

Zeckendorf's Theorem

Christian Dalvit

February 6, 2026

Abstract

This work formalizes Zeckendorf's theorem. The theorem states that every positive integer can be uniquely represented as a sum of one or more non-consecutive Fibonacci numbers. More precisely, if N is a positive integer, there exist unique positive integers $c_i \geq 2$ with $c_{i+1} > c_i + 1$, such that

$$N = \sum_{i=0}^k F_{c_i}$$

where F_n is the n -th Fibonacci number. This entry formalizes the proof from Gerrit Lekkerkerker's paper [1].

Contents

1 Zeckendorf's Theorem	1
1.1 Definitions	1
1.2 Auxiliary Lemmas	2
1.3 Theorem	6

1 Zeckendorf's Theorem

theory *Zeckendorf*

imports

Main

HOL-Number-Theory.Number-Theory

begin

1.1 Definitions

Formulate auxiliary definitions. An increasing sequence is a predicate of a function f together with a set I . f is an increasing sequence on I , if $f(x) + 1 < f(x + 1)$ for all $x \in I$. This definition is used to ensure that the Fibonacci numbers in the sum are non-consecutive.

definition *is-fib* :: *nat* \Rightarrow *bool* **where**
is-fib *n* = (\exists *i*. *n* = *fib* *i*)

definition *le-fib-idx-set* :: *nat* \Rightarrow *nat set* **where**
le-fib-idx-set *n* = {*i* . *fib* *i* < *n*}

definition *inc-seq-on* :: (*nat* \Rightarrow *nat*) \Rightarrow *nat set* \Rightarrow *bool* **where**
inc-seq-on *f* *I* = (\forall *n* \in *I*. *f*(*Suc* *n*) > *Suc*(*f* *n*))

definition *fib-idx-set* :: *nat* \Rightarrow *nat set* **where**
fib-idx-set *n* = {*i*. *fib* *i* = *n*}

1.2 Auxiliary Lemmas

lemma *fib-values[simp]*:

fib 3 = 2

fib 4 = 3

fib 5 = 5

fib 6 = 8

by(*auto simp: numeral-Bit0 numeral-eq-Suc*)

lemma *fib-strict-mono*: $i \geq 2 \implies \text{fib } i < \text{fib } (\text{Suc } i)$
using *fib-mono* **by**(*induct i, simp, fastforce*)

lemma *smaller-index-implies-fib-le*: $i < j \implies \text{fib}(\text{Suc } i) \leq \text{fib } j$
using *fib-mono* **by** (*induct j, auto*)

lemma *fib-index-strict-mono* : $i \geq 2 \implies j > i \implies \text{fib } j > \text{fib } i$
by(*induct i, simp, metis Suc-leI fib-mono fib-strict-mono nle-le nless-le*)

lemma *fib-implies-is-fib*: $\text{fib } i = n \implies \text{is-fib } n$
using *is-fib-def* **by** *auto*

lemma *zero-fib-unique-idx*: $n = \text{fib } i \implies n = \text{fib } 0 \implies i = 0$
using *fib-neq-0-nat fib-idx-set-def* **by** *fastforce*

lemma *zero-fib-equiv*: $\text{fib } i = 0 \iff i = 0$
using *zero-fib-unique-idx* **by** *auto*

lemma *one-fib-idxs*: $\text{fib } i = \text{Suc } 0 \implies i = \text{Suc } 0 \vee i = \text{Suc}(\text{Suc } 0)$
using *Fib.fib0 One-nat-def Suc-1 eq-imp-le fib-2 fib-index-strict-mono less-2-cases nat-neq-iff* **by** *metis*

lemma *ge-two-eq-fib-implies-eq-idx*: $n \geq 2 \implies n = \text{fib } i \implies n = \text{fib } j \implies i = j$
using *fib-index-strict-mono fib-mono Suc-1 fib-2 nle-le nless-le not-less-eq* **by** *metis*

lemma *ge-two-fib-unique-idx*: $\text{fib } i \geq 2 \implies \text{fib } i = \text{fib } j \implies i = j$
using *ge-two-eq-fib-implies-eq-idx* **by** *auto*

