

General Topology Math Notes

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1 Intro to Topology

1.1 Why Topology?

Topology can appear where we least expect it...

- Algebraic Number Theory - Next to Euclidean topology, can define other topologies on \mathbb{Q} (related to how often primes divide a number). Extends to Adeles, Langlands programme, etc
- Arithmetic Progressions in the Integers - An arithmetic progression of length k is a set $\{a, a + d, \dots, a + (k - 1)d\}$ Finding subsets of \mathbb{N} that contain arbitrarily long APs:

– $2\mathbb{N}$ or \mathbb{N}

- Primes (Green-Tao Theorem, 2007). Green-Tao theorem relies on **Szemerédi's Theorem**: Any dense enough subset of \mathbb{N} contains arbitrarily long APs

Furstenberg's idea: Get from $A \subseteq \mathbb{N}$ to $(a_i \in \{0, 1\}^{\mathbb{N}})$ with $a_i \begin{cases} 1 & i \in A \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases}$

Use topological dynamics to study this: A topological dynamical system is a triple of X cpt, $T : X \rightarrow X$ continuous, and a probability measure μ preserved by T (what)

1.2 Topological Spaces and Examples

Definition 1.2.1: Topological Space

A **topological space** is a pair (X, \mathcal{T}) , where X is a nonempty set, and \mathcal{T} is a collection of subsets of X which satisfies:

1. $\emptyset \in \mathcal{T}$ and $X \in \mathcal{T}$
2. if $U_\lambda \in \mathcal{T}$ for each $\lambda \in A$ (where A is some indexing set), then $\bigcup_{\lambda \in A} U_\lambda \in \mathcal{T}$
3. If $U_1, U_2 \in \mathcal{T}$, then $U_1 \cap U_2 \in \mathcal{T}$

1.2.2 Examples of Topological Spaces

1. \mathbb{R}^n with the Euclidean Topology - induced by the Euclidean Metric
2. For any set X , $\mathcal{T} = \mathcal{P}(X)$ (discrete topology)
3. For any set X , $\mathcal{T} = \{\emptyset, X\}$ (indiscrete topology)
4. $X = \{0, 1, 2\}$ with $\mathcal{T} = \{\emptyset, X, \{0\}, \{0, 1\}, \{0, 2\}\}$
5. $X = \mathbb{R}$ and U open (aka, in \mathcal{T}) if $\mathbb{R} \setminus U$ is finite or $U = \emptyset$

Proof for 5:

1. $\emptyset \in \mathcal{T}$, \emptyset is finite $\implies X \in \mathcal{T}$
2. Intersections of finite sets are finite
3. Unions of finite sets are finite

Definition 1.2.3: Neighbourhood of a point

A **neighbourhood** of a point $x \in X$ is a subset $N \subseteq X$ s.t. $x \in U \subseteq N$ for some open subset $U \subseteq X$

Definition 1.2.4: Metric Space

A **metric space** (X, d) is a nonempty set X together with a function

$$d : X \times X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$$

with the following properties:

1. $d(x, y) \geq 0$ for all $x, y \in X$ and $d(x, y) = 0$ iff $x = y$
2. $d(x, y) = d(y, x)$ for all $x, y \in X$
3. $d(x, z) \leq d(x, y) + d(y, z)$ for all $x, y, z \in X$

The function d is called the metric. Point 3 is called the *triangle inequality*

For any $x \in X$ and any positive real number r the **open ball** in X with centre x and radius r is defined by

$$B(x, r) = \{y \in X \mid d(x, y) < r\}$$

We declare a subset U of X to be *open in the metric topology given by d* iff for each $a \in U$ there is an $r > 0$ such that $B(a, r) \subseteq U$

If (X, \mathcal{T}) is a topological space, and if X admits a metric whose metric topology is precisely \mathcal{T} we say that (X, \mathcal{T}) is **metrisable**. Thus the euclidean spaces with their usual topologies are metrisable

1.2.5 Examples of Metric Spaces

1. Any set X with $d(x, y) = \begin{cases} 0, & x = y \\ 1, & \text{else} \end{cases}$
2. \mathbb{R}^n with $d(x, y) = |x - y| = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - y_i)^2}$
3. $C([0, 1])$ with $d(f, g) = \max_{t \in [0, 1]} |f(t) - g(t)|$
4. $C([0, 1])$ with $d(f, g) = \sqrt{\int_0^1 |f(t) - g(t)|^2 dt}$

