

$$(2 - x^2)^{x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4} = 1$$

### Solving for x

When x is real:

If x is real then the above equation will equal one if:

1.  $2 - x^2 = 1$
2.  $x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4 = 0$  where  $2 - x^2 \neq 0$
3.  $2 - x^2 = -1$  and  $x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4$  is even.

Now considering each case:

1.  $2 - x^2 = 1$   
 $-x^2 = -1$   
 $x^2 = 1$   
 $x = \pm 1$

2.  $x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4 = 0$   
 $(x - \sqrt{2})(x - 2\sqrt{2}) = 0$   
 Therefore,  $x = \sqrt{2}$  or  $x = 2\sqrt{2}$

However, when  $x = \sqrt{2}$ ,  $2 - x^2 = 0$  so this is not a valid solution. Only  $x = 2\sqrt{2}$  is valid in this case,

3.  $2 - x^2 = -1$   
 $x^2 = 3$   
 $x = \pm \sqrt{3}$

Now need to verify that  $x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4$  is even for these solutions.

When  $x = \sqrt{3}$ :

$$(\sqrt{3})^2 - 3\sqrt{2}(\sqrt{3}) + 4 = 3 - 3\sqrt{6} + 4$$

$$= 7 - 3\sqrt{6}$$

Which is clearly not an even number so solution is invalid.

Similarly, when  $x = -\sqrt{3}$ ,

$$x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4 = 7 + 3\sqrt{6}$$

Thus, neither of these solutions are valid.

Therefore,  $x = \pm 1$  or  $x = 2\sqrt{2}$  are all possible real solutions to the equation.

When x is allowed to be complex:

Finding the solution is made easier by factorising the original equation:

$$(2 - x^2)^{x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4} = 1$$

$$[(\sqrt{2} - x)(\sqrt{2} + x)]^{x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4} = 1$$

So we now have to expressions  $(\sqrt{2} - x)^{x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4}$  and  $(\sqrt{2} + x)^{x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4}$  whose product must be 1.

If we first consider  $(\sqrt{2} + x)^{x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4}$ , letting  $x = a + bi$  then we get:

$$(\sqrt{2} + a + bi)^{(a+bi)^2 - 3\sqrt{2}(a+bi) + 4} = (\sqrt{2} + a + bi)^{a^2 + 2abi - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a - 3\sqrt{2}bi + 4}$$

$$= (\sqrt{2} + a + bi)^{a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4 + (2ab - 3\sqrt{2}b)i}$$

If we then express  $\sqrt{2} + a + bi$  in Euler form :

$$\sqrt{2} + a + bi = r_1 e^{\theta_1 i} \text{ with } r_1 = \sqrt{(\sqrt{2} + a)^2 + b^2}$$

$$\text{and } \theta_1 = \tan^{-1}\left(\frac{b}{\sqrt{2} + a}\right)$$

So we now have:

$$r_1 e^{\theta_1 i (a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4 + (2ab - 3\sqrt{2}b)i)} = r_1 e^{\theta_1 i (2ab - 3\sqrt{2}b)i} \times e^{\theta_1 i (a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4)}$$

$$= r_1 e^{(3\sqrt{2} - 2a)b\theta_1} e^{(a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4)\theta_1 i}$$

Note that this is simply another complex number with modulus  $r = r_1 e^{(3\sqrt{2} - 2a)b\theta_1}$  and argument  $\theta = (a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4)\theta_1$ .

If we now consider  $(\sqrt{2} - x)^{x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4}$  where  $x = a + bi$ , following the same process as above,

$$(\sqrt{2} - a - bi)^{a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4 + (2ab - 3\sqrt{2}b)i} = r_2 e^{(3\sqrt{2} - 2a)b\theta_2} e^{(a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4)\theta_2 i}$$

$$\text{with } r_2 = \sqrt{(\sqrt{2} - a)^2 + b^2} \text{ and } \theta_2 = \tan^{-1}\left(\frac{b}{\sqrt{2} - a}\right)$$

So we now have two complex numbers, which we will call  $z_1$  and  $z_2$ :

$$z_1 = r_1 e^{(3\sqrt{2}-2a)b\theta_1} e^{(a^2-b^2-3\sqrt{2}a+4)\theta_1 i}$$

$$z_2 = r_2 e^{(3\sqrt{2}-2a)b\theta_2} e^{(a^2-b^2-3\sqrt{2}a+4)\theta_2 i}$$

that when multiplied together must give 1:

$$r_1 e^{(3\sqrt{2}-2a)b\theta_1} e^{(a^2-b^2-3\sqrt{2}a+4)\theta_1 i} \times r_2 e^{(3\sqrt{2}-2a)b\theta_2} e^{(a^2-b^2-3\sqrt{2}a+4)\theta_2 i} = 1$$

$$r_1 r_2 e^{(3\sqrt{2}-2a)b\theta_1 + (3\sqrt{2}-2a)b\theta_2} e^{(a^2-b^2-3\sqrt{2}a+4)\theta_1 i + (a^2-b^2-3\sqrt{2}a+4)\theta_2 i} = 1$$

$$r_1 r_2 e^{(3\sqrt{2}-2a)(\theta_1 + \theta_2)b} e^{(a^2-b^2-3\sqrt{2}a+4)(\theta_1 + \theta_2)i} = 1$$

Now, the left hand side represents a complex number with argument

$(a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4)(\theta_1 + \theta_2)$ . However, for the left hand side to be 1 or in fact any positive real number this argument must be zero:

$$(a^2 - b^2 - 3\sqrt{2}a + 4)(\theta_1 + \theta_2) = 0$$

$$\theta_1 + \theta_2 = 0$$

However, both  $\theta_1$  and  $\theta_2$  are arguments of complex numbers with the same imaginary component  $b$ , such that both must be positive or both must be negative. For this reason, both must either be  $\pi$  or 0 to fulfil the above equation, in which case  $b=0$ .

This indicates that there are in fact no complex solutions to the equation  $(2 - x^2)^{x^2 - 3\sqrt{2}x + 4} = 1$ , since  $x = a + 0i$  is simply  $x = a$ , a real number. Since all real solutions were already found above, we can now be certain that all possible solutions have been found.