lemma *no-fib-lower-bound*: $\neg \text{is-fib } n \implies n \geq 4$
proof(*rule ccontr*)
assume $\neg \text{is-fib } n \neg 4 \leq n$
hence $n \in \{0,1,2,3\}$ **by** *auto*
have *is-fib 0 is-fib 1 is-fib 2 is-fib 3*
using *fib0 fib1 fib-values fib-implies-is-fib* **by** *blast+*
then show *False*
using $\langle \neg \text{is-fib } n \rangle \langle n \in \{0,1,2,3\} \rangle$ **by** *blast*
qed

lemma *pos-fib-has-idx-ge-two*: $n > 0 \implies \text{is-fib } n \implies (\exists i. i \geq 2 \wedge \text{fib } i = n)$
unfolding *is-fib-def* **by** (*metis One-nat-def fib-2 fib-mono less-eq-Suc-le nle-le*)

lemma *finite-fib0-idx*: $\text{finite}(\{i. \text{fib } i = 0\})$
using *zero-fib-unique-idx finite-nat-set-iff-bounded* **by** *auto*

lemma *finite-fib1-idx*: $\text{finite}(\{i. \text{fib } i = 1\})$
using *one-fib-idxs finite-nat-set-iff-bounded* **by** *auto*

lemma *finite-fib-ge-two-idx*: $n \geq 2 \implies \text{finite}(\{i. \text{fib } i = n\})$
using *ge-two-fib-unique-idx finite-nat-set-iff-bounded* **by** *auto*

lemma *finite-fib-index*: $\text{finite}(\{i. \text{fib } i = n\})$
using *finite-fib0-idx finite-fib1-idx finite-fib-ge-two-idx* **by**(*rule nat-induct2, auto*)

lemma *no-fib-implies-zero-in-le-idx-set*: $\neg \text{is-fib } n \implies 0 \in \{i. \text{fib } i < n\}$
using *no-fib-lower-bound* **by** *fastforce*

lemma *no-fib-implies-le-fib-idx-set*: $\neg \text{is-fib } n \implies \{i. \text{fib } i < n\} \neq \{\}$
using *no-fib-implies-zero-in-le-idx-set* **by** *blast*

lemma *finite-smaller-fibs*: $\text{finite}(\{i. \text{fib } i < n\})$
proof(*induct n*)
case (*Suc n*)
moreover have $\{i. \text{fib } i < \text{Suc } n\} = \{i. \text{fib } i < n\} \cup \{i. \text{fib } i = n\}$ **by** *auto*
moreover have $\text{finite}(\{i. \text{fib } i = n\})$ **using** *finite-fib-index* **by** *auto*
ultimately show *?case* **by** *auto*
qed *simp*

lemma *nat-ge-2-fib-idx-bound*: $2 \leq n \implies \text{fib } i \leq n \implies n < \text{fib } (\text{Suc } i) \implies 2 \leq i$
by (*metis One-nat-def fib-1 fib-2 le-Suc-eq less-2-cases linorder-not-le not-less-eq*)

lemma *inc-seq-on-aux*: $\text{inc-seq-on } c \{0..k - 1\} \implies n - \text{fib } i < \text{fib } (i-1) \implies \text{fib } (c \ k) < \text{fib } i \implies$
 $(n - \text{fib } i) = (\sum i=0..k. \text{fib } (c \ i)) \implies \text{Suc } (c \ k) < i$
by (*metis fib-mono bot-nat-0.extremum diff-Suc-1 leD le-SucE linorder-le-less-linear not-add-less1 sum.last-plus*)

lemma *inc-seq-zero-at-start*: $inc-seq-on\ c\ \{0..k-1\} \implies c\ k = 0 \implies k = 0$
unfolding *inc-seq-on-def*
by (*metis One-nat-def Suc-pred atLeast0AtMost atMost-iff less-nat-zero-code not-gr-zero order.refl*)

