

7.5) Methods of proof

Worked example

Prove by exhaustion that the sum of an integer and the square of the integer is even for all integers n

Your turn

Prove by exhaustion that all square numbers are either a multiple of 4 or 1 more than a multiple of 4

Proof

Worked example

Disprove the statement:

“ $n^2 - n + 3$ is prime for all integers n .”

Your turn

Disprove the statement:

“ $n^2 - n + 41$ is prime for all integers n .”

$n = 41, n^2 - n + 41 = 41^2 = 1681$
1681 has 3 factors: 1, 41 and 1681

Worked example

a) Prove that for all positive values of p and q

$$p + q > \sqrt{4pq}$$

b) Use a counter-example to show that this is not true when p and q are not both positive.

Your turn

a) Prove that for all positive values of x and y

$$\frac{x}{y} + \frac{y}{x} \geq 2$$

b) Use a counter-example to show that this is not true when x and y are not both positive.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{a)} \quad & (x - y)^2 \geq 0 \\ & x^2 + y^2 - 2xy \geq 0 \\ & \frac{x^2 + y^2 - 2xy}{xy} \geq 0 \end{aligned}$$

[valid as $x, y > 0 \therefore xy > 0$]

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{x^2}{xy} + \frac{y^2}{xy} - \frac{2xy}{xy} \geq 0 \\ & \frac{x}{y} + \frac{y}{x} - 2 \geq 0 \\ & \frac{x}{y} + \frac{y}{x} \geq 2 \end{aligned}$$

b) e.g. $x = -3, y = 6$

$$-\frac{3}{6} + \frac{6}{-3} = -\frac{1}{2} - 2 = -\frac{5}{2} < -2$$