MATH 10: COLLEGE ALGEBRA



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Math 10: College Algebra

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page

Licensing

1: Algebra Essentials

1.1: Real Numbers

1.2: Exponents

1.3: Polynomials

1.4: Factoring

2: Equations and Inequalities

2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs

2.2: Linear Equations

2.3: Models and Applications

2.4: Complex Numbers

2.5: Quadratic Equations

2.6: Other Types of Equations

2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities

3: Functions

3.1: Functions and Function Notation

3.2: Domain and Range

3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs

3.4: Composition of Functions

3.5: Transformation of Functions

3.6: Inverse Functions

4: Linear Functions

4.1: Introduction to Linear Functions

4.2: Linear Functions with Applications

4.3: More Linear Models

4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data

5: Polynomial and Rational Functions

5.1: Quadratic Functions

5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions

5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions

5.4: Dividing Polynomials

5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions

5.6: Rational Functions

6: Exponential and Logarithmic Functions

6.1: Exponential Functions

6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions
6.3: Logarithmic Functions
6.4: Graphs of Logarithmic Functions
6.5: Logarithmic Properties
6.6: Exponential and Logarithmic Equations
6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions

Index

Glossary

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1: ALGEBRA ESSENTIALS

In this chapter, we will review sets of numbers and properties of operations used to manipulate numbers and variables. This understanding will serve as prerequisite knowledge throughout our study of algebra.

1.1: Real Numbers

1.2: Exponents

1.3: Polynomials

1.4: Factoring

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1.1: Real Numbers

Learning Objectives

- Classify a real number as a natural, whole, integer, rational, or irrational number.
- Perform calculations using order of operations.
- Use the following properties of real numbers: commutative, associative, distributive, inverse, and identity.
- Evaluate algebraic expressions.
- Simplify algebraic expressions.

It is often said that mathematics is the language of science. If this is true, then the language of mathematics is numbers. The earliest use of numbers occurred 100 centuries ago in the Middle East to count, or enumerate items. Farmers, cattlemen, and tradesmen used tokens, stones, or markers to signify a single quantity—a sheaf of grain, a head of livestock, or a fixed length of cloth, for example. Doing so made commerce possible, leading to improved communications and the spread of civilization.

Three to four thousand years ago, Egyptians introduced fractions. They first used them to show reciprocals. Later, they used them to represent the amount when a quantity was divided into equal parts.

But what if there were no cattle to trade or an entire crop of grain was lost in a flood? How could someone indicate the existence of nothing? From earliest times, people had thought of a “base state” while counting and used various symbols to represent this null condition. However, it was not until about the fifth century A.D. in India that zero was added to the number system and used as a numeral in calculations.

Clearly, there was also a need for numbers to represent loss or debt. In India, in the seventh century A.D., negative numbers were used as solutions to mathematical equations and commercial debts. The opposites of the counting numbers expanded the number system even further.

Because of the evolution of the number system, we can now perform complex calculations using these and other categories of real numbers. In this section, we will explore sets of numbers, calculations with different kinds of numbers, and the use of numbers in expressions.

Classifying a Real Number

The numbers we use for counting, or enumerating items, are the natural numbers: $1, 2, 3, 4, 5$ and so on. We describe them in set notation as $\{1, 2, 3, ...\}$ where the ellipsis $(\cdots)$ indicates that the numbers continue to infinity. The natural numbers are, of course, also called the counting numbers. Any time we enumerate the members of a team, count the coins in a collection, or tally the trees in a grove, we are using the set of natural numbers. The set of whole numbers is the set of natural numbers plus zero: $\{0, 1, 2, 3, ...\}$.

The set of integers adds the opposites of the natural numbers to the set of whole numbers: $\{\cdots, -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3, \cdots\}$. It is useful to note that the set of integers is made up of three distinct subsets: negative integers, zero, and positive integers. In this sense, the positive integers are just the natural numbers. Another way to think about it is that the natural numbers are a subset of the integers.

$$\overbrace{\cdots, -3, -2, -1}^{\text{negative integers}}, \underbrace{0}_{\text{zero}}, \overbrace{1, 2, 3, \cdots}^{\text{positive integers}}$$

The set of rational numbers is written as $\{\frac{m}{n} | \text{m and n are integers and } n \neq 0\}$.Notice from the definition that rational numbers are fractions (or quotients) containing integers in both the numerator and the denominator, and the denominator is never 0. We can also see that every natural number, whole number, and integer is a rational number with a denominator of 1.

Because they are fractions, any rational number can also be expressed in decimal form. Any rational number can be represented as either:

1. a terminating decimal: $\frac{15}{8} = 1.875$, or
2. a repeating decimal: $\frac{4}{11} = 0.36363636\cdots = 0.\overline{36}$

We use a line drawn over the repeating block of numbers instead of writing the group multiple times.

Example 1.1.1: Writing Integers as Rational Numbers

Write each of the following as a rational number. Write a fraction with the integer in the numerator and 1 in the denominator.

a. 7
b. 0
c. -8

Solution

a. $7 = \frac{7}{1}$

b. $0 = \frac{0}{1}$

c. $-8 = \frac{-8}{1}$

Exercise 1.1.1

Write each of the following as a rational number.

a. 11
b. 3
c. -4

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 1.1.2: Identifying Rational Numbers

Write each of the following rational numbers as either a terminating or repeating decimal.

a. $-\frac{5}{7}$
b. $\frac{15}{5}$
c. $\frac{13}{25}$

Solution

a. a repeating decimal

b. $\frac{15}{5} = 3$(or 3.0), a terminating decimal

c. $\frac{13}{25} = 0.52$, a terminating decimal

Exercise 1.1.2

Write each of the following rational numbers as either a terminating or repeating decimal.

a. $\frac{68}{17}$
b. $\frac{8}{13}$
c. $-\frac{13}{25}$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Irrational Numbers

At some point in the ancient past, someone discovered that not all numbers are rational numbers. A builder, for instance, may have found that the diagonal of a square with unit sides was not 2 or even 32, but was something else. Or a garment maker might have observed that the ratio of the circumference to the diameter of a roll of cloth was a little bit more than 3, but still not a rational number. Such numbers are said to be irrational because they cannot be written as fractions. These numbers make up the set of irrational numbers. Irrational numbers cannot be expressed as a fraction of two integers. It is impossible to describe this set of numbers by a single rule except to say that a number is irrational if it is not rational. So we write this as shown.

$$\{h \mid h \text{ is not a rational number}\} \tag{1.1.1}$$

Example 1.1.3: Differentiating Rational and Irrational Numbers

Determine whether each of the following numbers is rational or irrational. If it is rational, determine whether it is a terminating or repeating decimal.

a. $\sqrt{25}$
b. $\frac{33}{9}$
c. $\sqrt{11}$
d. $\frac{17}{34}$
e. $0.3033033303333\ldots$

Solution

a. $\sqrt{25}$: This can be simplified as $\sqrt{25}=5$. Therefore,$\sqrt{25}$is rational.
b. $\frac{33}{9}$: Because it is a fraction,$\frac{33}{9}$ is a rational number. Next, simplify and divide.

$$\frac{33}{9}=\frac{\cancel{33}}{\cancel{9}}$$

So, $\frac{33}{9}$ is rational and a repeating decimal.
c. $\sqrt{11}$: This cannot be simplified any further. Therefore, $\sqrt{11}$ is an irrational number.
d. $\frac{17}{34}$: Because it is a fraction, $\frac{17}{34}$ is a rational number. Simplify and divide.

$$\frac{17}{34}=0.5$$

So, $\frac{17}{34}$ is rational and a terminating decimal.
e. $0.3033033303333\ldots$ is not a terminating decimal. Also note that there is no repeating pattern because the group of $3s$ increases each time. Therefore it is neither a terminating nor a repeating decimal and, hence, not a rational number. It is an irrational number.

Exercise 1.1.3

Determine whether each of the following numbers is rational or irrational. If it is rational, determine whether it is a terminating or repeating decimal.

a. $\frac{7}{77}$
b. $\sqrt{81}$
c. $4.27027002700027\ldots$
d. $\frac{91}{13}$
e. $\sqrt{39}$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Real Numbers

Given any number n, we know that n is either rational or irrational. It cannot be both. The sets of rational and irrational numbers together make up the set of real numbers. As we saw with integers, the real numbers can be divided into three subsets: negative real numbers, zero, and positive real numbers. Each subset includes fractions, decimals, and irrational numbers according to their algebraic sign (+ or –). Zero is considered neither positive nor negative.

The real numbers can be visualized on a horizontal number line with an arbitrary point chosen as 0, with negative numbers to the left of 0 and positive numbers to the right of 0. A fixed unit distance is then used to mark off each integer (or other basic value) on either side of 0. Any real number corresponds to a unique position on the number line.The converse is also true: Each location on the number line corresponds to exactly one real number. This is known as a one-to-one correspondence. We refer to this as the real number line as shown in Figure $1.1.1$.

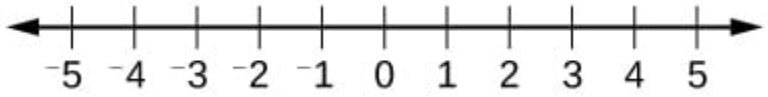


Figure $1.1.1$: The real number line.

Example $1.1.4$: Classifying Real Numbers

Classify each number as either positive or negative and as either rational or irrational. Does the number lie to the left or the right of 0 on the number line?

a. $-\frac{10}{3}$
b. $\sqrt{5}$
c. $-\sqrt{289}$
d. -6π
e. $0.615384615384\ldots$

Solution

a. $-\frac{10}{3}$ is negative and rational. It lies to the left of 0 on the number line.
b. $\sqrt{5}$ is positive and irrational. It lies to the right of 0.
c. $-\sqrt{289} = -\sqrt{17^2} = -17$ is negative and rational. It lies to the left of 0.
d. -6π is negative and irrational. It lies to the left of 0.
e. $0.615384615384\ldots$ is a repeating decimal so it is rational and positive. It lies to the right of 0.

Exercise $1.1.4$

Classify each number as either positive or negative and as either rational or irrational. Does the number lie to the left or the right of 0 on the number line?

a. $\sqrt{73}$
b. $-11.411411411\ldots$
c. $\frac{47}{19}$
d. $-\frac{\sqrt{5}}{2}$
e. 6.210735

Answer available at the end of this section.

Sets of Numbers as Subsets

Beginning with the natural numbers, we have expanded each set to form a larger set, meaning that there is a subset relationship between the sets of numbers we have encountered so far. These relationships become more obvious when seen as a diagram, such as Figure$(1.1.2)$.

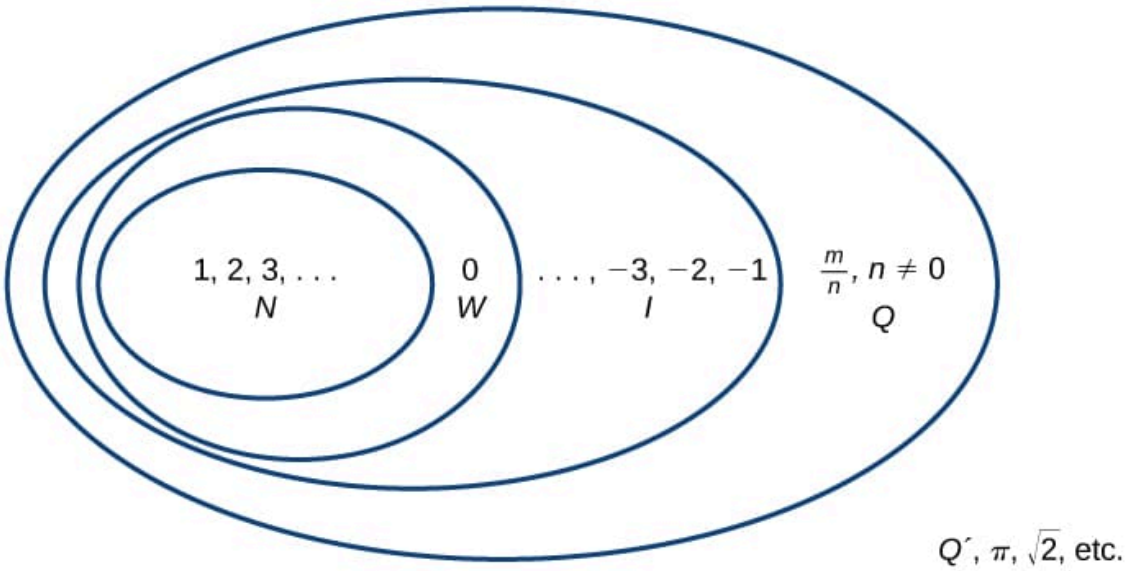


Figure 1.1.2: Sets of numbers. **N**: the set of natural numbers. **W**: the set of whole numbers. **I**: the set of integers. **Q**: the set of rational numbers. **Q´**: the set of irrational numbers

SETS OF NUMBERS

The set of natural numbers includes the numbers used for counting: $\{1, 2, 3, ...\}$.

The set of whole numbers is the set of natural numbers plus zero: $\{0, 1, 2, 3, ...\}$.

The set of integers adds the negative natural numbers to the set of whole numbers: $\{..., -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3, ...\}$.

The set of rational numbers includes fractions written as $\{\frac{m}{n} | \text{m and n are integers and } n \neq 0\}$.

The set of irrational numbers is the set of numbers that are not rational, are nonrepeating, and are nonterminating: $\{h \parallel \text{h is not a rational number}\}$.

Example 1.1.5: Differentiating the Sets of Numbers

Classify each number as being a natural number (N), whole number (W), integer (I), rational number (Q), and/or irrational number (Q′).

a. $\sqrt{36}$
b. $\frac{8}{3}$
c. $\sqrt{73}$
d. -6
e. $3.2121121112\ldots$

Solution

	N	W	I	Q	Q'
a. $\sqrt{36} = 6$	X	X	X	X	
b. $\frac{8}{3} = 2.\overline{6}$				X	
c. $\sqrt{73}$					X
d. -6			X	X	

	N	W	I	Q	Q'
e. $3.2121121112\ldots$					X

Exercise 1.1.5

Classify each number as being a natural number (N), whole number (W), integer (I), rational number (Q), and/or irrational number (Q′).

a. $-\frac{35}{7}$
b. 0
c. $\sqrt{169}$
d. $\sqrt{24}$
e. $4.763763763\ldots$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Performing Calculations Using the Order of Operations

When we multiply a number by itself, we square it or raise it to a power of 2. For example, $4^2 = 4 \times 4 = 16$. We can raise any number to any power. In general, the exponential notation an means that the number or variable a is used as a factor n times.

$$a^n = a \cdot a \cdot a \cdots a \qquad \text{n factors}$$

In this notation, a^n is read as the nth power of a, where a is called the base and n is called the exponent. A term in exponential notation may be part of a mathematical expression, which is a combination of numbers and operations. For example, $24 + 6 \times \frac{2}{3} - 4^2$ is a mathematical expression.

To evaluate a mathematical expression, we perform the various operations. However, we do not perform them in any random order. We use the order of operations. This is a sequence of rules for evaluating such expressions.

Recall that in mathematics we use parentheses ( ), brackets [ ], and braces { } to group numbers and expressions so that anything appearing within the symbols is treated as a unit. Additionally, fraction bars, radicals, and absolute value bars are treated as grouping symbols. When evaluating a mathematical expression, begin by simplifying expressions within grouping symbols.

The next step is to address any exponents or radicals. Afterward, perform multiplication and division from left to right and finally addition and subtraction from left to right.

Let's take a look at the expression provided.

$$24 + 6 \times \frac{2}{3} - 4^2$$

There are no grouping symbols, so we move on to exponents or radicals. The number 4 is raised to a power of 2, so simplify 4^2 as 16.

$$24 + 6 \times \frac{2}{3} - 4^2$$

$$24 + 6 \times \frac{2}{3} - 16$$

Next, perform multiplication or division, left to right.

$$24 + 6 \times \frac{2}{3} - 16$$

$$24 + 4 - 16$$

Lastly, perform addition or subtraction, left to right.

$$24 + 4 - 16$$

$$28 - 16$$

$$12$$

Therefore,

$$24 + 6 \times \frac{2}{3} - 4^2 = 12$$

For some complicated expressions, several passes through the order of operations will be needed. For instance, there may be a radical expression inside parentheses that must be simplified before the parentheses are evaluated. Following the order of operations ensures that anyone simplifying the same mathematical expression will get the same result.

ORDER OF OPERATIONS

Operations in mathematical expressions must be evaluated in a systematic order, which can be simplified using the acronym **PEMDAS**:

- **P**(arentheses)
- **E**(xponents)
- **M(**ultiplication) and **D**(ivision)
- **A**(ddition) and **S**(ubtraction)

HOW TO: Given a mathematical expression, simplify it using the order of operations.

1. Simplify any expressions within grouping symbols.
2. Simplify any expressions containing exponents or radicals.
3. Perform any multiplication and division in order, from left to right.
4. Perform any addition and subtraction in order, from left to right.

Example 1.1.6: Using the Order of Operations

Use the order of operations to evaluate each of the following expressions.

a. $(3 \times 2)^2 - 4 \times (6 + 2)$

b. $\dfrac{5^2 - 4}{7} - \sqrt{11 - 2}$

c. $6 - |\, 5 - 8 \,| + 3 \times (4 - 1)$

d. $\dfrac{14 - 3 \times 2}{2 \times 5 - 3^2}$

e. $7 \times (5 \times 3) - 2 \times [(6 - 3) - 4^2] + 1$

Solution

a.

$$\begin{aligned}(3\times 2)^2-4\times(6+2) &= (6)^2-4\times(8) && \text{Simplify parentheses}\\ &= 36-4\times 8 && \text{Simplify exponent}\\ &= 36-32 && \text{Simplify multiplication}\\ &= 4 && \text{Simplify subtraction}\end{aligned}$$

b.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{5^2-4}{7}-\sqrt{11-2} &= \frac{5^2-4}{7}-\sqrt{9} && \text{Simplify grouping symbols (radical)}\\ &= \frac{5^2-4}{7}-3 && \text{Simplify radical}\\ &= \frac{25-4}{7}-3 && \text{Simplify exponent}\\ &= \frac{21}{7}-3 && \text{Simplify subtraction in numerator}\\ &= 3-3 && \text{Simplify division}\\ &= 0 && \text{Simplify subtraction}\end{aligned}$$

Note that in the first step, the radical is treated as a grouping symbol, like parentheses. Also, in the third step, the fraction bar is considered a grouping symbol so the numerator is considered to be grouped.

c.

$$\begin{aligned}6-|\,5-8\,|+3\times(4-1) &= 6-|-3|+3\times 3 && \text{Simplify inside grouping symbols}\\ &= 6-3+3\times 3 && \text{Simplify absolute value}\\ &= 6-3+9 && \text{Simplify multiplication}\\ &= 3+9 && \text{Simplify subtraction}\\ &= 12 && \text{Simplify addition}\end{aligned}$$

d.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{14-3\times 2}{2\times 5-3^2} &= \frac{14-3\times 2}{2\times 5-9} && \text{Simplify exponent}\\ &= \frac{14-6}{10-9} && \text{Simplify products}\\ &= \frac{8}{1} && \text{Simplify differences}\\ &= 8 && \text{Simplify quotient}\end{aligned}$$

In this example, the fraction bar separates the numerator and denominator, which we simplify separately until the last step.

e.

$$\begin{aligned}7\times(5\times 3)-2\times[(6-3)-4^2]+1 &= 7\times(15)-2\times[(3)-4^2]+1 && \text{Simplify inside parentheses}\\ &= 7\times(15)-2\times(3-16)+1 && \text{Simplify exponent}\\ &= 7\times(15)-2\times(-13)+1 && \text{Subtract}\\ &= 105+26+1 && \text{Multiply}\\ &= 132 && \text{Add}\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.1.6

Use the order of operations to evaluate each of the following expressions.

a. $\sqrt{5^2-4^2}+7\times(5-4)^2$
b. $1+\dfrac{7\times 5-8\times 4}{9-6}$
c. $|1.8-4.3|+0.4\times\sqrt{15+10}$
d. $\dfrac{1}{2}\times[5\times 3^2-7^2]+\dfrac{1}{3}\times 9^2$
e. $[(3-8^2)-4]-(3-8)$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using Properties of Real Numbers

For some activities we perform, the order of certain operations does not matter, but the order of other operations does. For example, it does not make a difference if we put on the right shoe before the left or vice-versa. However, it does matter whether we put on shoes or socks first. The same thing is true for operations in mathematics.

Commutative Properties

The commutative property of addition states that numbers may be added in any order without affecting the sum.

$$a + b = b + a \tag{1.1.2}$$

We can better see this relationship when using real numbers.

$$(-2) + 7 = 5 \text{ and } 7 + (-2) = 5$$

Similarly, the **commutative property of multiplication** states that numbers may be multiplied in any order without affecting the product.

$$a \times b = b \times a \tag{1.1.3}$$

Again, consider an example with real numbers.

$$(-11) \times (-4) = 44 \text{ and } (-4) \times (-11) = 44$$

It is important to note that neither subtraction nor division is commutative. For example, $17 - 5$ is not the same as $5 - 17$. Similarly, $20 \div 5 \neq 5 \div 20$.

Associative Properties

The associative property of multiplication tells us that it does not matter how we group numbers when multiplying. We can move the grouping symbols to make the calculation easier, and the product remains the same.

$$a(bc) = (ab)c \tag{1.1.4}$$

Consider this example.

$$(3 \times 4) \times 5 = 60 \text{ and } 3 \times (4 \times 5) = 60$$

The associative property of addition tells us that numbers may be grouped differently without affecting the sum.

$$a + (b + c) = (a + b) + c \tag{1.1.5}$$

This property can be especially helpful when dealing with negative integers. Consider this example.

$$[15 + (-9)] + 23 = 29 \text{ and } 15 + [(-9) + 23] = 29$$

Are subtraction and division associative? Review these examples.

$$\begin{aligned} 8 - (3 - 15) &\stackrel{?}{=} (8 - 3) - 15 \\ 8 - (-12) &\stackrel{?}{=} 5 - 15 \\ 20 &\neq 10 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} 64 \div (8 \div 4) &\stackrel{?}{=} (64 \div 8) \div 4 \\ 64 \div 2 &\stackrel{?}{=} 8 \div 4 \\ 32 &\neq 2 \end{aligned}$$

As we can see, neither subtraction nor division is associative.

Distributive Property

The distributive property states that the product of a factor times a sum is the sum of the factor times each term in the sum.

$$a \times (b + c) = a \times b + a \times c \tag{1.1.6}$$

This property combines both addition and multiplication (and is the only property to do so). Let us consider an example.

$$\begin{aligned} 4 \cdot [12 + (-7)] &= 4 \cdot 12 + 4 \cdot (-7) \\ &= 48 + (-28) \\ &= 20 \end{aligned}$$

Note that 4 is outside the grouping symbols, so we distribute the 4 by multiplying it by 12, multiplying it by -7, and adding the products.

Example 1.1.7

To be more precise when describing this property, we say that multiplication distributes over addition. The reverse is not true, as we can see in this example.

$$\begin{aligned} 6 + (3 \times 5) &\stackrel{?}{=} (6 + 3) \times (6 \times 5) \\ 6 + (15) &\stackrel{?}{=} (9) \times (11) \\ 21 &\neq 99 \end{aligned}$$

Multiplication does not distribute over subtraction, and division distributes over neither addition nor subtraction.

A special case of the distributive property occurs when a sum of terms is subtracted.

$$a - b = a + (-b) \tag{1.1.7}$$

For example, consider the difference $12 - (5 + 3)$. We can rewrite the difference of the two terms 12 and $(5 + 3)$ by turning the subtraction expression into addition of the opposite. So instead of subtracting $(5 + 3)$, we add the opposite.

$$12 + (-1) \times (5 + 3)$$

Now, distribute -1 and simplify the result.

$$\begin{aligned} 12 - (5 + 3) &= 12 + (-1) \times (5 + 3) \\ &= 12 + [(-1) \times 5 + (-1) \times 3] \\ &= 12 + (-8) \\ &= 4 \end{aligned}$$

This seems like a lot of trouble for a simple sum, but it illustrates a powerful result that will be useful once we introduce algebraic terms. To subtract a sum of terms, change the sign of each term and add the results. With this in mind, we can rewrite the last example.

$$\begin{aligned} 12 - (5 + 3) &= 12 + (-5 - 3) \\ &= 12 - 8 \\ &= 4 \end{aligned}$$

Identity Properties

The **identity property of addition** states that there is a unique number, called the additive identity (0) that, when added to a number, results in the original number.

$$a + 0 = a \tag{1.1.8}$$

The **identity property of multiplication** states that there is a unique number, called the multiplicative identity (1) that, when multiplied by a number, results in the original number.

$$a \times 1 = a \tag{1.1.9}$$

For example, we have $(-6) + 0 = -6$ and $23 \times 1 = 23$. There are no exceptions for these properties; they work for every real number, including 0 and 1.

Inverse Properties

The inverse property of addition states that, for every real number a, there is a unique number, called the additive inverse (or opposite), denoted $-a$, that, when added to the original number, results in the additive identity, 0.

$$a + (-a) = 0 \tag{1.1.10}$$

For example, if $a = -8$, the additive inverse is 8, since $(-8) + 8 = 0$.

The inverse property of multiplication holds for all real numbers except 0 because the reciprocal of 0 is not defined. The property states that, for every real number a, there is a unique number, called the multiplicative inverse (or reciprocal), denoted $1a$, that, when multiplied by the original number, results in the multiplicative identity, 1.

$$a \times \frac{1}{a} = 1 \tag{1.1.11}$$

For example, if $a = -\frac{2}{3}$, the reciprocal, denoted $\frac{1}{a}$, is $-\frac{3}{2}$ because

$$a \cdot \frac{1}{a} = \left(-\frac{2}{3}\right) \times \left(-\frac{3}{2}\right) = 1$$

PROPERTIES OF REAL NUMBERS

The following properties hold for real numbers a, b, and c.

Table 1.1.1

	Addition	Multiplication
Commutative Property	$a + b = b + a$	$a \times b = b \times a$
Associative Property	$a + (b + c) = (a + b) + c$	$a(bc) = (ab)c$
Distributive Property	$a \times (b + c) = a \times b + a \times c$	
Identity Property	There exists a unique real number called the additive identity, 0, such that, for any real number a $a + 0 = a$	

There exists a unique real number called the multiplicative identity, 1, such that, for any real number a

$$a \times 1 = a$$

Inverse Property

Every real number a has an additive inverse, or opposite, denoted –a, such that

$$a + (-a) = 0$$

Every nonzero real number a has a multiplicative inverse, or reciprocal, denoted 1a , such that

$$a \times \left(\frac{1}{a}\right) = 1$$

Example 1.1.8: Using Properties of Real Numbers

Use the properties of real numbers to rewrite and simplify each expression. State which properties apply.

a. $3 \times 6 + 3 \times 4$
b. $(5 + 8) + (-8)$
c. $6 - (15 + 9)$
d. $\frac{4}{7} \times \left(\frac{2}{3} \times \frac{7}{4}\right)$
e. $100 \times [0.75 + (-2.38)]$

Solution

a.

$$\begin{aligned} 3 \times 6 + 3 \times 4 &= 3 \times (6 + 4) && \text{Distributive property} \\ &= 3 \times 10 && \text{Simplify} \\ &= 30 && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

b.

$$\begin{aligned} (5 + 8) + (-8) &= 5 + [8 + (-8)] && \text{Associative property of addition} \\ &= 5 + 0 && \text{Inverse property of addition} \\ &= 5 && \text{Identity property of addition} \end{aligned}$$

c.

$$\begin{aligned} 6 - (15 + 9) &= 6 + [(-15) + (-9)] && \text{Distributive property} \\ &= 6 + (-24) && \text{Simplify} \\ &= -18 && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

d.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{4}{7} \times \left(\frac{2}{3} \times \frac{7}{4}\right) &= \frac{4}{7} \times \left(\frac{7}{4} \times \frac{2}{3}\right) && \text{Commutative property of multiplication} \\ &= \left(\frac{4}{7} \times \frac{7}{4}\right) \times \frac{2}{3} && \text{Associative property of multiplication} \\ &= 1 \times \frac{2}{3} && \text{Inverse property of multiplication} \\ &= \frac{2}{3} && \text{Identity property of multiplication} \end{aligned}$$

e.

$$\begin{aligned} 100 \times [0.75 + (-2.38)] &= 100 \times 0.75 + 100 \times (-2.38) && \text{Distributive property} \\ &= 75 + (-238) && \text{Simplify} \\ &= -163 && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.1.7

Use the properties of real numbers to rewrite and simplify each expression. State which properties apply.

a. $\left(-\frac{23}{5}\right) \times \left[11 \times \left(-\frac{5}{23}\right)\right]$
b. $5 \times (6.2 + 0.4)$
c. $18 - (7 - 15)$
d. $\frac{17}{18} + \left[\frac{4}{9} + \left(-\frac{17}{18}\right)\right]$
e. $6 \times (-3) + 6 \times 3$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Evaluating Algebraic Expressions

So far, the mathematical expressions we have seen have involved real numbers only. In mathematics, we may see expressions such as $x+5$, $\frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$, or $\sqrt{2m^3n^2}$. In the expression $x+5$, 5 is called a **constant** because it does not vary and x is called a **variable** because it does. (In naming the variable, ignore any exponents or radicals containing the variable.) An **algebraic expression** is a collection of constants and variables joined together by the algebraic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

We have already seen some real number examples of exponential notation, a shorthand method of writing products of the same factor. When variables are used, the constants and variables are treated the same way.

$$(-3)^5 = (-3)\times(-3)\times(-3)\times(-3)\times(-3) \Rightarrow x^5 = x\times x\times x\times x\times x$$
$$(2\times 7)^3 = (2\times 7)\times(2\times 7)\times(2\times 7) \quad \Rightarrow (yz)^3 = (yz)\times(yz)\times(yz)$$

In each case, the exponent tells us how many factors of the base to use, whether the base consists of constants or variables.

Any variable in an algebraic expression may take on or be assigned different values. When that happens, the value of the algebraic expression changes. To evaluate an algebraic expression means to determine the value of the expression for a given value of each variable in the expression. Replace each variable in the expression with the given value, then simplify the resulting expression using the order of operations. If the algebraic expression contains more than one variable, replace each variable with its assigned value and simplify the expression as before.

Example 1.1.9: Describing Algebraic Expressions

List the constants and variables for each algebraic expression.

a. $x+5$
b. $\frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$
c. $\sqrt{2m^3n^2}$

Solution

	Constants	Variables
a. $x+5$	5	x
b. $\frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$	$\frac{4}{3}$, π	r
c. $\sqrt{2m^3n^2}$	2	m,n

Exercise 1.1.8

List the constants and variables for each algebraic expression.

a. $2(L+W)$
b. $4y^3+y$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 1.1.10: Evaluating an Algebraic Expression at Different Values

Evaluate the expression $2x-7$ for each value for x.

a. $x = 0$
b. $x = 1$
c. $x = 12$
d. $x = -4$

Solution

a. Substitute 0 for x.

$$\begin{aligned} 2x - 7 &= 2(0) - 7 \\ &= 0 - 7 \\ &= -7 \end{aligned}$$

b. Substitute 1 for x.

$$\begin{aligned} 2x - 7 &= 2(1) - 7 \\ &= 2 - 7 \\ &= -5 \end{aligned}$$

c. Substitute $\frac{1}{2}$ for x.

$$\begin{aligned} 2x - 7 &= 2\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) - 7 \\ &= 1 - 7 \\ &= -6 \end{aligned}$$

d. Substitute -4 for x.

$$\begin{aligned} 2x - 7 &= 2(-4) - 7 \\ &= -8 - 7 \\ &= -15 \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.1.9

Evaluate the expression $11 - 3y$ for each value for y.

a. $y = 2$
b. $y = 0$
c. $y = \frac{2}{3}$
d. $y = -5$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 1.1.11: Evaluating Algebraic Expressions

Evaluate each expression for the given values.

a. $x + 5$ for $x = -5$
b. $\frac{t}{2t - 1}$ for $t = 10$
c. $\frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$ for $r = 5$
d. $a + ab + b$ for $a = 11$, $b = -8$
e. $\sqrt{2m^3n^2}$ for $m = 2$, $n = 3$

Solution

a. Substitute -5 for x.

$$\begin{aligned} x+5 &= (-5)+5 \\ &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

b. Substitute 10 for t.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{t}{2t-1} &= \frac{(10)}{2(10)-1} \\ &= \frac{10}{20-1} \\ &= \frac{10}{19} \end{aligned}$$

c. Substitute 5 for r.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3 &= \frac{4}{3}\pi(5)^3 \\ &= \frac{4}{3}\pi(125) \\ &= \frac{500}{3}\pi \end{aligned}$$

d. Substitute 11 for a and -8 for b.

$$\begin{aligned} a+ab+b &= (11)+(11)(-8)+(-8) \\ &= 11-88-8 \\ &= -85 \end{aligned}$$

e. Substitute 2 for m and 3 for n.

$$\begin{aligned} \sqrt{2m^3n^2} &= \sqrt{2(2)^3(3)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{2(8)(9)} \\ &= \sqrt{144} \\ &= 12 \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.1.10

Evaluate each expression for the given values.

a. $\dfrac{y+3}{y-3}$ for $y=5$
b. $7-2t$ for $t=-2$
c. $\dfrac{1}{3}\pi r^2$ for $r=11$
d. $(p^2q)^3$ for $p=-2$, $q=3$
e. $4(m-n)-5(n-m)$ for $m=\dfrac{2}{3}$ $n=\dfrac{1}{3}$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Formulas

An equation is a mathematical statement indicating that two expressions are equal. The expressions can be numerical or algebraic. The equation is not inherently true or false, but only a proposition. The values that make the equation true, the solutions, are found using the properties of real numbers and other results. For example, the equation $2x + 1 = 7$ has the unique solution of 3 because when we substitute 3 for x in the equation, we obtain the true statement $2(3) + 1 = 7$.

A formula is an equation expressing a relationship between constant and variable quantities. Very often, the equation is a means of finding the value of one quantity (often a single variable) in terms of another or other quantities. One of the most common examples is the formula for finding the area A of a circle in terms of the radius r of the circle: $A = \pi r^2$. For any value of r, the area A can be found by evaluating the expression πr^2.

Example 1.1.12: Using a Formula

A right circular cylinder with radius r and height h has the surface area S (in square units) given by the formula $S = 2\pi r(r + h)$. See Figure $1.1.3$. Find the surface area of a cylinder with radius 6 in. and height 9 in. Leave the answer in terms of π.

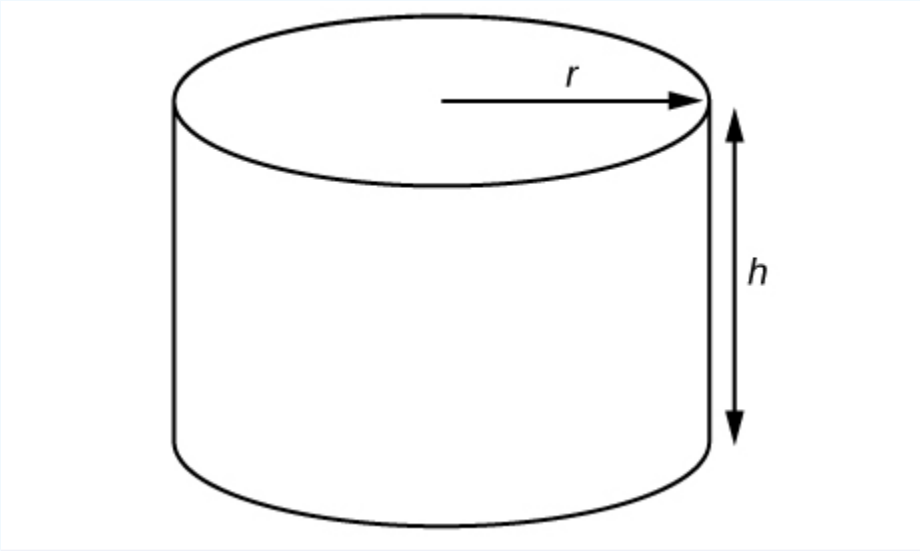


Figure $1.1.3$

Evaluate the expression $2\pi r(r + h)$ for $r = 6$ and $h = 9$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} S &= 2\pi r(r + h) \\ &= 2\pi(6)[(6) + (9)] \\ &= 2\pi(6)(15) \\ &= 180\pi \end{aligned}$$

The surface area is 180π square inches.

Exercise 1.1.11

A photograph with length L and width W is placed in a matte of width 8 centimeters (cm). The area of the matte (in square centimeters, or cm^2 is found to be $A = (L + 16)(W + 16) - L \cdot W$. See Figure 1.1.4. Find the area of a matte for a photograph with length 32cm and width 24cm.

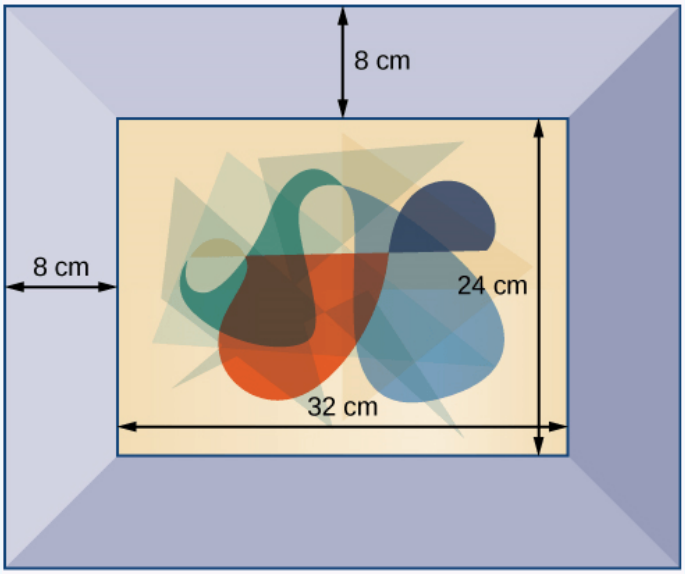


Figure 1.1.4

Answer available at the end of this section.

Simplifying Algebraic Expressions

Sometimes we can simplify an algebraic expression to make it easier to evaluate or to use in some other way. To do so, we use the properties of real numbers. We can use the same properties in formulas because they contain algebraic expressions.

Example 1.1.13: Simplifying Algebraic Expressions

Simplify each algebraic expression.

a. $3x - 2y + x - 3y - 7$
b. $2r - 5(3 - r) + 4$
c. $\left(4t - \frac{5}{4}s\right) - \left(\frac{2}{3}t + 2s\right)$
d. $2mn - 5m + 3mn + n$

Solution

a.
$$\begin{aligned} 3x - 2y + x - 3y - 7 &= 3x + x - 2y - 3y - 7 && \text{Commutative property of addition} \\ &= 4x - 5y - 7 && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

b.
$$\begin{aligned} 2r-5(3-r)+4 &= 2r-15+5r+4 && \text{Distributive property} \\ &= 2r+5y-15+4 && \text{Commutative property of addition} \\ &= 7r-11 && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

c.
$$\begin{aligned} \left(4t-\frac{5}{4}s\right)-\left(\frac{2}{3}t+2s\right) &= 4t-\frac{5}{4}s-\frac{2}{3}t-2s && \text{Distributive property} \\ &= 4t-\frac{2}{3}t-\frac{5}{4}s-2s && \text{Commutative property of addition} \\ &= \frac{10}{3}t-\frac{13}{4}s && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

d.
$$\begin{aligned} 2mn-5m+3mn+n &= 2mn+3mn-5m+n && \text{Commutative property of addition} \\ &= 5mn-5m+n && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.1.12

Simplify each algebraic expression.

a. $\frac{2}{3}y-2\left(\frac{4}{3}y+z\right)$
b. $\frac{5}{t}-2-\frac{3}{t}+1$
c. $4p(q-1)+q(1-p)$
d. $9r-(s+2r)+(6-s)$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 1.1.14: Simplifying a Formula

A rectangle with length L and width W has a perimeter P given by $P=L+W+L+W$. Simplify this expression.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} P &= L+W+L+W \\ P &= L+L+W+W && \text{Commutative property of addition} \\ P &= 2L+2W && \text{Simplify} \\ P &= 2(L+W) && \text{Distributive property} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.1.13

If the amount P is deposited into an account paying simple interest r for time t, the total value of the deposit A is given by $A=P+Prt$. Simplify the expression. (This formula will be explored in more detail later in the course.)

Answer available at the end of this section.

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with real numbers.

- Simplify an Expression
- Evaluate an Expression1
- Evaluate an Expression2

Key Concepts

- Rational numbers may be written as fractions or terminating or repeating decimals. See Example and Example.
- Determine whether a number is rational or irrational by writing it as a decimal. See Example.
- The rational numbers and irrational numbers make up the set of real numbers. See Example. A number can be classified as natural, whole, integer, rational, or irrational. See Example.
- The order of operations is used to evaluate expressions. See Example.
- The real numbers under the operations of addition and multiplication obey basic rules, known as the properties of real numbers. These are the commutative properties, the associative properties, the distributive property, the identity properties, and the inverse properties. See Example.
- Algebraic expressions are composed of constants and variables that are combined using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. See Example. They take on a numerical value when evaluated by replacing variables with constants. See Example,Example, and Example
- Formulas are equations in which one quantity is represented in terms of other quantities. They may be simplified or evaluated as any mathematical expression. See Example and Example.

Glossary

algebraic expression
: constants and variables combined using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division

associative property of addition
: the sum of three numbers may be grouped differently without affecting the result; in symbols,$a+(b+c)=(a+b)+c$

associative property of multiplication
: the product of three numbers may be grouped differently without affecting the result; in symbols,$a \cdot (b \cdot c)=(a \cdot b) \cdot c$

base
: in exponential notation, the expression that is being multiplied

commutative property of addition
: two numbers may be added in either order without affecting the result; in symbols,$a+b=b+a$

commutative property of multiplication
: two numbers may be multiplied in any order without affecting the result; in symbols,$a \cdot b=b \cdot a$

constant
: a quantity that does not change value

distributive property
: the product of a factor times a sum is the sum of the factor times each term in the sum; in symbols,$a \cdot (b+c)=a \cdot b+a \cdot c$

equation
: a mathematical statement indicating that two expressions are equal

exponent
: in exponential notation, the raised number or variable that indicates how many times the base is being multiplied

exponential notation
: a shorthand method of writing products of the same factor

formula
: an equation expressing a relationship between constant and variable quantities

identity property of addition
: there is a unique number, called the additive identity, 0, which, when added to a number, results in the original number; in symbols,$a+0=a$

identity property of multiplication
: there is a unique number, called the multiplicative identity, 1, which, when multiplied by a number, results in the original number; in symbols,a · 1=a

integers
: the set consisting of the natural numbers, their opposites, and 0:{...,–3,–2,–1,0,1,2,3,...}

inverse property of addition
: for every real numbera,there is a unique number, called the additive inverse (or opposite), denoted–a,which, when added to the original number, results in the additive identity, 0; in symbols,a+(–a)=0

inverse property of multiplication
: for every non-zero real numbera,there is a unique number, called the multiplicative inverse (or reciprocal), denoted1a,which, when multiplied by the original number, results in the multiplicative identity, 1; in symbols,a · 1a=1

irrational numbers
: the set of all numbers that are not rational; they cannot be written as either a terminating or repeating decimal; they cannot be expressed as a fraction of two integers

natural numbers
: the set of counting numbers:{1,2,3,...}

order of operations
: a set of rules governing how mathematical expressions are to be evaluated, assigning priorities to operations

rational numbers
: the set of all numbers of the formmn,wheremandnare integers andn≠0.Any rational number may be written as a fraction or a terminating or repeating decimal.

real number line
: a horizontal line used to represent the real numbers. An arbitrary fixed point is chosen to represent 0; positive numbers lie to the right of 0 and negative numbers to the left.

real numbers
: the sets of rational numbers and irrational numbers taken together

variable
: a quantity that may change value

whole numbers
: the set consisting of 0 plus the natural numbers:{0,1,2,3,...}

Answers

Exercise 1.1.1

a. $\frac{11}{1}$
b. $\frac{3}{1}$
c. $-\frac{4}{1}$

Exercise 1.1.2

a. 4 (or 4.0), terminating
b. $0.\overline{615384}$, repeating
c. -0.85, terminating

Exercise 1.1.3

a. rational and repeating;
b. rational and terminating;
c. irrational;
d. rational and terminating;
e. irrational

Exercise 1.1.4

a. positive, irrational; right
b. negative, rational; left
c. positive, rational; right
d. negative, irrational; left
e. positive, rational; right

Exercise 1.1.5

	N	W	I	Q	Q'
a. $-\frac{35}{7}$			X	X	
b. 0		X	X	X	
c. $\sqrt{169}$	X	X	X	X	
d. $\sqrt{24}$					X
e. $4.763763763\ldots$				X	

Exercise 1.1.6

a. 10
b. 2
c. 4.5
d. 25
e. -60

Exercise 1.1.7

1. 11, commutative property of multiplication
2. 33, distributive property
3. 26, distributive property
4. $\frac{4}{9}$, commutative property of addition, associative property of addition, inverse property of addition, identity property of addition
5. 0, distributive property, inverse property of addition, identity property of addition

Exercise 1.1.8

	Constants	Variables
a. $2\pi r(r+h)$	$2,\pi$	r,h
b. $2(L+W)$	2	L, W
c. $4y^3+y$	4	y

Exercise 1.1.9

1. 11
2. 26

Exercise 1.1.10

a. 4
b. 11
c. $\frac{121}{3}\pi$
d. 1728
e. 3

Exercise 1.1.11

$1152cm^2$

Exercise 1.1.12

a. $-2y-2z$ or $-2(y+z)$
b. $\frac{2}{t}-1$
c. $3pq-4p+q$
d. $7r-2s+6$

Exercise 1.1.13

$$A = P(1 + rt)$$

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1.2: Exponents

Learning Objectives

- The Rules of Exponents

Mathematicians, scientists, and economists commonly encounter very large and very small numbers. But it may not be obvious how common such figures are in everyday life. For instance, a pixel is the smallest unit of light that can be perceived and recorded by a digital camera. A particular camera might record an image that is $2,048$ pixels by $1,536$ pixels, which is a very high resolution picture. It can also perceive a color depth (gradations in colors) of up to 48 bits per frame, and can shoot the equivalent of 24 frames per second. The maximum possible number of bits of information used to film a one-hour $(3,600$-second) digital film is then an extremely large number.

Using a calculator, we enter $2,048 \times 1,536 \times 48 \times 24 \times 3,600$ and press ENTER. The calculator displays $1.304596316E13$. What does this mean? The "$E13$" portion of the result represents the exponent 13 of ten, so there are a maximum of approximately 1.3×10^{13} bits of data in that one-hour film. In this section, we review rules of exponents first and then apply them to calculations involving very large or small numbers.

Using the Product Rule of Exponents

Consider the product $x^3 \times x^4$. Both terms have the same base, x, but they are raised to different exponents. Expand each expression, and then rewrite the resulting expression.

$$\begin{aligned} x^3 \times x^4 &= \overbrace{x \times x \times x}^{3 \text{ factors}} \times \overbrace{x \times x \times x \times x}^{4 \text{ factors}} \\ &= \overbrace{x \times x \times x \times x \times x \times x \times x}^{7 \text{ factors}} \\ &= x^7 \end{aligned}$$

The result is that $x^3 \times x^4 = x^{3+4} = x^7$.

Notice that the exponent of the product is the sum of the exponents of the terms. In other words, when multiplying exponential expressions with the same base, we write the result with the common base and add the exponents. This is the product rule of exponents.

$$a^m \times a^n = a^{m+n} \tag{1.2.1}$$

Now consider an example with real numbers.

$$2^3 \times 2^4 = 2^{3+4} = 2^7$$

We can always check that this is true by simplifying each exponential expression. We find that 2^3 is 8, 2^4 is 16, and 2^7 is 128. The product 8×16 equals 128, so the relationship is true. We can use the product rule of exponents to simplify expressions that are a product of two numbers or expressions with the same base but different exponents.

THE PRODUCT RULE OF EXPONENTS

For any real number a and natural numbers m and n, the product rule of exponents states that

$$a^m \times a^n = a^{m+n} \tag{1.2.2}$$

Example 1.2.1: Using the Product Rule

Write each of the following products with a single base. Do not simplify further.

a. $t^5 \times t^3$
b. $(-3)^5 \times (-3)$
c. $x^2 \times x^5 \times x^3$

Solution

Use the product rule (Equation 1.2.2) to simplify each expression.

a. $t^5 \times t^3 = t^{5+3} = t^8$
b. $(-3)^5 \times (-3) = (-3)^5 \times (-3)^1 = (-3)^{5+1} = (-3)^6$
c. $x^2 \times x^5 \times x^3$

At first, it may appear that we cannot simplify a product of three factors. However, using the associative property of multiplication, begin by simplifying the first two.

$$x^2 \times x^5 \times x^3 = (x^2 \times x^5) \times x^3 = (x^{2+5}) \times x^3 = x^7 \times x^3 = x^{7+3} = x^{10}$$

Notice we get the same result by adding the three exponents in one step.

$$x^2 \times x^5 \times x^3 = x^{2+5+3} = x^{10}$$

Exercise 1.2.1

Write each of the following products with a single base. Do not simplify further.

a. $k^6 \times k^9$
b. $\left(\frac{2}{y}\right)^4 \times \left(\frac{2}{y}\right)$
c. $t^3 \times t^6 \times t^5$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Using the Quotient Rule of Exponents

The quotient rule of exponents allows us to simplify an expression that divides two numbers with the same base but different exponents. In a similar way to the product rule, we can simplify an expression such as $\frac{y^m}{y^n}$, where $m > n$. Consider the example $\frac{y^9}{y^5}$. Perform the division by canceling common factors.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{y^9}{y^5} &= \frac{y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y}{y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y} \\ &= \frac{y \cdot y \cdot y \cdot y}{1} \\ &= y^4 \end{aligned}$$

Notice that the exponent of the quotient is the difference between the exponents of the divisor and dividend.

$$\frac{a^m}{a^n} = a^{m-n} \tag{1.2.3}$$

In other words, when dividing exponential expressions with the same base, we write the result with the common base and subtract the exponents.

$$\frac{y^9}{y^5} = y^{9-5} = y^4$$

For the time being, we must be aware of the condition $m > n$. Otherwise, the difference $m - n$ could be zero or negative. Those possibilities will be explored shortly. Also, instead of qualifying variables as nonzero each time, we will simplify matters and assume from here on that all variables represent nonzero real numbers.

THE QUOTIENT RULE OF EXPONENTS

For any real number a and natural numbers m and n, such that $m > n$, the quotient rule of exponents states that

$$\frac{a^m}{a^n} = a^{m-n} \tag{1.2.4}$$

Example 1.2.2: Using the Quotient Rule

Write each of the following products with a single base. Do not simplify further.

a. $\frac{(-2)^{14}}{(-2)^9}$
b. $\frac{t^{23}}{t^{15}}$
c. $\frac{(z\sqrt{2})^5}{z\sqrt{2}}$

Solution

Use the quotient rule (Equation 1.2.4) to simplify each expression.

a. $\frac{(-2)^{14}}{(-2)^9} = (-2)^{14-9} = (-2)^5$
b. $\frac{t^{23}}{t^{15}}$=t^{23−15}=t^8\)
c. $\frac{(z\sqrt{2})^5}{z\sqrt{2}} = (z\sqrt{2})^{5-1} = (z\sqrt{2})^4$

Exercise 1.2.2

Write each of the following products with a single base. Do not simplify further.

a. $\frac{s^{75}}{s^{68}}$
b. $\frac{(-3)^6}{-3}$
c. $\frac{(ef^2)^5}{(ef^2)^3}$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Answer b available at the end of this section.

Answer c available at the end of this section.

Using the Power Rule of Exponents

Suppose an exponential expression is raised to some power. Can we simplify the result? Yes. To do this, we use the power rule of

exponents. Consider the expression $(x^2)^3$. The expression inside the parentheses is multiplied twice because it has an exponent of 2. Then the result is multiplied three times because the entire expression has an exponent of 3.

$$\begin{aligned}(x^2)^3 &= (x^2) \times (x^2) \times (x^2) \\ &= x \times x \times x \times x \times x \times x \\ &= x^6\end{aligned}$$

The exponent of the answer is the product of the exponents: $(x^2)^3 = x^{2 \cdot 3} = x^6$. In other words, when raising an exponential expression to a power, we write the result with the common base and the product of the exponents.

$$(a^m)^n = a^{m \cdot n} \tag{1.2.5}$$

Be careful to distinguish between uses of the product rule and the power rule. When using the product rule, different terms with the same bases are raised to exponents. In this case, you add the exponents. When using the power rule, a term in exponential notation is raised to a power. In this case, you multiply the exponents.

Table 1.2.1

Product Rule	Power Rule
$5^3 \times 5^4 = 5^{3+4} = 5^7$	$(5^3)^4 = 5^{3 \times 4} = 5^{12}$
$x^5 \times x^2 = x^{5+2} = x^7$	$(x^5)^2 = x^{5 \times 2} = x^{10}$
$(3a)^7 \times (3a)^{10} = (3a)^{7+10} = (3a)^{17}$	$((3a)^7)^{10} = (3a)^{7 \times 10} = (3a)^{70}$

THE POWER RULE OF EXPONENTS

For any real number a and positive integers m and n, the power rule of exponents states that

$$(a^m)^n = a^{m \cdot n} \tag{1.2.6}$$

Example 1.2.3: Using the Power Rule

Write each of the following products with a single base. Do not simplify further.

a. $(x^2)^7$
b. $((2t)^5)^3$
c. $((-3)^5)^{11}$

Solution

Use the power rule (Equation 1.2.6) to simplify each expression.

a. $(x^2)^7 = x^{2 \cdot 7} = x^{14}$
b. $((2t)^5)^3 = (2t)^{5 \cdot 3} = (2t)^{15}$
c. $((-3)^5)^{11} = (-3)^{5 \cdot 11} = (-3)^{55}$

Exercise 1.2.3

Write each of the following products with a single base. Do not simplify further.

a. $((3y)^8)^3$
b. $(t^5)^7$
c. $((-g)^4)^4$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Answer b available at the end of this section.

Answer c available at the end of this section.

Using the Zero Exponent Rule of Exponents

Return to the quotient rule. We made the condition that $m > n$ so that the difference $m - n$ would never be zero or negative. What would happen if $m = n$? In this case, we would use the zero exponent rule of exponents to simplify the expression to 1. To see how this is done, let us begin with an example.

$$\frac{t^8}{t^8} = 1$$

If we were to simplify the original expression using the quotient rule, we would have

$$\frac{t^8}{t^8} = t^{8-8} = t^0$$

If we equate the two answers, the result is $t^0 = 1$. This is true for any nonzero real number, or any variable representing a real number.

$$a^0 = 1$$

The sole exception is the expression 0^0. This appears later in more advanced courses, but for now, we will consider the value to be undefined.

THE ZERO EXPONENT RULE OF EXPONENTS

For any nonzero real number a, the zero exponent rule of exponents states that

$$a^0 = 1 \tag{1.2.7}$$

Example 1.2.4: Using the Zero Exponent Rule

Simplify each expression using the zero exponent rule of exponents.

a. $\dfrac{c^3}{c^3}$

b. $\dfrac{-3x^5}{x^5}$

c. $\dfrac{(j^2k)^4}{(j^2k) \times (j^2k)^3}$

d. $\dfrac{5(rs^2)^2}{(rs^2)^2}$

Solution

Use the zero exponent and other rules to simplify each expression.

a.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{c^3}{c^3} &= c^{3-3} \\ &= c^0 \\ &= 1\end{aligned}$$

b.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{-3x^5}{x^5} &= -3 \times \frac{x^5}{x^5} \\ &= -3 \times x^{5-5} \\ &= -3 \times x^0 \\ &= -3 \times 1 \\ &= -3\end{aligned}$$

c.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{(j^2k)^4}{(j^2k) \times (j^2k)^3} &= \frac{(j^2k)^4}{(j^2k)^{1+3}} && \text{Use the product rule in the denominator} \\ &= \frac{(j^2k)^4}{(j^2k)^4} && \text{Simplify} \\ &= (j^2k)^{4-4} && \text{Use the quotient rule} \\ &= (j^2k)^0 && \text{Simplify} \\ &= 1\end{aligned}$$

d.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{5(rs^2)^2}{(rs^2)^2} &= 5(rs^2)^{2-2} && \text{Use the quotient rule} \\ &= 5(rs^2)^0 && \text{Simplify} \\ &= 5 \times 1 && \text{Use the zero exponent rule} \\ &= 5 && \text{Simplify}\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.2.4

Simplify each expression using the zero exponent rule of exponents.

a. $\frac{t^7}{t^7}$
b. $\frac{(de^2)^{11}}{2(de^2)^{11}}$
c. $\frac{w^4 \times w^2}{w^6}$
d. $\frac{t^3 \times t^4}{t^2 \times t^5}$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Using the Negative Rule of Exponents

Another useful result occurs if we relax the condition that $m > n$ in the quotient rule even further. For example, can we simplify $\frac{t^3}{t^5}$? When \(m

Divide one exponential expression by another with a larger exponent. Use our example, $\frac{t^3}{t^5}$.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{t^3}{t^5} &= \frac{t \times t \times t}{t \times t \times t \times t \times t} \\ &= \frac{1}{t \times t} \\ &= \frac{1}{h^2}\end{aligned}$$

If we were to simplify the original expression using the quotient rule, we would have

$$\frac{t^3}{t^5} = h^{3-5}$$
$$= h^{-2}$$

Putting the answers together, we have $h^{-2} = \frac{1}{h^2}$. This is true for any nonzero real number, or any variable representing a nonzero real number.

A factor with a negative exponent becomes the same factor with a positive exponent if it is moved across the fraction bar—from numerator to denominator or vice versa.

$$a^{-n} = \frac{1}{a^n} \text{ and } a^n = \frac{1}{a^{-n}}$$

We have shown that the exponential expression an is defined when n is a natural number, 0, or the negative of a natural number. That means that an is defined for any integer n. Also, the product and quotient rules and all of the rules we will look at soon hold for any integer n.

THE NEGATIVE RULE OF EXPONENTS

For any nonzero real number a and natural number n, the negative rule of exponents states that

$$a^{-n} = \frac{1}{a^n} \tag{1.2.8}$$

Example 1.2.5: Using the Negative Exponent Rule

Write each of the following quotients with a single base. Do not simplify further. Write answers with positive exponents.

a. $\frac{\theta^3}{\theta^{10}}$
b. $\frac{z^2 \times z}{z^4}$
c. $\frac{(-5t^3)^4}{(-5t^3)^8}$

Solution

a. $\frac{\theta^3}{\theta^{10}} = \theta^{3-10} = \theta^{-7} = \frac{1}{\theta^7}$
b. $\frac{z^2 \times z}{z^4} = \frac{z^{2+1}}{z^4} = \frac{z^3}{z^4} = z^{3-4} = z^{-1} = \frac{1}{z}$
c. $\frac{(-5t^3)^4}{(-5t^3)^8} = (-5t^3)^{4-8} = (-5t^3)^{-4} = \frac{1}{(-5t^3)^4}$

Exercise 1.2.5

Write each of the following quotients with a single base. Do not simplify further. Write answers with positive exponents.

a. $\frac{(-3t)^2}{(-3t)^8}$
b. $\frac{f^{47}}{f^{49} \times f}$
c. $\frac{2k^4}{5k^7}$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Example 1.2.6: Using the Product and Quotient Rules

Write each of the following products with a single base. Do not simplify further. Write answers with positive exponents.

a. $b^2 \times b^{-8}$
b. $(-x)^5 \times (-x)^{-5}$
c. $\dfrac{-7z}{(-7z)^5}$

Solution

a. $b^2 \times b^{-8} = b^{2-8} = b^{-6} = \dfrac{1}{b^6}$
b. $(-x)^5 \times (-x)^{-5} = (-x)^{5-5} = (-x)^0 = 1$
c. $\dfrac{-7z}{(-7z)^5} = \dfrac{(-7z)^1}{(-7z)^5} = (-7z)^{1-5} = (-7z)^{-4} = \dfrac{1}{(-7z)^4}$

Exercise 1.2.6

Write each of the following products with a single base. Do not simplify further. Write answers with positive exponents.

a. $t^{-11} \times t^6$
b. $\dfrac{25^{12}}{25^{13}}$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Finding the Power of a Product

To simplify the power of a product of two exponential expressions, we can use the power of a product rule of exponents, which breaks up the power of a product of factors into the product of the powers of the factors. For instance, consider $(pq)^3$. We begin by using the associative and commutative properties of multiplication to regroup the factors.

$$\begin{aligned}(pq)^3 &= (pq) \times (pq) \times (pq) \\ &= p \times q \times p \times q \times p \times q \\ &= p^3 \times q^3\end{aligned}$$

In other words, $(pq)^3 = p^3 \times q^3$.

THE POWER OF A PRODUCT RULE OF EXPONENTS

For any real numbers a and b and any integer n, the power of a product rule of exponents states that

$$(ab)^n = a^n b^n \tag{1.2.9}$$

Example 1.2.7: Using the Power of a Product Rule

Simplify each of the following products as much as possible using the power of a product rule. Write answers with positive exponents.

a. $(ab^2)^3$
b. $(2t)^{15}$
c. $(-2w^3)^3$

d. $\dfrac{1}{(-7z)^4}$
e. $(e^{-2}f^2)^7$

Solution

Use the product and quotient rules and the new definitions to simplify each expression.

a. $(ab^2)^3 = (a)^3 \times (b^2)^3 = a^{1\times 3} \times b^{2\times 3} = a^3b^6$
b. $(2t)^{15} = (2)^{15} \times (t)^{15} = 2^{15}t^{15} = 32,768t^{15}$
c. $(-2w^3)^3 = (-2)^3 \times (w^3)^3 = -8 \times w^{3\times 3} = -8w^9$
d. $\dfrac{1}{(-7z)^4} = \dfrac{1}{(-7)^4 \times (z)^4} = \dfrac{1}{2401z^4}$
e. $(e^{-2}f^2)^7 = (e^{-2})^7 \times (f^2)^7 = e^{-2\times 7} \times f^{2\times 7} = e^{-14}f^{14} = \dfrac{f^{14}}{e^{14}}$

Exercise 1.2.7

Simplify each of the following products as much as possible using the power of a product rule. Write answers with positive exponents.

a. $(g^2h^3)^5$
b. $(5t)^3$
c. $(-3y^5)^3$
d. $\dfrac{1}{(a^6b^7)^3}$
e. $(r^3s^{-2})^4$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Finding the Power of a Quotient

To simplify the power of a quotient of two expressions, we can use the power of a quotient rule, which states that the power of a quotient of factors is the quotient of the powers of the factors. For example, let's look at the following example.

$$(e^{-2}f^2)^7 = \frac{f^{14}}{e^{14}} \tag{1.2.10}$$

Let's rewrite the original problem differently and look at the result.

$$\begin{aligned}(e^{-2}f^2)^7 &= \left(\frac{f^2}{e^2}\right)^7 \\ &= \frac{f^{14}}{e^{14}}\end{aligned}$$

It appears from the last two steps that we can use the power of a product rule as a power of a quotient rule.

$$\begin{aligned}(e^{-2}f^2)^7 &= \left(\frac{f^2}{e^2}\right)^7 \\ &= \frac{(f^2)^7}{(e^2)^7} \\ &= \frac{f^{2\times 7}}{e^{2\times 7}} \\ &= \frac{f^{14}}{e^{14}}\end{aligned}$$

THE POWER OF A QUOTIENT RULE OF EXPONENTS

For any real numbers a and b and any integer n, the power of a quotient rule of exponents states that

$$\left(\frac{a}{b}\right)^n = \frac{a^n}{b^n} \tag{1.2.11}$$

Example 1.2.8: Using the Power of a Quotient Rule

Simplify each of the following quotients as much as possible using the power of a quotient rule. Write answers with positive exponents.

a. $\left(\frac{4}{z^{11}}\right)^3$
b. $\left(\frac{p}{q^3}\right)^6$
c. $\left(\frac{-1}{t^2}\right)^{27}$
d. $(j^3k^{-2})^4$
e. $(m^{-2}n^{-2})^3$

Solution

a. $\left(\frac{4}{z^{11}}\right)^3 = \frac{(4)^3}{(z^{11})^3} = \frac{64}{z^{11\times 3}} = \frac{64}{z^{33}}$
b. $\left(\frac{p}{q^3}\right)^6 = \frac{(p)^6}{(q^3)^6} = \frac{p^{1\times 6}}{q^{3\times 6}} = \frac{p^6}{q^{18}}$
c. $\left(\frac{-1}{t^2}\right)^{27} = \frac{(-1)^{27}}{(t^2)^{27}} = \frac{-1}{t^{2\times 27}} = \frac{-1}{t^{54}} = -\frac{1}{t^{54}}$
d. $(j^3k^{-2})^4 = \left(\frac{j^3}{k^2}\right)^4 = \frac{(j^3)^4}{(k^2)^4} = \frac{j^{3\times 4}}{k^{2\times 4}} = \frac{j^{12}}{k^8}$
e. $(m^{-2}n^{-2})^3 = \left(\frac{1}{m^2n^2}\right)^3 = \frac{(1)^3}{(m^2n^2)^3} = \frac{1}{(m^2)^3(n^2)^3} = \frac{1}{m^{2\times 3}n^{2\times 3}} = \frac{1}{m^6n^6}$

Exercise 1.2.8

Simplify each of the following quotients as much as possible using the power of a quotient rule. Write answers with positive exponents.

a. $\left(\frac{b^5}{c}\right)^3$
b. $\left(\frac{5}{u^8}\right)^4$
c. $\left(\frac{-1}{w^3}\right)^{35}$
d. $(p^{-4}q^3)^8$
e. $(c^{-5}d^{-3})^4$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Simplifying Exponential Expressions

Recall that to simplify an expression means to rewrite it by combing terms or exponents; in other words, to write the expression more simply with fewer terms. The rules for exponents may be combined to simplify expressions.

Example 1.2.9: Simplifying Exponential Expressions

Simplify each expression and write the answer with positive exponents only.

a. $(6m^2n^{-1})^3$
b. $17^5 \times 17^{-4} \times 17^{-3}$
c. $\left(\dfrac{u^{-1}v}{v^{-1}}\right)^2$
d. $(-2a^3b^{-1})(5a^{-2}b^2)$
e. $(x^2\sqrt{2})^4(x^2\sqrt{2})^{-4}$
f. $\dfrac{(3w^2)^5}{(6w^{-2})^2}$

Solution

a.
$$\begin{aligned}(6m^2n^{-1})^3 &= (6)^3(m^2)^3(n^{-1})^3 && \text{The power of a product rule}\\ &= 6^3m^{2\times3}n^{-1\times3} && \text{The power rule}\\ &= 216m^6n^{-3} && \text{The power rule}\\ &= \frac{216m^6}{n^3} && \text{The negative exponent rule}\end{aligned}$$

b.
$$\begin{aligned}17^5 \times 17^{-4} \times 17^{-3} &= 17^{5-4-3} && \text{The product rule}\\ &= 17^{-2} && \text{Simplify}\\ &= \frac{1}{17^2} \text{ or } \frac{1}{289} && \text{The negative exponent rule}\end{aligned}$$

c.
$$\begin{aligned}\left(\frac{u^{-1}v}{v^{-1}}\right)^2 &= \frac{(u^{-1}v)^2}{(v^{-1})^2} && \text{The power of a quotient rule}\\ &= \frac{u^{-2}v^2}{v^{-2}} && \text{The power of a product rule}\\ &= u^{-2}v^{2-(-2)} && \text{The quotient rule}\\ &= u^{-2}v^4 && \text{Simplify}\\ &= \frac{v^4}{u^2} && \text{The negative exponent rule}\end{aligned}$$

d.
$$\begin{aligned}\left(-2a^3b^{-1}\right)\left(5a^{-2}b^2\right) &= \left(x^2\sqrt{2}\right)^{4-4} && \text{Commutative and associative laws of multiplication}\\ &= -10 \times a^{3-2} \times b^{-1+2} && \text{The product rule}\\ &= -10ab && \text{Simplify}\end{aligned}$$

e.
$$\begin{aligned}\left(x^2\sqrt{2}\right)^4\left(x^2\sqrt{2}\right)^{-4} &= \left(x^2\sqrt{2}\right)^{4-4} && \text{The product rule}\\ &= \left(x^2\sqrt{2}\right)^0 && \text{Simplify}\\ &= 1 && \text{The zero exponent rule}\end{aligned}$$

f.
$$\begin{aligned}\frac{(3w^2)^5}{(6w^{-2})^2} &= \frac{(3)^5 \times (w^2)^5}{(6)^2 \times (w^{-2})^2} && \text{The power of a product rule}\\ &= \frac{3^5w^{2\times5}}{6^2w^{-2\times2}} && \text{The power rule}\\ &= \frac{243w^{10}}{36w^{-4}} && \text{Simplify}\\ &= \frac{27w^{10-(-4)}}{4} && \text{The quotient rule and reduce fraction}\\ &= \frac{27w^{14}}{4} && \text{Simplify}\end{aligned}$$

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with exponents and scientific notation.

Exponential Notation

Key Equations

Rules of Exponents For nonzero real numbers a and b and integers m and n

Product rule	$a^m \cdot a^n = a^{m+n}$
Quotient rule	$\frac{a^m}{a^n} = a^{m-n}$
Power rule	$(a^m)^n = a^{m \cdot n}$
Zero exponent rule	$a^0 = 1$
Negative rule	$a^{-n} = \frac{1}{a^n}$
Power of a product rule	$(a \cdot b)^n = a^n \cdot b^n$
Power of a quotient rule	$\left(\frac{a}{b}\right)^n = \frac{a^n}{b^n}$

Key Concepts

- Products of exponential expressions with the same base can be simplified by adding exponents. See Example.
- Quotients of exponential expressions with the same base can be simplified by subtracting exponents. See Example.
- Powers of exponential expressions with the same base can be simplified by multiplying exponents. See Example.
- An expression with exponent zero is defined as 1. See Example.
- An expression with a negative exponent is defined as a reciprocal. See Example and Example.
- The power of a product of factors is the same as the product of the powers of the same factors. See Example.
- The power of a quotient of factors is the same as the quotient of the powers of the same factors. See Example.
- The rules for exponential expressions can be combined to simplify more complicated expressions. See Example.
- Scientific notation uses powers of 10 to simplify very large or very small numbers. See Example and Example.
- Scientific notation may be used to simplify calculations with very large or very small numbers. See Example and Example.

Answers

Exercise 1.2.1

k^{15}

$\left(\frac{2}{y}\right)^5$

t^{14}

Exercise 1.2.2

s^7

Exercise 1.2.2

$(-3)^5$

Exercise 1.2.2

$(ef^2)^2$

Exercise 1.2.3

$(3y)^{24}$

Exercise 1.2.3

t^{35}

Exercise 1.2.3

$(-g)^{16}$

Exercise 1.2.4

1

$\frac{1}{2}$

1

1

Exercise 1.2.5

$\frac{1}{(-3t)^6}$

$\frac{1}{f^3}$

$\frac{2}{5k^3}$

Exercise 1.2.6

$t^{-5} = \frac{1}{t^5}$

$\frac{1}{25}$

Exercise 1.2.7

$g^{10}h^{15}$

$125t^3$

$-27y^{15}$

$\frac{1}{a^{18}b^{21}}$

$\frac{r^{12}}{s^8}$

Exercise 1.2.8

$\frac{b^{15}}{c^3}$

$\frac{625}{u^{32}}$

$\frac{-1}{w^{105}}$

$\frac{q^{24}}{p^{32}}$

$\frac{1}{c^{20}d^{12}}$

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1.3: Polynomials

Learning Objectives

In this section students will:

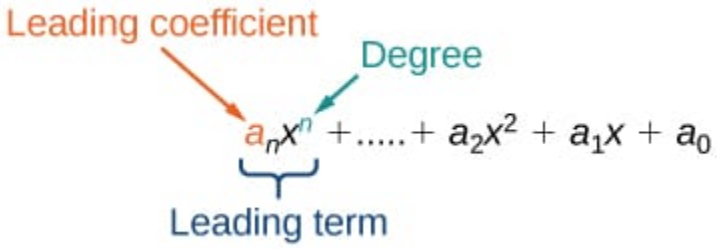
- Identify the degree and leading coefficient of polynomials.
- Add and subtract polynomials.
- Multiply polynomials.
- Use FOIL to multiply binomials.
- Perform operations with polynomials of several variables.

Identifying the Degree and Leading Coefficient of Polynomials

The formula just found is an example of a **polynomial**, which is a sum of or difference of terms, each consisting of a variable raised to a nonnegative integer power. A number multiplied by a variable raised to an exponent, such as 384π, is known as a **coefficient**. Coefficients can be positive, negative, or zero, and can be whole numbers, decimals, or fractions. Each product $a_i x^i$, such as $384\pi w$, is a **term of a polynomial**. If a term does not contain a variable, it is called a constant.

A polynomial containing only one term, such as $5x^4$, is called a **monomial**. A polynomial containing two terms, such as $2x - 9$, is called a **binomial**. A polynomial containing three terms, such as $-3x^2 + 8x - 7$, is called a **trinomial**.

We can find the **degree** of a polynomial by identifying the highest power of the variable that occurs in the polynomial. The term with the highest degree is called the **leading term** because it is usually written first. The coefficient of the leading term is called the **leading coefficient**. When a polynomial is written so that the powers are descending, we say that it is in standard form.



Polynomials

A polynomial is an expression that can be written in the form

$$a_n x^n + \ldots + a_2 x^2 + a_1 x + a_0 \tag{1.3.1}$$

Each real number ai is called a **coefficient**. The number a_0 that is not multiplied by a variable is called aconstant. Each product $a_i x^i$ is a **term of a polynomial**. The highest power of the variable that occurs in the polynomial is called the **degree** of a polynomial. The **leading term** is the term with the highest power, and its coefficient is called the **leading coefficient.**

How to: Given a polynomial expression, identify the degree and leading coefficient.

1. Find the highest power of x to determine the degree.
2. Identify the term containing the highest power of x to find the leading term.
3. Identify the coefficient of the leading term.

Example 1.3.1: Identifying the Degree and Leading Coefficient of a Polynomial

For the following polynomials, identify the degree, the leading term, and the leading coefficient.

a. $3 + 2x^2 - 4x^3$
b. $5t^5 - 2t^3 + 7t$
c. $6p - p^3 - 2$

Solution

a. The highest power of x is 3, so the degree is 3. The leading term is the term containing that degree, $-4x^3$. The leading coefficient is the coefficient of that term, -4.
b. The highest power of t is 5, so the degree is 5. The leading term is the term containing that degree, $5t^5$. The leading coefficient is the coefficient of that term, 5.
c. The highest power of p is 3, so the degree is 3. The leading term is the term containing that degree, $-p^3$, The leading coefficient is the coefficient of that term, –1.

