The Fundamental Group

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Date / Time / Location: Wed. June 6, 2012, 11:00 - 12:00, JD35.

Abstract:

Homotopy is a natural starting point for investigating how non-homeomorphic manifolds may be distinguished by the presence and absence of holes. In fact, a compact 2-dimensional manifold is determined by its fundamental group up to homeomorphism. We introduce homotopy and the fundamental group and prove some useful consequences related to the fundamental groups of circles and spheres.