

Effective enumerability

- 1) A set is *enumerable* if, and only if, it is the range of a total or partial function on the natural numbers.
- 2) A set is *effectively enumerable* if, and only if, it is the range of a total or partial effectively computable function on the natural numbers.
- 3) A function f is *effectively computable* if, and only if, there is a list of instructions giving a step-by-step procedure that will determine in a finite number of steps the value $f(n)$ for any argument n for which f returns a value.
- 4) How many functions on the natural numbers are there?
 - a) Consider just the functions on natural numbers that have either 0 or 1 as their value.
 - b) Each such function f determines a set Δ of natural numbers— $n \in \Delta$ iff $f(n) = 1$ —and for each set Δ of natural numbers there is such a function f .
 - c) But the set of all sets of natural numbers is nondenumerable.
 - d) Hence, the set of functions from the set of natural numbers to $\{0,1\}$ is nondenumerable.
- 5) How many lists of instructions are there? No more than there are sentences in language, and the set of sentences is enumerable.
- 6) Hence, there are uncomputable functions. In fact, *most* numerical functions are uncomputable.
- 7) There is an effectively computable function on the natural numbers whose range is the set of valid sentences. If the sentences of our formal language are encoded, this is even a numerical function that delivers the code number of a valid sentence for each natural number.
- 8) Suppose we enumerate the sentences in our formal language and define a function f such that $f(n) = 1$ if sentence number n is valid and $f(n) = 0$ if sentence number n is invalid. f is not computable (Church's theorem).
- 9) It follows that there is no effectively computable function on the natural numbers whose range is the set of *invalid* sentences. For if there were, we could compute f by criss-crossing from one list to the other.