

1. The-Axiom-of-Completeness
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 - 1.2. Axiom of Completeness
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2. Consequences-of-Completeness
 - 2.1. Nested Interval Property

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- **References:**
 - Abbott, S., Understanding Analysis

Main Content

Main Idea

\mathbb{R} is an ordered field and contains \mathbb{Q} as a subfield.

Explanation

\mathbb{R} is a field, meaning that addition and multiplication of real numbers are commutative, associative, and the distributive property holds. \mathbb{R} also has an order, meaning the following two properties hold:

1. If $x \in \mathbb{R}$ and $y \in \mathbb{R}$, then one and only one of the statements

$$x < y, \quad x = y, \quad y < x$$

is true.

2. If $x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}$, if $x < y$ and $y < z$, then $x < z$.

Finally, \mathbb{R} is a set containing \mathbb{Q} . The operations of addition and multiplication on \mathbb{Q} extend to all of \mathbb{R} in such a way that every element of \mathbb{R} has an additive inverse and every nonzero element of \mathbb{R} has a multiplicative inverse.

Review

1. Define the set of real numbers.

Links to Other Notes

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- **References:**
 - Abbott, S., Understanding Analysis

Main Content

Main Idea

Every nonempty set of real numbers that is bounded above has a least upper bound.

Explanation

Review

1. Define the Axiom of Completeness.

Links to Other Notes

- Initial Definition for \mathbb{R}

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- **References:**
 - Abbott, S., Understanding Analysis

Main Content

Main Idea

A set $A \subset \mathbb{R}$ is bounded above if there exists a number $b \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $a \leq b$ for all $a \in A$. The number b is called an upper bound for A . Likewise, the set A is bounded below if there exists a lower bound $l \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $l \leq a$ for every $a \in A$.

Explanation

Review

1. Define upper and lower bounds.

Links to Other Notes

- Initial Definition for \mathbb{R}
- Axiom of Completeness

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- **References:**
 - Abbott, S., Understanding Analysis

Main Content

Main Idea

A real number s is the least upper bound for a set $A \subset \mathbb{R}$ if it meets the following two criteria:

1. s is an upper bound for A ;
2. if b is any upper bound for A , then $s \leq b$.

Explanation

The least upper bound is frequently called the supremum of the set A , denoted $s = \sup A$.

Review

1. Define the supremum of a set.
2. Define the infimum, or the greatest lower bound, of a set.
3. Are least upper bounds unique? Explain.
4. Let

$$A = \left\{ \frac{1}{n} : n \in \mathbb{N} \right\} = \left\{ 1, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, \dots \right\}.$$

What is $\sup A$ and $\inf A$?

Links to Other Notes

- Initial Definition for \mathbb{R}
- Axiom of Completeness
- Upper and Lower Bounds

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Main Content

Main Idea

A real number a_0 is a maximum of the set A if a_0 is an element of A and $a_0 \geq a$ for all $a \in A$.

Explanation

The supremum can exist and not be a maximum, but when a maximum exists, then it is also the supremum.

Review

1. Define maximum.
2. Define minimum.
3. Consider the open interval

$$(0, 2) = \{x \in \mathbb{R} : 0 < x < 2\},$$

and the closed interval

$$[0, 2] = \{x \in \mathbb{R} : 0 \leq x \leq 2\}.$$

What are the maximums of the two sets? What are the supremums?

Links to Other Notes

- Initial Definition for \mathbb{R}
- Axiom of Completeness
- Upper and Lower Bounds
- Supremum and Infimum

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 - Abbott, S., Understanding Analysis

Main Content

Main Idea

The Axiom of Completeness is not a valid statement about Q .

Explanation

Consider the set

$$S = \{r \in Q : r^2 < 2\}.$$

This set is certainly bounded above, however, when we search for the least upper bound, we can always find a smaller supremum. For example, we might try $b = 2$, $b = 3/2$, $b = 142/100$, $b = 1415/1000$, and so on.

Review

1. Is the Axiom of Completeness a valid statement about Q ? Explain.
2. Does the set

$$S = \{r \in Q : r^2 < 2\}$$

have a supremum under R ?

Links to Other Notes

- Initial Definition for R
- Axiom of Completeness
- Upper and Lower Bounds
- Supremum and Infimum
- Maximum and Minimum

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Main Content

Main Idea

Let $A \subset \mathbb{R}$ be nonempty and bounded above, and let $c \in \mathbb{R}$. Define the set $c + A$ by

$$c + A = \{c + a : a \in A\}.$$

Then $\sup(c + A) = c + \sup A$.

