

Solution 1. Let $n = (m + 1)! + 1$, where $m! = 1 \cdot 2 \cdot \dots \cdot m$ and $m \geq 2$. Observe that for every $i \in \{2, \dots, m + 1\}$, we have $i \mid (m + 1)!$. Hence for every $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$, we have $i + 1 \mid n + i$. Furthermore, since $m \geq 2$, it follows that $n \geq 2(m + 1) + 1$, so $\frac{n+i}{i+1} \geq \frac{2(m+1)}{m+1} = 2$. Thus $n + i$ cannot be a prime number for any $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$. This proves the statement when $m \geq 2$; the case $m = 1$ is trivial as one can take any composite integer.

Solution 2. We give three solutions of slightly different flavor. First observe that if we fix the value of y , the equation reduces to a quadratic equation in x . In particular, this can be solved for any given fixed value of y . Looking at small values, it seems that $(3, 4)$ and $(4, 3)$ are the only solutions.

Since the equation is symmetric in x and y , we may assume that $x \geq y$. Hence the right-hand side of the equation is at most $2x^2$, while the growth-speed of the left-hand side is closer to x^2y^2 . Thus even when $y = 2$, the left-hand side grows much faster. In the first two solutions, we try to formalize this idea into a proper solution.

When y is very small, it is not true that $(xy - 7)^2$ grows like x^2y^2 , so we actually have to consider a few more special cases than just $y = 1$. However, solving the equation for given small y 's is substantially easier, so we seek for a way to prove that for every solution, the quantity $\min\{x, y\}$ needs to be small.

Solution 2.1: By symmetry, we may assume that $x \geq y$. If $y \geq 4$, then $xy \geq y^2 \geq 16 > 2 \cdot 7$, so we conclude that $\frac{1}{2}xy > 7$. In particular, it follows that

$$(xy - 7)^2 = \left(\frac{1}{2}xy + \frac{1}{2}xy - 7\right)^2 > \left(\frac{1}{2}xy\right)^2 \geq \frac{1}{4}x^2y^2 \geq 4x^2.$$

Here we are using the fact that the function $z \rightarrow z^2$ is increasing when $z \geq 0$ and the fact that we are assuming that $y \geq 4$. However, this contradicts the fact that $x^2 + y^2 \leq 2x^2 < 4x^2$. Thus we must have $y \leq 3$. It is easy to check that

1. $(x - 7)^2 = x^2 + 1$ has no solutions in positive integers (only solution is $x = \frac{24}{7}$).
2. $(2x - 7)^2 = x^2 + 4$ has no solutions in positive integers (only solutions are irrational).
3. $(3x - 7)^2 = x^2 + 9$ has solutions $x = 4$ and $x = \frac{5}{4}$.

Thus $(x, y) = (4, 3)$ is the only solution satisfying $x \geq y$, so all the solutions are $(4, 3)$ and $(3, 4)$.

Solution 2.2: Again, we assume that $x \geq y$, and we suppose that $y \geq 5$. Observe that the original equation is equivalent to having $y^2 = (xy - 7)^2 - x^2 = (x(y - 1) - 7) \cdot (x(y + 1) - 7)$. Since $x \geq y \geq 4$, we have

$$x(y + 1) - 7 \geq 4y + x - 7 \geq 3y + 1 > 3y.$$

We also have

$$\frac{1}{4}x(y - 1) \geq y - 1 \geq \frac{y}{2}$$

and

$$\frac{3}{4}x(y - 1) \geq \frac{3}{4} \cdot 4 \cdot 3 = 9 > 7,$$

thus implying that $x(y-1) - 7 > \frac{y}{2}$. Combining this with the first inequality implies that $(x(y-1) - 7) \cdot (x(y+1) - 7) > \frac{3}{2}y^2 > y^2$ whenever $x \geq y \geq 4$, thus giving the desired contradiction. Hence for every solution satisfying $x \geq y$ we must have $y \leq 3$, and the rest of the solution can be concluded as before.

Solution 2.3: This solution differs substantially from the previous two. The idea is to treat y as a constant, and solve the quadratic equation in terms of x . The discriminant of this quadratic equation must be a perfect square.

Observe that the original equation is equivalent to $(y^2 - 1)x^2 - 14xy + 49 - y^2 = 0$, which has discriminant $D = 196y^2 - 4(y^2 - 1)(49 - y^2)$. Then the solutions of this equation are

$$x = \frac{14y \pm \sqrt{D}}{2(y^2 - 1)}.$$

If one of these solutions is an integer, then $D = (2x(y^2 - 1) - 14y)^2$ is a perfect square, i.e. a square of an integer.

