

ON THE NUMBER OF PRIMES BELOW A GIVEN MAGNITUDE

THE RIEMANN ZETA FUNCTION AND HOW TO USE IT

HOMER REID

CP GROUP TALK

1/17/2008

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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First Definition of the Zeta Function

$$\zeta(s) \equiv \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^s}$$

$$= 1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{4^s} + \frac{1}{5^s} + \dots$$

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$$\zeta(2) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^2} = \frac{\pi^2}{6}, \quad \zeta(4) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^4} = \frac{\pi^4}{90}, \quad \zeta(1) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n} = \infty.$$



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$$\zeta(2) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^2} = \frac{\pi^2}{6}, \quad \zeta(4) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^4} = \frac{\pi^4}{90}, \quad \zeta(1) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n} = \infty.$$

This definition only works for $\text{Re } s > 1$.

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What Does $\zeta(s)$ Have To Do With Primes?

The Euler Product Formula

$$\prod_{p \text{ prime}} \frac{1}{\left(1 - \frac{1}{p^s}\right)} = \left(\frac{1}{1 - \frac{1}{2^s}}\right) \left(\frac{1}{1 - \frac{1}{3^s}}\right) \left(\frac{1}{1 - \frac{1}{5^s}}\right) \dots$$

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$$= \left(1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{2^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \left(1 + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{3^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \left(1 + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{5^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \cdots$$

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$$= \left(1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{2^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \left(1 + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{3^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \left(1 + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{5^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \cdots$$

$$= 1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{2^{2s}} + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{2^s 3^s} + \frac{1}{7^s} + \frac{1}{2^{3s}} + \frac{1}{3^{2s}} + \frac{1}{2^s 5^s} + \cdots$$

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 &= \left(1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{2^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \left(1 + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{3^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \left(1 + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{5^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \cdots \\
 &= 1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{2^{2s}} + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{2^s 3^s} + \frac{1}{7^s} + \frac{1}{2^{3s}} + \frac{1}{3^{2s}} + \frac{1}{2^s 5^s} + \cdots \\
 &= 1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{4^s} + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{6^s} + \frac{1}{7^s} + \frac{1}{8^s} + \frac{1}{9^s} + \frac{1}{10^s} + \cdots \quad \left(\begin{array}{l} \text{fundamental} \\ \text{theorem of} \\ \text{arithmetic} \end{array}\right)
 \end{aligned}$$



What Does $\zeta(s)$ Have To Do With Primes?

The Euler Product Formula

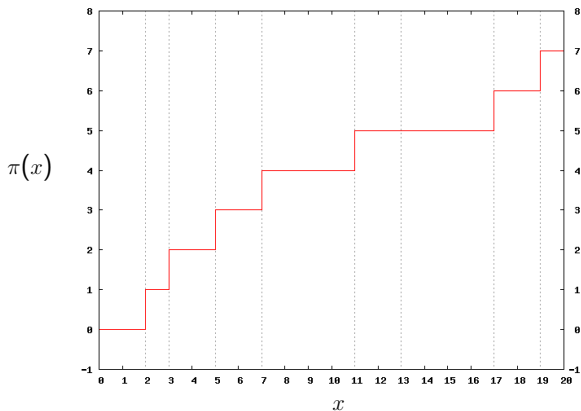
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 &= \left(1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{2^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \left(1 + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{3^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \left(1 + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{5^{2s}} + \cdots\right) \cdots \\
 &= 1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{2^{2s}} + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{2^s 3^s} + \frac{1}{7^s} + \frac{1}{2^{3s}} + \frac{1}{3^{2s}} + \frac{1}{2^s 5^s} + \cdots \\
 &= 1 + \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{4^s} + \frac{1}{5^s} + \frac{1}{6^s} + \frac{1}{7^s} + \frac{1}{8^s} + \frac{1}{9^s} + \frac{1}{10^s} + \cdots \quad \left(\begin{array}{l} \text{fundamental} \\ \text{theorem of} \\ \text{arithmetic} \end{array}\right) \\
 &= \zeta(s).
 \end{aligned}$$

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What Does $\zeta(s)$ Have To Do With Primes?

