

Prove that the only prime triple (i.e. three primes, each 2 from the next) is 3, 5, 7

Proof:

Given an arbitrary prime number n and $n \neq 3$, we test whether $n + 2$ and $n + 4$ can both be prime numbers.

Examine the even and odd cases for n .

If n is even, it can only be 2. It is obvious that $n + 2 = 4$ and $n + 4 = 6$ are not primes. Therefore, when n is even, there is no prime triples.

If n is odd, then n is not a multiple of 3, since the only prime divisible by 3 is 3 and $n \neq 3$. Therefore by Division Theorem, n can be expressed as one of $3k + 1$ and $3k + 2$, $k \in \mathcal{Z}$. Examine these two possibilities:

if $n = 3k + 1$, then $n + 2 = 3k + 3 = 3(k + 1)$, which is divisible by 3 and not equal to 3. Therefore $n + 2$ is not prime in this case;

if $n = 3k + 2$, then $n + 4 = 3k + 6 = 3(k + 2)$, which is divisible by 3 and not equal to 3. Therefore $n + 4$ is not prime in this case.

Therefore, for all possible cases of prime n and $n \neq 3$, at least one of $n + 2$ and $n + 4$ is not prime. This makes 3, 5, 7 the only prime triple, as required.