Exercise 1.3.1

Identify the degree, leading term, and leading coefficient of the polynomial $4x^2 - x^6 + 2x - 6$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Adding and Subtracting Polynomials

We can add and subtract polynomials by combining like terms, which are terms that contain the same variables raised to the same exponents. For example, $5x^2$ and $-2x^2$ are like terms, and can be added to get $3x^2$, but $3x$ and $3x^2$ are not like terms, and therefore cannot be added.

How to: Given multiple polynomials, add or subtract them to simplify the expressions.

1. Combine like terms.
2. Simplify and write in standard form.

Example 1.3.2: Adding Polynomials

Find the sum.

$$(12x^2 + 9x - 21) + (4x^3 + 8x^2 - 5x + 20)$$

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} &4x^3 + (12x^2 + 8x^2) + (9x - 5x) + (-21 + 20) && \text{Combine like terms} \\ &4x^3 + 20x^2 + 4x - 1 && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

We can check our answers to these types of problems using a graphing calculator. To check, graph the problem as given along with the simplified answer. The two graphs should be equivalent. Be sure to use the same window to compare the graphs. Using different windows can make the expressions seem equivalent when they are not.

Exercise 1.3.2

Find the sum.

$$(2x^3 + 5x^2 - x + 1) + (2x^2 - 3x - 4)$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 1.3.3: Subtracting Polynomials

Find the difference.

$$(7x^4 - x^2 + 6x + 1) - (5x^3 - 2x^2 + 3x + 2)$$

Solution

$7x^4 - 5x^3 + (-x^2 + 2x^2) + (6x - 3x) + (1 - 2)$ Combine like terms

$7x^4 - 5x^3 + x^2 + 3x - 1$ Simplify

Analysis

Note that finding the difference between two polynomials is the same as adding the opposite of the second polynomial to the first.

Exercise 1.3.3

Find the difference.

$$(-7x^3 - 7x^2 + 6x - 2) - (4x^3 - 6x^2 - x + 7)$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Multiplying Polynomials

Multiplying polynomials is a bit more challenging than adding and subtracting polynomials. We must use the distributive property to multiply each term in the first polynomial by each term in the second polynomial. We then combine like terms. We can also use a shortcut called the FOIL method when multiplying binomials. Certain special products follow patterns that we can memorize and use instead of multiplying the polynomials by hand each time. We will look at a variety of ways to multiply polynomials.

Multiplying Polynomials Using the Distributive Property

To multiply a number by a polynomial, we use the distributive property. The number must be distributed to each term of the polynomial. We can distribute the 2 in $2(x + 7)$ to obtain the equivalent expression $2x + 14$. When multiplying polynomials, the distributive property allows us to multiply each term of the first polynomial by each term of the second. We then add the products together and combine like terms to simplify.

How to: Given the multiplication of two polynomials, use the distributive property to simplify the expression.

1. Multiply each term of the first polynomial by each term of the second.
2. Combine like terms.

3. Simplify.

Example 1.3.4: Multiplying Polynomials Using the Distributive Property

Find the product.

$$(2x+1)(3x^2-x+4)$$

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} &2x(3x^2-x+4)+1(3x^2-x+4) && \text{Use the distributive property} \\ &(6x^3-2x^2+8x)+(3x^2-x+4) && \text{Multiply} \\ &6x^3+(-2x^2+3x^2)+(8x-x)+4 && \text{Combine like terms} \\ &6x^3+x^2+7x+4 && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

We can use a table to keep track of our work, as shown in Table 1.3.1. Write one polynomial across the top and the other down the side. For each box in the table, multiply the term for that row by the term for that column. Then add all of the terms together, combine like terms, and simplify.

Table 1.3.1

	$3x^2$	$-x$	$+4$
$2x$	$6x^3$	$-2x^2$	$8x$
$+1$	$3x^2$	$-x$	4

Exercise 1.3.4

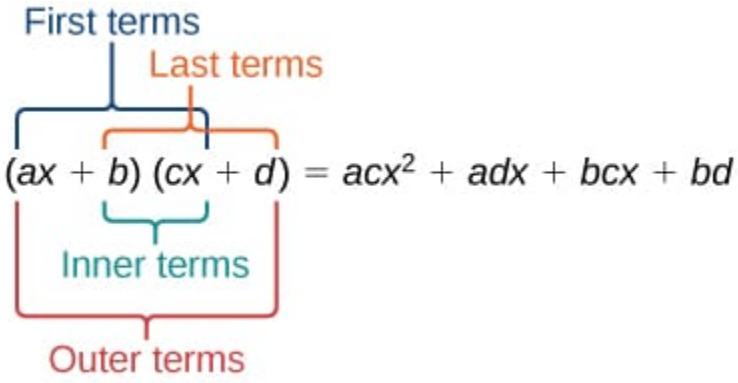
Find the product.

$(3x+2)(x^3-4x^2+7)$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using FOIL to Multiply Binomials

A shortcut called FOIL is sometimes used to find the product of two binomials. It is called FOIL because we multiply the first terms, the outer terms, the inner terms, and then the last terms of each binomial.



The FOIL method arises out of the distributive property. We are simply multiplying each term of the first binomial by each term of the second binomial, and then combining like terms.

FOIL to simplify expression

Given two binomials, use FOIL to simplify the expression.

1. Multiply the outer terms of the binomials.
2. Multiply the last terms of each binomial.
3. Combine like terms and simplify.

Example 1.3.5: Using FOIL to Multiply Binomials

Use FOIL to find the product.

$$(2x - 10)(3x + 3)$$

Solution

Find the product of the first terms.



Find the product of the outer terms.



Find the product of the inner terms.



Find the product of the last terms.



$$\begin{aligned} &6x^2 + 6x - 54x - 54 && \text{Add the products} \\ &6x^2 + (6x - 54x) - 54 && \text{Combine like terms} \\ &6x^2 - 48x - 54 && \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.3.5

Use FOIL to find the product.

$$(x+7)(3x-5)$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Perfect Square Trinomials

Certain binomial products have special forms. When a binomial is squared, the result is called a perfect square trinomial. We can find the square by multiplying the binomial by itself. However, there is a special form that each of these perfect square trinomials takes, and memorizing the form makes squaring binomials much easier and faster. Let's look at a few perfect square trinomials to familiarize ourselves with the form.

$$(x+5)^2 = x^2 + 10x + 25$$

$$(x-3)^2 = x^2 - 6x + 9$$

$$(4x-1)^2 = 16x^2 - 8x + 1$$

Notice that the first term of each trinomial is the square of the first term of the binomial and, similarly, the last term of each trinomial is the square of the last term of the binomial. The middle term is double the product of the two terms. Lastly, we see that the first sign of the trinomial is the same as the sign of the binomial.

Perfect Square Trinomials

When a binomial is squared, the result is the first term squared added to double the product of both terms and the last term squared.

$$(x+a)^2 = (x+a)(x+a) = x^2 + 2ax + a^2 \tag{1.3.2}$$

How to: Given a binomial, square it using the formula for perfect square trinomials.

1. Square the first term of the binomial.
2. Square the last term of the binomial.
3. For the middle term of the trinomial, double the product of the two terms.
4. Add and simplify.

Example 1.3.6: Expanding Perfect Squares

Expand $(3x-8)^2$.

Solution

Begin by squaring the first term and the last term. For the middle term of the trinomial, double the product of the two terms.

$$\begin{aligned} &(3x)^2 - 2(3x)(8) + (-8)^2 \\ &9x^2 - 48x + 64 \qquad \text{Simplify} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.3.6

Expand $(4x-1)^2$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Difference of Squares

Another special product is called the difference of squares, which occurs when we multiply a binomial by another binomial with the same terms but the opposite sign. Let's see what happens when we multiply $(x+1)(x-1)$ using the FOIL method.

$$\begin{aligned}(x+1)(x-1) &= x^2 - x + x - 1\\ &= x^2 - 1\end{aligned}$$

The middle term drops out, resulting in a difference of squares. Just as we did with the perfect squares, let's look at a few examples.

$$(x+5)(x-5) = x^2 - 25$$

$$(x+11)(x-11) = x^2 - 121$$

$$(2x+3)(2x-3) = 4x^2 - 9$$

Because the sign changes in the second binomial, the outer and inner terms cancel each other out, and we are left only with the square of the first term minus the square of the last term.

Q&A

Is there a special form for the sum of squares?

No. The difference of squares occurs because the opposite signs of the binomials cause the middle terms to disappear. There are no two binomials that multiply to equal a sum of squares.

Difference of Squares

When a binomial is multiplied by a binomial with the same terms separated by the opposite sign, the result is the square of the first term minus the square of the last term.

$$(a+b)(a-b) = a^2 - b^2 \tag{1.3.3}$$

Howto: Given a binomial multiplied by a binomial with the same terms but the opposite sign, find the difference of squares.

1. Square the first term of the binomials.
2. Square the last term of the binomials.
3. Subtract the square of the last term from the square of the first term.

Example 1.3.7: Multiplying Binomials Resulting in a Difference of Squares

Multiply $(9x+4)(9x-4)$.

Solution

Square the first term to get $(9x)^2 = 81x^2$. Square the last term to get $4^2 = 16$. Subtract the square of the last term from the square of the first term to find the product of $81x^2 - 16$.

Exercise 1.3.7

Multiply $(2x+7)(2x-7)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Performing Operations with Polynomials of Several Variables

We have looked at polynomials containing only one variable. However, a polynomial can contain several variables. All of the same rules apply when working with polynomials containing several variables. Consider an example:

$$\begin{aligned}
&(a+2b)(4a-b-c)a(4a-b-c)+2b(4a-b-c) && \text{Use the distributive property}\\
&4a^2-ab-ac+8ab-2b^2-2bc && \text{Multiply}\\
&4a^2+(-ab+8ab)-ac-2b^2-2bc && \text{Combine like terms}\\
&4a^2+7ab-ac-2bc-2b^2 && \text{Simplify}
\end{aligned}$$

Example 1.3.8: Multiplying Polynomials Containing Several Variables

Multiply $(x+4)(3x-2y+5)$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned}
&x(3x-2y+5)+4(3x-2y+5) && \text{Use the distributive property}\\
&3x^2-2xy+5x+12x-8y+20 && \text{Multiply}\\
&3x^2-2xy+(5x+12x)-8y+20 && \text{Combine like terms}\\
&3x^2-2xy+17x-8y+20 && \text{Simplify}
\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.3.8

Multiply $(3x-1)(2x+7y-9)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with polynomials.

1. Adding and Subtracting Polynomials
2. Multiplying Polynomials
3. Special Products of Polynomials

Key Equations

perfect square trinomial	$(x+a)^2=(x+a)(x+a)=x^2+2ax+a^2$
difference of squares	$(a+b)(a-b)=a^2-b^2$

Key Concepts

- A polynomial is a sum of terms each consisting of a variable raised to a non-negative integer power. The degree is the

highest power of the variable that occurs in the polynomial. The leading term is the term containing the highest degree, and the leading coefficient is the coefficient of that term. See Example.
- We can add and subtract polynomials by combining like terms. See Example and Example.
- To multiply polynomials, use the distributive property to multiply each term in the first polynomial by each term in the second. Then add the products. See Example.
- FOIL (First, Outer, Inner, Last) is a shortcut that can be used to multiply binomials. See Example.
- Perfect square trinomials and difference of squares are special products. See Example and Example.
- Follow the same rules to work with polynomials containing several variables. See Example.

Answers

Exercise 1.3.1

The degree is 6, the leading term is $-x^6$, and the leading coefficient is -1.

Exercise 1.3.2

$2x^3 + 7x^2 - 4x - 3$

Exercise 1.3.3

$-11x^3 - x^2 + 7x - 9$

Exercise 1.3.4

$3x^4 - 10x^3 - 8x^2 + 21x + 14$

Exercise 1.3.5

$3x^2 + 16x - 35$

Exercise 1.3.6

$16x^2 - 8x + 1$

Exercise 1.3.7

$4x^2 - 49$

Exercise 1.3.8

$6x^2 + 21xy - 29x - 7y + 9$

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1.4: Factoring

Learning Objectives

In this section students will:

- Factor the greatest common factor of a polynomial.
- Factor a trinomial.
- Factor by grouping.
- Factor a perfect square trinomial.
- Factor a difference of squares.
- Factor the sum and difference of cubes.
- Factor expressions using fractional or negative exponents.

Imagine that we are trying to find the area of a lawn so that we can determine how much grass seed to purchase. The lawn is the green portion in Figure 1.4.1.

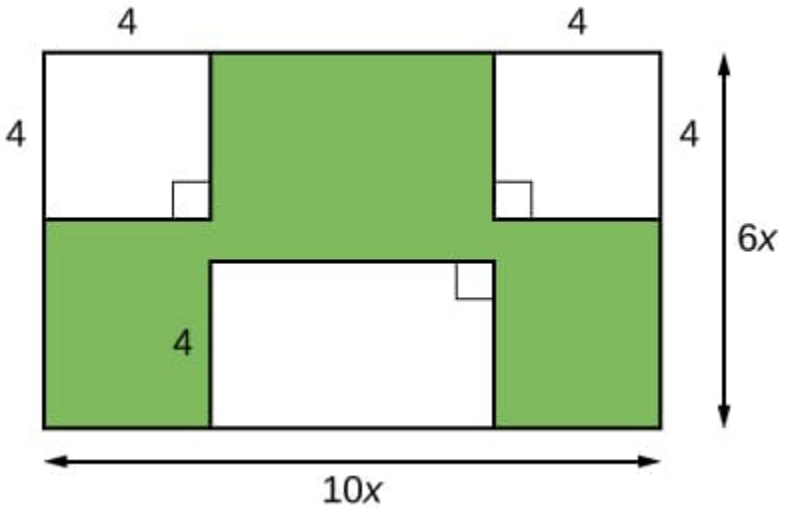


Figure 1.4.1

The area of the entire region can be found using the formula for the area of a rectangle.

$$\begin{aligned} A &= lw \\ &= 10x \times 6x \\ &= 60x^2 \ units^2 \end{aligned}$$

The areas of the portions that do not require grass seed need to be subtracted from the area of the entire region. The two square regions each have an area of $A = s^2 = 4^2 = 16 \ \ units^2$. The other rectangular region has one side of length $10x - 8$ and one side of length 4, giving an area of

$$A = lw = 4(10x - 8) = 40x - 32 \text{ units}^2.$$

So the region that must be subtracted has an area of

$$2(16) + 40x - 32 = 40x \text{ units}^2.$$

The area of the region that requires grass seed is found by subtracting $60x^2 - 40x \ \text{ units}^2$. This area can also be expressed in factored form as $20x(3x - 2) \ \text{ units}^2$. We can confirm that this is an equivalent expression by multiplying.

Many polynomial expressions can be written in simpler forms by factoring. In this section, we will look at a variety of methods that can be used to factor polynomial expressions.

Factoring the Greatest Common Factor of a Polynomial

When we study fractions, we learn that the greatest common factor (GCF) of two numbers is the largest number that divides evenly into both numbers. For instance, 4 is the GCF of 16 and 20 because it is the largest number that divides evenly into both 16 and 20 The GCF of polynomials works the same way: $4x$ is the GCF of $16x$ and $20x^2$ because it is the largest polynomial that divides evenly into both $16x$ and $20x^2$.

When factoring a polynomial expression, our first step should be to check for a GCF. Look for the GCF of the coefficients, and then look for the GCF of the variables.

Definition: Greatest Common Factor

The *greatest common factor* (GCF) of polynomials is the largest polynomial that divides evenly into the polynomials.

Howto: Given a polynomial expression, factor out the greatest common factor

1. Identify the GCF of the coefficients.
2. Identify the GCF of the variables.
3. Combine to find the GCF of the expression.
4. Determine what the GCF needs to be multiplied by to obtain each term in the expression.
5. Write the factored expression as the product of the GCF and the sum of the terms we need to multiply by.

Example 1.4.1: Factoring the Greatest Common Factor

Factor $6x^3y^3+45x^2y^2+21xy$.

Solution

First, find the GCF of the expression. The GCF of 6, 45, and 21 is 3. The GCF of x^3,x^2, and x is x. (Note that the GCF of a set of expressions in the form x^n will always be the exponent of lowest degree.) And the GCF of y^3,y^2, and y is y. Combine these to find the GCF of the polynomial, $3xy$.

Next, determine what the GCF needs to be multiplied by to obtain each term of the polynomial. We find that

- $3xy(2x^2y^2)=6x^3y^3$,
- $3xy(15xy)=45x^2y^2$, and
- $3xy(7)=21xy$.

Finally, write the factored expression as the product of the GCF and the sum of the terms we needed to multiply by.

$$(3xy)(2x^2y^2+15xy+7)$$

Analysis

After factoring, we can check our work by multiplying. Use the distributive property to confirm that

$$(3xy)(2x^2y^2+15xy+7)=6x^3y^3+45x^2y^2+21xy$$

Exercise 1.4.1

Factor $x(b^2 - a) + 6(b^2 - a)$ by pulling out the GCF.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Factoring a Trinomial with Leading Coefficient 1

Although we should always begin by looking for a GCF, pulling out the GCF is not the only way that polynomial expressions can be factored. The polynomial $x^2 + 5x + 6$ has a GCF of 1, but it can be written as the product of the factors $(x + 2)$ and $(x + 3)$.

Trinomials of the form $x^2 + bx + c$ can be factored by finding two numbers with a product of c and a sum of b. The trinomial $x^2 + 10x + 16$, for example, can be factored using the numbers 2 and 8 because the product of those numbers is 16 and their sum is 10. The trinomial can be rewritten as the product of $(x + 2)$ and $(x + 8)$.

FACTORING A TRINOMIAL WITH LEADING COEFFICIENT 1

A trinomial of the form $x^2 + bx + c$ can be written in factored form as $(x + p)(x + q)$ where $pq = c$ and $p + q = b$.

Q&A: Can every trinomial be factored as a product of binomials?

No. Some polynomials cannot be factored. These polynomials are said to be *prime*.

Howto: Given a trinomial in the form $x^2 + bx + c$, factor it

1. List factors of c.
2. Find p and q, a pair of factors of c with a sum of b.
3. Write the factored expression $(x + p)(x + q)$.

Example 1.4.2: Factoring a Trinomial with Leading Coefficient 1

Factor $x^2 + 2x - 15$.

Solution

We have a trinomial with leading coefficient 1, $b = 2$, and $c = -15$. We need to find two numbers with a product of -15 and a sum of 2. In Table $1.4.1$, we list factors until we find a pair with the desired sum.

Table $1.4.1$

Factors of –15	Sum of Factors
1,–15	–14
–1,15	14
3,–5	–2
–3,5	

Now that we have identified p and q as -3 and 5, write the factored form as $(x - 3)(x + 5)$.

Analysis

We can check our work by multiplying. Use FOIL to confirm that $(x-3)(x+5)=x^2+2x-15$.

Q&A: Does the order of the factors matter?

No. Multiplication is commutative, so the order of the factors does not matter.

Exercise 1.4.2

Factor x^2-7x+6.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Factoring by Grouping

Trinomials with leading coefficients other than 1 are slightly more complicated to factor. For these trinomials, we can **factor by grouping** by dividing the x term into the sum of two terms, factoring each portion of the expression separately, and then factoring out the GCF of the entire expression. The trinomial $2x^2+5x+3$ can be rewritten as $(2x+3)(x+1)$ using this process. We begin by rewriting the original expression as $2x^2+2x+3x+3$ and then factor each portion of the expression to obtain $2x(x+1)+3(x+1)$. We then pull out the GCF of $(x+1)$ to find the factored expression.

Factor by Grouping

To factor a trinomial in the form ax^2+bx+c by grouping, we find two numbers with a product of ac and a sum of b. We use these numbers to divide the x term into the sum of two terms and factor each portion of the expression separately, then factor out the GCF of the entire expression.

Howto: Given a trinomial in the form ax^2+bx+c, factor by grouping.

1. List factors of ac.
2. Find p and q, a pair of factors of ac with a sum of b.
3. Rewrite the original expression as $ax^2+px+qx+c$.
4. Pull out the GCF of ax^2+px.
5. Pull out the GCF of $qx+c$.
6. Factor out the GCF of the expression.

Example 1.4.3: Factoring a Trinomial by Grouping

Factor $5x^2+7x-6$ by grouping.

Solution

We have a trinomial with $a=5, b=7$, and $c=-6$. First, determine $ac=-30$. We need to find two numbers with a product of -30 and a sum of 7. In the table below, we list factors until we find a pair with the desired sum.

Table 1.4.2

Factors of –30	Sum of Factors
1,–30	–29
–1,30	29

2,–15	–13
–2,15	13
3,–10	–7
–3,10	7

So $p = -3$ and $q = 10$.

$5x^2 - 3x + 10x - 6$ Rewrite the original expression as $ax^2 + px + qx + c$.

$x(5x - 3) + 2(5x - 3)$ Factor out the GCF of each part

$(5x - 3)(x + 2)$ Factor out the GCF of the expression.

Analysis

We can check our work by multiplying. Use FOIL to confirm that $(5x - 3)(x + 2) = 5x^2 + 7x - 6$.

Exercise 1.4.3

Factor:

a. $2x^2 + 9x + 9$
b. $6x^2 + x - 1$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Factoring a Perfect Square Trinomial

A perfect square trinomial is a trinomial that can be written as the square of a binomial. Recall that when a binomial is squared, the result is the square of the first term added to twice the product of the two terms and the square of the last term.

$$a^2 + 2ab + b^2 = (a + b)^2 \tag{1.4.1}$$

and

$$a^2 - 2ab + b^2 = (a - b)^2 \tag{1.4.2}$$

We can use this equation to factor any perfect square trinomial.

Perfect Square Trinomials

A perfect square trinomial can be written as the square of a binomial:

$$a^2 + 2ab + b^2 = (a + b)^2 \tag{1.4.3}$$

Howto: Given a perfect square trinomial, factor it into the square of a binomial

1. Confirm that the first and last term are perfect squares.
2. Confirm that the middle term is twice the product of ab.
3. Write the factored form as $(a + b)^2$.

Example 1.4.4: Factoring a Perfect Square Trinomial

Factor $25x^2 + 20x + 4$.

Solution

Notice that $25x^2$ and 4 are perfect squares because $25x^2 = (5x)^2$ and $4 = 2^2$. Then check to see if the middle term is twice the product of $5x$ and 2. The middle term is, indeed, twice the product: $2(5x)(2) = 20x$. Therefore, the trinomial is a perfect square trinomial and can be written as $(5x + 2)^2$.

Exercise 1.4.4

Factor $49x^2 - 14x + 1$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Factoring a Difference of Squares

A difference of squares is a perfect square subtracted from a perfect square. Recall that a difference of squares can be rewritten as factors containing the same terms but opposite signs because the middle terms cancel each other out when the two factors are multiplied.

$$a^2 - b^2 = (a + b)(a - b) \tag{1.4.4}$$

We can use this equation to factor any differences of squares.

Differences of Squares

A difference of squares can be rewritten as two factors containing the same terms but opposite signs.

$$a^2 - b^2 = (a + b)(a - b) \tag{1.4.5}$$

Howto: Given a difference of squares, factor it into binomials

1. Confirm that the first and last term are perfect squares.
2. Write the factored form as $(a + b)(a - b)$.

Example 1.4.5: Factoring a Difference of Squares

Factor $9x^2 - 25$.

Solution

Notice that $9x^2$ and 25 are perfect squares because $9x^2 = (3x)^2$ and $25 = 5^2$. The polynomial represents a difference of squares and can be rewritten as $(3x + 5)(3x - 5)$.

Exercise 1.4.5

Factor $81y^2 - 100$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Is there a formula to factor the sum of squares?

No. A sum of squares cannot be factored.

Factoring the Sum and Difference of Cubes

Now, we will look at two new special products: the sum and difference of cubes. Although the sum of squares cannot be factored, the sum of cubes can be factored into a binomial and a trinomial.

$$a^3 + b^3 = (a + b)(a^2 - ab + b^2) \tag{1.4.6}$$

Similarly, the sum of cubes can be factored into a binomial and a trinomial, but with different signs.

$$a^3 - b^3 = (a - b)(a^2 + ab + b^2) \tag{1.4.7}$$

We can use the acronym SOAP to remember the signs when factoring the sum or difference of cubes. The first letter of each word relates to the signs: Same Opposite Always Positive. For example, consider the following example.

$$x^3 - 2^3 = (x - 2)(x^2 + 2x + 4) \tag{1.4.8}$$

The sign of the first 2 is the same as the sign between $x^3 - 2^3$. The sign of the $2x$ term is opposite the sign between $x^3 - 2^3$. And the sign of the last term, 4, is always positive.

Sum and Difference of Cubes

We can factor the sum of two cubes as

$$a^3 + b^3 = (a + b)(a^2 - ab + b^2) \tag{1.4.9}$$

We can factor the difference of two cubes as

$$a^3 - b^3 = (a - b)(a^2 + ab + b^2) \tag{1.4.10}$$

Howto: Given a sum of cubes or difference of cubes, factor it

1. Confirm that the first and last term are cubes, $a^3 + b^3$ or $a^3 - b^3$.
2. For a sum of cubes, write the factored form as $(a + b)(a^2 - ab + b^2)$. For a difference of cubes, write the factored form as $(a - b)(a^2 + ab + b^2)$.

Example 1.4.6: Factoring a Sum of Cubes

Factor $x^3 + 512$.

Solution

Notice that x^3 and 512 are cubes because $8^3 = 512$. Rewrite the sum of cubes as $(x + 8)(x^2 - 8x + 64)$.

Analysis

After writing the sum of cubes this way, we might think we should check to see if the trinomial portion can be factored further. However, the trinomial portion cannot be factored, so we do not need to check.

Exercise 1.4.6

Factor the sum of cubes: $216a^3 + b^3$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 1.4.7: Factoring a Difference of Cubes

Factor $8x^3 - 125$.

Solution

Notice that $8x^3$ and 125 are cubes because $8x^3 = (2x)^3$ and $125 = 5^3$. Write the difference of cubes as $(2x - 5)(4x^2 + 10x + 25)$.

Analysis

Just as with the sum of cubes, we will not be able to further factor the trinomial portion.

Exercise 1.4.7

Factor the difference of cubes: $1000x^3 - 1$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Factoring Expressions with Fractional or Negative Exponents

Expressions with fractional or negative exponents can be factored by pulling out a GCF. Look for the variable or exponent that is common to each term of the expression and pull out that variable or exponent raised to the lowest power. These expressions follow the same factoring rules as those with integer exponents. For instance, $2x^{\frac{1}{4}} + 5x^{\frac{3}{4}}$ can be factored by pulling out $x^{\frac{1}{4}}$ and being rewritten as $x^{\frac{1}{4}}(2 + 5x^{\frac{1}{2}})$.

Example 1.4.8: Factoring an Expression with Fractional or Negative Exponents

Factor $3x(x + 2)^{-\frac{1}{3}} + 4(x + 2)^{\frac{2}{3}}$.

Solution

Factor out the term with the lowest value of the exponent. In this case, that would be $(x + 2)^{-\frac{1}{3}}$.

$$\begin{aligned} &(x+2)^{-\frac{1}{3}}(3x + 4(x+2)) && \text{Factor out the GCF} \\ &(x+2)^{-\frac{1}{3}}(3x + 4x + 8) && \text{Simplify} \\ &(x+2)^{-\frac{1}{3}}(7x + 8) \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 1.4.8

Factor $2(5a - 1)^{\frac{3}{4}} + 7a(5a - 1)^{-\frac{1}{4}}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

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Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with factoring polynomials.

1. Identify GCF
2. Factor Trinomials when a Equals 1
3. Factor Trinomials when a is not equal to 1
4. Factor Sum or Difference of Cubes

Key Equations

difference of squares	$a^2 - b^2 = (a + b)(a - b)$
perfect square trinomial	$a^2 + 2ab + b^2 = (a + b)^2$
sum of cubes	$a^3 + b^3 = (a + b)(a^2 - ab + b^2)$
difference of cubes	$a^3 - b^3 = (a - b)(a^2 + ab + b^2)$

- The greatest common factor, or GCF, can be factored out of a polynomial. Checking for a GCF should be the first step in any factoring problem. See Example.
- Trinomials with leading coefficient 1 can be factored by finding numbers that have a product of the third term and a sum of the second term. See Example.
- Trinomials can be factored using a process called factoring by grouping. See Example.
- Perfect square trinomials and the difference of squares are special products and can be factored using equations. See Example and Example.
- The sum of cubes and the difference of cubes can be factored using equations. See Example and Example.
- Polynomials containing fractional and negative exponents can be factored by pulling out a GCF. See Example.

Answers

Exercise 1.4.1

$(b^2 - a)(x + 6)$

Exercise 1.4.2

$(x - 6)(x - 1)$

Exercise 1.4.3

$(2x + 3)(x + 3)$

$(3x - 1)(2x + 1)$

Exercise 1.4.4

$(7x - 1)^2$

Exercise 1.4.5

$(9y + 10)(9y - 10)$

Exercise 1.4.6

$(6a + b)(36a^2 - 6ab + b^2)$

Exercise 1.4.7

$(10x - 1)(100x^2 + 10x + 1)$

Exercise 1.4.8

$(5a - 1)^{-\frac{1}{4}}(17a - 2)$

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2: EQUATIONS AND INEQUALITIES

2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs

2.2: Linear Equations

2.3: Models and Applications

2.4: Complex Numbers

2.5: Quadratic Equations

2.6: Other Types of Equations

2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities

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2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs

Learning Objectives

- Using the Pythagorean Theorem
- Plot ordered pairs in a Cartesian coordinate system.
- Use the distance formula.
- Use the midpoint formula.

The Pythagorean Theorem

We have learned how the measures of the angles of a triangle relate to each other. Now, we will learn how the lengths of the sides relate to each other. An important property that describes the relationship among the lengths of the three sides of a right triangle is called the **Pythagorean Theorem**. This theorem has been used around the world since ancient times. It is named after the Greek philosopher and mathematician, Pythagoras, who lived around 500 BC.

Before we state the Pythagorean Theorem, we need to introduce some terms for the sides of a triangle. Remember that a right triangle has a 90° angle, marked with a small square in the corner. The side of the triangle opposite the 90°90° angle is called the *hypotenuse* and each of the other sides are called *legs*.

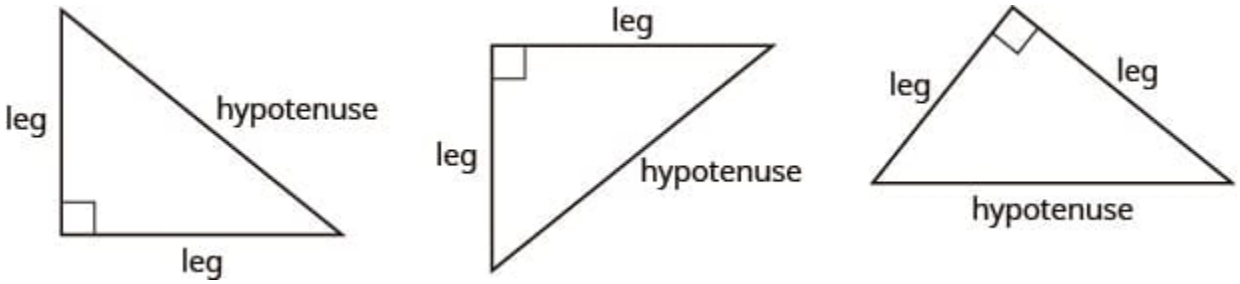


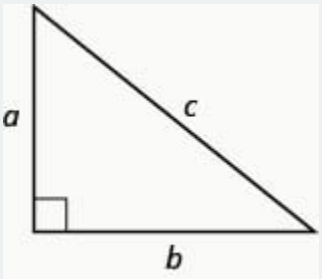
Figure 2.1.4

The Pythagorean Theorem tells how the lengths of the three sides of a right triangle relate to each other. It states that in any right triangle, the sum of the squares of the lengths of the two legs equals the square of the length of the hypotenuse. In symbols we say: in any right triangle, $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$, where a and b are the lengths of the legs and cc is the length of the hypotenuse.

Writing the formula in every exercise and saying it aloud as you write it, may help you remember the Pythagorean Theorem.

THE PYTHAGOREAN THEOREM

In any right triangle, where a and b are the lengths of the legs, c is the length of the hypotenuse.



Then

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2 \tag{2.1.1}$$

To solve exercises that use the Pythagorean Theorem (Equation 2.1.1), we will need to find square roots. We have used the notation $\sqrt{m}$ and the definition:

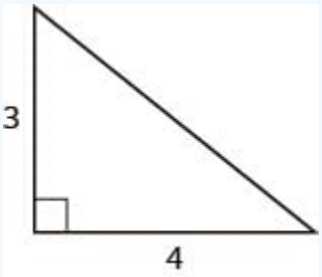
If $m = n^2$, then $\sqrt{m} = n$, for $n \geq 0$.

For example, we found that $\sqrt{25}$ is 5 because $25 = 5^2$.

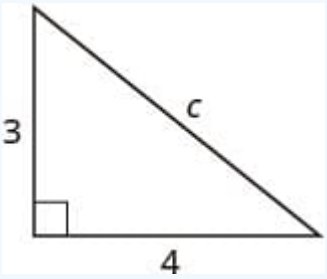
Because the Pythagorean Theorem contains variables that are squared, to solve for the length of a side in a right triangle, we will have to use square roots.

Example 2.1.6

Use the Pythagorean Theorem to find the length of the hypotenuse shown below.



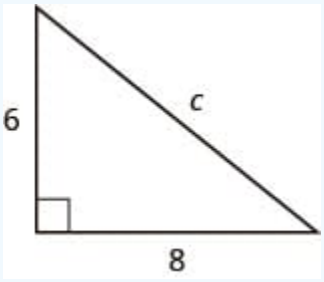
Solution

Label side *c* on the figure.	Let *c* = the length of the hypotenuse. 
Write the appropriate formula.	$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$
Substitute.	$3^2 + 4^2 = c^2$
Solve the equation.	$9 + 16 = c^2$
Simplify.	$25 = c^2$
Use the definition of square root.	$\sqrt{25} = c$
Simplify.	$5 = c$
Check $3^2 + 4^2 \stackrel{?}{=} 5^2$ $9 + 16 \stackrel{?}{=} 25$ $25 = 25$ ✓	

Answer	The length of the hypotenuse is 5.

Try It 2.1.11

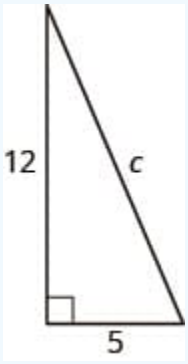
Use the Pythagorean Theorem to find the length of the hypotenuse in the triangle shown below.



Answer available at the end of this section.

Try It 2.1.12

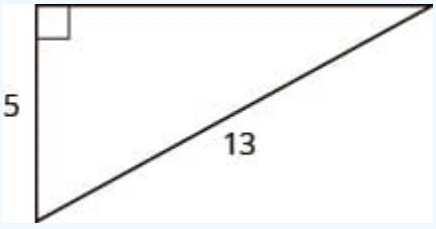
Use the Pythagorean Theorem to find the length of the hypotenuse in the triangle shown below.



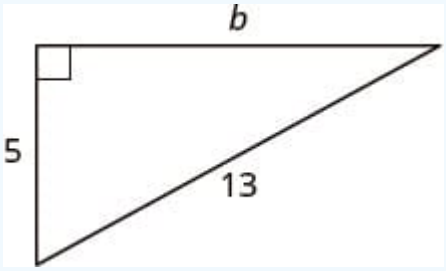
Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.1.7

Use the Pythagorean Theorem to find the length of the leg shown below.

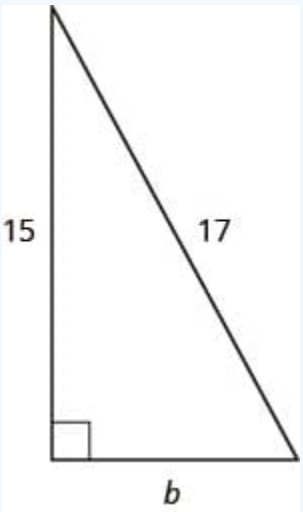


Solution

Label side b.	
Write the appropriate formula.	$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$
Substitute.	$5^2 + b^2 = 13^2$
Solve the equation.	$25 + b^2 = 169$
Isolate the variable term.	$b^2 = 144$
Use the definition of square root.	$b = \sqrt{144}$
Simplify.	$b = 12$
Check. $5^2 + 12^2 \stackrel{?}{=} 13^2$ $25 + 144 \stackrel{?}{=} 169$ $169 = 169$ ✓	
Answer.	The length of the leg is 12.

Try It 2.1.13

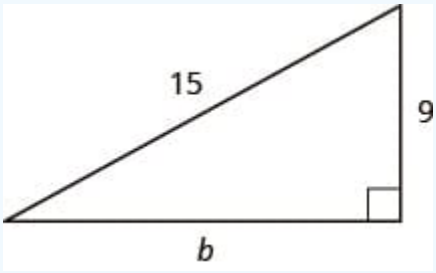
Use the Pythagorean Theorem to find the length of the leg in the triangle shown below.



Answer available at the end of this section.

Try It 2.1.14

Use the Pythagorean Theorem to find the length of the leg in the triangle shown below.



Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.1.12: Finding the Length of the Missing Side of a Right Triangle

Find the length of the missing side of the right triangle in Figure 2.1.5.

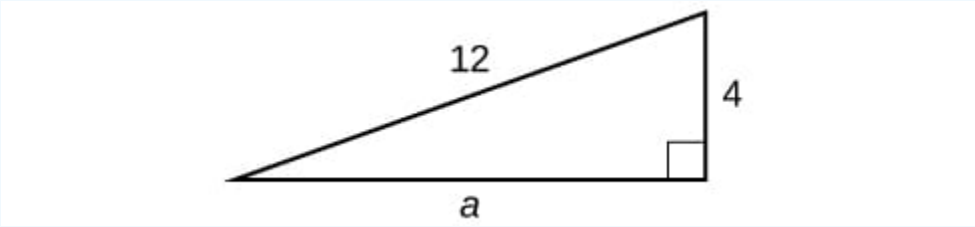


Figure 2.1.5

Solution

As we have measurements for side b and the hypotenuse, the missing side is a.

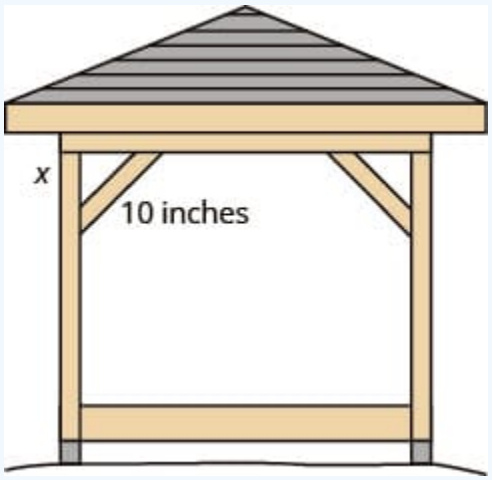
$$\begin{aligned} a^2 + b^2 &= c^2 \\ a^2 + (4)^2 &= (12)^2 \\ a^2 + 16 &= 144 \\ a^2 &= 128 \\ a &= \sqrt{128} \\ &= 8\sqrt{2} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 2.1.9

Use the Pythagorean Theorem to solve the right triangle problem: Leg a measures 4 units, leg b measures 3 units. Find the length of the hypotenuse.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.1.8



Kelvin is building a gazebo and wants to brace each corner by placing a 10″ piece of wood diagonally as shown above.

If he fastens the wood so that the ends of the brace are the same distance from the corner, what is the length of the legs of the right triangle formed? Approximate to the nearest tenth of an inch.

Solution

Step 1. Read the problem.

Step 2. Identify what we are looking for. — the distance from the corner that the bracket should be attached

Step 3. Name. Choose a variable to represent it. — Let x = distance from the corner.

Step 4. Translate

Write the appropriate formula and substitute. — $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$

$x^2 + x^2 = 10^2$

Step 5. Solve the equation.

$2x^2 = 100$

Isolate the variable. — $x^2 = 50$

Simplify. Approximate to the nearest tenth. — $x \approx 7.1$

Step 6. Check.

$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$

$(7.1)^2 + (7.1)^2 \approx 10^2$ Yes.

Step 7. Answer the question. — Kelven should fasten each piece of wood approximately 7.1” from the corner.

Try It 2.1.15

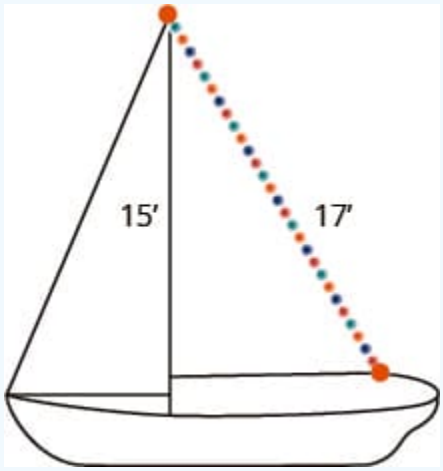
John puts the base of a 13-foot ladder five feet from the wall of his house as shown below. How far up the wall does the ladder reach?



Answer available at the end of this section.

Try It 2.1.16

Randy wants to attach a 17 foot string of lights to the top of the 15 foot mast of his sailboat, as shown below. How far from the base of the mast should he attach the end of the light string?



Answer available at the end of this section.

Plotting Ordered Pairs in the Cartesian Coordinate System

An old story describes how seventeenth-century philosopher/mathematician René Descartes invented the system that has become the foundation of algebra while sick in bed. According to the story, Descartes was staring at a fly crawling on the ceiling when he realized that he could describe the fly's location in relation to the perpendicular lines formed by the adjacent walls of his room. He viewed the perpendicular lines as horizontal and vertical axes. Further, by dividing each axis into equal unit lengths, Descartes saw that it was possible to locate any object in a two-dimensional plane using just two numbers—the displacement from the horizontal axis and the displacement from the vertical axis.

While there is evidence that ideas similar to Descartes' grid system existed centuries earlier, it was Descartes who introduced the components that comprise the Cartesian coordinate system, a grid system having perpendicular axes. Descartes named the horizontal axis the x-axis and the vertical axis the y-axis.

The Cartesian coordinate system, also called the *rectangular coordinate system*, is based on a two-dimensional plane consisting of the x-axis and the y-axis. Perpendicular to each other, the axes divide the plane into four sections. Each section is called a quadrant; the quadrants are numbered counterclockwise as shown in Figure $2.1.2$.

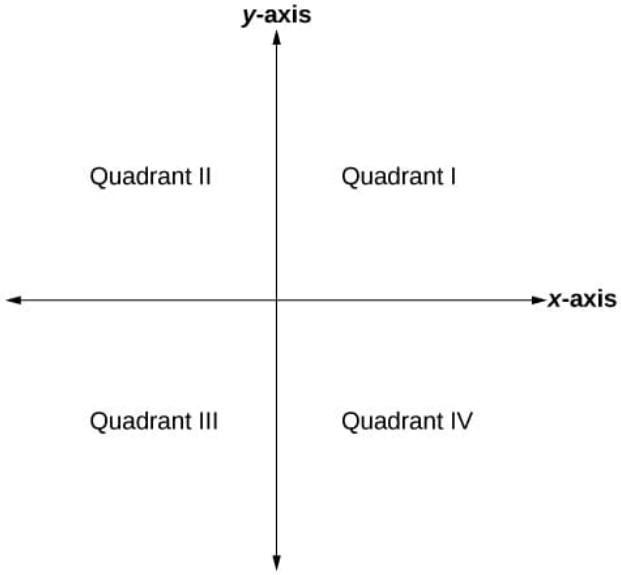


Figure $2.1.2$

The center of the plane is the point at which the two axes cross. It is known as the origin, or point $(0, 0)$. From the origin, each axis is further divided into equal units: increasing, positive numbers to the right on the x-axis and up the y-axis; decreasing, negative numbers to the left on the x-axis and down the y-axis. The axes extend to positive and negative infinity as shown by the arrowheads in Figure $2.1.3$.

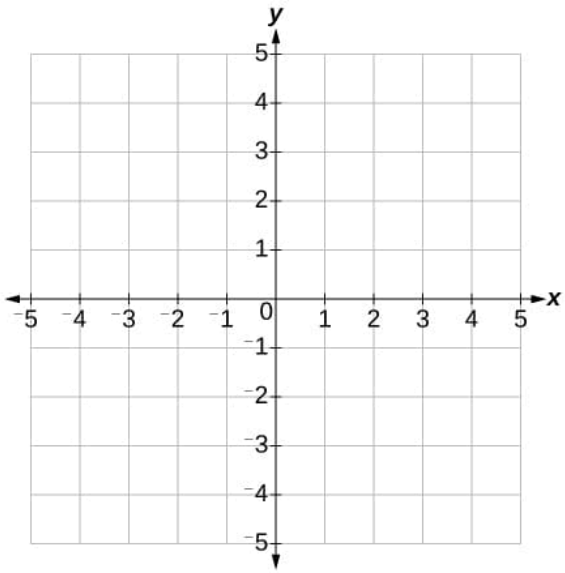


Figure $2.1.3$

Each point in the plane is identified by its x-coordinate, or horizontal displacement from the origin, and its y-coordinate, or vertical displacement from the origin. Together, we write them as an ordered pair indicating the combined distance from the origin in the form (x, y). An ordered pair is also known as a coordinate pair because it consists of x- and y-coordinates. For example, we can represent the point $(3, -1)$ in the plane by moving three units to the right of the origin in the horizontal direction, and one unit down in the vertical direction. See Figure $2.1.4$.

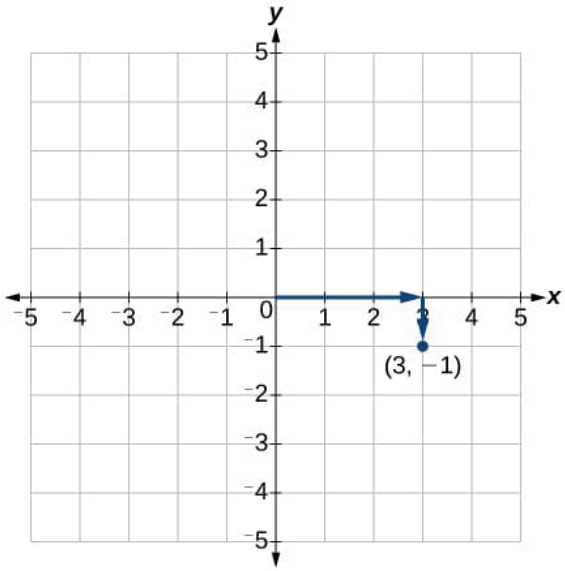


Figure 2.1.4

When dividing the axes into equally spaced increments, note that the x-axis may be considered separately from the y-axis. In other words, while the x-axis may be divided and labeled according to consecutive integers, the y-axis may be divided and labeled by increments of 2, or 10, or 100. In fact, the axes may represent other units, such as years against the balance in a savings account, or quantity against cost, and so on. Consider the rectangular coordinate system primarily as a method for showing the relationship between two quantities.

Cartesian Coordinate System

A two-dimensional plane where the

- x-axis is the horizontal axis
- y-axis is the vertical axis

A point in the plane is defined as an ordered pair, (x, y), such that x is determined by its horizontal distance from the origin and y is determined by its vertical distance from the origin.

Example 2.1.1: Plotting Points in a Rectangular Coordinate System

Plot the points $(-2, 4)$, $(3, 3)$, and $(0, -3)$ in the plane.

Solution

To plot the point $(-2, 4)$, begin at the origin. The x-coordinate is -2, so move two units to the left. The y-coordinate is 4, so then move four units up in the positive y direction.

To plot the point $(3, 3)$, begin again at the origin. The x-coordinate is 3, so move three units to the right. The y-coordinate is also 3, so move three units up in the positive y direction.

To plot the point $(0, -3)$, begin again at the origin. The x-coordinate is 0. This tells us not to move in either direction along the x-axis. The y-coordinate is -3, so move three units down in the negative y direction. See the graph in Figure 2.1.5.

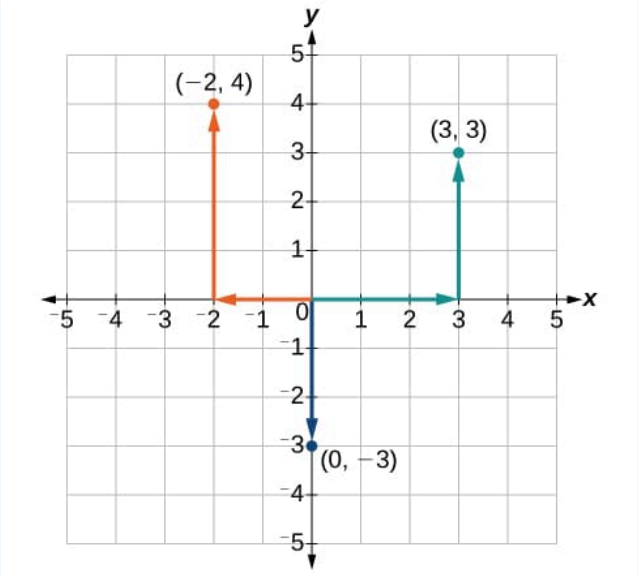


Figure 2.1.5

Analysis

Note that when either coordinate is zero, the point must be on an axis. If the x-coordinate is zero, the point is on the y-axis. If the y-coordinate is zero, the point is on the x-axis.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Distance Formula

Derived from the **Pythagorean Theorem**, the **distance formula** is used to find the distance between two points in the plane. The Pythagorean Theorem, $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$, is based on a right triangle where a and b are the lengths of the legs adjacent to the right angle, and c is the length of the hypotenuse. See Figure 2.1.15.

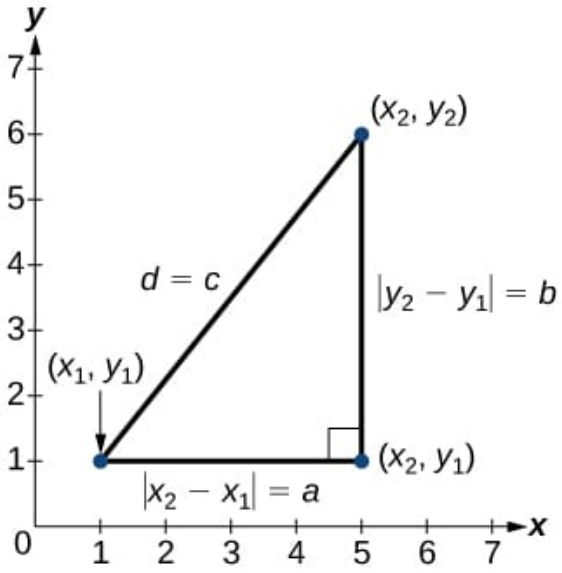


Figure 2.1.15

The relationship of sides $|x_2 - x_1|$ and $|y_2 - y_1|$ to side d is the same as that of sides a and b to side c. We use the absolute value symbol to indicate that the length is a positive number because the absolute value of any number is positive. (For example, $|-3|$

$= 3$.) The symbols $|x_2 - x_1|$ and $|y_2 - y_1|$ indicate that the lengths of the sides of the triangle are positive. To find the length c, take the square root of both sides of the Pythagorean Theorem.

$$c^2 = a^2 + b^2 \rightarrow c = \sqrt{a^2 + b^2} \tag{2.1.2}$$

It follows that the distance formula is given as

$$d^2 = (x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2 \rightarrow d = \sqrt{(x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2} \tag{2.1.3}$$

We do not have to use the absolute value symbols in this definition because any number squared is positive.

distance between two points

Given endpoints (x_1, y_1) and (x_2, y_2), the distance between two points is given by

$$d = \sqrt{(x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2} \tag{2.1.4}$$

Example 2.1.5: Finding the Distance between Two Points

Find the distance between the points $(-3, -1)$ and $(2, 3)$.

Solution

Let us first look at the graph of the two points. Connect the points to form a right triangle as in Figure 2.1.16

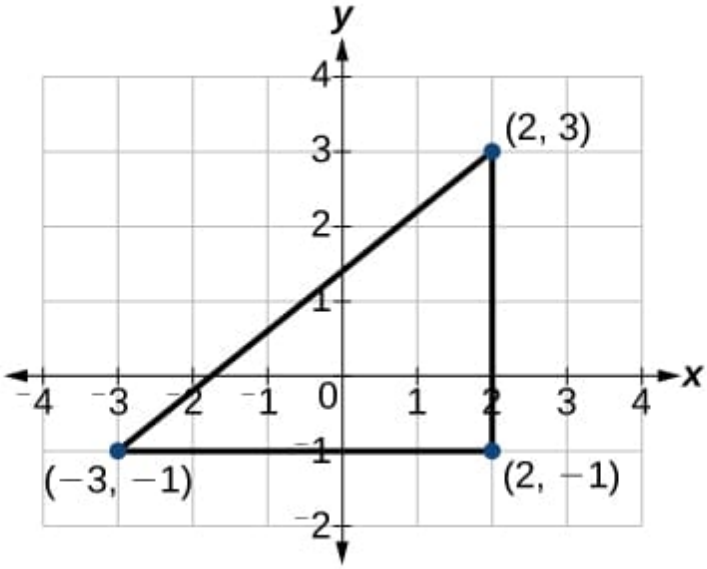


Figure 2.1.16

Then, calculate the length of d using the distance formula.

$$\begin{aligned} d &= \sqrt{(x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{(2 - (-3))^2 + (3 - (-1))^2} \\ &= \sqrt{(5)^2 + (4)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{25 + 16} \\ &= \sqrt{41} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 2.1.3

Find the distance between two points: $(1, 4)$ and $(11, 9)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Midpoint Formula

When the endpoints of a line segment are known, we can find the point midway between them. This point is known as the midpoint and the formula is known as the **midpoint formula**. Given the endpoints of a line segment, (x_1, y_1) and (x_2, y_2), the midpoint formula states how to find the coordinates of the midpoint M.

$$M = \left(\frac{x_1 + x_2}{2}, \frac{y_1 + y_2}{2}\right) \tag{2.1.5}$$

A graphical view of a midpoint is shown in Figure 2.1.18. Notice that the line segments on either side of the midpoint are congruent.

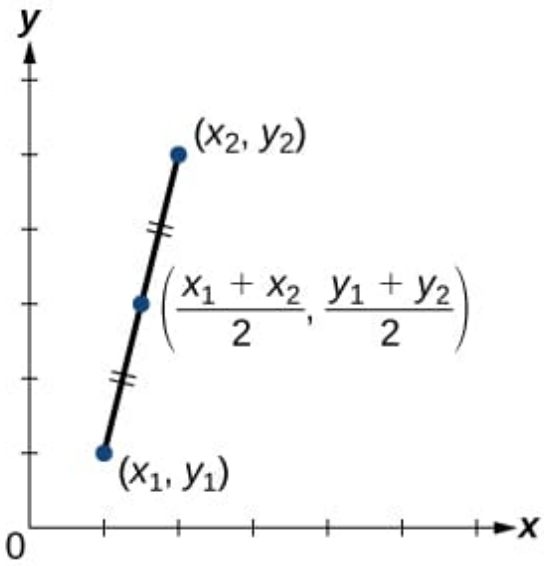


Figure 2.1.18

Example 2.1.7: Finding the Midpoint of the Line Segment

Find the midpoint of the line segment with the endpoints $(7, -2)$ and $(9, 5)$.

Solution

Use the formula to find the midpoint of the line segment.

$$\begin{aligned}\left(\frac{x_1 + x_2}{2}, \frac{y_1 + y_2}{2}\right) &= \left(\frac{7+9}{2}, \frac{-2+5}{2}\right) \\ &= \left(8, \frac{3}{2}\right)\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 2.1.4

Find the midpoint of the line segment with endpoints $(-2,-1)$ and $(-8,6)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.1.8: Finding the Center of a Circle

The diameter of a circle has endpoints $(-1,-4)$ and $(5,-4)$. Find the center of the circle.

Solution

The center of a circle is the center, or midpoint, of its diameter. Thus, the midpoint formula will yield the center point.

$$\begin{aligned}\left(\frac{x_1+x_2}{2},\frac{y_1+y_2}{2}\right) &= \left(\frac{-1+5}{2},\frac{-4-4}{2})\right)\\ &= \left(\frac{4}{2},-\frac{8}{2}\right)\\ &= (2,4)\end{aligned}$$

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with the Cartesian coordinate system.

1. Plotting points on the coordinate plane

2. Find x and y intercepts based on the graph of a line

Key Concepts

- The Pythagorean Theorem, among the most famous theorems in history, is used to solve right-triangle problems and has applications in numerous fields. Solving for the length of one side of a right triangle requires solving a quadratic equation. See Example.We can locate, or plot, points in the Cartesian coordinate system using ordered pairs, which are defined as displacement from the x-axis and displacement from the y-axis. See Example.
- The distance formula is derived from the Pythagorean Theorem and is used to find the length of a line segment. See Example and Example.
- The midpoint formula provides a method of finding the coordinates of the midpoint dividing the sum of the x-coordinates and the sum of the y-coordinates of the endpoints by 2. See Example and Example.

Answers

Try It 2.1.11
c=10

Try It 2.1.12
c=13

Try It 2.1.13
8

Try It 2.1.14
12

Exercise 2.1.9
5 units

Try It 2.1.15
12 feet

Try It 2.1.16

8 feet

Figure 2.1.14

Exercise 2.1.3

$\sqrt{125} = 5\sqrt{5}$

Exercise 2.1.4

$\left(-5, \frac{5}{2}\right)$

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2.2: Linear Equations

Learning Objectives

- Solve linear equations in one variable algebraically.
- Find the slope of a line passing through two points.
- Find the equation of a line in slope-intercept form.
- Find the equation of a line in point-slope form.
- Find the equation of a line in standard form.

Solving Linear Equations in One Variable

A *linear equation* is an equation of a straight line, written in one variable. The only power of the variable is 1. Linear equations in one variable may take the form $ax + b = 0$ and are solved using basic algebraic operations. We begin by classifying linear equations in one variable as one of three types: identity, conditional, or inconsistent.

- An **identity equation** is true for all values of the variable. Here is an example of an identity equation:

  $$3x = 2x + x$$

  The *solution set* consists of all values that make the equation true. For this equation, the solution set is all real numbers because any real number substituted for x will make the equation true.
- A **conditional equation** is true for only some values of the variable. For example, if we are to solve the equation $5x + 2 = 3x - 6$, we have the following:

  $$\begin{aligned} 5x + 2 &= 3x - 6 \\ 2x &= -8 \\ x &= -4 \end{aligned}$$

  The solution set consists of one number: -4. It is the only solution and, therefore, we have solved a conditional equation.
- An **inconsistent equation** results in a false statement. For example, if we are to solve $5x - 15 = 5(x - 4)$, we have the following:

  $$\begin{aligned} 5x - 15 &= 5x - 20 \\ 5x - 15 - 5x &= 5x - 20 - 5x \\ -15 &\neq -20 \end{aligned}$$

  Indeed, $-15 \neq -20$. There is no solution because this is an inconsistent equation.

Solving linear equations in one variable involves the fundamental properties of equality and basic algebraic operations. A brief review of those operations follows.

Definition: Linear Equation in One Variable

A linear equation in one variable can be written in the form

$$Ax + B = 0 \tag{2.2.1}$$

where A and B are real numbers, where $A \neq 0$.

Howto: Given a linear equation in one variable, use algebra to solve it

The following steps are used to manipulate an equation and isolate the unknown variable, so that the last line reads $x =$ _____, if x is the unknown. There is no set order, as the steps used depend on what is given:

1. We may add, subtract, multiply, or divide an equation by a number or an expression as long as we do the same thing to both sides of the equal sign. Note that we cannot divide by zero.
2. Apply the distributive property as needed: $A(B+C)=AB+AC$.
3. Isolate the variable on one side of the equation.
4. When the variable is multiplied by a coefficient in the final stage, multiply both sides of the equation by the reciprocal of the coefficient.

Example 2.2.1: Solving an Equation in One Variable

Solve the following equation: $2x+7=19$.

Solution

This equation can be written in the form $Ax+B=0$ by subtracting 19 from both sides. However, we may proceed to solve the equation in its original form by performing algebraic operations.

$$\begin{aligned} 2x+7&=19 \\ 2x&=12 \quad \text{Subtract 7 from both sides} \\ x&=6 \quad \text{Multiply both sides by } \frac{1}{2} \text{ or divide by 2} \end{aligned}$$

The solution is 6.

Exercise 2.2.1

Solve the linear equation: $2x+1=-9$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.2.2: Solving When the Variable Appears on Both Sides

Solve the following equation: $4(x-3)+12=15-5(x+6)$.

Solution

Apply standard algebraic properties.

$$\begin{aligned} 4(x-3)+12&=15-5(x+6) \\ 4x-12+12&=15-5x-30 \quad \text{Apply the distributive property} \\ 4x&=-15-5x \quad \text{Combine like terms} \\ 9x&=-15 \quad \text{Place x terms on one side and simplify} \\ x&=-\frac{15}{9} \quad \text{Multiply both sides by } \frac{1}{9} \text{ , the reciprocal of 9} \\ x&=-\frac{5}{3} \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

This problem requires the distributive property to be applied twice, and then the properties of algebra are used to reach the final line, $x=-\frac{5}{3}$.

Exercise 2.2.2

Solve the equation in one variable: $-2(3x-1)+x=14-x$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding a Linear Equation in TWO Variables

Definition: Linear Equation in Two Variables

A linear equation in TWO variables can be written in the form

$$Ax+By=C \tag{2.2.2}$$

where A , B and C are real numbers, where A and B are NOT BOTH equal to zero.

Perhaps the most familiar form of a linear equation is the *slope-intercept form*, written as

$$y=mx+b \tag{2.2.3}$$

where $m=\text{slope}$ and $(0,b)$ is the y -intercept.

Example 2.2.3: Identifying the Slope and y-intercept of a Line Given an Equation

Identify the slope and y-intercept, given the equation $2x+3y=6$.

Solution

We must re-write this equation into $y=mx+b$ form, as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} 2x+3y&=6\\ 3y&=-2x+6\\ y&=-\frac{2}{3}x+\frac{6}{3}\\ y&=-\frac{2}{3}x+2 \end{aligned}$$

the given line has a slope of $m=-\frac{2}{3}$. The y-intercept is $(0,2)$.

Analysis

The y-intercept is the point at which the line crosses the y-axis. On the y-axis, $x=0$. We can always identify the y-intercept when the line is in slope-intercept form, as it will always equal the value of b. Or, we can just substitute $x=0$ into the original equation and solve for y.

The **slope** of a line refers to the ratio of the vertical change in y over the horizontal change in x between any two points on a line. It indicates the direction in which a line slants as well as its steepness. Slope is sometimes described as rise over run.

$$m=\frac{y_2-y_1}{x_2-x_1} \tag{2.2.4}$$

If the slope is positive, the line slants to the right. If the slope is negative, the line slants to the left. As the slope increases, the line becomes steeper. Some examples are shown in Figure 2.2.2. The lines indicate the following slopes: $m=-3$, $m=2$, and $m=\frac{1}{3}$.

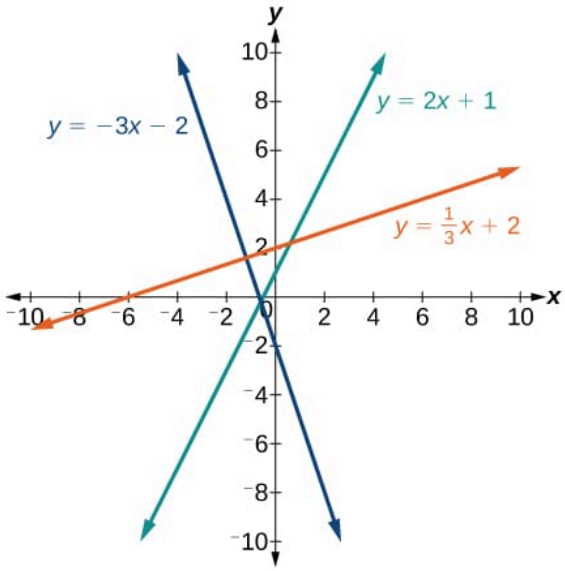


Figure 2.2.2

THE SLOPE OF A LINE

The slope of a line, m, represents the change in y over the change in x. Given two points, (x_1, y_1) and (x_2, y_2), the following formula determines the slope of a line containing these points:

$$m = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \tag{2.2.5}$$

Example 2.2.8: Finding the Slope of a Line Given Two Points

Find the slope of a line that passes through the points $(2, -1)$ and $(-6, 3)$.

Solution

We substitute the y-values and the x-values into the formula.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{3 - (-1)}{-6 - 2} \\ &= \frac{3 + 1}{-8} \\ &= \frac{4}{-8} \\ &= -\frac{4}{8} \\ &= -\frac{1}{2} \end{aligned}$$

The slope is $-\frac{1}{2}$

Analysis

It does not matter which point is called (x_1, y_1) or (x_2, y_2). As long as we are consistent with the order of the y terms and the order of the x terms in the numerator and denominator, the calculation will yield the same result.

Exercise 2.2.8

Find the slope of the line that passes through the points $(-2, 8)$ and $(1, 4)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.2.9: Identifying the Slope and y-intercept of a Line Given an Equation

Identify the slope and y-intercept, given the equation $y = 2x - 4$.

Solution

As the line is in $y = mx + b$ form, the given line has a slope of 2. The y-intercept is $(0, -4)$.

Analysis

The slope is an integer, so we can interpret this as a unit ratio $\frac{2}{1}$ when we are thinking of the behavior of the graph.

The Point-Slope Formula

Given the slope and one point on a line, we can find the equation of the line using the point-slope formula.

$$y - y_1 = m(x - x_1) \tag{2.2.6}$$

This is an important formula, as it will be used in other areas of college algebra and often in calculus to find the equation of a tangent line. We need only one point and the slope of the line to use the formula. After substituting the slope and the coordinates of one point into the formula, we simplify it and write it in slope-intercept form.

THE POINT-SLOPE FORM

Given one point and the slope, the point-slope formula will lead to the equation of a line:

$$y - y_1 = m(x - x_1) \tag{2.2.7}$$

Example 2.2.10: Finding the Equation of a Line Given the Slope and One Point

Write the equation of the line with slope $m = -3$ and passing through the point $(4, 8)$. Write the final equation in slope-intercept form.

Solution

Using the point-slope formula, substitute -3 for m and the point $(4, 8)$ for (x_1, y_1).

$$\begin{aligned} y - y_1 &= m(x - x_1) \\ y - 8 &= -3(x - 4) \\ y - 8 &= -3x + 12 \\ y &= -3x + 20 \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

Note that any point on the line can be used to find the equation. If done correctly, the same final equation will be obtained.

Exercise 2.2.10

Given $m = 4$, find the equation of the line in slope-intercept form passing through the point $(2, 5)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.2.11: Finding the Equation of a Line Passing Through Two Given Points

Find the equation of the line passing through the points $(3, 4)$ and $(0, -3)$. Write the final equation in slope-intercept form.

Solution

First, we calculate the slope using the slope formula and two points.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{-3-4}{0-3} \\ m &= \frac{-7}{-3} \\ m &= \frac{7}{3} \end{aligned}$$

Next, we use the point-slope formula with the slope of $\frac{7}{3}$, and either point. Let's pick the point $(3, 4)$ for (x_1, y_1).

$$\begin{aligned} y-4 &= \frac{7}{3}(x-3) \\ y-4 &= \frac{7}{3}x-7 \\ y &= \frac{7}{3}x-3 \end{aligned}$$

In slope-intercept form, the equation is written as $y = \frac{7}{3}x - 3$

Analysis

To prove that either point can be used, let us use the second point $(0, -3)$ and see if we get the same equation.

$$\begin{aligned} y-(-3) &= \frac{7}{3}(x-0) \\ y+3 &= \frac{7}{3}x \\ y &= \frac{7}{3}x-3 \end{aligned}$$

We see that the same line will be obtained using either point. This makes sense because we used both points to calculate the slope.

Standard Form of a Line

Recall the definition of a linear equation in TWO variables. When A, B, and C are integers, this equation is called the **standard form** of a line.

$$Ax + By = C \tag{2.2.8}$$

The x- and y-terms are on one side of the equal sign and the constant term is on the other side.

Example 2.2.12: Finding the Equation of a Line and Writing It in Standard Form

Find the equation of the line with $m = -6$ and passing through the point $\left(\frac{1}{4}, -2\right)$. Write the equation in standard form.

Solution

We begin using the point-slope formula.

$$y-(-2) = -6\left(x-\frac{1}{4}\right)$$
$$y+2 = -6x+\frac{3}{2}$$

From here, we multiply through by 2, as no fractions are permitted in standard form, and then move both variables to the left aside of the equal sign and move the constants to the right.

$$2(y+2) = \left(-6x+\frac{3}{2}\right)2$$
$$2y+4 = -12x+3$$
$$12x+2y = -1$$

This equation is now written in standard form.

Exercise 2.2.12

Find the equation of the line in standard form with slope $m = -\frac{1}{3}$ and passing through the point $(1, \frac{1}{3})$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Vertical and Horizontal Lines

Recall the definition of a linear equation in TWO variables requires that A , B and C are real numbers, where A and B are NOT BOTH equal to zero.

$$Ax+By = C \tag{2.2.9}$$

The equations of vertical and horizontal lines occur when ONE of the values A or B is equal to zero.

When $B = 0$, the equation represents a **vertical line** and is given by:

$$Ax = C \tag{2.2.10}$$

We simplify this into the form:

$$x = h \tag{2.2.11}$$

where h is a constant. The slope of a vertical line is undefined, and regardless of the y-value of any point on the line, the x -coordinate of every point will be k.

Suppose that we want to find the equation of a line containing the following points: $(-3,-5)$,$(-3,1)$,$(-3,3)$, and $(-3,5)$. First, we will find the slope.

$$m = \frac{5-3}{-3-(-3)} = \frac{2}{0}$$

Zero in the denominator means that the slope is undefined and, therefore, we cannot use the point-slope formula. However, we can plot the points.

Notice that the y-coordinates vary, however ALL of the x-coordinates are the same. This is a vertical line through $x = -3$. See Figure 2.2.3.

Similarly,

When $A = 0$, the equation represents a **horizontal line** and is given by:

$$By = C \tag{2.2.12}$$

We simplify this into the form:

$$y = k \tag{2.2.13}$$

where k is a constant. The slope of a horizontal line is zero, and for every x-value of any point on the line, the y-coordinate will always be k.

Suppose we want to find the equation of a line that contains the following set of points: $(-2, -2)$,$(0, -2)$,$(3, -2)$, and $(5, -2)$. We can use the point-slope formula. First, we find the slope using any two points on the line.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{-2-(-2)}{0-(-2)} \\ &= \frac{0}{2} \\ &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

Use any point for (x_1, y_1) in the formula, or use the y-intercept.

$$\begin{aligned} y-(-2) &= 0(x-3) \\ y+2 &= 0 \\ y &= -2 \end{aligned}$$

The graph is a horizontal line through $y = -2$. Notice that the x-coordinates vary, however ALL of the y-coordinates are the same. See Figure 2.2.3.

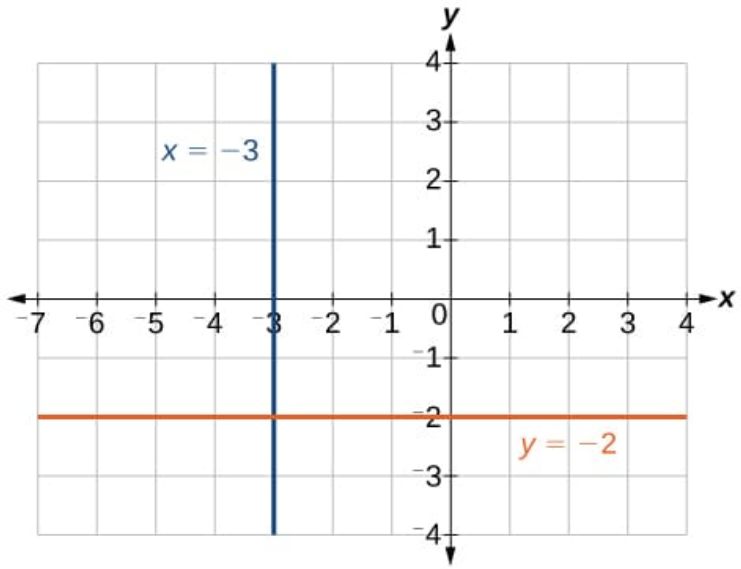


Figure 2.2.3: The line x = –3 is a vertical line. The line y = –2 is a horizontal line

Example 2.2.13: Finding the Equation of a Line Passing Through the Given Points

Find the equation of the line passing through the given points: $(1, -3)$ and $(1, 4)$.

Solution

The x-coordinate of both points is 1. Therefore, we have a vertical line, $x = 1$.

Exercise 2.2.13

Find the equation of the line passing through $(-5, 2)$ and $(2, 2)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with linear equations.

1. Solving linear equations
2. Equation of a line given two points

Key Concepts

- We can solve linear equations in one variable in the form $ax + b = 0$ using standard algebraic properties. See Example and Example.
- Given two points, we can find the slope of a line using the slope formula. See Example.
- We can identify the slope and y-intercept of an equation in slope-intercept form. See Example.
- We can find the equation of a line given the slope and a point. See Example.
- We can also find the equation of a line given two points. Find the slope and use the point-slope formula. See Example.
- The standard form of a line has no fractions. See Example.
- Horizontal lines have a slope of zero and are defined as $y = c$, where c is a constant.
- Vertical lines have an undefined slope (zero in the denominator), and are defined as $x = c$, where c is a constant. See Example.

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Answers

Exercise 2.2.1

$x = -5$

Exercise 2.2.2

$x = -3$

Exercise 2.2.8

$m = -\frac{4}{3}$

Exercise 2.2.10

$y = 4x - 3$

Exercise 2.2.12

$x + 3y = 2$

Exercise 2.2.13

Horizontal line: $y = 2$

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2.3: Models and Applications

Learning Objectives

- Simplify Rates and Unit Rates
- Solve Linear Direct Variation Applications
- Set up a linear equation to solve a real-world application.
- Use a formula to solve a real-world application.

Rates

We now introduce the concept of *rate*, a special type of ratio.

Rate

A *rate* is a quotient of two measurements with different units.

The physical interpretation of a rate in terms of its units is an important skill.

Example 1:

An automobile travels 224 miles on 12 gallons of gasoline. Express the ratio distance traveled to gas consumption as a fraction reduced to lowest terms. Write a short sentence explaining the physical significance of your solution. Include units in your description.

