

On the hardness of the NTRU problem

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de **BORDEAUX**



NTRU

(N -th degree truncated polynomial ring units)

- ▶ algorithmic problem based on lattices
- ▶ supposedly hard even with a quantum computer
- ▶ efficient
- ▶ used in post-quantum crypto: e.g., Falcon, NTRU and NTRUPrime (round 3 in the NIST post quantum standardization process)
- ▶ old (for lattice-based crypto): introduced in 1996

Ring LWE and Module LWE

(Ring / Module Learning With Errors)

- ▶ algorithmic problem based on lattices
- ▶ supposedly hard even with a quantum computer
- ▶ efficient
- ▶ used in post-quantum crypto: e.g., Dilithium, Saber and Kyber (round 3 in the NIST post quantum standardization process)
- ▶ more recent: introduced in 2009

[SSTX09] Stehlé, Steinfeld, Tanaka, and Xagawa. Efficient public key encryption based on ideal lattices. Asiacrypt.

[LPR10] Lyubashevsky, Peikert, and Regev. On ideal lattices and learning with errors over rings. Eurocrypt.

[LS15] Langlois and Stehlé. Worst-case to average-case reductions for module lattices. Design Codes Cryptography.

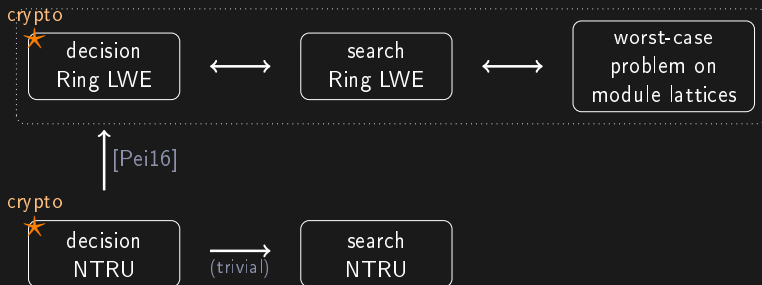
NTRU vs Ring LWE

- ▶ both are efficient
- ▶ both are versatile (but Ring LWE a bit more)
- ▶ NTRU is older

[Pei16] Peikert. A decade of lattice cryptography. Foundations and Trends in TCS.

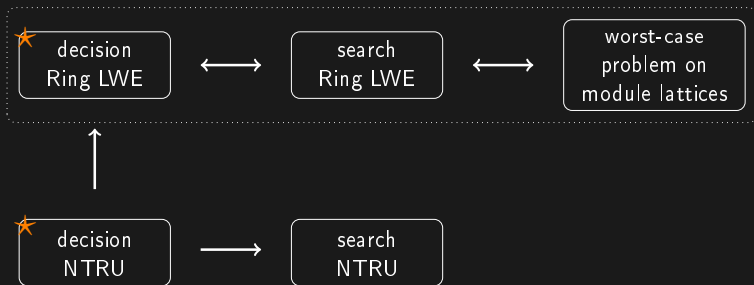
NTRU vs Ring LWE

- ▶ both are efficient
- ▶ both are versatile (but Ring LWE a bit more)
- ▶ NTRU is older
- ▶ Ring LWE has stronger theoretical security guarantees (reductions)

