

# Sylvester-Gallai

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Let  $S_n = \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ . Choose proper subsets  $T_1, T_2, \dots, T_m$  of  $S_n$  such that each 2-element subset of  $S_n$  appears in exactly one of the  $T_i$ . Then  $m \geq n$ .

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Let  $x$  be in  $c_x$  of the  $T_i$ .

**Claim.** If  $x \notin T_i$ , then  $c_x \geq |T_i|$ .

Proof. Take  $y \in T_i$ , then the unique  $T_j$  with both  $x, y$  is not  $T_i$ . Furthermore, these  $T_j$  are distinct for the different  $y$ , so there are at least  $|T_i|$  of them.  $\square$

Let  $Q$  be the set of all  $(x, i)$  with  $x \notin T_i$ . Then compute

$$1 = \sum_{x=1}^n \frac{1}{n} = \sum_{x=1}^n \frac{1}{n} \sum_{T_i \not\ni x} \frac{1}{m - c_x} = \sum_{x=1}^n \sum_{T_i \not\ni x} \frac{1}{n(m - c_x)} = \sum_{(x,i) \in Q} \frac{1}{mn - nc_x}$$

and

$$1 = \sum_{i=1}^m \frac{1}{m} = \sum_{i=1}^m \frac{1}{m} \sum_{x \notin T_i} \frac{1}{n - |T_i|} = \sum_{i=1}^m \sum_{x \notin T_i} \frac{1}{m(n - |T_i|)} = \sum_{(x,i) \in Q} \frac{1}{mn - m|T_i|}.$$

If  $m < n$ , then each term of the first sum is strictly larger than the corresponding term of the second sum, contradiction. Thus,  $m \geq n$ .  $\blacksquare$