

**Prove that in any triangulation of a convex  $n$ -gon ( $n \geq 4$ ), there will be always atleast two non-adjacent vertices which are not the endpoints of any diagonal.**

**Proof**

Recall: a triangulation of a convex  $n$ -gon is the division of the polygon into triangles by means of non-intersecting diagonals.

**Base Case:** We did this for the case of a quadrilateral. Join any one of the two diagonals of a quadrilateral and you see that the other two vertices are not endpoints of any diagonal in the triangulation.

**Induction Hypothesis:** Assume the said property holds true for all convex polygons with  $4, 5, 6, \dots, k$  vertices. We need to prove it for a convex polygon with  $k + 1$  vertices.

**Induction Step:** Draw a  $(k + 1)$ -gon and join any one of the diagonals (say  $v_i v_j$ ) which will divide the convex  $(k + 1)$ -gon into two convex polygons of  $m$  and  $k + 3 - m$  vertices respectively (actually draw this on a piece of paper to get a better picture). Let us name these polygons as  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  respectively. Firstly, assume that both have 4 or more vertices. Construct a triangulation of  $P_1$  and a triangulation of  $P_2$ . Now, in any triangulation of  $P_1$ , there will be two non-adjacent vertices which are not the endpoints of any diagonals (by the induction hypothesis). The same is true for  $P_2$  as well. As the vertices with the said property are non-adjacent, it cannot be the case that both  $v_i$  and  $v_j$  are not endpoints of any diagonal in a triangulation of  $P_1$  (or in a triangulation of  $P_2$  as well). So atleast one vertex  $w_1 \in P_1$  s.t.  $w_1 \neq v_i \wedge w_1 \neq v_j$  is the endpoint of no diagonal. Likewise, atleast one vertex  $w_2 \in P_2$  s.t.  $w_2 \neq v_i \wedge w_2 \neq v_j$  is the endpoint of no diagonal. Now let us merge the two triangulated polygons  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  to get back the original  $(k + 1)$ -gon, retaining the diagonal  $v_i v_j$ . Now clearly we have with us a triangulation of the  $(k + 1)$ -gon, and clearly  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  have no diagonal joining them. So the theorem is proved for this case.

Now what happens if  $P_1$  happens to be a triangle?  $P_1$  doesn't obey the property, but the number of vertices in  $P_2$  is more than 3 but less than  $k + 1$  and by the induction hypothesis,  $P_2$  does possess the said property. Let  $w_2 \in P_2$  be a vertex of  $P_2$  which is the endpoint of no diagonal, and clearly there exists a vertex  $w_1$  which is unequal to  $v_i$  and  $v_j$  (just as we did in the previous paragraph). Now vertex  $w_2$  from  $P_2$  and the third vertex of  $P_1$  (which is unequal to both  $v_i$  and  $v_j$ ) are not endpoints of any diagonal, and the theorem goes through for this case as well.