Observe that D can be written as

$$D = 4y^4 - 4y^2 + 196 = (2y^2 - 1)^2 + 195.$$

Our aim is to prove that for y sufficiently large, D is strictly contained between two perfect squares, and hence cannot itself be a perfect square. The equation above certainly implies that $D > (2y^2 - 1)^2$. On the other hand, for $y > 7$ we have $4y^2 > 14^2 = 196$, thus implying that $D < 4y^4 = (2y^2)^2$. Hence for $y > 7$ we have

$$(2y^2 - 1)^2 < D < (2y^2)^2,$$

thus implying that D cannot be a perfect square. Thus we must have $y \leq 7$.

Note that unlike in the previous solutions, we did not make any assumptions regarding which one of the variables is larger. Hence a similar argument proves that $x \leq 7$. One could then go on and check all 49 possible candidates for a solution; or write down the discriminant for each 7 possible values of y , check which ones are perfect squares (this occurs when $y \in \{1, 3, 4, 7\}$), find the appropriate values of x for those discriminants and conclude that $(3, 4)$ and $(4, 3)$ are the only solutions.

Solution 3. Let $n = 25$ denote the number of people and m denote the number of clubs. There are $\frac{25 \cdot 24}{2} = 25 \cdot 12 = 300$ possible pairs of people, and each club of 5 people covers $\frac{5 \cdot 4}{2} = 10$ such pairs. Since no pair of people is contained in two or more distinct clubs, we must have $10m \leq 300$, thus implying that $m \leq 30$.

To prove that $m = 30$ can be attained, we place 25 people into 5×5 grid whose coordinates are labeled with $\{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$, and we identify each individual with an unique pair $(i, j) \in \{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\} \times \{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$. We consider six sets of groups $A_{i,j}$ for $i \in \{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$ and $j \in \{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$, and B_i for $i \in \{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$ defined as follows:

1. The group $A_{i,j}$ consists of those individuals (u, v) satisfying $u + i \cdot v \equiv j \pmod{5}$
2. The group B_i consists of those individuals (u, v) satisfying $v = i$.

Geometrically speaking, the groups B_i are the columns of the 5×5 grid, the groups $A_{0,j}$ are the rows of the 5×5 grid, while the groups $A_{1,j}$ and $A_{4,j}$ are the shifted diagonals of the 5×5 grid (for $A_{1,j}$, the diagonals go from top left to bottom right; for $A_{4,j}$ the diagonals go from bottom left to top right). The groups $A_{2,j}$ and $A_{3,j}$ are slightly harder to visualize, but they can be attained by considering a chess knight hopping on the 5×5 grid down to rows; below is a grid demonstrating the sets $A_{2,j}$ (cells marked with a given j belong to the set $A_{2,j}$).

0	1	2	3	4
3	4	0	1	2
1	2	3	4	0
4	0	1	2	3
2	3	4	0	1

Observe that the sets B_i clearly contain exactly 5 members: indeed, each column has 5 individuals. Similarly, every set $A_{i,j}$ contains exactly 5 members as for any $v \in \{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$, the value of u has to be congruent to $j - i \cdot v$ modulo 5, so it is uniquely determined.

Now we are left to check that there is no pair of people (u, v) and (u_1, v_1) that is contained in two distinct groups. It is easy to check that for $i \neq 0$, the sets $A_{i,j}$ contain exactly one point from each row and column (this is because multiplicative inverses exist modulo 5: that is, for every $i \in \{1, 2, 3, 4\}$ there exists $i_1 \in \{1, 2, 3, 4\}$ so that $i \cdot i_1 \equiv 1 \pmod{5}$). Thus we may assume that $u \neq u_1$ and $v \neq v_1$, and hence this pair of people does not belong to any set B_j . If they both belong to a set $A_{i,j}$, then we must have

$$\begin{cases} u + iv \equiv j \pmod{5} \\ u_1 + iv_1 \equiv j \pmod{5} \end{cases}.$$

Subtracting gives us $i(v - v_1) \equiv u - u_1 \pmod{5}$. Since $v \neq v_1$, we have $v - v_1 \in \{1, 2, 3, 4\}$. As noted above, it is easy to check that multiplicative inverses exist modulo 5: that is, there exists $\alpha \in \{1, 2, 3, 4\}$ so that $\alpha(v - v_1) \equiv 1 \pmod{5}$. Multiplying both sides of the equation $i(v - v_1) \equiv u - u_1 \pmod{5}$ by α , we conclude that $i \equiv \alpha(u - u_1) \pmod{5}$. In particular, the value of i is uniquely determined by (u, v) and (u_1, v_1) . But given the value of i , the value of j is uniquely determined as $j \equiv u + iv \pmod{5}$. Thus there can be only one such set $A_{i,j}$, which completes the proof.