



planetmath.org

Math for the people, by the people.

Archimedes' cylinders in cube

Canonical name	ArchimedesCylindersInCube
Date of creation	2013-03-22 17:20:51
Last modified on	2013-03-22 17:20:51
Owner	pahio (2872)
Last modified by	pahio (2872)
Numerical id	7
Author	pahio (2872)
Entry type	Example
Classification	msc 51M25
Classification	msc 51-00
Synonym	perpendicular cylinders
Synonym	cylinders inscribed in cube
Related topic	SubstitutionNotation

The following problem has been solved by **Archimedes**:

Two distinct circular cylinders are inscribed in a cube; the axes thus intersect each other perpendicularly. Determine the volume common to both cylinders, when the radius of the base of the cylinders is r .

If the solid common to both cylinders is cut with a plane parallel to the axes of both cylinders, the figure of intersection is a square. Denote the distance of the plane from the center of the cube be x . By the Pythagorean theorem, half of the side of the square is $\sqrt{r^2 - x^2}$ and the area of the square is $4(\sqrt{r^2 - x^2})^2$. Accordingly, we have the function

$$A(x) := 4(r^2 - x^2)$$

for the area of the intersection square. If we let x here to grow from 0 to r , then half of the given solid is got. By the volume of the <http://planetmath.org/VolumeAsIntegral> entry, the half volume of the solid is

$$\frac{1}{2}V = \int_0^r 4(r^2 - x^2) dx = 4 \int_{x=0}^r \left(r^2 x - \frac{x^3}{3} \right) = \frac{8}{3}r^3.$$

So the volume in the question is $\frac{16}{3}r^3$. It is $\frac{2}{3}$ of the volume of the cube.