The Function $\pi(x)$

$\pi(x) \equiv$ number of primes $\leq x$



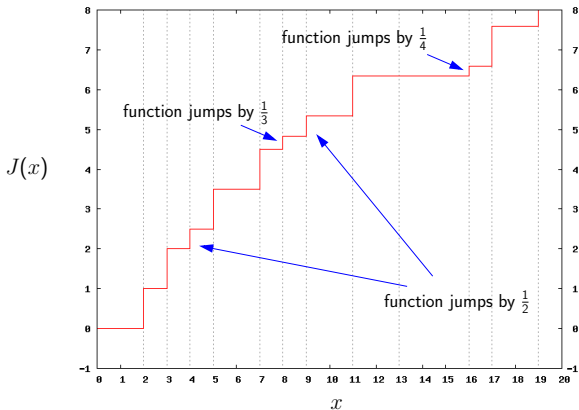
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What Does $\zeta(s)$ Have To Do With Primes?

The Function $J(x)$

$$J(x) = (\text{number of primes} \leq x) + \frac{1}{2}(\text{number of prime squares} \leq x) + \frac{1}{3}(\text{number of prime cubes} \leq x) + \dots$$

$$= \pi(x) + \frac{1}{2}\pi(x^{1/2}) + \frac{1}{3}\pi(x^{1/3}) + \dots$$



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What Does $\zeta(s)$ Have To Do With Primes?

The connection between $J(x)$ and $\zeta(s)$

Recall the Euler product formula:

$$\zeta(s) = \prod_p \left(1 - \frac{1}{p^s}\right)^{-1} \quad \implies \quad \log \zeta(s) = - \sum \log \left(1 - \frac{1}{p^s}\right)$$

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Expand $\log(1 - x) = -x - \frac{1}{2}x^2 - \frac{1}{3}x^3 - \dots$

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$$\begin{aligned} \log \zeta(s) &= \frac{1}{2^s} + \frac{1}{3^s} + \frac{1}{5^s} + \dots \\ &+ \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{2^{2s}} + \frac{1}{3^{2s}} + \frac{1}{5^{2s}} + \dots \right) \\ &+ \frac{1}{3} \left(\frac{1}{2^{3s}} + \frac{1}{3^{3s}} + \frac{1}{5^{3s}} + \dots \right) \end{aligned}$$

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$$= \sum \text{(magnitude of jump in } J) \cdot \frac{1}{n^s}$$

All integers n at which $J(n)$ has a jump

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What Does $\zeta(s)$ Have To Do With Primes?

The connection between $J(x)$ and $\zeta(s)$, continued

$$\log \zeta(s) = \sum_{\text{All integers } n \text{ at which } J(n) \text{ has a jump}} (\text{magnitude of jump in } J) \cdot \frac{1}{n^s}$$

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Integrate by parts:

$$= s \int_0^{\infty} \frac{1}{x^{s+1}} J(x) dx$$

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Now identify **Mellin transform** (Laplace transform with $e^{-st} \leftrightarrow x^{-s}$) pairs:

$$\frac{\log \zeta(s)}{s} = \int_0^{\infty} x^{-(s+1)} J(x) dx \iff J(x) = \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{a-i\infty}^{a+i\infty} \frac{\log \zeta(s)}{s} x^s ds$$

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\implies Analytical formula for $J(x)$! But need $\zeta(s)$ at arbitrary complex s .

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Second Definition of the Zeta Function

Extending ζ to the entire complex plane

- We need an analytic continuation of $\zeta(s) = \sum \frac{1}{n^s}$ to the entire complex s plane.