1.2.6 Topologies on Metric spaces

We want to define a topology on (X, d) . For this, we want open balls to be open in the topology

Definition 1.2.7: Base

For a set X , a basis \mathcal{B} is a collection of subsets such that

1. $\bigcup_{B \in \mathcal{B}} B = X$
2. $B_1 \cap B_2 \in \mathcal{B}$ for all $B_1, B_2 \in \mathcal{B}$

The **topology generated by \mathcal{B}** is

$$\mathcal{T} := \left\{ \bigcup_{i \in I} B_i, I \text{ index set, } B_i \in \mathcal{B} \right\}$$

Note: This is a topology because

$$(\cup_{i \in I} B_i) \cap (\cup_{j \in J} B_j) = \bigcup_{i \in I, j \in J} \underbrace{B_i \cap B_j}_{\in \mathcal{B}} \in \mathcal{T}$$

Definition 1.2.8: Metric Topology

$$\text{Let } \mathcal{B} = \left\{ \bigcap_{i=1}^n B_{r_i}(x_i), n \in \mathbb{N}, r_i > 0, x_i \in X, \forall i \right\}$$

The **metric topology** is the topology generated by this basis

Observation A set U is open in the metric topology $\iff \forall x \in U, \exists r > 0$ s.t. $B_r(x) \subseteq U$

- \Leftarrow : For each $x \in U$, let r_x s.t. $B_{r_x}(x) \subseteq U$. Then $U = \bigcup_{x \in U} B_{r_x}(x)$ is open
- \Rightarrow : Let $x \in U$ be given. Know that $x \in B_{r_1}(x_1) \cup \dots \cup B_{r_n}(x_n)$ for some n, r_1, x_1 . For each i , there is $\delta_i > 0$ s.t. $B_{\delta_i}(x) \subseteq B_{r_i}(x_i)$.

huh?

Theorem 1.2.9: random ms prop

If X carries metrics d, \tilde{d} such that $ad(x, y) \leq \tilde{d}(x, y) \leq Ad(x, y)$ for some $a, A > 0$, then the induced topologies agree

Definition 1.2.10: Subspace Topology

Let (X, \mathcal{T}) be a topological space, and let $A \subseteq X$ be any subset. Then the **subspace topology** on A consists of all sets of the form $U \cap A$ where $U \in \mathcal{T}$

Example: $(-1, 1) \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ with euclidean topology. The subspace topology is

$$\{(-1, 1) \cap U, U \subseteq \mathbb{R} \text{ open}\}$$

$(-1, 1)$ is closed in the subspace topology

Theorem 1.2.11: Topology Lemmas

1.3 If (X, \mathcal{T}) is a topological space and U_1, \dots, U_n are open sets, then the intersection $\bigcap_{i=1}^n U_i$ is also open

1.6 In order to show that a set $U \subseteq X$ is open, it is enough to show that for every $x \in U$ there is an open set V with $x \in V \subseteq U$

1.6 A subset U of \mathbb{R}^n is *open for the usual topology* iff for each $a \in U$ there exists an $r > 0$ s.t.

$$|x - a| < r \implies x \in U$$

The collection of open sets thus defined is called the **usual topology on \mathbb{R}^n** . Note

that open balls are open sets under this definition

Definition 1.2.12: Topology Small Definitions

•

1.3 Closed sets, Closure, Interior, and Boundary

Definition 1.3.1: Closed Subsets

Let (X, \mathcal{T}) be a topological space. A subset $A \subseteq X$ is **closed** iff its complement $X \setminus A = A^C := \{x \in X \mid x \notin A\}$ is open in X

Note: A set being “closed” has no connection with “not being open”

1.3.2 Examples of open and closed sets

- A set that is neither open nor closed: $[0, 1) \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ under Euclidean topology
- A set that is both closed and open: \emptyset or X

Theorem 1.3.3

Let (X, \mathcal{T}) be a topological space. Then

1. \emptyset and X are closed.
2. The union of finitely many closed sets is a closed set
3. The intersection of any collection of closed sets is a closed set

$\bigcup_{i \in I} A_i$ is not necessarily closed.

$$A_n = \left[-2 + \frac{1}{n}, 2 - \frac{1}{n} \right] \text{ in } \mathbb{R}, \bigcup_{i=1}^n A_i = (-2, 2)$$

1.3.4 Topological proof that there are infinitely many primes (Furstenberg)

Proof. Look at \mathbb{Z} with

$$\mathcal{B} := \{S(a, b), a \neq 0, b \in \mathbb{Z}\} \quad \text{and} \quad S(a, b) = \{an + b, n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$$

Let the open sets be the one generated by this basis. We can show

1. $S(a, b)$ is both open and closed.
2. All open sets are infinite.

