

Problem 28: A sequence of complex numbers z_0, z_1, z_2, \dots satisfies the rule

$$z_{n+1} = \frac{iz_n}{\bar{z}_n}.$$

Suppose that $|z_0| = 1$ and $z_{2005} = 1$. How many possible values are there for z_0 ? (Source: AMC 12)

We can assume that $z_0 = e^{i\theta}$ for some real number θ since $|z_0| = 1$.

Now let's write out some terms of the sequence.

$$\begin{aligned} z_1 &= \frac{iz_0}{\bar{z}_0} \\ &= \frac{ie^{i\theta}}{e^{-i\theta}} \\ &= \frac{ie^{i\theta}}{e^{-i\theta}} \\ &= ie^{2i\theta} \\ z_2 &= \frac{iz_1}{\bar{z}_1} \\ &= \frac{i(ie^{2i\theta})}{(ie^{2i\theta})} \\ &= \frac{i(ie^{2i\theta})}{-ie^{-2i\theta}} \\ &= -ie^{4i\theta} \\ z_3 &= \frac{iz_2}{\bar{z}_2} \\ &= \frac{i(-ie^{4i\theta})}{(-ie^{4i\theta})} \\ &= \frac{i(-ie^{4i\theta})}{ie^{-4i\theta}} \\ &= -ie^{8i\theta} \end{aligned}$$

The first four terms of the sequence are $e^{i\theta}, ie^{2i\theta}, -ie^{4i\theta}, -ie^{8i\theta}$.

We can deduce that $z_n = -i(e^{i\theta})^{2^n} = -i(z_0)^{2^n}$ for $n \geq 2$.

Since $z_{2005} = 1$, we get the equation

$$z_{2005} = -i(z_0)^{2^{2005}} = 1$$

Multiplying both sides by i , we get

$$(z_0)^{2^{2005}} = i$$

There are 2^{2005} solutions to this equation, so there are $\boxed{2^{2005}}$ possible values of z_0 .