lemma *fib-sum-zero-equiv*: $(\sum\ i=n..m::nat.\ fib\ (c\ i)) = 0 \iff (\forall\ i \in \{n..m\}.\ c\ i = 0)$
using *finite-atLeastAtMost sum-eq-0-iff zero-fib-equiv* **by** *auto*

lemma *fib-idx-ge-two-fib-sum-not-zero*: $n \leq m \implies \forall\ i \in \{n..m::nat\}.\ c\ i \geq 2 \implies \neg (\sum\ i=n..m.\ fib\ (c\ i)) = 0$
by (*rule ccontr, simp add: fib-sum-zero-equiv*)

lemma *one-unique-fib-sum*: $inc-seq-on\ c\ \{0..k-1\} \implies \forall\ i \in \{0..k\}.\ c\ i \geq 2 \implies (\sum\ i=0..k.\ fib\ (c\ i)) = 1 \iff k = 0 \wedge c\ 0 = 2$

proof

assume *assms*: $(\sum\ i = 0..k.\ fib\ (c\ i)) = 1\ inc-seq-on\ c\ \{0..k-1\}\ \forall\ i \in \{0..k\}.\ c\ i \geq 2$

hence $fib\ (c\ 0) + (\sum\ i = 1..k.\ fib\ (c\ i)) = 1$ **by** (*simp add: sum.atLeast-Suc-atMost*)

moreover have $fib\ (c\ 0) \geq 1$ **using** *assms fib-neq-0-nat[of c 0]* **by** *force*

ultimately show $k = 0 \wedge c\ 0 = 2$

using *fib-idx-ge-two-fib-sum-not-zero[of 1 k c] assms add-is-1 one-fib-idxs* **by** (*cases k=0, fastforce, auto*)

qed *simp*

lemma *no-fib-betw-fibs*:

assumes $\neg\ is-fib\ n$

shows $\exists\ i.\ fib\ i < n \wedge n < fib\ (Suc\ i)$

proof $-$

have *finite-le-fib*: $finite\ \{i.\ fib\ i < n\}$ **using** *finite-smaller-fibs* **by** *auto*

obtain *i* **where** *max-def*: $i = Max\ \{i.\ fib\ i < n\}$ **by** *blast*

show $\exists\ i.\ fib\ i < n \wedge n < fib\ (Suc\ i)$

proof (*intro exI conjI*)

have $(Suc\ i) \notin \{i.\ fib\ i < n\}$ **using** *max-def Max-ge Suc-n-not-le-n finite-le-fib*

by *blast*

thus $fib\ (Suc\ i) > n$

using $\langle \neg\ is-fib\ n \rangle\ fib-implies-is-fib\ linorder-less-linear$ **by** *blast*

qed (*insert max-def Max-in <neg is-fib n> finite-le-fib no-fib-implies-le-fib-idx-set, auto*)

qed

lemma *betw-fibs*:

shows $\exists\ i.\ fib\ i \leq n \wedge fib\ (Suc\ i) > n$

proof (*cases is-fib n*)

case *True*

then obtain *i* **where** $a: n = fib\ i$ **unfolding** *is-fib-def* **by** *auto*

then show *?thesis*

by (*metis fib1 Suc-le-eq fib-2 fib-mono fib-strict-mono le0 le-eq-less-or-eq not-less-eq-eq*)

qed (*insert no-fib-betw-fibs, force*)

Proof that the sum of non-consecutive Fibonacci numbers with largest member F_i is strictly less than F_{i+1} . This lemma is used for the uniqueness proof.

lemma *fib-sum-upper-bound*:

assumes *inc-seq-on* $c \{0..k-1\} \forall i \in \{0..k\}. c\ i \geq 2$

shows $(\sum_{i=0..k} \text{fib}(c\ i)) < \text{fib}(Suc\ (c\ k))$

proof(*insert assms, induct c k arbitrary: k rule: nat-less-induct*)

case 1

then show *?case*

proof(*cases c k*)

case (*Suc -*)

show *?thesis*

proof(*cases k*)

