
100	6	55,157	–	12.787	0.013	0.027	0.329	0.555	0.216
110	6	83,616	–	20.288	0.012	0.028	0.523	0.931	0.305
120	6	122,749	–	33.606	0.015	0.028	0.745	1.499	0.414
130	6	175,306	–	49.113	0.013	0.028	1.173	2.342	0.556
140	6	244,473	–	64.496	0.013	0.029	1.689	3.473	0.727
150	6	333,905	–	92.070	0.013	0.028	2.304	5.120	0.943
160	6	447,757	–	132.536	0.014	0.029	3.147	7.150	1.229
170	6	590,715	–	177.143	0.013	0.027	4.395	10.116	1.549
180	6	768,029	–	222.824	0.014	0.029	5.553	13.457	1.907
190	6	985,546	–	291.333	0.012	0.028	7.214	18.045	2.352
200	6	1,249,741	–	387.886	0.014	0.028	9.235	24.116	2.880

**Table 7** Timings (in sec.) for counting lattice points in  $F_d(60)$ ; Sect. 4.3

$d$	$n$	$\ell$	4ti2	bbox	LattE		normaliz		proj
					Default	All primal	Primal	Dual	
4	5	4008	7.722	0.236	0.007	0.009	0.011	0.019	0.011
5	6	6509	22.173	1.209	0.015	0.027	0.193	0.036	0.040
6	7	7853	33.795	3.861	0.030	0.113	0.070	0.047	0.090
7	8	8165	43.212	8.397	0.077	0.504	0.148	0.054	0.153
8	9	8171	44.388	18.088	0.188	2.120	0.287	0.054	0.233
9	10	8171	43.496	19.418	0.507	11.207	0.365	0.060	0.319
10	11	8171	43.577	20.616	1.315	44.764	0.434	0.064	0.413
11	12	8171	44.137	21.919	3.521	255.896	0.502	0.066	0.524
12	13	8171	44.183	23.121	9.238	2357.660	0.587	0.069	0.639
13	14	8171	44.143	24.264	24.864	36,124.990*	0.689	0.073	0.767
14	15	8171	44.275	25.290	66.012	–	16.999	0.074	0.908
15	16	8171	44.953	26.550	177.424	–	18.982	0.077	1.053
16	17	8171	44.967	27.808	467.912	–	21.059	0.082	1.210
17	18	8171	45.149	28.907	1246.255	–	22.979	0.084	1.383
18	19	8171	45.115	30.089	3282.651	–	25.063	0.084	1.571
19	20	8171	45.233	31.594	–	–	27.296	0.090	1.770
20	21	8171	45.396	32.797	–	–	29.629	0.092	1.975

**Table 8** Running times (in second) for counting lattice points in random polytopes; Sect. 4.4

$d \setminus b$	20	30	40	50	60	70
bbox						
4	0.082	0.130	0.154	0.190	0.207	0.213
5	0.756	1.439	2.548	3.116	3.766	4.845
6	4.298	11.853	18.827	34.396	47.261	63.581
7	20.466	52.392	144.850	236.414	400.435	581.584
8	89.321	270.244	679.447	1693.210	2929.315	–
9	473.808	1005.608	3511.637	–	–	–
LattE						
4	1.798	1.639	1.419	1.357	1.405	1.172
5	438.684	612.918	534.548	588.029	507.007	404.041
6	–	–	–	–	–	–
7	–	–	–	–	–	–
8	–	–	–	–	–	–
9	–	–	–	–	–	–

**Table 8** continued

$d \setminus b$	20	30	40	50	60	70
LattE (all primal)						
4	0.252	0.375	0.490	0.512	0.569	0.672
5	3.111	4.651	6.690	8.114	9.516	11.017
6	49.751	122.619	154.804	235.039	281.204	338.060
7	801.512	3016.324	4459.500*	–	–	–
8	22,332.390*	–	–	–	–	–
9	–	–	–	–	–	–
normaliz						
4	0.002	0.003	0.004	0.006	0.006	0.005
5	0.005	0.007	0.013	0.020	0.022	0.025
6	0.017	0.040	0.085	0.129	0.175	0.237
7	0.098	0.426	0.782	1.307	1.941	2.392
8	1.068	3.214	8.565	16.734	24.145	34.041
9	5.256	50.533	129.305	234.613	474.163	626.180
projection						
4	0.013	0.023	0.029	0.035	0.042	0.040
5	0.100	0.232	0.462	0.621	0.762	1.032
6	0.450	1.806	3.945	6.306	10.476	14.247
7	1.369	9.502	28.062	57.688	102.579	149.536
8	3.414	41.705	158.855	138.180	148.227	223.361
9	7.490	151.081	219.040	248.157	769.460	1017.670

**Table 9** Timings (in seconds) for counting lattice points in the matching polytope of  $K_n$ , see Sect. 4.5

$n$	$m$	4ti2	azove	bbox	LatTE		normaliz		proj
					Default	All primal	Primal	Dual	
4	10	0.00	0.000	0.005	0.028	0.070	0.000	0.001	0.002
5	15	0.00	0.000	0.051	0.450	16.865	0.006	0.003	0.009
6	21	0.00	0.003	2.430	13.195	-	0.093	0.008	0.059
7	28	0.18	0.004	281.244	531.014	-	1782.251	0.072	0.507
8	36	12.05	0.004	6138.776*	-	-	-	2.163	4.306
9	45	1557.38	0.004	-	-	-	-	95.743	60.759
10	55	-	0.009	-	-	-	-	558.374	-
11	66	-	0.017	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	78	-	0.062	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	91	-	0.236	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	105	-	1.046	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	120	-	4.696	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	136	-	23.224	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	153	-	112.785	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	171	-	578.191	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	190	-	2916.652	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	210	-	15,462.050*	-	-	-	-	-	-

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