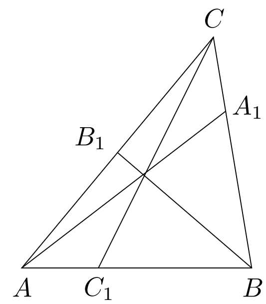
Ceva's theorem

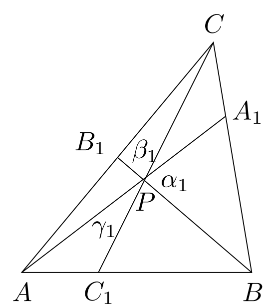
Let ABC be any triangle and choose a point A_1, B_1, C_1 on the line segments BC, AC, AB, respectively.



Theorem 1 (Ceva) *The lines AA_1, BB_1, and CC_1 are concurrent if and only if*

$$\frac{AC_1}{C_1B} \cdot \frac{BA_1}{A_1C} \cdot \frac{CB_1}{B_1A} = 1.$$

Proof: Assume first the three lines meet in the point P and use the notation shown in the picture below:



The triangles $AC_1P_\triangle$ and $C_1BP_\triangle$ have a common altitude at P, so the proportion of their areas is the proportion of the corresponding bases. Thus we may write

$$\frac{AC_1}{C_1B} = \frac{PA \cdot PC_1 \cdot \sin(\gamma_1)/2}{PB \cdot PC_1 \cdot \sin(\beta_1)/2} = \frac{PA \cdot \sin(\gamma_1)}{PB \cdot \sin(\beta_1)}.$$

Similarly we have

$$\frac{BA_1}{A_1C} = \frac{PB \cdot \sin(\alpha_1)}{PC \cdot \sin(\gamma_1)} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{CB_1}{B_1A} = \frac{PC \cdot \sin(\beta_1)}{PA \cdot \sin(\alpha_1)}.$$

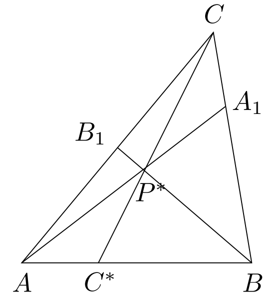
Multiplying the three fractions we get 1. For the converse, assume that A_1, B_1 and C_1 satisfy

$$\frac{AC_1}{C_1B} \cdot \frac{BA_1}{A_1C} \cdot \frac{CB_1}{B_1A} = 1.$$

We may rewrite this as

$$\frac{AC_1}{C_1B} = \frac{A_1C}{BA_1} \cdot \frac{B_1A}{CB_1}.$$

Define P^* as the intersection of AA_1 and BB_1 and let $C*$ be the intersection of CP^* with AB:



By the already shown implication of Ceva's theorem we have

$$\frac{AC^*}{C^*B}\cdot\frac{BA_1}{A_1C}\cdot\frac{CB_1}{B_1A}=1,$$

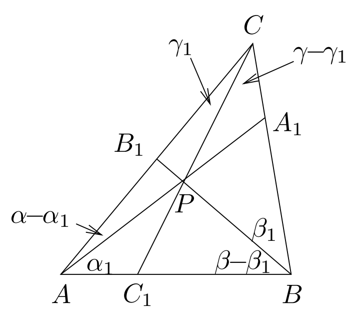
and so

$$\frac{AC^*}{C^*B}=\frac{A_1C}{BA_1}\cdot\frac{B_1A}{CB_1}.$$

We obtained that $C^*=C_1$ since they both subdivide AB into two segments of the same proportions. Therefore CC_1 also passes through P^*. ◇

The following equivalent form of Ceva's theorem is often useful.

Theorem 2 (Ceva) *Using the notation of the picture below*



the lines AA_1, BB_1, and CC_1 are concurrent if and only if

$$\sin(\alpha_1)\sin(\beta_1)\sin(\gamma_1)=\sin(\alpha-\alpha_1)\sin(\beta-\beta_1)\sin(\gamma-\gamma_1).$$

Proof: The triangles $AC_1C_\triangle$ and $C_1BC_\triangle$ have a common altitude at C, so the proportion of their areas is the proportion of the corresponding bases. Thus we may write

$$\frac{AC_1}{C_1B}=\frac{AC\cdot CC_1\cdot\sin(\gamma_1)/2}{BC\cdot CC_1\cdot\sin(\gamma-\gamma_1)/2}=\frac{AC\cdot\sin(\gamma_1)}{BC\cdot\sin(\gamma-\gamma_1)}.$$

Similarly we have

$$\frac{BA_1}{A_1C}=\frac{AB\cdot\sin(\alpha_1)}{AC\cdot\sin(\alpha-\alpha_1)}\quad\text{and}\quad\frac{CB_1}{B_1A}=\frac{BC\cdot\sin(\beta_1)}{AB\cdot\sin(\beta-\beta_1)}.$$

Multiplying the three equations we get that Ceva's condition is equivalent to

$$\frac{\cancel{AC}\cdot\sin(\gamma_1)}{\cancel{BC}\cdot\sin(\gamma-\gamma_1)}\cdot\frac{\cancel{AB}\cdot\sin(\alpha_1)}{\cancel{AC}\cdot\sin(\alpha-\alpha_1)}\cdot\frac{\cancel{BC}\cdot\sin(\beta_1)}{\cancel{AB}\cdot\sin(\beta-\beta_1)}=1.$$

Multiplying both sides with $\sin(\alpha-\alpha_1)\sin(\beta-\beta_1)\sin(\gamma-\gamma_1)$ yields the statement. ◇