

1042-20-49

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Uniform uniform exponential growth of subgroups of the mapping class group.

Let $\text{Mod}(S)$ denote the mapping class group of a compact, orientable surface S . We prove that finitely generated subgroups of $\text{Mod}(S)$ which are not virtually abelian have uniform exponential growth with minimal growth rate bounded below by a constant depending only on S . (Received August 18, 2008)