

21-128 and 15-151: Class 2



August 28, 2024

News and Notes

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LaTeX/Gradescope session: 1-2pm this Saturday, 8/31, in Doherty 2315.

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Proof-writing tips session: 2:15-4pm this Saturday, 8/31, in Doherty 2315.

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We played The Finger Game - probability and statistics are big drivers in Science today.

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Observe that **parenthesization** of propositional formulae is, in general, necessary.

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“s.t.” is shorthand for “such that”.

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Theorem (proved in 1974 by Erdos and Selfridge):
The product of two or more consecutive positive integers is never a square or any other higher power. 8 / 13

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Existence: One can verify that $n = (p + 1)/2$ and $m = (p - 1)/2$ are natural numbers such that $p = n^2 - m^2$.

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We have $p = (n - m)(n + m)$. Since p is positive, $n - m$ and $n + m$ must be positive integers.

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Solving two equations in two unknowns yields $n = (p + 1)/2$ and $m = (p - 1)/2$, as desired.

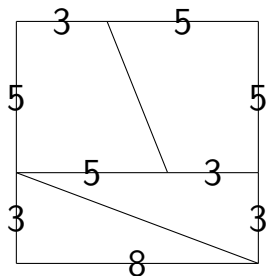
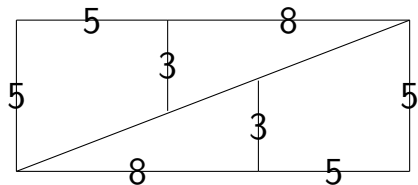
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Consider the rearrangement of the 4 pieces from the left into the 4 pieces on the right:

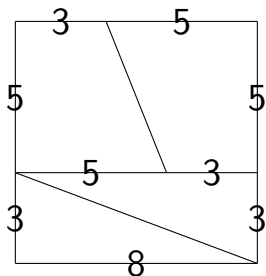
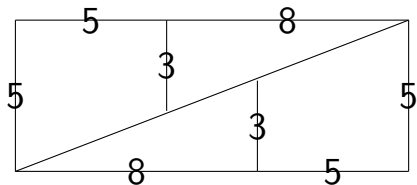
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What is wrong with the argument given above?

It is not possible that $64 = 65!$

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The lines labeled with “3” should be labeled with “ $\frac{40}{13}$ ”. When reassembled on the right, the top rectangle is 5 by $\frac{105}{13}$ and the bottom rectangle is 8 by $\frac{40}{13}$. The top and bottom rectangles don't form a square.

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