



proof that all cyclic groups of the same order  
are isomorphic to each other

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The following is a proof that all cyclic groups of the same order are isomorphic to each other.

*Proof.* Let  $G$  be a cyclic group and  $g$  be a generator of  $G$ . Define  $\varphi: \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow G$  by  $\varphi(c) = g^c$ . Since  $\varphi(a+b) = g^{a+b} = g^a g^b = \varphi(a)\varphi(b)$ ,  $\varphi$  is a group homomorphism. If  $h \in G$ , then there exists  $x \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that  $h = g^x$ . Since  $\varphi(x) = g^x = h$ ,  $\varphi$  is surjective.

Note that  $\ker \varphi = \{c \in \mathbb{Z} : \varphi(c) = e_G\} = \{c \in \mathbb{Z} : g^c = e_G\}$ .

If  $G$  is infinite, then  $\ker \varphi = \{0\}$ , and  $\varphi$  is injective. Hence,  $\varphi$  is a group isomorphism, and  $G \cong \mathbb{Z}$ .

If  $G$  is finite, then let  $|G| = n$ . Thus,  $|g| = |\langle g \rangle| = |G| = n$ . If  $g^c = e_G$ , then  $n$  divides  $c$ . Therefore,  $\ker \varphi = n\mathbb{Z}$ . By the first isomorphism theorem,  $G \cong \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z} = \mathbb{Z}_n$ .

Let  $H$  and  $K$  be cyclic groups of the same order. If  $H$  and  $K$  are infinite, then, by the above,  $H \cong \mathbb{Z}$  and  $K \cong \mathbb{Z}$ . If  $H$  and  $K$  are finite of order  $n$ , then, by the above,  $H \cong \mathbb{Z}_n$  and  $K \cong \mathbb{Z}_n$ . In any case, it follows that  $H \cong K$ .  $\square$