

Give an example of family of intervals $A_n, n = 1, 2, \dots$, such that $A_{n+1} \subset A_n$ for all n and $\cap_{n=1}^{\infty} A_n = \emptyset$.

Let A_n be the interval $(\frac{n}{n+1}, 1)$, then A_{n+1} is the interval $(\frac{n+1}{n+2}, 1)$

The greatest lower bound of A_n is $\frac{n}{n+1}$ and the greatest lower bound of A_{n+1} is $\frac{n+1}{n+2}$. They have the same lowest upper bound, 1.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{n}{n+1} &= \frac{n}{n+1} \frac{n+2}{n+2} && \text{Multiply and divide by } n+2 \\ &= \frac{n^2+n}{(n+1)(n+2)} && \text{Expand out numerator} \\ &< \frac{n^2+n+1}{(n+1)(n+2)} && \text{Add 1 to numerator} \\ &= \frac{(n+1)^2}{(n+1)(n+2)} && \text{Factor out } n+1 \text{ from numerator} \\ &= \frac{n+1}{n+2} && \text{Cancel out } n+1 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore $A_{n+1} \subset A_n$ since the greatest lower bound of A_n is strictly less than the greatest lower bound of A_{n+1} .

Now as $n \rightarrow \infty$, $\frac{n}{n+1} \rightarrow 1$, so $A_n \rightarrow (1, 1) = \emptyset$ since there are no values in this range. The intersection of the empty set with any set is the empty set. Therefore, $\cap_{n=1}^{\infty} A_n = \emptyset$. The family of intervals that lead to this conclusion was the interval $(\frac{n}{n+1}, 1)$, $n = 1, 2, \dots$