

**Example.** A subgroup of a group exists in which more than one but less than all of the left cosets of the subgroup coincide with right cosets of the same subgroup.

Consider  $D_4$ , the Dihedral group of degree 4, that is the group generated by elements  $a$  and  $b$  such that  $|a| = 4$ ,  $|b| = 2$ , and  $ba = a^{-1}b$ .

The Cayley table for  $D_4$  is:

*	1	a	a <sup>2</sup>	a <sup>3</sup>	b	ab	a <sup>2</sup> b	a <sup>3</sup> b
1	1	a	a <sup>2</sup>	a <sup>3</sup>	b	ab	a <sup>2</sup> b	a <sup>3</sup> b
a	a	a <sup>2</sup>	a <sup>3</sup>	1	ab	a <sup>2</sup> b	a <sup>3</sup> b	b
a <sup>2</sup>	a <sup>2</sup>	a <sup>3</sup>	1	a	a <sup>2</sup> b	a <sup>3</sup> b	b	ab
a <sup>3</sup>	a <sup>3</sup>	1	a	a <sup>2</sup>	a <sup>3</sup> b	b	ab	a <sup>2</sup> b
b	b	a <sup>3</sup> b	a <sup>2</sup> b	ab	1	a <sup>3</sup>	a <sup>2</sup>	a
ab	ab	b	a <sup>3</sup> b	a <sup>2</sup> b	a	1	a <sup>3</sup>	a <sup>2</sup>
a <sup>2</sup> b	a <sup>2</sup> b	ab	b	a <sup>3</sup> b	a <sup>2</sup>	a	1	a <sup>3</sup>
a <sup>3</sup> b	a <sup>3</sup> b	a <sup>2</sup> b	ab	b	a <sup>3</sup>	a <sup>2</sup>	a	1

Let  $L_X$  and  $R_X$  be the sets of left and right cosets, respectively, of a subgroup  $X$  of  $D_4$ . We will show that  $1 < |L_X \cap R_X| < [D_4 : X]$  when  $X \in \{\langle b \rangle, \langle ab \rangle, \langle a^2b \rangle, \langle a^3b \rangle\}$ . To do this, we will show that this inequality holds when  $X = \langle a^k b \rangle$  for any integer  $k \geq 0$ .

First note that  $ba^k = a^{-k}b$  for all integer  $k \geq 0$ , since when  $k = 0$  we have the trivial case  $b = b$ , and if  $ba^k = a^{-k}b$  holds for some  $k \geq 0$  then  $ba^{k+1} = baa^k = a^{-1}ba^k = a^{-1}a^{-k}b = a^{-(k+1)}b$  so that by mathematical induction it holds for all  $k \geq 0$ .

Now suppose  $X = \langle a^k b \rangle$  for some integer  $k \geq 0$ . Then since  $(a^k b)^2 = a^k b a^k b = a^k a^{-k} b b = b^2 = 1$ , we have  $X = \{a^k b, 1\}$ .

For left cosets we have,

$$\begin{aligned} Xa &= \{a^k b a, a\} = \{a^k a^{-1} b, a\} = \{a^k a^3 b, a\} = \{a^{k+3} b, a\} \\ Xa^2 &= \{a^k b a^2, a^2\} = \{a^k a^{-2} b, a^2\} = \{a^k a^2 b, a^2\} = \{a^{k+2} b, a^2\} \\ Xa^3 &= \{a^k b a^3, a^3\} = \{a^k a^{-3} b, a^3\} = \{a^k a b, a^3\} = \{a^{k+1} b, a^3\} \end{aligned}$$

so that  $L_X = \{X, \{a^{k+3} b, a\}, \{a^{k+2} b, a^2\}, \{a^{k+1} b, a^3\}\}$ .

And for right cosets,

$$\begin{aligned} aX &= \{a a^k b, a\} = \{a^{k+1} b, a\} \\ a^2 X &= \{a^2 a^k b, a^2\} = \{a^{k+2} b, a^2\} \\ a^3 X &= \{a^3 a^k b, a^3\} = \{a^{k+3} b, a^3\} \end{aligned}$$

so that  $R_X = \{X, \{a^{k+1} b, a\}, \{a^{k+2} b, a^2\}, \{a^{k+3} b, a^3\}\}$ .

Hence  $L_X \cap R_X = \{X, \{a^{k+2} b, a^2\}\}$  so that  $1 < |L_X \cap R_X| < 4 = [D_4 : X]$ .