1. $S(a, b) = \mathbb{Z} \setminus \bigcup_{i=1}^{a-1} S(a, b - i)$

2. Clear

Thus:

$$\underbrace{\mathbb{Z} \setminus \{-1, 1\}}_{\text{not closed}} = \bigcup_{p \text{ primes}} \overbrace{S(p, 0)}^{\text{closed}}$$

If there were only finitely many primes, right hand side would be closed

□

1.4 Closure and stuff

Definition 1.4.1: Closure, Interior, Boundary

Let (X, \mathcal{T}) be a topological space.

1. The **closure** of a subset $A \subseteq X$ is the smallest closed set such that $A \subseteq \overline{A}$.

$$\overline{A} := \bigcap_{\substack{C \subseteq X^{\text{closed}} \\ A \subseteq C}} C$$

2. The (open) **interior** of a subset $A \subseteq X$ is the biggest open set U contained in A

$$\text{int } A = A^\circ := \bigcup_{\substack{U \subseteq X^{\text{open}} \\ U \subseteq A}} U$$

3. The **boundary** or **frontier** of a subset $A \subseteq X$ is

$$\partial A := \overline{A} \setminus A^\circ$$

4. A subset A of X is **dense** in X iff $\overline{A} = X$

E.g.: $\mathbb{Q} \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ with the Euclidean topology

Theorem 1.4.2: Closure and Interior of Complement

Let (X, \mathcal{T}) be a topological space and $A \subseteq X$. Then

1. The closure of the complement is the complement of the interior:

$$\overline{X \setminus A} = X \setminus (A^\circ)$$

2. the interior of the complement is the complement of the closure:

$$(X \setminus A)^\circ = X \setminus \overline{A}$$

Definition 1.4.3: Limits in Topological spaces

A sequence (x_n) converges to $x \in X$ if $\forall U$ open with $x \in U$, $\exists N$ s.t. $x_n \in U$ for all $n \geq N$

Definition 1.4.4: Limit Set

\overline{A} can be thought as the set of limits. Formally define the **Limit Set** as

$$A' = \{x \in X : \forall U \subseteq X, x \in U, \text{ open } \exists a \in A, \text{ s.t. } a \in U\}$$

But, limits in general are much worse behaved in topological spaces, e.g. no unique limit point
Example: a topological space X and a sequence (x_n) which does not have a unique limit (i.e. $\exists x \neq y$ s.t. $x_n \rightarrow x$ and $x_n \rightarrow y$ in the sense defined): Nontrivial X with the indiscrete topology $\{\emptyset, X\}$

1.5 Hausdorff Spaces

Problem: Non-unique limits are nasty :(

Definition 1.5.1: Hausdorff Space

A topological space (X, \mathcal{T}) is **Hausdorff** if for each $x, y \in X$ with $x \neq y$ there exist *disjoint* open sets U and V s.t. $x \in U$ and $y \in V$
This space has *unique limits*!

If (X, d) is a metric space then it is automatically Hausdorff, so any metrisable space is Hausdorff. The trivial topology on a set with more than one element is not Hausdorff. Not every Hausdorff space is metrisable

Non-Hausdorff spaces are a lot more annoying to work with - for example you can have multiple limits in non-Hausdorff spaces

Theorem 1.5.2: Open sets on \mathbb{R} with Euclidean Topology

- A set U is open iff there are open intervals I_j s.t.

$$U = \bigcup_{j=1}^{\infty} I_j$$

- A set A is closed iff there are F_j (union of two closed intervals) s.t.

$$A = \bigcap_{j=1}^{\infty} F_j$$

Definition 1.5.3: Convergence of Hausdorff Spaces

A sequence (x_n) of members of a topological space X converges to $x \in X$ if for every open set U containing x , there exists an N such that $n \geq N \implies x_n \in U$

Theorem 1.5.4: Hausdorff Convergence Uniqueness

Suppose (X, \mathcal{T}) is Hausdorff. Then a sequence (x_n) can converge to at most one limit.