Explanation

Let $s = \sup A$. We see that $a \leq s$ for all $a \in A$, which implies $c + a \leq c + s$ for all $a \in A$. Thus $c + s$ is an upper bound for $c + A$ and condition (1) of Supremum and Infimum is verified. For (2), let b be an arbitrary upper bound for $c + A$, thus $c + a \leq b$ for all $a \in A$. This is equivalent to $a \leq b - c$ for all $a \in A$, from which we conclude that $b - c$ is an upper bound for A . Because s is the least upper bound of A , $s \leq b - c$, which can be rewritten as $c + s \leq b$. This verifies part (2) of Supremum and Infimum, and we conclude $\sup(c + A) = c + \sup A$.

Review

1. Prove $\sup(c + A) = c + \sup A$.

Links to Other Notes

- Initial Definition for \mathbb{R}
- Axiom of Completeness
- Upper and Lower Bounds

- Supremum and Infimum
- Maximum and Minimum
- \mathbb{Q} and the Axiom of Completeness

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- **References:**
 - Abbott, S., Understanding Analysis

Main Content

Main Idea

Assume $s \in R$ is an upper bound for a set $A \subset R$. Then, $s = \sup A$ if and only if, for every choice of $\epsilon > 0$, there exists an element $a \in A$ satisfying $s - \epsilon < a$.

Explanation

For the forward direction, assume $s = \sup A$ and consider $s - \epsilon$, where $\epsilon > 0$ has been arbitrarily chosen. Because $s - \epsilon < s$, part (2) of Supremum and Infimum implies that $s - \epsilon$ is not an upper bound for A . If this is the case, then there must be some element $a \in A$ for which $s - \epsilon < a$.

Conversely, assume s is an upper bound with the property that no matter how $\epsilon > 0$ is chosen, $s - \epsilon$ is no longer an upper bound for A . Notice that what this implies is that if b is any number less than s , then b is not an upper bound. To prove that $s = \sup A$, we must verify part (2) of Supremum and Infimum. Because we have just argued that any number smaller than s cannot be an upper bound, it follows that if b is some other upper bound for A , then $s \leq b$.

Review

1. What is an alternative phrasing for part (2) in Supremum and Infimum? Explain.

Links to Other Notes

- Initial Definition for R
- Axiom of Completeness
- Upper and Lower Bounds
- Supremum and Infimum

- Maximum and Minimum
- Q and the Axiom of Completeness
- $\sup(c + A) = c + \sup A$

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- **References:**
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Main Content

Questions

- (a) Write a formal definition in the style of Supremum and Infimum for the infimum or greatest lower bound of a set.
 - (b) Now, state and prove a version of Alternative Phrasing for Supremum for greatest lower bounds.
2. Give an example of each of the following, or state that the request is impossible.
 - (a) A set B with $\inf B \geq \sup B$.
 - (b) A finite set that contains its infimum but not its supremum.
 - (c) A bounded subset Q that contains its supremum but not its infimum.
3.
 - (a) Let A be nonempty and bounded below, and define $B = \{b \in \mathbb{R} : b \text{ is a lower bound for } A\}$. Show that $\sup B = \inf A$.
 - (b) Use (a) to explain why there is no need to assert that greatest lower bounds exist as part of the Axiom of Completeness.
4. As in $\sup(c + A) = c + \sup A$, let $A \subset \mathbb{R}$ be nonempty and bounded above, and let $c \in \mathbb{R}$. This time define the set $cA = \{ca : a \in A\}$.
 - (a) If $c \geq 0$, show that $\sup(cA) = c \sup A$.
 - (b) Postulate a similar type of statement for $\sup(cA)$ for the case $c < 0$.

Solutions

- (a) A real number n is the greatest lower bound for a set $A \subset \mathbb{R}$ if it meets the following two criteria:

1. n is a lower bound for A ;
 2. if b is any lower bound for A , then $b \leq n$.
- (b) Assume $n \in R$ is a lower bound for a set $A \subset R$. Then, $n = \inf A$ if and only if, for every choice of $\epsilon > 0$, there exists an element $a \in A$ satisfying $a < n + \epsilon$.

Proof. Assume $n = \inf A$ and consider $n + \epsilon$, where $\epsilon > 0$ has been chosen arbitrarily. Because $n < n + \epsilon$, the definition for infimum implies that $n + \epsilon$ is not a lower bound for A . Thus, there must be some element $a \in A$ such that $a < n + \epsilon$.