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Second Definition of the Zeta Function

Extending ζ to the entire complex plane

- We need an analytic continuation of $\zeta(s) = \sum \frac{1}{n^s}$ to the entire complex s plane.
- Proceed in analogy to the Gamma function $\Gamma(z)$, which is an analytic continuation of the factorial function $z!$ to the entire complex z plane:

$$\Gamma(z) \equiv \int_0^{\infty} t^z e^{-t} dt = z! \text{ if } z \text{ integer, but also valid for all } z.$$

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- To derive a similar formula for $\zeta(s)$, note

$$\int_0^{\infty} x^{s-1} e^{-nx} dx = \frac{\Gamma(s)}{n^s}.$$

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Sum both sides from $n = 1$ to ∞ :

$$\int_0^{\infty} x^{s-1} \underbrace{(e^{-x} + e^{-2x} + \dots)}_{= \frac{1}{e^x - 1}} dx = \Gamma(s-1) \underbrace{\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^s}}_{\zeta(s)}$$



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$$\Rightarrow \zeta(s) = \frac{1}{\Gamma(s-1)} \int_0^{\infty} \frac{x^{s-1}}{e^x - 1} dx.$$

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Second Definition of the Zeta Function

Extending ζ to the entire complex plane, continued

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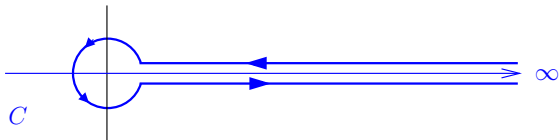
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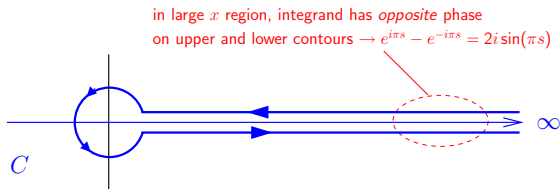
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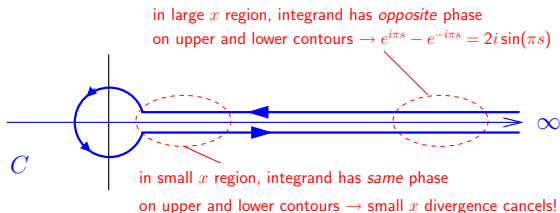
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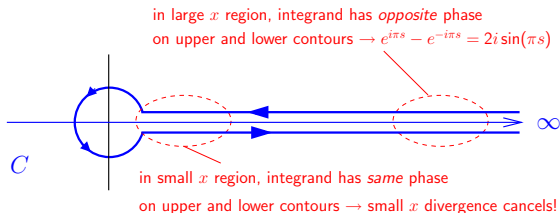
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$$\Rightarrow \zeta(s) \equiv \frac{1}{2i \sin \pi s \prod(s-1)} \int_C \frac{(-x)^s dx}{e^x - 1 x} = \frac{\prod(-s)}{2\pi i} \int_C \frac{(-x)^s dx}{e^x - 1 x}$$

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Fun Facts About $\zeta(s)$

Poles, zeroes, and the functional equation.

$$\zeta(s) = \frac{\prod(-s)}{2\pi i} \int_C \frac{(-x)^s}{e^x - 1} \frac{dx}{x}$$

- $\zeta(s)$ has only one simple pole, at $s = 1$ with residue 1.
- $\prod(-s)$ has poles at $s = 1, 2, 3, \dots$, but the poles at $s = 2, 3, \dots$ are cancelled by the behavior of the contour integral.

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- Combining the above two observations, it is convenient to define

$$\xi(s) \equiv \pi^{-s/2} \prod\left(\frac{s}{2}\right) (s - 1) \zeta(s)$$

in which case $\xi(s)$ is an *entire* function satisfying $\xi(s) = \xi(1 - s)$.