Being Hausdorff is what's called a *topological property*, which means whether it is true in a particular case depends only on the open sets of the space in question.

In contrast, the property of *completeness* of a metric space is not a topological property as there exist sets upon which one can put two distinct metrics, one complete and one not, yet for which the metric topologies coincide

Definition 1.5.5: Cauchy Sequences

Let (X, d) be a metric space

1. A **Cauchy Sequence** is a sequence (x_n) with each $x_n \in X$ with the property that for each $\epsilon > 0$, there exists an N s.t. $m, n \geq N \implies d(x_m, x_n) < \epsilon$
2. (X, d) is **complete** if every Cauchy Sequence converges

Caveat: In general, this does not have to converge to an $x \in X$

Example: \mathbb{Q} with the Euclidean metric.

Definition 1.5.6: Complete Space

A metric space is called **complete** if all Cauchy sequences converge to a point in the space

Definition 1.5.7: Closure in Metric Spaces

Let (X, d) be a complete metric space and $A \subseteq X$. A point x is in the **closure** of $A \iff \exists x_i \rightarrow x$ with $x \in A$

2 Continuity

2.1 Continuity

Definition 2.1.1: Continuity

Let $(X, \mathcal{T}), (Y, \tilde{\mathcal{T}})$ be topological spaces and $f : X \rightarrow Y$. f is **continuous** if for all $U \in \tilde{\mathcal{T}}$, $f^{-1}(U) \in \mathcal{T}$

Equivalently:

- $U \subseteq Y$ open $\implies f^{-1}(U)$ open
- $A \subseteq Y$ closed $\implies f^{-1}(A)$ closed

2.1.2 Why take f^{-1}

Properties: For U, V sets in Y ,

- $f^{-1}(U \cap V) = f^{-1}(U) \cap f^{-1}(V)$
- $f^{-1}(U^C) = f^{-1}(U)^C$
- $f^{-1}(U \cup V) = f^{-1}(U) \cup f^{-1}(V)$

Example: \mathbb{R} with Euclidean Topology

Proof. "Proof" that $[-1, 1]$ is open:

Take $[-1, 1]$ with the subspace topology $\mathcal{T} := \{[-1, 1] \cap U, U \subseteq \mathbb{R} \text{ open}\}$

Embedding $i : [-1, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, x \mapsto x$ is continuous

$[-1, 1]$ open in subspace topology

$i \text{ cont} \implies i([-1, 1])$ is open this is actually wrong! U open $\not\Rightarrow f(U)$ open

But $i([-1, 1]) = [-1, 1] \subseteq \mathbb{R}$

□

Definition 2.1.3: Formal Definition of Continuity

Let $(X, d), (Y, d)$ be metric spaces with the metric topology. $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is continuous as above iff $\forall x \in X, \forall \epsilon > 0, \exists \delta > 0$ s.t.

$$d(x, y) < \delta \implies d(f(x), f(y)) < \epsilon$$

Proof. \implies **Direction**

Recall: U open in metric topology if $\forall x \in U, \exists r > 0$ s.t. $B_r(x) \subseteq U$, where $B_r(x) = \{y \in X : d(x, y) < r\}$

\implies Let $x \in X$ be given, $\epsilon > 0$. Let $y = f(x) \in Y, U = B_\epsilon(y) = \{y' \in Y : \tilde{d}(y, y') < \epsilon\}$.

f cont $\implies f^{-1}(U)$ is open. $x \in f^{-1}(U) \implies \exists \delta > 0$ s.t. $B_\delta(x) \subseteq f^{-1}(U)$

$\implies \forall x' \in X$ s.t. $d(x, x') < \delta, x' \in B_\delta(x) \subseteq f^{-1}(U)$.

$\implies f(x') \in B_\delta(f(x)) \implies \tilde{d}(f(x), f(x')) < \epsilon$

\Leftarrow **Direction**

Let U be open in Y . WTS: $f^{-1}(U)$ is open.

