

Euclid's Lemma

Let p be a prime number and assume that $p \mid ab$ where $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$. Then, $p \mid a$ or $p \mid b$.

Proof.

If p is prime, then the only numbers that divide p are p and 1 .

Therefore, if $p \nmid a$, then $\gcd(p, a) = 1$.

Then by Bézout's identity, \exists some $s, t \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $as + pt = 1$.

Then $b(1) = b(as + pt) = abs + ptb$.

Now:

$$b = b * as + b * pt$$

Recall that $p \mid ab$ and $p \mid p$

So, $p \mid ab * s$ and $p \mid p * tb$

Thus, $p \mid (abs + ptb)$

Therefore, $p \mid b$

$p \nmid b \Rightarrow p \mid a$ is similar.

Therefore, $p \mid a$ or $p \mid b$

□