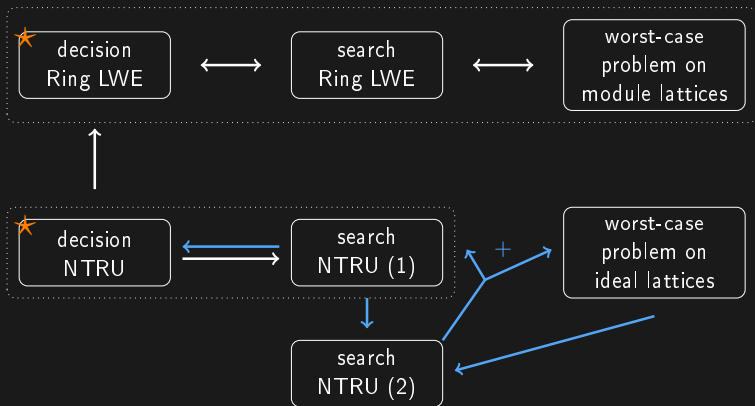


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Our result

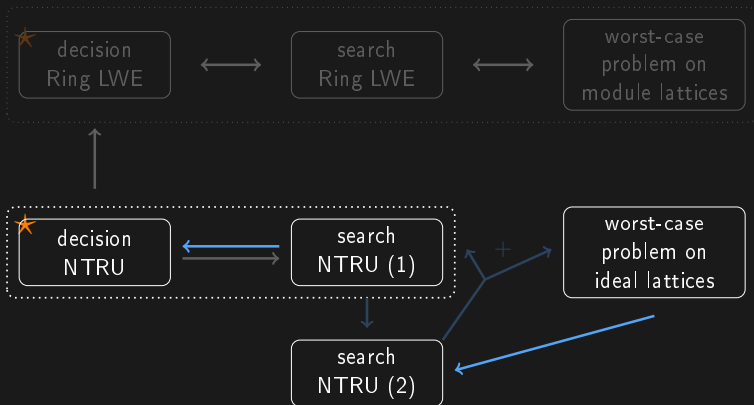


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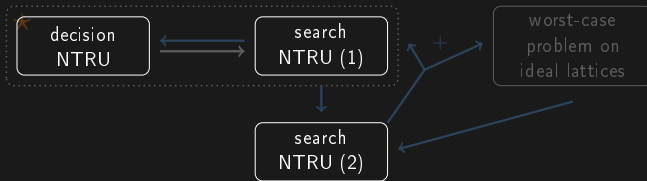


⚠ the reductions only work for certain distributions of NTRU instances ⚠
(the arrows may not compose)

Focus of this talk



The NTRU problems



If you like polynomial rings

- ▶ $R = \mathbb{Z}[X]/(X^n + 1)$ ($n = 2^k$)
- ▶ $K = \mathbb{Q}[X]/(X^n + 1)$
- ▶ $q \in \mathbb{Z}, q \geq 2$
- ▶ $R_q = (\mathbb{Z}/q\mathbb{Z})[X]/(X^n + 1)$
- ▶ $\|a\| = \sqrt{\sum_i a_i^2}$ ($a = \sum_{i=0}^{n-1} a_i X^i \in R$)

(K can be any other number field)

If you don't

- ▶ $R = \mathbb{Z}$
- ▶ $K = \mathbb{Q}$
- ▶ $q \in \mathbb{Z}, q \geq 2$
- ▶ $R_q = \mathbb{Z}/q\mathbb{Z}$
- ▶ $\|a\| = |a|$ ($a \in R$)

NTRU instances

NTRU instance

A γ -NTRU instance is $h \in R_q$ s.t.

- ▶ $h = f/g \pmod q$ (or $gh = f \pmod q$)
- ▶ $\|f\|, \|g\| \leq \frac{\sqrt{q}}{\gamma}$

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Proof: $\frac{f}{g} = \frac{f'}{g'} \bmod q \Rightarrow fg' = f'g \bmod q \Rightarrow fg' = f'g \Rightarrow \frac{f}{g} = \frac{f'}{g'}$

Decisional NTRU problem

decision NTRU

The γ -decisional NTRU problem asks, given $h \in R_q$, to decide whether

- ▶ $h \leftarrow \mathcal{D}$ where \mathcal{D} is a distribution over γ -NTRU instances
- ▶ $h \leftarrow \mathcal{U}(R_q)$

Search NTRU problems

NTRU_{vec} (= search NTRU (2))

The γ -search NTRU vector problem ($\gamma\text{-NTRU}_{\text{vec}}$) asks, given a γ -NTRU instance h , to recover $(f, g) \in R^2$ s.t.