Solution

Place miles traveled over gallons of gasoline consumed and reduce.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{224 \text{ mi}}{12 \text{ gal}} &= \frac{56 \cdot 4 \text{ mi}}{3 \cdot 4 \text{ gal}} && \text{Factor.} \\ &= \frac{56 \cdot \cancel{4} \text{ mi}}{3 \cdot \cancel{4} \text{ gal}} && \text{Cancel common factor.} \\ &= \frac{56 \text{ mi}}{3 \text{ gal}} \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the rate is 56 miles to 3 gallons of gasoline. In plain-speak, this means that the automobile travels 56 miles on 3 gallons of gasoline.

Unit Rates

When making comparisons, it is helpful to have a rate in a form where the denominator is 1. Such rates are given a special name.

Unit Rate

A *unit rate* is a rate whose denominator is 1.

Example 2:

Herman drives 120 miles in 4 hours. Find his average rate of speed.

Solution

Place the distance traveled over the time it takes to drive that distance.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{120 \text{ miles}}{4 \text{ hours}} &= \frac{30 \text{ miles}}{1 \text{ hour}} \quad \text{Divide: } 120/4 = 30.\\ &= 30 \text{ miles/hour}\end{aligned}$$

Hence, Herman's average rate of speed is 30 miles per hour.

Example 3:

Aditya works 8.5 hours and receives $95 in pay. What is his hourly pay rate?

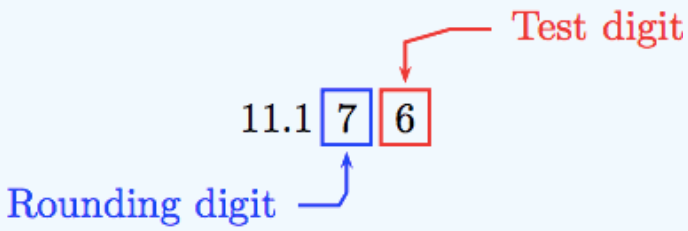
Solution

Let's place money earned over hours worked to get the following rate:

$$\frac{95 \text{ dollars}}{8.5 \text{ hours}}$$

We will get a much better idea of Aditya's salary rate if we express the rate with a denominator of 1. To do so, divide. Push the decimal in the divisor to the far right, then move the decimal an equal number of places in the dividend. As we are dealing with dollars and cents, we will round our answer to the nearest hundredth.

$$\begin{array}{r} 11.176 \\ 85\overline{)950.000} \\ 85 \\ \hline 100 \\ 85 \\ \hline 15\,0 \\ 8\,5 \\ \hline 6\,50 \\ 5\,95 \\ \hline 550 \\ 510 \\ \hline 40 \end{array}$$



Because the test digit is greater than or equal to 5, we add 1 to the rounding digit and truncate; i.e., 95/8.5 ≈ 11.18. Hence,

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{95 \text{ dollars}}{8.5 \text{ hours}} &= \frac{11.18 \text{ dollars}}{1 \text{ hour}} \quad \text{Divide: } 95/8.5 \approx 11.18.\\ &= 11.18 \text{ dollars/hour.}\end{aligned}$$

That is, his pay rate is 11.18 dollars per hour.

Example 4:

One automobile travels 422 miles on 15 gallons of gasoline. A second automobile travels 354 miles on 13 gallons of gasoline. Which automobile gets the better gas mileage?

Solution

Decimal division (rounded to the nearest tenth) reveals the better gas mileage.

In the case of the first automobile, we get the following rate: $$\frac{422 \text{ mi}}{15\text{gal}}$$	I
Divide. $$\begin{array}{r} 28.13 \\ 15\overline{)422.00} \\ \underline{30} \\ 122 \\ \underline{120} \\ 20 \\ \underline{15} \\ 50 \\ \underline{45} \\ 5 \end{array}$$	D
To the nearest tenth, 28.1.	T

In the case of the first automobile, the mileage rate is 28.1 mi/1 gal, which can be read “28.1 miles per gallon.” In the case of the second automobile, the mileage rate is 27.2 mi/1 gal, which can be read “27.2 miles per gallon.” Therefore, the first automobile gets the better gas mileage.

Solving Linear Direct Variation Applications

A used-car company has just offered their best candidate, Nicole, a position in sales. The position offers 16% commission on her sales. Her earnings depend on the amount of her sales. For instance, if she sells a vehicle for $4,600, she will earn $736. She wants to evaluate the offer, but she is not sure how. In this section, we will look at relationships, such as this one, between earnings, sales, and commission rate.

Nicole’s earnings can be found by multiplying her sales by her commission. The formula $e = 0.16s$ tells us her earnings, e, come from the product of 0.16, her commission, and the sale price of the vehicle. If we create a table, we observe that as the sales price increases, the earnings increase as well, which should be intuitive. See **Table 5.8.1**.

s, sales price	$e = 0.16s$	Interpretation
$9,200	$e = 0.16(9,200) = 1,472$	A sale of a $9,200 vehicle results in $1472 earnings.
$4,600	$e = 0.16(4,600) = 736$	A sale of a $4,600 vehicle results in $736 earnings.
$18,400	$e = 0.16(18,400) = 2,944$	A sale of a $18,400 vehicle results in $2944 earnings.

Table 5.8.1

Notice that earnings are a multiple of sales. As sales increase, earnings increase in a predictable way. Double the sales of the vehicle from $4,600 to $9,200, and we double the earnings from $736 to $1,472. As the input increases, the output increases as a multiple of the input. A relationship in which one quantity is a constant multiplied by another quantity is called **direct variation**. Each variable in this type of relationship **varies directly** with the other.

Figure 5.8.1 represents the data for Nicole's potential earnings. We say that earnings vary directly with the sales price of the car. The formula $y = kx$ is used for direct variation. The value k is a nonzero constant greater than zero and is called the **constant of variation**. In this case, $k = 0.16$ and $n = 1$. We saw functions like this one when we discussed power functions.

Figure 5.8.1

A General Note: DIRECT VARIATION

If x and y are related by an equation of the form

$$y = kx$$

then we say that the relationship is **direct variation** and y **varies directly** with, or is proportional to x. In direct variation relationships, there is a nonzero constant ratio $k = \frac{y}{x}$, where k is called the **constant of variation**, which help defines the relationship between the variables.

Given a description of a direct variation problem, solve for an unknown.

1. Identify the units for the variable, x,and the units for the variable, y.
2. Determine the constant of variation. You may need to divide y by the specified power of x to determine the constant of variation.
3. Use the constant of variation to write an equation for the relationship.
4. Substitute known values into the equation to find the unknown.

Example 5:

Solving a Direct Variation Problem

The number of kilometers y varies directly with the number of miles x. If $y = 100$ km, then $x = 60$ mi, find the number of miles 500 that is equivalent to kilometers.

Solution

The general linear formula for direct variation is $y = kx$. The constant can be found by dividing y by x.

$$k = \frac{y}{x}$$

$$= \frac{100}{60}$$

$$= \frac{5}{3}$$

Now use the constant to write an equation that represents this relationship.

$$y = \frac{5}{3}x$$

Substitute $y = 500$ and solve for x.

$$500 = \frac{5}{3}x$$

$$1500 = 5x$$

$$x = \frac{1500}{5}$$

$$x = 300$$

Answer: 500 kilometers is equivalent to 300 miles.

Q&A

Do the graphs of all linear direct variation equations pass through the origin?

YES. Linear Direct variation equations are always of the form $y = kx$, since $0 = k * 0$ for any constant of variation k, all of these graphs pass through $(0, 0)$.

Example 6:

The mass of an object in kilograms varies directly with the weight in pounds. If $y = 100$ kg, then $x = 220$ lbs, find the mass in kilograms of an object that weights 55 lbs.

Solution

$k = \frac{100}{220}$

$k = \frac{5}{11}$

$y = \frac{5}{11}x$

since $x = 55$

$y = \frac{5}{11}(55)$

$y = 25$

Answer

An object that weights 55 lbs has a mass of 25 kilograms.

Using Rates and Direct Variation in a Formula

Example 7:

It takes Andrew $30\ min$ to drive to work in the morning. He drives home using the same route, but it takes 10 minutes longer, and he averages $10\ mi/h$ less than in the morning. How far does Andrew drive to work?

Solution

This is a distance problem, so we can use the formula $d = rt$, where distance equals rate multiplied by time. Note that when rate is given in mi/h, time must be expressed in hours. Consistent units of measurement are key to obtaining a correct solution.

First, we identify the known and unknown quantities. Andrew's morning drive to work takes $30\ min$, or $\frac{1}{2}\ h$ at rate r. His drive home takes $40\ min$, or $\frac{2}{3}\ h$, and his speed averages $10\ mi/h$ less than the morning drive. Both trips cover distance d. A table, such as Table 2.3.2, is often helpful for keeping track of information in these types of problems.

Table 2.3.2

	d	r	t
To Work	d	r	$\frac{1}{2}$
To Home	d	$r-10$	$\frac{2}{3}$

Write two equations, one for each trip.

$$d = r\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \qquad \text{To work}$$

$$d = (r-10)\left(\frac{2}{3}\right) \qquad \text{To home}$$

As both equations equal the same distance, we set them equal to each other and solve for r.

$$\begin{aligned} r\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) &= (r-10)\left(\frac{2}{3}\right) \\ \frac{1}{2}r &= \frac{2}{3}r - \frac{20}{3} \\ \frac{1}{2}r - \frac{2}{3}r &= -\frac{20}{3} \\ -\frac{1}{6}r &= -\frac{20}{3} \\ r &= -\frac{20}{3}(-6) \\ r &= 40 \end{aligned}$$

We have solved for the rate of speed to work, $40\ mph$. Substituting 40 into the rate on the return trip yields $30mi/h$. Now we can answer the question. Substitute the rate back into either equation and solve for d.

$$\begin{aligned} d &= 40\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \\ &= 20 \end{aligned}$$

The distance between home and work is $20\ mi$.

Analysis

Note that we could have cleared the fractions in the equation by multiplying both sides of the equation by the LCD to solve for r.

$$\begin{aligned} r\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) &= (r-10)\left(\frac{2}{3}\right) \\ 6 \times r\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) &= 6 \times (r-10)\left(\frac{2}{3}\right) \\ 3r &= 4(r-10) \\ 3r &= 4r-40 \\ r &= 40 \end{aligned}$$

Building Linear Models

When **modeling** scenarios with linear equations and solving problems involving quantities with a **constant rate of change**, we typically follow the 5 step method.

We list the strategy here, and then use it to solve some problems.

A PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGY.

1. **Read** the problem. Make sure all the words and ideas are understood.
2. **Identify** what we are looking for and choose a variable to represent that quantity.
3. **Translate** into an equation. It may be helpful to restate the problem, then translate into an algebraic equation.
4. **Solve** the equation using algebraic techniques.
5. **Check** the answer in the problem and make sure it makes sense. Clearly state your result using appropriate units.

Example 8:

Emily is a college student who plans to spend a summer in Seattle. She has saved $3,600 for her trip and anticipates spending $400 each day on food, lodging and activities. How many days can Emily remain in Seattle before her money runs out?

There are two changing quantities: time and money. The amount of money she has remaining while on vacation *depends* on how long she stays.

We can use this information to define our variables, including units.

- Dependent: M, money remaining, in dollars
- Independent: t, time, in days

So, the amount of money M, remaining depends on the number of days t

We can also identify the initial value and the rate of change.

- Initial Value: She saved $3,600, so 3600 is the initial value for M.
- Rate of Change: She anticipates spending $400 each day, so –400 is the slope.

Notice that the unit of dollars per day matches the unit of our output variable divided by our input variable. Also, because the slope is negative, the linear function is decreasing. This should make sense because she is spending money each day.

Since this student is spending the same amount of money each day, the **rate of change is constant**,

so we can start with the linear model $M = mt + b$.

Then we can substitute $m = -400$ for the slope and $b = 3600$ for the initial value.

$M = -400t + 3600$

Solution

To find the t-intercept, we set the amount of money to zero, and solve for the time.

0=−400t+3600

400t = 3600

t=9

Answer:

The t-intercept is $(9, 0)$ we say that Emily will have no money left after 9 days.

Using a Given Intercept to Build a Model

Some real-world problems provide the y-intercept, which is the constant or initial value. Once the y-intercept is known, the x-intercept can be calculated.

Data can be used to construct functions that model real-world applications. Once an equation that fits given data is determined, we can use the equation to make certain predictions; this is called **mathematical modeling**[35].

Example 9:

Suppose that Hannah plans to pay off a no-interest loan from her parents. Her loan balance is $1,000. She plans to pay $250 per month until her balance is $0. The y-intercept is the initial amount of her debt, or $1,000. The rate of change, or slope, is -$250 per month. We can then use the slope-intercept form and the given information to develop a linear model, $y = mx + b$

Solution

$y = -250x + 1000$

Now we can set y equal to 0, and solve for x to find the x-intercept.

$0 = -250x + 1000$

$250x = 1000$

$x = 4$

The x-intercept is the number of months it takes her to reach a balance of $0.

Answer:

The x-intercept is 4 months, so it will take Hannah four months to pay off her loan.

Using Two Given Pairs of Values to Build a Model

Many real-world applications are not as direct as the ones we just considered. Instead they require us to identify some aspect of a linear model. We might sometimes instead be asked to evaluate the linear model at a given value or set the equation of the linear model equal to a specified value.

Example 10:

Using a Linear Model to Investigate a Town's Population

A town's population has been growing linearly. In 2004 the population was 6,200. By 2009 the population had grown to 8,100. Assume this trend continues.

1. Predict the population in 2013.
2. Identify the year in which the population will reach 15,000.

Solution

The two changing quantities are the population size and time. While we could use the actual year value as the input quantity, doing so tends to lead to very cumbersome equations because the y-intercept would correspond to the year 0, more than 2000 years ago!

To make computation a little nicer, we will define our input as the number of years since 2004:

- Independent: t, years since 2004
- Dependent: P, the town's population

To predict the population in 2013 (t=9), we would first need an equation for the population. Likewise, to find when the population would reach 15,000, we would need to solve for the number of years that would produce a population of 15,000. To write an equation, we need the initial value and the rate of change, or slope.

To determine the rate of change, we will use the change in output per change in input.

m=change in population/change in time

The problem gives us two input-output pairs. Converting them to match our defined variables, the year 2004 would correspond to t=0, giving the point (0,6200). Notice that through our clever choice of variable definition, we have "given" ourselves the y-intercept of the function. The year 2009 would correspond to t=5, giving the point (5,8100).

The two coordinate pairs are (0,6200) and (5,8100). Recall that we encountered examples in which we were provided two points earlier in the chapter. We can use these values to calculate the slope.

$m = \frac{8100-6200}{5-0}$

= 380 people per year

We already know the y-intercept of the line, so we can immediately write the equation:

P=380t+6200

To predict the population in 2013, we evaluate our equation at t=9.

P=380(9)+6,200

P=9,620

If the trend continues, our model predicts a population of 9,620 in 2013.

To find when the population will reach 15,000, we can set P=15000 and solve for t.

15000=380t+6200

8800 = 380t

t≈23.158

Answer: Our model predicts the population will reach 15,000 in a little more than 23 years after 2004, or somewhere around the year 2027.

Modeling Cost Applications

Data can be used to construct functions that model real-world applications. Once an equation that fits given data is determined, we can use the equation to make certain predictions; this is called **mathematical modeling**[35].

Example 11:

The cost of a daily truck rental is $\$48.00$, plus an additional $\$0.45$ for every mile driven. Write a function that gives the cost of the daily truck rental and use it to determine the total cost of renting the truck for a day and driving it 60 miles.

Solution

The total cost of the truck rental depends on the number of miles driven. If we let x represent the number of miles driven, then $0.45x$ represents the variable cost of renting the truck. Use this and the fixed cost, $\$48.00$, to write a function that models the total cost,

$$C = 0.45x + 48$$

Use this function to calculate the cost of the rental when $x = 60$ miles.

$$\begin{aligned} C &= 0.45(60) + 48 \\ &= 27 + 48 \\ &= 75 \end{aligned}$$

Answer:

The total cost of renting the truck for the day and driving it 60 miles would be $\$75$.

We can use the model $C = 0.45x + 48$ to answer many more questions. For example, how many miles can be driven to keep the cost of the rental at most $\$66$? To answer this question, set up an inequality that expresses the cost less than or equal to $\$66$.

$$\begin{aligned} C &\leq \$66 \\ 0.45x + 48 &\leq 66 \end{aligned}$$

Solve for x to determine the number of miles that can be driven.

$$\begin{aligned} 0.45x + 48 &\leq 66 \\ 0.45x &\leq 18 \\ x &\leq 40 \end{aligned}$$

To limit the rental cost to $\$66$, the truck can be driven 40 miles or less.

Modeling Depreciation of Value

Example 12:

A company purchased a new piece of equipment for $\$12,000$. Four years later it was valued at $\$9,000$ dollars. Use this data to construct a linear function that models the value of the piece of equipment over time.

Solution

The value of the item depends on the number of years after it was purchased. Therefore, the age of the piece of equipment is the independent variable. Use ordered pairs where the x-values represent the age and the y-values represent the corresponding value.

$$(age, value)$$

From the problem, we can determine two ordered pairs. Purchased new $(age = 0)$, the item cost $\$12,000$, and 4 years later the item was valued at $\$9,000$. Therefore, we can write the following two $(age, value)$ ordered pairs:

$$(0,\ 12000) \quad \text{and} \quad (4,\ 9000)$$

Use these two ordered pairs to construct a linear model. Begin by finding the slope m.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \\ &= \frac{9000 - 12000}{4 - 0} \\ &= \frac{-3000}{4} \\ &= -750 \end{aligned}$$

Here we have $m = -750$. The ordered pair $(0, 12000)$ gives the y-intercept; therefore, $b = 12000$.

$$\begin{aligned} y &= mx + b \\ y &= -750x + 12000 \end{aligned}$$

Lastly, write this model as a function which gives the value of the piece of equipment over time. Choose the function name V, for value, and the variable t instead of x to represent time in years.

$$V = -750t + 12000$$

Answer:

$V = -750t + 12,000$

The equation $V = -750t + 12,000$ called a **linear depreciation model**[36]. It uses a linear equation to expresses the declining value of an item over time. Using this to determine the value of the item between the given data points is called **interpolation**[37]. For example, we can use the equation to determine the value of the item where $t = 2$,

$$\begin{aligned} V &= -750(2) + 12,000 \\ &= 10,500 \end{aligned}$$

This shows that the item was worth $\$10,500$ two years after it was purchased. Using this model to predict the value outside the given data points is called **extrapolation**[38]. For example, we can use the equation to determine the value of the item when $t = 10$:

$$\begin{aligned} V &= -750(10) + 12,000 \\ &= -7,500 + 12,000 \\ &= 4,500 \end{aligned}$$

The model predicts that the piece of equipment will be worth $\$4,500$ ten years after it is purchased.

Figure 2.3.5

Business Models

In a business application, revenue results from the sale of a number of items. For example, if an item can be sold for $\$150$ and we let n represent the number of units sold, then we can form the following **revenue equation**[39]:

$$R = 150n$$

Use this function to determine the revenue generated from selling $n = 100$ units,

$$R = 150(100) = 15,000$$

The function shows that the revenue generated from selling 100 items is $\$15,000$. Typically, selling items does not represent the entire story. There are a number of costs associated with the generation of revenue. For example, if there is a one-time set up fee of $\$5,280$ and each item cost $\$62$ to produce, then we can form the following **cost equation**[40]:

$$C = 62n + 5,280$$

Here n represents the number of items produced. Use this to determine the cost associated with producing $n = 100$ units:

$$C = 62(100) + 5,280 = 11,480$$

This shows that the cost associated with producing 100 items is $11,480. Profit is revenue less costs:

$$\begin{aligned} Profit &= Revenue - Cost \\ &= 15,000 - 11,480 \\ &= 3,520 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the profit generated by producing and selling 100 items is $\$3,520$. In general, given a revenue equation$R$ and a cost equation C, we can form a **profit equation**[41] by subtracting as follows:

$$P = R - C$$

Example 13:

The cost in dollars of producing n items is given by the formula $C = 62n + 5,280$. The revenue in dollars is given by $R = 150n$, where n represents the number items sold. Write an equation that gives the profit generated by producing and selling n items. Use this equation to determine how many items must be produced and sold in order to earn a profit of at least $\$7,000$.

Solution

Obtain the profit equation by subtracting the cost equation from the revenue equation.

$$\begin{aligned} P &= R - C \\ &= 150n - (62n + 5,280) \\ &= 150n - 62n - 5,280 \\ &= 88n - 5,280 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $P(n) = 88n + 5,280$ models the profit. To determine the number of items that must be produced and sold to profit at least $\$7,000$, solve the following:

$$\begin{aligned} P &\geq 7,000 \\ 88n - 5,280 &\geq 7,000 \\ 88n &\geq 12,280 \\ n &\geq 139.5 \end{aligned}$$

Round up because the number of units produced and sold must be an integer. To see this, calculate the profit where n is 139 and 140 units.

$$\begin{aligned} P &= 88(139) - 5,280 = 6,952 \\ P &= 88(140) - 5,280 = 7,040 \end{aligned}$$

Answer:

140 or more items must be produced and sold in order to earn a profit of at least $\$7,000$.

Sometimes the costs exceed the revenue, in which case, the profit will be negative. For example, use the profit equation of the previous example, $P = 88n - 5,280$, to calculate the profit generated where $n = 50$.

$$P = 88(50) - 5,280 = -880$$

This indicates that when 50 units are produced and sold the corresponding profit is a loss of $\$880$.

It is often important to determine how many items must be produced and sold to break even. To break even means to neither have a gain nor a loss; in this case, the profit will be equal to zero. To determine the **breakeven point**[42], set the profit function equal to zero and solve:

$$\begin{aligned} P &= 88n - 5,280 \\ 0 &= 88n - 5,280 \\ 5,280 &= 88n \\ 60 &= n \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, 60 items must be produced and sold to break even.

Figure $2.3.6$

You Try it.

Custom t-shirts can be sold for $\$6.50$ each. In addition to an initial setup fee of $\$120$, each t-shirt cost $\$3.50$ to produce.

a. Write an equation that models the revenue and an equation that models the cost.
b. Determine the equation that models the profit and use it to determine the profit from producing and selling 150 t-shirts.
c. Calculate the number of t-shirts that must be sold to break even.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Concepts

- A rate is a quotient of two measurements with different units.
- There are many known formulas that can be used to solve applications. Distance problems, for example, are solved using the $d = rt$ formula. See Example.A linear equation can be used to solve for an unknown in a number problem. See Example.
- Applications can be written as mathematical problems by identifying known quantities and assigning a variable to unknown quantities. See Example.
- Given two points we can find the equation of a line.
- To find an equation of a line, first use the given information to determine the slope. Then use the slope and a point on the line to find the equation using point-slope form.
- To construct a linear equation that models a real-world application, first identify the dependent and independent variables. Next, find two ordered pairs that describe the given situation. Use these two ordered pairs to construct a linear function by finding the slope and y-intercept.
-

Answers

You Try it.

a. Revenue: $R = 6.50x$; cost: $C = 3.50x + 120$;
b. profit: $P = 3x - 120$; profit from producing and selling 150 t-shirts: $\$330$
c. 40

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2.4: Complex Numbers

Learning Objectives

- Add and subtract complex numbers.
- Multiply and divide complex numbers.
- Solve quadratic equations with complex numbers

Discovered by Benoit Mandelbrot around 1980, the Mandelbrot Set is one of the most recognizable fractal images. The image is built on the theory of self-similarity and the operation of iteration. Zooming in on a fractal image brings many surprises, particularly in the high level of repetition of detail that appears as magnification increases. The equation that generates this image turns out to be rather simple.

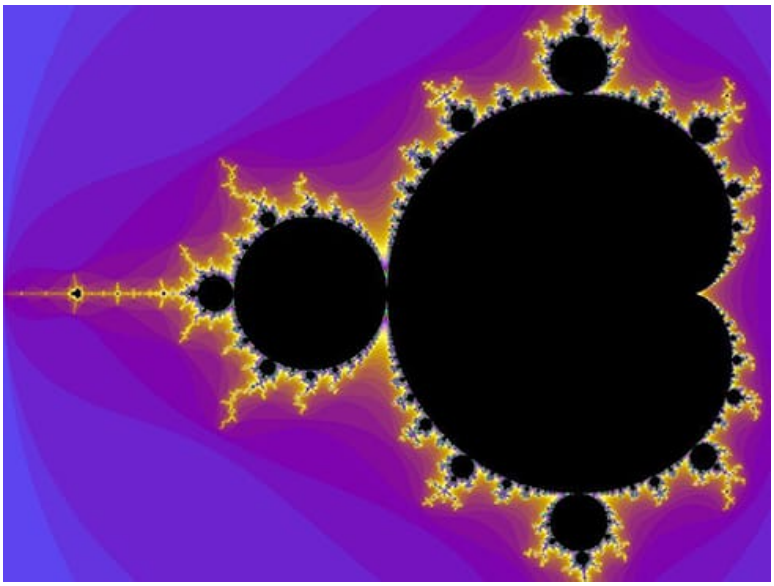


Figure 2.4.1: The Mandelbrot set exhibits similarity, which is best shown in an animation.

In order to better understand it, we need to become familiar with a new set of numbers. Keep in mind that the study of mathematics continuously builds upon itself. Negative integers, for example, fill a void left by the set of positive integers. The set of rational numbers, in turn, fills a void left by the set of integers. The set of real numbers fills a void left by the set of rational numbers. Not surprisingly, the set of real numbers has voids as well. In this section, we will explore a set of numbers that fills voids in the set of real numbers and find out how to work within it.

Expressing Square Roots of Negative Numbers as Multiples of i

We know how to find the square root of any positive real number. In a similar way, we can find the square root of any negative number. The difference is that the root is not real. If the value in the radicand is negative, the root is said to be an imaginary number.The imaginary number i is defined as the square root of -1.

$$\sqrt{-1} = i \tag{2.4.1}$$

So, using properties of radicals,

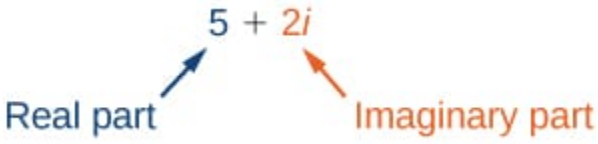
$$i^2 = (\sqrt{-1})^2 = -1 \tag{2.4.2}$$

We can write the square root of any negative number as a multiple of i. Consider the square root of -49.

$$\begin{aligned}\sqrt{-49} &= \sqrt{49 \cdot (-1)} \\ &= \sqrt{49}\sqrt{-1} \\ &= 7i\end{aligned}$$

We use $7i$ and not $-7i$ because the principal root of 49 is the positive root.

A complex number is the sum of a real number and an imaginary number. A complex number is expressed in standard form when written $a + bi$ where a is the real part and b is the imaginary part. For example, $5 + 2i$ is a complex number. So, too, is $3 + 4i\sqrt{3}$.



Imaginary numbers differ from real numbers in that a squared imaginary number produces a negative real number. Recall that when a positive real number is squared, the result is a positive real number and when a negative real number is squared, the result is also a positive real number. Complex numbers consist of real and imaginary numbers.

Definition: Imaginary and Complex Numbers

An **imaginary number** is any even root of a negative number. The principal square root of -1 is called the *imaginary unit* $i = \sqrt{-1}$

A **complex number** is any number of the form $a + bi$ where a and b are real numbers.

- a is called the *real part* of the complex number.
- b is called the *imaginary part* of the complex number.

If $a = 0$ and $b \neq 0$, the complex number is called a **pure imaginary number**.

If $b = 0$, then the complex number $a + bi$ is a real number, also known as a **pure real number**.

How to: Given an imaginary number, express it in the standard form of a complex number

1. Write $\sqrt{-a}$ as $\sqrt{a}\sqrt{-1}$.
2. Re-write $\sqrt{-1}$ as i.
3. Express the result $\sqrt{a} \cdot i$ in simplest form.

Example 2.4.1: Expressing an Imaginary Number in Standard Form

Express $\sqrt{-9}$ in standard form.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned}\sqrt{-9} &= \sqrt{9}\sqrt{-1} \\ &= 3i\end{aligned}$$

In standard form, this is $0 + 3i$.

Exercise 2.4.1

Express $\sqrt{-24}$ in standard form.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Adding and Subtracting Complex Numbers

Just as with real numbers, we can perform arithmetic operations on complex numbers. To add or subtract complex numbers, we combine the real parts and then combine the imaginary parts.

COMPLEX NUMBERS: ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION

Adding complex numbers:

$$(a+bi)+(c+di)=(a+c)+(b+d)i \tag{2.4.3}$$

Subtracting complex numbers:

$$(a+bi)-(c+di)=(a-c)+(b-d)i \tag{2.4.4}$$

How to: Given two complex numbers, find the sum or difference

1. Identify the real and imaginary parts of each number.
2. Add or subtract the real parts.
3. Add or subtract the imaginary parts.

Example 2.4.2: Adding and Subtracting Complex Numbers

Add or subtract as indicated.

a. $(3-4i)+(2+5i)$
b. $(-5+7i)-(-11+2i)$

Solution

a.
$$\begin{aligned}(3-4i)+(2+5i) &= 3-4i+2+5i\\ &= 3+2+(-4i)+5i\\ &= (3+2)+(-4+5)i\\ &= 5+i\end{aligned}$$

b.
$$\begin{aligned}(-5+7i)-(-11+2i) &= -5+7i+11-2i\\ &= -5+11+7i-2i\\ &= (-5+11)+(7-2)i\\ &= 6+5i\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 2.4.2

Subtract $2+5i$ from $3–4i$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Multiplying Complex Numbers

Multiplying complex numbers is much like multiplying binomials. The major difference is that we work with the real and imaginary parts separately.

Multiplying a Complex Number by a Real Number

Lets begin by multiplying a complex number by a real number. We distribute the real number just as we would with a binomial. Consider, for example, $3(6+2i)$:



$$\begin{aligned} 3(6+2i) &= (3\cdot 6)+(3\cdot 2i) && \text{Distribute.}\\ &= 18+6i && \text{Simplify.}\end{aligned}$$

Example 2.4.3: Multiplying a Complex Number by a Real Number

Find the product $4(2+5i)$.

Solution

Distribute the 4.

$$\begin{aligned} 4(2+5i) &= (4\cdot 2)+(4\cdot 5i)\\ &= 8+20i\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 2.4.4

Find the product: $-\frac{1}{2}(8-2i)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Multiplying a Complex Number by a Pure Imaginary Number

Lets begin by multiplying a complex number by a real number. We distribute the real number just as we would with a binomial. Consider, for example, $-4i(5+3i)$:

Example 2.4.4: Multiplying a Complex Number by a Pure Imaginary Number

Find the product $-4i(5+3i)$.

Solution

Distribute the $-4i$.

$$\begin{aligned} -4i(5+3i) &= (-4i\cdot 5)+(-4i\cdot 3i)\\ &= -20i-12i^2 \qquad = -20i-12(-1)=-20i+12 \qquad = 12-20i\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 2.4.4

Find the product: $i(6-2i)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Multiplying Complex Numbers Together

Now, let's multiply two complex numbers. We can use either the distributive property or more specifically the FOIL method because we are dealing with binomials. Recall that FOIL is an acronym for multiplying First, Inner, Outer, and Last terms together. The difference with complex numbers is that when we get a squared term, i^2, it equals -1.

$$\begin{aligned}(a+bi)(c+di) &= ac+adi+bci+bdi^2 \\ &= ac+adi+bci+bd(-1) \qquad i^2=-1 \\ &= ac+adi+bci-bd \\ &= (ac-bd)+(ad+bc)i\end{aligned}$$

Group real terms and imaginary terms.

How to: Given two complex numbers, multiply to find the product

1. Use the distributive property or the FOIL method.
2. Remember that $i^2=-1$.
3. Group together the real terms and the imaginary terms

Example 2.4.5: Multiplying a Complex Number by a Complex Number

Multiply $(4+3i)(2-5i)$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned}(4+3i)(2-5i) &= 4(2)-4(5i)+3i(2)-(3i)(5i) \\ &= 8-20i+6i-15(i^2) \\ &= (8+15)+(-20+6)i \\ &= 23-14i\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 2.4.5

Multiply: $(3-4i)(2+3i)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Dividing Complex Numbers

Dividing two complex numbers is more complicated than adding, subtracting, or multiplying because we cannot divide by an imaginary number, meaning that any fraction must have a real-number denominator to write the answer in standard form $a+bi$. We need to find a term by which we can multiply the numerator and the denominator that will eliminate the imaginary portion of the denominator so that we end up with a real number as the denominator. This term is called the complex conjugate of the denominator, which is found by changing the sign of the imaginary part of the complex number. In other words, the complex conjugate of $a+bi$ is $a-bi$. For example, the product of $a+bi$ and $a-bi$ is

$$(a+bi)(a-bi) = a^2 - abi + abi - b^2i^2$$
$$= a^2 + b^2$$

The result is a real number.

Note that complex conjugates have an opposite relationship: The complex conjugate of $a+bi$ is $a-bi$, and the complex conjugate of $a-bi$ is $a+bi$. Further, when a quadratic equation with real coefficients has complex solutions, the solutions are always complex conjugates of one another.

Suppose we want to divide $c+di$ by $a+bi$, where neither a nor b equals zero. We first write the division as a fraction, then find the complex conjugate of the denominator, and multiply.

$$\frac{c+di}{a+bi} \text{ where } a \neq 0 \text{ and } b \neq 0$$

Multiply the numerator and denominator by the complex conjugate of the denominator.

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{(c+di)}{(a+bi)} \cdot \frac{(a-bi)}{(a-bi)} &= \frac{(c+di)(a-bi)}{(a+bi)(a-bi)} \\
&= \frac{ca - cbi + adi - bdi^2}{a^2 - abi + abi - b^2i^2} && \text{Apply the distributive property} \\
&= \frac{ca - cbi + adi - bd(-1)}{a^2 - abi + abi - b^2(-1)} && \text{Simplify, remembering that } i^2 = -1 \\
&= \frac{(ca+bd) + (ad-cb)i}{a^2+b^2}
\end{aligned}$$

Definition: Complex Conjugate

If $a \neq 0$, the **complex conjugate** of $a+bi$ is $a-bi$, and the complex conjugate of $a-bi$ is $a+bi$.

The complex conjugate is found by changing the sign of the imaginary part of the complex number. The real part of the number remains unchanged.

- When a complex number is multiplied by its complex conjugate, the result is a real number.
- When a complex number is added to its complex conjugate, the result is a real number.

Example 2.4.6: Finding Complex Conjugates

Find the complex conjugate of each number.

a. $2 + i\sqrt{5}$
b. $-\frac{1}{2}i$

Solution

a. The number is already in the form $a+bi$. The complex conjugate is $a-bi$, or $2 - i\sqrt{5}$.
b. We can rewrite this number in the form $a+bi$ as $0 - \frac{1}{2}i$. The complex conjugate is $a-bi$, or $0 + \frac{1}{2}i$. This can be written simply as $\frac{1}{2}i$.

Analysis

Although we have seen that we can find the complex conjugate of an imaginary number, in practice we generally find the complex conjugates of only complex numbers with both a real and an imaginary component. To obtain a real number from a pure imaginary number, we can simply multiply by i.

Exercise 2.4.6

Find the complex conjugate of $-3+4i$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

How to: Given two complex numbers, divide one by the other

1. Write the division problem as a fraction.
2. Determine the complex conjugate of the denominator.
3. Multiply the numerator and denominator of the fraction by the complex conjugate of the denominator.
4. Simplify.

Example 2.4.7: Dividing Complex Numbers

Divide $(2+5i)$ by $(4-i)$.

Solution

We begin by writing the problem as a fraction.

$$\frac{(2+5i)}{(4-i)}$$

Then we multiply the numerator and denominator by the complex conjugate of the denominator.

$$\frac{(2+5i)}{(4-i)}\cdot\frac{(4+i)}{(4+i)}$$

To multiply two complex numbers, we expand the product as we would with polynomials (using FOIL).

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{(2+5i)}{(4-i)}\cdot\frac{(4+i)}{(4+i)} &= \frac{8+2i+20i+5i^2}{16+4i-4i-i^2}\\ &= \frac{8+2i+20i+5(-1)}{16+4i-4i-(-1)} \quad i^2=-1\\ &= \frac{3+22i}{17}\\ &= \frac{3}{17}+\frac{22}{17}i\end{aligned}$$

Separate real and imaginary parts.

Note that this expresses the quotient in standard form.

Simplifying Powers of i

The powers of i are cyclic. Let's look at what happens when we raise i to increasing powers.

$$\begin{aligned}i^1 &= i\\ i^2 &= -1\\ i^3 &= i^2\cdot i = -1\cdot i = -i\\ i^4 &= i^3\cdot i = -i\cdot i = -i^2 = -(-1) = 1\end{aligned}$$

$$i^5 = i^4 \cdot i = 1 \cdot i = i$$

We can see that when we get to the fifth power of i , it is equal to the first power. As we continue to multiply i by increasing powers, we will see a cycle of four. Let's examine the next four powers of i.

$$i^6 = i^5 \cdot i = i \cdot i = i^2 = -1$$
$$i^7 = i^6 \cdot i = i^2 \cdot i = i^3 = -i$$
$$i^8 = i^7 \cdot i = i^3 \cdot i = i^4 = 1$$
$$i^9 = i^8 \cdot i = i^4 \cdot i = i^5 = i$$

The cycle is repeated continuously: $i, -1, -i, 1,$ every four powers.

Example 2.4.8: Simplifying Powers of i

Evaluate: i^{35}.

Solution

Since $i^4 = 1$, we can simplify the problem by factoring out as many factors of i^4 as possible. To do so, first determine how many times 4 goes into $35 : 35 = 4 \cdot 8 + 3$.

$$i^{35} = i^{4 \cdot 8 + 3} = i^{4 \cdot 8} \cdot i^3 = (i^4)^8 \cdot i^3 = i^8 \cdot i^3 = i^3 = -i$$

Exercise 2.4.7

Evaluate: i^{18}

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A

Can we write i^{35} in other helpful ways?

As we saw in Example 2.4.8, we reduced i^{35} to i^3 by dividing the exponent by 4 and using the remainder to find the simplified form. But perhaps another factorization of i^{35} may be more useful. Table 2.4.1 shows some other possible factorizations.

Table 2.4.1

Factorization of i^{35}	$i^{34} \cdot i$	$i^{33} \cdot i^2$	$i^{31} \cdot i^4$	$i^{19} \cdot i^{16}$
Reduced form	$(i^2)^{17} \cdot i$	$i^{33} \cdot (-1)$	$i^{31} \cdot 1$	$i^{19} \cdot (i^4)^4$
Simplified form	$(-1)^{17} \cdot i$	$-i^{33}$	i^{31}	i^{19}

Each of these will eventually result in the answer we obtained above but may require several more steps than our earlier method.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with complex numbers.

1. Adding and Subtracting Complex Numbers
2. Multiply Complex Numbers
3. Multiplying Complex Conjugates

4. Raising i to Powers

Key Concepts

- The square root of any negative number can be written as a multiple of i. See Example.
- Complex numbers can be added and subtracted by combining the real parts and combining the imaginary parts. See Example.
- Complex numbers can be multiplied and divided.
  - To multiply complex numbers, distribute just as with polynomials. See Example and Example.
  - To divide complex numbers, multiply both numerator and denominator by the complex conjugate of the denominator to eliminate the complex number from the denominator. See Example and Example.
- The powers of i are cyclic, repeating every fourth one. See Example.

Answers

Exercise 2.4.1

$\sqrt{-24} = 0 + 2i\sqrt{6}$

Exercise 2.4.2

$(3 - 4i) - (2 + 5i) = 1 - 9i$

Exercise 2.4.4

$-4 + i$

Exercise 2.4.4

$2 + 6i$

Exercise 2.4.5

$18 + i$

Exercise 2.4.6

$-3 - 4i$

Exercise 2.4.7

-1

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2.5: Quadratic Equations

Learning Objectives

- Solve quadratic equations by factoring.
- Solve quadratic equations by the square root property.
- Solve quadratic equations by completing the square.
- Solve quadratic equations by using the quadratic formula.

Solving Quadratic Equations by Factoring

Definition: Quadratic Equation

Any second-degree polynomial equation that can be written in the form

$$ax^2 + bx + c = 0 \tag{2.5.1}$$

where a, b, c are real numbers, and $a \neq 0$ is called a **quadratic equation.**

For example, equations such as $2x^2 + 3x - 1 = 0$, $x^2 - 4 = 0$, $-3x^2 + 5x = 0$and are quadratic equations. They are used in countless ways in the fields of engineering, architecture, finance, biological science, and, of course, mathematics.

Often the easiest method of solving a quadratic equation is **factoring**. Factoring means finding expressions that can be multiplied together to give the expression on one side of the equation.

If a quadratic equation can be factored, it is written as a product of linear terms. Solving by factoring depends on the zero-product property, which states that if $a \cdot b = 0$, then $a = 0$ or $b = 0$, where a and b are real numbers or algebraic expressions. In other words, if the product of two numbers or two expressions equals zero, then one of the numbers or one of the expressions must equal zero because zero multiplied by anything equals zero.

Multiplying the factors expands the equation to a string of terms separated by plus or minus signs. So, in that sense, the operation of multiplication undoes the operation of factoring. For example, expand the factored expression $(x - 2)(x + 3)$ by multiplying the two factors together.

$$\begin{aligned}(x-2)(x+3) &= x^2 + 3x - 2x - 6 \\ &= x^2 + x - 6\end{aligned}$$

The product is a quadratic expression. Set equal to zero, $x^2 + x - 6 = 0$ is a quadratic equation. If we were to factor the equation, we would get back the factors we multiplied.

The process of factoring a quadratic equation depends on the leading coefficient, whether it is 1 or another integer. We will look at both situations; but first, we want to confirm that the equation is written in standard form, $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$, where a, b, and c are real numbers, and $a \neq 0$. The equation $x^2 + x - 6 = 0$ is in standard form.

We can use the zero-product property to solve quadratic equations in which we first have to factor out the greatest common factor(GCF), and for equations that have special factoring formulas as well, such as the difference of squares, both of which we will see later in this section.

ZERO-PRODUCT PROPERTY AND QUADRATIC EQUATIONS

The **zero-product property** states

$$\text{If } a \cdot b = 0, \text{ then } a = 0 \text{ or } b = 0,$$

where a and b are real numbers or algebraic expressions.

A quadratic equation is an equation containing a second-degree polynomial; for example

$$ax^2 + bx + c = 0 \tag{2.5.2}$$

where a, b, and c are real numbers, and if $a \neq 0$, it is in standard form.

Factoring and Solving Quadratics with a Leading Coefficient of 1

In the quadratic equation $x^2 + x - 6 = 0$, the leading coefficient, or the coefficient of x^2, is 1. We have one method of factoring quadratic equations in this form.

How to: Factor a quadratic equation with the leading coefficient of 1

1. Find two numbers whose product equals c and whose sum equals b.
2. Use those numbers to write two factors of the form $(x + k)$ or $(x - k)$, where k is one of the numbers found in step 1. Use the numbers exactly as they are. In other words, if the two numbers are 1 and -2, the factors are $(x + 1)(x - 2)$.
3. Solve using the zero-product property by setting each factor equal to zero and solving for the variable.

Example 2.5.1: Solving a Quadratic with Leading Coefficient of 1

Factor and solve the equation: $x^2 + x - 6 = 0$.

Solution

To factor $x^2 + x - 6 = 0$, we look for two numbers whose product equals -6 and whose sum equals 1. Begin by looking at the possible factors of -6.

$$1 \cdot (-6)$$

$$(-6) \cdot 1$$

$$2 \cdot (-3)$$

$$3 \cdot (-2)$$

The last pair, $3 \cdot (-2)$ sums to 1, so these are the numbers. Note that only one pair of numbers will work. Then, write the factors.

$$(x - 2)(x + 3) = 0$$

To solve this equation, we use the zero-product property. Set each factor equal to zero and solve.

$$\begin{aligned} (x - 2)(x + 3) &= 0 \\ (x - 2) &= 0 \\ x &= 2 \\ (x + 3) &= 0 \\ x &= -3 \end{aligned}$$

The two solutions are 2 and -3. We can see how the solutions relate to the graph in Figure $2.5.2$. The solutions are the x-intercepts of $x^2 + x - 6 = 0$.

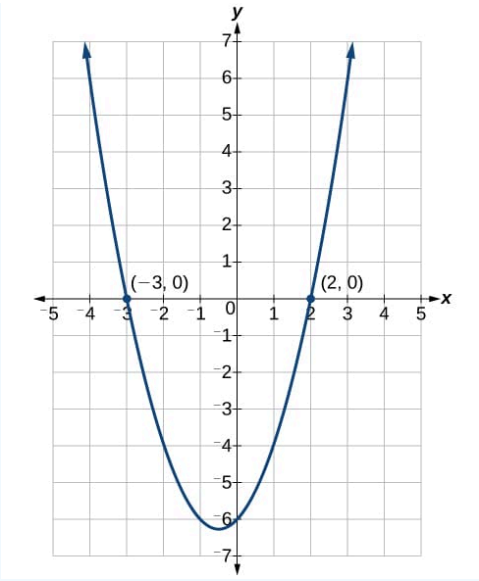


Figure 2.5.2

Exercise 2.5.1

Factor and solve the quadratic equation: $x^2 - 5x - 6 = 0$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.5.2: Solve the Quadratic Equation by Factoring

Solve the quadratic equation by factoring: $x^2 + 8x + 15 = 0$.

Solution

Find two numbers whose product equals 15 and whose sum equals 8. List the factors of 15.

$$1 \cdot 15$$

$$3 \cdot 5$$

$$(-1) \cdot (-15)$$

$$(-3) \cdot (-5)$$

The numbers that add to 8 are 3 and 5. Then, write the factors, set each factor equal to zero, and solve.

$$\begin{aligned} (x+3)(x+5) &= 0 \\ (x+3) &= 0 \\ x &= -3 \\ (x+5) &= 0 \\ x &= -5 \end{aligned}$$

The solutions are -3 and -5.

Exercise 2.5.2

Solve the quadratic equation by factoring: $x^2 - 4x - 21 = 0$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.5.3: Using Zero-Product Property to Solve a Quadratic Equation

Solve the difference of squares equation using the zero-product property: $x^2 - 9 = 0$.

Solution

Recognizing that the equation represents the difference of squares, we can write the two factors by taking the square root of each term, using a minus sign as the operator in one factor and a plus sign as the operator in the other. Solve using the zero-factor property.

$$\begin{aligned} x^2 - 9 &= 0 \\ (x-3)(x+3) &= 0 \\ x - 3 &= 0 \\ x &= 3 \\ (x+3) &= 0 \\ x &= -3 \end{aligned}$$

The solutions are 3 and -3.

Exercise 2.5.3

Solve by factoring: $x^2 - 25 = 0$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Factoring and Solving Quadratic Equations with a Leading Coefficient other than 1

When the leading coefficient is not 1, we factor a quadratic equation using the method called *grouping*, which requires four terms.

Grouping: Steps for factoring quadratic equations

With the equation in standard form, let's review the grouping procedures

1. With the quadratic in standard form, $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$, multiply $a \cdot c$.
2. Find two numbers whose product equals ac and whose sum equals b.
3. Rewrite the equation replacing the bx term with two terms using the numbers found in step 1 as coefficients of x.
4. Factor the first two terms and then factor the last two terms. The expressions in parentheses must be exactly the same to use grouping.
5. Factor out the expression in parentheses.
6. Set the expressions equal to zero and solve for the variable.

Example 2.5.4: Solving a Quadratic Equation Using Grouping

Use grouping to factor and solve the quadratic equation: $4x^2 + 15x + 9 = 0$.

Solution

First, multiply ac : $4(9) = 36$. Then list the factors of 36.

$$1 \cdot 36$$

$$2 \cdot 18$$

$$3 \cdot 12$$

$$4 \cdot 9$$

$$6 \cdot 6$$

The only pair of factors that sums to 15 is $3 + 12$. Rewrite the equation replacing the b term, $15x$, with two terms using 3 and 12 as coefficients of x. Factor the first two terms, and then factor the last two terms.

$$\begin{aligned} 4x^2 + 3x + 12x + 9 &= 0 \\ x(4x + 3) + 3(4x + 3) &= 0 \\ (4x + 3)(x + 3) &= 0 \qquad \text{Solve using the zero-product property} \\ (4x + 3) &= 3 \\ x &= -\frac{3}{4} \\ (x + 3) &= 0 \\ x &= -3 \end{aligned}$$

The solutions are $-\frac{3}{4}$, and -3. See Figure $2.5.3$.

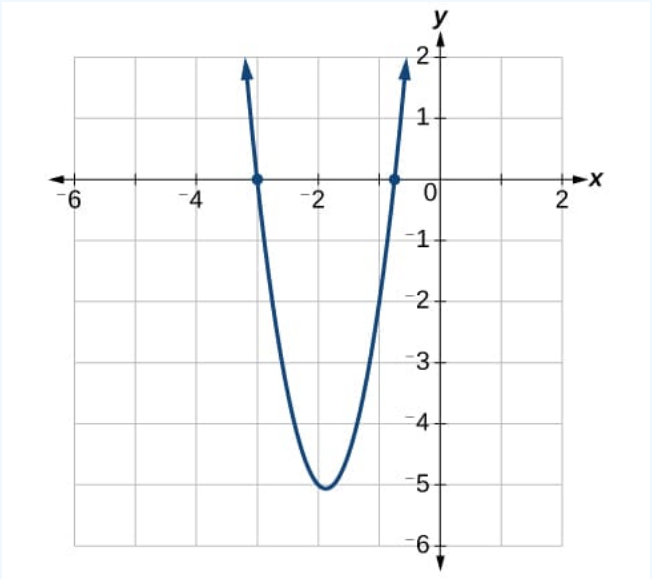


Figure $2.5.3$

Exercise $2.5.4$

Solve using factoring by grouping: $12x^2 + 11x + 2 = 0$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example $2.5.5$: Solving a Higher Degree Polynomial Equation by Factoring

Solve the equation by factoring: $-3x^3 - 5x^2 - 2x = 0$.

Solution

This equation does not look like a quadratic, as the highest power is 3, not 2. Recall that the first thing we want to do when solving any equation is to factor out the GCF, if one exists. And it does here. We can factor out $-x$ from all of the terms and then proceed with grouping.

$$\begin{aligned} -3x^3 - 5x^2 - 2x &= 0 \\ -x(3x^2 + 5x + 2) &= 0 \\ -x(3x^2 + 3x + 2x + 2) &= 0 \quad \text{Use grouping on the expression in parentheses} \\ -x[3x(x+1) + 2(x+1)] &= 0 \\ -x(3x+2)(x+1) &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

Now, we use the zero-product property. Notice that we have three factors.

$$\begin{aligned} -x &= 0 \\ x &= 0 \\ 3x + 2 &= 0 \\ x &= -\frac{2}{3} \\ x + 1 &= 0 \\ x &= -1 \end{aligned}$$

The solutions are 0, $-\frac{2}{3}$, and -1.

Exercise 2.5.5

Solve by factoring: $x^3 + 11x^2 + 10x = 0$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Square Root Property

When there is no linear term in the equation, another method of solving a quadratic equation is by using the **square root property**, in which we isolate the x^2 term and take the square root of the number on the other side of the equals sign. Keep in mind that sometimes we may have to manipulate the equation to isolate the x^2 term so that the square root property can be used.

THE SQUARE ROOT PROPERTY

With the x^2 term isolated, the square root property states that:

$$\text{if } x^2 = k, \text{ then } x = \pm\sqrt{k}$$

where k is a nonzero real number.

Howto: Given a quadratic equation with an x^2 term but no x term, use the square root property to solve it

1. Isolate the x^2 term on one side of the equal sign.
2. Take the square root of both sides of the equation, putting a $\pm$ sign before the expression on the side opposite the squared term.
3. Simplify the numbers on the side with the $\pm$ sign.

Example 2.5.6: Solving a Simple Quadratic Equation Using the Square Root Property

Solve the quadratic using the square root property: $x^2 = 8$.

Solution

Take the square root of both sides, and then simplify the radical. Remember to use a $\pm$ sign before the radical symbol.

$$\begin{aligned} x^2 &= 8 \\ x &= \pm\sqrt{8} \\ &= \pm 2\sqrt{2} \end{aligned}$$

The solutions are $2\sqrt{2}, -2\sqrt{2}$

Example 2.5.7: Solving a Quadratic Equation Using the Square Root Property

Solve the quadratic equation: $4x^2 + 1 = 7$.

Solution

First, isolate the x^2 term. Then take the square root of both sides.

$$\begin{aligned} 4x^2 + 1 &= 7 \\ 4x^2 &= 6 \\ x^2 &= \frac{6}{4} \\ x &= \pm\frac{\sqrt{6}}{2} \end{aligned}$$

The solutions are $\frac{\sqrt{6}}{2}$, and $-\frac{\sqrt{6}}{2}$.

Exercise 2.5.6

Solve the quadratic equation using the square root property: $3(x-4)^2 = 15$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Completing the Square

Not all quadratic equations can be factored or can be solved in their original form using the square root property. In these cases, we may use a method for solving a **quadratic equation** known as **completing the square**. Using this method, we add or subtract terms to both sides of the equation until we have a perfect square trinomial on one side of the equal sign. We then apply the square root property. To complete the square, the leading coefficient, a, must equal 1. If it does not, then divide the entire equation by a. Then, we can use the following procedures to solve a quadratic equation by completing the square.

We will use the example $x^2 + 4x + 1 = 0$ to illustrate each step.

Given a quadratic equation that cannot be factored, and with $a = 1$, first add or subtract the constant term to the right sign of the equal sign.

$$x^2+4x+1=0$$
$$x^2+4x=-1 \quad \text{Multiply the b term by } \frac{1}{2} \text{ and square it.}$$
$$\frac{1}{2}(4)=2$$
$$2^2=4 \quad \text{Add } \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^2 \text{ to both sides of the equal sign and simplify the right side. We have}$$
$$x^2+4x+4=-1+4$$
$$x^2+4x+4=3 \quad \text{The left side of the equation can now be factored as a perfect square.}$$
$$(x+2)^2=3$$
$$\sqrt{(x+2)^2}=\pm\sqrt{3} \quad \text{Use the square root property and solve.}$$
$$\sqrt{(x+2)^2}=\pm\sqrt{3}$$
$$x+2=\pm\sqrt{3}$$
$$x=-2\pm\sqrt{3}$$

The solutions are $-2+\sqrt{3}$, and $-2-\sqrt{3}$.

Example 2.5.8: Solving a Quadratic by Completing the Square

Solve the quadratic equation by completing the square: $x^2-3x-5=0$.

Solution

First, move the constant term to the right side of the equal sign.

$$x^2-3x=5 \quad \text{Then, take } \frac{1}{2} \text{ of the b term and square it.}$$
$$\frac{1}{2}(-3)=-\frac{3}{2}$$
$$\left(-\frac{3}{2}\right)^2=\frac{9}{4}$$
$$x^2-3x+\left(-\frac{3}{2}\right)^2=5+\left(-\frac{3}{2}\right)^2 \quad \text{Add the result to both sides of the equal sign.}$$
$$x^2-3x+\frac{9}{4}=5+\frac{9}{4}$$

Factor the left side as a perfect square and simplify the right side.

$$\left(x-\frac{3}{2}\right)^2=\frac{29}{4}$$
$$(x-\frac{3}{2})=\pm\frac{\sqrt{29}}{2} \quad \text{Use the square root property and solve.}$$
$$x=\frac{3}{2}\pm\frac{\sqrt{29}}{2}$$

The solutions are $\frac{3}{2}+\frac{\sqrt{29}}{2}$, and $\frac{3}{2}-\frac{\sqrt{29}}{2}$

Exercise 2.5.7

Solve by completing the square: $x^2-6x=13$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Quadratic Formula

The fourth method of solving a **quadratic equation** is by using the **quadratic formula**, a formula that will solve all quadratic

equations. Although the quadratic formula works on any quadratic equation in standard form, it is easy to make errors in substituting the values into the formula. Pay close attention when substituting, and use parentheses when inserting a negative number.

We can derive the quadratic formula by **completing the square**. We will assume that the leading coefficient is positive; if it is negative, we can multiply the equation by -1 and obtain a positive a. Given $ax^2+bx+c=0, a\neq 0$, we will complete the square as follows:

First, move the constant term to the right side of the equal sign:

$$ax^2+bx=-c$$

As we want the leading coefficient to equal 1, divide through by a:

$$x^2+\frac{b}{a}x=-\frac{c}{a}$$

Then, find $\frac{1}{2}$ of the middle term, and add $(\frac{1}{2}\frac{b}{a})^2=\frac{b^2}{4a^2}$ to both sides of the equal sign:

$$x^2+\frac{b}{a}x+\frac{b^2}{4a^2}=\frac{b^2}{4a^2}-\frac{c}{a}$$

Next, write the left side as a perfect square. Find the common denominator of the right side and write it as a single fraction:

$$(x+\frac{b}{2a})^2=\frac{b^2-4ac}{4a^2}$$

Now, use the square root property, which gives

$$x+\frac{b}{2a}=\pm\sqrt{\frac{b^2-4ac}{4a^2}}$$

$$x+\frac{b}{2a}=\frac{\pm\sqrt{b^2-4ac}}{2a}$$

Finally, add $-\frac{b}{2a}$ to both sides of the equation and combine the terms on the right side. Thus,

$$x=\frac{-b\pm\sqrt{b^2-4ac}}{2a}$$

THE QUADRATIC FORMULA

Written in standard form, $ax^2+bx+c=0$, any quadratic equation can be solved using the **quadratic formula**:

$$x=\frac{-b\pm\sqrt{b^2-4ac}}{2a} \tag{2.5.3}$$

where a, b, and c are real numbers and $a\neq 0$.

How to

Given a quadratic equation, solve it using the quadratic formula

1. Make sure the equation is in standard form: $ax^2+bx+c=0$.
2. Make note of the values of the coefficients and constant term, a, b, and c.
3. Carefully substitute the values noted in step 2 into the equation. To avoid needless errors, use parentheses around each number input into the formula.

4. Calculate and solve.

Example 2.5.9: Solve the Quadratic Equation Using the Quadratic Formula

Solve the quadratic equation: $x^2 + 5x + 1 = 0$.

Solution

Identify the coefficients: $a = 1, b = 5, c = 1$. Then use the quadratic formula.

$$\begin{aligned} x &= \frac{-(5) \pm \sqrt{(5)^2 - 4(1)(1)}}{2(1)} \\ &= \frac{-5 \pm \sqrt{25 - 4}}{2} \\ &= \frac{-5 \pm \sqrt{21}}{2} \end{aligned}$$

Example 2.5.10: Solving a Quadratic Equation with the Quadratic Formula

Use the quadratic formula to solve $x^2 + x + 2 = 0$.

Solution

First, we identify the coefficients: $a = 1$,$b = 1$, and $c = 2$.

Substitute these values into the quadratic formula.

$$\begin{aligned} x &= \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a} \\ &= \frac{-(1) \pm \sqrt{(1)^2 - 4(1)(2)}}{2(1)} \\ &= \frac{-1 \pm \sqrt{1 - 8}}{2} \\ &= \frac{-1 \pm \sqrt{-7}}{2} \\ &= \frac{-1 \pm i\sqrt{7}}{2} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 2.5.8

Solve the quadratic equation using the quadratic formula: $9x^2 + 3x - 2 = 0$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

The Discriminant

The **quadratic formula** not only generates the solutions to a quadratic equation, it tells us about the nature of the solutions when we consider the **discriminant**, or the expression under the radical, $b^2 - 4ac$. The discriminant tells us whether the solutions are real numbers or complex numbers, and how many solutions of each type to expect. Table 2.5.1 relates the value of the discriminant to the solutions of a quadratic equation.

Table 2.5.1

Value of Discriminant	Results
$b^2-4ac=0$	One rational solution (double solution)
$b^2-4ac>0$, perfect square	Two rational solutions
$b^2-4ac>0$, not a perfect square	Two irrational solutions
$b^2-4ac<0$	Two complex solutions

THE DISCRIMINANT

For $ax^2+bx+c=0$, where a, b, and c are real numbers, the **discriminant** is the expression under the radical in the quadratic formula: b^2-4ac. It tells us whether the solutions are real numbers or complex numbers and how many solutions of each type to expect.

Example 2.5.11: Using the Discriminant to Find the Nature of the Solutions to a Quadratic Equation

Use the discriminant to find the nature of the solutions to the following quadratic equations:

a. $x^2+4x+4=0$
b. $8x^2+14x+3=0$
c. $3x^2-5x-2=0$
d. $3x^2-10x+15=0$

Solution

Calculate the discriminant b^2-4ac for each equation and state the expected type of solutions.

a.

$x^2+4x+4=0$

$b^2-4ac=(4)^2-4(1)(4)=0$ There will be one rational double solution.

b.

$8x^2+14x+3=0$

$b^2-4ac=(14)^2-4(8)(3)=100$ As 100 is a perfect square, there will be two rational solutions.

c.

$3x^2-5x-2=0$

$b^2-4ac=(-5)^2-4(3)(-2)=49$ As 49 is a perfect square, there will be two rational solutions.

d.

$3x^2-10x+15=0$

$b^2-4ac=(-10)^2-4(3)(15)=-80$ There will be two complex solutions.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with quadratic equations.

1. Solving Quadratic Equations by Factoring
2. The Zero-Product Property
3. Completing the Square
4. Quadratic Formula with Two Rational Solutions

Key Equations

quadratic formula	$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$

Key Concepts

- Many quadratic equations can be solved by factoring when the equation has a leading coefficient of 1 or if the equation is a difference of squares. The zero-factor property is then used to find solutions. See Example, Example, and Example.
- Many quadratic equations with a leading coefficient other than 1 can be solved by factoring using the grouping method. See Example and Example.
- Another method for solving quadratics is the square root property. The variable is squared. We isolate the squared term and take the square root of both sides of the equation. The solution will yield a positive and negative solution. See Example and Example.
- Completing the square is a method of solving quadratic equations when the equation cannot be factored. See Example.
- A highly dependable method for solving quadratic equations is the quadratic formula, based on the coefficients and the constant term in the equation. See Example.
- The discriminant is used to indicate the nature of the roots that the quadratic equation will yield: real or complex, rational or irrational, and how many of each. See Example.

Answers

Exercise $2.5.1$

$(x-6)(x+1)=0, x=6, x=-1$

Exercise $2.5.2$

$(x-7)(x+3)=0, x=7, x=-3$

Exercise $2.5.3$

$(x+5)(x-5)=0, x=-5, x=5$

Exercise $2.5.4$

$(3x+2)(4x+1)=0, x=-\frac{2}{3}, x=-\frac{1}{4}$

Exercise $2.5.5$

$x=0, x=-10, x=-1$

Exercise $2.5.6$

$x=4\pm\sqrt{5}$

Exercise $2.5.7$

$x=3\pm\sqrt{22}$

Exercise $2.5.8$

$x=-\frac{2}{3}, x=\frac{1}{3}$

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2.6: Other Types of Equations

Learning Objectives

- Solve radical equations.
- Solve rational equations.

Solving Other Types of Equations

We have solved linear equations, rational equations, and quadratic equations using several methods. However, there are many other types of equations, and we will investigate a few more types in this section. We will look at radical equations, rational equations and absolute value equations. Solving any equation, however, employs the same basic algebraic rules. We will learn some new techniques as they apply to certain equations, but the algebra never changes.

Solving Radical Equations

Radical equations are equations that contain variables in the **radicand** (the expression under a radical symbol), such as

$$\sqrt{3x+18}=x$$

$$\sqrt{x+3}=x-3$$

$$\sqrt{x+5}-\sqrt{x-3}=2$$

Radical equations may have one or more radical terms, and are solved by eliminating each radical, one at a time. We have to be careful when solving radical equations, as it is not unusual to find **extraneous solutions**, roots that are not, in fact, solutions to the equation. These solutions are not due to a mistake in the solving method, but result from the process of raising both sides of an equation to a power. However, checking each answer in the original equation will confirm the true solutions.

Definition: Radical Equation

An equation containing variable terms in the radicand is called a **radical equation.**

How to: Given a radical equation, solve it

1. Isolate the radical expression on one side of the equal sign. Put all remaining terms on the other side.
2. If the radical is a square root, then square both sides of the equation. If it is a cube root, then raise both sides of the equation to the third power. In other words, for an nth root radical, raise both sides to the nth power. Doing so eliminates the radical symbol.
3. Solve the remaining equation.
4. If a radical term still remains, repeat steps 1–2.
5. Confirm solutions by substituting them into the original equation.

Example 2.6.6: Solving an Equation with One Radical

Solve $\sqrt{15-2x}=x$.

Solution

The radical is already isolated on the left side of the equal side, so proceed to square both sides.

$$\begin{aligned}\sqrt{15-2x} &= x\\ \left(\sqrt{15-2x}\right)^2 &= (x)^2\\ 15-2x &= x^2\end{aligned}$$

We see that the remaining equation is a quadratic. Set it equal to zero and solve.

$$\begin{aligned}0 &= x^2+2x-15\\ 0 &= (x+5)(x-3)\\ x &= -5\\ x &= 3\end{aligned}$$

The proposed solutions are -5 and 3. Let us check each solution back in the original equation. First, check $x=-5$.

$$\begin{aligned}\sqrt{15-2x} &= x\\ \sqrt{15-2(-5)} &= -5\\ \sqrt{25} &= -5\\ 5 &\neq -5\end{aligned}$$

This is an extraneous solution. While no mistake was made solving the equation, we found a solution that does not satisfy the original equation.

Check $x=3$.

$$\begin{aligned}\sqrt{15-2x} &= x\\ \sqrt{15-2(3)} &= 3\\ \sqrt{9} &= 3\\ 3 &= 3\end{aligned}$$

The solution is 3.

Exercise 2.6.5

Solve the radical equation: $\sqrt{x+3}=3x-1$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.6.7: Solving a Radical Equation Containing Two Radicals

Solve $\sqrt{2x+3}+\sqrt{x-2}=4$

Solution

As this equation contains two radicals, we isolate one radical, eliminate it, and then isolate the second radical.

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

$$\begin{aligned}\sqrt{2x+3} &= 4-\sqrt{x-2} && \text{Subtract } \sqrt{x-2} \text{ from both sides}\\ \left(\sqrt{2x+3}\right)^2 &= \left(4-\sqrt{x-2}\right)^2 && \text{Square both sides}\end{aligned}$$

Use the perfect square formula to expand the right side: $(a-b)^2=a^2-2ab+b^2$.

$$\begin{aligned} 2x+3 &= (4)^2 - 2(4)\sqrt{x-2} + (\sqrt{x-2})^2 \\ 2x+3 &= 16 - 8\sqrt{x-2} + (x-2) \\ 2x+3 &= 14 + x - 8\sqrt{x-2} \quad \text{Combine like terms} \\ x-11 &= -8\sqrt{x-2} \quad \text{Isolate the second radical} \\ (x-11)^2 &= (-8\sqrt{x-2})^2 \quad \text{Square both sides} \\ x^2 - 22x + 121 &= 64(x-2) \end{aligned}$$

Now that both radicals have been eliminated, set the quadratic equal to zero and solve.

$$\begin{aligned} x^2 - 22x + 121 &= 64x - 128 \\ x^2 - 86x + 249 &= 0 \\ (x-3)(x-83) &= 0 \\ x &= 3 \\ x &= 83 \end{aligned}$$

The proposed solutions are 3 and 83. Check each solution in the original equation.

$$\begin{aligned} \sqrt{2x+3} + \sqrt{x-2} &= 4 \\ \sqrt{2x+3} &= 4 - \sqrt{x-2} \\ \sqrt{2(3)+3} &= 4 - \sqrt{(3)-2} \\ \sqrt{9} &= 4 - \sqrt{1} \\ 3 &= 3 \end{aligned}$$

One solution is 3.

Check $x = 83$.

$$\begin{aligned} \sqrt{2x+3} + \sqrt{x-2} &= 4 \\ \sqrt{2x+3} &= 4 - \sqrt{x-2} \\ \sqrt{2(83)+3} &= 4 - \sqrt{(83)-2} \\ \sqrt{169} &= 4 - \sqrt{81} \\ 13 &\neq -5 \end{aligned}$$

The only solution is 3. We see that $x = 83$ is an extraneous solution.

Exercise 2.6.6

Solve the equation with two radicals: $\sqrt{3x+7} + \sqrt{x+2} = 1$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Solving a Rational Equation

Definition: Rational Equation

A *rational equation* contains at least one rational expression where the variable appears in at least one of the denominators.

In this section, we look at rational equations that, after some manipulation, result in a linear equation. If an equation contains at least one rational expression, it is a considered a **rational equation**. Recall that a **rational number** is the ratio of two numbers, such as $\frac{2}{3}$ or $\frac{7}{2}$. A rational expression is the ratio, or quotient, of two polynomials. Here are three examples.

$$\frac{x+1}{x^2-4}$$

$$\frac{1}{x-3}$$

or

$$\frac{4}{x^2+x-2}$$

Rational equations have a variable in the denominator in at least one of the terms. Our goal is to perform algebraic operations so that the variables appear in the numerator. In fact, we will eliminate all denominators by multiplying both sides of the equation by the **least common denominator** (LCD). Finding the LCD is identifying an expression that contains the highest power of all of the factors in all of the denominators. We do this because when the equation is multiplied by the LCD, the common factors in the LCD and in each denominator will equal one and will cancel out.

Example 2.6.3: Solving a Rational Equation

Solve the rational equation:

$$\frac{7}{2x}-\frac{5}{3x}=\frac{22}{3}$$

Solution

We have three denominators; $2x$,$3x$, and 3. The LCD must contain $2x$,$3x$, and 3. An LCD of $6x$ contains all three denominators. In other words, each denominator can be divided evenly into the LCD. Next, multiply both sides of the equation by the LCD $6x$.

$$\begin{aligned}
(6x)\left[\frac{7}{2x}-\frac{5}{3x}\right] &= \left[\frac{22}{3}\right](6x) \\
(6x)\left(\frac{7}{2x}\right)-(6x)\left(\frac{5}{3x}\right) &= \left(\frac{22}{3}\right)(6x) \qquad \text{Use the distributive property. Cancel out the common factors} \\
3(7)-2(5) &= 22(2x) \qquad \text{Multiply remaining factors by each numerator.} \\
21-10 &= 44x \\
11 &= 44x \\
\frac{11}{44} &= x \\
\frac{1}{4} &= x
\end{aligned}$$

A common mistake made when solving rational equations involves finding the LCD when one of the denominators is a binomial—two terms added or subtracted—such as $(x+1)$. Always consider a binomial as an individual factor—the terms cannot be separated. For example, suppose a problem has three terms and the denominators are x, $x-1$, and $3x-3$. First, factor all denominators. We then have x, $(x-1)$, and $3(x-1)$ as the denominators. (Note the parentheses placed around the second denominator.) Only the last two denominators have a common factor of $(x-1)$. The x in the first denominator is separate from the x in the $(x-1)$ denominators. An effective way to remember this is to write factored and binomial denominators in parentheses, and consider each parentheses as a separate unit or a separate factor. The LCD in this instance is found by multiplying together the x, one factor of $(x-1)$, and the 3. Thus, the LCD is the following:

$$x(x-1)3=3x(x-1)$$

So, both sides of the equation would be multiplied by $3x(x-1)$. Leave the LCD in factored form, as this makes it easier to see how each denominator in the problem cancels out.

Another example is a problem with two denominators, such as x and x^2+2x. Once the second denominator is factored as $x^2+2x=x(x+2)$, there is a common factor of x in both denominators and the LCD is $x(x+2)$.

Sometimes we have a rational equation in the form of a proportion; that is, when one fraction equals another fraction and there

are no other terms in the equation.

$$\frac{a}{b} = \frac{c}{d} \tag{2.6.1}$$

We can use another method of solving the equation without finding the LCD: cross-multiplication. We multiply terms by crossing over the equal sign.

$$\text{If } \frac{a}{b} = \frac{c}{d}, \text{ then } \frac{a}{b} \times \frac{c}{d}.$$

Multiply a(d) and b(c), which results in $ad = bc$.

Any value that makes a denominator in the original expression equal to zero must be excluded from the possible solutions. This value is called an **exclusion.**

How to: Given a rational equation, solve it.

1. Factor all denominators in the equation.
2. Find and exclude values that set each denominator equal to zero.
3. Find the LCD.
4. Multiply the whole equation by the LCD. If the LCD is correct, there will be no denominators left.
5. Solve the remaining equation.
6. Make sure to plug in all possible solutions back into the original equation to avoid producing zero in a denominator

Example 2.6.4: Solving a Rational Equation without Factoring

Solve the following rational equation:

$$\frac{2}{x} - \frac{3}{2} = \frac{7}{2x}$$

Solution

We have three denominators: x, 2, and $2x$. No factoring is required. The product of the first two denominators is equal to the third denominator, so, the LCD is $2x$. Only one value is excluded from a solution set, 0. Next, multiply the whole equation (both sides of the equal sign) by $2x$.

$$\begin{aligned} 2x\left[\frac{2}{x} - \frac{3}{2}\right] &= \left[\frac{7}{2x}\right](2x) \\ 2x\left(\frac{2}{x}\right) - 2x\left(\frac{3}{2}\right) &= \left(\frac{7}{2x}\right)(2x) \qquad \text{Distribute } 2x \\ 2(2) - 3x &= 7 \qquad \text{Denominators cancel out.} \\ 4 - 3x &= 7 \\ -3x &= 3 \\ x &= -1 \text{ or } \{-1\} \end{aligned}$$

The proposed solution is -1, which is not an excluded value, so the solution set contains one number, $x = -1$, or $\{-1\}$ written in set notation.

Exercise 2.6.4

Solve the rational equation:

$$\frac{2}{3x} = \frac{1}{4} - \frac{1}{6x}$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.6.5: Solving a Rational Equation by Factoring the Denominator

Solve the following rational equation:

$$\frac{1}{x} = \frac{1}{10} - \frac{3}{4x}$$

Solution

First find the common denominator. The three denominators in factored form are $x, 10 = 2 \cdot 5$, and $4x = 2 \cdot 2 \cdot x$. The smallest expression that is divisible by each one of the denominators is $20x$. Only $x = 0$ is an excluded value. Multiply the whole equation by $20x$.

$$\begin{aligned} 20x\left(\frac{1}{x}\right) &= \left(\frac{1}{10} - \frac{3}{4x}\right)20x \\ 20 &= 2x - 15 \\ 35 &= 2x \\ \frac{35}{2} &= x \end{aligned}$$

The solution is $\frac{35}{2}$.

