

Real numbers and least upper bounds

Cliff Sun

April 10, 2024

Definition 0.1. Let $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}$, then

1. If there is some real number b such that $\forall a \in A, a < b$, then we say that b is an upper bound of A and A is bounded above.
2. If $\exists b \in \mathbb{R}$, such that $b \leq a, \forall a \in A$, then we say that b is a lower bound of A and A is bounded below.
3. A is bounded if it is bounded above and below.

Axiom 0.2. Every nonempty $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ which is bounded above has a least upper bound.

Definition 0.3. A Least Upper Bound is defined as b' such that for all $b \in B$ where B is the set of all upper bounds, $b' \leq b$.

The reason why this axiom is called completeness is because it tells us that the real numbers has no "holes".

Notation

We call the least upper bound of set A its supremum, or $\sup A$. Similarly, the greatest lower bound of a set A its infimum or $\inf A$.