



planetmath.org

Math for the people, by the people.

arithmetic progression

Canonical name	ArithmeticProgression
Date of creation	2013-03-22 13:39:00
Last modified on	2013-03-22 13:39:00
Owner	bbukh (348)
Last modified by	bbukh (348)
Numerical id	10
Author	bbukh (348)
Entry type	Definition
Classification	msc 00A05
Classification	msc 11B25
Related topic	MulidimensionalArithmeticProgression
Related topic	SumOfKthPowersOfTheFirstNPositiveIntegers

Arithmetic progression of length n , initial term a_1 and common difference d is the sequence $a_1, a_1 + d, a_1 + 2d, \dots, a_1 + (n - 1)d$.

The sum of terms of an arithmetic progression can be computed using Gauss's trick:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} S & = & (a_1 + 0) \quad + \quad (a_1 + d) \quad + \cdots + (a_1 + (n - 2)d) + (a_1 + (n - 1)d) \\ +S & = & (a_1 + (n - 1)d) + (a_1 + (n - 2)d) + \cdots + (a_1 + d) + (a_1 + 0) \\ \hline 2S & = & (2a_1 + (n - 1)d) + (2a_1 + (n - 1)d) + \cdots + (2a_1 + (n - 1)d) + (2a_1 + (n - 1)d). \end{array}$$

We just add the sum with itself written backwards, and the sum of each of the columns equals to $(2a_1 + (n - 1)d)$. The sum is then

$$S = \frac{(2a_1 + (n - 1)d)n}{2}.$$