

Week 3 Discrete Math Notes

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Pigeonhole Principle

Simple Form

If $n + 1$ objects are distributed into n boxes, then at least one box contains two or more of the objects.

Stronger Form

Let q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n be positive integers. If

$$(q_1 + q_2 + \dots + q_n) - n + 1$$

Objects are distributed into n boxes, then either the first box contains at least q_1 objects, or the second box contains at least q_2 boxes, \dots , or the n th box contains at least q_n objects.

There is special case, where q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n are all equal to some integer r , this is called the corollary and it is where the simple form is derived from.

Corollary:

Let n and r be positive integers. If $n(r - 1) + 1$ objects are distributed into n boxes, then at least one of the boxes contains r or more objects.