

# Rational numbers, irrational numbers: each dense in real numbers

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In ZFC, with standard definitions of the real, rational, and irrational numbers, let  $p_i$  be an irrational number between zero and one for  $i$  from a suitably large well-ordered index set  $X$ . With the well-ordering of the index set, let the  $i$ 'th element  $p_{i+1}$  be an irrational number between zero and  $p_i$ , where  $i+1$  is the least element of the well-ordering  $X_i$  setminus  $i$ , that is defined to equal  $X_{i+1}$ . There are uncountably many irrational numbers less than each  $p_i$  and greater than zero, else the irrational numbers are countable (or the real numbers are not standard). Define  $P$  to be comprised of the  $p_i$ 's. There exists a rational number  $q_i$  between  $p_i$  and  $p_{i+1}$ , else the rational numbers are not dense in the reals thus that between any two irrational numbers there is a rational number. For each of the irrational  $p_i$ 's, there thus exists at least one unique rational  $q_i$  between  $p_i$  and  $p_{i+1}$ , and infinitely many. Let the ordered pair  $(p_i, q_i)$  be an element of a function, as a set, from  $P$  to  $Q$ . If there is an uncountable set  $P$  of irrational numbers in  $(0,1)$ , then there is a 1-to-1 function defined by the set  $\{(p_i, q_i), i \in X\}$  from uncountable  $P$  to a subset of  $Q$  the rational numbers, and there is thus an injection from an uncountable set of irrational numbers to a subset of the rational numbers, a subset of a countable set is countable.

Contradiction ensues, from that an uncountable set injects into a countable set. Which presupposition is false? Perhaps it is so that the irrationals can not be well-ordered in their normal ordering, but, via separation, for any given subset of the irrational numbers in  $(0, p_i)$  there exists  $(0, p_{i+1})$  for any  $p_i$  such that  $0 < p_{i+1} < p_i$ , or the irrationals are not dense in the reals. Perhaps it is so that there are no uncountable subsets of the irrationals in  $(0,1)$ , but then the irrationals wouldn't be uncountable. The rationals are dense in the reals so between any distinct  $p_i$  and  $p_{i+1}$  there exists a  $q_i$ , or  $p_i = p_{i+1}$  and  $p_i \neq p_{i+1}$ . In ZFC there exists a suitably large well-ordered index set.

Quantify over sets, ZF(C) and/or the standard definitions of the real, rational, and irrational numbers are thus inconsistent.

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