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Accounting explicitly for the pole at $s = 1$

Separate out the entire function $\xi(s)$ from $\zeta(s)$

$$\zeta(s) = \frac{1}{s-1} \cdot \frac{\pi^{s/2}}{\Gamma(\frac{s}{2})} \cdot \xi(s)$$

Since $\xi(s)$ is *entire*, we can write it as an “infinite degree polynomial:”

$$\xi(s) = \xi(0) \cdot \prod_{\rho} \left(1 - \frac{s}{\rho}\right)$$

where the product is over all roots ρ of ξ (which are just the roots of ζ).

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Analytic Expression for $J(x)$

Recall from before:
$$J(x) = \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{a-i\infty}^{a+i\infty} \frac{\log \zeta(s)}{s} x^s ds$$

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 &= \text{Li}(x) + 0 + \int_x^{\infty} \frac{dt}{t(t^2-1)\log t} + \log \xi(0) - \sum_{\rho} \text{Li}(x^{\rho})
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It turns out that the first term in this expression for $J(x)$ dominates the other terms and is itself a good approximation to $J(x)$:

$$J(x) \approx \text{Li}(x) = \int_0^x \frac{dt}{\log t}$$

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But our *goal* was to get an expression for $\pi(x)$, which is related to $J(x)$ according to

$$J(x) = \pi(x) + \frac{1}{2}\pi(x^{1/2}) + \frac{1}{3}\pi(x^{1/3}) + \dots .$$

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Can we *invert* this relation to obtain a formula for $\pi(x)$ in terms of $J(x)$?



The Möbius Inversion Formula

Part 1: The Möbius Symbol

Begin by defining the *Möbius symbol*. Recall that any integer n has a unique prime decomposition:

$$n = p_1^{a_1} p_2^{a_2} \cdots p_m^{a_m}.$$



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The *Möbius symbol* $\mu(n)$ characterizes the number and multiplicity of the prime factors of n :

$$\mu(n) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } n \text{ contains any primes more than once} \\ +1 & \text{if } n = \text{product of even number of distinct prime factors} \\ -1 & \text{if } n = \text{product of odd of distinct prime factors} \end{cases}$$



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n	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
$\mu(n)$	1	-1	-1	0	-1	+1	-1	0	0	+1	-1

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The Möbius Inversion Formula

Part 2: The Inversion Formula

The *Möbius inversion formula*:

$$g(x) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} f(nx) \iff f(x) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \mu(n)g(nx).$$

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 g(x) &= f(x) + f(2x) + f(3x) + f(4x) + f(5x) + f(6x) + f(7x) + \dots \\
 -g(2x) &= -f(2x) - f(4x) - f(6x) - f(8x) - f(10x) - f(12x) - f(14x) - \dots \\
 -g(3x) &= -f(3x) - f(6x) - f(9x) - f(12x) - f(15x) - f(18x) - f(21x) - \dots \\
 -g(5x) &= -f(5x) - f(10x) - f(15x) - f(20x) - f(25x) - f(30x) - f(35x) - \dots \\
 +g(6x) &= f(6x) + f(12x) + f(18x) + f(24x) + f(30x) + f(36x) + f(42x) + \dots
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$$g(x) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} f(nx) \quad \iff \quad f(x) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \mu(n)g(nx).$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 g(x) &= f(x) + \cancel{f(2x)} + \cancel{f(3x)} + \cancel{f(4x)} + f(5x) + f(6x) + f(7x) + \dots \\
 -g(2x) &= -\cancel{f(2x)} - \cancel{f(4x)} - f(6x) - f(8x) - f(10x) - f(12x) - f(14x) - \dots \\
 -g(3x) &= -\cancel{f(3x)} - f(6x) - f(9x) - f(12x) - f(15x) - f(18x) - f(21x) - \dots \\
 -g(5x) &= -f(5x) - f(10x) - f(15x) - f(20x) - f(25x) - f(30x) - f(35x) - \dots \\
 +g(6x) &= f(6x) + f(12x) + f(18x) + f(24x) + f(30x) + f(36x) + f(42x) + \dots
 \end{aligned}$$

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40	41	42
43	44	45	46	47	48	49
50	51	52	53	54	55	56
57	58	59	60	61	62	63

