Descent, Vieta Jumping, and Pell equations

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1 Techniques

There is really one technique here: assign some positive integer quantity (the "size" of a solution, e.g. the sum of the absolute valies of the variables) to each solution, take the solution with lowest "size" that doesn't fit your claimed pattern and derive a contradiction.

2 Problems

- 1. Find all solutions in integers to $a^4 + b^4 = c^2$.
- 2. Let a and b be positive integers. Prove that if $\frac{a^2+b^2}{ab+1}$ is an integer, then it is a square.
- 3. Pell Equations:
 - Let d be a positive integer which is not a perfect square. Prove that there exist positive integers x_0, y_0 such that for any pair x, y of positive integers satisfying $x^2 dy^2 = 1$, there is a positive integer k satisfying

$$x + y\sqrt{d} = (x_0 + y_0\sqrt{d})^k.$$

- Find the recurrence relating a solution (x_n, y_n) to the next solution (x_{n+1}, y_{n+1}) .
- Do the same for $x^2 dy^2 = -1$.

In the case where the RHS is 1, it is known that there is always a solution. When the RHS is -1, there need not be solutions (eg $x^2 - 3y^2 = -1$ has no solutions).

- 4. Prove that there are infinitely many triples (a, b, c) of positive integers in arithmetic progression such that ab + 1, bc + 1 and ca + 1 are all perfect squares.
- 5. Find all solutions in integers to $x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = 2xyz$.
- 6. Prove that there are infinitely many pairs of positive integers a, b such that $a \mid b^2 + 1$ and $b \mid a^2 + 1$.
- 7. Let a and b be two positive integers. Prove that

$$a^2 + \left\lceil \frac{4a^2}{b} \right\rceil$$

is not a square.

3 Homework

- 1. We call a 5-tuple of integers arrangeable if its elements can be labelled a, b, c, d, e in some order such that a b + c d + e = 0. Determine all 2022-tuples of integers such that if we place them in order around a circle, then any 5-tuple of numbers in consecutive positions is arrangeable.
- 2. Find all positive integers n such that

$$\sqrt{\frac{7^n+1}{2}}$$

is prime.

3. Let a and b be positive integers. Show that if 4ab-1 divides $(4a^2-1)^2$, then a=b.