

4. [12 points] Zeno's paradox says that one can never arrive somewhere because one must always first travel half-way there—and that having traveled half-way there, one must travel half of the remaining distance, then half of the distance remaining after that, etc.

- (a) [4 points of 12] Suppose that you start with the goal of traveling 20 km. Let  $d_n$  be the total distance that you have gone after having traveled the  $n$ th half-distance to your goal. Find  $d_1$ ,  $d_2$ ,  $d_3$  and  $d_4$ .

---

*Solution:*

We start with 20 km to go, so after the first half-distance we've traveled  $d_1 = 10$  km. After the second half-distance, we've traveled  $d_2 = d_1 + 5 = 15$  km. After the third, we've traveled  $d_3 = d_2 + \frac{5}{2} = 17.5$  km, and after the fourth,  $d_4 = d_3 + \frac{5}{4} = 18.75$  km.

- (b) [6 points of 12] Find a closed-form expression for the distance you've traveled after  $n$  half-distances.

---

*Solution:*

After  $n$  half-distances, we've traveled

$$\begin{aligned} d_n &= 10 + 5 + \frac{5}{2} + \frac{5}{4} + \cdots + \frac{10}{2^{n-1}} \text{ km.} \\ &= 10\left(1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} + \cdots + \frac{1}{2^{n-1}}\right) \text{ km} \\ &= 10\left(\frac{1 - \frac{1}{2^n}}{1 - \frac{1}{2}}\right) \text{ km.} \end{aligned}$$

- (c) [2 points of 12] What is the sum as the number of half-distances traveled goes to infinity? (That is, how far do you travel if you continue "forever"?)

---

*Solution:*

This is just the limit of the preceding as  $n \rightarrow \infty$ . In this case  $\frac{1}{2^n} \rightarrow 0$ , so  $d \rightarrow 20$ . That is, we cover the full 20 km distance.