Exercise 2.6.5

Solve the rational equation:

$$-\frac{5}{2x} + \frac{3}{4x} = -\frac{7}{4}$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.6.6: Solving Rational Equations with a Binomial in the Denominator

Solve the following rational equations and state the excluded values:

a. $\frac{3}{x-6} = \frac{5}{x}$

b. $\frac{x}{x-3} = \frac{5}{x-3} - \frac{1}{2}$

c. $\frac{x}{x-2} = \frac{5}{x-2} - \frac{1}{2}$

Solution

a.

The denominators x and $x - 6$ have nothing in common. Therefore, the LCD is the product $x(x - 6)$. However, for this problem, we can cross-multiply.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{3}{x-6} &= \frac{5}{x} \\ 3x &= 5(x-6) \qquad \text{Distribute.} \\ 3x &= 5x - 30 \\ -2x &= -30 \\ x &= 15 \end{aligned}$$

The solution is 15. The excluded values are 6 and 0.

b.

The LCD is $2(x-3)$. Multiply both sides of the equation by $2(x-3)$.

$$\begin{aligned} 2(x-3)\left[\frac{x}{x-3}\right] &= \left[\frac{5}{x-3}-\frac{1}{2}\right]2(x-3) \\ \frac{2(x-3)x}{x-3} &= \frac{2(x-3)5}{x-3}-\frac{2(x-3)}{2} \\ 2x &= 10-(x-3) \\ 2x &= 13-x \\ 3x &= 13 \\ x &= \frac{13}{3} \end{aligned}$$

The solution is $\frac{13}{3}$. The excluded value is 3.

c.

The least common denominator is $2(x-2)$. Multiply both sides of the equation by $x(x-2)$.

$$\begin{aligned} 2(x-2)\left[\frac{x}{x-2}\right] &= \left[\frac{5}{x-2}-\frac{1}{2}\right]2(x-2) \\ 2x &= 10-(x-2) \\ 2x &= 12-x \\ 3x &= 12 \\ x &= 4 \end{aligned}$$

The solution is 4. The excluded value is 2.

Exercise 2.6.6

Solve $\frac{-3}{2x+1}=\frac{4}{3x+1}$. State the excluded values.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.6.7: Solving a Rational Equation with Factored Denominators and Stating Excluded Values

Solve the rational equation after factoring the denominators: $\frac{2}{x+1}-\frac{1}{x-1}=\frac{2x}{x^2-1}$. State the excluded values.

Solution

We must factor the denominator x^2-1. We recognize this as the difference of squares, and factor it as $(x-1)(x+1)$. Thus, the LCD that contains each denominator is $(x-1)(x+1)$. Multiply the whole equation by the LCD, cancel out the denominators, and solve the remaining equation.

$$\begin{aligned} (x+1)(x-1)\left[\frac{2}{x+1}-\frac{1}{x-1}\right] &= \left[\frac{2x}{x^2-1}\right](x+1)(x-1) \\ 2(x-1)-(x+1) &= 2x \\ 2x-2-x-1 &= 2x \text{ Distribute the negative sign} \\ -3-x &= 0 \\ x &= -3 \end{aligned}$$

The solution is -3. The excluded values are 1 and -1.

Exercise 2.6.7

Solve the rational equation:

$$\frac{2}{x-2}+\frac{1}{x+1}=\frac{1}{x^2-x-2}$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Solving Rational Equations Resulting in a Quadratic

Earlier, we solved rational equations. Sometimes, solving a rational equation results in a quadratic. When this happens, we continue the solution by simplifying the quadratic equation by one of the methods we have seen. It may turn out that there is no solution.

Example 2.6.11: Solving a Rational Equation Leading to a Quadratic

Solve the following rational equation: $\frac{-4x}{x-1}+\frac{4}{x+1}=\frac{-8}{x^2-1}$

Solution

We want all denominators in factored form to find the LCD. Two of the denominators cannot be factored further. However, $x^2-1=(x+1)(x-1)$. Then, the LCD is $(x+1)(x-1)$. Next, we multiply the whole equation by the LCD.

$$\begin{aligned}(x+1)(x-1)\left(\frac{-4x}{x-1}+\frac{4}{x+1}\right)&=\left(\frac{-8}{x^2-1}\right)(x+1)(x-1)\\ -4x(x+1)+4(x-1)&=-8\\ -4x^2-4x+4x-4&=-8\\ -4x^2+4&=0\\ -4(x^2-1)&=0\\ -4(x+1)(x-1)&=0\\ x&=-1\\ x&=1\end{aligned}$$

In this case, either solution produces a zero in the denominator in the original equation. Thus, there is no solution.

Exercise 2.6.10

Solve $\frac{3x+2}{x-2}+\frac{1}{x}=\frac{-2}{x^2-2x}$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Concepts

Answer available at the end of this section.

- Rational exponents can be rewritten several ways depending on what is most convenient for the problem. To solve, both sides of the equation are raised to a power that will render the exponent on the variable equal to 1. See Example, Example, and Example.
- Factoring extends to higher-order polynomials when it involves factoring out the GCF or factoring by grouping. See Example and Example.

- We can solve radical equations by isolating the radical and raising both sides of the equation to a power that matches the index. See Example and Example.
- To solve absolute value equations, we need to write two equations, one for the positive value and one for the negative value. See Example.
- Equations in quadratic form are easy to spot, as the exponent on the first term is double the exponent on the second term and the third term is a constant. We may also see a binomial in place of the single variable. We use substitution to solve. See Example and Example.
- Solving a rational equation may also lead to a quadratic equation or an equation in quadratic form. See Example.

Answers

Exercise $2.6.5$

$x = 1$, extraneous solution $x = -\frac{2}{9}$

Exercise $2.6.6$

$x = -2$, extraneous solution $x = -1$

Exercise $2.6.4$

$x = \frac{10}{3}$

Exercise $2.6.5$

$x = 1$

Exercise $2.6.6$

$x = -\frac{7}{17}$. Excluded values are $x = -12$ and $x = -13$.

Exercise $2.6.7$

$x = \frac{1}{3}$

Exercise $2.6.10$

$x = -1, x = 0$ is not a solution.

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2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities

Learning Objectives

- Use interval notation.
- Use properties of inequalities.
- Solve inequalities in one variable algebraically.
- Solve absolute value equations and inequalities.

Using Interval Notation

Indicating the solution to an inequality such as $x \geq 4$ can be achieved in several ways.

- We can use a number line as shown in Figure $2.7.1$. The blue ray begins at $x = 4$ and, as indicated by the arrowhead, continues to infinity, which illustrates that the solution set includes all real numbers greater than or equal to 4.



Figure $2.7.1$

- We can use **set-builder notation**: $\{x|x \geq 4\}$, which translates to "all real numbers x such that x is greater than or equal to 4." Notice that braces are used to indicate a set and the vertical line that appears after the first x variable is to be read "such that".
- The third method is **interval notation**, in which solution sets are indicated with parentheses or brackets. The solutions to $x \geq 4$ are represented as $[4, \infty)$. This is perhaps the most useful method, as it applies to concepts studied later in this course and to other higher-level math courses.

The main concept to remember is that parentheses represent solutions greater than or less than the number, and brackets represent solutions that are greater than or equal to or less than or equal to the number. Use parentheses to represent infinity or negative infinity, since positive and negative infinity are not numbers in the usual sense of the word and, therefore, cannot be "equaled." A few examples of an interval, or a set of numbers in which a solution falls, are $[-2, 6)$, or all numbers between -2 and 6, including -2, but not including 6; $(-1, 0)$, all real numbers between, but not including -1 and 0; and $(-\infty, 1]$, all real numbers less than or equal to 1. Table $2.7.1$ outlines the possibilities.

Table $2.7.1$

Set Description	Set-Builder Notation	Interval Notation
All real numbers between a and b, but not including a or b	\(\{x|a	(a, b)
All real numbers greater than a, but not including a	$\{x\|x > a\}$	(a, ∞)
All real numbers less than b, but not including b	\(\{x|x	$(-\infty, b)$
All real numbers greater than a, including a	$\{x\|x \geq a\}$	$[a, \infty)$
All real numbers less than b, including b	$\{x\|x \leq b\}$	$(-\infty, b]$
All real numbers between a and b, including a	\(\{x|a≤x	$[a, b)$
All real numbers between a and b, including b	\(\{x|a	$(a, b]$
All real numbers between a and b, including a and b	$\{x\|a \leq x \leq b\}$	$[a, b]$
All real numbers less than a or greater than b	\(\{x|xb\}\)	$(-\infty, a) \cup (b, \infty)$
All real numbers	$\{x\|x\ is\ all\ real\ numbers\}$	$(-\infty, \infty)$

Example 2.7.1: Using Interval Notation to Express All Real Numbers Greater Than or Equal to a

Use interval notation to indicate all real numbers greater than or equal to -2.

Solution

Use a bracket on the left of -2 and parentheses after infinity: $[-2, \infty)$. The bracket indicates that -2 is included in the set with all real numbers greater than -2 to infinity.

Try It! 2.7.1

Use interval notation to indicate all real numbers between and including -3 and 5.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.7.2: Using Interval Notation to Express All Real Numbers Less Than or Equal to a or Greater Than or Equal to b

Write the interval expressing all real numbers less than or equal to -1 or greater than or equal to 1.

Solution

We have to write two intervals for this example. The first interval must indicate all real numbers less than or equal to 1. So, this interval begins at $-\infty$ and ends at -1, which is written as $(-\infty, -1]$.

The second interval must show all real numbers greater than or equal to 1, which is written as $[1, \infty)$. However, we want to combine these two sets. We accomplish this by inserting the union symbol, $\cup$, between the two intervals.

$$(-\infty, -1] \cup [1, \infty)$$

Try It! 2.7.2

Express all real numbers less than -2 or greater than or equal to 3 in interval notation.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Properties of Inequalities

When we work with inequalities, we can usually treat them similarly to but not exactly as we treat equalities. We can use the **addition property** and the **multiplication property** to help us solve them. The one exception is when we multiply or divide by a negative number; doing so reverses the inequality symbol.

PROPERTIES OF INEQUALITIES

Addition Property

- If \(a

Multiplication Property

- If \(a0\), then \(ac

- If \(abc\).

These properties also apply to $a \leq b$, $a > b$, and $a \geq b$.

Example 2.7.3: Demonstrating the Addition Property

Illustrate the addition property for inequalities by solving each of the following. Give the solution sets using interval notation.

a. $x - 15 < 4$
b. $6 \geq x - 1$
c. $x + 9 \geq 7$

Solution

The addition property for inequalities states that if an inequality exists, adding or subtracting the same number on both sides does not change the inequality.

a.

$$\begin{aligned} x - 15 &< 4 \\ x - 15 + 15 &< 4 + 15 \\ x &< 19 \end{aligned}$$

We read this as "x is less than 19."

$$(-\infty, 19) \tag{2.7.1}$$

b.

$$\begin{aligned} 6 &\geq x - 1 \\ 6 + 1 &\geq x - 1 + 1 \\ 7 &\geq x \end{aligned}$$

Note: because the variable is on the right hand side of the inequality. We read this as "x is less than or equal to 7."

$$(-\infty, 7] \tag{2.7.2}$$

c.

$$\begin{aligned} x + 9 &\geq 7 \\ x + 9 - 9 &\geq 7 - 9 \\ x &\geq -2 \end{aligned}$$

We read this as "x is greater than or equal to -2."

$$[-2, \infty) \tag{2.7.3}$$

Try It! 2.7.3

Solve $3x - 2 < 1$ and give the solution in set-builder notation.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.7.4: Demonstrating the Multiplication Property

Illustrate the multiplication property for inequalities by solving each of the following. GIve the solutions sing interval notation.

a. $3x < 6$
b. $-2x - 1 \geq 5$
c. $5 - x < 10$

Solution

a.

$$\begin{aligned} 3x &< 6 \\ \frac{1}{3}(3x) &< (6)\frac{1}{3} \\ x &< 2 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{write the result using interval notation} \quad (-\infty, 2) \tag{2.7.4}$$

b.

$$\begin{aligned} -2x - 1 &\geq 5 \\ -2x &\geq 6 \\ \left(-\frac{1}{2}\right)(-2) &\geq (6)\left(-\frac{1}{2}\right) \qquad \text{Multiply by } \left(-\frac{1}{2}\right) \\ x &\leq -3 \qquad\qquad\quad \text{Reverse the inequality.} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{write the result using interval notation} \quad (-\infty, -3] \tag{2.7.5}$$

c.

$$\begin{aligned} 5 - x &< 10 \\ -x &< 5 \\ (-1)(-x) &< (5)(-1) \qquad \text{Multiply by } -1 \\ x &> -5 \qquad\quad \text{Reverse the inequality.} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{write the result using interval notation} \quad (-5, \infty) \tag{2.7.6}$$

Try It! 2.7.4

Solve $4x + 7 \geq 2x - 3$ and give the solution set as an interval.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Solving Inequalities in One Variable Algebraically

As the examples have shown, we can perform the same operations on both sides of an inequality, just as we do with equations; we combine like terms and perform operations. To solve, we isolate the variable.

Example 2.7.5: Solving an Inequality Algebraically

Solve the inequality: $13 - 7x \geq 10x - 4$ and state the solution set using interval notation, then read the result.

Solution

Solving this inequality is similar to solving an equation up until the last step.

$$\begin{aligned} 13 - 7x &\geq 10x - 4 \\ 13 - 17x &\geq -4 \qquad \text{Move variable terms to one side of the inequality} \\ -17x &\geq -17 \qquad \text{Isolate the variable term} \\ x &\leq 1 \qquad \text{Dividing both sides by -17 reverses the inequality.} \end{aligned}$$

The solution set is given by the interval $(-\infty, 1]$, we read this as *"all real numbers less than or equal to* 1".

Try It! 2.7.5

Solve the inequality and express the result using interval notation: $-x + 4 < \frac{1}{2}x + 1$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.7.6: Solving an Inequality with Fractions

Solve the following inequality and give the solution set in interval notation: $-\frac{3}{4}x \geq -\frac{5}{8} + \frac{2}{3}x$.

Solution

We begin solving in the same way we do when solving an equation.

$$-\frac{3}{4}x \geq -\frac{5}{8} + \frac{2}{3}x$$

$$-\frac{3}{4}x - \frac{2}{3}x \geq -\frac{5}{8} \qquad \text{Put variable terms on one side.}$$

$$-\frac{9}{12}x - \frac{8}{12}x \geq -\frac{5}{8} \qquad \text{Write fractions with common denominator.}$$

$$-\frac{17}{12}x \geq -\frac{5}{8}$$

$$x \leq -\frac{5}{8}\left(-\frac{12}{17}\right) \qquad \text{Multiplying by a negative number reverses the inequality.}$$

$$x \leq \frac{15}{34}$$

The solution set is the interval $\left(-\infty, \frac{15}{34}\right]$.

Try It! 2.7.6

Solve the inequality and give the solution as an interval: $-\frac{5}{6}x \leq \frac{3}{4} + \frac{8}{3}x$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Understanding Compound Inequalities

A **compound inequality** is a statement of two or more* inequalities joined together by the compounding words "AND" or "OR". A statement such as \(45.\).

**While it is possible to have statements involving more than two inequalities, such as* $x > -1$ *and* $x \geq 2$ *or* $x < 5$*. The resulting solution sets of these types of propositions would depend upon the interpretation of the implied parenthesis that may not appear. For example, we could read this as "*$x > -1$ *and* $x \geq 2$" *or "*$x < 5$*", on the other hand we could read it as "*$x > -1$*" and "*$x \geq 2$ *or* $x < 5$*". For this reason we shall save this deeper discussion for a course in formal logic and thus restrict our study of compound inequalities to exactly TWO inequalities joined together by one compound word at a time.*

Example 2.7.7: Solving a compound inequality AND

Solve the compound inequality and give the solution using interval notation: $5x-1>-7$ and $2x\leq 6$

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} 5x-1>-7 \quad &\text{and} 2x\leq 6 \\ 5x>-7+1 \quad &\text{and} \tfrac{1}{2}x\leq \tfrac{6}{2} \\ 5x>-6 \qquad &\text{and} \qquad x\leq 3 \\ x>\tfrac{-6}{5} \qquad &\text{and} \qquad x\leq 3 \end{aligned}$$

We read this as " all real numbers greater than $-\frac{6}{5}$ AND less than or equal to 3.

Hence, the solution set is the interval $(-\frac{6}{5},3]$

Example 2.7.1: Solving a compound inequality OR

Solve the compound inequality and give the solution using interval notation: $-6x>8$ or $x+5>9$

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} -6x>8 \qquad &\text{or} x+5>9 \\ \tfrac{-6x}{-6}>\tfrac{8}{-6} \quad &\text{or} x+5-5>9-5 \\ x<\tfrac{8}{-6} \qquad &\text{or} \qquad x>4 \\ x<-\tfrac{4}{3} \qquad &\text{or} \qquad x>4 \end{aligned}$$

We read this as " all real numbers less than $-\frac{4}{3}$ OR greater than 4.

Hence, the solution set is the interval $(-\infty,-\frac{4}{3})U(4,\infty)$

Continued Inequalities

A **continued inequality** is a statement in which the implied compound is the word "AND". These inequalities are written as one statement such as $-1\leq x<2$. We sometimes refer to these as "sandwich" inequalities because in their simplest form, the variable is sandwiched between two real numbers. There are two common methods used to solve continued inequalities:

1. Separating them into two separate inequalities joined by the word "AND"

2. Leaving the compound inequality intact and performing operations on all three parts at the same time.

We will illustrate both methods.

Example 2.7.7: Solving a Continued Inequality

Solve the continued inequality: $3\leq 2x+2<6$

Solution

The first method is to write two separate inequalities: $3 \leq 2x + 2$ and $2x + 2 < 6$. We solve them independently.

$$\begin{aligned} 3 &\leq 2x + 2 \quad \text{and} \quad 2x + 2 < 6 \\ 1 &\leq 2x \qquad\qquad\quad 2x < 4 \\ \tfrac{1}{2} &\leq x \qquad\qquad\quad x < 2 \end{aligned}$$

Then, we can rewrite the solution as a compound inequality, the same way the problem began.

$$\frac{1}{2} \leq x < 2$$

In interval notation, the solution is written as $[\frac{1}{2},\ 2)$.

The second method is to leave the compound inequality intact, and perform solving procedures on the three parts at the same time.

$$\begin{aligned} &3 \leq 2x + 2 < 6 \\ &1 \leq 2x < 4 && \text{Isolate the variable term, and subtract 2 from all three parts.} \\ &\tfrac{1}{2} \leq x < 2 && \text{Divide through all three parts by 2.} \end{aligned}$$

We get the same solution: $[\frac{1}{2},\ 2)$.

Try It! 2.7.7

Solve the continued inequality: $4 < 2x - 8 \leq 10$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.7.8: Solving a Continued Inequality with the Variable in All Three Parts

Solve the continued inequality with variables in all three parts: $5x - 10 < 7x - 2 < 3 + x$.

Solution

Let's try the first method. Write two inequalities:

$$\begin{aligned} 5x - 10 &< 7x - 2 \quad \text{and} \quad 7x - 2 < 3 + x \\ -2x - 10 &< -2 \qquad\qquad 6x - 2 < 3 \\ -2x &< 8 \qquad\qquad\quad 6x < 5 \\ x &> -4 \qquad\qquad\quad x < \tfrac{5}{6} \end{aligned}$$

The solution set is $-4 < x < \frac{5}{6}$ or in interval notation $\left(-4, \frac{5}{6}\right)$. Notice that when we write the solution in interval notation, the smaller number comes first. We read intervals from left to right, as they appear on a number line. See Figure 2.7.2.

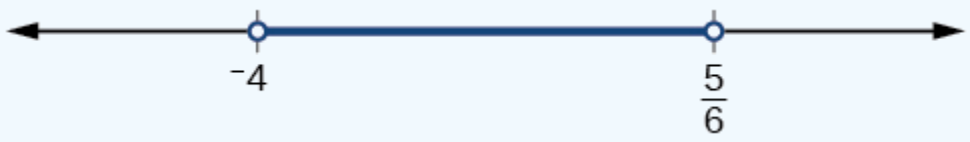


Figure 2.7.2

Try It! 2.7.8

Solve the continued inequality: $3y < 4 - 5y < 5 + 3y$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Summary of Compound Inequalities using AND the Solution Sets as Intervals

Let **a, b** be real numbers such that **a.**

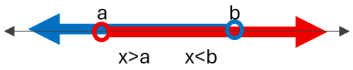
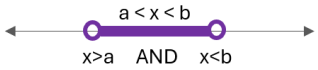
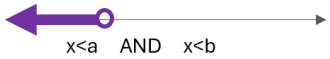
Inequalities on a number line	Compound Inequality on a number line	Interval Solution
		DNE
		(a, b)
		(-∞, a)
		(b, ∞)

Figure 2.7.3

Summary of Compound Inequalities using OR the Solution Sets as Intervals

Let a, b be real numbers such that a.

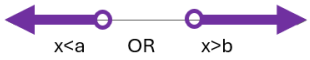
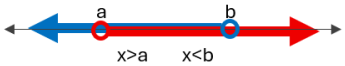
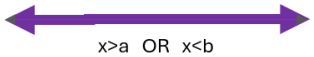
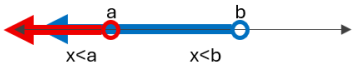
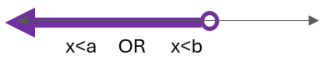
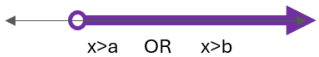
Inequalities on a number line	Compound Inequality on a number line	Compound Interval
		(-∞, a) U (b, ∞)
		(-∞, ∞)
		(-∞, b)
		(a, ∞)

Figure 2.7.4

Note: The above compound inequality summaries can be extended to $\leq$ and $\geq$ by adjusting the interval notation symbols on the endpoints accordingly.

Understanding Absolute Value

In its basic form $|x|$, the absolute value, is one of our fundamental algebraic operations. The absolute value is commonly thought of as providing the distance that a specified number is from zero on a number line. Intuitively, for whatever the inside value is, the result is the value without regard to sign.

Definition: Absolute Value

The absolute value can be defined as a piecewise equation

$$|x| = \begin{cases} x & \text{if } x \geq 0 \\ -x & \text{if } x < 0 \end{cases} \tag{2.7.7}$$

Example 2.7.9: Determine a Number within a Prescribed Distance

Describe all values of x with a distance of 6 from 0.

Solution

We want the distance between x and 0 to be equal to 6. We can draw a number line, such as the one in Figure 2.7.5 , to represent the condition to be satisfied.

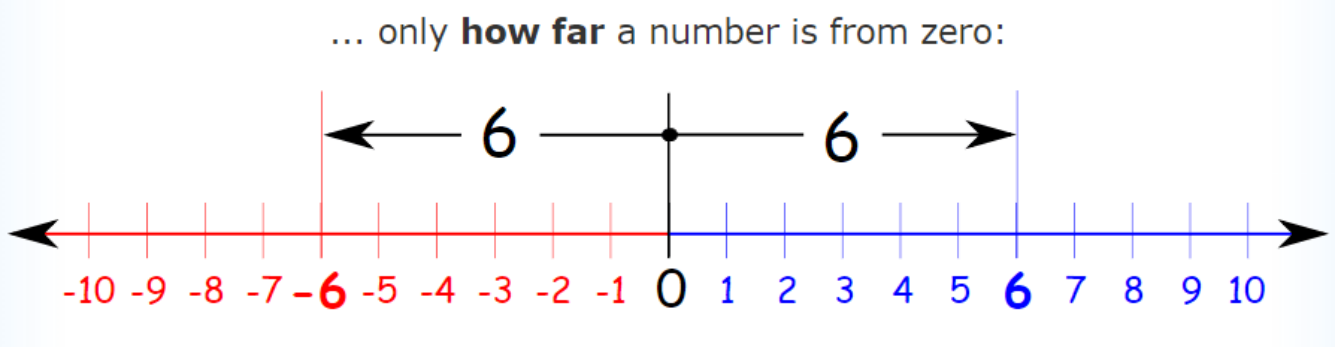


Figure 2.7.5: Number line describing the distance of 6 away from 0.

The distance from 6 to 0 can be represented using the absolute value as $|x| = 6$.

$$|x| = 6$$
$$x = -6 \qquad x = 6$$

Exercise 2.7.9

Describe all values of x for which the distance from 0 is 3.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Solving an Absolute Value Equation

Next, we will learn how to solve an absolute value equation. To solve an equation such as $|2x - 6| = 8$, we notice that the absolute value will be equal to 8 if the quantity inside the absolute value bars is 8 or -8. This leads to two different equations we can solve independently.

$$2x - 6 = 8$$
$$2x = 14$$
$$x = 7$$

OR

$$2x - 6 = -8$$
$$2x = -2$$
$$x = -1$$

Knowing how to solve problems involving absolute value functions is useful. For example, we may need to identify numbers or points on a line that are at a specified distance from a given reference point.

ABSOLUTE VALUE EQUATIONS

For real number expressions A and B, an equation of the form $|A| = B$, with $B > 0$, will have TWO solutions when $A = B$ or $A = -B$.

If $B = 0$, the equation $|A| = B$ has ONE solution, $A = 0$.

If $B < 0$, the equation $|A| = B$ has no solution.

An absolute value equation in the form $|ax+b|=c$ has the following properties:

- **If $c<0$, $|ax+b|=c$ has no solution.**
- **If $c=0$, $|ax+b|=c$ has one solution.**
- **If $c>0$, $|ax+b|=c$ has two solutions.**

How to

Given an absolute value equation, solve it.

1. **Isolate the absolute value expression on one side of the equal sign.**
2. **If $c>0$, write and solve two equations: $ax+b=c$ and $ax+b=-c$.**

Example 2.7.10: Solving Absolute Value Equations

Solve the following absolute value equations:

a. $|6x+4|=8$
b. $|3x+4|=-9$
c. $|3x-5|-4=6$
d. $|-5x+10|=0$

Solution

a. $|6x+4|=8$

Write two equations and solve each:

$$\begin{aligned} 6x+4&=8\\ 6x&=4\\ x&=\frac{2}{3}\end{aligned}$$

OR

$$\begin{aligned} 6x+4&=-8\\ 6x&=-12\\ x&=-2\end{aligned}$$

The two solutions are $\frac{2}{3}$ and -2.

b. $|3x+4|=-9$

There is no solution as an absolute value cannot be negative.

c. $|3x-5|-4=6$

Isolate the absolute value expression and then write two equations.

$$\begin{aligned} |3x-5|-4&=6\\ |3x-5|&=10\\ 3x-5&=10\\ 3x&=15\\ x&=5\end{aligned}$$

OR

$$3x - 5 = -10$$
$$3x = -5$$
$$x = \frac{5}{3}$$

There are two solutions: 5, and $-\frac{5}{3}$.

d. $|-5x + 10| = 0$

The equation is set equal to zero, so we have to write only one equation.

$$-5x + 10 = 0$$
$$-5x = -10$$
$$x = 2$$

There is only one solution, namely 2.

Exercise 2.7.10

Solve the absolute value equation: $|1 - 4x| + 8 = 13$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Solving Absolute Value Inequalities

As we know, the absolute value of a quantity is a positive number or zero. From the origin, a point located at $(-x,\ 0)$ has an absolute value of x, as it is x units away. Consider absolute value as the distance from one point to another point. Regardless of direction, positive or negative, the distance between the two points is represented as a positive number or zero.

An absolute value inequality is an equation of the form

\[|A|B,\quad \text{or} \quad|A|≥B,\nonumber\]

Where A, and sometimes B, represents an algebraic expression dependent on a variable x. Solving the inequality means finding the set of all x-values that satisfy the problem. Usually this set will be an interval or the union of two intervals and will include a range of values.

There are two basic approaches to solving absolute value inequalities: graphical and algebraic. The advantage of the graphical approach is we can read the solution by interpreting the graphs of two equations. The advantage of the algebraic approach is that solutions are exact, as precise solutions are sometimes difficult to read from a graph.

To solve absolute value inequalities, just as with absolute value equations, we write two inequalities and then solve them independently.

Definition: Absolute Value Inequalities

For an algebraic expression X and $k > 0$, an absolute value inequality is an inequality of the form

**\[\begin{align*} | X |&-k \text{ and } X < k\[4pt]
| X |&>k \text{ is equivalent to }X<–k \text{ or }X>k\end{align*}\]**

These statements also apply to $|X| \leq k$ and $|X| \geq k$.

Example 2.7.11: Determining a Number within a Prescribed Distance

Describe all values x for which the distance from the number 5 is at most 4.

Solution

We want the distance between x and 5 to be less than or equal to 4. We can draw a number line, such as in Figure 2.7.6, to represent the condition to be satisfied.

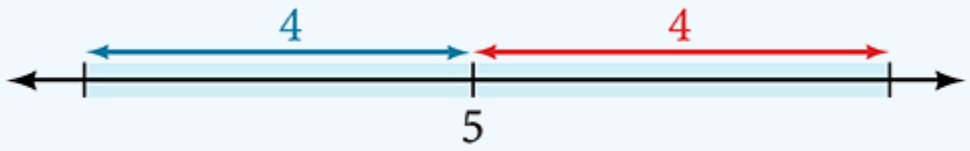


Figure 2.7.6

The distance from x to 5 can be represented using an absolute value symbol, $|x-5|$. Write the values of x that satisfy the condition as an absolute value inequality.

$$|x-5| \leq 4$$

We need to write two inequalities as there are always two solutions to an absolute value equation.

$$\begin{aligned} x-5 &\leq 4 \quad \text{and} \quad x-5 \geq -4 \\ x &\leq 9 \qquad\qquad x \geq 1 \end{aligned}$$

If the solution set is $x \leq 9$ and $x \geq 1$, then the solution set is an interval including all real numbers between and including 1 and 9.

So $|x-5| \leq 4$ is equivalent to $[1,9]$ in interval notation.

Try It! 2.7.11

Describe all x-values within a distance of 3 from the number 2.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 2.7.12: Solving an Absolute Value Inequality

Solve $|x-1| \leq 3$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} |x-1| &\leq 3 \\ -3 \leq x-1 &\leq 3 \\ -2 \leq x &\leq 4 \\ [-2,4] & \end{aligned}$$

Example 2.7.13: Solve Absolute Value Inequalities

Given the equation $-\frac{1}{2}|4x-5|+3<0$

Solution

We begin by isolating the absolute value.

$$-\tfrac{1}{2}|4x-5| < -3 \qquad \text{Multiply both sides by } -2, \text{ and reverse the inequality.}$$
$$|4x-5| > 6$$

Next, we solve for the equality $|4x-5| > 6$.

$$\begin{array}{rcl} 4x-5<-6 & & 4x-5>6 \\ 4x<-1 & \text{or} & 4x>11 \\ x<-\tfrac{1}{4} & & x>\tfrac{11}{4} \end{array}$$

The solution is the disjoint interval

$(-\infty,-\tfrac{1}{4})U(\tfrac{11}{4},\infty)$

Try It! 2.7.12

Solve $-2|k-4| \le -6$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Answers

Try It! 2.7.1

$[-3,5]$

Try It! 2.7.2

$(-\infty,-2) \cup [3,\infty)$

Try It! 2.7.3

$x|x<1$

Try It! 2.7.4

$[5,\infty)$

Try It! 2.7.5

$(2,\infty)$

Try It! 2.7.6

$\left[-\frac{3}{14},\infty\right)$

Try It! 2.7.7

\(6

Try It! 2.7.8

$(-\frac{1}{8},\frac{1}{2})$

Exercise 2.7.9

$|x|=3$

$x=-3$ **or** $x=3$

Exercise 2.7.10

$x=-1, x=\frac{3}{2}$

Try It! 2.7.11

As an absolute value inequality $|x-2| \le 3$

As a compound inequality (implied "and") $-1 \le x \le 5$

As a compound inequality (explicit) $x \ge -1$ **and** $x \le 5$

As an interval $[-1,5]$

Try It! 2.7.12

$k \leq 1$ **or** $k \geq 7$; **in interval notation, this would be** $(-\infty, 1] \cup [7, \infty)$.

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3: FUNCTIONS

3.1: Functions and Function Notation

3.2: Domain and Range

3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs

3.4: Composition of Functions

3.5: Transformation of Functions

3.6: Inverse Functions

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3.1: Functions and Function Notation

Learning Objectives

- Determine whether a relation represents a function.
- Find the value of a function.
- Determine whether a function is one-to-one.
- Use the vertical line test to identify functions.
- Graph the functions listed in the library of functions.

A jetliner changes altitude as its distance from the starting point of a flight increases. The weight of a growing child increases with time. In each case, one quantity depends on another. There is a relationship between the two quantities that we can describe, analyze, and use to make predictions. In this section, we will analyze such relationships.

Determining Whether a Relation Represents a Function

A relation is a set of ordered pairs. The set of the first components of each ordered pair is called the domain and the set of the second components of each ordered pair is called the range. Consider the following set of ordered pairs. The first numbers in each pair are the first five natural numbers. The second number in each pair is twice that of the first.

$$\{(1,2),(2,4),(3,6),(4,8),(5,10)\} \tag{1.1.1}$$

The domain is $\{1,2,3,4,5\}$. The range is $\{2,4,6,8,10\}$.

Note that each value in the domain is also known as an **input** value, or **independent variable**, and is often labeled with the lowercase letter x. Each value in the range is also known as an output value, or **dependent variable**, and is often labeled lowercase letter y.

A function f is a relation that assigns a single value in the range to each value in the domain. In other words, no x-values are repeated. For our example that relates the first five **natural numbers** to numbers double their values, this relation is a function because each element in the domain, {1, 2, 3, 4, 5}, is paired with exactly one element in the range, $\{2,4,6,8,10\}$.

Now let's consider the set of ordered pairs that relates the terms "even" and "odd" to the first five natural numbers. It would appear as

$$\{(\text{odd},1),(\text{even},2),(\text{odd},3),(\text{even},4),(\text{odd},5)\} \tag{1.1.2}$$

Notice that each element in the domain, {even, odd} is not paired with exactly one element in the range, $\{1,2,3,4,5\}$. For example, the term "odd" corresponds to three values from the range, $\{1,3,5\}$, and the term "even" corresponds to two values from the range, $\{2,4\}$. This violates the definition of a function, so this relation is not a function.

Figure $3.1.1$ compares relations that are functions and not functions.

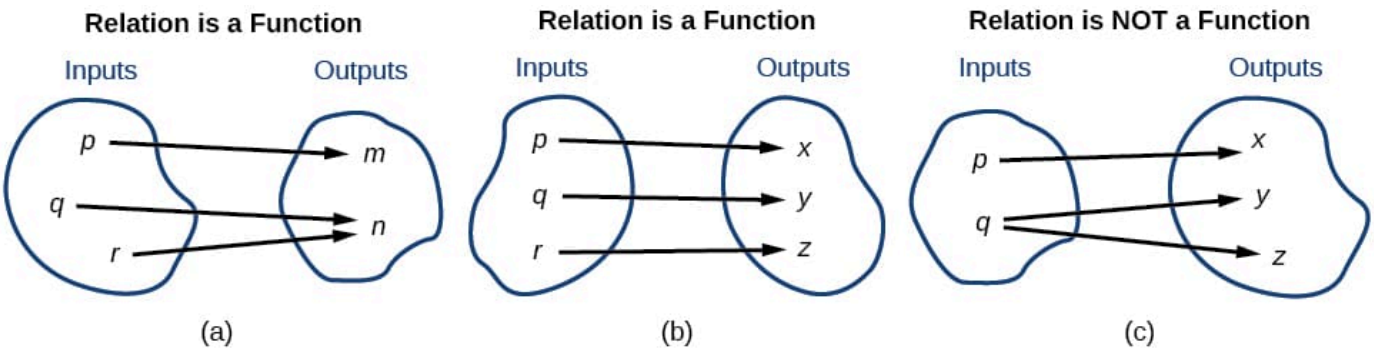


Figure 3.1.1: (a) This relationship is a function because each input is associated with a single output. Note that input q and r both give output n. (b) This relationship is also a function. In this case, each input is associated with a single output. (c) This relationship is not a function because input q is associated with two different outputs.

Definition: Function

A **function** is a relation in which each possible input value leads to exactly one output value. We say "the output is a function of the input."

The **input** values make up the **domain**, and the **output** values make up the **range**.

How To: Given a relationship between two quantities, determine whether the relationship is a function

1. Identify the input values.
2. Identify the output values.
3. If each input value leads to only one output value, classify the relationship as a function. If any input value leads to two or more outputs, do not classify the relationship as a function.

Example 3.1.1: Determining If Menu Price Lists Are Functions

The coffee shop menu, shown in Figure 3.1.2 consists of items and their prices.

a. Is price a function of the item?
b. Is the item a function of the price?



Figure 3.1.2: A menu of donut prices from a coffee shop where a plain donut is $1.49 and a jelly donut and chocolate donut are $1.99.

Solution

a. Let's begin by considering the input as the items on the menu. The output values are then the prices. See Figure 3.1.3.



Figure 3.1.3: A menu of donut prices from a coffee shop where a plain donut is $1.49 and a jelly donut and chocolate donut are $1.99.

Each item on the menu has only one price, so the price is a function of the item.

a. Two items on the menu have the same price. If we consider the prices to be the input values and the items to be the output, then the same input value could have more than one output associated with it. See Figure 3.1.4.

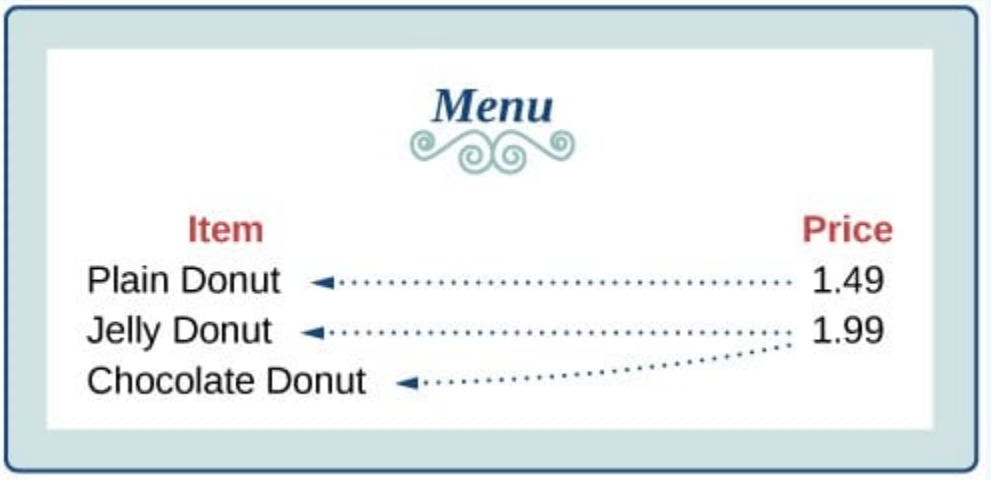


Figure 3.1.4: Association of the prices to the donuts.

Therefore, the item is a not a function of price.

Example 3.1.2: Determining If Class Grade Rules Are Functions

In a particular math class, the overall percent grade corresponds to a grade point average. Is grade point average a function of the percent grade? Is the percent grade a function of the grade point average? Table 3.1.1 shows a possible rule for assigning grade points.

Table 3.1.1: Class grade points.

Percent grade	0–56	57–61	62–66	67–71	72–77	78–86	87–91	92–100
Grade point average	0.0	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0

Solution

For any percent grade earned, there is an associated grade point average, so the grade point average is a function of the percent grade. In other words, if we input the percent grade, the output is a specific grade point average.

In the grading system given, there is a range of percent grades that correspond to the same grade point average. For example, students who receive a grade point average of 3.0 could have a variety of percent grades ranging from 78 all the way to 86. Thus, percent grade is not a function of grade point average.

Exercise 3.1.1

Table 3.1.2 lists the five greatest baseball players of all time in order of rank.

Table 3.1.2: Five greatest baseball players.

Player	Rank
Babe Ruth	1
Willie Mays	2
Ty Cobb	3
Walter Johnson	4
Hank Aaron	5

a. Is the rank a function of the player name?
b. Is the player name a function of the rank?

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Using Function Notation

Once we determine that a relationship is a function, we need to display and define the functional relationships so that we can understand and use them, and sometimes also so that we can program them into computers. There are various ways of representing functions. A standard function notation is one representation that facilitates working with functions.

To represent "height is a function of age," we start by identifying the descriptive variables h for height and a for age. The letters f, g,and h are often used to represent functions just as we use x, y,and z to represent numbers and A, B, and C to represent sets.

$$\begin{aligned} &h \text{ is } f \text{ of } a && \text{We name the function } f\text{; height is a function of age.} \\ &h = f(a) && \text{We use parentheses to indicate the function input.} \\ &f(a) && \text{We name the function } f \text{ ; the expression is read as "} f \text{ of } a\text{."} \end{aligned} \tag{3.1.1}$$

Remember, we can use any letter to name the function; the notation $h(a)$ shows us that h depends on a. The value a must be put into the function h to get a result. The parentheses indicate that age is input into the function; they do not indicate multiplication.

We can also give an algebraic expression as the input to a function. For example $f(a + b)$ means "first add a and b, and the result is the input for the function f." The operations must be performed in this order to obtain the correct result.

Function Notation

The notation $y = f(x)$ defines a function named f. This is read as "y is a function of x." The letter x represents the input value, or independent variable. The letter y, or $f(x)$, represents the output value, or dependent variable.

Example 3.1.3: Using Function Notation for Days in a Month

Use function notation to represent a function whose input is the name of a month and output is the number of days in that month.

Solution

Using Function Notation for Days in a Month

Use function notation to represent a function whose input is the name of a month and output is the number of days in that month.

The number of days in a month is a function of the name of the month, so if we name the function f, we write $\text{days} = f(\text{month})$ or $d = f(m)$. The name of the month is the input to a "rule" that associates a specific number (the output) with each input.

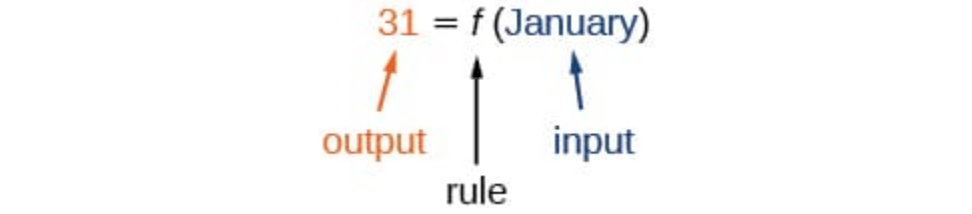


Figure 3.1.5: The function $31 = f(January)$ where 31 is the output, f is the rule, and January is the input.

For example, $f(\text{March}) = 31$, because March has 31 days. The notation $d = f(m)$ reminds us that the number of days, d (the output), is dependent on the name of the month, m (the input).

Analysis

Note that the inputs to a function do not have to be numbers; function inputs can be names of people, labels of geometric objects, or any other element that determines some kind of output. However, most of the functions we will work with in this book will have numbers as inputs and outputs.

Example 3.1.3B: Interpreting Function Notation

A function $N = f(y)$ gives the number of police officers, N, in a town in year y. What does $f(2005) = 300$ represent?

Solution

When we read $f(2005) = 300$, we see that the input year is 2005. The value for the output, the number of police officers (N), is 300. Remember, $N = f(y)$. The statement $f(2005) = 300$ tells us that in the year 2005 there were 300 police officers in the town.

Exercise 3.1.2

Use function notation to express the weight of a pig in pounds as a function of its age in days d.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A

Instead of a notation such as $y = f(x)$, could we use the same symbol for the output as for the function, such as $y = y(x)$, meaning "y is a function of x?"

Yes, this is often done, especially in applied subjects that use higher math, such as physics and engineering. However, in exploring math itself we like to maintain a distinction between a function such as f, which is a rule or procedure, and the output y we get by applying f to a particular input x. This is why we usually use notation such as $y = f(x), P = W(d)$, and so on.

Representing Functions Using Tables

A common method of representing functions is in the form of a table. The table rows or columns display the corresponding input and output values. In some cases, these values represent all we know about the relationship; other times, the table provides a few select examples from a more complete relationship.

Table 3.1.3 lists the input number of each month ($\text{January} = 1$, $\text{February} = 2$, and so on) and the output value of the number of days in that month. This information represents all we know about the months and days for a given year (that is not a leap year). Note that, in this table, we define a days-in-a-month function f where $D = f(m)$ identifies months by an integer rather than by name.

Table 3.1.3: Months and number of days per month.

Month number, m (input)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Days in month, D (output)	31	28	31	30	31	30	31	31	30	31	30	31

Table 3.1.4 defines a function $Q = g(n)$ Remember, this notation tells us that g is the name of the function that takes the input n and gives the output Q.

Table 3.1.4: Function $Q = g(n)$

n	1	2	3	4	5
Q	8	6	7	6	8

Table 3.1.5 displays the age of children in years and their corresponding heights. This table displays just some of the data available for the heights and ages of children. We can see right away that this table does not represent a function because the same input value, 5 years, has two different output values, 40 in. and 42 in.

Table 3.1.5: Age of children and their corresponding heights.

Age in years, a (input)	5	5	6	7	8	9	10
Height in inches, h (output)	40	42	44	47	50	52	54

How To: Given a table of input and output values, determine whether the table represents a function

1. Identify the input and output values.
2. Check to see if each input value is paired with only one output value. If so, the table represents a function.

Example 3.1.5: Identifying Tables that Represent Functions

Which table, Table 3.1.6, Table 3.1.7, or Table 3.1.8, represents a function (if any)?

Table 3.1.6

Input	Output
2	1
5	3

Input	Output
8	6

Table 3.1.7

Input	Output
-3	5
0	1
4	5

Table 3.1.8

Input	Output
1	0
5	2
5	4

Solution

Table 3.1.6 and Table 3.1.7 define functions. In both, each input value corresponds to exactly one output value. Table 3.1.8 does not define a function because the input value of 5 corresponds to two different output values.

When a table represents a function, corresponding input and output values can also be specified using function notation.

The function represented by Table 3.1.6 can be represented by writing

$$f(2) = 1,\ f(5) = 3, \text{ and } f(8) = 6$$

Similarly, the statements

$$g(-3) = 5,\ g(0) = 1, \text{ and } g(4) = 5$$

represent the function in Table 3.1.7.

Table 3.1.8 cannot be expressed in a similar way because it does not represent a function.

Exercise 3.1.3

Does Table 3.1.9 represent a function?

Table 3.1.9

Input	Output
1	10
2	100
3	1000

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding Input and Output Values of a Function

When we know an input value and want to determine the corresponding output value for a function, we evaluate the function. Evaluating will always produce one result because each input value of a function corresponds to exactly one output value.

When we know an output value and want to determine the input values that would produce that output value, we set the output equal to the function's formula and solve for the input. Solving can produce more than one solution because different input values can produce the same output value.

Evaluation of Functions in Algebraic Forms

When we have a function in formula form, it is usually a simple matter to evaluate the function. For example, the function $f(x) = 5 - 3x^2$ can be evaluated by squaring the input value, multiplying by 3, and then subtracting the product from 5.

How To: Given the formula for a function, evaluate.

Given the formula for a function, evaluate.

1. Replace the input variable in the formula with the value provided.
2. Calculate the result.

Example $3.1.6A$: Evaluating Functions at Specific Values

1. Evaluate $f(x) = x^2 + 3x - 4$ at

a. 2
b. a
c. $a + h$
d. Evaluate $\frac{f(a+h)-f(a)}{h}$

Solution

Replace the x in the function with each specified value.

a. Because the input value is a number, 2, we can use simple algebra to simplify.

$$\begin{aligned} f(2) &= 2^2 + 3(2) - 4 \\ &= 4 + 6 - 4 \\ &= 6 \end{aligned}$$

b. In this case, the input value is a letter so we cannot simplify the answer any further.

$$f(a) = a^2 + 3a - 4$$

c. With an input value of $a + h$, we must use the distributive property.

$$\begin{aligned} f(a+h) &= (a+h)^2 + 3(a+h) - 4 \\ &= a^2 + 2ah + h^2 + 3a + 3h - 4 \end{aligned}$$

d. In this case, we apply the input values to the function more than once, and then perform algebraic operations on the result. We already found that

$$f(a+h) = a^2 + 2ah + h^2 + 3a + 3h - 4$$

and we know that

$$f(a) = a^2 + 3a - 4$$

Now we combine the results and simplify.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{f(a+h) - f(a)}{h} &= \frac{(a^2 + 2ah + h^2 + 3a + 3h - 4) - (a^2 + 3a - 4)}{h} \\ &= \frac{(2ah + h^2 + 3h)}{h} \\ &= \frac{h(2a + h + 3)}{h} && \text{Factor out h.} \\ &= 2a + h + 3 && \text{Simplify.} \end{aligned}$$

Example 3.1.6B: Evaluating Functions

Given the function $f(x) = x^2 + 2x$, evaluate $f(4)$.

Solution

To evaluate $f(4)$, we substitute the value 4 for the input variable p in the given function.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= x^2 + 2x \\ f(4) &= (4)^2 + 2(4) \\ &= 16 + 8 \\ &= 24 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, for an input of 4, we have an output of 24.

Exercise 3.1.4

Given the function $g(x) = \sqrt{x - 4}$, evaluate $g(5)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 3.1.7: Solving Functions

Given the function $f(x) = x^2 + 2x$, solve for $f(x) = 3$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= 3 \\ x^2 + 2x &= 3 && \text{Substitute the original function} \\ x^2 + 2x - 3 &= 0 && \text{Subtract 3 from each side.} \\ (x+3)(x-1) &= 0 && \text{Factor.} \end{aligned}$$

If $(x + 3)(x - 1) = 0$, either $(x + 3) = 0$ or $(x - 1) = 0$ (or both of them equal 0). We will set each factor equal to 0 and solve for p in each case.

$$(x + 3) = 0,\ x = -3$$

$$(x - 1) = 0,\ x = 1$$

This gives us two solutions. The output $f(x) = 3$ when the input is either $x = 1$ or $x = -3$.

Exercise 3.1.5

Given the function $g(x) = \sqrt{x-4}$, solve $g(x) = 2$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Evaluating Functions Expressed in Formulas

Some functions are defined by mathematical rules or procedures expressed in **equation** form. If it is possible to express the function output with a formula involving the input quantity, then we can define a function in algebraic form. For example, the equation $2n + 6p = 12$ expresses a functional relationship between n and p. We can rewrite it to decide if p is a function of n.

How to: Given a function in equation form, write its algebraic formula.

1. Solve the equation to isolate the output variable on one side of the equal sign, with the other side as an expression that involves only the input variable.
2. Use all the usual algebraic methods for solving equations, such as adding or subtracting the same quantity to or from both sides, or multiplying or dividing both sides of the equation by the same quantity.

Example 3.1.8A: Finding an Equation of a Function

Express the relationship $2x + 6y = 12$ as a function $y = f(x)$, if possible.

Solution

To express the relationship in this form, we need to be able to write the relationship where p is a function of n, which means writing it as $p = [\text{expression involving } n]$.

$$\begin{aligned} 2x + 6y &= 12 \\ 6y &= 12 - 2x && \text{Subtract 2x from both sides.} \\ y &= \frac{12-2x}{6} && \text{Divide both sides by 6 and simplify.} \\ y &= \frac{12}{6} - \frac{2x}{6} \\ y &= 2 - \frac{1}{3}x \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, y as a function of x is written as

$$y = f(x) = 2 - \frac{1}{3}x$$

Analysis

It is important to note that not every relationship expressed by an equation can also be expressed as a function with a formula.

Example 3.1.8B: Expressing the Equation of a Circle as a Function

Does the equation $x^2 + y^2 = 1$ represent a function with x as input and y as output? If so, express the relationship as a function $y = f(x)$.

Solution

First we subtract x^2 from both sides.

$$y^2 = 1 - x^2$$

We now try to solve for y in this equation.

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

$$\text{so, } y = \sqrt{1 - x^2} \text{ and } y = -\sqrt{1 - x^2}$$

We get two outputs corresponding to the same input, so this relationship cannot be represented as a single function $y = f(x)$.

Exercise 3.1.6

If $x - 8y^3 = 0$, express y as a function of x.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q & A

Are there relationships expressed by an equation that do represent a function but which still cannot be represented by an algebraic formula?

Yes, this can happen. For example, given the equation $x = y + 2^y$, if we want to express y as a function of x, there is no simple algebraic formula involving only x that equals y. However, each x does determine a unique value for y, and there are mathematical procedures by which y can be found to any desired accuracy. In this case, we say that the equation gives an implicit (implied) rule for y as a function of x, even though the formula cannot be written explicitly.

Evaluating a Function Given in Tabular Form

As we saw above, we can represent functions in tables. Conversely, we can use information in tables to write functions, and we can evaluate functions using the tables. For example, how well do our pets recall the fond memories we share with them? There is an urban legend that a goldfish has a memory of 3 seconds, but this is just a myth. Goldfish can remember up to 3 months, while the beta fish has a memory of up to 5 months. And while a puppy's memory span is no longer than 30 seconds, the adult dog can remember for 5 minutes. This is meager compared to a cat, whose memory span lasts for 16 hours.

The function that relates the type of pet to the duration of its memory span is more easily visualized with the use of a table (Table 3.1.10).

Table 3.1.10

Pet Memory	span in hours
Puppy	0.008
Adult Dog	0.083
Cat	3
Goldfish	2160
Beta Fish	3600

At times, evaluating a function in table form may be more useful than using equations. Here let us call the function P. The domain of the function is the type of pet and the range is a real number representing the number of hours the pet's memory span lasts. We can evaluate the function P at the input value of "goldfish." We would write $P(goldfish) = 2160$. Notice that, to evaluate the

function in table form, we identify the input value and the corresponding output value from the pertinent row of the table. The tabular form for function P seems ideally suited to this function, more so than writing it in paragraph or function form.

How To: Given a function represented by a table, identify specific output and input values

1. Find the given input in the row (or column) of input values.
2. Identify the corresponding output value paired with that input value.
3. Find the given output values in the row (or column) of output values, noting every time that output value appears.
4. Identify the input value(s) corresponding to the given output value.

Example 3.1.9: Evaluating and Solving a Tabular Function

Using Table 3.1.11,

a. Evaluate $g(3)$.
b. Solve $g(n) = 6$.

Table 3.1.11

n	1	2	3	4	5
$g(n)$	8	6	7	6	8

Solution

a. Evaluating $g(3)$ means determining the output value of the function g for the input value of $n = 3$. The table output value corresponding to $n = 3$ is 7, so $g(3) = 7$.
b. Solving $g(n) = 6$ means identifying the input values, n,that produce an output value of 6. Table 3.1.12 shows two solutions: 2 and 4.

Table 3.1.12

n	1	2	3	4	5
$g(n)$	8	6	7	6	8

When we input 2 into the function g, our output is 6. When we input 4 into the function g, our output is also 6.

Exercise 3.1.7

Using Table 3.1.12, evaluate $g(1)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding Function Values from a Graph

Evaluating a function using a graph also requires finding the corresponding output value for a given input value, only in this case, we find the output value by looking at the graph. Solving a function equation using a graph requires finding all instances of the given output value on the graph and observing the corresponding input value(s).

Example 3.1.10: Reading Function Values from a Graph

Given the graph in Figure 3.1.7,

a. Evaluate $f(2)$.
b. Solve $f(x) = 4$.

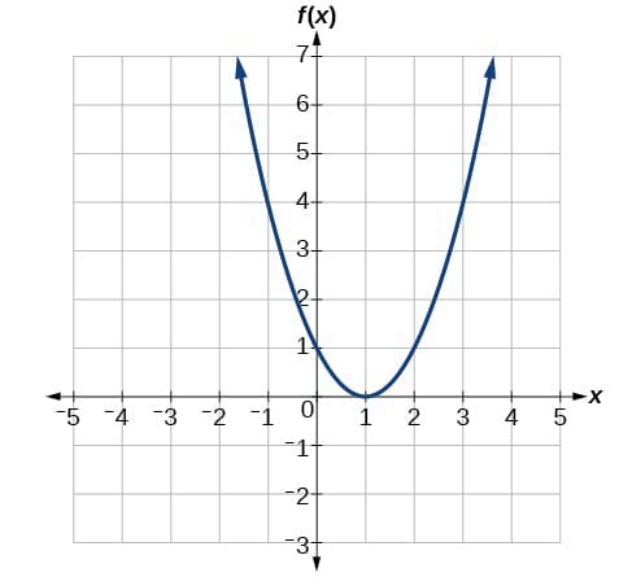
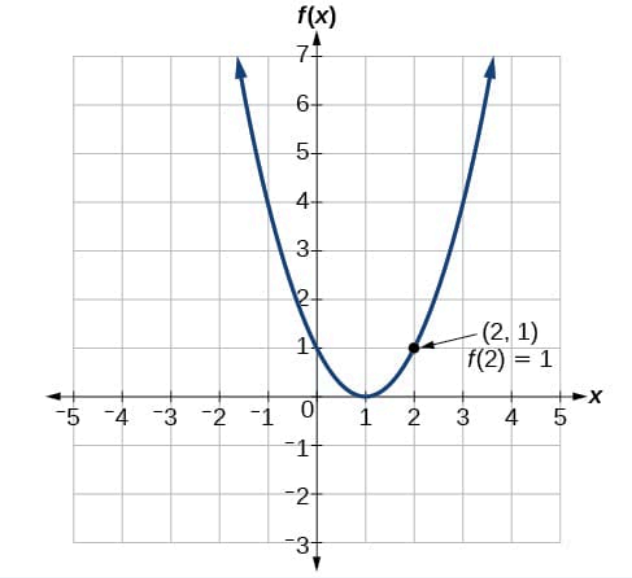


Figure 3.1.7: Graph of a positive parabola centered at $(1, 0)$.

Solution

To evaluate $f(2)$, locate the point on the curve where $x = 2$, then read the y-coordinate of that point. The point has coordinates $(2, 1)$, so $f(2) = 1$. See Figure 3.1.8.



3.1.8: Graph of a positive parabola centered at $(1, 0)$ with the labeled point $(2, 1)$ where $f(2) = 1$.

To solve $f(x) = 4$, we find the output value 4 on the vertical axis. Moving horizontally along the line $y = 4$, we locate two points of the curve with output value 4: $(-1, 4)$ and $(3, 4)$. These points represent the two solutions to $f(x) = 4$: –1 or 3. This means $f(-1) = 4$ and $f(3) = 4$, or when the input is –1 or 3, the output is 4. See Figure 3.1.9.

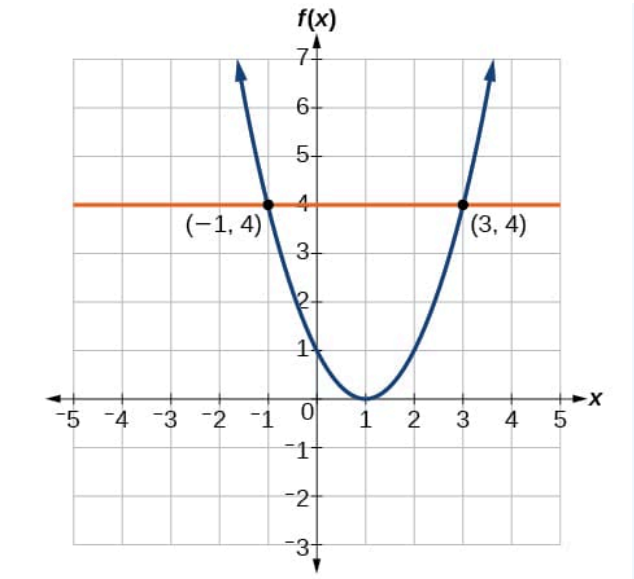


Figure 3.1.9: Graph of an upward-facing parabola with a vertex at $(0, 1)$ and labeled points at $(-1, 4)$ and $(3, 4)$. A line at $y = 4$ intersects the parabola at the labeled points.

Exercise 3.1.8

Given the graph in Figure 3.1.7, solve $f(x) = 1$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Determining Whether a Function is One-to-One

Some functions have a given output value that corresponds to two or more input values. For example, in the stock chart shown in the Figure at the beginning of this chapter, the stock price was $1000 on five different dates, meaning that there were five different input values that all resulted in the same output value of $1000.

However, some functions have only one input value for each output value, as well as having only one output for each input. We call these functions one-to-one functions. As an example, consider a school that uses only letter grades and decimal equivalents, as listed in Table 3.1.13.

Table 3.1.13: Letter grades and decimal equivalents.

Letter Grade	Grade Point Average
A	4.0
B	3.0
C	2.0
D	1.0

This grading system represents a one-to-one function, because each letter input yields one particular grade point average output and each grade point average corresponds to one input letter.

To visualize this concept, let's look again at the two simple functions sketched in Figures $3.1.1a$ and $3.1.1b$. The function in part (a) shows a relationship that is not a one-to-one function because inputs q and r both give output n. The function in part (b) shows a relationship that is a one-to-one function because each input is associated with a single output.

One-to-One Functions

A **one-to-one function** is a function in which each output value corresponds to exactly one input value.

Example 3.1.11: Determining Whether a Relationship Is a One-to-One Function

Is the area of a circle a function of its radius? If yes, is the function one-to-one?

Solution

A circle of radius r has a unique area measure given by $A = \pi r^2$, so for any input, r, there is only one output, A. The area is a function of radius$r$.

If the function is one-to-one, the output value, the area, must correspond to a unique input value, the radius. Any area measure A is given by the formula $A = \pi r^2$. Because areas and radii are positive numbers, there is exactly one solution: $\sqrt{\frac{A}{\pi}}$. So the area of a circle is a one-to-one function of the circle's radius.

Exercise 3.1.9A

a. Is a balance a function of the bank account number?
b. Is a bank account number a function of the balance?
c. Is a balance a one-to-one function of the bank account number?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 3.1.9B

Evaluate the following:

a. If each percent grade earned in a course translates to one letter grade, is the letter grade a function of the percent grade?
b. If so, is the function one-to-one?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Vertical Line Test

As we have seen in some examples above, we can represent a function using a graph. Graphs display a great many input-output pairs in a small space. The visual information they provide often makes relationships easier to understand. By convention, graphs are typically constructed with the input values along the horizontal axis and the output values along the vertical axis.

The most common graphs name the input value x and the output y, and we say y is a function of x, or $y = f(x)$ when the function is named f. The graph of the function is the set of all points (x, y) in the plane that satisfies the equation $y = f(x)$. If the function is defined for only a few input values, then the graph of the function is only a few points, where the x-coordinate of each point is an input value and the y-coordinate of each point is the corresponding output value. For example, the black dots on the graph in Figure 3.1.10 tell us that $f(0) = 2$ and $f(6) = 1$. However, the set of all points (x, y) satisfying $y = f(x)$ is a curve. The curve shown includes $(0, 2)$ and $(6, 1)$ because the curve passes through those points

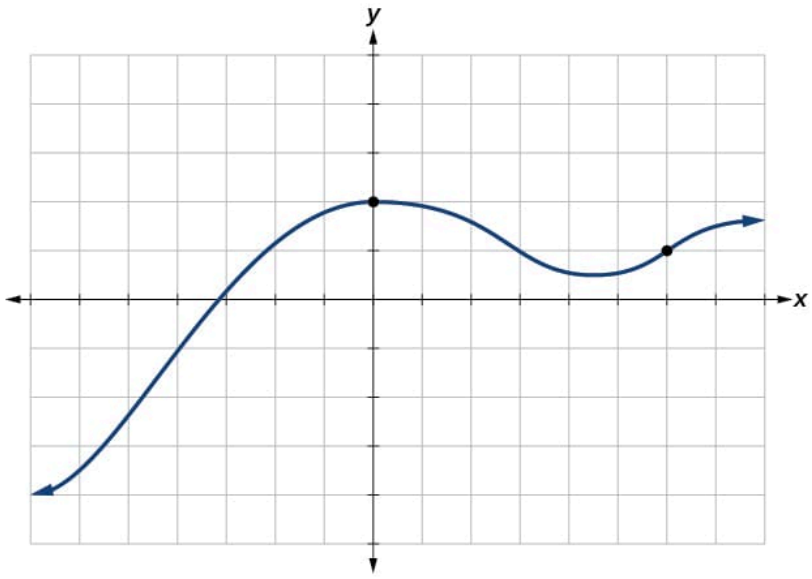


Figure 3.1.10: Graph of a polynomial.

The vertical line test can be used to determine whether a graph represents a function. If we can draw any vertical line that intersects a graph more than once, then the graph does not define a function because a function has only one output value for each input value. See Figure 3.1.11.

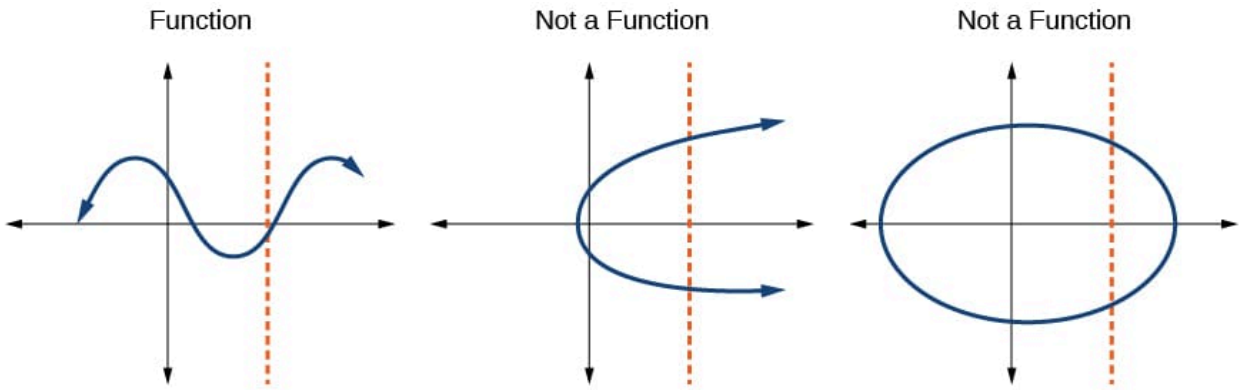


Figure 3.1.11: Three graphs visually showing what is and is not a function.

How to: Given a graph, use the vertical line test to determine if the graph represents a function

1. Inspect the graph to see if any vertical line drawn would intersect the curve more than once.
2. If there is any such line, determine that the graph does not represent a function.

Example 3.1.12: Applying the Vertical Line Test

Which of the graphs in Figure 3.1.12 represent(s) a function $y = f(x)$?

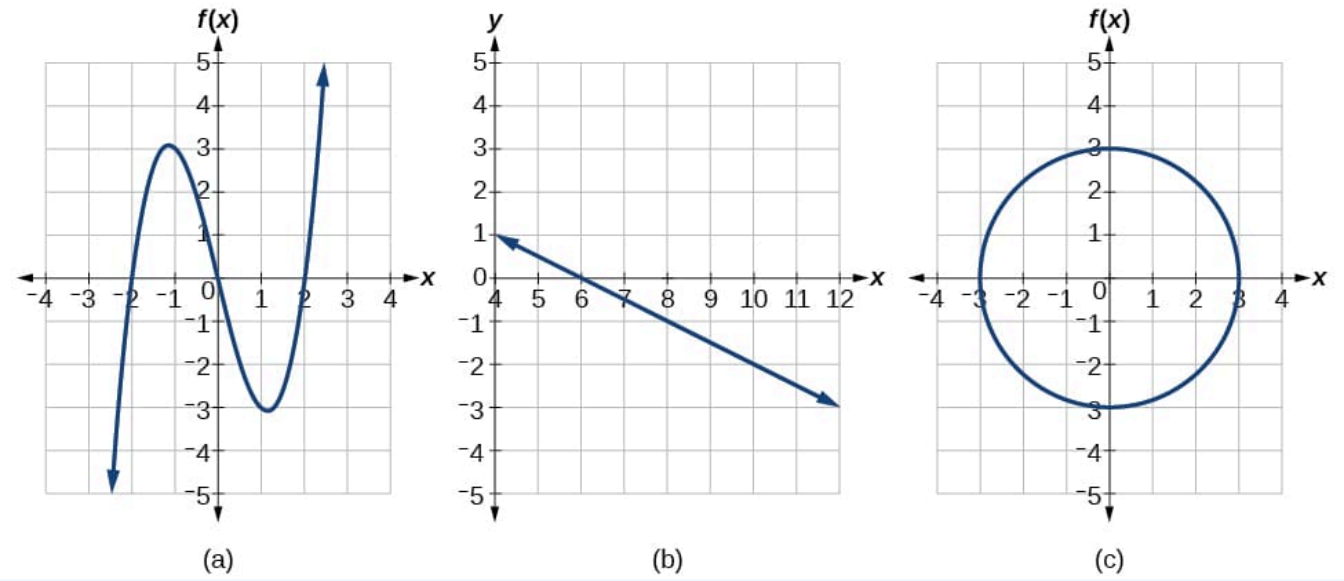


Figure 3.1.12: Graph of a polynomial (a), a downward-sloping line (b), and a circle (c).

Solution

If any vertical line intersects a graph more than once, the relation represented by the graph is not a function. Notice that any vertical line would pass through only one point of the two graphs shown in parts (a) and (b) of Figure 3.1.12. From this we can conclude that these two graphs represent functions. The third graph does not represent a function because, at most x-values, a vertical line would intersect the graph at more than one point, as shown in Figure 3.1.13.

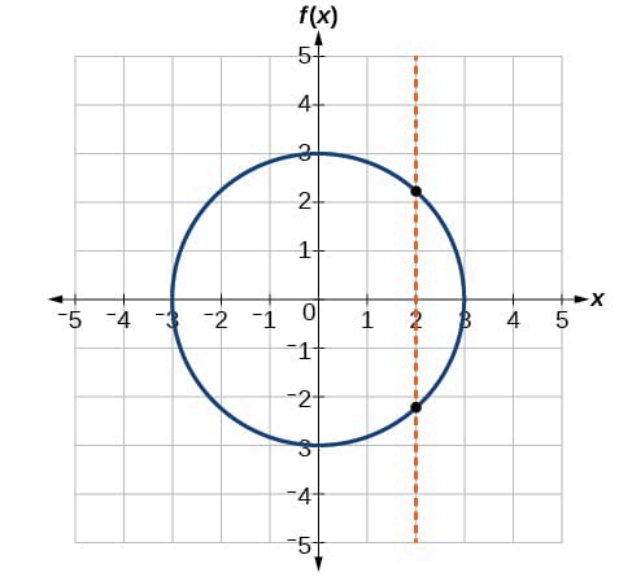


Figure 3.1.13: Graph of a circle.

Exercise 3.1.10

Does the graph in Figure 3.1.14 represent a function?

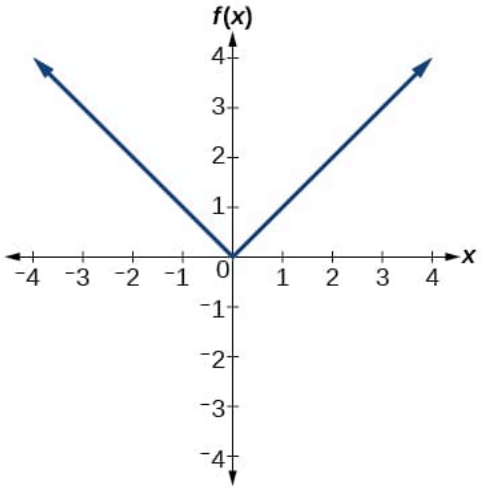


Figure 3.1.14: Graph of $y = |x|$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Horizontal Line Test

Once we have determined that a graph defines a function, an easy way to determine if it is a one-to-one function is to use the **horizontal line test**. Draw horizontal lines through the graph. If any horizontal line intersects the graph more than once, then the graph does not represent a one-to-one function.

How to: Given a graph of a function, use the horizontal line test to determine if the graph represents a one-to-one function

1. Inspect the graph to see if any horizontal line drawn would intersect the curve more than once.
2. If there is any such line, determine that the function is not one-to-one.

Example 3.1.13: Applying the Horizontal Line Test

Consider the functions shown in Figure 3.1.12a and Figure 3.1.12b. Are either of the functions one-to-one?

Solution

The function in Figure 3.1.12a is not one-to-one. The horizontal line shown in Figure 3.1.15 intersects the graph of the function at two points (and we can even find horizontal lines that intersect it at three points.)

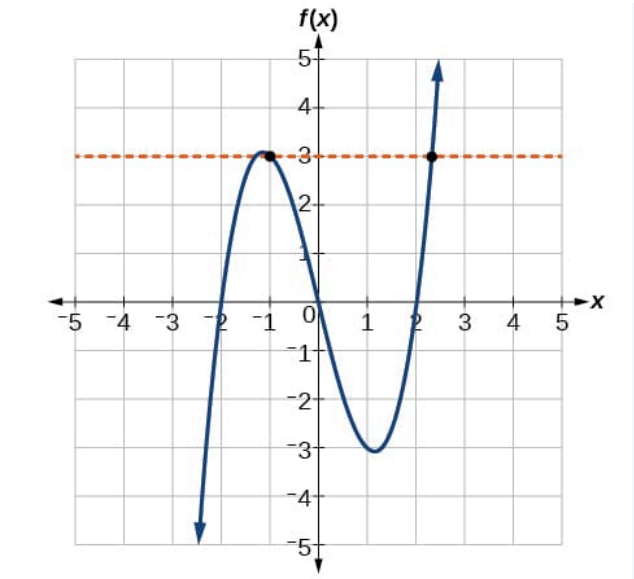


Figure 3.1.15: Graph of a polynomial with a horizontal line crossing through 2 points

The function in Figure $3.1.12b$ is one-to-one. Any horizontal line will intersect a diagonal line at most once.

Exercise 3.1.11

Is the graph shown in Figure $3.1.13$ one-to-one?

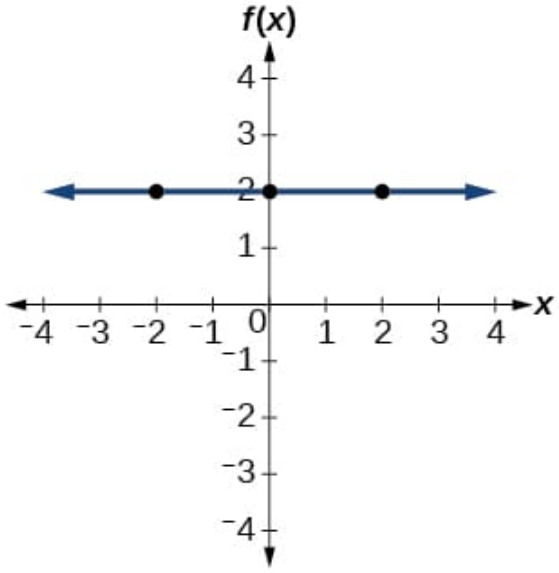
Answer available at the end of this section.