So it is enough to show for all $x \in f^{-1}(U), \exists \delta > 0$ s.t. $B_\delta(x) \subseteq f^{-1}(U)$.

Let x be given, $y := f(x) \in U$. U open $\implies \exists \epsilon > 0$ s.t. $B_\epsilon(y) \subseteq U$.

By assumption $\exists \delta > 0$ s.t.

$$d(x', x) < \delta \implies \tilde{d}(f(x'), f(x)) < \epsilon$$

But, $\{y' : d(y', f(x)) < \epsilon\} \subseteq U$ by choice of ϵ .

$\implies B_\delta(x) \subseteq f^{-1}(U)$

□

2.2 Homeomorphisms

Definition 2.2.1: Homeomorphism

Let $(X, \mathcal{T}), (Y, \tilde{\mathcal{T}})$ be topological spaces. A function $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is a **homeomorphism** (or **bi-continuous**) if f is bijective, f is continuous, and $f^{-1}Y \rightarrow X$ is continuous

A “Great goal of Topology”: Understand topological spaces up to homeomorphisms.

Say that a property of a topological space is a **topological invariant** if it is preserved by homeomorphism. Example: Being Hausdorff

Example 2.2.2: Examples of Homeomorphisms

- (X, \mathcal{T}) topological space, $\text{id} : X \rightarrow X, x \mapsto x$
- $X = \mathbb{R}^n, A : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$ Linear + Invertible
- Example which is **not** a homeomorphism:

$$f : \underbrace{\mathbb{R}}_{\text{metric topology}} \rightarrow \underbrace{\mathbb{R}}_{\text{indiscrete topology } \{\emptyset, \mathbb{R}\}}, x \mapsto x$$

Problem: f^{-1} is not continuous

Definition 2.2.3: Another continuity definition

Let $(X, d), (Y, \tilde{d})$ be metric spaces with the metric topology. $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is continuous iff

$$\forall x \in X, \forall \epsilon > 0, \exists \delta > 0 \text{ s.t. } \forall y \in X, d(x, y) < \delta \implies \tilde{d}(f(x), f(y)) < \epsilon$$

Observe: $\forall y \in X$ is equivalent to

$$B_\delta(x) \subseteq f^{-1}(\tilde{B}_\epsilon(f(x)))$$

Why? Let A, B be things which can be true for $y \in X$. i.e.

$$A \implies B \text{ is equivalent to } \{y : A \text{ true}\} \subseteq \{y : B \text{ true}\}$$

$$\text{Then: } B_\delta(x) = \{y, \underbrace{d(x, y) < \delta}_A\}, f^{-1}(\tilde{B}_\epsilon(f(x))) = \{y \in X : \underbrace{\tilde{d}(f(x), f(y)) < \epsilon}_B\}$$

$$\text{WTS: } U \text{ open} \iff \forall x \in U, \exists r > 0 \text{ s.t. } B_\delta(x) \subseteq U$$

$$\implies \text{"Let } x, \epsilon \text{ be given, WTS that } \exists \delta \text{ s.t. } B_\delta(x) \subseteq f^{-1}(\tilde{B}_\epsilon f(x))$$

Example: f cont + bijective but not a homeomorphism:

indiscrete topology: only \emptyset and X are open

$$f : \underbrace{X}_{\text{discrete topology - every set is open}} \rightarrow \underbrace{X}_{\text{identity}}$$

discrete topology - every set is open

Lemma 2.2.4: Homeomorphism-condition

For a set X with topologies $\mathcal{T}, \tilde{\mathcal{T}}$. The identity map $(X, \mathcal{T}) \rightarrow (X, \tilde{\mathcal{T}}), x \mapsto x$ is

- continuous $\iff \tilde{\mathcal{T}} \subseteq \mathcal{T}$
- a homeo $\iff \tilde{\mathcal{T}} = \mathcal{T}$

Theorem 2.2.5: Mapping prop

- Let $f : X \rightarrow Y, g : Y \rightarrow Z$ continuous. The map $f \circ g$ is continuous

$$\text{As } (f \circ g)^{-1}(U) = f^{-1}(g^{-1}(U))$$

- If $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is constant, then f is continuous
- In particular, f, g homeo $\implies f \circ g$ is a homeo

