

Notes on Inequalities

1. Properties of Absolute Values of Real Numbers

The absolute value of a real number x is defined as

$$|x| = \begin{cases} x & \text{if } x \geq 0 \\ -x & \text{if } x < 0 \end{cases}$$

For any real numbers x , a , and b , the following relations hold:

a) $|x| \geq 0$ and is equal to zero only when $x = 0$.

b) $|-x| = |x|$.

c) $|x|^2 = x^2$.

d) $|ab| = |a| \cdot |b|$.

e) $|\frac{a}{b}| = \frac{|a|}{|b|}$.

2. Triangle Inequality

For real numbers x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n ,

$$|x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_n| \leq |x_1| + |x_2| + \dots + |x_n|.$$

The equality holds when all the x_i have the same sign.

Another version of this inequality is

$$|\pm x_1 \pm x_2 + \dots + \pm x_n| \leq |x_1| + |x_2| + \dots + |x_n|.$$

3. AM-GM Inequality

For non-negative real numbers x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n ,

$$\frac{x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_n}{n} \geq \sqrt[n]{x_1 x_2 \dots x_n}$$

The equality holds when $x_1 = x_2 = \dots = x_n$.

4. HM-GM-AM Inequality

For $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \in \mathbb{R}^+$,

$$\frac{n}{\frac{1}{x_1} + \frac{1}{x_2} + \dots + \frac{1}{x_n}} \leq \sqrt[n]{x_1 x_2 \dots x_n} \leq \frac{x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_n}{n}.$$

The equality holds on both sides when $x_1 = x_2 = \dots = x_n$.

5. Rearrangement Inequality

If $a_1 \leq a_2 \leq \dots \leq a_n$ and $b_1 \leq b_2 \leq \dots \leq b_n$ are two collections of real numbers in increasing order, then for any permutation $(a'_1, a'_2, \dots, a'_n)$ of (a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n) ,

$$a_1 b_1 + a_2 b_2 + \dots + a_n b_n \geq a'_1 b_1 + a'_2 b_2 + a'_n b_n.$$

The equality hold if and only if $(a'_1, a'_2, \dots, a'_n) = (a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n)$.

It follows that

$$a_1 b_1 + a_2 b_2 + \dots + a_n b_n \geq a_n b_1 + a_{n-1} b_2 + \dots + a_1 b_n.$$

6. Cauchy-Schwarz Inequality

For real numbers x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n ,

$$\left(\sum_{i=1}^n x_i y_i \right)^2 \leq \left(\sum_{i=1}^n x_i^2 \right) \left(\sum_{i=1}^n y_i^2 \right).$$

The equality holds if and only if there exists some $\lambda \in \mathbb{R}$ such that $x_i = \lambda y_i$ for all $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$.

7. Cauchy-Schwarz Inequality in Engel Form

For real numbers a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n and $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n > 0$,

$$\frac{a_1^2}{x_1} + \frac{a_2^2}{x_2} + \dots + \frac{a_n^2}{x_n} \geq \frac{(a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_n)^2}{x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_n}.$$

The equality holds if and only if

$$\frac{a_1}{x_1} = \frac{a_2}{x_2} = \dots = \frac{a_n}{x_n}.$$

8. Quadratic Mean-Arithmetic Mean Inequality

For $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n \in \mathbb{R}^+$,

$$\sqrt{\frac{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + \dots + x_n^2}{n}} \geq \frac{x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_n}{n}.$$

9. Tchebychev's Inequality

If $a_1 \leq a_2 \leq \dots \leq a_n$ and $b_1 \leq b_2 \leq \dots \leq b_n$ are two collections of real numbers,

$$\frac{a_1 b_1 + a_2 b_2 + \dots + a_n b_n}{n} \geq \left(\frac{a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_n}{n} \right) \left(\frac{b_1 + b_2 + \dots + b_n}{n} \right).$$

The equality holds when $a_1 = a_2 = \dots = a_n$ or $b_1 = b_2 = \dots = b_n$.

10. Geometric Inequalities

a) If A , B , and C are points on a plane, then

$$AB + BC \geq AC.$$

The equality holds if and only if B lies on the line segment AC .

b) In a triangle, the longest side is the opposite to the greatest angle and vice versa.

Hence, if in a triangle ABC we have $\angle A > \angle B$, then $BC > CA$.

11. Ptolemy's Inequality

If $ABCD$ is a convex quadrilateral, then

$$AC \cdot BD \leq (AB \cdot CD + BC \cdot AD).$$

The equality holds if and only if $ABCD$ is a cyclic quadrilateral.

12. Euler's Inequality

If R and r are the circumradius and the inradius of a triangle ABC ,

$$R \geq 2r.$$

The equality holds if and only if the triangle ABC is equilateral.

13. Leibniz's Inequality

In a triangle ABC with side lengths a , b , and c and circumradius R , the following relation holds:

$$9R^2 \geq a^2 + b^2 + c^2.$$

14. Symmetric Functions of the Sides of a Triangle

If a , b , and c are the lengths of the sides of a triangle, s is its semiperimeter, r is its inradius, and R is its circumradius, the following relations hold:

$$a + b + c = 2s$$

$$ab + bc + ca = s^2 + r^2 + 4rR$$

$$abc = 4Rrs$$

$$s^3 - (a + b + c)s^2 + (ab + bc + ca)s - abc = r^2s$$

$$a^2 + b^2 + c^2 = 2(s^2 - r^2 - 4Rr)$$

$$a^3 + b^3 + c^3 = 2(s^3 - 3r^2s - 6Rrs)$$