# MATH 8, ASSIGNMENT 18
# EUCLIDEAN GEOMETRY 6: SIMILAR TRIANGLES

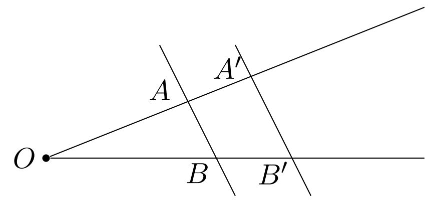
FEB 21, 2026

## Thales Theorem

**Theorem 31.** *Let points $A'$, $B'$ be on the sides of angle $\angle AOB$ as shown in the picture. Then lines $AB$ and $A'B'$ are parallel if and only if*

$$\frac{OA}{OB} = \frac{OA'}{OB'}$$

*In this case, we also have $\frac{OA}{OB} = \frac{AA'}{BB'}$*

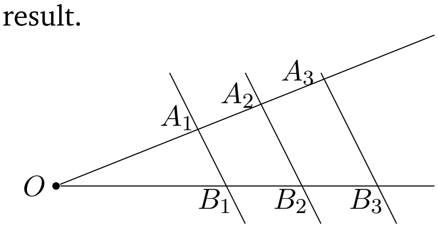



We have already seen and proved a special case of this theorem when discussing the midline of a triangle.

The proof of this theorem is unexpectedly hard. In the case when $\frac{OA}{OA'}$ is a rational number, one can use arguments similar to those we did when talking about midline. The case of irrational numbers is harder yet. We skip the proof for now; it will be discussed in Math 9.

As an immediate corollary of this theorem, we get the following result.

**Theorem 32.** *Let points $A_1, \dots, A_n$ and $B_1, \dots B_n$ on the sides of an angle be chosen so that $A_1A_2 = A_2A_3 = \cdots = A_{n-1}A_n$, and lines $A_1B_1$, $A_2B_2$, ... are parallel. Then $B_1B_2 = B_2B_3 = \cdots = B_{n-1}B_n$.*




Proof of this theorem is left to you as exercise.

## Similar triangles

**Definition.** Two triangles $\triangle ABC$, $\triangle A'B'C'$ are called *similar* if

$$\angle A \cong \angle A', \quad \angle B \cong \angle B', \quad \angle C \cong \angle C'$$

and the corresponding sides are proportional, i.e.

$$\frac{AB}{A'B'} = \frac{AC}{A'C'} = \frac{BC}{B'C'}$$

The common ratio $\frac{AB}{A'B'} = \frac{AC}{A'C'} = \frac{BC}{B'C'}$ is sometimes called the similarity coefficient.

There are some similarity tests:

**Theorem 33** (AAA similarity test)**.** *If the corresponding angles of triangles $\triangle ABC$, $\triangle A'B'C'$ are equal:*

$$\angle A \cong \angle A', \quad \angle B \cong \angle B', \quad \angle C \cong \angle C'$$

*then the triangles are similar.*

**Theorem 34** (SSS similarity test)**.** *If the corresponding sides of triangles $\triangle ABC$, $\triangle A'B'C'$ are proportional:*

$$\frac{AB}{A'B'} = \frac{AC}{A'C'} = \frac{BC}{B'C'}$$

*then the triangles are similar.*

**Theorem 35** (SAS similarity test)**.** *If two pairs of corresponding sides of triangles $\triangle ABC$, $\triangle A'B'C'$ are proportional:*

$$\frac{AB}{A'B'} = \frac{AC}{A'C'}$$

*and $\angle A \cong \angle A'$ then the triangles are similar.*

Proofs of all of these tests can be obtained from Thales theorem.

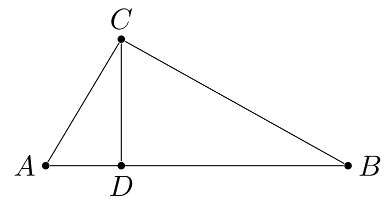
HOMEWORK

**1.** Prove Theorem 34 (using Thales Theorem). Hint: let $k = \frac{OB_1}{OA_1}$; show that then $B_iB_{i+1} = kA_iA_{i+1}$.

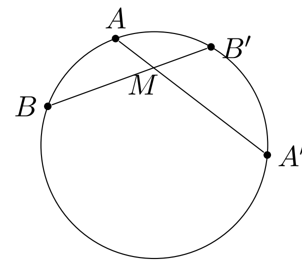
**2.** Using Theorem 34, describe how one can divide a given segment into $5$ equal parts using ruler and compass.

**3.** Given segments of length $a$, $b$, $c$, construct a segment of length $\frac{ab}{c}$ using ruler and compass.

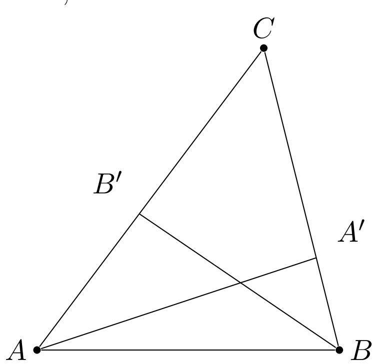
**4.** Let $ABC$ be a right triangle, $\angle C = 90°$, and let $CD$ be the altitude. Prove that triangles $\triangle ACD$, $\triangle CBD$ are similar. Deduce from this that $CD^2 = AD \cdot DB$.




**5.** Let $M$ be a point inside a circle and let $AA', BB'$ be two chords through $M$. Show that then $AM \cdot MA' = BM \cdot MB'$. [Hint: use inscribed angle theorem to show that triangles $\triangle AMB$, $\triangle B'MA'$ are similar. ]




**6.** Let $AA', BB'$ be altitudes in the acute triangle $\triangle ABC$.




(a) Show that points $A', B'$ are on a circle with diameter $AB$.
(b) Show that $\angle AA'B' = \angle ABB'$, $\angle A'B'B = \angle A'AB$
(c) Show that triangle $\triangle ABC$ is similar to triangle $\triangle A'B'C$.

***7.** Show that the angle bisector of a triangle divides the opposite side in the same proportion as the corresponding sides of the triangle: if $CM$ is angle bisector of $\angle C$, then $\frac{AM}{BM} = \frac{AC}{BC}$. [Hint: drop perpendiculars from $A$, $B$ to $CM$]