

1.1 Introduction to Proof: Quiz

Theorem Let a, b be positive real numbers with $a < b$.
Then $\sqrt{a} < \sqrt{b}$.

Identify any mistakes in the following proofs.

Proof 1

$$\begin{aligned}\sqrt{a} < \sqrt{b} &\Leftrightarrow \sqrt{b} - \sqrt{a} > 0 \\ &\Leftrightarrow (\sqrt{b} - \sqrt{a})(\sqrt{b} + \sqrt{a}) > 0 \\ &\Leftrightarrow (\sqrt{b})^2 - (\sqrt{a})^2 > 0 \\ &\Leftrightarrow b - a > 0\end{aligned}$$

which is true

Proof 2

Suppose not

$$\begin{aligned}b \leq a &\Rightarrow b - a \leq 0 \\ &\Rightarrow (\sqrt{b})^2 - (\sqrt{a})^2 \leq 0 \\ &\Rightarrow (\sqrt{b} - \sqrt{a})(\sqrt{b} + \sqrt{a}) \leq 0 \\ &\Rightarrow \sqrt{b} - \sqrt{a} \leq 0 \\ &\Rightarrow \sqrt{b} \leq \sqrt{a}\end{aligned}$$

contradiction

Proof 3

Observe that for any positive c and d such that $c < d$ we have $c^2 < cd$ and also $cd < d^2$ and combining these we get $c^2 < d^2$. So

$$\begin{aligned}\sqrt{a} < \sqrt{b} &\Leftrightarrow (\sqrt{a})^2 < (\sqrt{b})^2 \\ &\Leftrightarrow a < b\end{aligned}$$