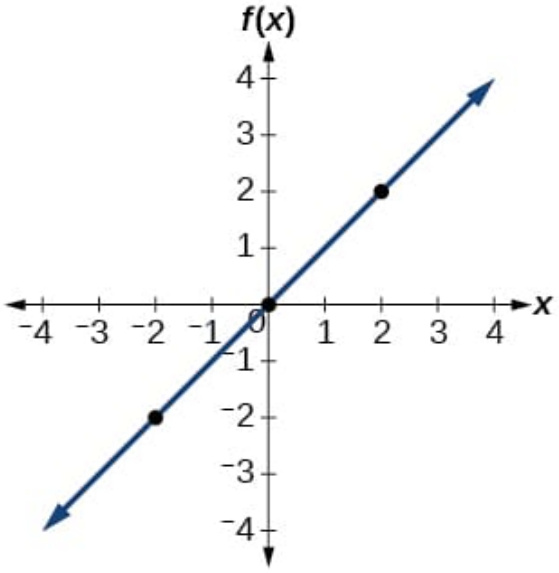
Identifying Basic Toolkit Functions

In this text, we will be exploring functions—the shapes of their graphs, their unique characteristics, their algebraic formulas, and how to solve problems with them. When learning to read, we start with the alphabet. When learning to do arithmetic, we start with numbers. When working with functions, it is similarly helpful to have a base set of building-block elements. We call these our "toolkit functions," which form a set of basic named functions for which we know the graph, formula, and special properties. Some of these functions are programmed to individual buttons on many calculators. For these definitions we will use x as the input variable and $y = f(x)$ as the output variable.

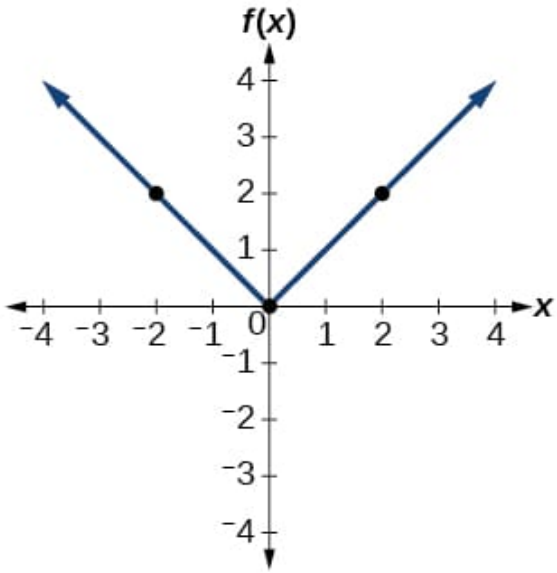
We will see these toolkit functions, combinations of toolkit functions, their graphs, and their transformations frequently throughout this book. It will be very helpful if we can recognize these toolkit functions and their features quickly by name, formula, graph, and basic table properties. The graphs and sample table values are included with each function shown in Table $3.1.14$.

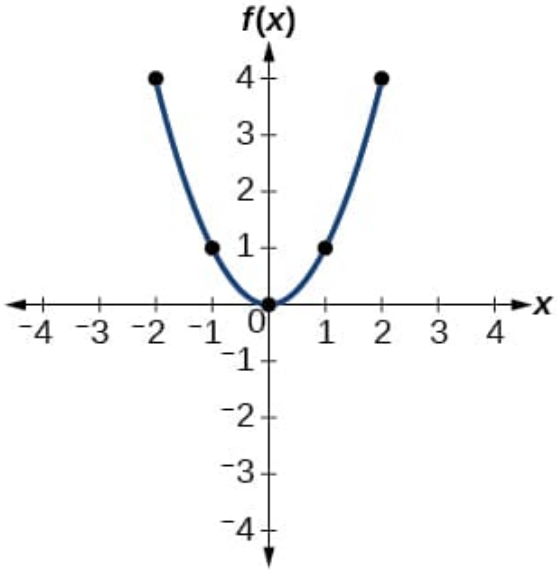
Table 3.1.14: Toolkit Functions

<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Function</th><th>Graph</th></tr>
<tr><td>Constant</td><td>$f(x) = c$ where c is a constant</td><td> 

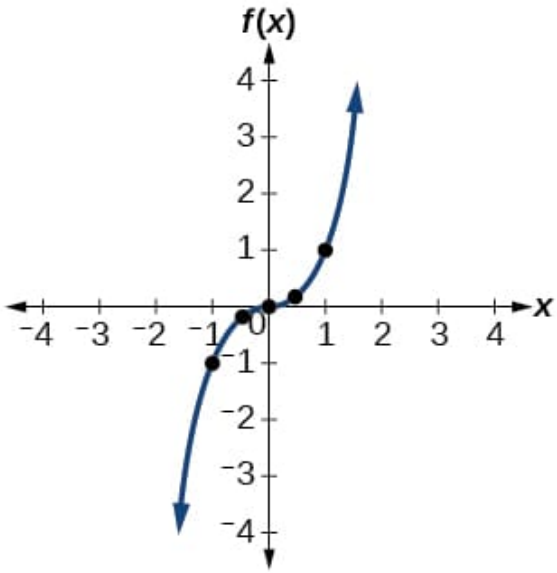
<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Identity</td><td>$f(x) = x$</td><td> 

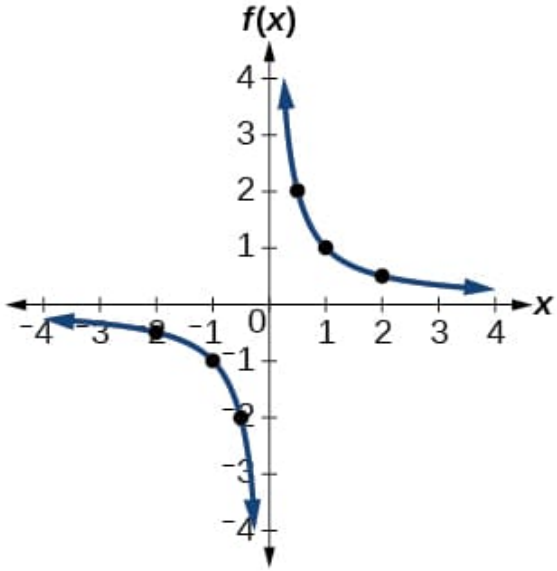
<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>−2</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Function</th><th>Graph</th></tr>
<tr><td>Absolute Value</td><td>$f(x) = |x|$</td><td> 

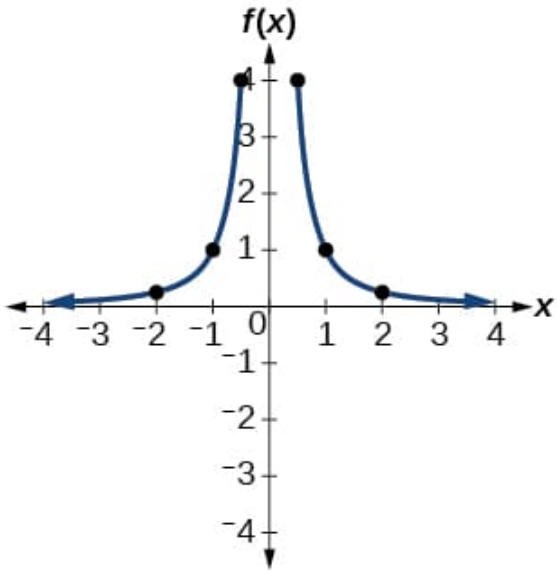
<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Quadratic</td><td>$f(x) = x^2$</td><td> 

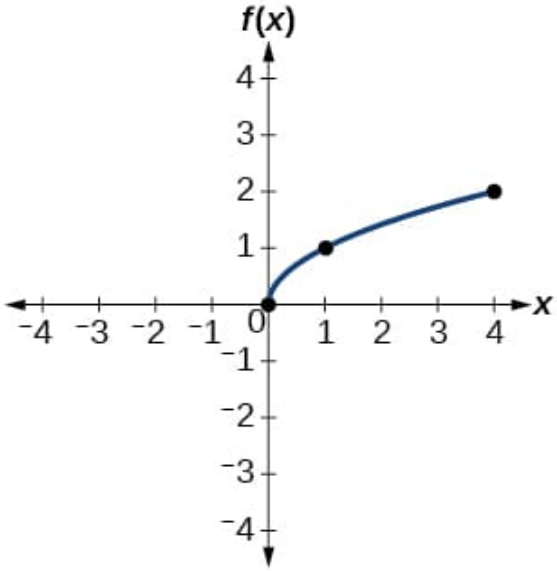
<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>−1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Function</th><th>Graph</th></tr>
<tr><td>Cubic</td><td>$f(x) = x^3$</td><td> 

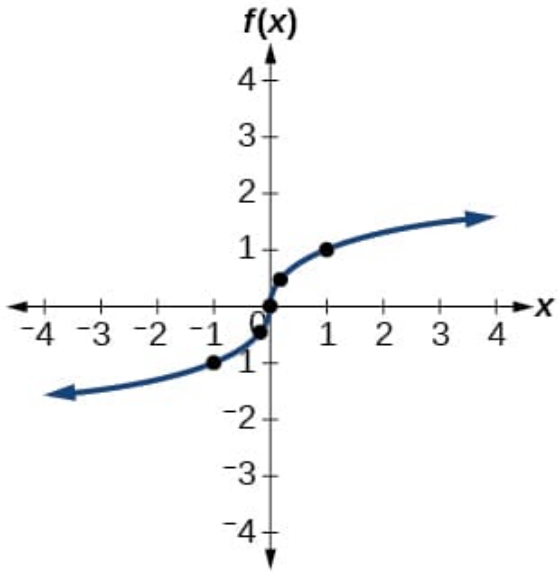
<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−1</td><td>−1</td></tr>
<tr><td>−0.5</td><td>−0.125</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>0.5</td><td>0.125</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Reciprocal</td><td>$f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$</td><td> 

<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>−0.5</td></tr>
<tr><td>−1</td><td>−1</td></tr>
<tr><td>−0.5</td><td>−2</td></tr>
<tr><td>0.5</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>0.5</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Function</th><th>Graph</th></tr>
<tr><td>Reciprocal squared</td><td>$f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$</td><td> 

<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>0.25</td></tr>
<tr><td>−1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>−0.5</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>0.5</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>0.25</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Square root</td><td>$f(x) = \sqrt{x}$</td><td> 

<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

Name	Function	Graph
Cube root	$f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$	

x	f(x)
−1	−1
−0.125	−0.5
0	0
0.125	0.5
1	1

Key Equations

- Constant function $f(x) = c$, where c is a constant
- Identity function $f(x) = x$
- Absolute value function $f(x) = |x|$
- Quadratic function $f(x) = x^2$
- Cubic function $f(x) = x^3$
- Reciprocal function $f(x) = \dfrac{1}{x}$
- Reciprocal squared function $f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$
- Square root function $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$
- Cube root function $f(x) = 3\sqrt{x}$

Key Concepts

- A relation is a set of ordered pairs. A function is a specific type of relation in which each domain value, or input, leads to exactly one range value, or output.
- Function notation is a shorthand method for relating the input to the output in the form $y = f(x)$.
- In tabular form, a function can be represented by rows or columns that relate to input and output values.
- To evaluate a function, we determine an output value for a corresponding input value. Algebraic forms of a function can be evaluated by replacing the input variable with a given value.
- To solve for a specific function value, we determine the input values that yield the specific output value.
- An algebraic form of a function can be written from an equation.
- Input and output values of a function can be identified from a table.
- Relating input values to output values on a graph is another way to evaluate a function.
- A function is one-to-one if each output value corresponds to only one input value.
- A graph represents a function if any vertical line drawn on the graph intersects the graph at no more than one point.
- The graph of a one-to-one function passes the horizontal line test.

Footnotes

1 http://www.baseball-almanac.com/lege.../lisn100.shtml. Accessed 3/24/2014.
2 www.kgbanswers.com/how-long-i...y-span/4221590. Accessed 3/24/2014.

Glossary

dependent variable
an output variable

domain
the set of all possible input values for a relation

function
a relation in which each input value yields a unique output value

horizontal line test
a method of testing whether a function is one-to-one by determining whether any horizontal line intersects the graph more than once

independent variable
an input variable

input
each object or value in a domain that relates to another object or value by a relationship known as a function

one-to-one function
a function for which each value of the output is associated with a unique input value

output
each object or value in the range that is produced when an input value is entered into a function

range
the set of output values that result from the input values in a relation

relation
a set of ordered pairs

vertical line test
a method of testing whether a graph represents a function by determining whether a vertical line intersects the graph no more than once

---

Answers

Exercise 3.1.1

Yes

yes. (Note: If two players had been tied for, say, 4th place, then the name would not have been a function of rank.)

Exercise 3.1.2

$w = f(d)$

Exercise 3.1.3

yes

Exercise 3.1.4

$g(5) = 1$

Exercise 3.1.5

$x = 8$

Exercise 3.1.6

$y = f(x) = \frac{\sqrt[3]{x}}{2}$

Exercise 3.1.7

$g(1) = 8$

Exercise 3.1.8

$x = 0$ or $x = 2$

Exercise 3.1.9A

a. yes, because each bank account has a single balance at any given time;

b. no, because several bank account numbers may have the same balance;

c. no, because the same output may correspond to more than one input.

Exercise $3.1.9B$

a. Yes, letter grade is a function of percent grade;
b. No, it is not one-to-one. There are 100 different percent numbers we could get but only about five possible letter grades, so there cannot be only one percent number that corresponds to each letter grade.

Exercise $3.1.10$

yes

Exercise $3.1.11$

No, because it does not pass the horizontal line test.

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3.2: Domain and Range

Learning Objectives

- Find the domain of a function defined by an equation.
- Find the domain and range of a function defined by a graph.
- Graph piecewise-defined functions.

Finding the Domain of a Function Defined by an Equation

In Functions and Function Notation, we were introduced to the concepts of **domain and range**. In this section, we will practice determining domains and ranges for specific functions. Keep in mind that, in determining domains and ranges, we need to consider what is physically possible or meaningful in real-world examples, such as tickets sales and year in the horror movie example above. We also need to consider what is mathematically permitted. For example, we cannot include any input value that leads us to take an even root of a negative number if the domain and range consist of real numbers. Or in a function expressed as a formula, we cannot include any input value in the domain that would lead us to divide by 0.

We can visualize the domain as a "holding area" that contains "raw materials" for a "function machine" and the range as another "holding area" for the machine's products (Figure 3.2.2).

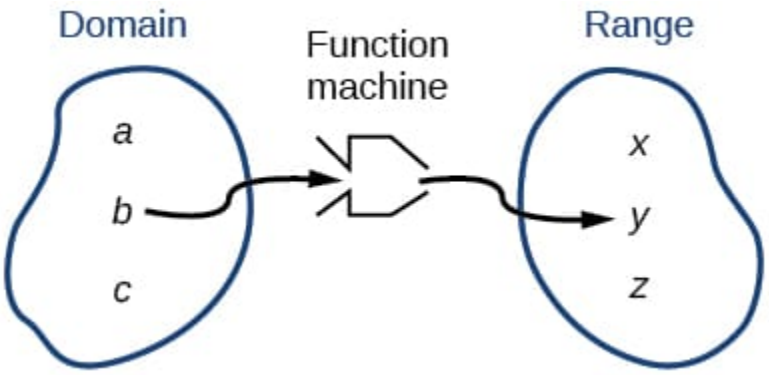


Figure 3.2.2: Diagram of how a function relates two relations

We can write the **domain and range** in **interval notation**, which uses values within brackets to describe a set of numbers. In interval notation, we use a square bracket [when the set includes the endpoint and a parenthesis (to indicate that the endpoint is either not included or the interval is unbounded. For example, if a person has $100 to spend, he or she would need to express the interval that is more than 0 and less than or equal to 100 and write $(0, 100]$. We will discuss interval notation in greater detail later.

Let's turn our attention to finding the domain of a function whose equation is provided. Oftentimes, finding the domain of such functions involves remembering three different forms. First, if the function has no denominator or an even root, consider whether the domain could be all real numbers. Second, if there is a denominator in the function's equation, exclude values in the domain that force the denominator to be zero. Third, if there is an even root, consider excluding values that would make the radicand negative.

Before we begin, let us review the conventions of interval notation:

- The smallest term from the interval is written first.
- The largest term in the interval is written second, following a comma.
- Parentheses, (or), are used to signify that an endpoint is not included, called exclusive.
- Brackets, [or], are used to indicate that an endpoint is included, called inclusive.

See Figure 3.2.3 for a summary of interval notation.

Inequality	Interval Notation	Graph on Number Line	Description
$x > a$	(a, ∞)		x is greater than a
$x < a$	$(-\infty, a)$		x is less than a
$x \geq a$	$[a, \infty)$		x is greater than or equal to a
$x \leq a$	$(-\infty, a]$		x is less than or equal to a
$a < x < b$	(a, b)		x is strictly between a and b
$a \leq x < b$	$[a, b)$		x is between a and b, to include a
$a < x \leq b$	$(a, b]$		x is between a and b, to include b
$a \leq x \leq b$	$[a, b]$		x is between a and b, to include a and b

Figure 3.2.3: Summary of interval notation.

Example 3.2.1: Finding the Domain of a Function as a Set of Ordered Pairs

Find the domain of the following function: $\{(2, 10), (3, 10), (4, 20), (5, 30), (6, 40)\}$.

Solution

First identify the input values. The input value is the first coordinate in an ordered pair. There are no restrictions, as the ordered pairs are simply listed. The domain is the set of the first coordinates of the ordered pairs.

$$\{2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$$

Exercise 3.2.1

Find the domain of the function:

$$\{(-5, 4), (0, 0), (5, -4), (10, -8), (15, -12)\}$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

How To: Given a function written in equation form, find the domain.

1. Identify the input values.
2. Identify any restrictions on the input and exclude those values from the domain.
3. Write the domain in interval form, if possible.

Example 3.2.2: Finding the Domain of a Function

Find the domain of the function $f(x) = x^2 - 1$.

Solution

The input value, shown by the variable x in the equation, is squared and then the result is lowered by one. Any real number may be squared and then be lowered by one, so there are no restrictions on the domain of this function. The domain is the set of real numbers.

In interval form, the domain of f is $(-\infty, \infty)$.

Exercise 3.2.2

Find the domain of the function:

$$f(x) = 5 - x + x^3$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

How to: Given a function written in an equation form that includes a fraction, find the domain

1. Identify the input values.
2. Identify any restrictions on the input. If there is a denominator in the function's formula, set the denominator equal to zero and solve for x . If the function's formula contains an even root, set the radicand greater than or equal to 0, and then solve.
3. Write the domain in interval form, making sure to exclude any restricted values from the domain.

Example 3.2.3: Finding the Domain of a Function Involving a Denominator

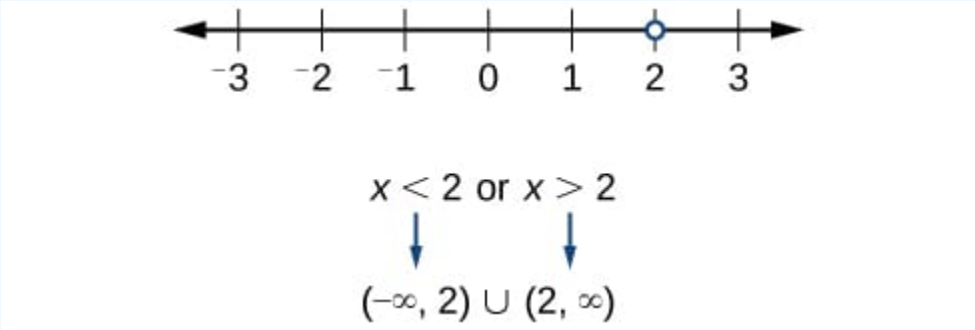
Find the domain of the function $f(x) = \dfrac{x+1}{2-x}$.

Solution

When there is a denominator, we want to include only values of the input that do not force the denominator to be zero. So, we will set the denominator equal to 0 and solve for x.

$$\begin{aligned} 2 - x &= 0 \\ -x &= -2 \\ x &= 2 \end{aligned}$$

Now, we will exclude 2 from the domain. The answers are all real numbers where $x < 2$ or $x > 2$. We can use a symbol known as the union, $\cup$,to combine the two sets. In interval notation, we write the solution:$(-\infty, 2) \cup (2, \infty)$.



In interval form, the domain of f is $(-\infty, 2) \cup (2, \infty)$.

Exercise 3.2.3

Find the domain of the function:

$$f(x) = \frac{1+4x}{2x-1}$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

How To: Given a function written in equation form including an even root, find the domain.

1. Identify the input values.
2. Since there is an even root, exclude any real numbers that result in a negative number in the radicand. Set the radicand greater than or equal to zero and solve for x.
3. The solution(s) are the domain of the function. If possible, write the answer in interval form.

Example 3.2.4: Finding the Domain of a Function with an Even Root

Find the domain of the function:

$$f(x) = \sqrt{7-x}.$$

Solution

When there is an even root in the formula, we exclude any real numbers that result in a negative number in the radicand.

Set the radicand greater than or equal to zero and solve for x.

$$\begin{aligned} 7-x &\geq 0 \\ -x &\geq -7 \\ x &\leq 7 \end{aligned}$$

Now, we will exclude any number greater than 7 from the domain. The answers are all real numbers less than or equal to 7, or $(-\infty, 7]$.

Exercise 3.2.4

Find the domain of the function

$$f(x) = \sqrt{5+2x}.$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Can there be functions in which the domain and range do not intersect at all?

Yes. For example, the function $f(x) = -\frac{1}{\sqrt{x}}$ has the set of all positive real numbers as its domain but the set of all negative real numbers as its range. As a more extreme example, a function's inputs and outputs can be completely different categories (for example, names of weekdays as inputs and numbers as outputs, as on an attendance chart), in such cases the domain and range have no elements in common.

Using Notations to Specify Domain and Range

In the previous examples, we used inequalities and lists to describe the domain of functions. We can also use inequalities, or other statements that might define sets of values or data, to describe the behavior of the variable in set-builder notation. For example, $\{x|10 \leq x < 30\}$ describes the behavior of x in set-builder notation. The braces $\{\}$ are read as "the set of," and the vertical bar | is read as "such that," so we would read$\{x|10 \leq x < 30\}$ as "the set of x-values such that 10 is less than or equal to x, and x is less than 30."

Figure $3.2.4$ compares inequality notation, set-builder notation, and interval notation.

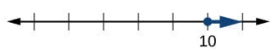
	Inequality Notation	Set-builder Notation	Interval Notation
	$5 < h \leq 10$	$\{h \mid 5 < h \leq 10\}$	$(5, 10]$
	$5 \leq h < 10$	$\{h \mid 5 \leq h < 10\}$	$[5, 10)$
	$5 < h < 10$	$\{h \mid 5 < h < 10\}$	$(5, 10)$
	$h < 10$	$\{h \mid h < 10\}$	$(-\infty, 10)$
	$h \geq 10$	$\{h \mid h \geq 10\}$	$[10, \infty)$
	All real numbers	$\mathbb{R}$	$(-\infty, \infty)$

Figure $3.2.4$: Summary of notations for inequalities, set-builder, and interval.

To combine two intervals using inequality notation or set-builder notation, we use the word "or." As we saw in earlier examples, we use the union symbol, $\cup$,to combine two unconnected intervals. For example, the union of the sets$\{2, 3, 5\}$ and $\{4, 6\}$ is the set $\{2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$. It is the set of all elements that belong to one or the other (or both) of the original two sets. For sets with a finite number of elements like these, the elements do not have to be listed in ascending order of numerical value. If the original two sets have some elements in common, those elements should be listed only once in the union set. For sets of real numbers on intervals, another example of a union is

$$\{x||x| \geq 3\} = (-\infty, -3] \cup [3, \infty) \tag{3.2.1}$$

Set-Builder Notation and Interval Notation

Set-builder notation is a method of specifying a set of elements that satisfy a certain condition. It takes the form $\{x|\text{ statement about x}\}$ which is read as, "the set of all x such that the statement about x is true." For example,

\[\{x|4

Interval notation is a way of describing sets that include all real numbers between a lower limit that may or may not be included and an upper limit that may or may not be included. The endpoint values are listed between brackets or parentheses. A square bracket indicates inclusion in the set, and a parenthesis indicates exclusion from the set. For example,

$$(4, 12]$$

Given a line graph, describe the set of values using interval notation.

1. Identify the intervals to be included in the set by determining where the heavy line overlays the real line.
2. At the left end of each interval, use [with each end value to be included in the set (solid dot) or (for each excluded end value (open dot).
3. At the right end of each interval, use] with each end value to be included in the set (filled dot) or) for each excluded end value (open dot).
4. Use the union symbol $\cup$ to combine all intervals into one set.

Example 3.2.5: Describing Sets on the Real-Number Line

Describe the intervals of values shown in Figure 3.2.5 using inequality notation, set-builder notation, and interval notation.

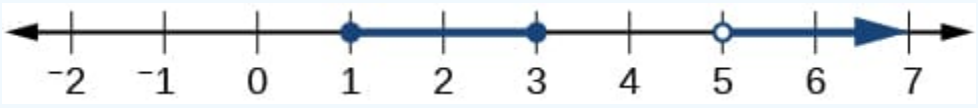


Figure 3.2.5: Line graph of $1 \leq x \leq 3$ or $x > 5$.

Solution

To describe the values, x, included in the intervals shown, we would say, "x is a real number greater than or equal to 1 and less than or equal to 3, or a real number greater than 5."

Inequality

$$1 \leq x \leq 3 \text{ or } x > 5$$

Set-builder Notation

$$\{x | 1 \leq x \leq 3 \text{ or } x > 5\}$$

Interval notation

$$[1, 3] \cup (5, \infty)$$

Remember that, when writing or reading interval notation, using a square bracket means the boundary is included in the set. Using a parenthesis means the boundary is not included in the set.

Exercise 3.2.5

Given Figure 3.2.6, specify the graphed set in

a. words
b. set-builder notation
c. interval notation



Figure 3.2.6: Line graph of $x \leq -2$, $-1 \leq x < 3$.

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Finding Domain and Range from Graphs

Another way to identify the domain and range of functions is by using graphs. Because the domain refers to the set of possible input values, the domain of a graph consists of all the input values shown on the x-axis. The range is the set of possible output values, which are shown on the y-axis. Keep in mind that if the graph continues beyond the portion of the graph we can see, the domain and range may be greater than the visible values. See Figure 3.2.7.

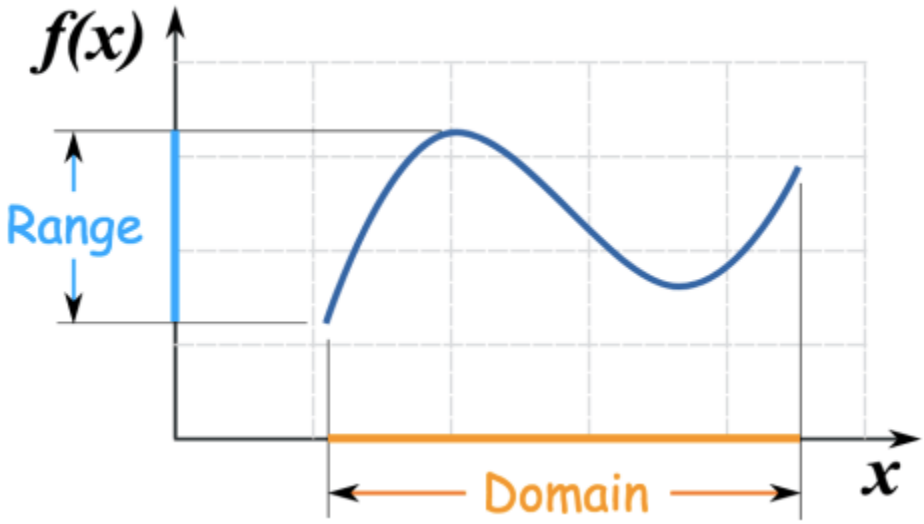


Figure 3.2.7: Graph of a function that shows the set of all x-values is the domain and the set of all y-values is the range

Note: The domain and range are always written from smaller to larger values, or from left to right for domain, and from the bottom of the graph to the top of the graph for range.

Example 3.2.6: Finding Domain and Range from a Graph

Find the domain and range of the function f whose graph is shown below.

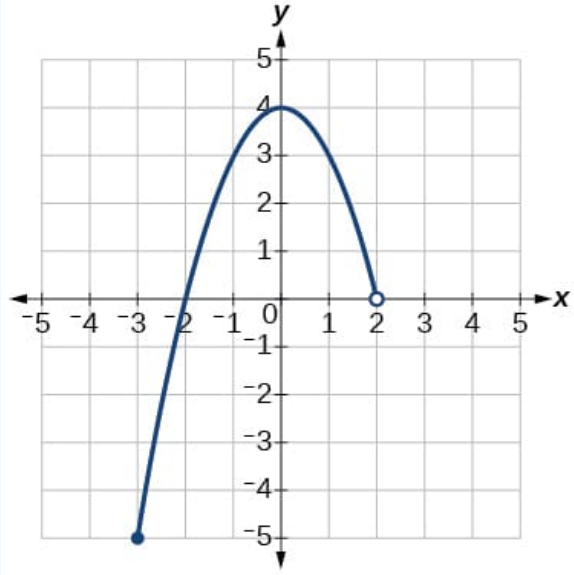


Figure 3.2.8: Graph of a restricted quadratic function.

Solution

We can observe that the horizontal extent of the graph is –3 to 2, there is a closed point (solid dot) at $(-3,-5)$ and an open "hole" at $(2,0)$, so the domain of f is $[-3,2)$.

The vertical extent of the graph is from –5 to 4, there are closed points (solid dot or line/curve of the graph) at $(-3,-5)$ and $(0,4)$, so the range is $[-5,4]$. See Figure 3.2.9.

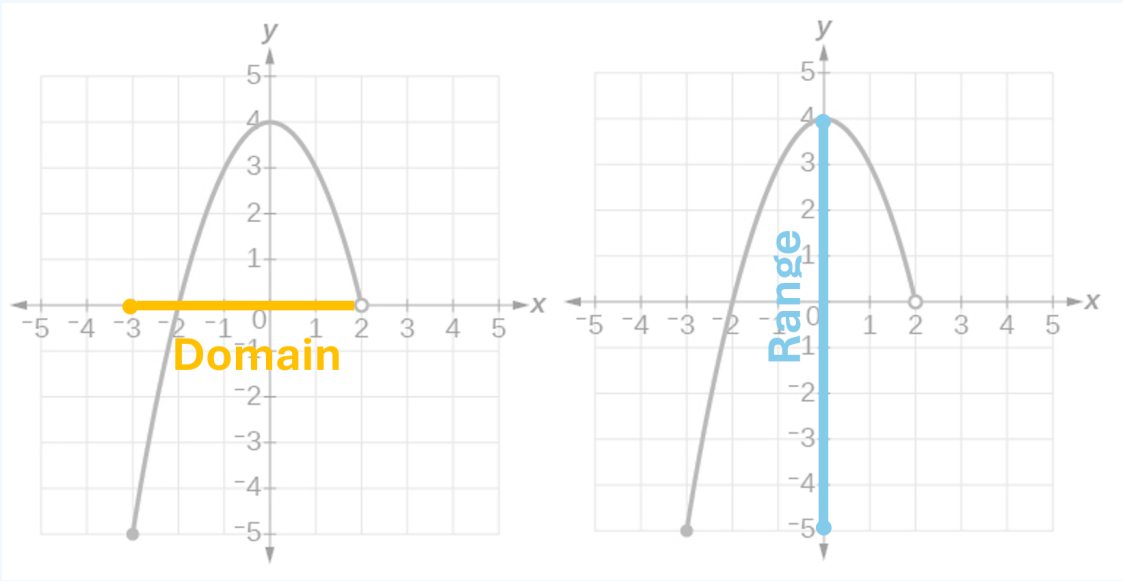
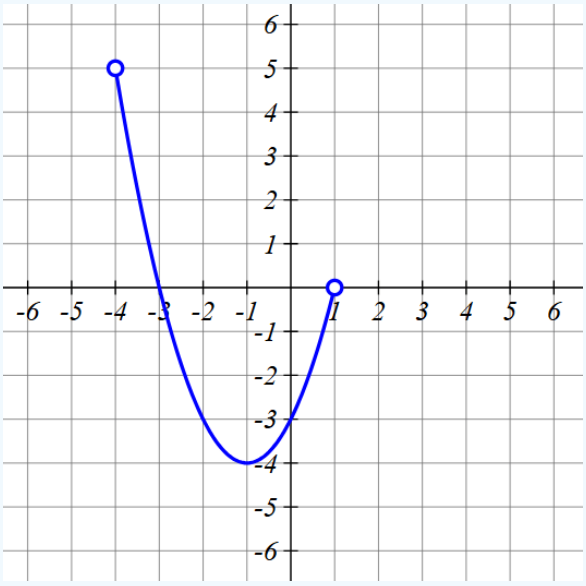


Figure 3.2.9: Graph of the previous function shows the domain and range

Exercise 3.2.6

Find the domain and range of the function f whose graph is shown below.



Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 3.2.7: Finding Domain and Range from a Graph of Oil Production

Find the domain and range of the function f whose graph is shown in Figure 3.2.10.

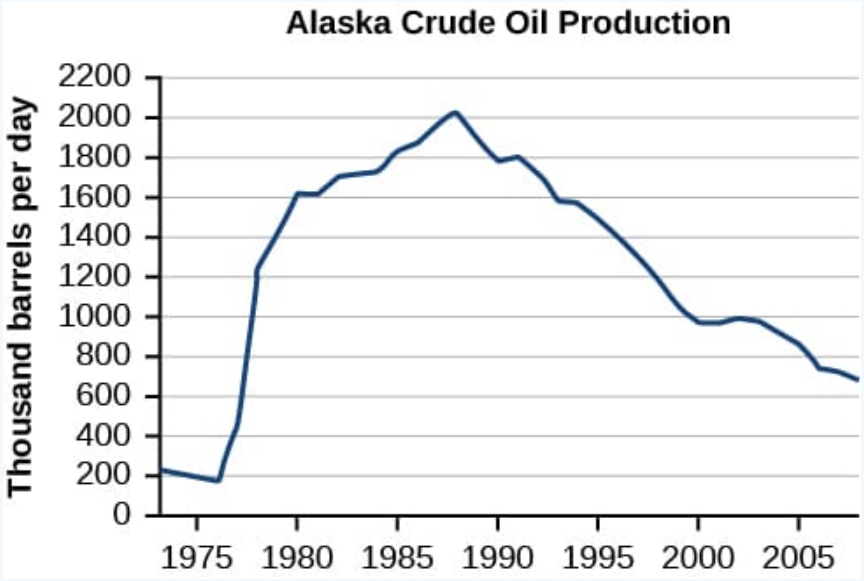


Figure 3.2.10: Graph of the Alaska Crude Oil Production where the y-axis is thousand barrels per day and the -axis is the years(credit: modification of work by the U.S. Energy Information Administration)

Solution

The input quantity along the horizontal axis is “years,” which we represent with the variable t for time. The output quantity is “thousands of barrels of oil per day,” which we represent with the variable b for barrels. The graph may continue to the left and right beyond what is viewed, but based on the portion of the graph that is visible, we can determine the domain as $1973 \leq t \leq 2008$ and the range as approximately $180 \leq b \leq 2010$.

In interval notation, the domain is $[1973, 2008]$, and the range is about $[180, 2010]$. For the domain and the range, we approximate the smallest and largest values since they do not fall exactly on the grid lines.

Exercise 3.2.7

Given Figure 3.2.11, identify the domain and range using interval notation.

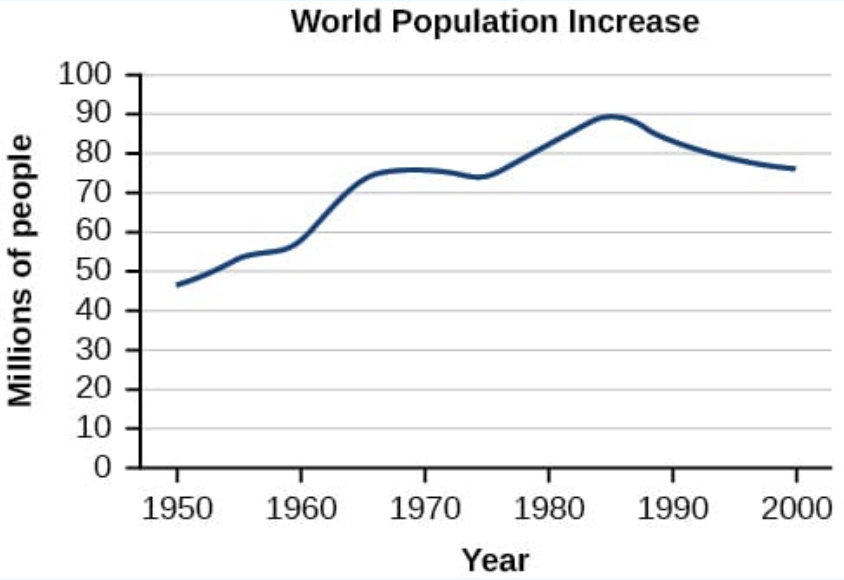


Figure 3.2.11: Graph of World Population Increase where the y-axis represents millions of people and the x-axis represents the year.

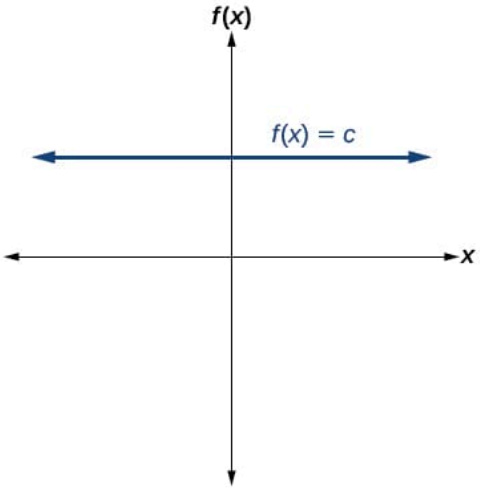
Answer available at the end of this section.

Can a function’s domain and range be the same?

Yes. For example, the domain and range of the cube root function are both the set of all real numbers.

Finding Domains and Ranges of the Toolkit Functions

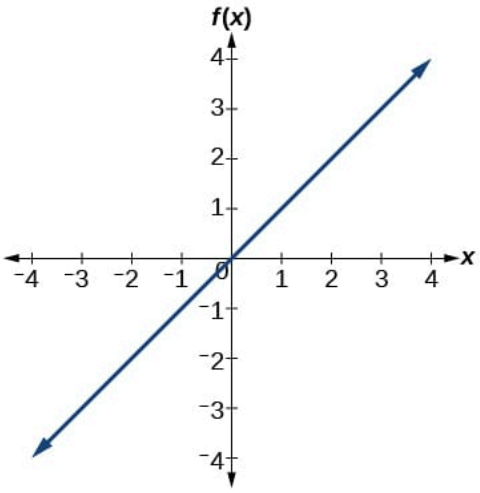
We will now return to our set of toolkit functions to determine the domain and range of each.



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
Range: [c,c]

Figure 3.2.12: Constant function $f(x) = c$.

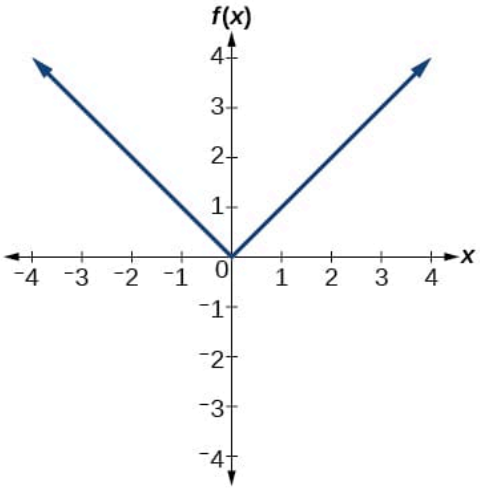
For the **constant function** $f(x) = c$, the domain consists of all real numbers; there are no restrictions on the input. The only output value is the constant c, so the range is the set $\{c\}$ that contains this single element. In interval notation, this is written as $[c, c]$, the interval that both begins and ends with c.



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
Range: $(-\infty, \infty)$

Figure 3.2.13***:*** *Identity function f(x)=x.*

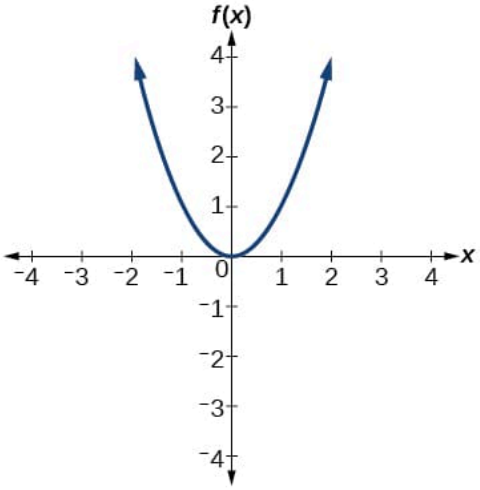
For the **identity function** $f(x) = x$, there is no restriction on x. Both the domain and range are the set of all real numbers.



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
Range: $[0, \infty)$

Figure 3.2.14: Absolute function $f(x) = |x|$.

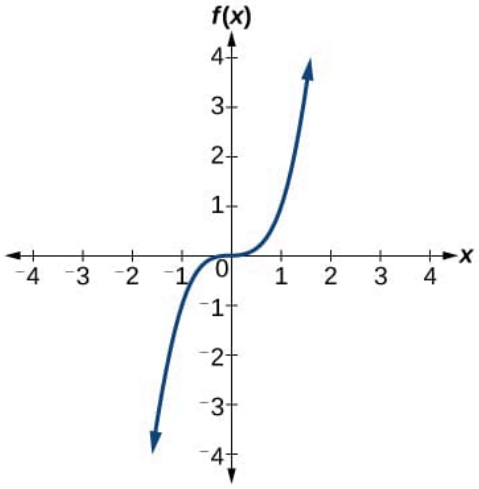
For the **absolute value function** $f(x) = |x|$, there is no restriction on x. However, because absolute value is defined as a distance from 0, the output can only be greater than or equal to 0.



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
Range: $[0, \infty)$

Figure 3.2.15: Quadratic function $f(x) = x^2$.

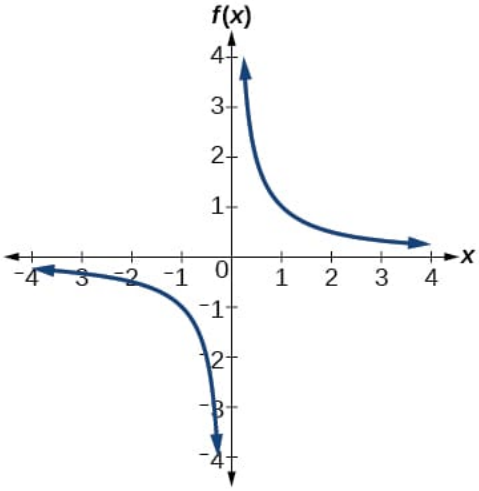
For the **quadratic function** $f(x) = x^2$, the domain is all real numbers since the horizontal extent of the graph is the whole real number line. Because the graph does not include any negative values for the range, the range is only nonnegative real numbers.



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
Range: $(-\infty, \infty)$

Figure 3.2.16: Cubic function $f(x) - x^3$.

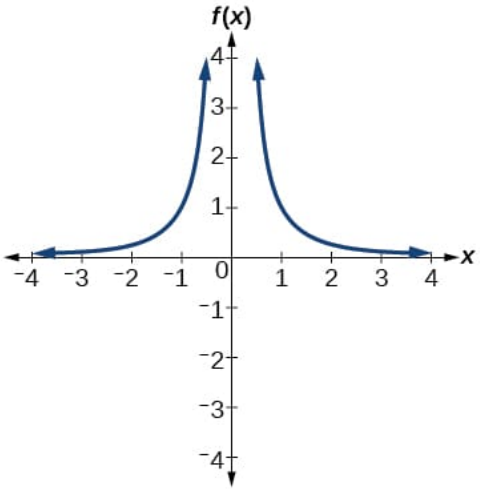
For the **cubic function** $f(x) = x^3$, the domain is all real numbers because the horizontal extent of the graph is the whole real number line. The same applies to the vertical extent of the graph, so the domain and range include all real numbers.



Domain: $(-\infty, 0) \cup (0, \infty)$
Range: $(-\infty, 0) \cup (0, \infty)$

Figure 3.2.17: Reciprocal function $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$.

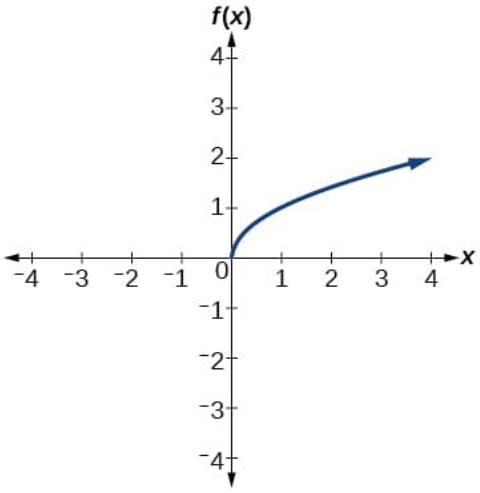
For the **reciprocal function** $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$, we cannot divide by 0, so we must exclude 0 from the domain. Further, 1 divided by any value can never be 0, so the range also will not include 0. In set-builder notation, we could also write $\{x|x \neq 0\}$,the set of all real numbers that are not zero.



Domain: $(-\infty, 0) \cup (0, \infty)$
Range: $(0, \infty)$

Figure 3.2.18: Reciprocal squared function $f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$

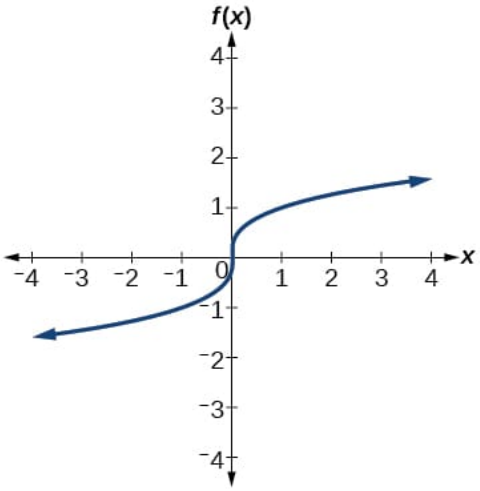
For the **reciprocal squared function** $f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$,we cannot divide by 0, so we must exclude 0 from the domain. There is also no x that can give an output of 0, so 0 is excluded from the range as well. Note that the output of this function is always positive due to the square in the denominator, so the range includes only positive numbers.



Domain: $[0, \infty)$
Range: $[0, \infty)$

Figure 3.2.19***:*** *Square root function* $f(x) = \sqrt{(x)}$.

For the **square root function** $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$, we cannot take the square root of a negative real number, so the domain must be 0 or greater. The range also excludes negative numbers because the square root of a positive number x is defined to be positive, even though the square of the negative number $-\sqrt{x}$ also gives us x.



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
Range: $(-\infty, \infty)$

Figure 3.2.20: Cube root function $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$.

For the **cube root function** $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$, the domain and range include all real numbers. Note that there is no problem taking a cube root, or any odd-integer root, of a negative number, and the resulting output is negative (it is an odd function).

How To:

Given the formula for a function, determine the domain and range.

1. Exclude from the domain any input values that result in division by zero.
2. Exclude from the domain any input values that have nonreal (or undefined) number outputs.
3. Use the valid input values to determine the range of the output values.
4. Look at the function graph and table values to confirm the actual function behavior.

Finding the Domain and Range Using Toolkit Functions

Find the domain and range of $f(x) = 2x^3 - x$.

Solution

There are no restrictions on the domain, as any real number may be cubed and then subtracted from the result.

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$ and the range is also $(-\infty, \infty)$.

Example $3.2.7B$: Finding the Domain and Range

Find the domain and range of $f(x) = \frac{2}{x+1}$.

Solution

We cannot evaluate the function at –1 because division by zero is undefined. The domain is $(-\infty, -1) \cup (-1, \infty)$. Because the function is never zero, we exclude 0 from the range. The range is $(-\infty, 0) \cup (0, \infty)$.

Example $3.2.7C$: Finding the Domain and Range

Find the domain and range of $f(x) = 2\sqrt{x+4}$.

Solution

We cannot take the square root of a negative number, so the value inside the radical must be nonnegative.

$x + 4 \geq 0$ when $x \geq -4$

The domain of $f(x)$ is $[-4, \infty)$.

We then find the range. We know that $f(-4) = 0$, and the function value increases as x increases without any upper limit. We conclude that the range of f is $[0, \infty)$.

Analysis

Figure $3.2.19$ represents the function f.

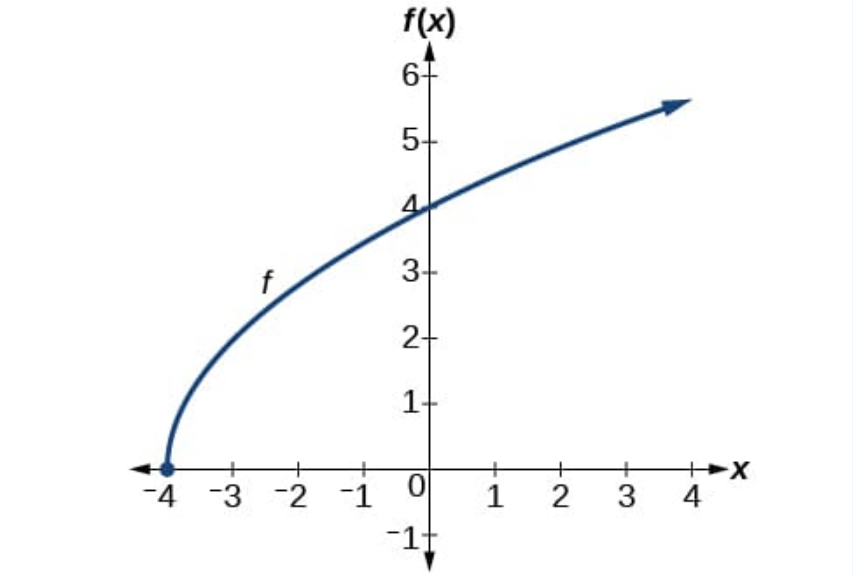


Figure $3.2.19$: Graph of a square root function at $(-4, 0)$.

Exercise $3.2.7$

Find the domain and range of

$f(x) = \sqrt{-2 - x}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Piecewise-Defined Functions

Sometimes, we come across a function that requires more than one formula in order to obtain the given output. For example, in the toolkit functions, we introduced the absolute value function $f(x) = |x|$. With a domain of all real numbers and a range of values greater than or equal to 0, **absolute value** can be defined as the **magnitude**, or **modulus**, of a real number value regardless of sign. It is the distance from 0 on the number line. All of these definitions require the output to be greater than or equal to 0.

If we input 0, or a positive value, the output is the same as the input.

$$f(x) = x \text{ if } x \geq 0$$

If we input a negative value, the output is the opposite of the input.

$$f(x) = -x \text{ if } x < 0$$

Because this requires two different processes or pieces, the absolute value function is an example of a **piecewise function**. A piecewise function is a function in which more than one formula is used to define the output over different pieces of the domain.

We use piecewise functions to describe situations in which a rule or relationship changes as the input value crosses certain "boundaries." For example, we often encounter situations in business for which the cost per piece of a certain item is discounted once the number ordered exceeds a certain value. Tax brackets are another real-world example of piecewise functions. For example, consider a simple tax system in which incomes up to $10,000 are taxed at 10%, and any additional income is taxed at 20%. The tax on a total income S would be $0.1S$ if $S \leq \$10,000$ and $\$1000 + 0.2(S - \$10,000)$ if $S > \$10,000$.Piecewise Function

Definition: Piecewise Function

A piecewise function is a function in which more than one formula is used to define the output. Each formula has its own domain, and the domain of the function is the union of all these smaller domains. We notate this idea like this:

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \text{formula 1} & \text{if x is in domain 1} \\ \text{formula 2} & \text{if x is in domain 2} \\ \text{formula 3} & \text{if x is in domain 3} \end{cases}$$

In piecewise notation, the *absolute value* function is

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} x & \text{if } x \geq 0 \\ -x & \text{if } x < 0 \end{cases}$$



Given a piecewise function, write the formula and identify the domain for each interval.

1. Identify the intervals for which different rules apply.
2. Determine formulas that describe how to calculate an output from an input in each interval.
3. Use braces and if-statements to write the function.

Example $3.2.8A$: Writing a Piecewise Function

A museum charges $5 per person for a guided tour with a group of 1 to 9 people or a fixed $50 fee for a group of 10 or more people. Write a **function** relating the number of people, n, to the cost, C.

Solution

Two different formulas will be needed. For n-values under 10, $C = 5n$. For values of n that are 10 or greater, $C = 50$.

$$C(n) = \begin{cases} 5n & \text{if } n < 10 \\ 50 & \text{if } n \geq 10 \end{cases}$$

Analysis

The function is represented in Figure $3.2.20$. The graph is a diagonal line from $n = 0$ to $n = 10$ and a constant after that. In this example, the two formulas agree at the meeting point where $n = 10$, but not all piecewise functions have this property.

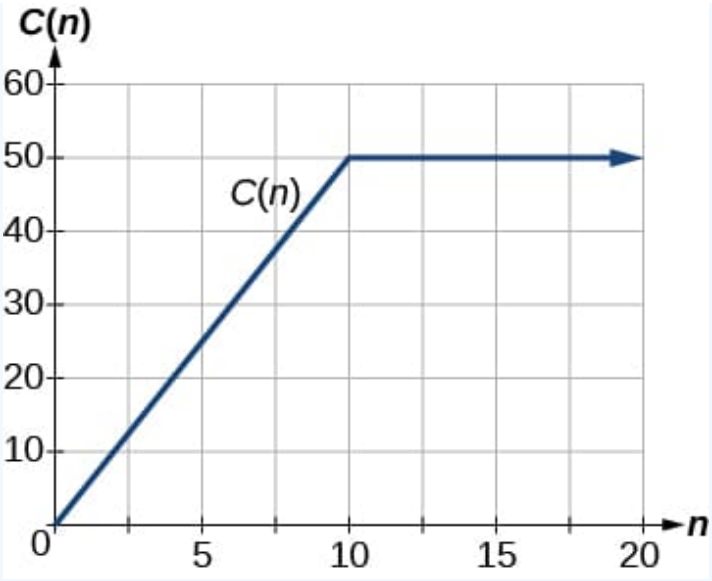


Figure 3.2.20

Example $3.2.8B$: Working with a Piecewise Function

A cell phone company uses the function below to determine the cost, C, in dollars for g gigabytes of data transfer.

\[C(g)= \begin{cases} 25 & \text{if $0

Find the cost of using 1.5 gigabytes of data and the cost of using 4 gigabytes of data.

Soltuion

To find the cost of using 1.5 gigabytes of data, $C(1.5)$, we first look to see which part of the domain our input falls in. Because 1.5 is less than 2, we use the first formula.

$$C(1.5) = \$25$$

To find the cost of using 4 gigabytes of data, C(4), we see that our input of 4 is greater than 2, so we use the second formula.

$$C(4) = 25 + 10(4 - 2) = \$45$$

Analysis

The function is represented in Figure 3.2.21. We can see where the function changes from a constant to a shifted and stretched identity at $g = 2$. We plot the graphs for the different formulas on a common set of axes, making sure each formula is applied on its proper domain.

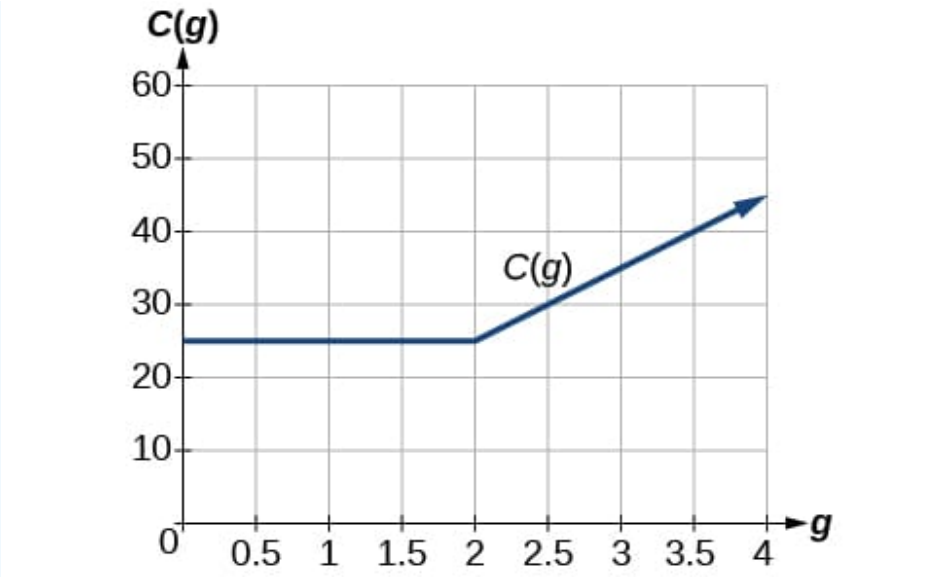


Figure 3.2.21

How To: **Given a piecewise function, sketch a graph.**

1. Indicate on the x-axis the boundaries defined by the intervals on each piece of the domain.
2. For each piece of the domain, graph on that interval using the corresponding equation pertaining to that piece. Do not graph two functions over one interval because it would violate the criteria of a function.

Example 3.2.8C: Graphing a Piecewise Function

Sketch a graph of the function.

\[f(x)= \begin{cases} x^2 & \text{if $x \leq 1$} \ 3 &\text{if 12} \end{cases} \nonumber \]

Solution

Each of the component functions is from our library of toolkit functions, so we know their shapes. We can imagine graphing each function and then limiting the graph to the indicated domain. At the endpoints of the domain, we draw open circles to indicate where the endpoint is not included because of a less-than or greater-than inequality; we draw a closed circle where the endpoint is included because of a less-than-or-equal-to or greater-than-or-equal-to inequality.

Figure 3.2.20 shows the three components of the piecewise function graphed on separate coordinate systems.

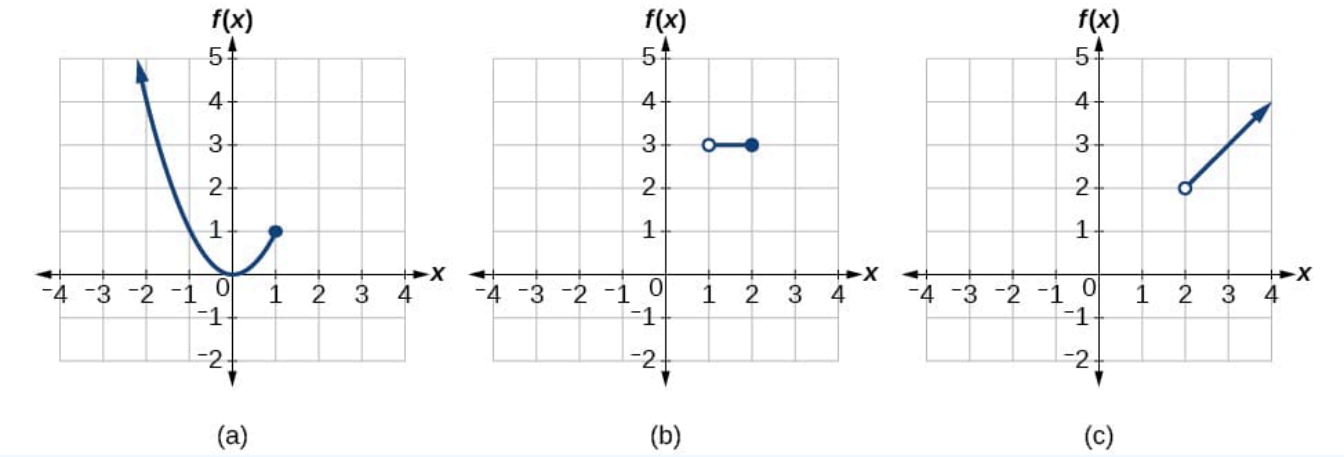


Figure 3.2.20***:*** *Graph of each part of the piece-wise function f(x)*

(a)$f(x) = x^2$ if $x \leq 1$; (b) $f(x) = 3$ if $1 < x \leq 2$; (c) $f(x) = x$ if $x > 2$

Now that we have sketched each piece individually, we combine them in the same coordinate plane. See Figure 3.2.21.

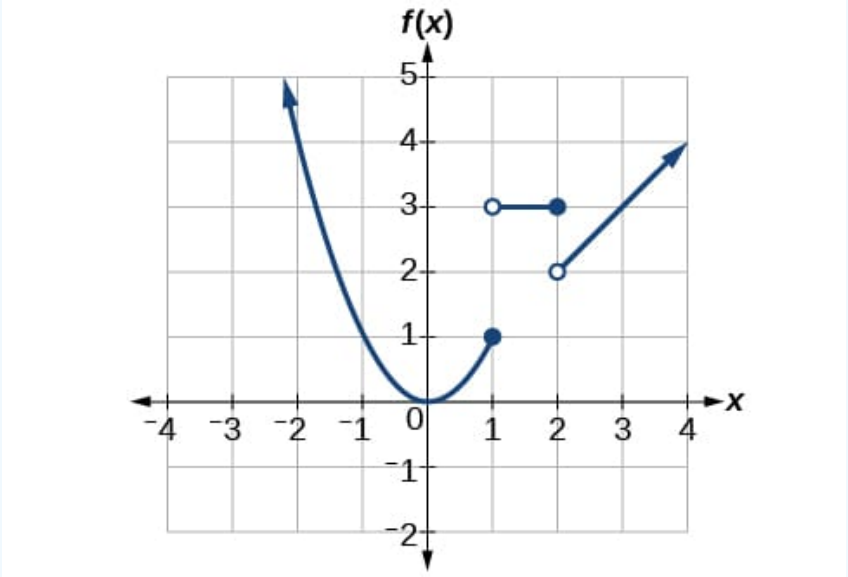


Figure 3.2.21: Graph of the entire function.

Analysis

Note that the graph does pass the vertical line test even at $x = 1$ and $x = 2$ because the points $(1, 3)$ and $(2, 2)$ are not part of the graph of the function, though $(1, 1)$ and $(2, 3)$ are.

Exercise 3.2.8

Graph the following piecewise function.

\[f(x)= \begin{cases} x^3 & \text{if $x < -1$} \ -2 &\text{if -14} \end{cases} \nonumber \]

Answer available at the end of this section.

Can more than one formula from a piecewise function be applied to a value in the domain?

No. Each value corresponds to one equation in a piecewise formula.

Key Concepts

- The domain of a function includes all real input values that would not cause us to attempt an undefined mathematical operation, such as dividing by zero or taking the square root of a negative number.
- The domain of a function can be determined by listing the input values of a set of ordered pairs.
- The domain of a function can also be determined by identifying the input values of a function written as an equation.
- Interval values represented on a number line can be described using inequality notation, set-builder notation, and interval notation.
- For many functions, the domain and range can be determined from a graph.
- An understanding of toolkit functions can be used to find the domain and range of related functions.
- A piecewise function is described by more than one formula.
- A piecewise function can be graphed using each algebraic formula on its assigned subdomain.

Footnotes

1 The Numbers: Where Data and the Movie Business Meet. “Box Office History for Horror Movies.” http://www.the-numbers.com/market/genre/Horror. Accessed 3/24/2014
2 www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/Lea...s=MCRFPAK2&f=A.

Glossary

interval notation

a method of describing a set that includes all numbers between a lower limit and an upper limit; the lower and upper values are listed between brackets or parentheses, a square bracket indicating inclusion in the set, and a parenthesis indicating exclusion

piecewise function

a function in which more than one formula is used to define the output

set-builder notation

a method of describing a set by a rule that all of its members obey; it takes the form {x| statement about x}

Answers

Exercise 3.2.1

$\{-5, 0, 5, 10, 15\}$

Exercise 3.2.2

$(-\infty, \infty)$

Exercise 3.2.3

$$(-\infty, \frac{1}{2}) \cup (\frac{1}{2}, \infty)$$

Exercise 3.2.4

$$[-2.5, \infty)$$

Exercise 3.2.5

Values that are less than or equal to –2, or values that are greater than or equal to –1 and less than 3;
$\{x | x \leq -2 \text{ or } -1 \leq x < 3\}$

$(-\infty, -2] \cup [-1, 3)$

Exercise 3.2.6

Domain: $(-4, 1)$

Range: $[-4, 5)$

Exercise 3.2.7

domain =$[1950, 2002]$

range = $[47,000,000, 89,000,000]$

Exercise 3.2.7

domain: $(-\infty, -2]$

range: $[0, \infty)$

Exercise 3.2.8

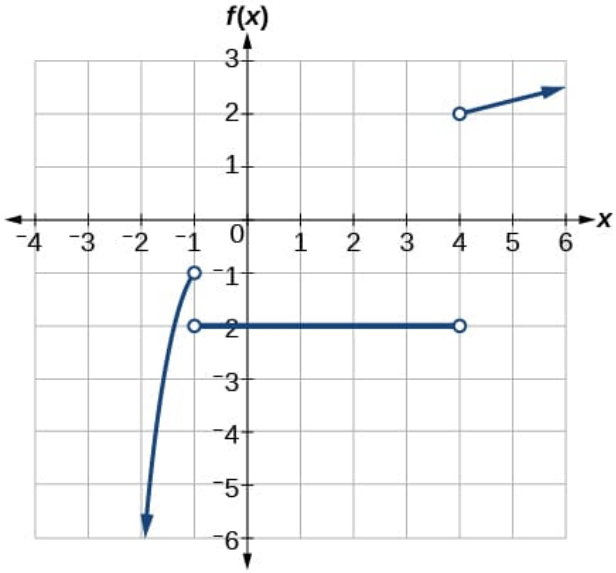


Figure 3.2.22

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3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs

Learning Objectives

- Find the average rate of change of a function.
- Interpret average rate of change as the slope of a secant line.
- Use a graph to determine where a function is increasing, decreasing, or constant.
- Use a graph to locate local and global extrema.

Gasoline costs have experienced some wild fluctuations over the last several decades. Table 3.3.1 lists the average cost, in dollars, of a gallon of gasoline for the years 2005–2012. The cost of gasoline can be considered as a function of year.

Table 3.3.1

y	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
$C(y)$	4.29	4.62	4.84	5.30	4.41	4.84	3.58	3.68

If we were interested only in how the gasoline prices changed between 2005 and 2012, we could compute that the cost per gallon had increased from $2.31 to $3.68, an increase of $1.37. While this is interesting, it might be more useful to look at how much the price changed per year. In this section, we will investigate changes such as these.

Finding the Average Rate of Change of a Function

The price change per year is a **rate of change** because it describes how an output quantity changes relative to the change in the input quantity. We can see that the price of gasoline in Table 3.3.1 did not change by the same amount each year, so the rate of change was not constant. If we use only the beginning and ending data, we would be finding the **average rate of change** over the specified period of time. To find the average rate of change, we divide the change in the output value by the change in the input value.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Average rate of change} &= \frac{\text{Change in output}}{\text{Change in input}} \\ &= \frac{\Delta y}{\Delta x} \\ &= \text{Slope of the Secant Line between } (x_1, y_1) \text{ and } (x_2, y_2) \\ &= \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \\ &= \frac{f(x_2) - f(x_1)}{x_2 - x_1}\end{aligned}$$

The Greek letter Δ (delta) signifies the change in a quantity; we read the ratio as "delta-y over delta-x" or "the change in y divided by the change in x." Occasionally we write Δf instead of Δy, which still represents the change in the function's output value resulting from a change to its input value. It does not mean we are changing the function into some other function.

In our example, the gasoline price increased by $1.37 from 2005 to 2012. Over 7 years, the average rate of change was

$$\frac{\Delta y}{\Delta x} = \frac{\$1.37}{7\text{years}} \approx 0.196 \text{ dollars per year.} \tag{3.3.1}$$

On average, the price of gas increased by about 19.6¢ each year. Other examples of rates of change include:

- The price of gasoline decreasing by 22 cents per year.
- A population of coyotes increasing by 40 coyotes per week.
- A car traveling 68 miles per hour.

- A vehicle fuel efficiency of 27 miles per gallon.

Definition: Rate of Change

A **rate of change** describes how an output quantity changes relative to the change in the input quantity. The units on a rate of change are "output units per input units."

The average rate of change between two input values is the total change of the function values (output values) divided by the change in the input values.

$$\frac{\Delta y}{\Delta x} = \frac{f(x_2) - f(x_1)}{x_2 - x_1} \tag{3.3.2}$$

How To...

Given the value of a function at different points, calculate the average rate of change of a function for the interval between two values x_1 and x_2.

1. Calculate the difference $y_2 - y_1 = \Delta y$.
2. Calculate the difference $x_2 - x_1 = \Delta x$.
3. Find the ratio $\frac{\Delta y}{\Delta x}$.

Example 3.3.1: Computing an Average Rate of Change

Using the data in Table 3.3.1, find the average rate of change of the price of gasoline between 2017 and 2019.

Solution

In 2017, the price of gasoline was \$4.84. In 2019, the cost was \$4.41. The average rate of change is

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\Delta y}{\Delta x} &= \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \\ &= \frac{\$2.41 - \$2.84}{2019 - 2017} \\ &= \frac{-\$0.43}{2 \text{ years}} \\ &= -\$0.22 \text{ per year}\end{aligned}$$

Analysis

Note that a decrease is expressed by a negative change or "negative increase." A rate of change is negative when the output decreases as the input increases or when the output increases as the input decreases.

Exercise 3.3.1

Using the data in Table 3.3.1, find the average rate of change between 2015 and 2020.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Example 3.3.2: Computing Average Rate of Change from a Graph

Given the function $g(t)$ shown in Figure 3.3.1, find the *slope of the secant line* between the points $(-1, g(-1))$ and $2, g(2))$

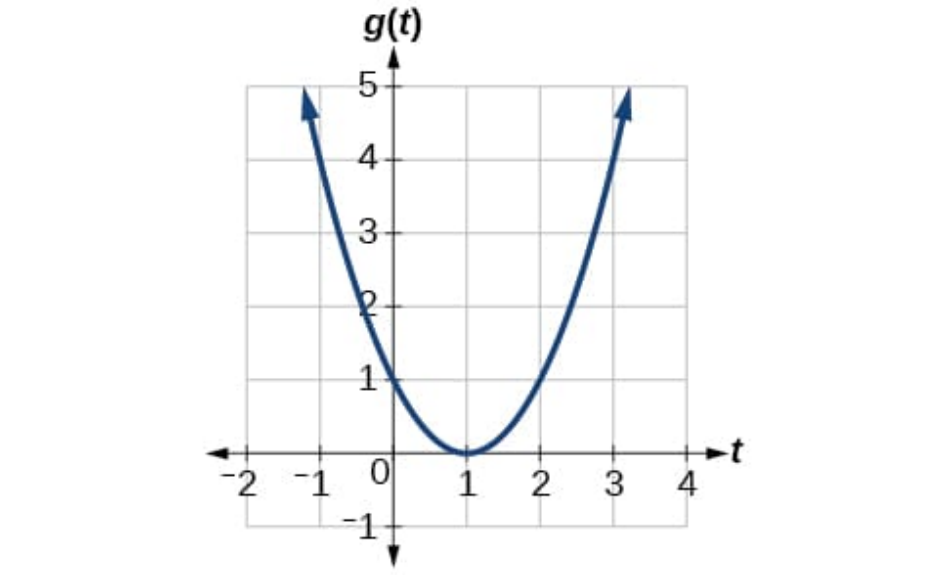


Figure 3.3.1: Graph of a parabola.

Solution

At $t = -1$, Figure 3.3.2 shows $g(-1) = 4$. At $t = 2$,the graph shows $g(2) = 1$.

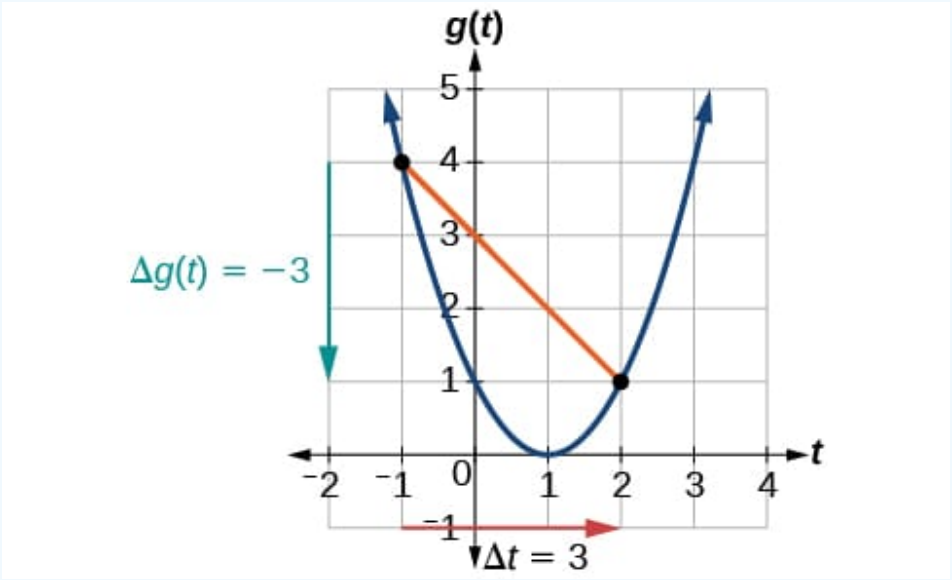


Figure 3.3.2: Graph of a parabola with a line from points (-1, 4) and (2, 1) to show the changes for g(t) and t.

The horizontal change $\Delta t = 3$ is shown by the red arrow, and the vertical change $\Delta g(t) = -3$ is shown by the turquoise arrow. The output changes by –3 while the input changes by 3, giving an average rate of change of

$$\frac{1-4}{2-(-1)} = \frac{-3}{3} = -1 \tag{3.3.3}$$

Analysis

Note that the order in which we evaluate is very important. For example, if we evaluated $\frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_1 - x_2}$, we will not get the correct answer.

You must decide which point will have subscript 1 and which point will have a subscript 2, then BE CONSISTENT when evaluating by subtracting in the SAME ORDER each time.

Example 3.3.3: Computing Average Rate of Change from a Table

After picking up a friend who lives 10 miles away, Anna records her distance from home over time. The values are shown in Table 3.3.2. Find her average speed over the first 6 hours.

Table 3.3.2

t **(hours)**	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
$D(t)$ **(miles)**	10	55	90	153	214	240	292	300

Solution

Here, the average speed is the average rate of change. She traveled 292 miles in 6 hours, for an average speed of

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{292 - 10}{6 - 0} &= \frac{282}{6} \\ &= 47 \end{aligned}$$

The average speed is about 47 miles per hour.

