

12.1, number 43: Describe the following circle using either one equation or two equations. The circle is the set of points which are on the plane through the point $(1, 1, 3)$ perpendicular to the z -axis and also are on the sphere of radius 5 centered at the origin.

Answer: The first condition “the set of points which are on the plane through the point $(1, 1, 3)$ perpendicular to the z -axis” is a clumsy way of saying $z = 3$. So we want the circle that satisfies the two equations

$$z = 3 \text{ and } x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = 25$$

Of course,

$$z = 3 \text{ and } x^2 + y^2 = 16$$

is also a fine answer.

But notice that you have to have two equations! The equation $x^2 + y^2 = 16$ all by itself represents a cylinder in 3-space.