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NTRU_{mod} (= search NTRU (1))

The γ -search NTRU module problem ($\gamma\text{-NTRU}_{\text{mod}}$) asks, given a γ -NTRU instance h , to recover h_K .

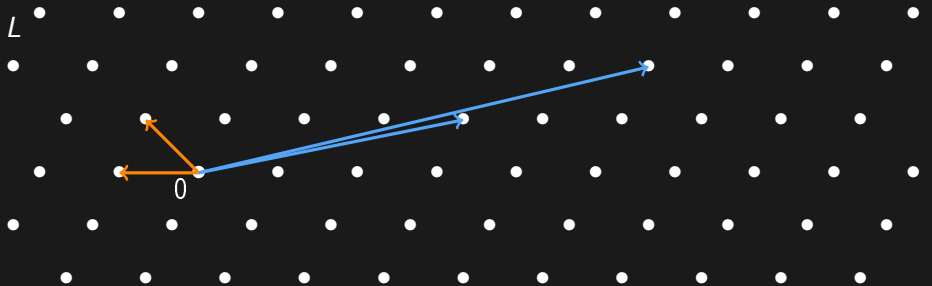
(Recall $h_K = f/g \in K$ for any trapdoor (f, g))

\Leftrightarrow recover $(\alpha f, \alpha g)$ for any $\alpha \in K$

Digression: NTRU problems are lattice problems

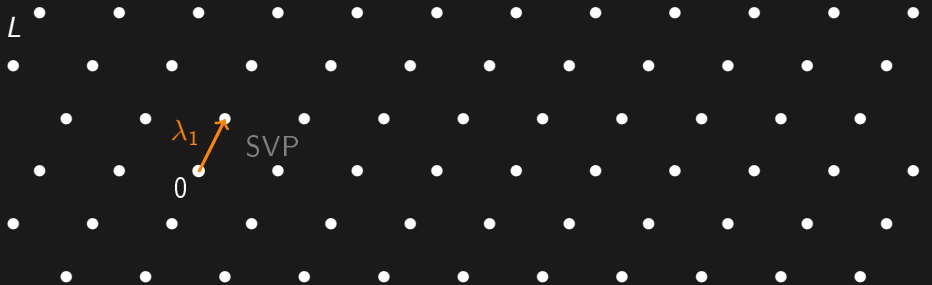


Lattices



- ▶ $L = \{Bx \mid x \in \mathbb{Z}^n\}$ is a **lattice**
- ▶ $B \in GL_n(\mathbb{R})$ is a **basis**
- ▶ n is the **dimension** of L

Shortest vector problem



SVP : Shortest Vector Problem

(Supposedly hard to solve when n is large)

Unique shortest vector problem



uSVP : unique Shortest Vector Problem

$\text{uSVP} = \text{SVP}$ restricted to lattices with $\lambda_1 \ll \lambda_2$

(Supposedly hard to solve when n is large, as long as $\lambda_2/\lambda_1 = \text{poly}(n)$)

NTRU is a (module) lattice problem

NTRU lattice: For $h \in R$, define Λ_h the (module) lattice with basis

$$B_h = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ h & q \end{pmatrix} \quad (\text{in columns})$$

$$\Lambda_h = \{(g, f)^T \in R^2 \mid g \cdot h = f \pmod{q}\}$$

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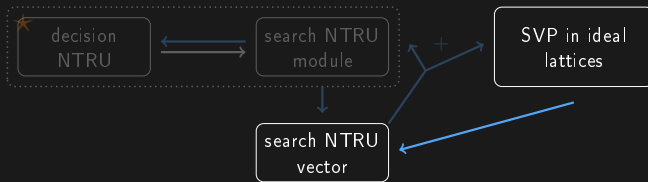
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NTRU_{mod}: recover $\alpha \cdot (f, g) \leftrightarrow$ find the direction where Λ_h is dense

