Contents

1 Transitive groups **1**

1 Permutation groups 1
2 Orbits and transitivity 2
3 Orbit-stabiliser theorem 4
4 The Orbit-Counting Lemma 6
5 Derangements 8
6 A theorem of Boston *et al.* 9
7 Cycle index 10
8 Random permutations 12
9 The outer automorphism of S_6 13
10 Appendix: designs 14
Exercises 15

2 Primitive groups **19**

1 Primitivity 19
2 Multiple transitivity 20
3 Wreath product 21
4 Iwasawa's Lemma 23
5 Power action 23
6 Some types of primitive groups 24
7 The O'Nan–Scott Theorem 26
8 The CFSG 27
9 Consequences of CFSG 28
Exercises 34

3 Classical groups **37**

1 Finite fields and projective spaces 37
2 Linear and projective groups 38
3 Forms 45
4 Symplectic groups 51

5 Unitary groups 54
6 Orthogonal groups 58
7 Some more 2-transitive groups 62
8 Aschbacher's Theorem 63
Exercises 64

4 Character theory **69**
1 Representations 69
2 Characters 70
3 Permutation characters 71
4 Example: PGL(n, q) acting on subspaces 73
5 Block's Lemma 74
6 Block-transitive t-designs 75
Exercises 76

5 Further reading **79**