

Specifically, we notice that finding a number x with $x = \cos(x)$ is the same as finding a solution to the equation $f(x) = 0$, where $f(x) = \cos(x) - x$. Why is this true? A solution to $f(x) = 0$ is a number so that $\cos(x) - x = 0$, or equivalently, so that $\cos(x) = x$. This is exactly the condition we want!

Great, so lets try to show that for the function $f(x) = \cos(x) - x$ there exists a solution to $f(x) = 0$. Since we know we have to use the intermediate value theorem, we start by observing that $f(x)$ is the difference of two continuous functions, and is therefore itself continuous. Furthermore we can see that

$$\begin{aligned}f(0) &= \cos(0) - 0 = 1 - 0 = 1 > 0 \\f\left(\frac{\pi}{2}\right) &= \cos\left(\frac{\pi}{2}\right) - \frac{\pi}{2} = 0 - \frac{\pi}{2} = -\frac{\pi}{2} < 0\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, since $f(x)$ is a continuous function on $[0, \frac{\pi}{2}]$ with $f(0) > 0$ and $f(\frac{\pi}{2}) < 0$, we may apply the IVT and conclude that there exists a number c in the interval $(0, \frac{\pi}{2})$ with $f(c) = 0$. This magical value of c therefore satisfies $\cos(c) - c = 0$, and so $\cos(c) = c$. Thats just what we want.