case *k-Suc: (Suc -)*

hence *ck-bounds*: $c(k-1) + 1 < c\ k$ $c(k-1) < c\ k$

using 1(2) **unfolding** *inc-seq-on-def* **by** (*force*)+

moreover have $(\sum_{i=0..k} \text{fib}(c\ i)) = \text{fib}(c\ k) + (\sum_{i=0..k-1} \text{fib}(c\ i))$

using *k-Suc* **by** *simp*

moreover have $(\sum_{i=0..(k-1)} \text{fib}(c\ i)) < \text{fib}(Suc\ (c\ (k-1)))$

using *ck-bounds(2) 1* **unfolding** *inc-seq-on-def* **by** *auto*

ultimately show *?thesis*

using *Suc smaller-index-implies-fib-le* **by** *fastforce*

qed(*simp add: fib-index-strict-mono assms(2)*)

qed(*insert inc-seq-zero-at-start[OF 1(2)], auto*)

qed

lemma *last-fib-sum-index-constraint*:

assumes $n \geq 2$ $n = (\sum_{i=0..k} \text{fib}(c\ i))$ *inc-seq-on* $c \{0..k-1\}$

assumes $\forall i \in \{0..k\}. c\ i \geq 2$ $\text{fib}\ i \leq n$ $\text{fib}(Suc\ i) > n$

shows $c\ k = i$

proof –

have $2 \leq i$ **using** *assms(1,5,6) nat-ge-2-fib-idx-bound* **by** *simp*

have $c\ k > i \longrightarrow \text{False}$

using *smaller-index-implies-fib-le assms*

by (*metis bot-nat-0.extremum leD sum.last-plus trans-le-add1*)

moreover have $c\ k < i \longrightarrow \text{False}$

proof

assume $c\ k < i$

have *seq*: *inc-seq-on* $c \{0..k-1-1\} \forall i \in \{0..k-1\}. 2 \leq c\ i$

using *assms* **unfolding** *inc-seq-on-def* **by** *simp*+

have $k > 0$

by(*rule ccontr, insert <c k < i> assms fib-index-strict-mono leD, auto*)

hence $c(k-1) + 1 < c\ k$ $c(k-1) + 3 \leq i$

using $<c\ k < i>$ *assms* **unfolding** *inc-seq-on-def* **by** *force*+

have $(\sum_{i=0..k-1} \text{fib}(c\ i)) + \text{fib}(c\ k) = (\sum_{i=0..k} \text{fib}(c\ i))$

using *sum.atLeast0-atMost-Suc Suc-pred'[OF <k > 0>]* **by** *metis*

moreover have $\text{fib}(Suc\ (c\ (k-1))) \leq \text{fib}(i-2)$

using $<c\ k < i>$ $<c(k-1) + 1 < c\ k>$ **by** (*simp add: fib-mono*)

moreover have $\text{fib}(c\ k) \leq \text{fib}(i-1)$

```

    using ⟨c k < i⟩ fib-mono by fastforce
  ultimately have (∑ i = 0..k. fib (c i)) < fib (i-1) + fib (i-2)
    using assms ⟨c k < i⟩ ⟨k > 0⟩ fib-sum-upper-bound[OF seq(1) seq(2)] by
simp
  hence (∑ i = 0..k. fib (c i)) < fib i
    using fib.simps(3)[of i-2] assms(4) ⟨c k < i⟩
    by (metis add-2-eq-Suc diff-Suc-1 ⟨2 ≤ i⟩ le-add-diff-inverse)
  then show False
    using assms by simp
  qed
  ultimately show ?thesis by simp
qed

```

1.3 Theorem

Now, both parts of Zeckendorf's Theorem can be proven. Firstly, the existence of an increasing sequence for a positive integer N such that the corresponding Fibonacci numbers sum up to N is proven. Then, the uniqueness of such an increasing sequence is proven.