Reductions



SVP in ideal lattices

Recall: $R = \mathbb{Z}$ or $R = \mathbb{Z}[X]/(X^n + 1)$ (with $n = 2^k$)

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(Principal) Ideals: $I = \langle z \rangle = \{zr \mid r \in R\}$
(e.g., $\langle 2 \rangle = \{2x \mid x \in \mathbb{Z}\}$)

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(Principal) Ideals: $I = \langle z \rangle = \{zr \mid r \in R\}$
(e.g., $\langle 2 \rangle = \{2x \mid x \in \mathbb{Z}\}$)

ideal-SVP: Given $\langle z \rangle$, find $a \in \langle z \rangle$ such that $\|a\|$ is small
(recall: $\|a\| = \sqrt{\sum_i |a_i|^2}$ if $a = \sum_i a_i X^i$)

From ideal-SVP to NTRU_{vec} (1/2)

Objective: Transform an ideal I into an NTRU instance h

- ▶ $I = \langle z \rangle = \{z \cdot r \mid r \in R\}$
- ▶ g short vector of I

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$$g = z \cdot r \quad (r \in R)$$

$$\Leftrightarrow g \cdot \frac{q}{z} = qr$$

$$\Leftrightarrow g \cdot h = f \pmod{q}$$

- ▶ $h = q/z, f = 0$
- ▶ $\|f\|, \|g\|$ small

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 Not an NTRU instance ($h \in K$ is not in R_q)

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$$\{x\} = x - \lfloor x \rfloor$$

- ▶ $h = \lfloor q/z \rfloor$, $f = -g\{q/z\}$
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This is an NTRU instance

From ideal-SVP to NTRU_{vec} (2/2)

Summing up: If $I = \langle z \rangle = \{z \cdot r \mid r \in R\}$ and z known

- ▶ we can construct an NTRU instance h from I
 - ▶ any short $g \in I$ provides a trapdoor (f, g) for h

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What we need to conclude the reduction:

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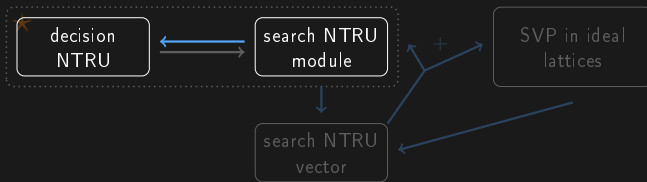
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And for non principal ideals?

- ▶ $I = R \cap \langle z \rangle$ and z easily computed
 - ▶ everything still works with this z

Reductions



Reducing NTRU_{mod} to dNTRU (1/2)

Objective: given $h = f/g \bmod q$, recover $h_K = f/g \in K$ (division in K)

Can use an oracle for decision NTRU:

given $h \in R_q$, the oracle outputs

- ▶ **YES** if $h = f/g \bmod q$, with f, g small ($\leq B$)
- ▶ **NO** otherwise

(we assume for now that the oracle is perfect)

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Idea:

- ▶ take $x, y \in R$
- ▶ create $h' = x \cdot h + y = \frac{xf + yg}{g} \bmod q$
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- ▶ learn whether $xf + yg$ is small or not

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- ▶ query the oracle on h'
- ▶ learn whether $xf + yg$ is small or not

\Rightarrow we can choose x and y

\Rightarrow we can modify the coordinates one by one

Reducing NTRU_{mod} to dNTRU (2/2)

Simplified problem

$f, g \in \mathbb{R}$ secret, $B \geq 0$ unknown.

Given any $x, y \in \mathbb{R}$, we can learn whether $|xf + yg| \geq B$ or not.

