pst-spirograph
v.0.41

A PSTricks package for drawing spirograph curves

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Package author(s):
Manuel Luque
Herbert Voß
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1 Introduction

pst-spirograph is a package to simulate the operation of a spirograph. A spirograph is a geometric drawing toy that produces mathematical roulette curves that are technically known as hypotrochoids and epitrochoids. The mathematician Bruno Abakanowicz invented the spirograph between 1881 and 1900.\(^1\) It was used to calculate an area delimited by curves. A hypotrochoid is generated by a fixed point on a circle rolling inside a fixed circle.\(^2\) It consists of a small toothed wheel rotating inside or outside a ring gear. The weighing tile wheel has nine drilled holes numbered from 0–8, through these small holes the tip of a pen or pencil can be put. This causes the small wheel to rotate one or more laps around the crown and draws a hypocycloid.

The wheel can also turn off a first fixed gear, it is thus possible to draw epicycloids. The command is written as

```
\psSpirograph [Options] (x,y)
```

and can optionally be followed by the coordinates of the point where you wish to place the Spirograph: `\psSpirograph [Options] (x,y)` which by default is centered at the origin. The optional parameters, including default values are indicated as following:

1. Z1=20: number of teeth of the wheel 1, the crown;
2. Z2=10: number of teeth of the wheel 2;
3. \( m=0.5 \): relative size of the gear;
4. ap=20: pressure angle in degrees, it must be reduced if the number of teeth crown is large (if the path of the teeth will be incorrect), e.g. take Z1=120;
5. holenum=0: active hole number;
6. polarangle=0: polar angle in degrees to position the center of the inner/outer gear; of the small wheel. It is a useful parameter for an animation, then it is the starting angle.
7. thetamax=360: the end value for the rotation of the second inside/outside gear;

There are two Boolean values for the organisation of the two circles:

- circles: to draw circles of contact (default is false).
- inner: the gear rotates inside of the crown (true — default) or outside (false).

In the drawing, the color selection wheel and the line of the curve is made with the following setting:

1. color1={[rgb]{0.625 0.75 1}};
2. color2={[rgb]{0.75 1 0.75}};
3. curvecolor=red;
4. curvewidth=1pt: linewidth of the hypocycloid;
5. circlescolor=red.

The origin of the spirograph can be set by the coordinates \((x,y)\). If they are missing, \((0,0)\) is assumed. By default, the wheels are not filled with color. The color inside the wheels must be set by the option `fillStyle=solid`.

---

The choice of color and line thickness contour of the wheels is made with usual PSTricks options: \texttt{linecolor} and \texttt{linewidth}. The transparency of the small wheel is adjusted with the \texttt{opacity} option of PSTricks.

The last parameter is the angle \texttt{thetamax=360}, which represents the rotation in degrees the center of the small wheel around the ring, so it is a parameter to adjust, depending on the planned route of the hypocycloid.

\section*{2 Parameter}

\subsection*{2.1 Relative size}

The relative size of the two gears can be set by the optional argument \( m \), which can take every possible value.
2.2 Pencil position

The holes (holenumber) for the pencil are ordered from outside into the center of the gear with different polar coordinates (radius and angle). They are numbered from 0 to 8 and the position cannot be changed. Every given number greater than 8 will be reset internally to 8.
2.2 Pencil position

\psset{unit=0.8cm}
\begin{pspicture}[]
\showgrid=top,opacity=0.5(-7,-7)(7,7)
\psframe*[linecolor=yellow!30](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psset{thetamax=720, Z1=120, Z2=48, m=0.1, ap=10, linewidth=0.025, curvewidth=1.1pt}
\psSpirograph[holenumber=0]
\psSpirograph[holenumber=1, curvecolor=blue] \psSpirograph[holenumber=2, curvecolor=green]
\psSpirograph[holenumber=3, curvecolor=cyan] \psSpirograph[holenumber=4, curvecolor=magenta]
\psSpirograph[holenumber=5, curvecolor=black] \psSpirograph[holenumber=6, curvecolor=black!50]
\psSpirograph[holenumber=7, curvecolor=blue!50] \psSpirograph[holenumber=8, curvecolor=red!50]
\end{pspicture}
2.3 Pressure Angle

