

107 (Cantor's diagonal) Prove  $\neg \exists f: \text{nat} \rightarrow \text{nat} \rightarrow \text{nat} \cdot \forall g: \text{nat} \rightarrow \text{nat} \cdot \exists n: \text{nat} \cdot f\ n = g$  .

After trying the question, scroll down to the solution.

§

Here is a lemma. It starts with the local axiom  $f: nat \rightarrow nat \rightarrow nat$ .

$$\begin{aligned}
 & f: nat \rightarrow nat \rightarrow nat && \text{function inclusion (or arrow) and specialization} \\
 \Rightarrow & \forall m: nat \cdot f m: nat \rightarrow nat && \text{function inclusion (or arrow) and specialization} \\
 \Rightarrow & \forall m, p: nat \cdot f m p: nat && \text{specialize } p \text{ to } m \\
 \Rightarrow & \forall m: nat \cdot f m m: nat && \text{nat construction} \\
 \Rightarrow & \forall m: nat \cdot f m m + 1: nat && \text{domain law} \\
 = & nat: \square \langle m: nat \cdot f m m + 1 \rangle \wedge \forall m: nat \cdot f m m + 1: nat && \text{function inclusion (or arrow)} \\
 = & \langle m: nat \cdot f m m + 1 \rangle : nat \rightarrow nat
 \end{aligned}$$

Let missing domains be as in the question.

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \neg \exists f \forall g \exists n \cdot f n = g && \text{using the lemma, specialize } g \text{ to } \langle m: nat \cdot f m m + 1 \rangle \\
 \Leftarrow & \neg \exists f \exists n \cdot f n = \langle m: nat \cdot f m m + 1 \rangle && \text{function equality} \\
 = & \neg \exists f \exists n \cdot \square (f n) = \square \langle m: nat \cdot f m m + 1 \rangle \wedge \forall p: nat \cdot f n p = \langle m: nat \cdot f m m + 1 \rangle p && \text{domain} \\
 = & \neg \exists f \exists n \cdot \square (f n) = nat \wedge \forall p: nat \cdot f n p = \langle m: nat \cdot f m m + 1 \rangle p && \text{apply} \\
 = & \neg \exists f \exists n \cdot \square (f n) = nat \wedge \forall p: nat \cdot f n p = f p p + 1 && \text{specialize} \\
 \Leftarrow & \neg \exists f \exists n \cdot \square (f n) = nat \wedge f n n = f n n + 1 && \text{cancellation} \\
 = & \neg \exists f \exists n \cdot \square (f n) = nat \wedge 0 = 1 && \text{generic} \\
 = & \neg \exists f \exists n \cdot \square (f n) = nat \wedge \perp && \text{drop unused quantifiers (idempotence, domains not null)} \\
 = & \neg \perp && \text{binary law} \\
 = & \top
 \end{aligned}$$

Cantor's diagonal argument is popularly thought to prove that there are more real numbers than integers. But it does not prove that. To prove that requires an extra axiom

$$\wp A < \wp B = \neg \exists f: A \rightarrow B \cdot \forall g: B \cdot \exists n: A \cdot f n = g$$

Then we can prove  $\wp int = \wp nat$  and  $\wp nat < \wp (nat \rightarrow nat)$  and  $\wp (nat \rightarrow nat) = \wp real$ , and then conclude  $\wp int < \wp real$ . In my opinion, this extra axiom is unmotivated by any application, so I have not included it. To most mathematicians, it is somehow a fact.