Objective: recover f/g

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Algorithm:

- ▶ Find x_0, y_0 such that $x_0 f + y_0 g = B$
(Fix $x_0 \ll B/|f|$ and increase y_0 until the oracle says no)

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- ▶ Solve for f/g

Handling imperfect oracles

If the oracle is not perfect:

We use the “oracle hidden center” framework [PRS17]

[PRS17] Peikert, Regev, and Stephens-Davidowitz. Pseudorandomness of ring-LWE for any ring and modulus. STOC.

Handling imperfect oracles

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We use the “oracle hidden center” framework [PRS17]

- ▶ we continuously transform \mathcal{D} into $\mathcal{U}(R_q)$
(recall that \mathcal{D} is a distribution over NTRU instances)
- ▶ need to prove that the continuous transformation behaves nicely
(lipschitz,...)
- ▶ then call [PRS17]

[PRS17] Peikert, Regev, and Stephens-Davidowitz. Pseudorandomness of ring-LWE for any ring and modulus. STOC.

Conclusion

Security guarantees:

- [SS11, WW18] If $f, g \leftarrow D_{R, \sigma}$ with $\sigma \geq \text{poly}(n) \cdot \sqrt{q}$
then $f/g \approx \mathcal{U}(R_q)$ (cyclotomic fields)
- ▶ dNTRU is statistically hard when $\gamma \leq \frac{1}{\text{poly}(n)}$

[SS11] Stehlé and Steinfeld. Making NTRU as secure as worst-case problems over ideal lattices. Eurocrypt.

[WW18] Wang and Wang. Provably secure NTRUEncrypt over any cyclotomic field. SAC.

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Attacks: (polynomial time)

[LLL82] dNTRU and NTRU_{mod} are broken if $\gamma \geq 2^n$

[LLL82] Lenstra, Lenstra, Lovász. Factoring polynomials with rational coefficients. *Mathematische Annalen*.

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[ABD16, CJL16] dNTRU and NTRU_{mod} are broken

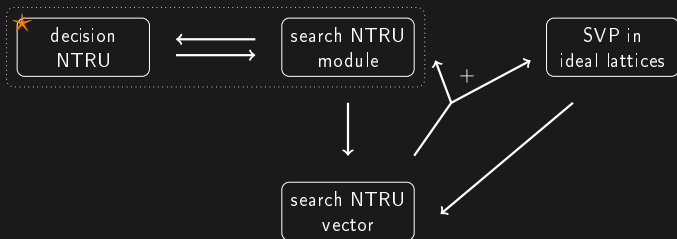
[KF17] if $(\log q)^2 \geq n \cdot \log \frac{\sqrt{q}}{\gamma}$
(e.g., $q \approx 2^{\sqrt{n}}$ and $\gamma = \sqrt{q}/\text{poly}(n)$)

[ABD16] Albrecht, Bai, and Ducas. A subfield lattice attack on overstretched NTRU assumptions. *Crypto*.

[CJL16] Cheon, Jeong, and Lee. An algorithm for NTRU problems. *LMS J Comput Math*.

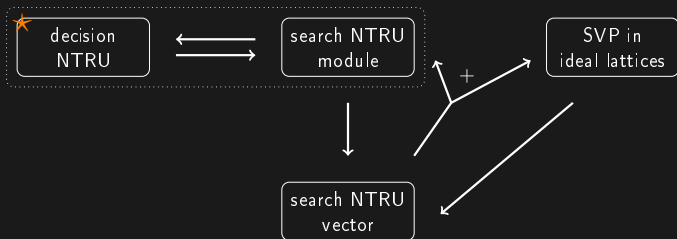
[KF17] Kirchner and Fouque. Revisiting lattice attacks on overstretched NTRU parameters. *Eurocrypt*

Conclusion and open problems



- ▶ Can we make the distributions of the reductions match?
- ▶ Can we relate NTRU_{mod} and ideal-SVP?
 - ▶ maybe not since any “natural reduction” would provide new attacks
- ▶ Can we replace ideal lattices by modules of rank ≥ 2 ?
 - ▶ for instance, uSVP in modules of rank-2?

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