3 The Clark Barwick Era

Theorem 3.0.1: Clark Barwick Quotes List

“Shadows are harshest when there is only one lamp” - 04/10/24

“If one must choose between rigour and meaning, then I shall unhesitantly choose the latter” - 25/10/24

“Everyone knows what a curve is, until they have learned enough mathematics to have become confused” - F. Klein (29/10/24)

“You become what you give your attention to” - (05/11/24)

3.1 More top

3.1.1 Something weird

$$[0, 2\pi) \rightarrow S^1 = \{z \in \mathbb{C} : \|z\| = 1\}$$

$$[0, 2\pi) \rightarrow [0, 1) \text{ is open, and is also creepy}$$

Not a homeomorphism

Claim: A continuous bijection in which the **image** of every open set is open is a homeomorphism

Definition 3.1.2: Subspace Topology

For X a topological space, and $T \subseteq X$, $\mathcal{U} \subseteq T$ is open iff $\exists V \subseteq X$ open and $\mathcal{U} = V \cap T$

Definition 3.1.3: Impromptu Set Theory - Products

\mathcal{F} is a family of sets. We can talk about a product

$$\prod_{x \in \mathcal{F}} X = \{(a_x)_{x \in \mathcal{F}} : a_x \in X\}$$

Example:

$$\mathbb{R}^\infty = \prod_{i=1}^{\infty} \mathbb{R} = \{(x_1, x_2, \dots) : x_i \in \mathbb{R}\}$$

$$\prod_{x \in \mathcal{F}} = \{\phi : \mathcal{F} \Rightarrow \bigcup_{x \in \mathcal{F}} X : \phi(x) \in X\}$$

Note: the \mathcal{F} notation is pretty creepy - Clark

3.1.4 Topologising the above thing

$$\prod_{i \in I} X_i \rightarrow X_j$$

3.2 Week 4 Lecture 1

Definition 3.2.1: Quotient Topology

Define X with \sim a relation on X . We have a function

$$\begin{aligned} g : X &\rightarrow X/\sim \\ x &\mapsto [x] \end{aligned}$$

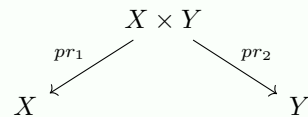
$\mathcal{U} \subseteq X/\sim$ is open iff $g^{-1}(\mathcal{U}) \subseteq X$ is open

3.3 Week 4 Lecture 2

Definition 3.3.1: Coarser and Finer

- Coarse: There are more open sets

Definition 3.3.2: Product Topology



The **Product Topology** is the coarsest possible topology such that pr_1 and pr_2 are both continuous

Definition 3.3.3: Quotient Topology

For X a topological space and \sim a relation, define a function $q : X \rightarrow X/\sim$ where the quotient top is the finest topology such that q is continuous

Definition 3.3.4: Coarse and Fine Topologies

For X a topological space and Y a set:

- $f : X \rightarrow Y$ means there exists a unique finest topology s.t. f is continuous
- $g : Y \rightarrow X$ means that there exists a unique coarsest topology s.t. g is continuous

Lemma 3.3.5: Hausdorff Coarseness

τ_1 is coarser than τ_2 and τ_1 is Hausdorff $\implies \tau_2$ is Hausdorff

3.4 Connectedness

Definition 3.4.1: Path Connected

A space X is **path-connected** if for all $x, y \in X$, there exists $\alpha : [0, 1] \xrightarrow{\text{cts}} X$ s.t. $\alpha(0) = x$ and $\alpha(1) = y$

Theorem 3.4.2

If a topological space X is path-connected, then it is also connected

3.4.3

Claim: $\mathbb{R}^n \not\cong \mathbb{R}$ for $n > 1$

4 Homotopy Theory

4.1 Homotopies

Recall that for X a topological space, it is path connected iff $\forall x, y \in X, \exists \gamma : [0, 1] \rightarrow X$ such that

$$\gamma(0) = x \quad \text{and} \quad \gamma(1) = y$$

Sameness := connectability by a path

Definition 4.1.1: Homotopy

Let $f, g : X \rightarrow Y$ be two continuous maps. A **homotopy** between them is a continuous map

$$h : X \times I \rightarrow Y$$

such that $\forall x \in X, h(x, 0) = f(x)$ and $h(x, 1) = g(x)$