Analysis

Because the speed is not constant, the average speed depends on the interval chosen. For the interval $[2, 3]$, the average speed is 63 miles per hour.

Example 3.3.4: Computing Average Rate of Change for a Function Expressed as a Formula

Compute the average rate of change of $f(x) = x^2 - 3x + 1$ on the interval $[2, 4]$.

Solution

We can start by computing the function values at each endpoint of the interval.

$$\begin{aligned} f(2) &= 2^2 - 3(2) + 1 \\ &= 4 - 6 + 1 \\ &= -1 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} f(4) &= 4^2 - 3(4) + 1 \\ &= 16 - 12 + 1 \\ &= 5 \end{aligned}$$

Now we compute the average rate of change.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{AROC} &= \frac{f(4)-f(2)}{4-2} \\ &= \frac{5-(-1)}{4-2} \\ &= \frac{5+1}{2} \\ &= 3 \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 3.3.2

Find the average rate of change of $f(x)=\frac{1}{3x+1}$ on the interval $[0,1]$.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Example 3.3.5: Finding an Average Rate of Change as an Expression

Find the average rate of change of $g(t)=t^2+3t+1$ on the interval $[a,a+h]$. The answer will be an expression involving a.

Solution

We use the average rate of change formula.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Average rate of change} &= \frac{g(a+h)-g(a)}{a+h-a} && \text{Evaluate.} \\ &= \frac{(a^2+2ah+h^2+3a+3h+1)-(a^2+3a+1)}{h} && \text{Simplify.} \\ &= \frac{h^2+2ah+3h}{h} && \text{Simplify and factor.} \\ &= \frac{h(h+2a+3)}{h} && \text{Divide by the common factor h} \\ &= h+2a+3 \end{aligned}$$

This result tells us the average rate of change between $t_1=a$ and any other point $t_2=a+h$ is equal to $h+2a+3$

For example, on the interval $[1,1+h]$, the average rate of change would be $h+2(1)+3=h+5$ where h represents the horizontal distance between t_1 and t_2

Exercise 3.3.3

Find the average rate of change of $f(x)=x^2+2x-8$ on the interval $[a,a+5]$.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Using a Graph to Determine Where a Function is Increasing, Decreasing, or Constant

As part of exploring how functions change, we can identify intervals over which the function is changing in specific ways. We say that a function is increasing on an interval if the function values increase as the input values increase within that interval. Similarly, a function is decreasing on an interval if the function values decrease as the input values increase over that interval. The average rate of change of an increasing function is positive, and the average rate of change of a decreasing function is negative. Figure 3.3.3 shows examples of increasing and decreasing intervals on a function.

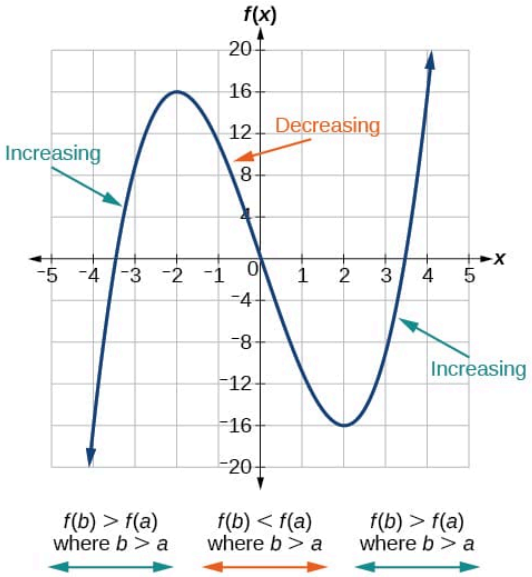


Figure 3.3.3: The function $f(x) = x^3 - 12x$ is increasing on $(-\infty, -2) \cup (2, \infty)$ and is decreasing on $(-2, 2)$.

While some functions are increasing (or decreasing) over their entire domain, many others are not. A value of the input where a function changes from increasing to decreasing (as we go from left to right, that is, as the input variable increases) is called a **local maximum**. If a function has more than one, we say it has local maxima. Similarly, a value of the input where a function changes from decreasing to increasing as the input variable increases is called a **local minimum**. The plural form is "local minima." Together, local maxima and minima are called **local extrema**, or local extreme values, of the function. (Fun Fact: The singular form of extrema is "extremum")

Often, the term local is replaced by the term **relative**.

A function that is neither increasing nor decreasing on an interval is called **constant**. The graph would be a horizontal line.

A function is also neither increasing nor decreasing at the extrema.

For the function whose graph is shown in Figure 3.3.4, the local maximum is 16, and it occurs at $x = -2$. The local minimum is –16 and it occurs at $x = 2$.

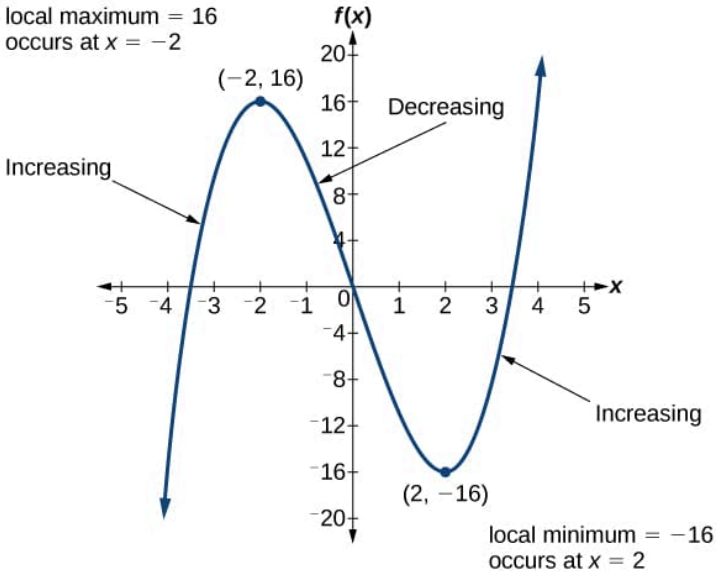


Figure 3.3.4: Graph of a polynomial that shows the increasing and decreasing intervals and local maximum.maximum

To locate the local maxima and minima from a graph, we need to observe the graph to determine where the graph attains its

highest and lowest points, respectively, within an open interval. Like the summit of a roller coaster, the graph of a function is higher at a local maximum than at nearby points on both sides. The graph will also be lower at a local minimum than at neighboring points. Figure 3.3.5 illustrates these ideas for a local maximum.

Note: We must speak of these values as local extrema, because any given local extremum as defined here is not necessarily the highest maximum or lowest minimum in the function's entire domain.

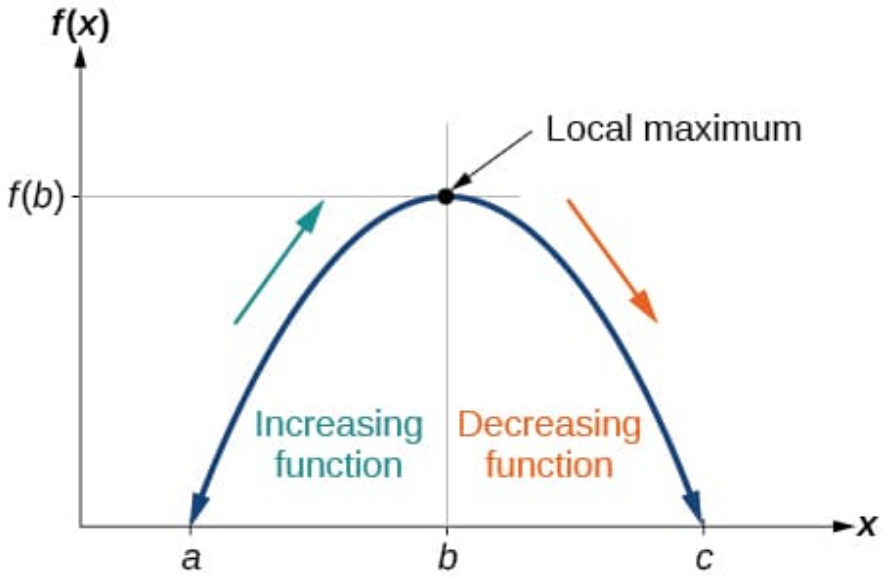


Figure 3.3.5: Definition of a local maximum

These observations lead us to the formal definitions of increasing, decreasing and constant and a formal definition of local extrema.

Increasing, Decreasing, Constant.

- A function f is **increasing** on an open interval if $f(b) > f(a)$ for every a, b interval where $b > a$.
- A function f is **decreasing** on an open interval if \(f(b)a\).
- A function f is **constant** on open interval if $f(b) = f(a)$ for every a, b interval where $b > a$.

Local Minima and Local Maxima

- A function f has a **local maximum** of $f(b)$ at $x = b$ in an open interval (a, c) if $f(b)$ is greater than or equal to $f(x)$ for every x in the interval (x does not equal b)
- Similarly, f has a **local minimum** of $f(b)$ at $x = b$ in (a, c) if $f(b)$ is less than or equal to $f(x)$ for every x in the interval (x does not equal b)

Example 3.3.7 Finding Increasing and Decreasing Intervals on a Graph

Given the function $p(t)$ in Figure 3.3.6, identify the intervals on which the function appears to be increasing.

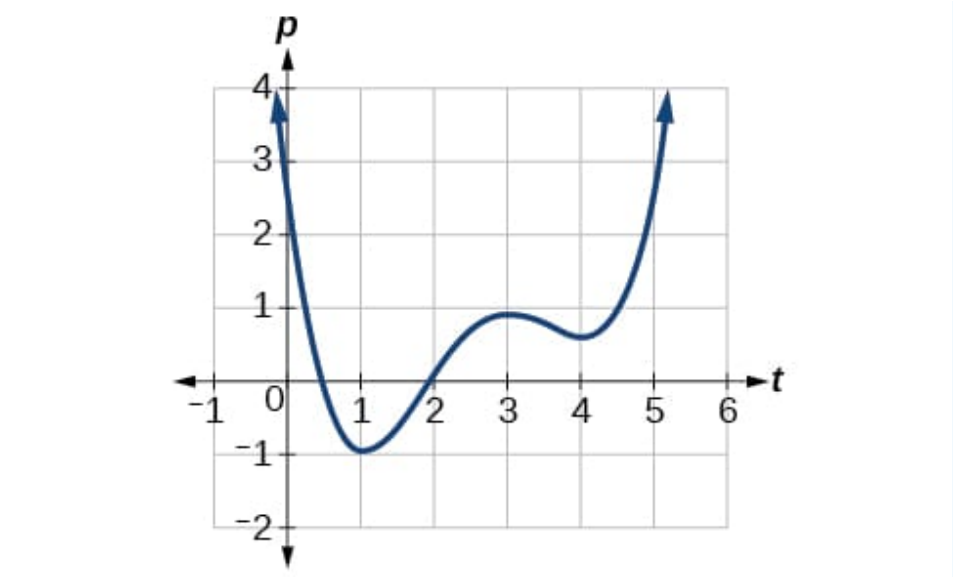


Figure 3.3.6: Graph of a polynomial.

Solution

We see that the function is not constant on any interval. The function is increasing where it slants upward as we move to the right and decreasing where it slants downward as we move to the right. The function appears to be increasing from $t = 1$ to $t = 3$ and from $t = 4$ on.

In interval notation, we would say the function appears to be increasing on the interval $(1, 3)$ and the interval $(4, \infty)$.

Analysis

Notice in this example that we used open intervals (intervals that do not include the endpoints), because the function is neither increasing nor decreasing at $t = 1$, $t = 3$, and $t = 4$. These points are the local extrema (two minima and a maximum).

Example 3.3.8

The graph the function $f(x) = x^3 - 6x^2 - 15x + 20$ is shown in Figure 3.3.7

Estimate the local extrema of the function. Use these to determine the intervals on which the function is increasing and decreasing.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Example 3.3.9: Finding Local Maxima and Minima from a Graph

For the function f whose graph is shown in Figure 3.3.8, find all local maxima and minima.

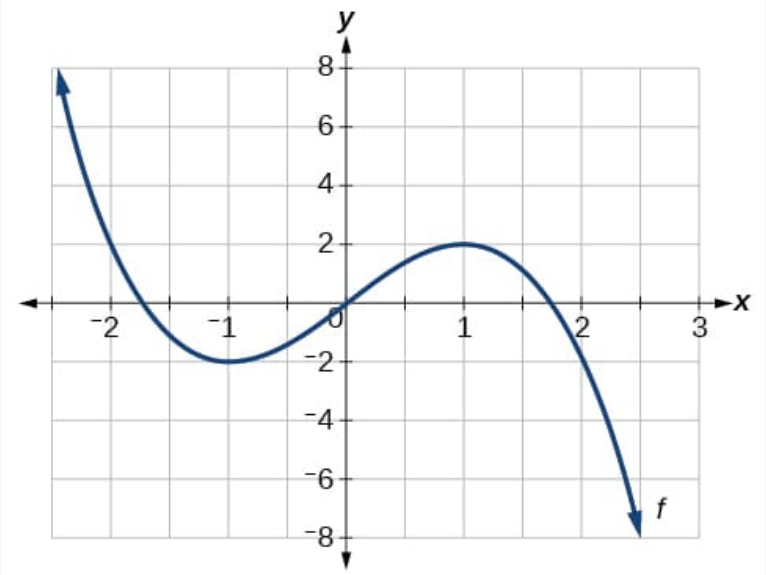


Figure 3.3.8: Graph of a polynomial.

Solution

Observe the graph of f. The graph attains a local maximum at $x = 1$ because it is the highest point in an open interval around $x = 1$.The local maximum is the y-coordinate at $x = 1$, which is 2.

The graph attains a local minimum at $x = -1$ because it is the lowest point in an open interval around $x = -1$. The local minimum is the y-coordinate at $x = -1$, which is –2.

Use A Graph to Locate the Absolute Maximum and Absolute Minimum

There is a difference between locating the highest and lowest points on a graph in a region around an open interval (locally) and locating the highest and lowest points on the graph for the entire domain. The y-coordinates (output) at the highest and lowest points are called the **absolute maximum** and **absolute minimum**, respectively. To locate absolute maxima and minima from a graph, we need to observe the graph to determine where the graph attains it highest and lowest points on the domain of the function.

Often, the term absolute is replaced by the term **global**.

(Figure 3.3.9).

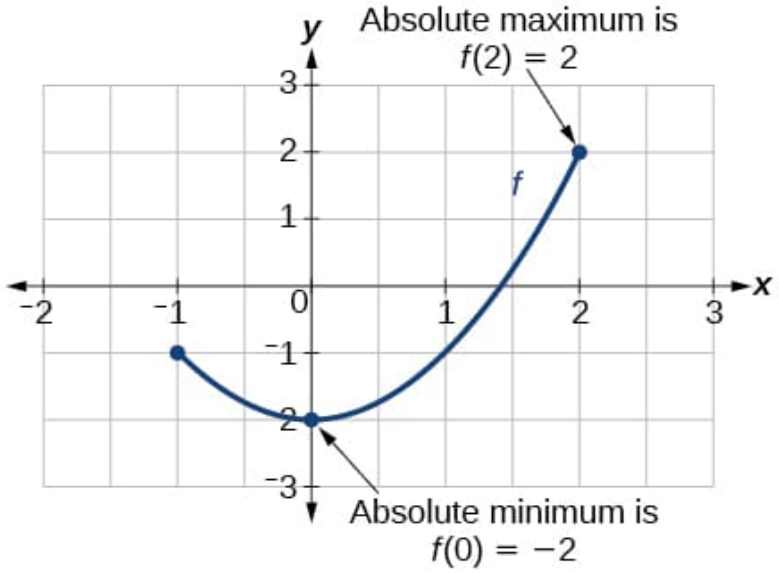


Figure 3.3.9: Graph of a segment of a parabola with an absolute minimum of -2 at $x = 0$and absolute maximum of 2 at $x = 2$.

Not every function has an absolute maximum or minimum value. For example the function $f(x) = x^2$ does NOT have an absolute maximum.

Absolute Maxima and Minima

- The **absolute maximum** of f at $x = c$ is $f(c)$ where $f(c) \geq f(x)$ for all x in the domain of f.
- The **absolute minimum** of f at $x = d$ is $f(d)$ where $f(d) \leq f(x)$ for all x in the domain of f.

Example 3.3.10: Finding Absolute Maxima and Minima from a Graph

For the function f shown in Figure 3.3.10, find all absolute maxima and minima.

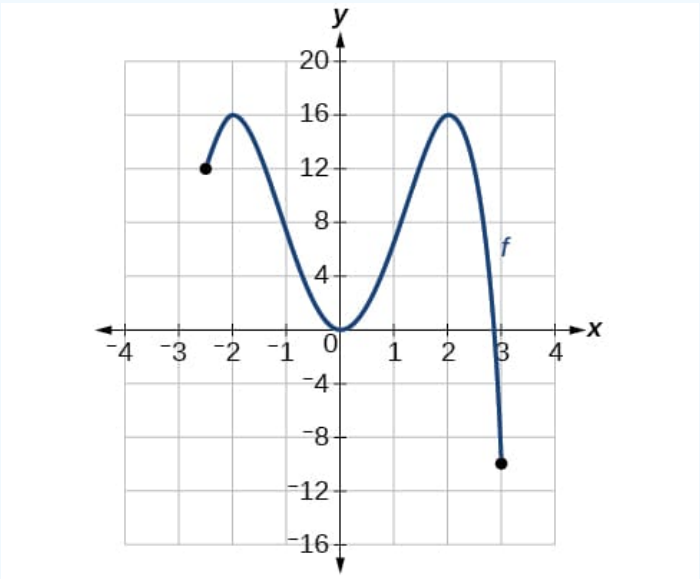


Figure 3.3.10: Graph of a polynomial.

Solution

Observe the graph of f. The graph attains an absolute maximum in two locations, $x = -2$ and $x = 2$, because at these locations, the graph attains its highest point on the domain of the function. The absolute maximum is the y-coordinate at $x = -2$ and $x = 2$, which is 16.

The graph attains an absolute minimum at x=3, because it is the lowest point on the domain of the function's graph. The absolute minimum is the y-coordinate at x=3,which is–10.

Example 3.3.11: Finding Absolute Maxima and Minima from a Graph

For the function f shown in Figure 3.3.11, find all absolute maxima and minima.

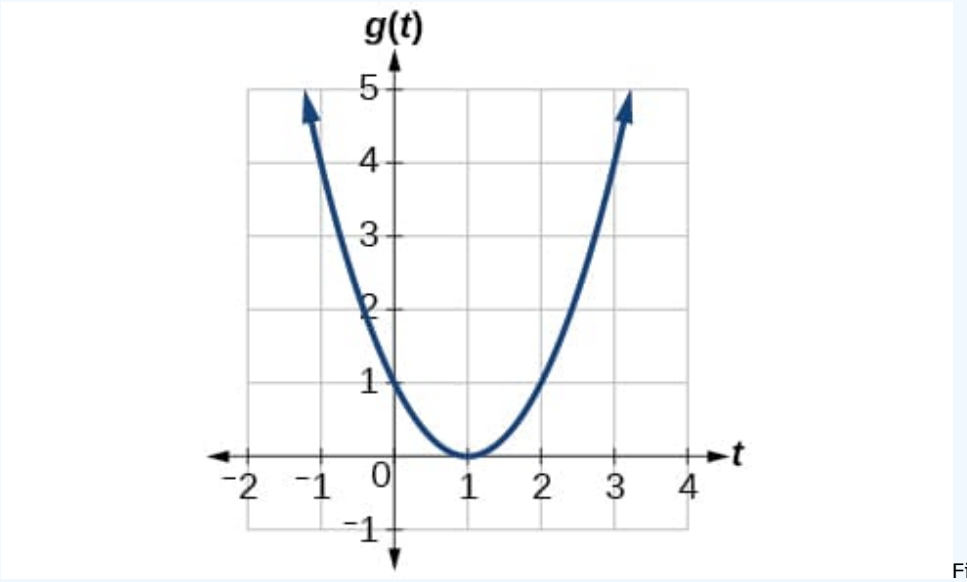


Figure 3.3.11: Graph of a quadratic function.

Solution

Observe the graph of fT, the implied domain is $(-oo, oo)$.

The **absolute maximum does not exist** because there is no point on this graph for which the value of $f(x)$ is greater than all other values for every x in the implied domain.

The graph attains an absolute minimum is the y-coordinate at $x = 1$, which is $y = 0$, because $f(1) = 0$ and \(0 ≤ f(x)\) for all possible x in the domain of the function.

Answers

The absolute minimum is 0 at $x = 1$.

The absolute maximum does not exist, we would enter DNE for this part of the answer.

Key Equation

- Average rate of change: $\frac{\Delta y}{\Delta x} = \frac{f(x_2) - f(x_1)}{x_2 - x_1}$

Key Concepts

- A rate of change relates a change in an output quantity to a change in an input quantity. The average rate of change is determined using only the beginning and ending data. See Example.
- Identifying points that mark the interval on a graph can be used to find the average rate of change. See Example.
- Comparing pairs of input and output values in a table can also be used to find the average rate of change. See Example.
- An average rate of change can also be computed by determining the function values at the endpoints of an interval described by a formula. See Example and Example.
- The average rate of change can sometimes be determined as an expression. See Example.
- A function is increasing where its rate of change is positive and decreasing where its rate of change is negative. See Example.
- A local maximum is where a function changes from increasing to decreasing and has an output value larger (more positive or less negative) than output values at neighboring input values.
- A local minimum is where the function changes from decreasing to increasing (as the input increases) and has an output value smaller (more negative or less positive) than output values at neighboring input values.
- Minima and maxima are also called extrema.
- We can find local extrema from a graph. See Example and Example.
- The highest and lowest points on a graph indicate the maxima and minima. See Example.

Answers

Exercise 3.3.1

$\frac{\$4.84 - \$4.29}{5 \text{ years}} = \frac{\$0.55}{5 \text{ years}} = \$0.11 \text{per year.}$

Exercise 3.3.2

AROC = $-\frac{3}{4}$

Exercise 3.3.3

AROC = $2a + 7$

Example 3.3.8

The local maximum appears to occur at $(-1, 28)$, and the local minimum occurs at $(5, -80)$. The function is increasing on $(-\infty, -1) \cup (5, \infty)$ and decreasing on $(-1, 5)$.

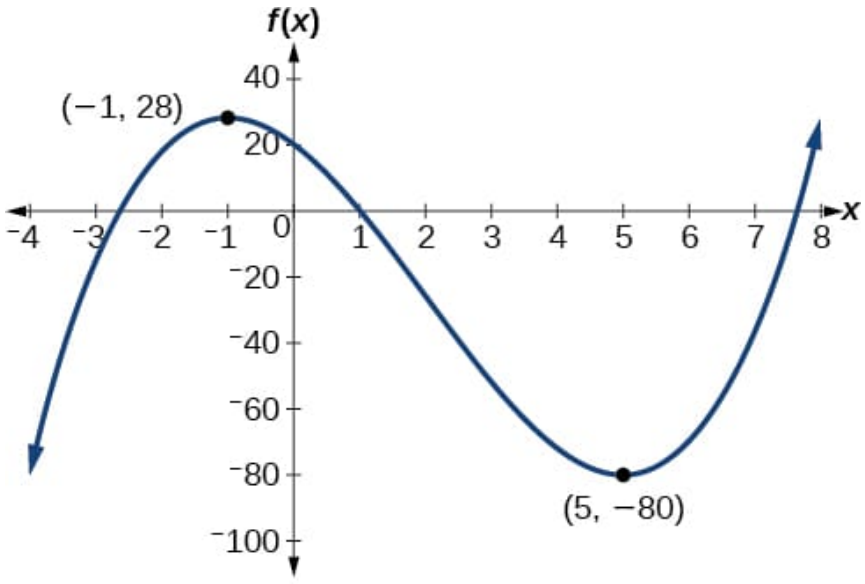


Figure 3.3.7 *Graph of a polynomial with a local maximum at (-1, 28) and local minimum at (5, -80).*

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3.4: Composition of Functions

Learning Objectives

- Create a new function by composition of functions.
- Evaluate composite functions.
- Find the domain of a composite function.

Create a Function by Composition of Functions

Performing algebraic operations on functions combines them into a new function, but we can also create functions by composing functions. When we wanted to compute a heating cost from a day of the year, we created a new function that takes a day as input and yields a cost as output. The process of **combining functions** so that the output of one function becomes the input of another is known as a **composition of functions**. The resulting function is known as a **composite function**. We represent this combination by the following notation:

$$f \circ g(x) = f(g(x)) \tag{3.4.1}$$

We read the left-hand side as"f composed with g at x," and the right-hand side as"f of g of x."The two sides of the equation have the same mathematical meaning and are equal. The open circle symbol $\circ$ is called the composition operator. We use this operator mainly when we wish to emphasize the relationship between the functions themselves without referring to any particular input value. Composition is a binary operation that takes two functions and forms a new function, much as addition or multiplication takes two numbers and gives a new number. However, it is important not to confuse function composition with multiplication because, as we learned above, in most cases $f(g(x)) \neq f(x)g(x)$.

It is also important to understand the order of operations in evaluating a composite function. We follow the usual convention with parentheses by starting with the innermost parentheses first, and then working to the outside. In the equation above, the function g takes the input x first and yields an output $g(x)$. Then the function f takes $g(x)$ as an input and yields an output $f(g(x))$.

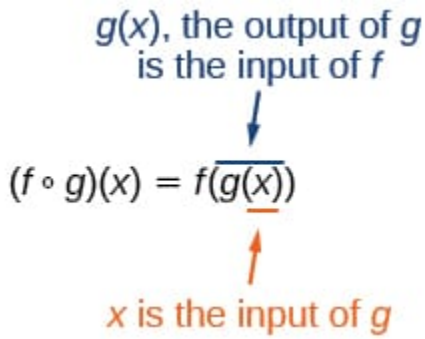


Figure 3.4.2: Explanation of the composite function.

In general, $f \circ g$ and $g \circ f$ are different functions. In other words, in many cases $f(g(x)) \neq g(f(x))$ for all x. We will also see that sometimes two functions can be composed only in one specific order.

For example, if $f(x) = x^2$ and $g(x) = x + 2$, then

$$\begin{aligned} f(g(x)) &= f(x+2) \\ &= (x+2)^2 \\ &= x^2 + 4x + 4 \end{aligned}$$

but

$$\begin{aligned} g(f(x)) &= g(x^2) \\ &= x^2 + 2 \end{aligned}$$

These expressions are not equal for all values of x, so the two functions are not equal. It is irrelevant that the expressions happen to be equal for the single input value $x = -\frac{1}{2}$.

Note that the range of the inside function (the first function to be evaluated) needs to be within the domain of the outside function. Less formally, the composition has to make sense in terms of inputs and outputs.

Definition: Composition

When the output of one function is used as the input of another, we call the entire operation a composition of functions. For any input x and functions f and g, this action defines a **composite function**, which we write as $f \circ g$ such that

$$(f \circ g)(x) = f(g(x)) \tag{3.4.2}$$

It is important to realize that the product of functions fg is not the same as the function composition $f(g(x))$, because, in general, $f(x)g(x) \neq f(g(x))$.

Other Compositions

Similarly, we can form other types of compositions as follows:

$$(g \circ f)(x) = g(f(x)) \tag{3.4.3}$$

$$(f \circ f)(x) = f(f(x)) \tag{3.4.4}$$

$$(g \circ g)(x) = g(g(x)) \tag{3.4.5}$$

Example 3.4.1: Determining whether Composition of Functions is Commutative

Using the functions provided, find $f(g(x))$ and $g(f(x))$. Determine whether the composition of the functions is **commutative**.

$$f(x) = 2x + 1 \quad g(x) = 3x - 4$$

Solution

Let's begin by substituting $g(x)$ into $f(x)$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(g(x)) &= 2(3x - 4) + 1 \\ &= 6x - 12 + 1 \\ &= 6x - 11 \end{aligned}$$

Now we can substitute $f(x)$ into $g(x)$.

$$\begin{aligned} g(f(x)) &= 3(2x + 1) - 4 \\ &= 6x + 3 - 4 \\ &= 6x - 1 \end{aligned}$$

We find that $g(f(x)) \neq f(g(x))$, so the operation of function composition is **not** commutative.

Example 3.4.2: Finding Composite Functions

Given the functions $f(x) = x^2 + 6x$ and $g(x) = x + 2$. Find the compositions and simplify the resulting expressions.

1. $(f \circ g)(x)$
2. $(g \circ f)(x)$
3. $(f \circ f)(x)$
4. $(g \circ g)(x)$

Solutions

By definition

1.

$$\begin{aligned}(f \circ g)(x) &= f(g(x)) \\ &= (x+2)^2 + 6(x+2) \\ &= x^2 + 4x + 4 + 6x + 12 \\ &= x^2 + 10x + 16\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $(f \circ g)(x) = x^2 + 10x + 16$

2.

$$\begin{aligned}(g \circ f)(x) &= g(f(x)) \\ &= (x^2 + 6x) + 2) \\ &= x^2 + 6x + 2\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $(g \circ f)(x) = x^2 + 6x + 2$

3.

$$\begin{aligned}(f \circ f)(x) &= f(f(x)) \\ &= (x^2 + 6x)^2 + 6(x^2 + 6x) \\ &= x^2(x+6)^2 + 6x^2 + 36x \\ &= x^2(x^2 + 12x + 36) + 6x^2 + 36x \\ &= x^4 + 12x^3 + 36x^2 + 6x^2 + 36x \\ &= x^4 + 12x^3 + 42x^2 + 36x\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $(f \circ f)(x) = x^4 + 12x^3 + 42x^2 + 36x$

4.

$$\begin{aligned}(g \circ g)(x) &= g(g(x)) \\ &= (x+2) + 2 \\ &= x + 4\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $(g \circ g)(x) = x + 4$

Example 3.4.3: Investigating the Order of a Composition by Evaluating

Suppose $f(x) = x^2 + 6x$ and $g(x) = x + 2$, evaluate $(f \circ g)(1)$ and $(g \circ f)(1)$, discuss the results.

Solution

Since we already have the composite function $(f \circ g)(x) = x^2 + 10x + 16$ obtained in the previous example, we can simply evaluate this function at $x = 1$

$(f \circ g)(1) = (1)^2 + 10(1) + 16 = 27$

Next, to evaluate $(g \circ f)(1)$, we can use the definition

$(g \circ f)(1) = g(f(1))$

First we evaluate $f(1) = (1)^2 + 6(1) = 7$

Next, we use the output of f as the input for g , so now we must evaluate $g(7)$

$$g(x) = x + 2$$

$$g(7) = (7) + 2$$
$$= 9$$

Therefore, $(g \circ f)(1) = 9$

Discussion

Since $(f \circ g)(1) = 27$ and $(g \circ f)(1) = 9$, we have confirmed that composition is **not** commutative.

Question/Answer

Are there any situations where $f(g(x))$ and $g(f(x))$ would be equal?

Yes. There are several possible cases in which this happens.

1. When $f(x) = g(x)$

2. When BOTH functions are of the form $y = x + b$

3. When BOTH functions are of the form $y = ax$

4. When BOTH functions are of the form $y = x^n$

5. When f and g are inverses* of each other.

**Later in this chapter, we will discuss "inverse" functions. When these compositions are equal, then f and g have a special relationship to each other that we will learn more about...stay tuned.*

Evaluating Composite Functions

Once we compose a new function from two existing functions, we need to be able to evaluate it for any input in its domain. We will do this with specific numerical inputs for functions expressed as tables, graphs, and formulas and with variables as inputs to functions expressed as formulas. In each case, we evaluate the inner function using the starting input and then use the inner function's output as the input for the outer function.

While we can compose the functions for each individual input value, it is sometimes helpful to find a single formula that will calculate the result of a composition $f(g(x))$. To do this, we will extend our idea of function evaluation. Recall that, when we evaluate a function like $f(x) = x^2 - x$, we substitute the value inside the parentheses into the formula wherever we see the input variable.

Example 3.4.6: Evaluating a Composition of Functions with a Numerical Input

Given $f(x) = x^2 - x$ and $g(x) = 3x + 2$, evaluate $f(g(1))$.

Solution

Because the inside expression is $g(1)$, we start by evaluating $g(x)$ at $x = 1$.

$$g(1) = 3(1) + 2$$
$$g(1) = 5$$

Then $f(g(1)) = f(5)$, so we evaluate $f(x)$ at an input of 5.

$$f(g(1)) = f(5)$$
$$f(g(1)) = 5^2 - 5$$
$$f(g(1)) = 20$$

Exercise 3.4.6

Given $f(x) = x^2 - x$ and $g(x) = 3x + 2$, evaluate

a. $g(f(2))$
b. $g(f(-2))$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Evaluating Composite Functions Using Tables

When working with functions given as tables, we read input and output values from the table entries and always work from the inside to the outside. We evaluate the inside function first and then use the output of the inside function as the input to the outside function.

Example 3.4.4: Using a Table to Evaluate a Composite Function

Using Table 3.4.1, evaluate $f(g(3))$ and $g(f(3))$.

Table 3.4.1

x	$f(x)$	$g(x)$
1	6	3
2	8	5
3	3	2
4	1	7

Solution

To evaluate $f(g(3))$, we start from the inside with the input value 3. We then evaluate the inside expression $g(3)$ using the table that defines the function $g : g(3) = 2$. We can then use that result as the input to the function f, so $g(3)$ is replaced by 2 and we get $f(2)$. Then, using the table that defines the function f, we find that $f(2) = 8$.

$$g(3) = 2$$

$$f(g(3)) = f(2) = 8$$

To evaluate $g(f(3))$, we first evaluate the inside expression $f(3)$ using the first table: $f(3) = 3$. Then, using the table for g, we can evaluate

$$g(f(3)) = g(3) = 2$$

Table 3.4.2 shows the composite functions $f \circ g$ and $g \circ f$ as tables.

Table 3.4.2

x	$g(x)$	$f(g(x))$	$f(x)$	$g(f(x))$
3	2	8	3	2

Exercise 3.4.4

Using Table 3.4.1, evaluate $f(g(1))$ and $g(f(4))$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Evaluating Composite Functions Using Graphs

When we are given individual functions as graphs, the procedure for evaluating composite functions is similar to the process we use for evaluating tables. We read the input and output values, but this time, from the x- and y-axes of the graphs.

How To ...

Given a composite function and graphs of its individual functions, evaluate it using the information provided by the graphs.

1. Locate the given input to the inner function on the x-axis of its graph.
2. Read off the output of the inner function from the y-axis of its graph.
3. Locate the inner function output on the x-axis of the graph of the outer function.
4. Read the output of the outer function from the y-axis of its graph. This is the output of the composite function.

Example 3.4.5: Using a Graph to Evaluate a Composite Function

Using Figure 3.4.3, evaluate $f(g(1))$.

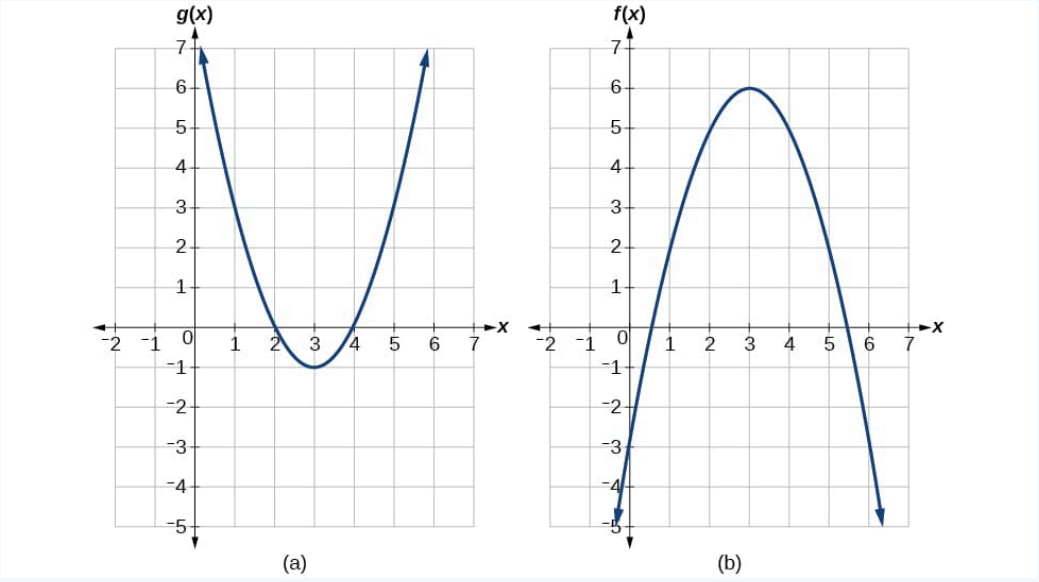


Figure 3.4.3: Two graphs of a positive and negative parabola.

Solution

To evaluate $f(g(1))$, we start with the inside evaluation. See Figure $3.4.4$.

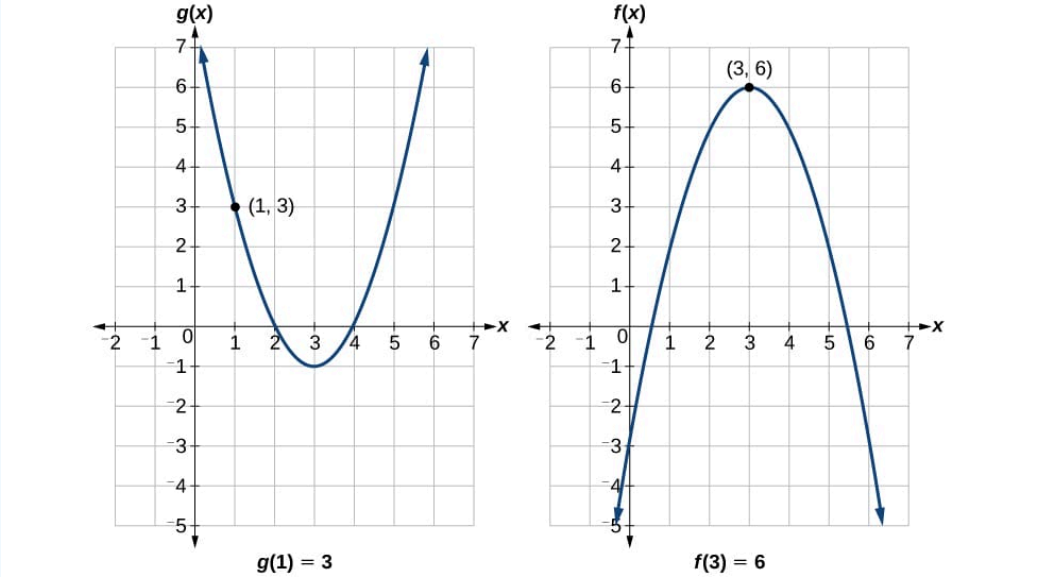


Figure $3.4.4$: Two graphs of a positive parabola $g(x)$ and a negative parabola $f(x)$. The following points are plotted: $g(1) = 3$ and $f(3) = 6$.

We evaluate $g(1)$ using the graph of $g(x)$, finding the input of 1 on the x-axis and finding the output value of the graph at that input. Here, $g(1) = 3$. We use this value as the input to the function f.

$$f(g(1)) = f(3)$$

We can then evaluate the composite function by looking to the graph of $f(x)$, finding the input of 3 on the x-axis and reading the output value of the graph at this input. Here, $f(3) = 6$, so $f(g(1)) = 6$.

Analysis

Figure $3.4.5$ shows how we can mark the graphs with arrows to trace the path from the input value to the output value.

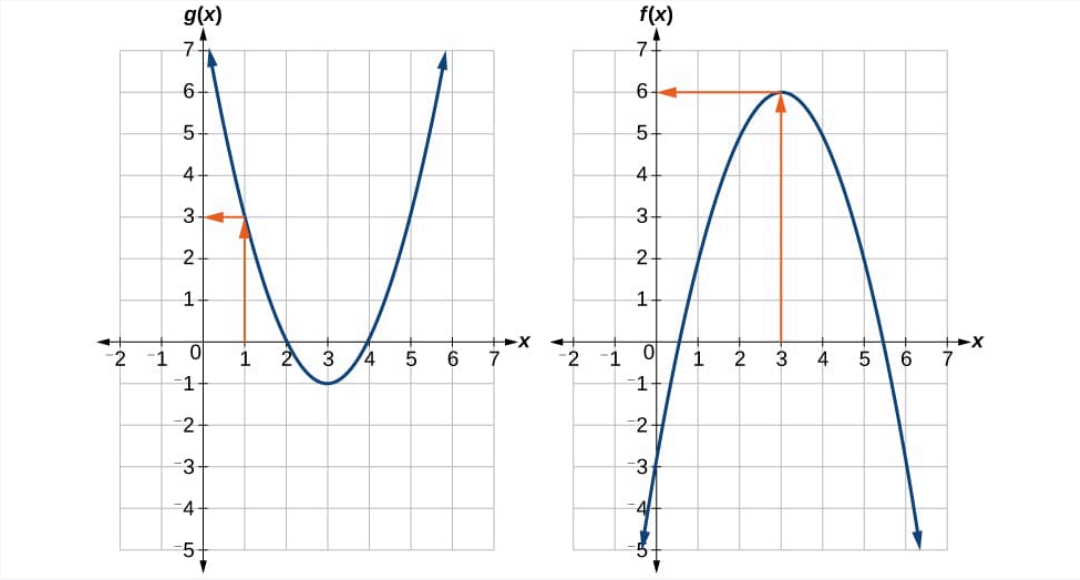


Figure $3.4.5$: Two graphs of a positive and negative parabola.

Exercise 3.4.5

Using Figure 3.4.3, evaluate $g(f(2))$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding the Domain of a Composite Function

As we discussed previously, the **domain of a composite function** such as $f \circ g$ is dependent on the domain of g and the domain of f. It is important to know when we can apply a composite function and when we cannot, that is, to know the domain of a function such as $f \circ g$. Let us assume we know the domains of the functions f and g separately. If we write the composite function for an input x as $f(g(x))$, we can see right away that x must be a member of the domain of g in order for the expression to be meaningful, because otherwise we cannot complete the inner function evaluation. However, we also see that $g(x)$ must be a member of the domain of f, otherwise the second function evaluation in $f(g(x))$ cannot be completed, and the expression is still undefined. Thus the domain of $f \circ g$ consists of only those inputs in the domain of g that produce outputs from g belonging to the domain of f. Note that the domain of f composed with g is the set of all x such that x is in the domain of g and g(x)\) is in the domain of f.

Definition: Domain of a Composite Function

The **domain of a composite function** $f(g(x))$ is the set of those inputs x in the domain of g for which $g(x)$ is in the domain of f.

How To...

Given a function composition $f(g(x))$, determine its domain.

1. Find the domain of g.
2. Find the domain of f.
3. Find those inputs x in the domain of g for which $g(x)$ is in the domain of f. That is, exclude those inputs x from the domain of g for which $g(x)$ is not in the domain of f. The resulting set is the domain of $f \circ g$.

Example 3.4.7: Finding the Domain of a Composite Function

Find the domain of

$$(f \circ g)(x) \text{ where } f(x) = \frac{5}{x-1} \text{ and } g(x) = \frac{4}{3x-2}$$

Solution

The domain of $g(x)$ consists of all real numbers except $x = \frac{2}{3}$, since that input value would cause us to divide by 0. Likewise, the domain of f consists of all real numbers except 1. So we need to exclude from the domain of $g(x)$ that value of x for which $g(x) = 1$.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{4}{3x-2} &= 1 \\ 4 &= 3x-2 \\ 6 &= 3x \\ x &= 2 \end{aligned}$$

So the domain of $f \circ g$ is the set of all real numbers except $\frac{2}{3}$ and 2. This means that

$$x \neq \frac{2}{3} \text{ or } x \neq 2$$

We can write this in interval notation as

$$\left(-\infty, \frac{2}{3}\right) \cup \left(\frac{2}{3}, 2\right) \cup (2, \infty)$$

Example 3.4.8: Finding the Domain of a Composite Function Involving Radicals

Find the domain of

$$(f \circ g)(x) \text{ where } f(x) = \sqrt{x+2} \text{ and } g(x) = \sqrt{3-x}$$

Solution

Because we cannot take the square root of a negative number, the domain of g is $(-\infty, 3]$. Now we check the domain of the composite function

$$(f \circ g)(x) = \sqrt{\sqrt{3-x}+2}$$

For $(f \circ g)(x) = \sqrt{\sqrt{3-x}+2}, \sqrt{3-x}+2 \geq 0$, since the radicand of a square root must be positive. Since square roots are positive, $\sqrt{3-x} \geq 0$,or, $3-x \geq 0$, which gives a domain of $(-\infty, 3]$.

Analysis

This example shows that knowledge of the range of functions (specifically the inner function) can also be helpful in finding the domain of a composite function. It also shows that the domain of $f \circ g$ can contain values that are not in the domain of f , though they must be in the domain of g.

Exercise 3.4.8

Find the domain of

$$(f \circ g)(x) \text{ where } f(x) = \frac{1}{x-2} \text{ and } g(x) = \sqrt{x+4}$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Equation

- Composite function $(f \circ g)(x) = f(g(x))$

Key Concepts

- We can perform algebraic operations on functions. See Example.
- When functions are combined, the output of the first (inner) function becomes the input of the second (outer) function.
- The function produced by combining two functions is a composite function. See Example and Example.
- The order of function composition must be considered when interpreting the meaning of composite functions. See Example.
- A composite function can be evaluated by evaluating the inner function using the given input value and then evaluating the outer function taking as its input the output of the inner function.
- A composite function can be evaluated from a table. See Example.
- A composite function can be evaluated from a graph. See Example.
- A composite function can be evaluated from a formula. See Example.
- The domain of a composite function consists of those inputs in the domain of the inner function that correspond to outputs

of the inner function that are in the domain of the outer function. See Example and Example.
- Just as functions can be combined to form a composite function, composite functions can be decomposed into simpler functions.
- Functions can often be decomposed in more than one way. See Example.

Glossary

composite function

the new function formed by function composition, when the output of one function is used as the input of another

Answers

Exercise 3.4.6

8

20

Exercise 3.4.4

$f(g(1)) = f(3) = 3$ and $g(f(4)) = g(1) = 3$

Exercise 3.4.5

$g(f(2)) = g(5) = 3$

Exercise 3.4.8

$[-4, 0) \cup (0, \infty)$

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3.5: Transformation of Functions

Learning Objectives

- Graph functions using vertical and horizontal shifts.
- Graph functions using reflections about the x-axis and the y-axis.
- Graph functions using compressions and stretches.
- Combine transformations.
- Determine whether a function is even, odd, or neither.

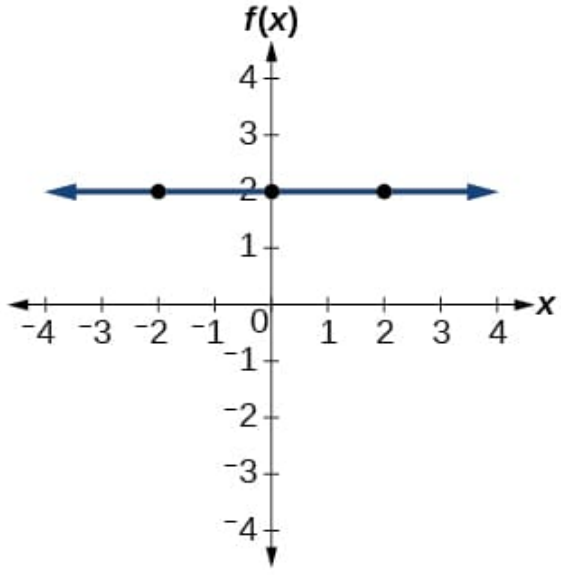
Often when given a problem, we try to model the scenario using mathematics in the form of words, tables, graphs, and equations. One method we can employ is to adapt the basic graphs of the toolkit or "parent" functions to build new models for a given scenario. There are systematic ways to alter functions to construct appropriate models for the problems we are trying to solve.

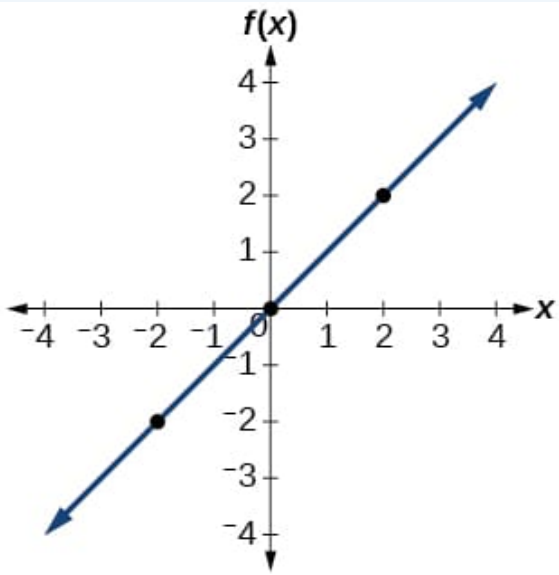
Parent Functions

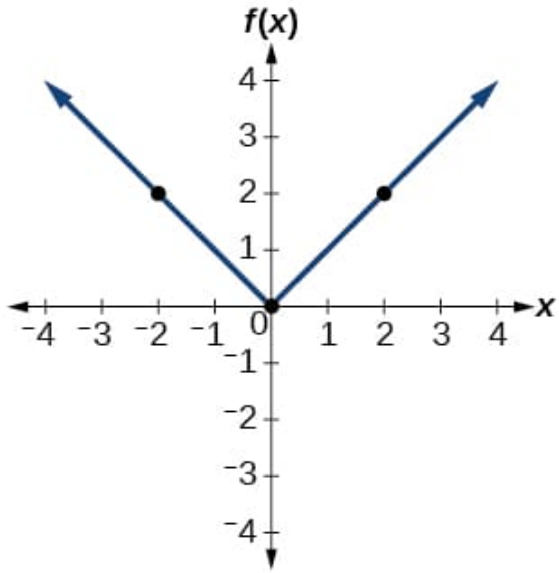
In this text, we will be exploring functions—the shapes of their graphs, their unique characteristics, their algebraic formulas, and how to solve problems with them. When learning to read, we start with the alphabet. When learning to do arithmetic, we start with numbers. When working with functions, it is similarly helpful to have a base set of building-block elements. We call these our “toolkit functions,” which form a set of basic named functions for which we know the graph, formula, and special properties. Some of these functions are programmed to individual buttons on many calculators. For these definitions we will use x as the input variable and $y = f(x)$ as the output variable.

We will see these toolkit functions, combinations of toolkit functions, their graphs, and their transformations frequently throughout this book. It will be very helpful if we can recognize these toolkit functions and their features quickly by name, formula, graph, and basic table properties. The graphs and sample table values are included with each function shown in Table $3.5.14$.

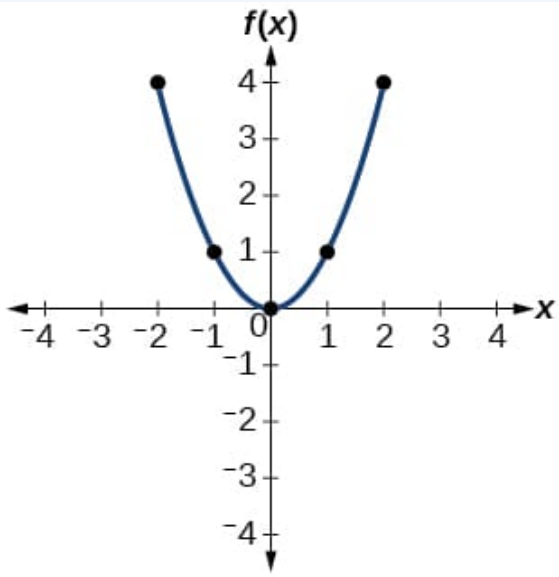
Table $3.5.14$: Toolkit Functions

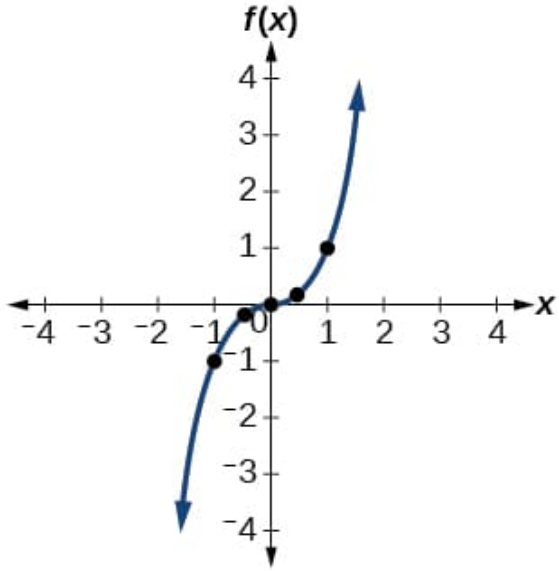
Name	Function	Graph
Constant	$f(x) = c$ where c is a constant	 <table><tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr><tr><td>−2</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr></table>

<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Function</th><th>Graph</th></tr>
<tr><td>Identity</td><td>$f(x) = x$</td><td> 

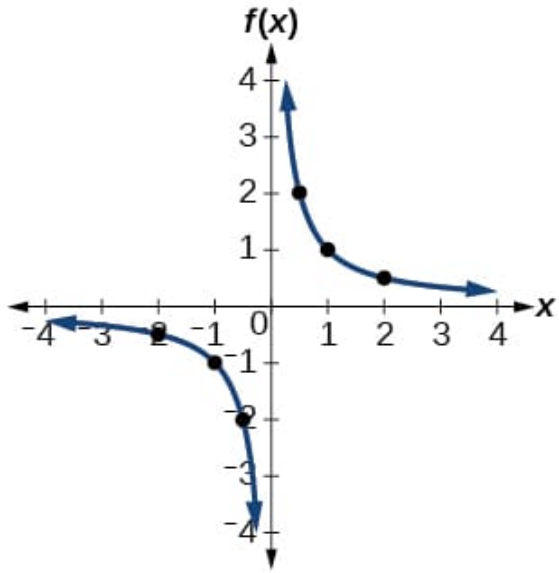
<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>−2</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Absolute Value</td><td>$f(x) = |x|$</td><td> 

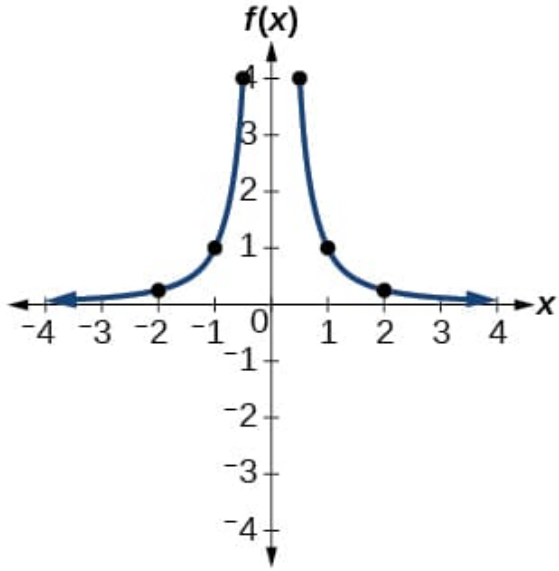
<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Function</th><th>Graph</th></tr>
<tr><td>Quadratic</td><td>$f(x) = x^2$</td><td> 

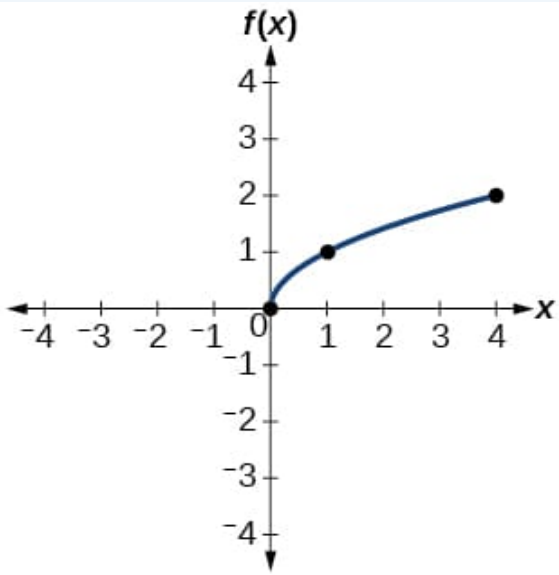
<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>−1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Cubic</td><td>$f(x) = x^3$</td><td> 

<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−1</td><td>−1</td></tr>
<tr><td>−0.5</td><td>−0.125</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>0.5</td><td>0.125</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

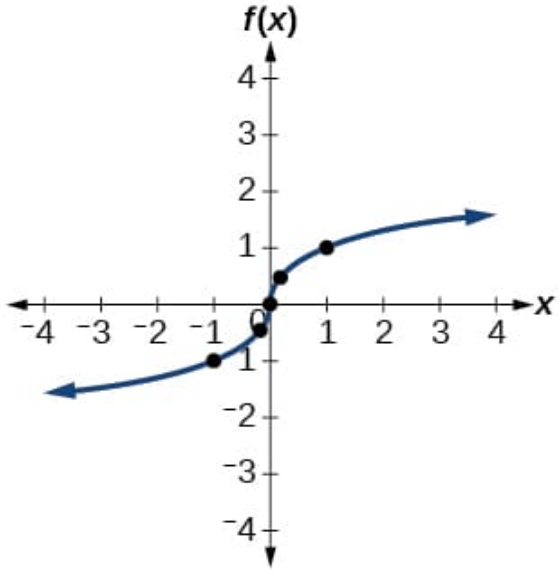
<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Function</th><th>Graph</th></tr>
<tr><td>Reciprocal</td><td>$f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$</td><td> 

<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>−0.5</td></tr>
<tr><td>−1</td><td>−1</td></tr>
<tr><td>−0.5</td><td>−2</td></tr>
<tr><td>0.5</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>0.5</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Reciprocal squared</td><td>$f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$</td><td> 

<table>
<tr><th>x</th><th>f(x)</th></tr>
<tr><td>−2</td><td>0.25</td></tr>
<tr><td>−1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>−0.5</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>0.5</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>0.25</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

Name	Function	Graph
Square root	$f(x) = \sqrt{x}$	

x	f(x)
0	0
1	1
4	2

Name	Function	Graph
Cube root	$f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$	

x	f(x)
−1	−1
−0.125	−0.5
0	0
0.125	0.5
1	1

Identifying Vertical Shifts

One simple kind of transformation involves shifting the entire graph of a function up, down, right, or left. The simplest shift is a vertical shift, moving the graph up or down, because this transformation involves adding a positive or negative constant to the function. In other words, we add the same constant to the output value of the function regardless of the input. For a function $g(x) = f(x) + k$, the function $f(x)$ is shifted vertically k units. See Figure $3.5.2$ for an example.

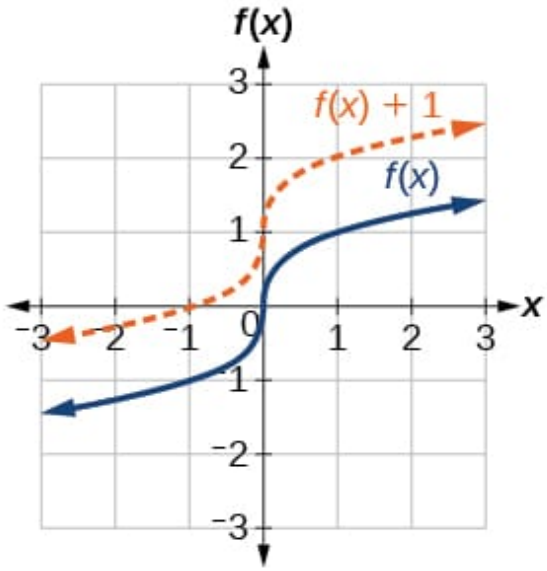


Figure 3.5.2: Vertical shift by $k = 1$ of the cube root function $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$.

To help you visualize the concept of a vertical shift, consider that $y = f(x)$. Therefore, $f(x) + k$ is equivalent to $y + k$. Every unit of y is replaced by $y + k$, so the y-value increases or decreases depending on the value of k. The result is a shift upward or downward.

Definition: Vertical Shift

Given a function $f(x)$, a new function $y = f(x) + k$, where k is a constant, is a **vertical shift** of the function $f(x)$. All the output values change by k units. If k is positive, the graph will shift up. If k is negative, the graph will shift down.

Example 3.5.1: Shifting a Tabular Function Vertically

A function $f(x)$ is given in Table 3.5.2. Create a table for the function $g(x) = f(x) - 3$.

Table 3.5.2

x	2	4	6	8
$f(x)$	1	3	7	11

Solution

The formula $g(x) = f(x) - 3$ tells us that we can find the output values of g by subtracting 3 from the output values of f. For example:

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= 1 && \text{Given} \\ g(x) &= f(x) - 3 && \text{Given Transformation} \\ g(2) &= f(2) - 3 \\ &= 1 - 3 \\ &= -2 \end{aligned}$$

Subtracting 3 from each $f(x)$ value, we can complete a table of values for $g(x)$ as shown in Table 3.5.3.

Table 3.5.3

x	2	4	6	8
$f(x)$	1	3	7	11

$g(x)$	-2	0	4	8

Analysis

As with the earlier vertical shift, notice the input values stay the same and only the output values change.

Exercise 3.5.1

The function $h(t) = -4.9t^2 + 30t$ gives the height h of a ball (in meters) thrown upward from the ground after t seconds. Suppose the ball was instead thrown from the top of a 10-m building. Relate this new height function $b(t)$ to $h(t)$, and then find a formula for $b(t)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Identifying Horizontal Shifts

We just saw that the vertical shift is a change to the output, or outside, of the function. We will now look at how changes to input, on the inside of the function, change its graph and meaning. A shift to the input results in a movement of the graph of the function left or right in what is known as a **horizontal shift**, shown in Figure 3.5.4.

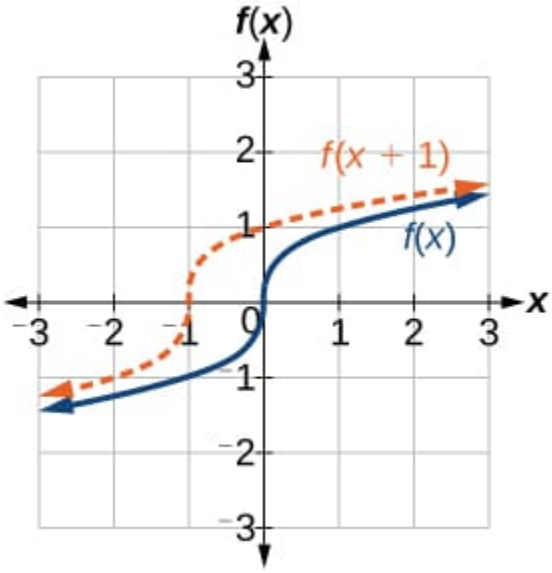


Figure 3.5.4: Horizontal shift of the function $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$. Note that $h = -1$ shifts the graph to the left, that is, towards negative values of x.

For example, if $f(x) = x^2$, then $g(x) = (x-2)^2$ is a new function. Each input is reduced by 2 prior to squaring the function. The result is that the graph is shifted 2 units to the right, because we would need to increase the prior input by 2 units to yield the same output value as given in f.

Definition: Horizontal Shift

Given a function f, a new function $y = f(x-h)$, where h is a constant, is a **horizontal shift** of the function f. If h is positive, the graph will shift right. If h is negative, the graph will shift left.

Example 3.5.2: Shifting a Tabular Function Horizontally

A function $f(x)$ is given in Table 3.5.4. Create a table for the function $g(x) = f(x-3)$.

Table 3.5.4

x	2	4	6	8
$f(x)$	1	3	7	11

Solution

The formula $g(x) = f(x-3)$ tells us that the output values of g are the same as the output value of f when the input value is 3 less than the original value. For example, we know that $f(2) = 1$. To get the same output from the function g, we will need an input value that is 3 larger. We input a value that is 3 larger for $g(x)$ because the function takes 3 away before evaluating the function f.

$$\begin{aligned} g(5) &= f(5-3) \\ &= f(2) \\ &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

We continue with the other values to create Table 3.5.5.

Table 3.5.5

x	5	7	9	11
$x-3$	2	4	6	8
$f(x)$	1	3	7	11
$g(x)$	1	3	7	11

The result is that the function $g(x)$ has been shifted to the right by 3. Notice the output values for $g(x)$ remain the same as the output values for $f(x)$, but the corresponding input values, x, have shifted to the right by 3. Specifically, 2 shifted to 5, 4 shifted to 7, 6 shifted to 9, and 8 shifted to 11.

Analysis

Figure 3.5.6 represents both of the functions. We can see the horizontal shift in each point.

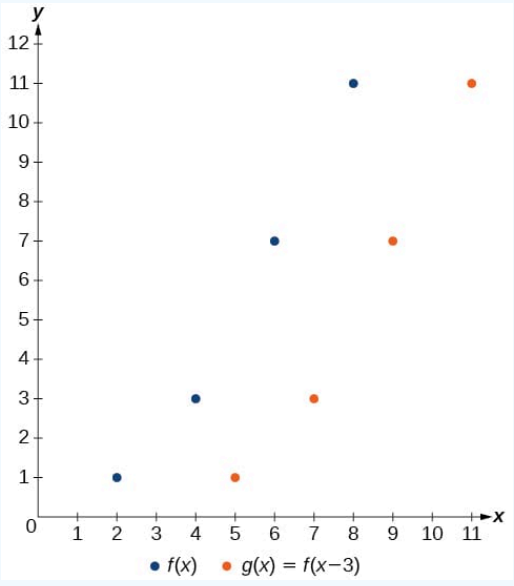


Figure 3.5.6: Graph of the points from the previous table for $f(x)$ and $g(x) = f(x-3)$

Example 3.5.3: Identifying a Horizontal Shift of a Toolkit Function

Figure 3.5.7 represents a transformation of the toolkit function $f(x) = x^2$. Relate this new function $g(x)$ to $f(x)$, and then find a formula for $g(x)$.

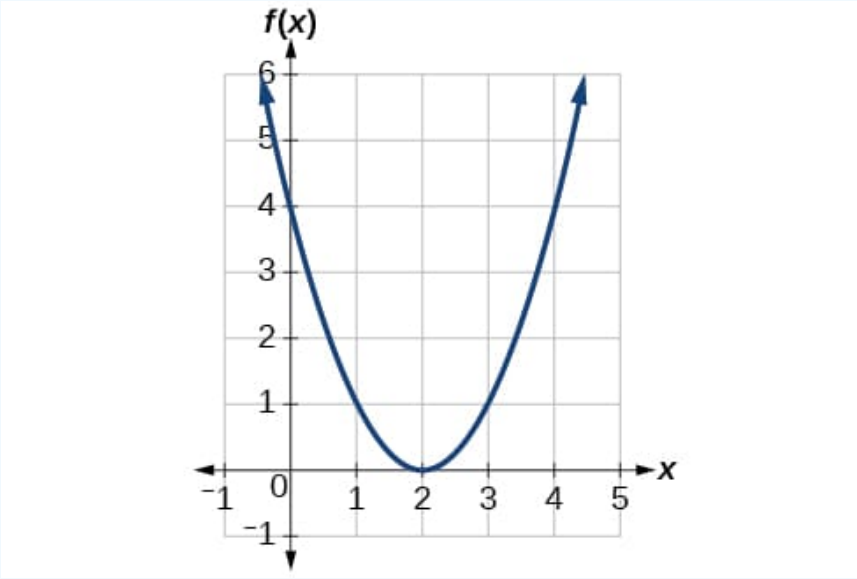


Figure 3.5.7: Graph of a parabola

Solution

Notice that the graph is identical in shape to the $f(x) = x^2$ function, but the x-values are shifted to the right 2 units. The vertex used to be at $(0, 0)$, but now the vertex is at $(2, 0)$. The graph is the basic quadratic function shifted 2 units to the right, so

$$g(x) = f(x - 2)$$

Notice how we must input the value $x = 2$ to get the output value $y = 0$; the x-values must be 2 units larger because of the shift to the right by 2 units. We can then use the definition of the $f(x)$ function to write a formula for $g(x)$ by evaluating $f(x - 2)$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= x^2 \\ g(x) &= f(x - 2) \\ g(x) &= f(x - 2) = (x - 2)^2 \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

To determine whether the shift is $+2$ or -2, consider a single reference point on the graph. For a quadratic, looking at the vertex point is convenient. In the original function, $f(0) = 0$. In our shifted function, $g(2) = 0$. To obtain the output value of 0 from the function f, we need to decide whether a plus or a minus sign will work to satisfy $g(2) = f(x - 2) = f(0) = 0$. For this to work, we will need to subtract 2 units from our input values.

Exercise 3.5.2

Given the function $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$, graph the original function $f(x)$ and the transformation $g(x) = f(x + 2)$ on the same axes. Is this a horizontal or a vertical shift? Which way is the graph shifted and by how many units?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Combining Vertical and Horizontal Shifts

Now that we have two transformations, we can combine them together. Vertical shifts are outside changes that affect the output $(y-)$ axis values and shift the function up or down. Horizontal shifts are inside changes that affect the input $(x-)$ axis values and shift the function left or right. Combining the two types of shifts will cause the graph of a function to shift up or down and right or left.

How To...

Given a function and both a vertical and a horizontal shift, sketch the graph.

1. Identify the vertical and horizontal shifts from the formula.
2. The vertical shift results from a constant added to the output. Move the graph up for a positive constant and down for a negative constant.
3. The horizontal shift results from a constant added to the input. Move the graph left for a positive constant and right for a negative constant.
4. Apply the shifts to the graph in either order.

Example 3.5.4: Graphing Combined Vertical and Horizontal Shifts

Given $f(x)=|x|$, sketch a graph of $y=f(x+1)-3$.

Solution

The function f is our toolkit absolute value function. We know that this graph has a V shape, with the point at the origin. The graph of $y=f(x+1)-3$ has transformed f in two ways: $f(x+1)$ is a change on the inside of the function, giving a horizontal shift left by 1, and the subtraction by 3 in $f(x+1)-3$ is a change to the outside of the function, giving a vertical shift down by 3. The transformation of the graph is illustrated in Figure 3.5.9.

Let us follow one point of the graph of $f(x)=|x|$.

- The point $(0,0)$ is transformed first by shifting left 1 unit:$(0,0)\rightarrow(-1,0)$
- The point $(-1,0)$ is transformed next by shifting down 3 units:$(-1,0)\rightarrow(-1,-3)$

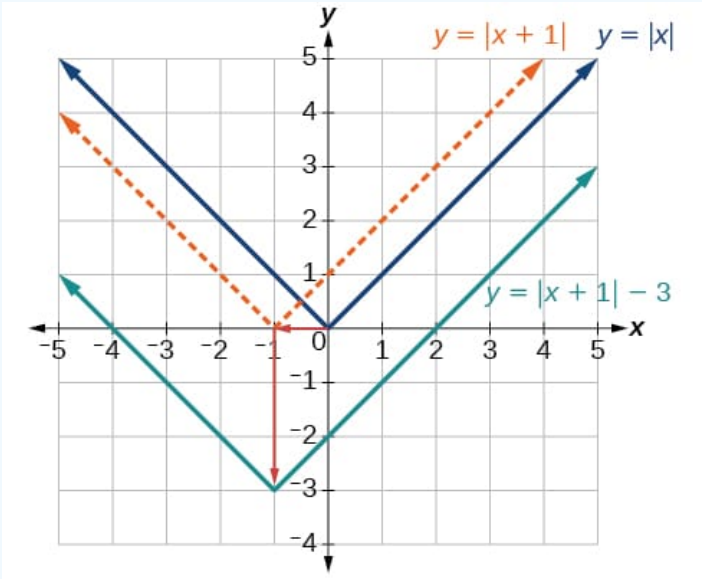


Figure 3.5.9: Graph of an absolute function, $y=|x|$, and how it was transformed to $y=|x+1|-3$

Figure 3.5.10 shows the graph of h.

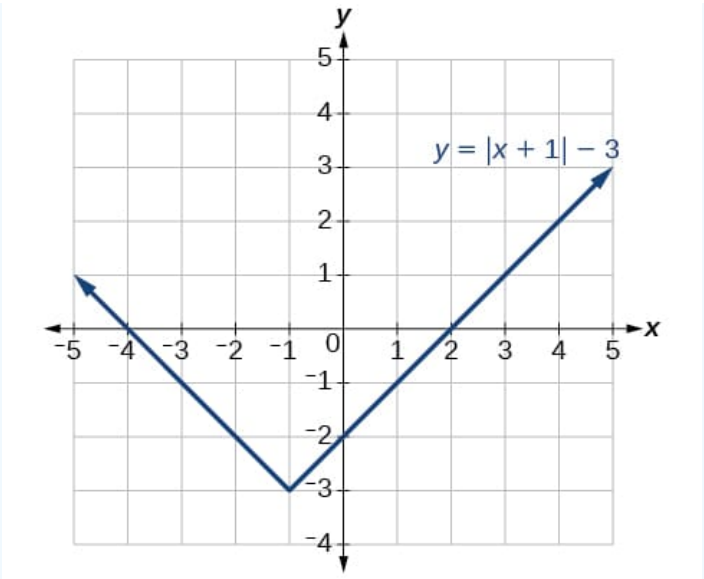


Figure 3.5.10: The final function $y = |x + 1| - 3$.

Example 3.5.5: Identifying Combined Vertical and Horizontal Shifts

Write a formula for the graph shown in Figure 3.5.12, which is a transformation of the toolkit square root function.

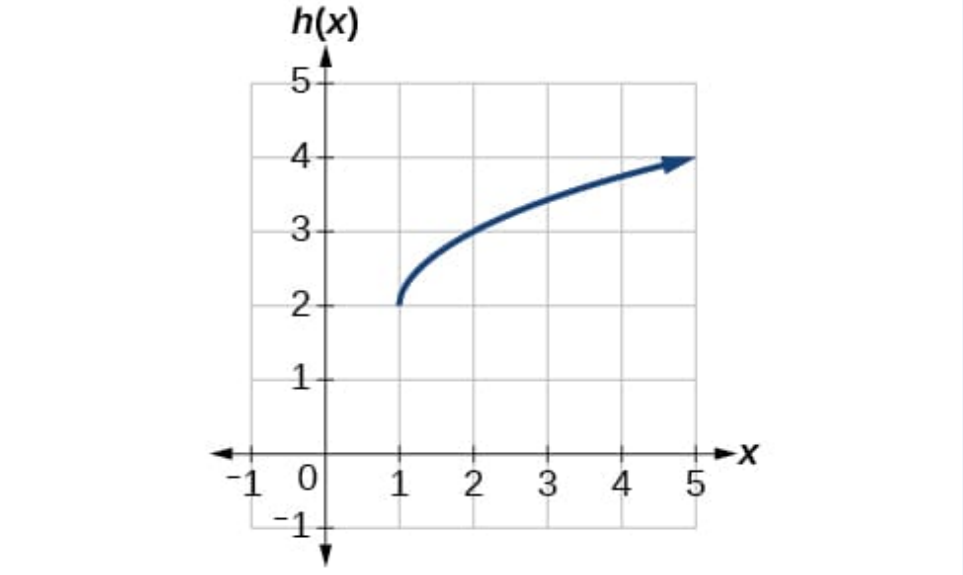


Figure 3.5.12: Graph of a square root function transposed right one unit and up 2.