lemma *fib-implies-zeckendorf*:

```

  assumes is-fib n n > 0
  shows ∃ c k. n = (∑ i=0..k. fib(c i)) ∧ inc-seq-on c {0..k-1} ∧ (∀ i∈{0..k}.
c i ≥ 2)
  proof -
    from assms obtain i where i-def: fib i = n i ≥ 2 using pos-fib-has-idx-ge-two
  by auto
  define c where c-def: (c :: nat ⇒ nat) = (λ n::nat. if n = 0 then i else i + 3)
  from i-def have n = (∑ i = 0..0. fib (c i)) by (simp add: c-def)
  moreover have inc-seq-on c {0..0} by (simp add: c-def inc-seq-on-def)
  ultimately show ∃ c k. n = (∑ i=0..k. fib(c i)) ∧ inc-seq-on c {0..k-1} ∧
(∀ i∈{0..k}. c i ≥ 2)
    using i-def c-def by fastforce
  qed

```

theorem *zeckendorf-existence*:

```

  assumes n > 0
  shows ∃ c k. n = (∑ i=0..k. fib (c i)) ∧ inc-seq-on c {0..k-1} ∧ (∀ i∈{0..k}.
c i ≥ 2)
  using assms
  proof(induct n rule: nat-less-induct)
    case (1 n)
    then show ?case
  proof(cases is-fib n)
    case False
    obtain i where bounds: fib i < n n < fib (Suc i) i > 0
    using no-fib-betw-fibs 1(2) False by force
    then obtain c k where seq: (n - fib i) = (∑ i=0..k. fib (c i)) inc-seq-on c
{0..k-1} ∧ i∈{0..k}. c i ≥ 2

```

using 1 fib-neq-0-nat zero-less-diff diff-less **by** metis
let ?c' = (λn . if $n = k+1$ then i else $c n$)
have diff-le-fib: $n - \text{fib } i < \text{fib}(i-1)$
using bounds fib2 not0-implies-Suc[of i] **by** auto
hence ck-lt-fib: $\text{fib } (c k) < \text{fib } i$
using fib-Suc-mono[of $i-1$] bounds **by** (simp add: sum.last-plus seq)
have inc-seq-on ?c' {0..k}
using inc-seq-on-aux[OF seq(2) diff-le-fib ck-lt-fib seq(1)] One-nat-def
inc-seq-on-def leI seq **by** force
moreover **have** $n = (\sum i=0..k+1. \text{fib } (?c' i))$
using bounds seq **by** simp
moreover **have** $\forall i \in \{0..k+1\}. ?c' i \geq 2$
using seq bounds fib2 not0-implies-Suc[of i] atLeastAtMost-iff
diff-is-0-eq' less-nat-zero-code not-less-eq-eq **by** fastforce
ultimately **show** ?thesis **by** fastforce
qed(insert fib-implies-zeckendorf, auto)
qed

lemma fib-unique-fib-sum:

fixes $k :: \text{nat}$
assumes $n \geq 2$ inc-seq-on $c \{0..k-1\} \forall i \in \{0..k\}. c i \geq 2$
assumes $n = \text{fib } i$
shows $n = (\sum i=0..k. \text{fib } (c i)) \longleftrightarrow k = 0 \wedge c 0 = i$

proof

assume *ass*: $n = (\sum i = 0..k. \text{fib } (c i))$
obtain j **where** bounds: $\text{fib } j \leq n$ $\text{fib}(Suc j) > n$ $j \geq 2$
using betw-fibs *assms* nat-ge-2-fib-idx-bound **by** blast
have idx-eq: $c k = j$
using last-fib-sum-index-constraint *assms*(1-3) *ass* bounds **by** simp
have $i = j$
using bounds *ass* *assms*
by (metis Suc-leI fib-mono ge-two-fib-unique-idx le-neq-implies-less linorder-not-le)
have $k > 0 \longrightarrow \text{fib } i = \text{fib } i + (\sum i = 0..k-1. \text{fib } (c i))$
using *ass* *assms* **by** (metis idx-eq One-nat-def Suc-pred $\langle i = j \rangle$ add commute
sum.atLeast0-atMost-Suc)
hence $k > 0 \longrightarrow \text{False}$
using fib-idx-ge-two-fib-sum-not-zero[of 0 $k-1$ c] *assms* **by** auto
then **show** $k = 0 \wedge c 0 = i$ **using** $\langle i = j \rangle$ idx-eq **by** simp
qed(auto simp: *assms*)

