

## An example using the Baire Category Theorem

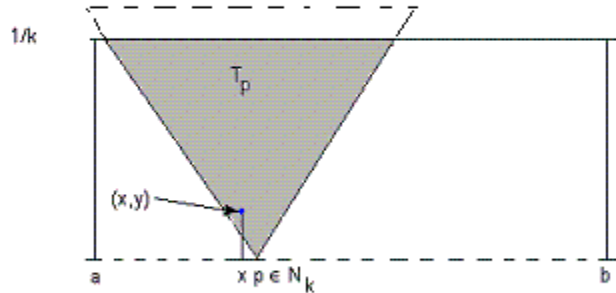
Suppose that for each irrational  $p$ , an equilateral triangle  $T_p$  (including its interior) is constructed in the plane with one vertex at  $(p, 0)$  and its opposite side above and parallel to the  $x$ -axis.

Prove that  $\bigcup\{T_p : p \in \mathbb{P}\}$  must contain a rectangle of the form  $[a, b] \times (0, \frac{1}{k}]$  for some  $a, b \in \mathbb{R}$  and some  $k \in \mathbb{N}$ .

**Proof**  $N_k = \{p \in \mathbb{P} : T_p \text{ has height } \geq \frac{1}{k}\}$ . By hypothesis,  $\mathbb{P} = \bigcup_{k=1}^{\infty} N_k$  and therefore  $\mathbb{R} = \bigcup_{k=1}^{\infty} N_k \cup \bigcup_{q \in \mathbb{Q}} \{q\}$ . Since  $\mathbb{R}$  is second category in itself and each  $\{q\}$  is nowhere dense in  $\mathbb{R}$ ,  $\exists k \in \mathbb{N}$  for which  $N_k$  is not nowhere dense, that is,  $\text{int}_{\mathbb{R}} \text{cl}_{\mathbb{R}} N_k \neq \emptyset$ . Therefore  $\text{cl}_{\mathbb{R}} N_k$  contains some open interval  $(a, b)$ .

For this  $k$ , we claim that the rectangle  $[a, b] \times (0, \frac{1}{k}] \subseteq \bigcup\{T_p : p \in \mathbb{P}\}$ .

If  $(x, y) \in [a, b] \times (0, \frac{1}{k}]$ , then  $x \in [a, b]$ . Since  $(a, b) \subseteq \text{cl}_{\mathbb{R}} N_k$  there are points  $p \in N_k$  arbitrarily close to  $x$  and if we choose such a  $p$  sufficiently close to  $x$ , it is geometrically clear (since  $y > 0$ ) that  $(x, y) \in T_p$ :



*Note: In the hypothesis, we could weaken “equilateral” to read “...” ?*