Conversely, assume there exists an element $a \in A$ that satisfies $a < n + \epsilon$. In other words, for any number b that is greater than n , b is not a lower bound. Thus, according to the definition, n is the greatest lower bound for A . \square

2. (a) Consider $B = \{0\}$; $\sup B = \inf B = 0$, thus, $\inf B \geq \sup B$.
- (b) Impossible, finite sets must have both a maximum and minimum, and thus, must contain their infimum and supremum.
- (c) Consider $B = \{b \in Q : 0 < b \leq 1\}$; $\sup B = 1 \in B$ and $\inf B = 0 \notin B$.
3. (a) Since every $b \in B$ is a lower bound for A , we have $b \leq a$ for all $a \in A$. In particular, $\inf A$, being the greatest lower bound of A , satisfies $b \leq \inf A$ for all $b \in B$. Thus, $\sup B \leq \inf A$, since $\sup B$ is the least upper bound of B . Conversely, by definition of $\inf A$, $\inf A$ is a lower bound for A , so $\inf A \in B$. Since $\sup B$ is the least upper bound for B , it must satisfy $\sup B \geq \inf A$. Therefore, $\sup B = \inf A$.
- (b) The existence of the infimum for a bounded below set A can always be derived from the Axiom of Completeness as follows:
 - Define B to be the set of all lower bounds of A .
 - The Axiom of Completeness guarantees that B has a supremum $\sup B$.
 - By definition and part (a), $\sup B = \inf A$.

Thus, the existence of greatest lower bounds (infima) is already implicit in the Axiom of Completeness, as every bounded below set can be "reduced" to a problem of finding the supremum of its set of lower bounds.

4. (a) Let $s = \sup A$. We see that $a \leq s$ for all $a \in A$, which implies $ca \leq cs$ for all $a \in A$. Thus, cs is an upper bound for cA and condition (1) of Supremum and Infimum is verified. For (2), let b be an arbitrary upper bound for cA , thus $ca \leq b$ for all $a \in A$. This is equivalent to $a \leq b/c$ for all $a \in A$, from which we conclude that b/c is an upper bound for A . Because s is the least upper bound of A , $s \leq b/c$, which can be rewritten as $cs \leq b$. This verifies part (2) of Supremum and Infimum, and we conclude $\sup(cA) = c \sup A$.
- (b) If $c < 0$, $\sup(cA) = c \inf A$.

Review

1.

Links to Other Notes

- Initial Definition for \mathbb{R}
- Axiom of Completeness
- Upper and Lower Bounds
- Supremum and Infimum
- Maximum and Minimum
- \mathbb{Q} and the Axiom of Completeness
- $\sup(c + A) = c + \sup A$
- Alternative Phrasing for Supremum

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 - Abbott, S., Understanding Analysis

Main Content

Main Idea

For each $n \in N$, assume we are given a closed interval $I_n = [a_n, b_n] = \{x \in R : a_n \leq x \leq b_n\}$. Assume also that each I_n contains I_{n+1} . Then, the resulting nested sequence of closed intervals

$$I_1 \supset I_2 \supset I_3 \supset I_4 \supset \dots$$

has a nonempty intersection; that is, $\bigcap_{n=1}^{\infty} I_n \neq \emptyset$.

Explanation

Consider the set

$$A = \{a_n : n \in N\}$$

of left-hand endpoints of the intervals. Because the intervals are nested, we see that every b_n serves as an upper bound for A . Thus, we are justified in setting

$$x = \sup A.$$

Now, consider a particular $I_n = [a_n, b_n]$. Because x is an upper bound for A , we have $a_n \leq x$. The fact that each b_n is an upper bound for A and that x is the least upper bound implies $x \leq b_n$.

Therefore, we have $a_n \leq x \leq b_n$, which means $x \in I_n$ for every choice of $n \in N$. Hence, $x \in \bigcap_{n=1}^{\infty} I_n$, and the intersection is not empty.

Review

1. State and prove the Nested Interval Property.

Links to Other Notes

- [Initial Definition for \$\mathbb{R}\$](#)
- [Axiom of Completeness](#)
- [Upper and Lower Bounds](#)
- [Supremum and Infimum](#)
- [Maximum and Minimum](#)
- [Q and the Axiom of Completeness](#)
- [sup\(\$c + A\$ \) = \$c + \sup A\$](#)
- [Alternative Phrasing for Supremum](#)

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