

A set \mathcal{S} of sets is said to be intersecting if for any two members A and B of \mathcal{S} , we have $A \cap B \neq \emptyset$. Prove that for any nonempty set U and for any intersecting collection \mathcal{S} of subsets of U and for any $X \subseteq U$ at least one of the two collections $\mathcal{S} \cup \{X\}$ and $\mathcal{S} \cup \{U \setminus X\}$ is intersecting.

Proof: We must show that $\mathcal{S} \cup \{X\}$ or $\mathcal{S} \cup \{U \setminus X\}$ is intersecting. Assume X is an arbitrary subset of U . Assume $\mathcal{S} \cup \{X\}$ is not intersecting. We must show $\mathcal{S} \cup \{U \setminus X\}$ is intersecting. By definition of being not intersecting, there exist $A, B \in \mathcal{S} \cup \{X\}$ such that $A \cap B = \emptyset$. Since \mathcal{S} was defined to be previously intersecting, then without loss of generality $A = X$. Since $B \subseteq U$, and A, B were disjoint, then $B \subseteq U \setminus X$, and therefore $B \cap (U \setminus X) \neq \emptyset$. Since $B \subseteq (U \setminus X)$ and \mathcal{S} is intersecting, then all the other sets of \mathcal{S} also have non-empty intersections. Therefore $\mathcal{S} \cup \{U \setminus X\}$ is intersecting.