Solution

The graph of the toolkit function starts at the origin, so this graph has been shifted 1 to the right and up 2. In function notation, we could write that as

$$h(x) = f(x - 1) + 2$$

Using the formula for the square root function, we can write

$$h(x) = \sqrt{x - 1} + 2$$

Analysis

Note that this transformation has changed the domain and range of the function. This new graph has domain $[1, \infty)$ and range $[2, \infty)$.

Exercise 3.5.3

Write a formula for a transformation of the toolkit reciprocal function $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$ that shifts the function's graph one unit to the right and one unit up.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Functions Using Reflections about the Axes

Another transformation that can be applied to a function is a reflection over the x- or y-axis. A **vertical reflection** reflects a graph vertically across the x-axis, while a **horizontal reflection** reflects a graph horizontally across the y-axis. The reflections are shown in Figure 3.5.13**.**

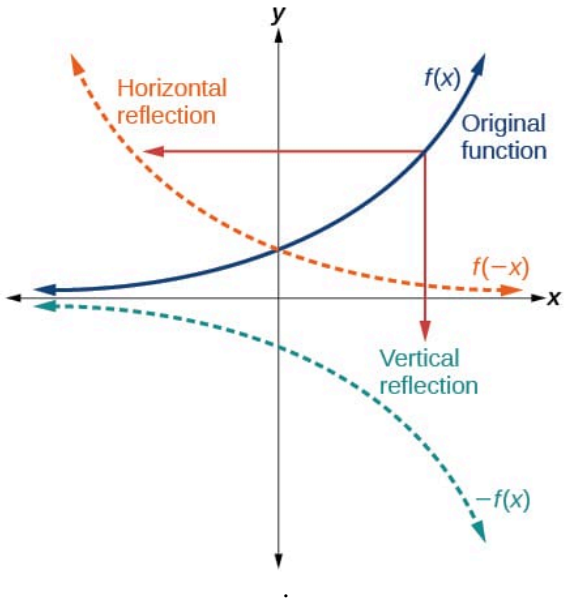


Figure 3.5.13: Graph of the vertical and horizontal reflection of a function.

Notice that the vertical reflection produces a new graph that is a mirror image of the base or original graph about the x-axis. The horizontal reflection produces a new graph that is a mirror image of the base or original graph about the y-axis.

Definitions: Reflections

Given a function $f(x)$, a new function $y = -f(x)$ is a **vertical reflection** of the function $f(x)$, called a reflection about (or over, or across) the x-axis.

Given a function $f(x)$, a new function $y = f(-x)$ is a **horizontal reflection** of the function $f(x)$, called a reflection about the y-axis.

How To...

Given a function, reflect the graph both vertically and horizontally.

1. Multiply all outputs by –1 for a vertical reflection. The new graph is a reflection of the original graph about the x-axis.
2. Multiply all inputs by –1 for a horizontal reflection. The new graph is a reflection of the original graph about the y-axis.

Example 3.5.6: Reflecting a Graph Horizontally and Vertically

Reflect the graph of $s(t) = \sqrt{t}$ (a) vertically and (b) horizontally.

Solution

a. Reflecting the graph vertically means that each output value will be reflected over the horizontal t-axis as shown in Figure 3.5.14.

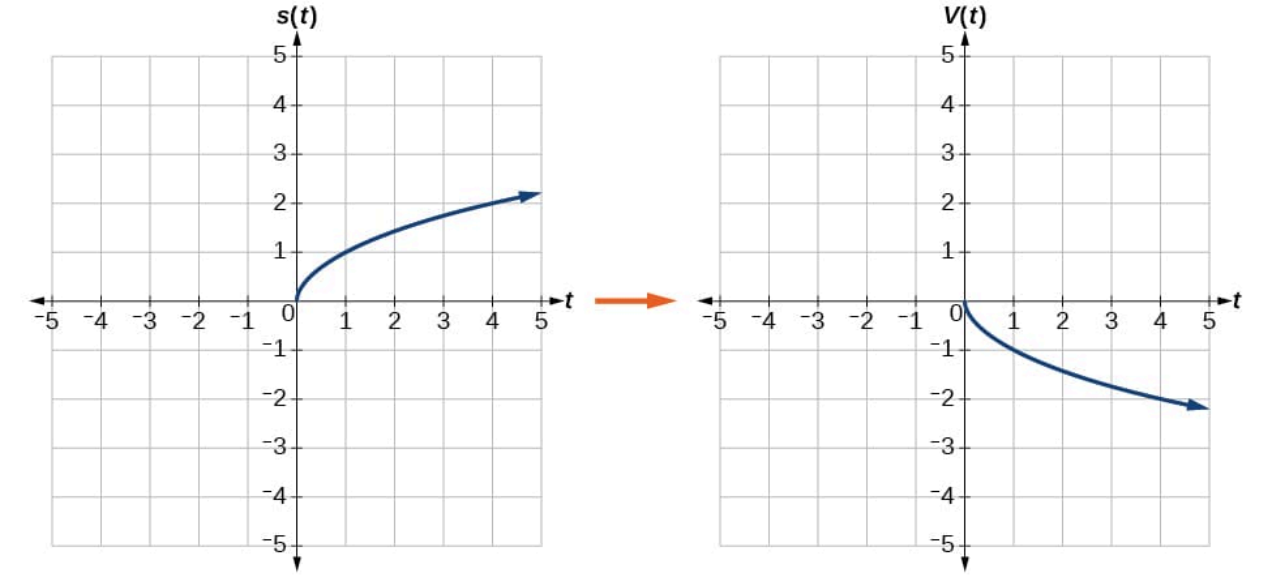


Figure 3.5.14: Graph of the vertical reflection of the square root function.

Because each output value is the opposite of the original output value, we can write

$$V(t) = -s(t) \text{ or } V(t) = -\sqrt{t}$$

Notice that this is an outside change, or vertical shift, that affects the output $s(t)$ values, so the negative sign belongs outside of the function.

b. Reflecting horizontally means that each input value will be reflected over the vertical axis as shown in Figure 3.5.15.

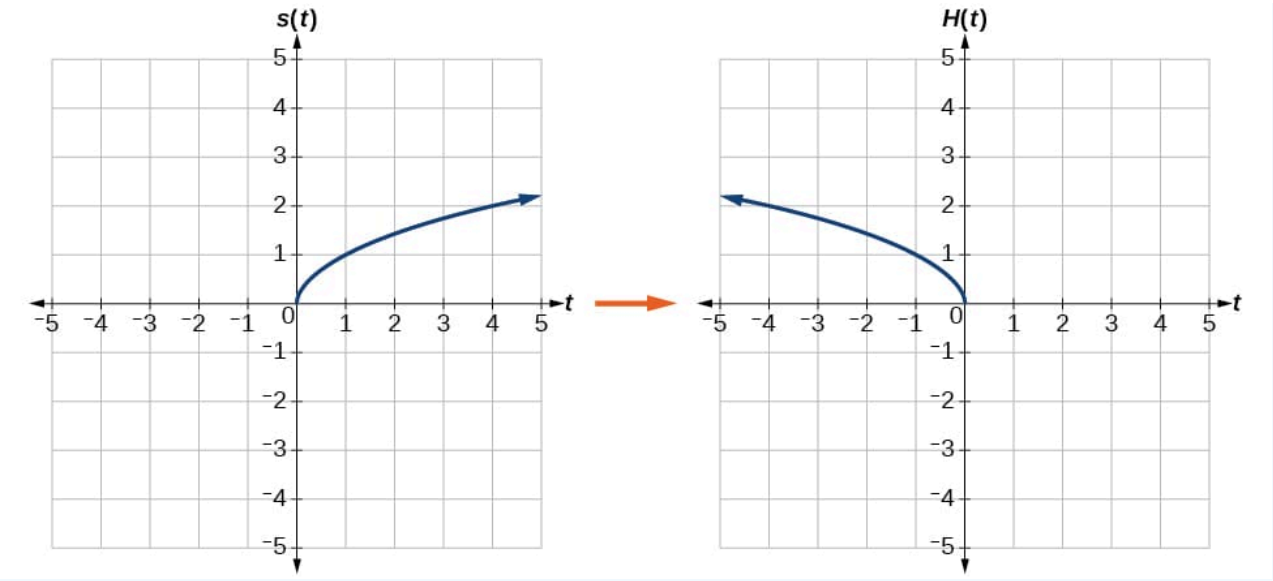


Figure 3.5.15: Horizontal reflection of the square root function

Because each input value is the opposite of the original input value, we can write

$$H(t) = s(-t) \text{ or } H(t) = \sqrt{-t}$$

Notice that this is an inside change or horizontal change that affects the input values, so the negative sign is on the inside of the function.

Note that these transformations can affect the domain and range of the functions. While the original square root function has domain $[0, \infty)$ and range $[0, \infty)$, the vertical reflection gives the $V(t)$ function the range $(-\infty, 0]$ and the horizontal reflection gives the $H(t)$ function the domain $(-\infty, 0]$.

Exercise 3.5.4

Reflect the graph of $f(x) = |x - 1|$ (a) vertically and (b) horizontally.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 3.5.7: Reflecting a Tabular Function Horizontally and Vertically

A function $f(x)$ is given as Table 3.5.6. Create a table for the functions below.

a. $g(x) = -f(x)$
b. $h(x) = f(-x)$

Table 3.5.6

x	2	4	6	8
$f(x)$	1	3	7	11

a. For $g(x)$, the negative sign outside the function indicates a vertical reflection, so the x-values stay the same and each output value will be the opposite of the original output value. See Table 3.5.7.

Table 3.5.7

x	2	4	6	8
$g(x)$	-1	-3	-7	-11

b. For $h(x)$, the negative sign inside the function indicates a horizontal reflection, so each input value will be the opposite of the original input value and the $h(x)$ values stay the same as the $f(x)$ values. See Table 3.5.8.

Table 3.5.8

x	-2	-4	-6	-8
$h(x)$	1	3	7	11

Exercise 3.5.5

A function $f(x)$ is given as Table 3.5.9. Create a table for the functions below.

a. $g(x) = -f(x)$
b. $h(x) = f(-x)$

Table 3.5.9

x	-2	0	2	4
$f(x)$	5	10	15	20

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 3.5.6

Given the toolkit function $f(x) = x^2$, graph $g(x) = -f(x)$ and $h(x) = f(-x)$. Take note of any surprising behavior for these functions.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Functions Using Stretches and Compressions

Adding a constant to the inputs or outputs of a function changed the position of a graph with respect to the axes, but it did not affect the shape of a graph. We now explore the effects of multiplying the inputs or outputs by some quantity.

We can transform the inside (input values) of a function or we can transform the outside (output values) of a function. Each change has a specific effect that can be seen graphically.

Vertical Stretches and Compressions

When we multiply a function by a positive constant, we get a function whose graph is stretched or compressed vertically in relation to the graph of the original function. If the constant is greater than 1, we get a **vertical stretch**; if the constant is between 0 and 1, we get a **vertical compression**. Figure 3.5.23 shows a function multiplied by constant factors 2 and 0.5 and the resulting vertical stretch and compression.

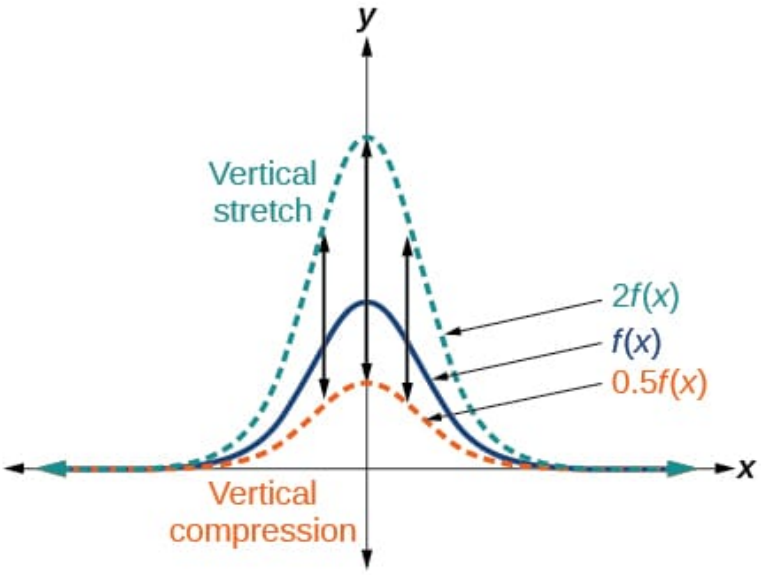


Figure 3.5.23: Vertical stretch and compression

Definitions: Vertical Stretches and Compressions

Given a function $f(x)$, a new function $g(x) = cf(x)$, where c is a constant, is a **vertical stretch** or **vertical compression** of the function $f(x)$.

- If $c > 1$, then the graph will be stretched vertically by a factor of c
- If \(0
- If $c < 0$, then there will be combination of a vertical stretch or compression with a vertical reflection.

How To...

Given a function, graph its vertical stretch.

a. Identify the value of c.
b. Multiply all range values by c
c. If $c > 1$, the graph is stretched by a factor of c.
d. If \(0
e. If $c < 0$, the graph is either stretched or compressed and also reflected about the x-axis.

Exercise 3.5.7

A function f is given as Table 3.5.14. Create a table for the function $g(x) = \frac{3}{4}f(x)$.

Table 3.5.14

x	2	4	6	8
$f(x)$	12	16	20	0

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 3.5.8: Recognizing a Vertical Stretch

The graph in Figure 3.5.26 is a transformation of the toolkit function $f(x) = x^3$. Relate this new function $g(x)$ to $f(x)$, and then find a formula for $g(x)$.

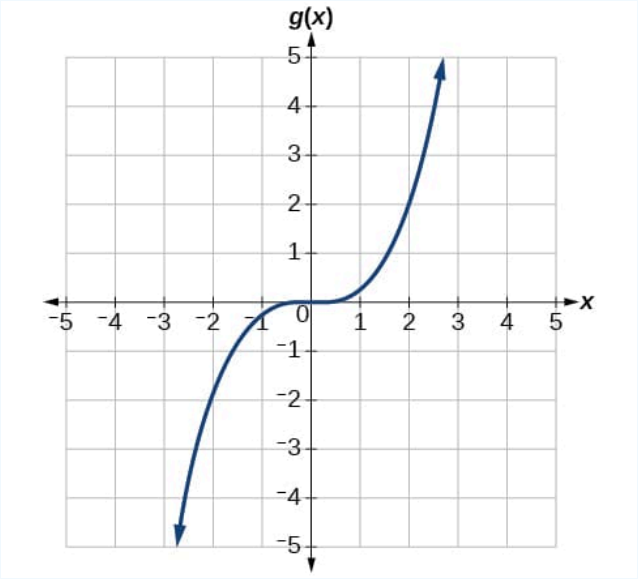


Figure 3.5.26: Graph of a transformation of $f(x) = x^3$

When trying to determine a vertical stretch or shift, it is helpful to look for a point on the graph that is relatively clear. In this graph, it appears that $g(2) = 2$. With the basic cubic function at the same input, $f(2) = 2^3 = 8$. Based on that, it appears that the outputs of g are $\frac{1}{4}$ the outputs of the function f because $g(2) = \frac{1}{4}f(2)$. From this we can fairly safely conclude that $g(x) = \frac{1}{4}f(x)$.

We can write a formula for g by using the definition of the function f.

$$g(x) = \frac{1}{4}f(x) = \frac{1}{4}x^3. \tag{3.5.1}$$

Exercise 3.5.8

Write the formula for the function that we get when we stretch the identity toolkit function by a factor of 3, and then shift it down by 2 units.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Horizontal Stretches and Compressions

Now we consider changes to the inside of a function. When we multiply a function's input by a positive constant, we get a function whose graph is stretched or compressed horizontally in relation to the graph of the original function. If the constant is between 0 and 1, we get a **horizontal stretch**; if the constant is greater than 1, we get a **horizontal compression** of the function.

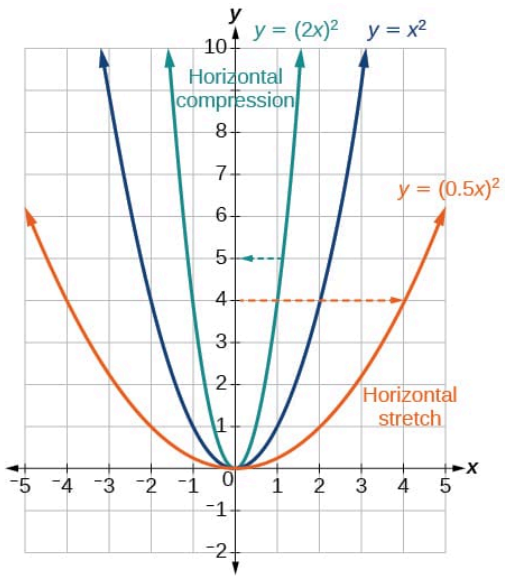


Figure 3.5.27: Graph of the vertical stretch and compression of x^2.

Given a function $y = f(x)$, the form $y = f(bx)$ results in a horizontal stretch or compression. Consider the function $y = x^2$. Observe Figure 3.5.27. The graph of $y = (0.5x)^2$ is a horizontal stretch of the graph of the function $y = x^2$ by a factor of 2. The graph of $y = (2x)^2$ is a horizontal compression of the graph of the function $y = x^2$ by a factor of 2.

Definitions: Horizontal Stretches and Compressions

Given a function $f(x)$, a new function $g(x) = f(cx)$, where c is a constant, is a **horizontal stretch** or **horizontal compression** of the function $f(x)$.

- If $c > 1$, then the graph will be compressed by a factor of c.
- If \(0
- If $c < 0$, then there will be combination of a horizontal stretch or compression with a horizontal reflection.

How To...

Given a description of a function, sketch a horizontal compression or stretch.

1. Write a formula to represent the function.
2. Set $g(x) = f(cx)$ where $c > 1$ for a compression or \(0

Example 3.5.9: Recognizing a Horizontal Compression on a Graph

Relate the function $g(x)$ to $f(x)$ in Figure 3.5.30.

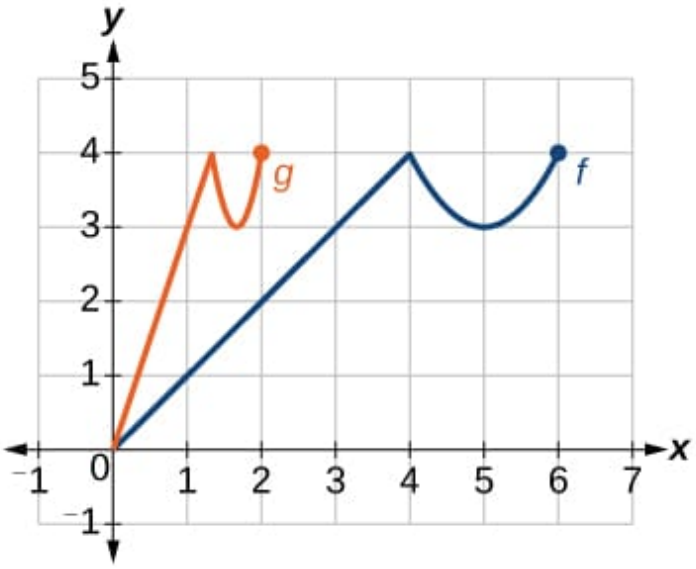


Figure 3.5.30: Graph of $f(x)$ being vertically compressed to $g(x)$.

Solution

The graph of $g(x)$ looks like the graph of $f(x)$ horizontally compressed. Because $f(x)$ ends at (6,4) and $g(x)$ ends at (2,4), we can see that the x-values have been compressed by $\frac{1}{3}$, because $6(\frac{1}{3}) = 2$. We might also notice that $g(2) = f(6)$ and $g(1) = f(3)$. Either way, we can describe this relationship as $g(x) = f(3x)$. This is a horizontal compression by $\frac{1}{3}$.

Analysis

Notice that the coefficient needed for a horizontal stretch or compression is the reciprocal of the stretch or compression. So to stretch the graph horizontally by a scale factor of 4, we need a coefficient of $\frac{1}{4}$ in our function: $f(\frac{1}{4}x)$. This means that the input values must be four times larger to produce the same result, requiring the input to be larger, causing the horizontal stretching.

Exercise 3.5.9

Write a formula for the toolkit square root function horizontally stretched by a factor of 3.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Performing a Sequence of Transformations

When combining transformations, it is very important to consider the order of the transformations. For example, vertically shifting by 3 and then vertically stretching by 2 does not create the same graph as vertically stretching by 2 and then vertically shifting by 3, because when we shift first, both the original function and the shift get stretched, while only the original function gets stretched when we stretch first.

When we see an expression such as $2f(x) + 3$, which transformation should we start with? The answer here follows nicely from the order of operations. Given the output value of $f(x)$, we first multiply by 2, causing the vertical stretch, and then add 3, causing the vertical shift. In other words, multiplication before addition.

Horizontal transformations are a little trickier to think about. When we write $g(x) = f(2x + 3)$, for example, we have to think about how the inputs to the function g relate to the inputs to the function f. Suppose we know $f(7) = 12$. What input to g would produce that output? In other words, what value of x will allow $g(x) = f(2x + 3) = 12$? We would need $2x + 3 = 7$. To solve for x, we would first subtract 3, resulting in a horizontal shift, and then divide by 2, causing a horizontal compression.

This format ends up being very difficult to work with, because it is usually much easier to horizontally stretch a graph before shifting. We can work around this by factoring inside the function.

$$f(bx+p)=f(b(x+\frac{p}{b}))$$

Let's work through an example.

$$f(x)=(2x+4)^2$$

We can factor out a 2.

$$f(x)=(2(x+2))^2$$

Now we can more clearly observe a horizontal shift to the left 2 units and a horizontal compression. Factoring in this way allows us to horizontally stretch first and then shift horizontally.

Combining Transformations: Order May Matter!

- When combining a scalar and a vertical transformation of the form $cf(x)+k$, first vertically stretch (or compress) and then vertically shift by k.
- When combining a scalar and a horizontal transformation of the form $f(cx+h)$, first horizontally shift by h and then horizontally stretch (or compress).
- When combining a scalar and a horizontal transformation of the form $f(c(x+h))$, first horizontally stretch (or compress) and then horizontally shift by h.
- When combining a reflection and a vertical transformation of the form $-f(x)+k$, first vertically reflect and then vertically shift by k.
- When combining a reflection and a horizontal transformation of the form $f(-x+h)$, first horizontally shift by h and then horizontally reflect.
- When combining a reflection and a horizontal transformation of the form $f(-(x+h))$, first horizontally reflect and then horizontally shift by h.
- Horizontal and vertical transformations are independent. It does not matter whether horizontal or vertical transformations are performed first.

Example 3.5.10: Finding a Triple Transformation of a Tabular Function

Given Table 3.5.18 for the function $f(x)$, create a table of values for the function $g(x)=2f(3x)+1$.

Table 3.5.18

x	6	12	18	24
$f(x)$	10	14	15	17

Solution

There are three steps to this transformation, and we will work from the inside out. Starting with the horizontal transformations, $f(3x)$ is a horizontal compression by $\frac{1}{3}$, which means we multiply each x-value by $\frac{1}{3}$.See Table 3.5.19.

Table 3.5.19

x	2	4	6	8
$f(3x)$	10	14	15	17

Looking now to the vertical transformations, we start with the vertical stretch, which will multiply the output values by 2. We apply this to the previous transformation. See Table 3.5.20.

Table 3.5.20

x	2	4	6	8
$2f(3x)$	20	28	30	34

Finally, we can apply the vertical shift, which will add 1 to all the output values. See Table 3.5.21.

Table 3.5.21

x	2	4	6	8
$g(x) = 2f(3x) + 1$	21	29	31	35

Graphing an Absolute Value Function

The most significant feature of the absolute value graph is the corner point at which the graph changes direction. This point is shown at the origin in Figure 3.5.3.

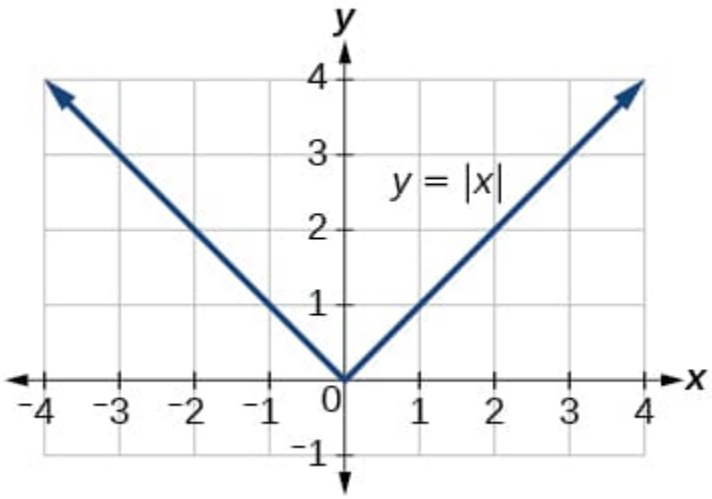


Figure 3.5.3: Graph of an absolute function.

Figure 3.5.3 shows the graph of $y = 2|x–3| + 4$. The graph of $y = |x|$ has been shifted right 3 units, vertically stretched by a factor of 2, and shifted up 4 units. This means that the corner point is located at $(3, 4)$ for this transformed function.

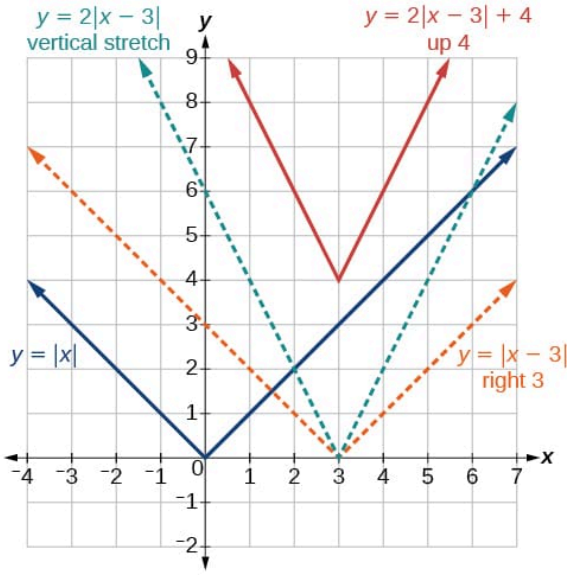


Figure 3.5.4: Graph of the different types of transformations for an absolute function.

Example 3.5.11: Writing an Equation for an Absolute Value Function

Write an equation for the function graphed in Figure 3.5.5.

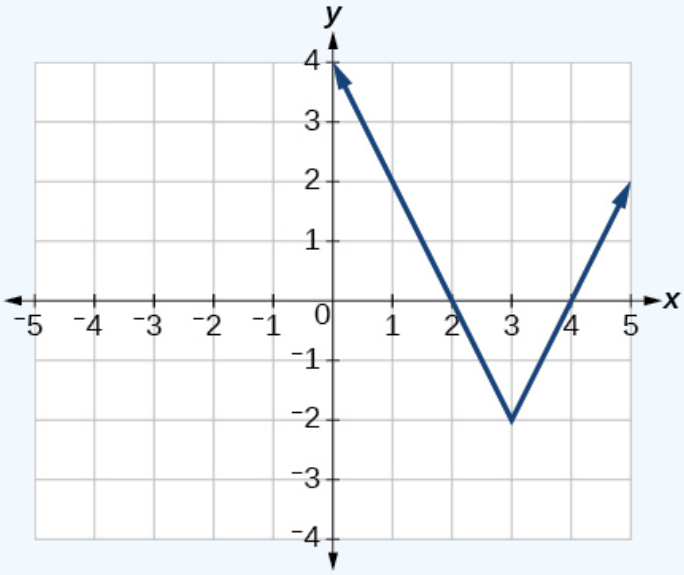


Figure 3.5.5: Graph of an absolute function.

Solution

The basic absolute value function changes direction at the origin, so this graph has been shifted to the right 3 units and down 2 units from the basic toolkit function. See Figure 3.5.6.

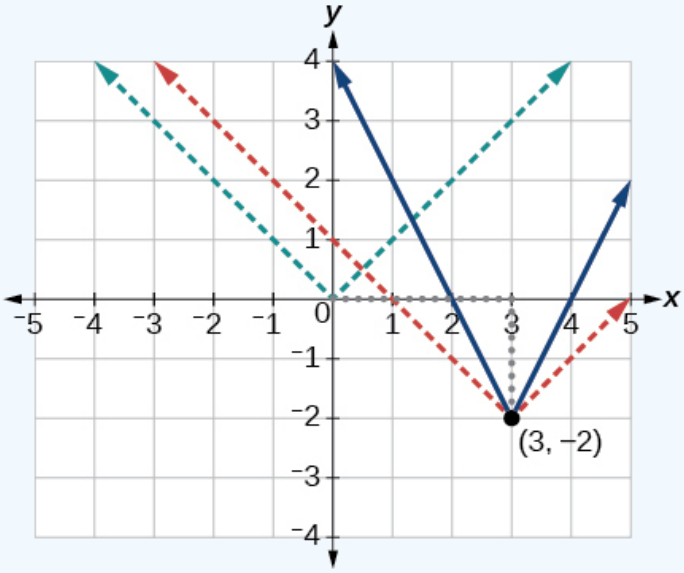


Figure 3.5.6: Graph of two transformations for an absolute function at $(3, -2)$.

We also notice that the graph appears vertically stretched, because the width of the final graph on a horizontal line is not equal to 2 times the vertical distance from the corner to this line, as it would be for an unstretched absolute value function. Instead, the width is equal to 1 times the vertical distance as shown in Figure 3.5.7.

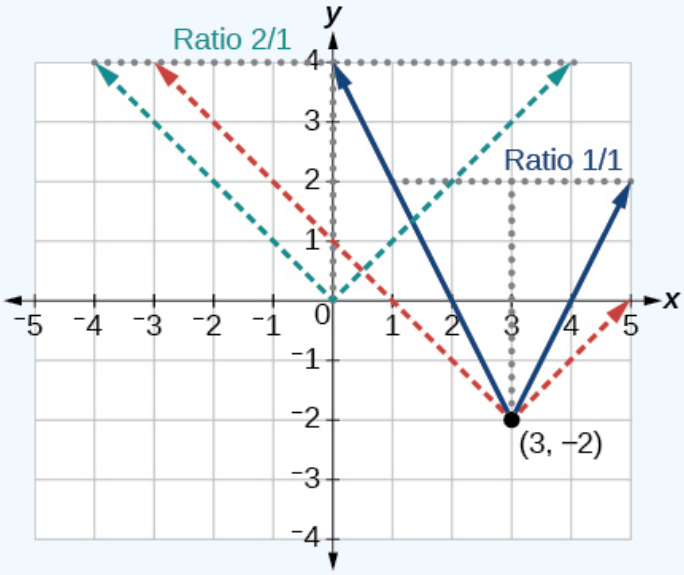


Figure 3.5.7: Graph of two transformations for an absolute function at $(3, -2)$ and the ratios between the two different transformations.

From this information we can write the equation

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= 2|x-3|-2, && \text{treating the stretch as a vertial stretch, or} \\ f(x) &= |2(x-3)|-2, && \text{treating the stretch as a horizontal compression.} \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

Note that these equations are algebraically equivalent—the stretch for an absolute value function can be written interchangeably as a vertical or horizontal stretch or compression.

Q & A

If we couldn't observe the stretch of the function from the graphs, could we algebraically determine it?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 3.5.10

Write the equation for the absolute value function that is horizontally shifted left 2 units, then reflected about the x axis, and vertically shifted up 3 units.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q & A

Do the graphs of absolute value functions always intersect the vertical axis? The horizontal axis?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Determining Even and Odd Functions

Some functions exhibit symmetry so that reflections result in the original graph. For example, horizontally reflecting the toolkit functions $f(x) = x^2$ or $f(x) = |x|$ will result in the original graph. We say that these types of graphs are symmetric about the y-axis. Functions whose graphs are symmetric about the y-axis are called **even functions**.

If the graphs of $f(x) = x^3$ or $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$ were reflected over both axes, the result would be the original graph, as shown in Figure 3.5.21.

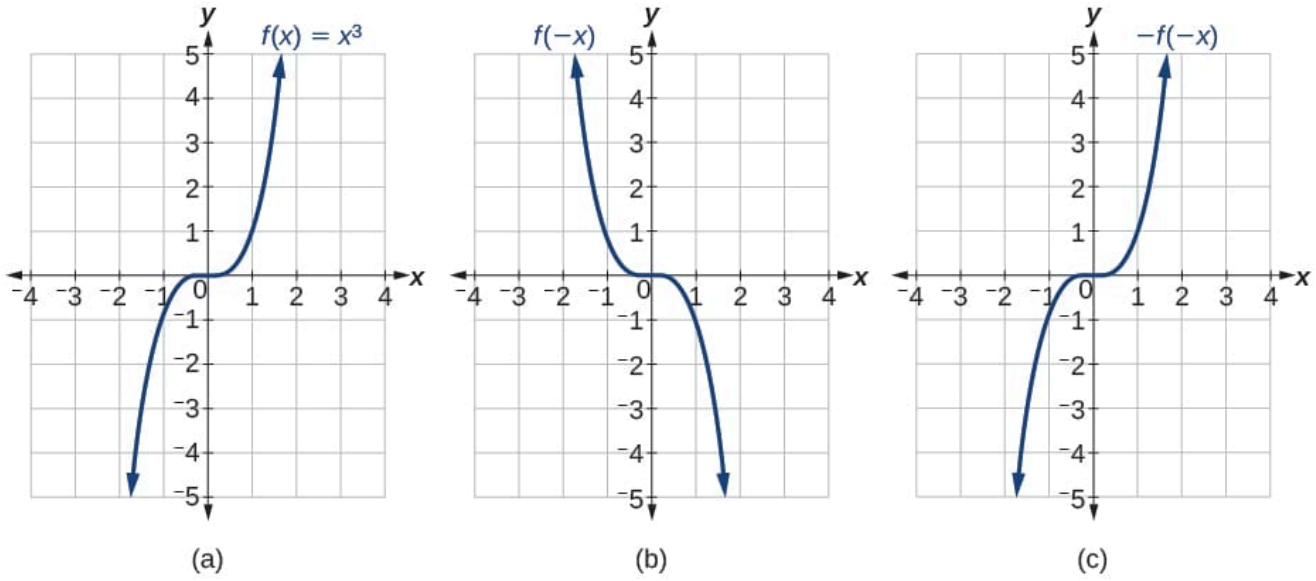


Figure 3.5.21: (a) The cubic toolkit function (b) Horizontal reflection of the cubic toolkit function (c) Horizontal and vertical reflections reproduce the original cubic function.

We say that these graphs are symmetric about the origin. A function with a graph that is symmetric about the origin is called an **odd function**.

Note: A function can be neither even nor odd if it does not exhibit either symmetry. For example, $f(x) = 2^x$ is neither even nor

odd. Also, the only function that is both even and odd is the constant function $f(x) = 0$.

Definitions: Even and Odd Functions

A function is called an **even function** if for every input x

$f(x) = f(-x)$

The graph of an even function is symmetric about the y-axis.

A function is called an **odd function** if for every input x

$f(x) = -f(-x)$

The graph of an odd function is symmetric about the origin.

How To...

Given the formula for a function, determine if the function is even, odd, or neither.

1. Determine whether the function satisfies $f(x) = f(-x)$. If it does, it is even.
2. Determine whether the function satisfies $f(x) = -f(-x)$. If it does, it is odd.
3. If the function does not satisfy either rule, it is neither even nor odd.

Example 3.5.12: Determining whether a Function Is Even, Odd, or Neither

Is the function $f(x) = x^3 + 2x$ even, odd, or neither?

Solution

Without looking at a graph, we can determine whether the function is even or odd by finding formulas for the reflections and determining if they return us to the original function. Let's begin with the rule for even functions.

$$f(-x) = (-x)^3 + 2(-x) = -x^3 - 2x$$

This does not return us to the original function, so this function is not even. We can now test the rule for odd functions.

$$-f(-x) = -(-x^3 - 2x) = x^3 + 2x$$

Because $-f(-x) = f(x)$, this is an odd function.

Analysis

Consider the graph of f in Figure 3.5.22. Notice that the graph is symmetric about the origin. For every point (x, y) on the graph, the corresponding point $(-x, -y)$ is also on the graph. For example, $(1, 3)$ is on the graph of f, and the corresponding point $(-1, -3)$ is also on the graph.

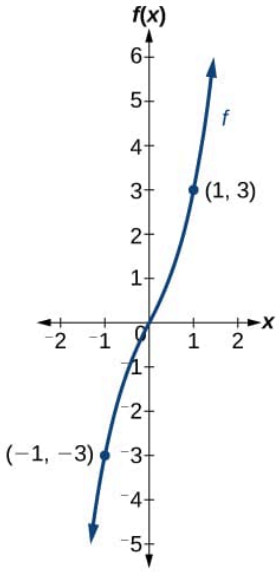


Figure 3.5.22: Graph of $f(x)$ with labeled points at $(1, 3)$ and $(-1, -3)$.

Exercise 3.5.11

Is the function $f(s) = s^4 + 3s^2 + 7$ even, odd, or neither?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Equations

- Vertical shift $y = f(x) + k$ (up for $k > 0$)
- Horizontal shift $y = f(x - h)$(right) for $h > 0$
- Vertical reflection $y = -f(x)$
- Horizontal reflection $y = f(-x)$
- Vertical stretch $y = cf(x)$ (c>0)
- Vertical compression $y = cf(x)$ (0
- Horizontal stretch \(y=f(cx)(0
- Horizontal compression $y = f(cx)$ (c>1)

Key Concepts

- A function can be shifted vertically by adding a constant to the output.
- A function can be shifted horizontally by adding a constant to the input.
- Relating the shift to the context of a problem makes it possible to compare and interpret vertical and horizontal shifts.
- Vertical and horizontal shifts are often combined.
- A vertical reflection reflects a graph about the x-axis. A graph can be reflected vertically by multiplying the output by –1.
- A horizontal reflection reflects a graph about the y-axis. A graph can be reflected horizontally by multiplying the input by –1.
- A graph can be reflected both vertically and horizontally. The order in which the reflections are applied does not affect the final graph.
- A function presented in tabular form can also be reflected by multiplying the values in the input and output rows or columns accordingly.
- A function presented as an equation can be reflected by applying transformations one at a time.
- Even functions are symmetric about the y-axis, whereas odd functions are symmetric about the origin.
- Even functions satisfy the condition $f(x) = f(-x)$.
- Odd functions satisfy the condition $-f(x) = f(-x)$.
- A function can be odd, even, or neither.

- A function can be compressed or stretched vertically by multiplying the output by a constant.
- A function can be compressed or stretched horizontally by multiplying the input by a constant.
- The order in which different transformations are applied does affect the final function. Both vertical and horizontal transformations must be applied in the order given. However, a vertical transformation may be combined with a horizontal transformation in any order.

Glossary

even function

a function whose graph is unchanged by horizontal reflection, $f(x) = f(-x)$, and is symmetric about the y-axis

horizontal compression
a transformation that compresses a function's graph horizontally, by multiplying the input by a constant c>1

horizontal reflection
a transformation that reflects a function's graph across the y-axis by multiplying the input by –1

horizontal shift
a transformation that shifts a function's graph left or right by adding a positive or negative constant to the input

horizontal stretch
a transformation that stretches a function's graph horizontally by multiplying the input by a constant 0

odd function
a function whose graph is unchanged by combined horizontal and vertical reflection, $-f(x) = f(-x)$, and is symmetric about the origin

vertical compression
a function transformation that compresses the function's graph vertically by multiplying the output by a constant 0

vertical reflection
a transformation that reflects a function's graph across the x-axis by multiplying the output by –1

vertical shift
a transformation that shifts a function's graph up or down by adding a positive or negative constant to the output

vertical stretch
a transformation that stretches a function's graph vertically by multiplying the output by a constant c>1

Answers

Exercise $3.5.1$

$b(t) = h(t) + 10 = -4.9t^2 + 30t + 10$

Exercise $3.5.2$

The graphs of $f(x)$ and $g(x)$ are shown below. The transformation is a horizontal shift. The function is shifted to the left by 2 units.

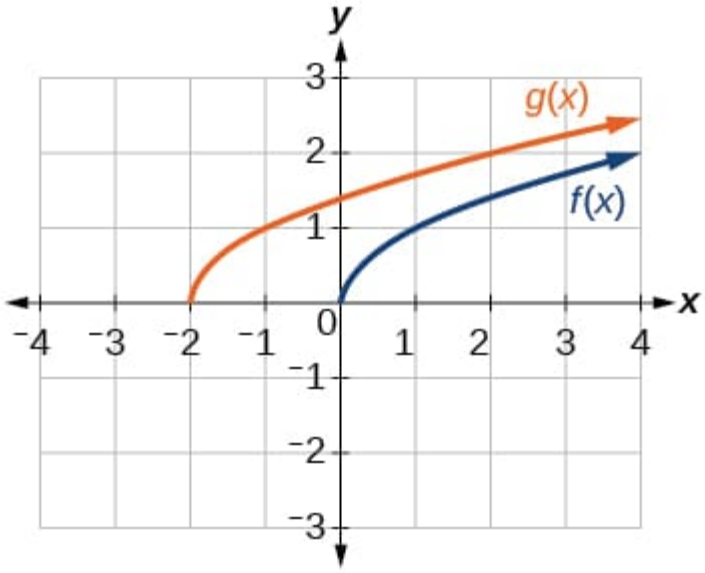


Figure 3.5.8

Exercise 3.5.3

$$g(x) = \frac{1}{x-1} + 1$$

Exercise 3.5.4

a.

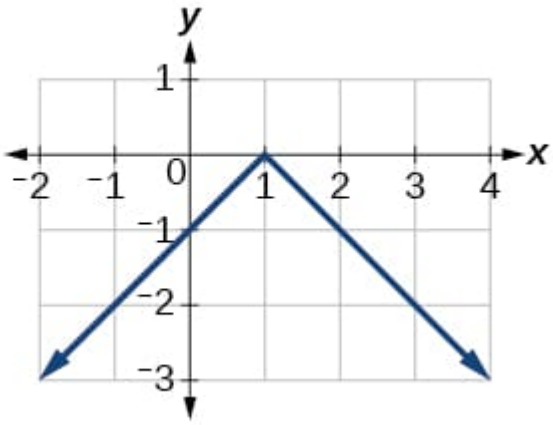


Figure 3.5.16: Graph of a vertically reflected absolute function.

b.

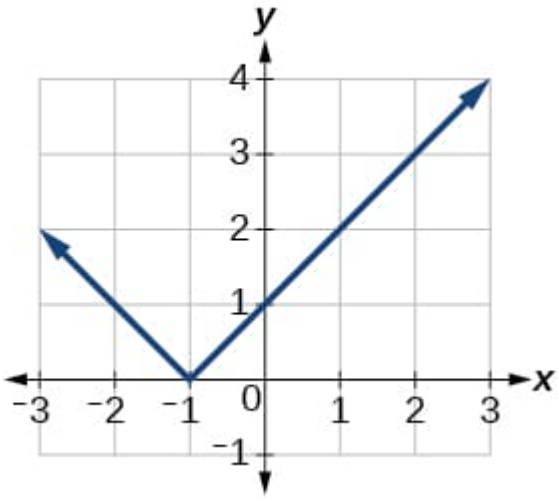


Figure 3.5.17: Graph of an absolute function translated one unit left.

Exercise 3.5.5

a. $g(x) = -f(x)$

Table 3.5.10

x	-2	0	2	4
$g(x)$	-5	-10	-15	-20

b. $h(x) = f(-x)$

Table 3.5.11

x	-2	0	2	-4
$h(x)$	15	10	5	20

Exercise 3.5.6

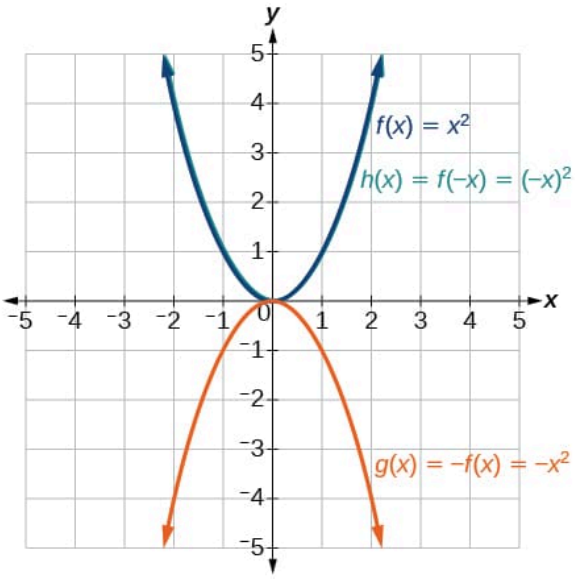


Figure 3.5.20: Graph of x^2 and its reflections.

Notice: $g(x) = f(-x)$ looks the same as $f(x)$.

Exercise 3.5.7

Table 3.5.15

x	2	4	6	8
$g(x)$	9	12	15	0

Exercise 3.5.8

$g(x) = 3x - 2$

Exercise 3.5.9

$g(x) = f(\frac{1}{3}x)$, so using the square root function we get $g(x) = \sqrt{\frac{1}{3}x}$

Q & A

Yes. If we are unable to determine the stretch based on the width of the graph, we can solve for the stretch factor by putting in a known pair of values for x and $f(x)$.

$$f(x) = a|x - 3| - 2$$

Now substituting in the point $(1, 2)$

$$\begin{aligned} 2 &= a|1 - 3| - 2 \\ 4 &= 2a \\ a &= 2 \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 3.5.10

$f(x) = -|x + 2| + 3$

Q & A

Yes, they always intersect the vertical axis. The graph of an absolute value function will intersect the vertical axis when the input is zero.

No, they do not always intersect the horizontal axis. The graph may or may not intersect the horizontal axis, depending on how the graph has been shifted and reflected. It is possible for the absolute value function to intersect the horizontal axis at zero, one, or two points (Figure 3.5.8).

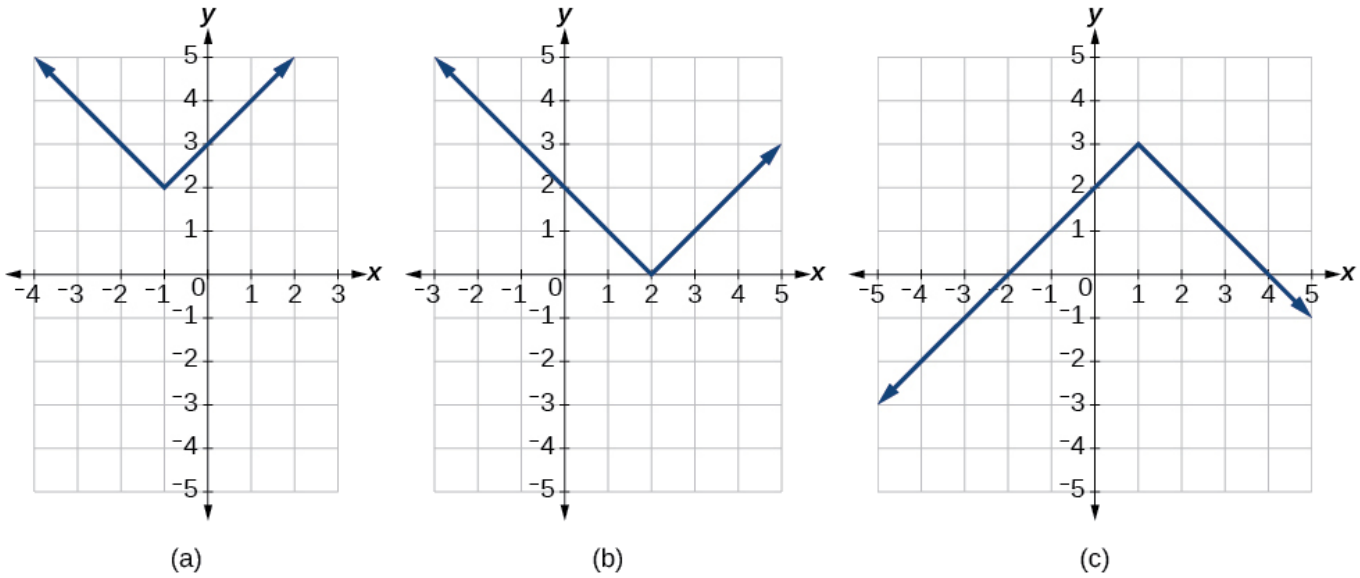


Figure 3.5.8: (a) The absolute value function does not intersect the horizontal axis. (b) The absolute value function intersects the horizontal axis at one point. (c) The absolute value function intersects the horizontal axis at two points.

Exercise 3.5.11

even

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3.6: Inverse Functions

Learning Objectives

- Verify inverse functions.
- Determine the domain and range of an inverse function, and restrict the domain of a function to make it one-to-one.
- Find or evaluate the inverse of a function.
- Use the graph of a one-to-one function to graph its inverse function on the same axes.

A reversible heat pump is a climate-control system that is an air conditioner and a heater in a single device. Operated in one direction, it pumps heat out of a house to provide cooling. Operating in reverse, it pumps heat into the building from the outside, even in cool weather, to provide heating. As a heater, a heat pump is several times more efficient than conventional electrical resistance heating.

If some physical machines can run in two directions, we might ask whether some of the function "machines" we have been studying can also run backwards. Figure 3.6.1 provides a visual representation of this question. In this section, we will consider the reverse nature of functions.

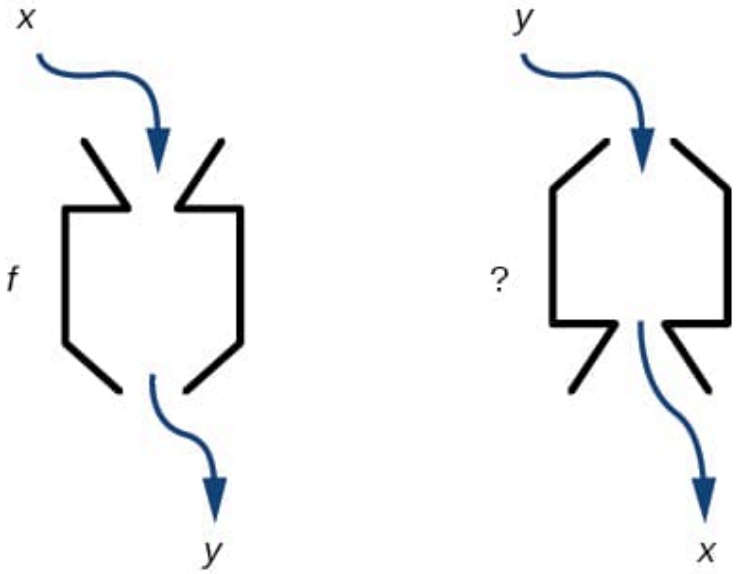


***Figure** 3.6.1**:** Can a function "machine" operate in reverse?*

Verifying That Two Functions Are Inverse Functions

Suppose a fashion designer traveling to Milan for a fashion show wants to know what the temperature will be. He is not familiar with the **Celsius** scale. To get an idea of how temperature measurements are related, he asks his assistant, Betty, to convert 75 degrees **Fahrenheit** to degrees Celsius. She finds the formula

$$C = \frac{5}{9}(F - 32) \tag{3.6.1}$$

and substitutes 75 for F to calculate

$$\frac{5}{9}(75 - 32) \approx 24^{\circ} \tag{3.6.2}$$

Knowing that a comfortable 75 degrees Fahrenheit is about 24 degrees Celsius, he sends his assistant the week's weather forecast from Figure 3.6.2 for Milan, and asks her to convert all of the temperatures to degrees Fahrenheit.

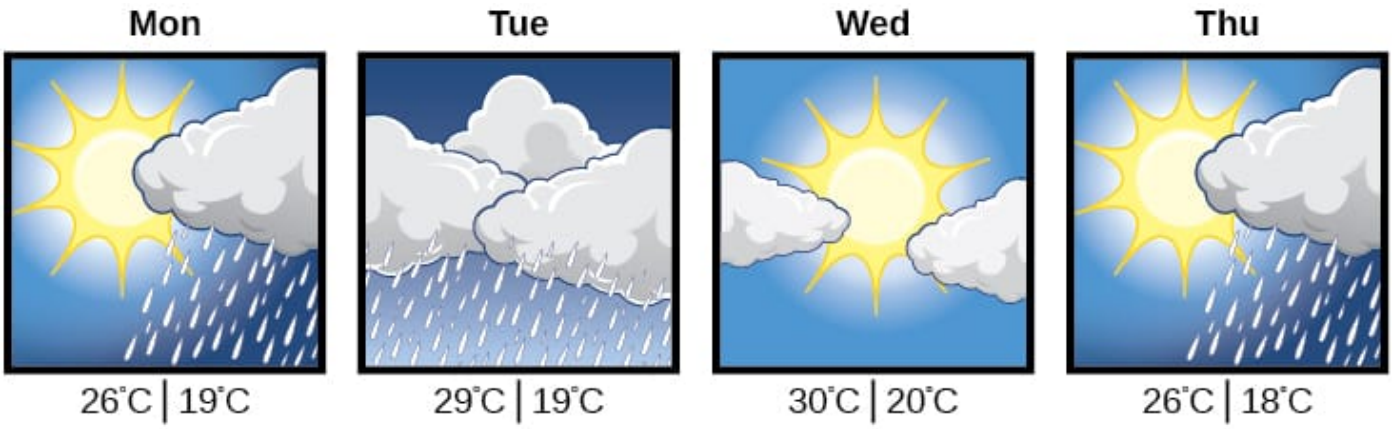


Figure 3.6.2: A forecast of Monday's through Thursday's weather.

At first, Betty considers using the formula she has already found to complete the conversions. After all, she knows her algebra, and can easily solve the equation for F after substituting a value for C. For example, to convert 26 degrees Celsius, she could write

$$26 = \frac{5}{9}(F - 32) \tag{3.6.3}$$

$$26 \cdot \frac{9}{5} = F - 32 \tag{3.6.4}$$

$$F = 26 \cdot \frac{9}{5} + 32 \approx 79 \tag{3.6.5}$$

After considering this option for a moment, however, she realizes that solving the equation for each of the temperatures will be awfully tedious. She realizes that since evaluation is easier than solving, it would be much more convenient to have a different formula, one that takes the Celsius temperature and outputs the Fahrenheit temperature.

The formula for which Betty is searching corresponds to the idea of an **inverse function**, which is a function for which the input of the original function becomes the output of the inverse function and the output of the original function becomes the input of the inverse function.

Given a function $f(x)$, we represent its inverse as $f^{-1}(x)$, read as "f inverse of x." The raised –1 is part of the notation. It is not an exponent; it does not imply a power of –1 . In other words, $f^{-1}(x)$ does not mean $\frac{1}{f(x)}$ because $\frac{1}{f(x)}$ is the reciprocal of f and not the inverse.

The "exponent-like" notation comes from an analogy between function composition and multiplication: just as $a^{-1}a = 1$ (1 is the identity element for multiplication) for any nonzero number a, so $f^{-1} \circ f$ equals the identity function, that is,

$$(f^{-1} \circ f)(x) = f^{-1}(f(x)) = f^{-1}(y) = x \tag{3.6.6}$$

This holds for all x in the domain of f. Informally, this means that inverse functions "undo" each other. However, just as zero does not have a **reciprocal**, some functions do not have inverses.

Given a function $f(x)$, we can verify whether some other function $g(x)$ is the inverse of $f(x)$ by checking whether either $g(f(x)) = x$ or $f(g(x)) = x$ is true. We can test whichever equation is more convenient to work with because they are logically equivalent (that is, if one is true, then so is the other.)

For example, $y = 4x$ and $y = \frac{1}{4}x$ are inverse functions.

$$(f^{-1} \circ f)(x) = f^{-1}(4x) = \frac{1}{4}(4x) = x \tag{3.6.7}$$

and

$$(f \circ f^{-1})(x) = f\left(\frac{1}{4}x\right) = 4\left(\frac{1}{4}x\right) = x \tag{3.6.8}$$

A few coordinate pairs from the graph of the function $y = 4x$ are $(-2, -8)$, $(0, 0)$, and $(2, 8)$. A few coordinate pairs from the graph of the function $y = \frac{1}{4}x$ are $(-8, -2)$, $(0, 0)$, and $(8, 2)$. If we interchange the input and output of each coordinate pair of a function, the interchanged coordinate pairs would appear on the graph of the inverse function.

Definition: Inverse Function

For any **one-to-one function** $f(x) = y$, a function $f^{-1}(x)$ is an **inverse function** of f if $f^{-1}(y) = x$. This can also be written as $f^{-1}(f(x)) = x$ for all x in the domain of f. It also follows that $f(f^{-1}(x)) = x$ for all x in the domain of f^{-1} if f^{-1} is the inverse of f.

The notation f^{-1} is read "f inverse." Like any other function, we can use any variable name as the input for f^{-1}, so we will often write $f^{-1}(x)$, which we read as "f inverse of x." Keep in mind that

$$f^{-1}(x) \neq \frac{1}{f(x)} \tag{3.6.9}$$

and not all functions have inverses.

Example 3.6.1: Identifying an Inverse Function for a Given Input-Output Pair

If for a particular one-to-one function $f(2) = 4$ and $f(5) = 12$, what are the corresponding input and output values for the inverse function?

Solution

The inverse function reverses the input and output quantities, so if

$$\begin{aligned} f(2) = 4, \text{ then } f^{-1}(4) = 2; \\ f(5) = 12, \text{ then } f^{-1}(12) = 5 \end{aligned} \tag{3.6.10}$$

.

Alternatively, if we want to name the inverse function g, then $g(4) = 2$ and $g(12) = 5$.

Analysis

Notice that if we show the coordinate pairs in a table form, the input and output are clearly reversed. See Table 3.6.1.

Table 3.6.1

$(x, f(x))$	$(x, g(x))$
$(2, 4)$	$(4, 2)$
$(5, 12)$	$(12, 5)$

Exercise 3.6.1

Given that $f^{-1}(6) = 2$, what are the corresponding input and output values of the original function f?

Answer available at the end of this section.

How To: Given two functions $f(x)$ and $g(x)$, test whether the functions are inverses of each other.

1. Determine whether $f(g(x)) = x$ or $g(f(x)) = x$.

2. If both statements are true, then $g = f^{-1}$ and $f = g^{-1}$. If either statement is false, then both are false, and $g \neq f^{-1}$ and $f \neq g^{-1}$.

Example 3.6.2: Testing Inverse Relationships Algebraically

If $f(x) = \frac{1}{x+2}$ and $g(x) = \frac{1}{x} - 2$, is $g = f^{-1}$?

Solution

$$g(f(x)) = \frac{1}{(\frac{1}{x+2})} - 2 \tag{3.6.11}$$
$$= x + 2 - 2 \tag{3.6.12}$$
$$= x \tag{3.6.13}$$

so

$$g = f^{-1} \text{ and } f = g^{-1} \tag{3.6.14}$$

This is enough to answer yes to the question, but we can also verify the other formula.

$$f(g(x)) = \frac{1}{\frac{1}{x} - 2 + 2} \tag{3.6.15}$$
$$= \frac{1}{\frac{1}{x}} \tag{3.6.16}$$
$$= x \tag{3.6.17}$$

Analysis

Notice the inverse operations are in reverse order of the operations from the original function.

Exercise 3.6.2

If $f(x) = x^3 - 4$ and $g(x) = \sqrt[3]{x+4}$, is $g = f^{-1}$?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 3.6.3: Determining Inverse Relationships for Power Functions

If $f(x) = x^3$ (the cube function) and $g(x) = \frac{1}{3}x$, is $g = f^{-1}$?

Solution

$$f(g(x)) = \frac{x^3}{27} \neq x \tag{3.6.18}$$

No, the functions are not inverses.

Analysis

The correct inverse to the cube is, of course, the cube root $\sqrt[3]{x} = x^{\frac{1}{3}}$, that is, the one-third is an exponent, not a multiplier.

Exercise 3.6.3

If $f(x) = (x-1)^3$ and $g(x) = \sqrt[3]{x} + 1$, is $g = f^{-1}$?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding Domain and Range of Inverse Functions

The outputs of the function f are the inputs to f^{-1}, so the range of f is also the domain of f^{-1}. Likewise, because the inputs to f are the outputs of f^{-1}, the domain of f is the range of f^{-1}. We can visualize the situation as in Figure $3.6.3$.

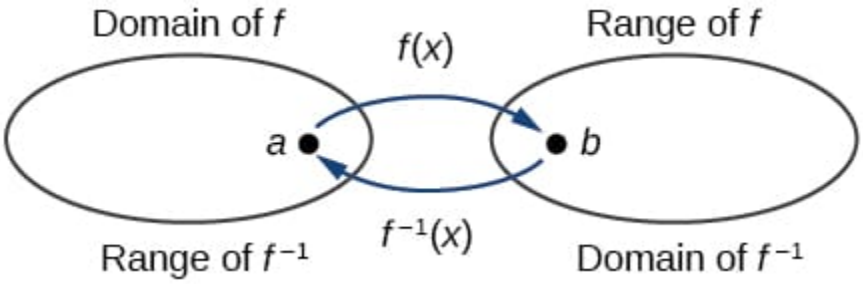


Figure $3.6.3$***:*** *Domain and range of a function and its inverse.*

When a function has no inverse function, it is possible to create a new function where that new function on a limited domain does have an inverse function. For example, the inverse of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$ is $f^{-1}(x) = x^2$, because a square "undoes" a square root; but the square is only the inverse of the square root on the domain $[0, \infty)$, since that is the range of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$.

We can look at this problem from the other side, starting with the square (toolkit quadratic) function $f(x) = x^2$. If we want to construct an inverse to this function, we run into a problem, because for every given output of the quadratic function, there are two corresponding inputs (except when the input is 0). For example, the output 9 from the quadratic function corresponds to the inputs 3 and –3. But an output from a function is an input to its inverse; if this inverse input corresponds to more than one inverse output (input of the original function), then the "inverse" is not a function at all! To put it differently, the quadratic function is not a one-to-one function; it fails the horizontal line test, so it does not have an inverse function. In order for a function to have an inverse, it must be a one-to-one function.

In many cases, if a function is not one-to-one, we can still restrict the function to a part of its domain on which it is one-to-one. For example, we can make a restricted version of the square function $f(x) = x^2$ with its range limited to $[0, \infty)$, which is a one-to-one function (it passes the horizontal line test) and which has an inverse (the square-root function).

If $f(x) = (x - 1)^2$ on $[1, \infty)$, then the inverse function is $f^{-1}(x) = \sqrt{x} + 1$.

- The domain of f = range of $f^{-1} = [1, \infty)$.
- The domain of f^{-1} = range of $f = [0, \infty)$.

Is it possible for a function to have more than one inverse?

No. If two supposedly different functions, say, g and h, both meet the definition of being inverses of another function f, then you can prove that $g = h$. We have just seen that some functions only have inverses if we restrict the domain of the original function. In these cases, there may be more than one way to restrict the domain, leading to different inverses. However, on any one domain, the original function still has only one unique inverse.

Note: Domain and Range of Inverse Functions

The range of a function $f(x)$ is the domain of the inverse function $f^{-1}(x)$.

The domain of $f(x)$ is the range of $f^{-1}(x)$.

How To: Given a function, find the domain and range of its inverse.

1. If the function is one-to-one, write the range of the original function as the domain of the inverse, and write the domain of the original function as the range of the inverse.
2. If the domain of the original function needs to be restricted to make it one-to-one, then this restricted domain becomes the range of the inverse function.

Example 3.6.4: Finding the Inverses of Toolkit Functions

Identify which of the toolkit functions besides the quadratic function are not one-to-one, and find a restricted domain on which each function is one-to-one, if any. The toolkit functions are reviewed in Table 3.6.2. We restrict the domain in such a fashion that the function assumes all y-values exactly once.

Table 3.6.2

Constant	Identity	Quadratic	Cubic	Reciprocal
$f(x) = c$	$f(x) = x$	$f(x) = x^2$	$f(x) = x^3$	$f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$
Reciprocal squared	Cube Root	Square Root	Absolute Value	
$f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$	$f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$	$f(x) = \sqrt{x}$	$f(x) = \|x\|$	

Solution

The constant function is not one-to-one, and there is no domain (except a single point) on which it could be one-to-one, so the constant function has no meaningful inverse.

The absolute value function can be restricted to the domain $[0, \infty)$,where it is equal to the identity function.

The reciprocal-squared function can be restricted to the domain $(0, \infty)$.

Analysis

We can see that these functions (if unrestricted) are not one-to-one by looking at their graphs, shown in Figure 3.6.4. They both would fail the horizontal line test. However, if a function is restricted to a certain domain so that it passes the horizontal line test, then in that restricted domain, it can have an inverse.

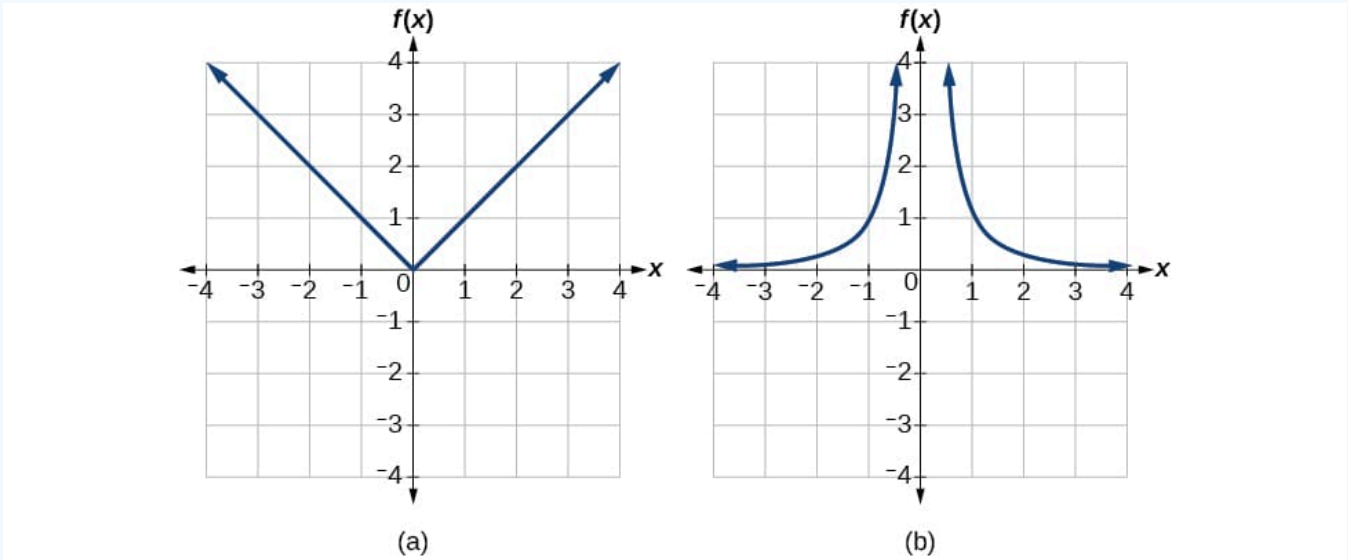


Figure 3.6.4***:*** *(a) Absolute value (b) Reciprocal squared*

Try It 3.6.4: The domain of function f is $(1, \infty)$ and the range of function f is $(-\infty, -2)$. Find the domain and range of the inverse function.

Solution

The domain of function f^{-1} is $(-\infty, -2)$ and the range of function f^{-1} is $(1, \infty)$.

Finding and Evaluating Inverse Functions

Once we have a one-to-one function, we can evaluate its inverse at specific inverse function inputs or construct a complete representation of the inverse function in many cases.

Inverting Tabular Functions

Suppose we want to find the inverse of a function represented in table form. Remember that the domain of a function is the range of the inverse and the range of the function is the domain of the inverse. So we need to interchange the domain and range.

Each row (or column) of inputs becomes the row (or column) of outputs for the inverse function. Similarly, each row (or column) of outputs becomes the row (or column) of inputs for the inverse function.

Example 3.6.5: Interpreting the Inverse of a Tabular Function

A function $f(t)$ is given in Table 3.6.3, showing distance in miles that a car has traveled in t minutes. Find and interpret $f^{-1}(70)$

Table 3.6.3

t **(minutes)**	30	50	70	90
$f(t)$ **(miles)**	20	40	60	70

The inverse function takes an output of f and returns an input for f. So in the expression $f^{-1}(70)$, 70 is an output value of the original function, representing 70 miles. The inverse will return the corresponding input of the original function f, 90 minutes, so $f^{-1}(70) = 90$. The interpretation of this is that, to drive 70 miles, it took 90 minutes.

Alternatively, recall that the definition of the inverse was that if $f(a) = b$, then $f^{-1}(b) = a$. By this definition, if we are given $f^{-1}(70) = a$, then we are looking for a value a so that $f(a) = 70$. In this case, we are looking for a t so that $f(t) = 70$, which is when $t = 90$.

Exercise 3.6.5

Using Table 3.6.4, find and interpret (a) $f(60)$,and (b) $f^{-1}(60)$.

Table 3.6.4

t **(minutes)**	30	50	60	70	90
$f(t)$ **(miles)**	20	40	50	60	70

Answer available at the end of this section.

Evaluating the Inverse of a Function, Given a Graph of the Original Function

We saw in **Functions and Function Notation** that the domain of a function can be read by observing the horizontal extent of its graph. We find the domain of the inverse function by observing the *vertical* extent of the graph of the original function, because this corresponds to the horizontal extent of the inverse function. Similarly, we find the range of the inverse function by observing the *horizontal* extent of the graph of the original function, as this is the vertical extent of the inverse function. If we want to evaluate an inverse function, we find its input within its domain, which is all or part of the vertical axis of the original function's graph.

How To: Given the graph of a function, evaluate its inverse at specific points.

1. Find the desired input on the y-axis of the given graph.
2. Read the inverse function's output from the x-axis of the given graph.

Example 3.6.6: Evaluating a Function and Its Inverse from a Graph at Specific Points

A function $g(x)$ is given in Figure 3.6.5. Find $g(3)$ and $g^{-1}(3)$.

.

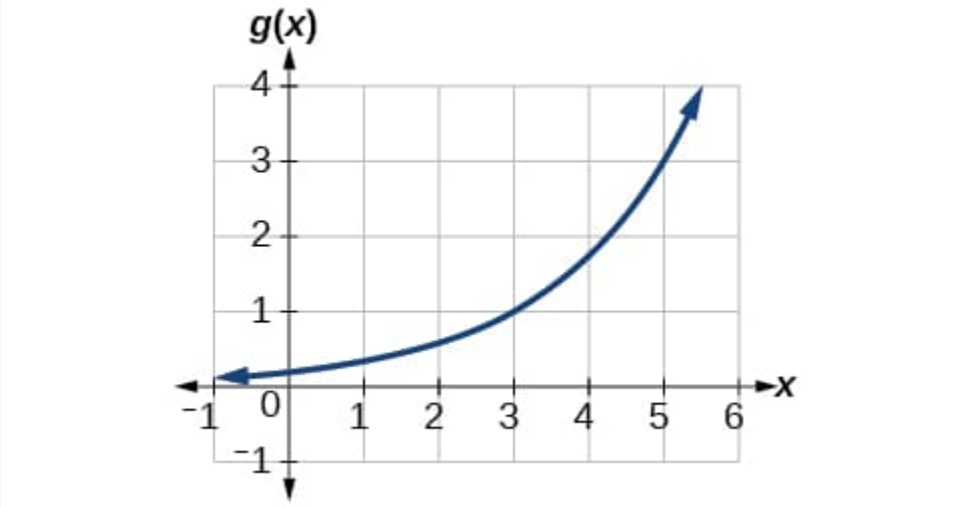


Figure 3.6.5: Graph of $g(x)$

Solution

To evaluate $g(3)$, we find 3 on the x-axis and find the corresponding output value on the y-axis. The point $(3, 1)$ tells us that $g(3) = 1$.

To evaluate $g^{-1}(3)$, recall that by definition $g^{-1}(3)$ means the value of x for which $g(x) = 3$. By looking for the output value 3 on the vertical axis, we find the point $(5, 3)$ on the graph, which means $g(5) = 3$, so by definition, $g^{-1}(3) = 5$. See Figure 3.6.6.

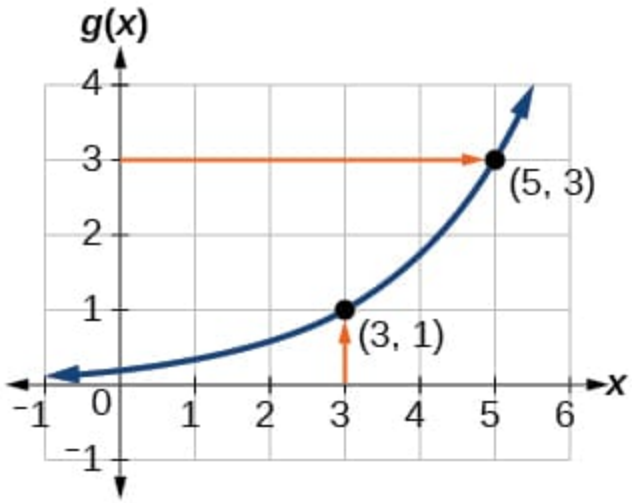


Figure 3.6.6: Graph of $g(x)$.

Exercise 3.6.6

Using the graph in Figure 3.6.6, (a) find $g^{-1}(1)$,and (b) estimate $g^{-1}(4)$.

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Finding Inverses of Functions Represented by Formulas

Sometimes we will need to know an inverse function for all elements of its domain, not just a few. If the original function is given as a formula— for example, y as a function of x— we can often find the inverse function by solving to obtain x as a function of y.

How To: Given a function represented by a formula, find the inverse.

1. Make sure f is a one-to-one function.
2. Solve for x
3. Interchange x and y.

Example 3.6.7: Inverting the Fahrenheit-to-Celsius Function

Find a formula for the inverse function that gives Fahrenheit temperature as a function of Celsius temperature.

$$C = \frac{5}{9}(F - 32) \tag{3.6.19}$$

Solution

$$C = \frac{5}{9}(F - 32) \tag{3.6.20}$$

$$C \cdot \frac{9}{5} = F - 32 \tag{3.6.21}$$

$$F = \frac{9}{5}C + 32 \tag{3.6.22}$$

By solving in general, we have uncovered the inverse function. If

$$C = h(F) = \frac{5}{9}(F - 32) \tag{3.6.23}$$

,

then

$$F = h^{-1}(C) = \frac{9}{5}C + 32. \tag{3.6.24}$$

In this case, we introduced a function h to represent the conversion because the input and output variables are descriptive, and writing C^{-1} could get confusing.