theorem zeckendorf-unique:

assumes $n > 0$
assumes $n = (\sum i=0..k. \text{fib } (c i))$ inc-seq-on $c \{0..k-1\} \forall i \in \{0..k\}. c i \geq 2$
assumes $n = (\sum i=0..k'. \text{fib } (c' i))$ inc-seq-on $c' \{0..k'-1\} \forall i \in \{0..k'\}. c' i \geq 2$
shows $k = k' \wedge (\forall i \in \{0..k\}. c i = c' i)$
using *assms*
proof(induct n arbitrary: $k k'$ rule: nat-less-induct)
case IH: (1 n)

```

consider  $n = 0 \mid n = 1 \mid n \geq 2$  by linarith
then show ?case
proof(cases)
  case 3
    obtain  $i$  where bounds:  $\text{fib } i \leq n \text{ fib } (\text{Suc } i) > n \ 2 \leq i$ 
      using betw-fibs nat-ge-2-fib-idx-bound 3 by blast
    have last-idx-eq:  $c' \ k' = i \ c \ k = i \ c' \ k' = c \ k$ 
      using last-fib-sum-index-constraint[OF 3] IH(6-8) IH(3-5) bounds by
blast+
    then show ?thesis
    proof(cases is-fib n)
      case True
        hence  $\text{fib } i = n$ 
        unfolding is-fib-def using bounds IH(2-8) fib-mono leD nle-le not-less-eq-eq
by metis
        hence  $k = 0 \ c \ 0 = i \ k' = 0 \ c' \ 0 = i$ 
          using fib-unique-fib-sum 3 IH(3-8) by metis+
          then show ?thesis by simp
      case False
        have  $k > 0$ 
          using IH(3) False unfolding is-fib-def by fastforce
        have  $k' > 0$ 
          using IH(6) False unfolding is-fib-def by fastforce
        have  $0 < n - \text{fib } (c \ k)$  using False bounds last-idx-eq(2) unfolding is-fib-def
by fastforce
        moreover have  $n - \text{fib } (c \ k) < n$ 
          using bounds last-idx-eq by (simp add: dual-order.strict-trans1 fib-neq-0-nat)
        moreover have  $n - \text{fib } (c \ k) = (\sum i = 0..k-1. \text{fib } (c \ i))$ 
          using sum.atLeast0-atMost-Suc[of  $\lambda i. \text{fib } (c \ i) \ k-1$ ] Suc-diff-1  $\langle k > 0 \rangle$ 
IH(3) by simp
        moreover have  $n - \text{fib } (c' \ k') = (\sum i = 0..k'-1. \text{fib } (c' \ i))$ 
          using sum.atLeast0-atMost-Suc[of  $\lambda i. \text{fib } (c' \ i) \ k'-1$ ] Suc-diff-1  $\langle k' > 0 \rangle$ 
IH(6) by simp
        moreover have inc-seq-on  $c \ \{0..k-1 - 1\} \ \forall i \in \{0..k-1\}. \ 2 \leq c \ i$ 
          using IH(4,5) unfolding inc-seq-on-def by auto
        moreover have inc-seq-on  $c' \ \{0..k'-1 - 1\} \ \forall i \in \{0..k'-1\}. \ 2 \leq c' \ i$ 
          using IH(7,8) unfolding inc-seq-on-def by auto
        ultimately have  $k-1 = k'-1 \ \wedge \ (\forall i \in \{0..k-1\}. \ c \ i = c' \ i)$ 
          using IH(1) unfolding last-idx-eq by blast
        then show ?thesis
          using IH(1) last-idx-eq by (metis One-nat-def Suc-pred  $\langle 0 < k' \rangle \langle 0 < k \rangle$ 
atLeastAtMost-iff le-Suc-eq)
        qed
      qed(insert IH one-unique-fib-sum, auto)
    qed
  end

```

References

- [1] C. G. Lekkerkerker. Voorstelling van natuurlijke getallen door een som van getallen van Fibonacci. *Stichting Mathematisch Centrum. Zuivere Wiskunde*, (ZW 30/51), 1951.