This value defines the look of a "teeth". Values greater than 30 make no real sense.

\begin{pspicture}[showgrid=top,opacity=0.5](-7,-3)(7,3)
\psset{unit=0.4,linewidth=0.025,fillstyle=solid,polarangle=90}
\psSpirograph[ap=0](-12,0)
\psSpirograph[ap=20, holenum=4](0,0)
\psSpirograph[ap=30, holenum=8](12,0)
\end{pspicture}
3 Examples

\begin{pspicture}(-7,-7)(7,7)
\psframe*[linecolor=yellow!30](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psSpirograph[thetamax=720,Z1=120,Z2=48,m=0.1,ap=10,linewidth=0.025,fillstyle=solid,polarangle=200,holenumber=0,opacity=0.3]
\psSpirograph[thetamax=720,Z1=120,Z2=48,m=0.1,ap=10,linewidth=0.025,fillstyle=solid,polarangle=340,holenumber=3,opacity=0.3,curvecolor=blue]
\psSpirograph[thetamax=720,Z1=120,Z2=48,m=0.1,ap=10,linewidth=0.025,fillstyle=solid,polarangle=90,holenumber=6,opacity=0.3,curvecolor=green]
\end{pspicture}
\begin{pspicture}[showgrid=top](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psframe*[linecolor=yellow!30](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psSpirograph[thetamax=720,Z1=120,Z2=48,m=0.1,ap=10,linewidth=0.025,
fillstyle=solid,polarangle=200,holenumber=3,opacity=0.75]
\end{pspicture}
\begin{pspicture}[showgrid=top](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psframe[linecolor=gray!20](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psSpirograph[thetamax=720,Z1=36,Z2=24,m=0.15,linewidth=0.025,ap=20,inner=false,fillstyle=solid,polarangle=150,linecolor=blue,holenumber=0,opacity=0.8]
\end{pspicture}
\begin{pspicture}[showgrid=top](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psframe*[linecolor=yellow!30](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psSpirograph[thetamax=1440,Z1=27,Z2=12,m=0.4,linewidth=0.025,
curvecolor={{rgb}{0 0.25 0.5}},circles,fillstyle=solid,polarangle=30,
linecolor=blue,holenumber=0,opacity=0.75]
\end{pspicture}
\begin{pspicture}[showgrid=top](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psframe*[linecolor=yellow!30](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psset{unit=0.5}
\psSpirograph[thetamax=-1800,Z1=108,Z2=15,m=0.2,linewidth=0.025,ap=10,fillstyle=solid,polarangle=54,linecolor=blue,holenumber=0,opacity=0.75]
\end{pspicture}
\begin{pspicture}[showgrid=top](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psframe[linecolor=gray!20](-7,-7)(7,7)
\psSpirograph[thetamax=1800,Z1=36,Z2=30,m=0.15,linewidth=0.025,ap=20,inner=false,
fillstyle=solid,polarangle=150,linecolor=blue,holenumber=4,opacity=0.8]
\end{pspicture}
4 Animations

With package animate one can easily create animations. You get a better result with \multiframe{360}{iA=0+4}{...} but that increases the file size of the PDF.

\begin{animateinline}[width=0.9\linewidth,begin={\begin{pspicture}(-3.5,-3.5)(3.5,3.5)},end={\end{pspicture}},palindrome,controls,autoplay]{5}
\multiframe{100}{iA=0+8}{
\texttt{\textbackslash psSpirograph[thetamax=iA,Z1=59,Z2=24,m=0.1,ap=10,curvewidth=1.1pt,}
\texttt{linewidth=0.025,fillstyle=solid,polarangle=iA,holenumber=5,opacity=0.5](0,0)}
}\end{animateinline}

There are some more examples in the documentation directory of the package.
5 List of all optional arguments for pst-spirograph

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Default</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Z1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z2</td>
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<td>thetamax</td>
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<td>360</td>
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<td>color1</td>
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<td>[rgb]{0.625 0.75 1}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>ordinary</td>
<td>[rgb]{0.75 1 0.75}</td>
</tr>
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<td>circlescolor</td>
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<td>curvecolor</td>
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<tr>
<td>curvewidth</td>
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<tr>
<td>inner</td>
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<td>true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circles</td>
<td>boolean</td>
<td>true</td>
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