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Do You Know What's Hidden Inside That There Pi?

Tau Beta engineering professors Aziz S. Inan, Ph.D., and Peter M. Osterberg, Ph.D., look at the numerical properties within the digits involved

Pi Day is celebrated around the world every year on March 14 (3/14, or simply 314) because 314 constitutes the first three digits of number pi. In 2015, Pi Day expressed as 3/14/15 (31415) was particularly unique since 31415 represents the first five digits of pi.

In addition, this next Pi Day (3/14/16 or 31416) is also interesting since 3.1416 is the value of pi “rounded off” to 5 significant digits.

These two once-in-a-century Pi Days piqued our curiosity and motivated us to revisit the number pi, in search of finding some undiscovered interesting numerical properties “hidden” within its digits.

Historically, pi (or π), the ratio of any circle’s circumference to its diameter, has fascinated and inspired mathematicians for four millennia [1-4]. Using basic experimentation, many mathematicians in early civilizations figured out that the length of a rope wound around the circumference of a circle is equal to approximately three times the length of its diameter.

The calculation of the digits of pi was revolutionized by the development of infinite series techniques during the 16th and 17th centuries. Infinite series allowed mathematicians to compute pi with much greater precision than ever before.

Irrational Number

Pi is an irrational number, meaning that it cannot be written as the ratio of two integers. Since π is irrational, it has an infinite number of digits and does not appear to settle into a repeating pattern of digits.

Using powerful computers, mathematicians are now able to compute the value of pi to billions of digits, but still, no one has ever found any evidence that calculating more and more digits of pi will reveal that there is a regular pattern that exists within its digits.

A number consisting of an infinite number of digits is called *normal* when all possible sequences of digits of any given length appear equally often. The conjecture that pi is *normal* has not yet been proven or disproven.

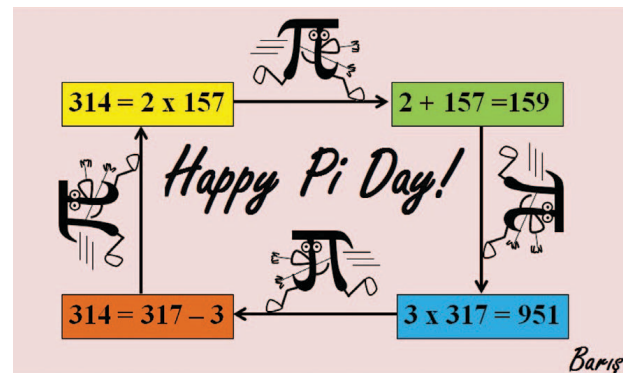
In this article, numerous “hidden” number connections are revealed between the early digits of pi. The authors discovered most of these number connections by splitting the digits of pi into groups of three consecutive digits. The following table lists the first 45 digits of pi in groups of three digits.

| | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 3.14 | 159 | 265 | 358 | 979 |
| 323 | 846 | 264 | 338 | 327 |
| 950 | 288 | 419 | 716 | 939 |

Hidden Properties Revealed

The following “hidden” properties were observed:

1. The prime factors of the first three digits of pi, 314, add up to $2 + 157 = 159$, the next three digits of pi. (The prime factors of a positive integer are the prime numbers that divide this integer exactly. For example, $314 = 2 \times 157$, where 2 and 157 are prime numbers.)
2. The reverse of the next three digits of pi, 159, is 951. Interestingly enough, the difference of the prime factors of 951 yields $317 - 3 = 314$, the first three digits of pi. (Figure below demonstrates how the prime factors of the first three digits of pi produce the next three digits of pi and vice versa.)



3. The sum of 314 and 951 (which is the reverse of 159) yields 1265, where the rightmost three digits are 265, corresponding to the next three digits (7th to 9th) of pi.
4. The product of 159 and the reverse of 265 (562) yields 89358, where the rightmost three digits (358) are the next three digits (10th to 12th) of pi. Also, interestingly enough, if 89358 is split into numbers 893 and 58, these two numbers add up to 951, which is reverse of 159. In addition, $159 + 265 = 8 \times 53$, where if numbers 8 and 53 are put side-by-side as 853, the reverse of this number is also 358.
5. If the 5th to 12th digits of pi (59265358) are split as 59, 265, and 358, the sum of 59, the reverse of 265 (562),

and 358 equals 979, which is the next three digits (13th to 15th) of pi. (Note that the “hidden” properties of pi given in items 1 to 5 are summarized in figure below.)

6. Subtracting twice 314 from 951 (the reverse of 159) yields 323, the next three digits (16th to 18th) of pi. Also, the reverse of 323 plus 1 equals 3 times 141, where 3 and 141 side-by-side constitutes the first four digits of pi.
7. Number 323 plus 1 times 2 yields 648, the reverse of which is 846, which corresponds to the next three digits (19th to 21st) of pi. Also, 141 (the 2nd to 4th digits of pi) times the sum of its digits yields 846.
8. The third three digits of pi given by 265 minus 1 yield 264, the next three digits (22nd to 24th) of pi, and since 264 equals 33 times 8, 33 and 8 put side-by-side makes 338, which constitutes the next three digits (25th to 27th) of pi.
9. Numbers 846, 264, and 338 (which side-by-side as 846264338 constitute the 19th to 27th digits of pi) are numerically connected in an interesting way: Reverse of 264 (462) multiplied by reverse of 338 (833) yields 384,846 where the rightmost three digits are 846. In addition, if 384,846 is split in the middle as 384 and 846, 846 minus 384 results in 462, which is the reverse of 264.
10. Number 979 (which corresponds to the 13th to 15th digits of pi) plus 2 divided by 3 yields 327, the next three digits (28th to 30th) of pi.

| |
|--|
| $\pi=3.14159265358979\dots$ |
| $314 = 157 \times 2$ |
| $159 = 157 + 2$ |
| $\overleftarrow{951} = 317 \times 3$ |
| $314 = 317 - 3$ |
| $\cancel{X}265 = 314 + \overleftarrow{951}$ |
| $\cancel{X}358 = 159 \times \overleftarrow{562}$ |
| $979 = 59 + \overleftarrow{562} + 358$ |

11. One less than 951 (the reverse of 159, the 4th to 6th digits of pi) is 950, the next three digits (31st to 33rd) of pi. In addition, 723 (which is the reverse of 327, the 28th to 30th digits of pi) plus the reverse of one less than 723 also equals 950. Also, 592 (the 5th to 7th digits of pi) plus 358 (the 10th to 12th digits of pi) yield 950.
12. The difference of 626 (the 21st to 23rd digits of pi) and 338 (the 25th to 27th digits of pi) is 288, the next three digits (34th to 36th) of pi. Also, 338 plus twice 288 yields 914, the reverse of which is 419, corresponding to the next three digits (37th to 39th) of pi. (Also, note that 914 equals 626 plus 288.)
13. Twice 358 (the 10th to 12th digits of pi) yield 716, the next three digits (40th to 42nd) of pi.
14. Three times half of the difference of the reverse of 419 (the 37th to 39th digits of pi) and 288 (the 34th to 36th digits of pi) yields 939, the next three digits (43rd to 45th) of pi. And, 939 minus 2 results in 937, which constitute the next three digits (46th to 48th) of pi. Also, interestingly enough, 937 is the 159th (the 4th to 6th digits of pi) prime number.

The authors find these “hidden” properties fascinating. And there probably exist many more interesting undiscovered properties hidden within the number π which they will continue to investigate. And, who knows, maybe the findings of this article will someday lead mathematicians to make a “breakthrough” to prove or disprove, once and for all, if π is a normal irrational number.

References

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