The Möbius Inversion Formula

Part 2: The Inversion Formula

The *Möbius inversion formula*:

$$g(x) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} f(nx) \iff f(x) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \mu(n)g(nx).$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 g(x) &= f(x) + \cancel{f(2x)} + \cancel{f(3x)} + \cancel{f(4x)} + \cancel{f(5x)} + \cancel{f(6x)} + \cancel{f(7x)} + \dots \\
 -g(2x) &= \cancel{-f(2x)} - \cancel{f(4x)} - \cancel{f(6x)} - \cancel{f(8x)} - \cancel{f(10x)} - \cancel{f(12x)} - \cancel{f(14x)} - \dots \\
 -g(3x) &= \cancel{-f(3x)} - \cancel{f(6x)} - \cancel{f(9x)} - \cancel{f(12x)} - \cancel{f(15x)} - \cancel{f(18x)} - \cancel{f(21x)} - \dots \\
 -g(5x) &= \cancel{-f(5x)} - \cancel{f(10x)} - \cancel{f(15x)} - \cancel{f(20x)} - \cancel{f(25x)} - \cancel{f(30x)} - \cancel{f(35x)} - \dots \\
 +g(6x) &= \cancel{f(6x)} + \cancel{f(12x)} + \cancel{f(18x)} + \cancel{f(24x)} + \cancel{f(30x)} + \cancel{f(36x)} + \cancel{f(42x)} + \dots
 \end{aligned}$$

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	32	33	34	35
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43	44	45	46	47	48	49
50	51	52	53	54	55	56
57	58	59	60	61	62	63

Analytic Expression for $\pi(x)$

$$J(x) = \pi(x) + \frac{1}{2}\pi(x^{1/2}) + \frac{1}{3}\pi(x^{1/3}) + \dots$$

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40	41	42
43	44	45	46	47	48	49
50	51	52	53	54	55	56
57	58	59	60	61	62	63

Analytic Expression for $\pi(x)$

$$J(x) = \pi(x) + \frac{1}{2}\pi(x^{1/2}) + \frac{1}{3}\pi(x^{1/3}) + \dots$$

Use Möbius inversion with $g(x) = J(x)$, $f(n) = \frac{1}{n}\pi(x^{1/n})$:

$$\pi(x) = J(x) - \frac{1}{2}J(x^{1/2}) - \frac{1}{3}J(x^{1/3}) - \frac{1}{5}J(x^{1/5}) + \frac{1}{6}J(x^{1/6}) + \dots$$

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	32	33	34	35
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Analytic Expression for $\pi(x)$

$$J(x) = \pi(x) + \frac{1}{2}\pi(x^{1/2}) + \frac{1}{3}\pi(x^{1/3}) + \dots$$

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$$\pi(x) = J(x) - \frac{1}{2}J(x^{1/2}) - \frac{1}{3}J(x^{1/3}) - \frac{1}{5}J(x^{1/5}) + \frac{1}{6}J(x^{1/6}) + \dots$$

Since $J(x) \approx \text{Li}(x)$, the number of primes $\leq x$ is well approximated by

$$\pi(x) = \text{Li}(x) - \frac{1}{2}\text{Li}(x^{1/2}) - \frac{1}{3}\text{Li}(x^{1/3}) - \frac{1}{5}\text{Li}(x^{1/5}) + \frac{1}{6}\text{Li}(x^{1/6}) + \dots$$



Testing The Analytic Expression for $\pi(x)$

TABLE III^a

x	Riemann's error	Gauss's error
1,000,000	30	130
2,000,000	-9	122
3,000,000	0	155
4,000,000	33	206
5,000,000	-64	125
6,000,000	24	228
7,000,000	-38	179
8,000,000	-6	223
9,000,000	-53	187
10,000,000	88	339

^aFrom Lehmer [L9].

(Table taken from Edwards, *Riemann's Zeta Function*.)