Exercise 3.6.7

Solve for x in terms of y given $y = \frac{1}{3}(x - 5)$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 3.6.8: Solving to Find an Inverse Function

Find the inverse of the function $f(x) = \frac{2}{x-3} + 4$.

Solution

$$y = \frac{2}{x - 3 + 4} \quad \text{Set up an equation.} \tag{3.6.25}$$

$$y - 4 = \frac{2}{x - 3} \quad \text{Subtract 4 from both sides.} \tag{3.6.26}$$

$$x - 3 = \frac{2}{y - 4} \quad \text{Multiply both sides by x−3 and divide by y−4.} \tag{3.6.27}$$

$$x = \frac{2}{y - 4} + 3 \quad \text{Add 3 to both sides.} \tag{3.6.28}$$

So $f^{-1}(y) = \frac{2}{y-4} + 3$ or $f^{-1}(x) = \frac{2}{x-4} + 3$.

Analysis

The domain and range of f exclude the values 3 and 4, respectively. f and f^{-1} are equal at two points but are not the same function, as we can see by creating Table 3.6.5.

Table 3.6.5

x	1	2	5	$f^{-1}(y)$
$f(x)$	3	2	5	y

Example 3.6.9: Solving to Find an Inverse with Radicals

Find the inverse of the function $f(x) = 2 + \sqrt{x - 4}$.

Solution

$$y = 2 + \sqrt{x - 4} \tag{3.6.29}$$

$$(y - 2)^2 = x - 4 \tag{3.6.30}$$

$$x = (y - 2)^2 + 4 \tag{3.6.31}$$

So $f^{-1}(x) = (x - 2)^2 + 4$.

The domain of f is $[4, \infty)$. Notice that the range of f is $[2, \infty)$, so this means that the domain of the inverse function f^{-1} is also $[2, \infty)$

Analysis

The formula we found for $f^{-1}(x)$ looks like it would be valid for all real x. However, f^{-1} itself must have an inverse (namely, f) so we have to restrict the domain of f^{-1} to $[2, \infty)$ in order to make f^{-1} a one-to-one function. This domain of f^{-1} is exactly the range of f.

Exercise 3.6.8

What is the inverse of the function $f(x) = 2 - \sqrt{x}$? State the domains of both the function and the inverse function.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding Inverse Functions and Their Graphs

Now that we can find the inverse of a function, we will explore the graphs of functions and their inverses. Let us return to the quadratic function $f(x) = x^2$ restricted to the domain $[0, \infty)$, on which this function is one-to-one, and graph it as in Figure 3.6.7.

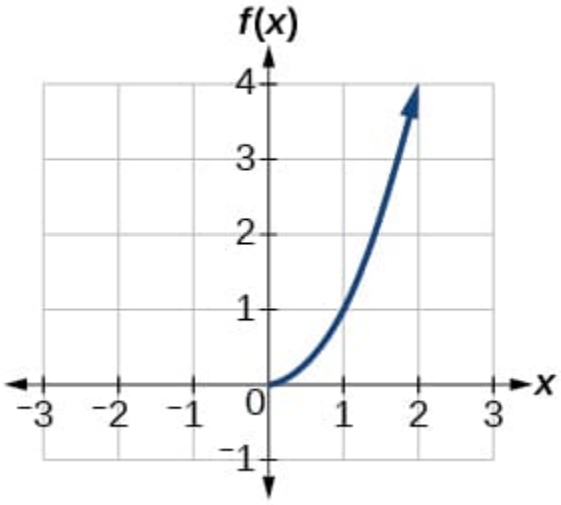


***Figure** 3.6.7**:** Quadratic function with domain restricted to $[0, \infty)$.*

Restricting the domain to $[0, \infty)$ makes the function one-to-one (it will obviously pass the horizontal line test), so it has an inverse on this restricted domain.

We already know that the inverse of the toolkit quadratic function is the square root function, that is, $f^{-1}(x) = \sqrt{x}$. What happens if we graph both f and f^{-1} on the same set of axes, using the x-axis for the input to both f and f^{-1}?

We notice a distinct relationship: The graph of $f^{-1}(x)$ is the graph of $f(x)$ reflected about the diagonal line $y = x$, which we will call the identity line, shown in Figure 3.6.8.

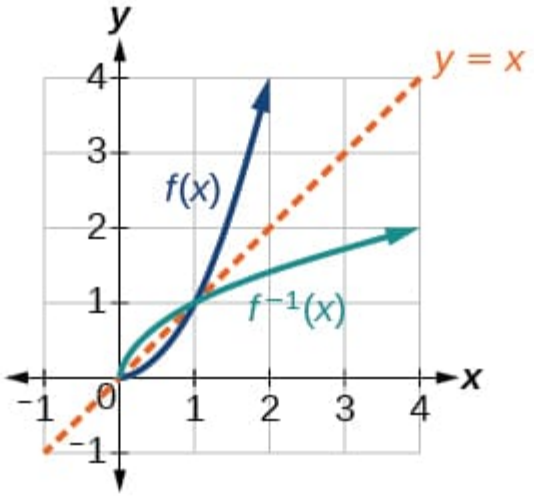


Figure 3.6.8***:*** *Square and square-root functions on the non-negative domain*

This relationship will be observed for all one-to-one functions, because it is a result of the function and its inverse swapping inputs and outputs. This is equivalent to interchanging the roles of the vertical and horizontal axes.

Example 3.6.10: Finding the Inverse of a Function Using Reflection about the Identity Line

Given the graph of $f(x)$ in Figure 3.6.9, sketch a graph of $f^{-1}(x)$.

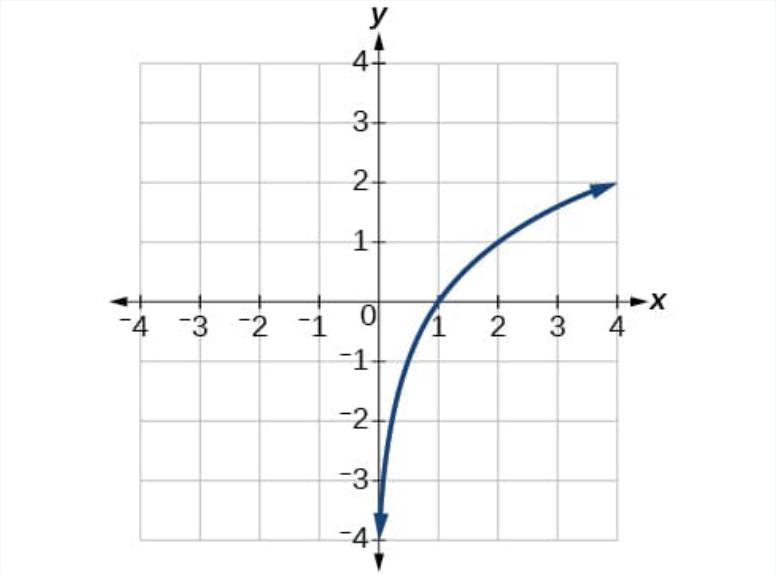


Figure 3.6.9: Graph of $f^(-1)(x)$.

This is a one-to-one function, so we will be able to sketch an inverse. Note that the graph shown has an apparent domain of $(0, \infty)$ and range of $(-\infty, \infty)$, so the inverse will have a domain of $(-\infty, \infty)$ and range of $(0, \infty)$.

If we reflect this graph over the line $y = x$, the point $(1, 0)$ reflects to $(0, 1)$ and the point $(4, 2)$ reflects to $(2, 4)$. Sketching the inverse on the same axes as the original graph gives Figure 3.6.10.

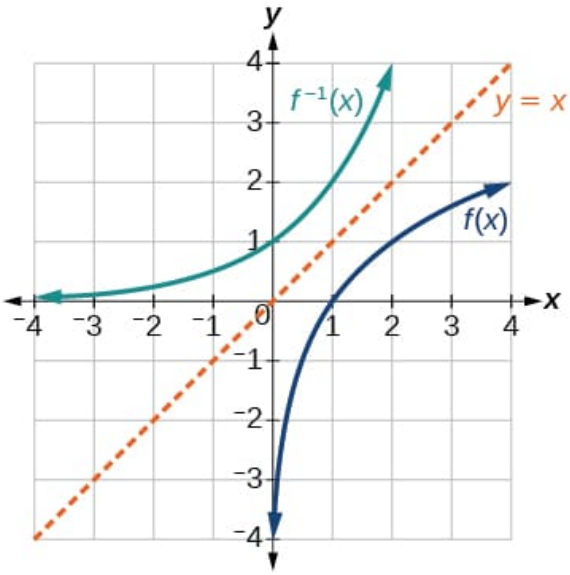


Figure 3.6.10: The function and its inverse, showing reflection about the identity line

Exercise 3.6.1

Draw graphs of the functions f and f^{-1} from Example 3.6.8.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Is there any function that is equal to its own inverse?

Yes. If $f = f^{-1}$, then $f(f(x)) = x$, and we can think of several functions that have this property. The identity function does, and so does the reciprocal function, because

$$\frac{1}{\frac{1}{x}} = x \tag{3.6.32}$$

Any function $f(x) = c - x$, where c is a constant, is also equal to its own inverse.

Key Concepts

- If $g(x)$ is the inverse of $f(x)$, then $g(f(x)) = f(g(x)) = x$.
- Each of the toolkit functions has an inverse.
- For a function to have an inverse, it must be one-to-one (pass the horizontal line test).
- A function that is not one-to-one over its entire domain may be one-to-one on part of its domain.
- For a tabular function, exchange the input and output rows to obtain the inverse.
- The inverse of a function can be determined at specific points on its graph.
- To find the inverse of a formula, solve the equation $y = f(x)$ for x as a function of y. Then exchange the labels x and y.
- The graph of an inverse function is the reflection of the graph of the original function across the line $y = x$.

Answers

Exercise 3.6.1

$f(2) = 6$

Exercise 3.6.2

Yes

Exercise 3.6.3

Yes

Exercise 3.6.5

$f(60) = 50$. In 60 minutes, 50 miles are traveled.
$f^{-1}(60) = 70$. To travel 60 miles, it will take 70 minutes.

Exercise 3.6.6

3

5.6

Exercise 3.6.7

$x = 3y + 5$

Exercise 3.6.8

$f^{-1}(x) = (2 - x)^2$; domain of f: $[0, \infty)$; domain of f^{-1}: $(-\infty, 2]$

Exercise 3.6.1

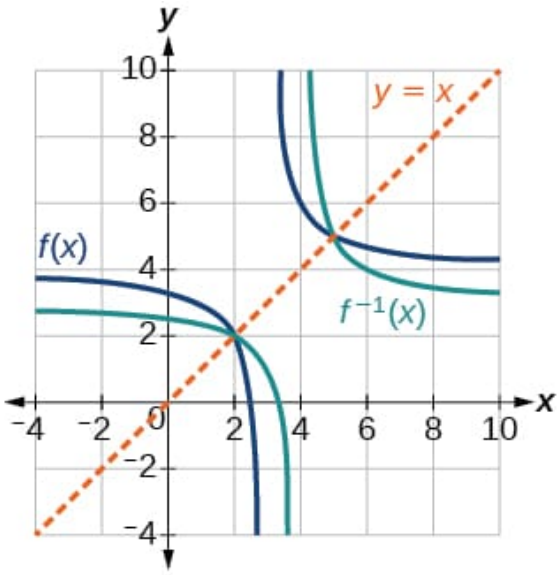


Figure 3.6.11: Graph of $f(x)$ and $f^(-1)(x)$.

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4: LINEAR FUNCTIONS

Recall that a function is a relation that assigns to every element in the domain exactly one element in the range. Linear functions are a specific type of function that can be used to model many real-world applications, such as plant growth over time. In this chapter, we will explore linear functions, their graphs, and how to relate them to data.

4.1: Introduction to Linear Functions

4.2: Linear Functions with Applications

4.3: More Linear Models

4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data

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4.1: Introduction to Linear Functions

Imagine placing a plant in the ground one day and finding that it has doubled its height just a few days later. Although it may seem incredible, this can happen with certain types of bamboo species. These members of the grass family are the fastest-growing plants in the world. One species of bamboo has been observed to grow nearly 1.5 inches every hour.1 In a twenty-four hour period, this bamboo plant grows about 36 inches, or an incredible 3 feet! A constant rate of change, such as the growth cycle of this bamboo plant, is a linear function.

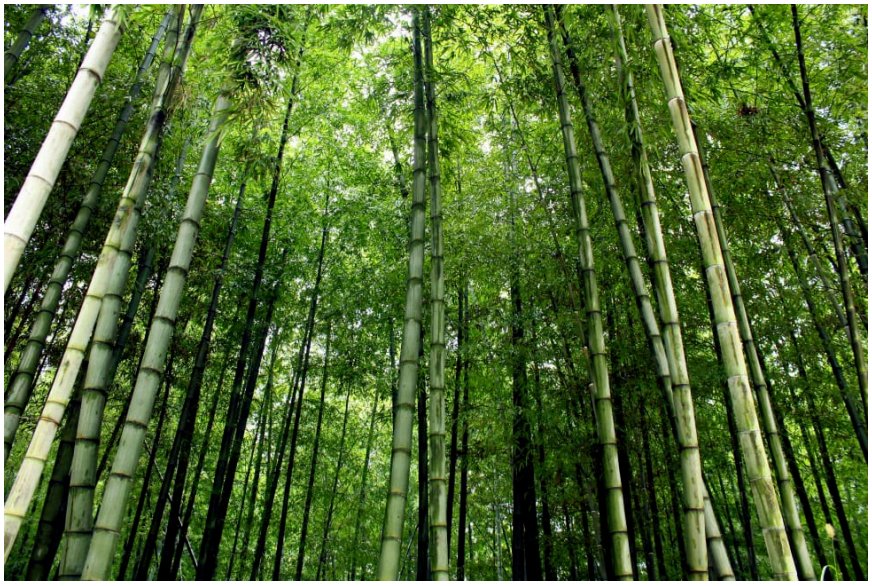


Figure 4.1.1***:*** *A bamboo forest in China (credit: "JFXie"/Flickr)*

Recall from Functions and Function Notation that a function is a relation that assigns to every element in the domain exactly one element in the range. Linear functions are a specific type of function that can be used to model many real-world applications, such as plant growth over time. In this chapter, we will explore linear functions, their graphs, and how to relate them to data.

Footnotes

1 www.guinnessworldrecords.com/...growing-plant/

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4.2: Linear Functions with Applications

Learning Objectives

- Represent a linear function.
- Determine whether a linear function is increasing, decreasing, or constant.
- Interpret slope as a rate of change.
- Write and interpret an equation for a linear function.
- Graph linear functions.
- Model Real World Applications using Linear Functions

Just as with the growth of a bamboo plant, there are many situations that involve constant change over time. Consider, for example, the first commercial maglev train in the world, the Shanghai MagLev Train (maglev train in the world, the Shanghai MagLev Train (Figure 4.2.1). It carries passengers comfortably for a 30-kilometer trip from the airport to the subway station in only eight minutes.



Figure 4.2.1: Shanghai MagLev Train (credit: “kanegen”/Flickr)

Suppose a maglev train were to travel a long distance, and that the train maintains a constant speed of 83 meters per second for a period of time once it is 250 meters from the station. How can we analyze the train’s distance from the station as a function of time? In this section, we will investigate a kind of function that is useful for this purpose, and use it to investigate real-world situations such as the train’s distance from the station at a given point in time.maglev train were to travel a long distance, and that the train maintains a constant speed of 83 meters per second for a period of time once it is 250 meters from the station. How can we analyze the train’s distance from the station as a function of time? In this section, we will investigate a kind of function that is useful for this purpose, and use it to investigate real-world situations such as the train’s distance from the station at a given point in time.

Representing Linear Functions

The function describing the train’s motion is a **linear function**, which is defined as a function with a constant rate of change, that is, a polynomial of degree 1. There are several ways to represent a linear function, including word form, function notation, tabular form, and graphical form. We will describe the train’s motion as a function using each method.

Representing a Linear Function in Word Form

Let's begin by describing the linear function in words. For the train problem we just considered, the following word sentence may be used to describe the function relationship.

- *The train's distance from the station is a function of the time during which the train moves at a constant speed plus its original distance from the station when it began moving at constant speed.*

The speed is the rate of change. Recall that a rate of change is a measure of how quickly the dependent variable changes with respect to the independent variable. The rate of change for this example is constant, which means that it is the same for each input value. As the time (input) increases by 1 second, the corresponding distance (output) increases by 83 meters. The train began moving at this constant speed at a distance of 250 meters from the station.

Representing a Linear Function in Function Notation

Another approach to representing linear functions is by using function notation. One example of function notation is an equation written in the form known as the slope-intercept form of a line, where x is the input value, m is the rate of change, and b is the initial value of the dependent variable.

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Equation form} && y = mx + b \\ &\text{Equation notation} && f(x) = mx + b \end{aligned}$$

In the example of the train, we might use the notation $D(t)$ in which the total distance D is a function of the time t. The rate, m, is 83 meters per second. The initial value of the dependent variable b is the original distance from the station, 250 meters. We can write a generalized equation to represent the motion of the train.

$$D(t) = 83t + 250 \tag{4.2.1}$$

Representing a Linear Function in Tabular Form

A third method of representing a linear function is through the use of a table. The relationship between the distance from the station and the time is represented in Figure 4.2.2. From the table, we can see that the distance changes by 83 meters for every 1 second increase in time.

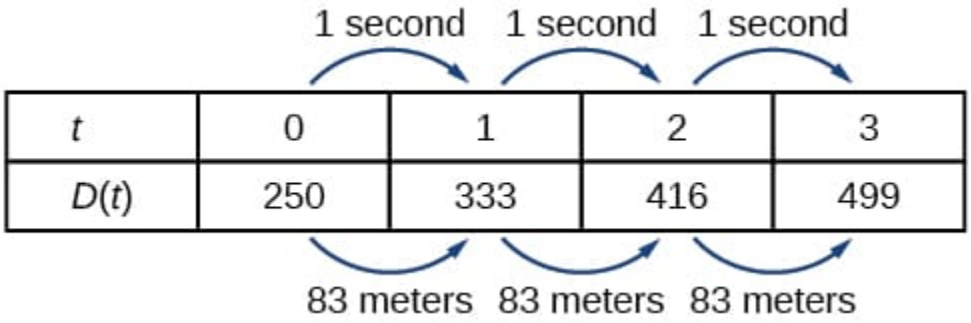


Figure 4.2.2: Tabular representation of the function D showing selected input and output values

Q/A? Can the input in the previous example be any real number?

No. The input represents time, so while nonnegative rational and irrational numbers are possible, negative real numbers are not possible for this example. The input consists of non-negative real numbers.

Representing a Linear Function in Graphical Form

Another way to represent linear functions is visually, using a graph. We can use the function relationship from above, $D(t) = 83t + 250$, to draw a graph, represented in Figure 4.2.3. Notice the graph is a line. When we plot a linear function, the graph is always

a line.

The rate of change, which is constant, determines the slant, or **slope** of the line. The point at which the input value is zero is the vertical intercept, or **y-intercept**, of the line. We can see from the graph in Figure $4.2.3$ that the y-intercept in the train example we just saw is $(0, 250)$ and represents the distance of the train from the station when it began moving at a constant speed.

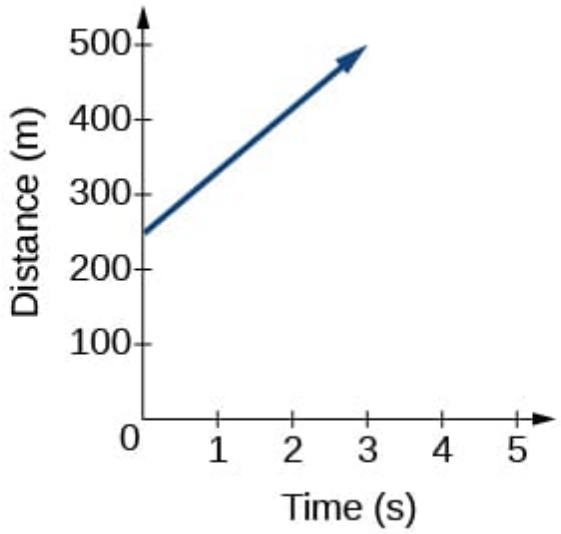


Figure $4.2.3$: The graph of $D(t) = 83t + 250$. Graphs of linear functions are lines because the rate of change is constant.

Notice that the graph of the train example is restricted, but this is not always the case. Consider the graph of the line $f(x) = 2x + 1$. Ask yourself what numbers can be input to the function, that is, what is the domain of the function? The domain is comprised of all real numbers because any number may be doubled, and then have one added to the product.

Definition: Linear Function

A **linear function** is a function whose graph is a line. Linear functions can be written in the slope-intercept form of a line

$$f(x) = mx + b \tag{4.2.2}$$

where b is the initial or starting value of the function (when input, $x = 0$), and m is the constant rate of change, or **slope** of the function. The **y-intercept** is at $(0, b)$.

Example $4.2.1$: Using a Linear Function to Find the Pressure on a Diver

The pressure, P, in pounds per square inch (PSI) on the diver in Figure $4.2.4$ depends upon her depth below the water surface, d, in feet. This relationship may be modeled by the equation, $P(d) = 0.434d + 14.696$. Restate this function in words.



Figure 4.2.4: (credit: Ilse Reijs and Jan-Noud Hutten)Hutten)

To restate the function in words, we need to describe each part of the equation. The pressure as a function of depth equals four hundred thirty-four thousandths times depth plus fourteen and six hundred ninety-six thousandths.

Analysis

The initial value, 14.696, is the pressure in PSI on the diver at a depth of 0 feet, which is the surface of the water. The rate of change, or slope, is 0.434 PSI per foot. This tells us that the pressure on the diver increases 0.434 PSI for each foot her depth increases.

Determining whether a Linear Function Is Increasing, Decreasing, or Constant

The linear functions we used in the two previous examples increased over time, but not every linear function does. A linear function may be increasing, decreasing, or constant. For an increasing function, as with the train example, the output values increase as the input values increase. The graph of an **increasing function** has a positive slope. A line with a positive slope slants upward from left to right as in Figure 4.2.5(a). For a **decreasing function**, the slope is negative. The output values decrease as the input values increase. A line with a negative slope slants downward from left to right as in Figure 4.2.5(b). If the function is constant, the output values are the same for all input values so the slope is zero. A line with a slope of zero is horizontal as in Figure 4.2.5(c).

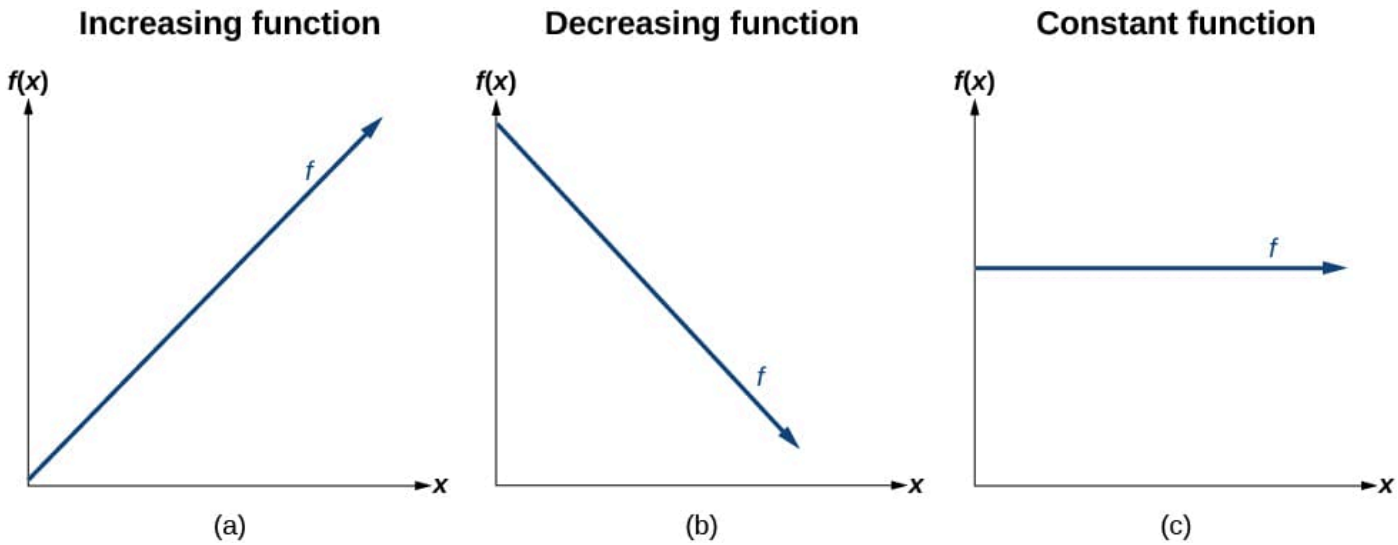


Figure 4.2.5: Three graphs depicting an increasing function, a decreasing function, and a constant function.]
Increasing and Decreasing Functions

Increasing and Decreasing Functions

The slope determines if the function is an **increasing linear function**, a **decreasing linear function**, or a constant function.

- $f(x) = mx + b$ is an increasing function if $m > 0$.
- $f(x) = mx + b$ is an decreasing function if $m < 0$.
- $f(x) = mx + b$ is a constant function if $m = 0$.

Example 4.2.2: decide whether a Function is Increasing, Decreasing, or Constant

Some recent studies suggest that a teenager sends an average of 60 texts per day. For each of the following scenarios, find the linear function that describes the relationship between the input value and the output value. Then, determine whether the graph of the function is increasing, decreasing, or constant.

a. The total number of texts a teen sends is considered a function of time in days. The input is the number of days, and output is the total number of texts sent.
b. A teen has a limit of 500 texts per month in his or her data plan. The input is the number of days, and output is the total number of texts remaining for the month.
c. A teen has an unlimited number of texts in his or her data plan for a cost of $50 per month. The input is the number of days, and output is the total cost of texting each month.

Solution

Analyze each function.

a. The function can be represented as $f(x) = 60x$ where x is the number of days. The slope, 60, is positive so the function is increasing. This makes sense because the total number of texts increases with each day.
b. The function can be represented as $f(x) = 500 - 60x$ where x is the number of days. In this case, the slope is negative so the function is decreasing. This makes sense because the number of texts remaining decreases each day and this function represents the number of texts remaining in the data plan after x days.
c. The cost function can be represented as $f(x) = 50$ because the number of days does not affect the total cost. The slope is 0 so the function is constant.

How To: How to: Given two points from a linear function, calculate and interpret the slope.

1. Determine the units for output and input values.
2. Calculate the change of output values and change of input values.
3. Interpret the slope as the change in output values per unit of the input value.

Example 4.2.3: Finding the Slope of a Linear Function

If $f(x)$ is a linear function, and $(3,-2)$ and $(8,1)$ are points on the line, find the slope. Is this function increasing or decreasing?

Solution

The coordinate pairs are $(3,-2)$ and $(8,1)$. To find the rate of change, we divide the change in output by the change in input.

$$m=\frac{\text{change in output (rise)}}{\text{change in input (run)}}=\frac{1-(-2)}{8-3}=\frac{3}{5} \tag{4.2.3}$$

We could also write the slope as $m=0.6$. The function is increasing because $m>0$.

Analysis

As noted earlier, the order in which we write the points does not matter when we compute the slope of the line as long as the first output value, or *y*-coordinate, used corresponds with the first input value, or *x*-coordinate, used.

Try it! 4.2.1

If $f(x)$ is a linear function, and $(2,3)$ and $(0,4)$ are points on the line, find the slope. Is this function increasing or decreasing?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 4.2.4: Finding the Population Change from a Linear Function

The population of a city increased from 23,400 to 27,800 between 2008 and 2012. Find the change of population per year if we assume the change was constant from 2008 to 2012.

The rate of change relates the change in population to the change in time. The population increased by $27,800-23,400=4400$ people over the four-year time interval. To find the rate of change, divide the change in the number of people by the number of years.

$$\frac{4,400 \text{ people}}{4 \text{ years}}=1,100\frac{\text{people}}{\text{year}} \tag{4.2.4}$$

So the population increased by 1,100 people per year.

Analysis

Because we are told that the population increased, we would expect the slope to be positive. This positive slope we calculated is therefore reasonable.

Try it! 4.2.2

The population of a small town increased from 1,442 to 1,868 between 2009 and 2012. Find the change of population per year if we assume the change was constant from 2009 to 2012.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Writing the Point-Slope Form of a Linear Equation

Up until now, we have been using the slope-intercept form of a linear equation to describe linear functions. Here, we will learn another way to write a linear function, the **point-slope form**.

$$y - y_1 = m(x - x_1) \tag{4.2.5}$$

The point-slope form is derived from the slope formula.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{y - y_1}{x - x_1} && \text{assuming } x \neq x_1 \\ m(x - x_1) &= \frac{y - y_1}{x - x_1}(x - x_1) && \text{Multiply both sides by } (x - x_1). \\ m(x - x_1) &= y - y_1 && \text{Simplify} \\ y - y_1 &= m(x - x_1) && \text{Rearrange} \end{aligned}$$

Keep in mind that the slope-intercept form and the point-slope form can be used to describe the same function. We can move from one form to another using basic algebra. For example, suppose we are given an equation in point-slope form, $y - 4 = -\frac{1}{2}(x - 6)$. We can convert it to the slope-intercept form as shown.

$$\begin{aligned} y - 4 &= -\frac{1}{2}(x - 6) \\ y - 4 &= -\frac{1}{2}x + 3 && \text{Distribute the } -\frac{1}{2}. \\ y &= -\frac{1}{2}x + 7 && \text{Add 4 to each side.} \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the same line can be described in slope-intercept form as $y = \frac{1}{2}x + 7$.

Note: Point-Slope Form of a Linear Equation

The **point-slope** form of a linear equation takes the form

$$y - y_1 = m(x - x_1) \tag{4.2.6}$$

where m is the slope, x_1 and y_1 are the x and y coordinates of a specific point through which the line passes.

Writing the Equation of a Line Using a Point and the Slope

The point-slope form is particularly useful if we know one point and the slope of a line. Suppose, for example, we are told that a line has a slope of 2 and passes through the point $(4, 1)$. We know that $m = 2$ and that $x_1 = 4$ and $y_1 = 1$. We can substitute these values into the general point-slope equation.

$$\begin{aligned} y - y_1 &= m(x - x_1) \\ y - 1 &= 2(x - 4) \end{aligned}$$

If we wanted to then rewrite the equation in slope-intercept form, we apply algebraic techniques.

$$\begin{aligned} y-1 &= 2(x-4) \\ y-1 &= 2x-8 && \text{Distribute the 2.} \\ y &= 2x-7 && \text{Add 1 to each side.} \end{aligned}$$

Both equations, $y-1=2(x-4)$ and $y=2x$–7, describe the same line. See Figure 4.2.7.

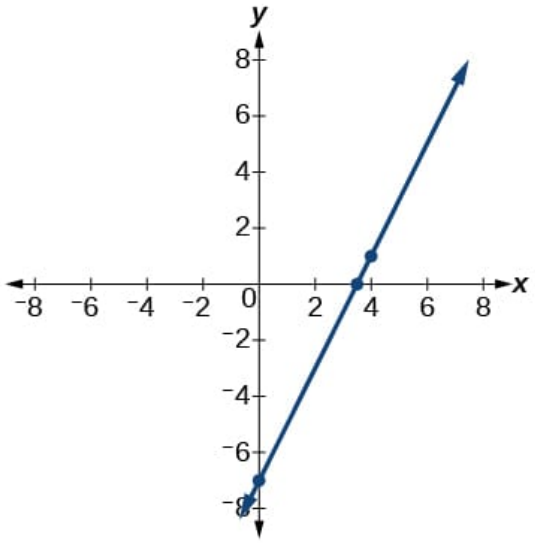


Figure 4.2.7

Example 4.2.5: Writing Linear Equations Using a Point and the Slope

Write the point-slope form of an equation of a line with a slope of 3 that passes through the point $(6,-1)$. Then rewrite it in the slope-intercept form.

Solution

Let's figure out what we know from the given information. The slope is 3, so $m=3$. We also know one point, so we know $x_1=6$ and $y_1=-1$. Now we can substitute these values into the general point-slope equation.

$$\begin{aligned} y-y_1 &= m(x-x_1) \\ y-(-1) &= 3(x-6) && \text{Substitute known values.} \\ y+1 &= 3(x-6) && \text{Distribute } -1 \text{ to find point-slope form.} \end{aligned}$$

Then we use algebra to find the slope-intercept form.

$$\begin{aligned} y+1 &= 3(x-6) \\ y+1 &= 3x-18 && \text{Distribute 3.} \\ y &= 3x-19 && \text{Simplify to slope-intercept form.} \end{aligned}$$

Try it! 4.2.3

Write the point-slope form of an equation of a line with a slope of –2 that passes through the point $(-2,2)$. Then rewrite it in the slope-intercept form.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Writing the Equation of a Line Using Two Points

The point-slope form of an equation is also useful if we know any two points through which a line passes. Suppose, for example, we know that a line passes through the points $(0, 1)$ and $(3, 2)$. We can use the coordinates of the two points to find the slope.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \\ &= \frac{2 - 1}{3 - 0} \\ &= \frac{1}{3} \end{aligned}$$

Now we can use the slope we found and the coordinates of one of the points to find the equation for the line. Let use $(0, 1)$ for our point.

$$\begin{aligned} y - y_1 &= m(x - x_1) \\ y - 1 &= \frac{1}{3}(x - 0) \end{aligned}$$

As before, we can use algebra to rewrite the equation in the slope-intercept form.

$$\begin{aligned} y - 1 &= \frac{1}{3}(x - 0) && \\ y - 1 &= \frac{1}{3}x && \text{Distribute the } \frac{1}{3}. \\ y &= \frac{1}{3}x + 1 && \text{Add 1 to each side.} \end{aligned}$$

Both equations describe the line shown in Figure $4.2.8$.

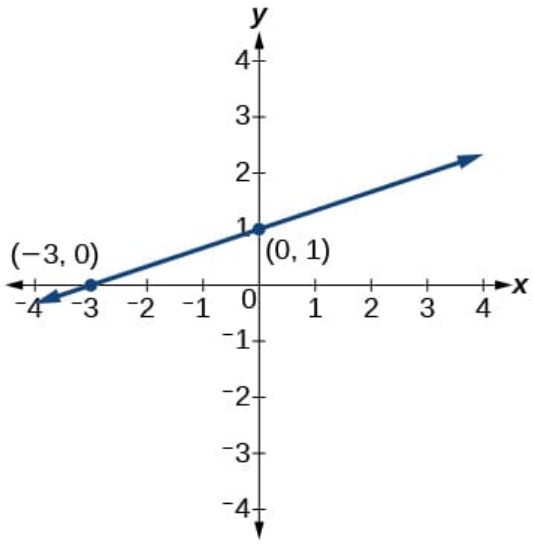


Figure $4.2.8$

Example $4.2.6$: Writing Linear Equations Using Two Points

Write the point-slope form of an equation of a line that passes through the points $(5, 1)$ and $(8, 7)$. Then rewrite it in the slope-intercept form.

Let's begin by finding the slope.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \\ &= \frac{7-1}{8-5} \\ &= \frac{6}{3} \\ &= 2 \end{aligned}$$

So $m = 2$. Next, we substitute the slope and the coordinates for one of the points into the general point-slope equation. We can choose either point, but we will use $(5, 1)$.

$$\begin{aligned} y - y_1 &= m(x - x_1) \\ y - 1 &= 2(x - 5) \end{aligned}$$

The point-slope equation of the line is $y_2–1 = 2(x_2–5)$. To rewrite the equation in slope-intercept form, we use algebra.

$$\begin{aligned} y - 1 &= 2(x - 5) \\ y - 1 &= 2x - 10 \\ y &= 2x - 9 \end{aligned}$$

The slope-intercept equation of the line is $y = 2x–9$.

Try It! 4.2.4

Write the point-slope form of an equation of a line that passes through the points $(–1, 3)$ and $(0, 0)$. Then rewrite it in the slope-intercept form.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Writing and Interpreting an Equation for a Linear Function

Now that we have written equations for linear functions in both the slope-intercept form and the point-slope form, we can choose which method to use based on the information we are given. That information may be provided in the form of a graph, a point and a slope, two points, and so on. Look at the graph of the function f in Figure 4.2.9.

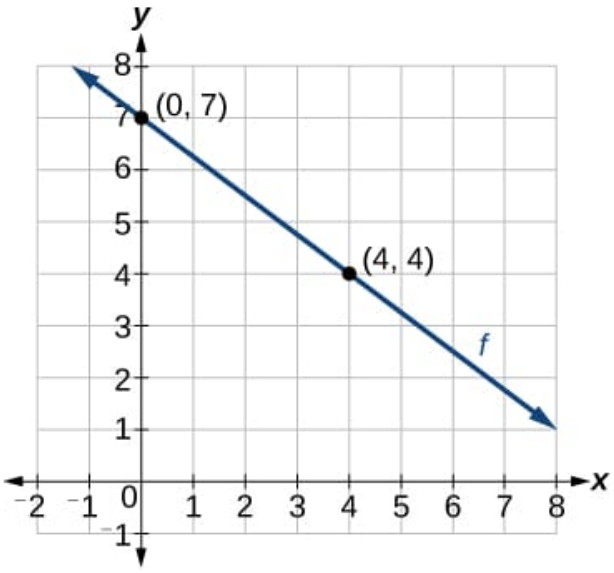


Figure 4.2.9: Graph depicting how to calculate the slope of a line.

We are not given the slope of the line, but we can choose any two points on the line to find the slope. Let's choose $(0, 7)$ and $(4, 4)$

. We can use these points to calculate the slope.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \\ &= \frac{4-7}{4-0} \\ &= -\frac{3}{4} \end{aligned}$$

Now we can substitute the slope and the coordinates of one of the points into the point-slope form.

$$\begin{aligned} y - y_1 &= m(x - x_1) \\ y - 4 &= -\frac{3}{4}(x - 4) \end{aligned}$$

If we want to rewrite the equation in the slope-intercept form, we would find

$$\begin{aligned} y - 4 &= -\frac{3}{4}(x - 4) \\ y - 4 &= -\frac{3}{4}x + 3 \\ y &= -\frac{3}{4}x + 7 \end{aligned}$$

If we wanted to find the slope-intercept form without first writing the point-slope form, we could have recognized that the line crosses the y-axis when the output value is 7. Therefore, $b = 7$. We now have the initial value b and the slope m so we can substitute m and b into the slope-intercept form of a line.

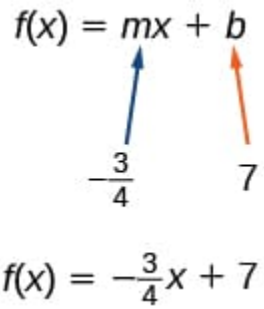


Figure 4.2.10

So the function is $f(x) = -\frac{3}{4}x + 7$, and the linear equation would be $y = -\frac{3}{4}x + 7$.

How To: How to: Given the graph of a linear function, write an equation to represent the function.

1. Identify two points on the line.
2. Use the two points to calculate the slope.
3. Determine where the line crosses the y-axis to identify the y-intercept by visual inspection.
4. Substitute the slope and y-intercept into the slope-intercept form of a line equation.

Example 4.2.7: Writing an Equation for a Linear Function

Write an equation for a linear function given a graph of f shown in Figure 4.2.11.

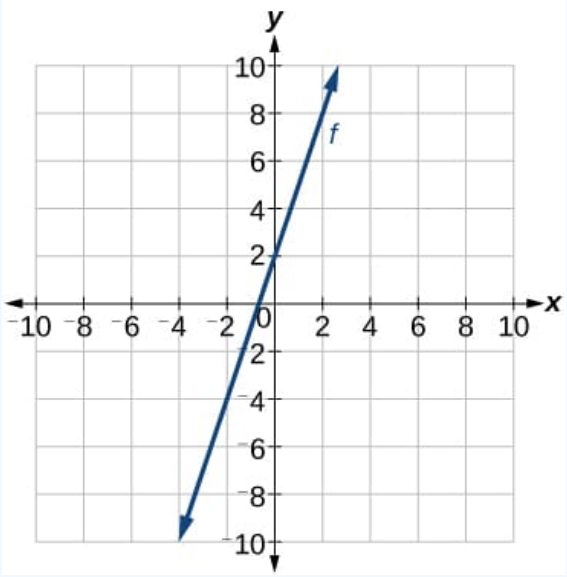


Figure 4.2.11

Solution

Identify two points on the line, such as $(0, 2)$ and $(-2, -4)$. Use the points to calculate the slope.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \\ &= \frac{4 - 2}{-2 - 0} \\ &= \frac{-6}{-2} \\ &= 3 \end{aligned}$$

Substitute the slope and the coordinates of one of the points into the point-slope form.

$$\begin{aligned} y - y_1 &= m(x - x_1) \\ y - (-4) &= 3(x - (-2)) \\ y + 4 &= 3(x + 2) \end{aligned}$$

We can use algebra to rewrite the equation in the slope-intercept form.

$$\begin{aligned} y + 4 &= 3(x + 2) \\ y + 4 &= 3x + 6 \\ y &= 3x + 2 \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

This makes sense because we can see from Figure 4.2.12 that the line crosses the y-axis at the point $(0, 2)$, which is the y-intercept, so $b = 2$.

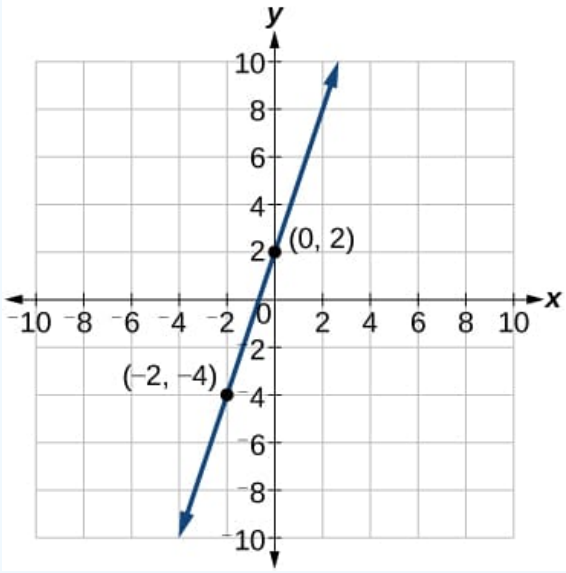


Figure 4.2.12: Graph of an increasing line with points at $(0, 2)$ and $(-2, -4)$.

Example 4.2.8: Writing an Equation for a Linear Cost Function

Suppose Ben starts a company in which he incurs a fixed cost of $1,250 per month for the overhead, which includes his office rent. His production costs are $37.50 per item. Write a linear function C where $C(x)$ is the cost for x items produced in a given month.

Solution

The fixed cost is present every month, $1,250. The costs that can vary include the cost to produce each item, which is $37.50 for Ben. The variable cost, called the marginal cost, is represented by 37.5. The cost Ben incurs is the sum of these two costs, represented by $C(x) = 1250 + 37.5x$.

Analysis

If Ben produces 100 items in a month, his monthly cost is represented by

$$\begin{aligned} C(100) &= 1250 + 37.5(100) \\ &= 5000 \end{aligned}$$

So his monthly cost would be $5,000.

Example 4.2.9: Writing an Equation for a Linear Function Given Two Points

If f is a linear function, with $f(3) = -2$, and $f(8) = 1$, find an equation for the function in slope-intercept form.

Solution

We can write the given points using coordinates.

$$\begin{aligned} f(3) = -2 &\rightarrow (3, 2) \\ f(8) = 1 &\rightarrow (8, 1) \end{aligned}$$

We can then use the points to calculate the slope.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} \\ &= \frac{1-(-2)}{8-3} \\ &= \frac{3}{5} \end{aligned}$$

Substitute the slope and the coordinates of one of the points into the point-slope form.

$$\begin{aligned} y - y_1 &= m(x - x_1) \\ y-(-2) &= \frac{3}{5}(x-3) \end{aligned}$$

We can use algebra to rewrite the equation in the slope-intercept form.

$$\begin{aligned} y+2 &= \frac{3}{5}(x-3) \\ y+2 &= \frac{3}{5}x - \frac{9}{5} \\ y &= \frac{3}{5}x - \frac{19}{5} \end{aligned}$$

Try It! 4.2.5

If $f(x)$ is a linear function, with $f(2) = -11$, and $f(4) = -25$, find an equation for the function in slope-intercept form.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Modeling Real-World Problems with Linear Functions

In the real world, problems are not always explicitly stated in terms of a function or represented with a graph. Fortunately, we can analyze the problem by first representing it as a linear function and then interpreting the components of the function. As long as we know, or can figure out, the initial value and the rate of change of a linear function, we can solve many different kinds of real-world problems.



How to: Given a linear function f and the initial value and rate of change, evaluate $f(c)$.

1. Determine the initial value and the rate of change (slope).
2. Substitute the values into $f(x) = mx + b$.
3. Evaluate the function at $x = c$.

Example 4.2.10: Using a Linear Function to Determine the Number of Songs in a Music Collection

Marcus currently has 200 songs in his music collection. Every month, he adds 15 new songs. Write a formula for the number of songs, N, in his collection as a function of time, t, the number of months. How many songs will he own in a year?

Solution

The initial value for this function is 200 because he currently owns 200 songs, so $N(0) = 200$, which means that $b = 200$.

The number of songs increases by 15 songs per month, so the rate of change is 15 songs per month. Therefore we know that $m = 15$. We can substitute the initial value and the rate of change into the slope-intercept form of a line.

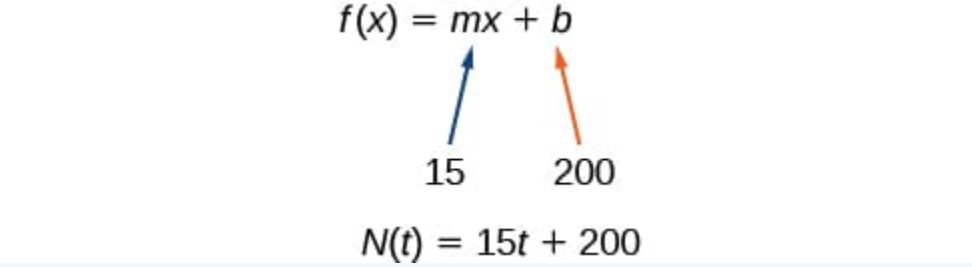


Figure 4.2.13

We can write the formula $N(t) = 15t + 200$.

With this formula, we can then predict how many songs Marcus will have in 1 year (12 months). In other words, we can evaluate the function at $t = 12$.

$$\begin{aligned} N(12) &= 15(12) + 200 \\ &= 180 + 200 \\ &= 380 \end{aligned}$$

Marcus will have 380 songs in 12 months.

Analysis

Notice that N is an increasing linear function. As the input (the number of months) increases, the output (number of songs) increases as well.

Example 4.2.11: Using a Linear Function to Calculate Salary Plus Commission

Working as an insurance salesperson, Ilya earns a base salary plus a commission on each new policy. Therefore, Ilya's weekly income, I,depends on the number of new policies, n, he sells during the week. Last week he sold 3 new policies, and earned \$760 for the week. The week before, he sold 5 new policies and earned \$920. Find an equation for $I(n)$, and interpret the meaning of the components of the equation.

Solution

The given information gives us two input-output pairs: $(3, 760)$ and $(5, 920)$. We start by finding the rate of change.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{920 - 760}{5 - 3} \\ &= \frac{\$160}{2 \text{ policies}} \\ &= \$80 \text{ per policy} \end{aligned}$$

Keeping track of units can help us interpret this quantity. Income increased by \$160 when the number of policies increased by 2, so the rate of change is \$80 per policy. Therefore, Ilya earns a commission of \$80 for each policy sold during the week.

We can then solve for the initial value.

$$\begin{aligned} I(n) &= 80n + b \\ 760 &= 80(3) + b \text{ when } n = 3, I(3) = 760 \\ 760 - 80(3) &= b \\ 520 &= b \end{aligned}$$

The value of b is the starting value for the function and represents Ilya's income when $n = 0$, or when no new policies are sold. We can interpret this as Ilya's base salary for the week, which does not depend upon the number of policies sold.

We can now write the final equation.

$$I(n) = 80n + 520$$

Our final interpretation is that Ilya's base salary is $520 per week and he earns an additional $80 commission for each policy sold.

Example 4.2.12: Using Tabular Form to Write an Equation for a Linear Function

Table 4.2.1 relates the number of rats in a population to time, in weeks. Use the table to write a linear equation.

Table 4.2.1

w, number of weeks	0	2	4	6
P(w), number of rats	1000	1080	1160	1240

Solution

We can see from the table that the initial value for the number of rats is 1000, so $b = 1000$.

Rather than solving for m, we can tell from looking at the table that the population increases by 80 for every 2 weeks that pass. This means that the rate of change is 80 rats per 2 weeks, which can be simplified to 40 rats per week.

$$P(w) = 40w + 1000$$

If we did not notice the rate of change from the table we could still solve for the slope using any two points from the table. For example, using $(2, 1080)$ and $(6, 1240)$

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{1240 - 1080}{6 - 2} \\ &= \frac{160}{4} \\ &= 40 \end{aligned}$$

Is the initial value always provided in a table of values?

No. Sometimes the initial value is provided in a table of values, but sometimes it is not. If you see an input of 0, then the initial value would be the corresponding output. If the initial value is not provided because there is no value of input on the table equal to 0, find the slope, substitute one coordinate pair and the slope into $f(x) = mx + b$, and solve for b.

Try It 4.2.6

A new plant food was introduced to a young tree to test its effect on the height of the tree. Table 4.2.2 shows the height of the tree, in feet, x months since the measurements began. Write a linear function, $H(x)$, where x is the number of months since the start of the experiment.

Table 4.2.2

x	0	2	4	8	12
$H(x)$	12.5	13.5	14.5	16.5	18.5

Answer available at the end of this section.

Business Applications

In a business application, revenue results from the sale of a number of items. For example, if an item can be sold for $\$150$ and we let n represent the number of units sold, then we can form the following **revenue function**[39]:

$$R(n) = 150n$$

Use this function to determine the revenue generated from selling $n = 100$ units,

$$R(100) = 150(100) = 15,000$$

The function shows that the revenue generated from selling 100 items is $\$15,000$. Typically, selling items does not represent the entire story. There are a number of costs associated with the generation of revenue. For example, if there is a one-time set up fee of $\$5,280$ and each item cost $\$62$ to produce, then we can form the following **cost function**[40]:

$$C(n) = 62n + 5,280$$

Here n represents the number of items produced. Use this function to determine the cost associated with producing $n = 100$ units:

$$C(100) = 62(100) + 5,280 = 11,480$$

The function shows that the cost associated with producing 100 items is $11,480. Profit is revenue less costs:

$$\begin{aligned} Profit &= Revenue - Cost \\ &= 15,000 - 11,480 \\ &= 3,520 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the profit generated by producing and selling 100 items is $\$3,520$. In general, given a revenue function R and a cost function C, we can form a **profit function**[41] by subtracting as follows:

$$P(n) = R(n) - C(n)$$

Example 4.2.7:

The cost in dollars of producing n items is given by the formula $C(n) = 62n + 5,280$. The revenue in dollars is given by $R(n) = 150n$, where n represents the number items sold. Write a function that gives the profit generated by producing and selling n items. Use the function to determine how many items must be produced and sold in order to earn a profit of at least $\$7,000$.

Solution

Obtain the profit function by subtracting the cost function from the revenue function.

$$\begin{aligned} P(n) &= R(n) - C(n) \\ &= 150n - (62n + 5,280) \\ &= 150n - 62n - 5,280 \\ &= 88n - 5,280 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $P(n) = 88n + 5,280$ models the profit. To determine the number of items that must be produced and sold to profit at least $\$7,000$, solve the following:

$$\begin{aligned} P(n) &\geq 7,000 \\ 88n - 5,280 &\geq 7,000 \\ 88n &\geq 12,280 \\ n &\geq 139.5 \end{aligned}$$

Round up because the number of units produced and sold must be an integer. To see this, calculate the profit where n is 139 and 140 units.

$$\begin{aligned} P(139) &= 88(139) - 5,280 = 6,952 \\ P(140) &= 88(140) - 5,280 = 7,040 \end{aligned}$$

Answer:

140 or more items must be produced and sold in order to earn a profit of at least $\$7,000$.

Sometimes the costs exceed the revenue, in which case, the profit will be negative. For example, use the profit function of the previous example, $P(n) = 88n - 5,280$, to calculate the profit generated where $n = 50$.

$$P(50) = 88(50) - 5,280 = -880$$

This indicates that when 50 units are produced and sold the corresponding profit is a loss of $\$880$.

It is often important to determine how many items must be produced and sold to break even. To break even means to neither have a gain nor a loss; in this case, the profit will be equal to zero. To determine the **breakeven point**[42], set the profit function equal to zero and solve:

$$\begin{aligned} P(n) &= 88n - 5,280 \\ 0 &= 88n - 5,280 \\ 5,280 &= 88n \\ 60 &= n \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, 60 items must be produced and sold to break even.

Figure $4.2.6$

Exercise $4.2.2$

Custom t-shirts can be sold for $\$6.50$ each. In addition to an initial setup fee of $\$120$, each t-shirt cost $\$3.50$ to produce.

a. Write a function that models the revenue and a function that models the cost.
b. Determine a function that models the profit and use it to determine the profit from producing and selling 150 t-shirts.
c. Calculate the number of t-shirts that must be sold to break even.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Equations

- slope-intercept form of a line: $f(x) = mx + b$
- slope: $m = \dfrac{\text{change in output (rise)}}{\text{change in input (run)}} = \dfrac{\Delta y}{\Delta x} = \dfrac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1}$
- point-slope form of a line: $y - y_1 = m(x - x_1)$

Key Concepts

- The ordered pairs given by a linear function represent points on a line.
- Linear functions can be represented in words, function notation, tabular form, and graphical form.
- The rate of change of a linear function is also known as the slope.
- An equation in the slope-intercept form of a line includes the slope and the initial value of the function.
- The initial value, or y-intercept, is the output value when the input of a linear function is zero. It is the y-value of the point at which the line crosses the y-axis.
- An increasing linear function results in a graph that slants upward from left to right and has a positive slope.
- A decreasing linear function results in a graph that slants downward from left to right and has a negative slope.
- A constant linear function results in a graph that is a horizontal line.
- Analyzing the slope within the context of a problem indicates whether a linear function is increasing, decreasing, or constant.
- The slope of a linear function can be calculated by dividing the difference between y-values by the difference in corresponding x-values of any two points on the line.
- The slope and initial value can be determined given a graph or any two points on the line.
- One type of function notation is the slope-intercept form of an equation.
- The point-slope form is useful for finding a linear equation when given the slope of a line and one point.
- The point-slope form is also convenient for finding a linear equation when given two points through which a line passes.
- The equation for a linear function can be written if the slope m and initial value b are known.
- A linear function can be used to solve real-world problems.
- A linear function can be written from tabular form.

Footnotes

1 www.chinahighlights.com/shang...glev-train.htm
2 www.cbsnews.com/8301-501465_1...ay-study-says/

Glossary

decreasing linear function

a function with a negative slope: If $f(x) = mx + b$, then $m < 0$.

increasing linear function

a function with a positive slope: If $f(x) = mx + b$, then $m > 0$.

linear function

a function with a constant rate of change that is a polynomial of degree 1, and whose graph is a straight line

point-slope form

the equation for a line that represents a linear function of the form \(y–y_1=m(x–x_1)

slope

the ratio of the change in output values to the change in input values; a measure of the steepness of a line

slope-intercept form

the equation for a line that represents a linear function in the form $f(x) = mx + b$

y-intercept

the value of a function when the input value is zero; also known as initial value

Answers

Try it! 4.2.1

$m = \frac{4-3}{0-2} = \frac{1}{-2} = -\frac{1}{2}$; decreasing because $m < 0$.

Try it! 4.2.2

$m = \frac{1,868-1,442}{2,012-2,009} = \frac{426}{3} = 142$ people per year

Try it! 4.2.3

$y - 2 = -2(x + 2)$; $y = -2x - 2$

Try It! 4.2.4

$y - 0 = -3(x - 0)$; $y = -3x$.

Try It! 4.2.5

$y = -7x + 3$



Try It 4.2.6

$H(x) = 0.5x + 12.5$

Exercise 4.2.2

a. Revenue: $R(x) = 6.50x$; cost: $C(x) = 3.50x + 120$;

b. profit: $P(x) = 3x + 120$; $330

c. 40

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4.3: More Linear Models

Learning Objectives

- Build linear models from verbal descriptions.
- Model a set of data with a linear function.

Emily is a college student who plans to spend a summer in Seattle. She has saved $3,500 for her trip and anticipates spending $400 each week on rent, food, and activities. How can we write a linear model to represent her situation? What would be the x-intercept, and what can she learn from it? To answer these and related questions, we can create a model using a linear function. Models such as this one can be extremely useful for analyzing relationships and making predictions based on those relationships. In this section, we will explore examples of **linear function** models.



Figure 4.3.1: (credit: EEK Photography/Flickr)

Identifying Steps to Model and Solve Problems

When **modeling** scenarios with linear functions and solving problems involving quantities with a **constant rate of change**, we typically follow the same problem strategies that we would use for any type of function. Let's briefly review them:

Identify changing quantities, and then define descriptive variables to represent those quantities. When appropriate, sketch a picture or define a coordinate system.
Carefully read the problem to identify important information. Look for information that provides values for the variables or values for parts of the functional model, such as slope and initial value.
Carefully read the problem to determine what we are trying to find, identify, solve, or interpret.
Identify a solution pathway from the provided information to what we are trying to find. Often this will involve checking and tracking units, building a table, or even finding a formula for the function being used to model the problem.
When needed, write a formula for the function.
Solve or evaluate the function using the formula.
Reflect on whether your answer is reasonable for the given situation and whether it makes sense mathematically.
Clearly convey your result using appropriate units, and answer in full sentences when necessary.

Building Linear Models

Now let's take a look at the student in Seattle. In her situation, there are two changing quantities: time and money. The amount of money she has remaining while on vacation depends on how long she stays. We can use this information to define our variables, including units.

- Output: M, money remaining, in dollars
- Input: t, time, in weeks

So, the amount of money remaining depends on the number of weeks: $M(t)$

We can also identify the initial value and the rate of change.

- Initial Value: She saved $3,500, so $3,500 is the initial value for M.
- Rate of Change: She anticipates spending $400 each week, so –$400 per week is the rate of change, or slope.

Notice that the unit of dollars per week matches the unit of our output variable divided by our input variable. Also, because the slope is negative, the linear function is decreasing. This should make sense because she is spending money each week.

The **rate of change is constant**, so we can start with the linear model $M(t) = mt + b$. Then we can substitute the intercept and slope provided.

$$M(t) = mt + b$$

$$M(t) = -400t + 3500$$

Figure 4.3.2

To find the x-intercept, we set the output to zero, and solve for the input.

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= -400t + 3500 \\ t &= \frac{3500}{400} \\ &= 8.75 \end{aligned}$$

The x-intercept is 8.75 weeks. Because this represents the input value when the output will be zero, we could say that Emily will have no money left after 8.75 weeks.

When modeling any real-life scenario with functions, there is typically a limited domain over which that model will be valid—almost no trend continues indefinitely. Here the domain refers to the number of weeks. In this case, it doesn't make sense to talk about input values less than zero. A negative input value could refer to a number of weeks before she saved $3,500, but the scenario discussed poses the question once she saved $3,500 because this is when her trip and subsequent spending starts. It is also likely that this model is not valid after the x-intercept, unless Emily will use a credit card and goes into debt. The domain represents the set of input values, so the reasonable domain for this function is $0 \leq t \leq 8.75$.

In the above example, we were given a written description of the situation. We followed the steps of modeling a problem to analyze the information. However, the information provided may not always be the same. Sometimes we might be provided with an intercept. Other times we might be provided with an output value. We must be careful to analyze the information we are given, and use it appropriately to build a linear model.

Using a Given Intercept to Build a Model

Some real-world problems provide the y-intercept, which is the constant or initial value. Once the y-intercept is known, the x-intercept can be calculated. Suppose, for example, that Hannah plans to pay off a no-interest loan from her parents. Her loan

balance is $1,000. She plans to pay $250 per month until her balance is $0. The y-intercept is the initial amount of her debt, or $1,000. The rate of change, or slope, is -$250 per month. We can then use the slope-intercept form and the given information to develop a linear model.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= mx + b \\ &= -250x + 1000 \end{aligned}$$

Now we can set the function equal to 0, and solve for x to find the x-intercept.

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= -250 + 1000 \\ 1000 &= 250x \\ 4 &= x \\ x &= 4 \end{aligned}$$

The x-intercept is the number of months it takes her to reach a balance of $0. The x-intercept is 4 months, so it will take Hannah four months to pay off her loan.

Using a Given Input and Output to Build a Model

Many real-world applications are not as direct as the ones we just considered. Instead they require us to identify some aspect of a linear function. We might sometimes instead be asked to evaluate the linear model at a given input or set the equation of the linear model equal to a specified output.



Given a word problem that includes two pairs of input and output values, use the linear function to solve a problem.

1. Identify the input and output values.
2. Convert the data to two coordinate pairs.
3. Find the slope.
4. Write the linear model.
5. Use the model to make a prediction by evaluating the function at a given x-value.
6. Use the model to identify an x-value that results in a given y-value.
7. Answer the question posed.

Example 4.3.1: Using a Linear Model to Investigate a Town's Population

A town's population has been growing linearly. In 2004 the population was 6,200. By 2009 the population had grown to 8,100. Assume this trend continues.

a. Predict the population in 2013.
b. Identify the year in which the population will reach 15,000.

Solution

The two changing quantities are the population size and time. While we could use the actual year value as the input quantity, doing so tends to lead to very cumbersome equations because the y-intercept would correspond to the year 0, more than 2000 years ago!

To make computation a little nicer, we will define our input as the number of years since 2004:

- Input: t, years since 2004
- Output: $P(t)$, the town's population

To predict the population in 2013 ($t = 9$), we would first need an equation for the population. Likewise, to find when the population would reach 15,000, we would need to solve for the input that would provide an output of 15,000. To write an equation, we need the initial value and the rate of change, or slope.

To determine the rate of change, we will use the change in output per change in input.

$$m = \frac{\text{change in output}}{\text{change in input}} \tag{4.3.1}$$

The problem gives us two input-output pairs. Converting them to match our defined variables, the year 2004 would correspond to $t = 0$, giving the point $(0, 6200)$. Notice that through our clever choice of variable definition, we have "given" ourselves the y-intercept of the function. The year 2009 would correspond to $t = 5$, giving the point $(5, 8100)$.

The two coordinate pairs are $(0, 6200)$ and $(5, 8100)$. Recall that we encountered examples in which we were provided two points earlier in the chapter. We can use these values to calculate the slope.

$$\begin{aligned} m &= \frac{8100 - 6200}{5 - 0} \\ &= \frac{1900}{5} \\ &= 380 \text{ people per year} \end{aligned}$$

We already know the y-intercept of the line, so we can immediately write the equation:

$$P(t) = 380t + 6200 \tag{4.3.2}$$

To predict the population in 2013, we evaluate our function at $t = 9$.

$$\begin{aligned} P(9) &= 380(9) + 6,200 \\ &= 9,620 \end{aligned}$$

If the trend continues, our model predicts a population of 9,620 in 2013.

To find when the population will reach 15,000, we can set $P(t) = 15000$ and solve for t.

$$\begin{aligned} 15000 &= 380t + 6200 \\ 8800 &= 380t \\ t &\approx 23.158 \end{aligned}$$

Our model predicts the population will reach 15,000 in a little more than 23 years after 2004, or somewhere around the year 2027.

Exercise 4.3.1A

A company sells doughnuts. They incur a fixed cost of $25,000 for rent, insurance, and other expenses. It costs $0.25 to produce each doughnut.

a. Write a linear model to represent the cost C of the company as a function of x, the number of doughnuts produced.
b. Find and interpret the y-intercept.

Solution

a. $C(x) = 0.25x + 25,000$ b. The y-intercept is $(0, 25,000)$. If the company does not produce a single doughnut, they still incur a cost of $25,000.

Exercise 4.3.1B

A city's population has been growing linearly. In 2008, the population was 28,200. By 2012, the population was 36,800. Assume this trend continues.

a. Predict the population in 2014.
b. Identify the year in which the population will reach 54,000.

Solution

a. 41,100 b. 2020

Using a Diagram to Model a Problem

It is useful for many real-world applications to draw a picture to gain a sense of how the variables representing the input and output may be used to answer a question. To draw the picture, first consider what the problem is asking for. Then, determine the input and the output. The diagram should relate the variables. Often, geometrical shapes or figures are drawn. Distances are often traced out. If a right triangle is sketched, the Pythagorean Theorem relates the sides. If a rectangle is sketched, labeling width and height is helpful.

Example 4.3.2: Using a Diagram to Model Distance Walked

Anna and Emanuel start at the same intersection. Anna walks east at 4 miles per hour while Emanuel walks south at 3 miles per hour. They are communicating with a two-way radio that has a range of 2 miles. How long after they start walking will they fall out of radio contact?

Solution

In essence, we can partially answer this question by saying they will fall out of radio contact when they are 2 miles apart, which leads us to ask a new question:

"How long will it take them to be 2 miles apart?"

In this problem, our changing quantities are time and position, but ultimately we need to know how long will it take for them to be 2 miles apart. We can see that time will be our input variable, so we'll define our input and output variables.

- Input: t, time in hours.
- Output: $A(t)$, distance in miles, and $E(t)$, distance in miles

Because it is not obvious how to define our output variable, we'll start by drawing a picture such as Figure 4.3.3.

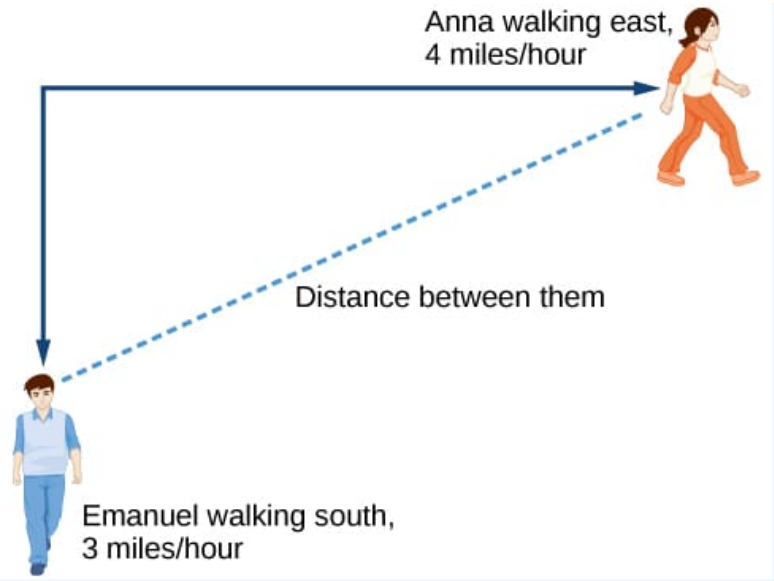


Figure 4.3.3

- Initial Value: They both start at the same intersection so when $t = 0$, the distance traveled by each person should also be 0. Thus the initial value for each is 0.
- Rate of Change: Anna is walking 4 miles per hour and Emanuel is walking 3 miles per hour, which are both rates of change. The slope for A is 4 and the slope for E is 3.

Using those values, we can write formulas for the distance each person has walked.

$$A(t) = 4t \tag{4.3.3}$$

$$E(t) = 3t \tag{4.3.4}$$

For this problem, the distances from the starting point are important. To notate these, we can define a coordinate system, identifying the "starting point" at the intersection where they both started. Then we can use the variable, A, which we introduced above, to represent Anna's position, and define it to be a measurement from the starting point in the eastward direction. Likewise, can use the variable, E, to represent Emanuel's position, measured from the starting point in the southward direction. Note that in defining the coordinate system, we specified both the starting point of the measurement and the direction of measure.

We can then define a third variable, D, to be the measurement of the distance between Anna and Emanuel. Showing the variables on the diagram is often helpful, as we can see from Figure 4.3.4.

Recall that we need to know how long it takes for D, the distance between them, to equal 2 miles. Notice that for any given input t, the outputs $A(t)$, $E(t)$, and $D(t)$ represent distances.

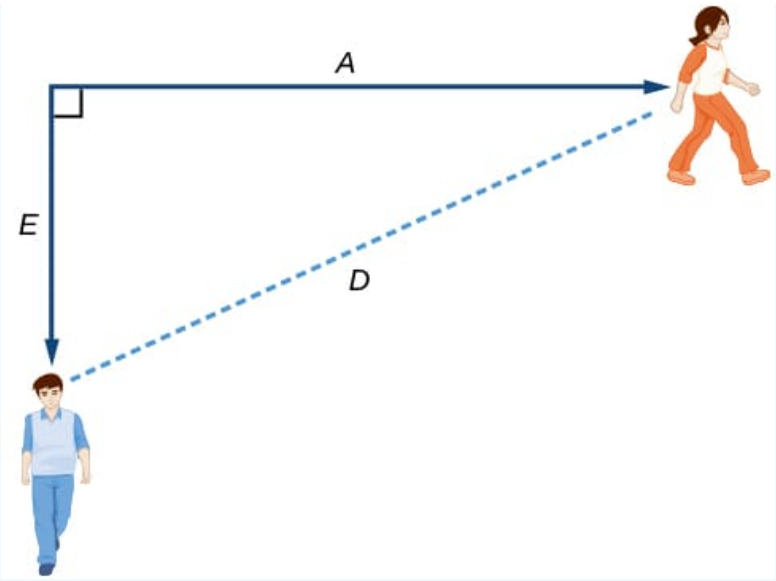


Figure 4.3.4: We can use the Pythagorean Theorem because we have drawn a right angle.

Using the Pythagorean Theorem, we get:

$$\begin{aligned} d(t)^2 &= A(t)^2 + E(t)^2 \\ &= (4t)^2 + (3t)^2 \\ &= 16t^2 + 9t^2 \\ &= 25t^2 \\ D(t) &= \pm\sqrt{25t^2} \qquad \text{Solve for } D(t) \text{ using the square root} \\ &= \pm 5|t| \end{aligned}$$

In this scenario we are considering only positive values of t, so our distance $D(t)$ will always be positive. We can simplify this answer to $D(t) = 5t$. This means that the distance between Anna and Emanuel is also a linear function. Because D is a linear function, we can now answer the question of when the distance between them will reach 2 miles. We will set the output $D(t) = 2$ and solve for t.

$$\begin{aligned} D(t) &= 2 \\ 5t &= 2 \\ t &= \frac{2}{5} = 0.4 \end{aligned}$$

They will fall out of radio contact in 0.4 hours, or 24 minutes.

Should I draw diagrams when given information based on a geometric shape?

Yes. Sketch the figure and label the quantities and unknowns on the sketch.

Example 4.3.3: Using a Diagram to Model Distance between Cities

There is a straight road leading from the town of Westborough to Agritown 30 miles east and 10 miles north. Partway down this road, it junctions with a second road, perpendicular to the first, leading to the town of Eastborough. If the town of Eastborough is located 20 miles directly east of the town of Westborough, how far is the road junction from Westborough?

Solution

It might help here to draw a picture of the situation. See Figure 4.3.5. It would then be helpful to introduce a coordinate system. While we could place the origin anywhere, placing it at Westborough seems convenient. This puts Agritown at coordinates $(30, 10)$, and Eastborough at $(20, 0)$.

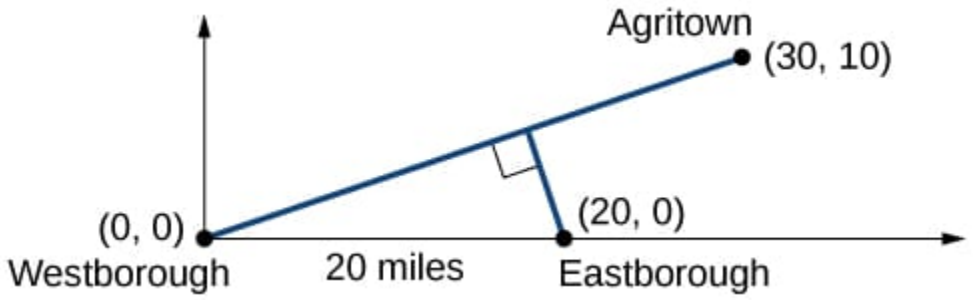


Figure 4.3.5

Using this point along with the origin, we can find the slope of the line from Westborough to Agritown:

$$m = \frac{10-0}{30-0} = \frac{1}{3} \tag{4.3.5}$$

The equation of the road from Westborough to Agritown would be

$$W(x) = \frac{1}{3}x \tag{4.3.6}$$

From this, we can determine the perpendicular road to Eastborough will have slope $m = -3$. Because the town of Eastborough is at the point $(20, 0)$, we can find the equation:

$$\begin{aligned} E(x) &= -3x + b \\ 0 &= -3(20) + b \qquad \text{Substitute in } (20, 0) \\ b &= 60 \\ E(x) &= -3x + 60 \end{aligned}$$

We can now find the coordinates of the junction of the roads by finding the intersection of these lines. Setting them equal,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{3}x &= -3x + 60 \\ \frac{10}{3}x &= 60 \\ 10x &= 180 \\ x &= 18 \qquad \text{Substituting this back into } W(x) \\ y &= W(18) \\ &= \frac{1}{3}(18) \\ &= 6 \end{aligned}$$

The roads intersect at the point $(18, 6)$. Using the distance formula, we can now find the distance from Westborough to the junction.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{distance} &= \sqrt{(x_2 - x_1)^2 + (y_2 - y_1)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{(18-0)^2 + (6-0)^2} \\ &\approx 18.743 \text{miles} \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

One nice use of linear models is to take advantage of the fact that the graphs of these functions are lines. This means real-world applications discussing maps need linear functions to model the distances between reference points.

Exercise 4.3.2

There is a straight road leading from the town of Timpson to Ashburn 60 miles east and 12 miles north. Partway down the road, it junctions with a second road, perpendicular to the first, leading to the town of Garrison. If the town of Garrison is located 22 miles directly east of the town of Timpson, how far is the road junction from Timpson?

Solution

21.15 miles

Building Systems of Linear Models

Real-world situations including two or more linear functions may be modeled with a **system of linear equations**. Remember, when solving a system of linear equations, we are looking for points the two lines have in common. Typically, there are three types of answers possible, as shown in Figure 4.3.6.

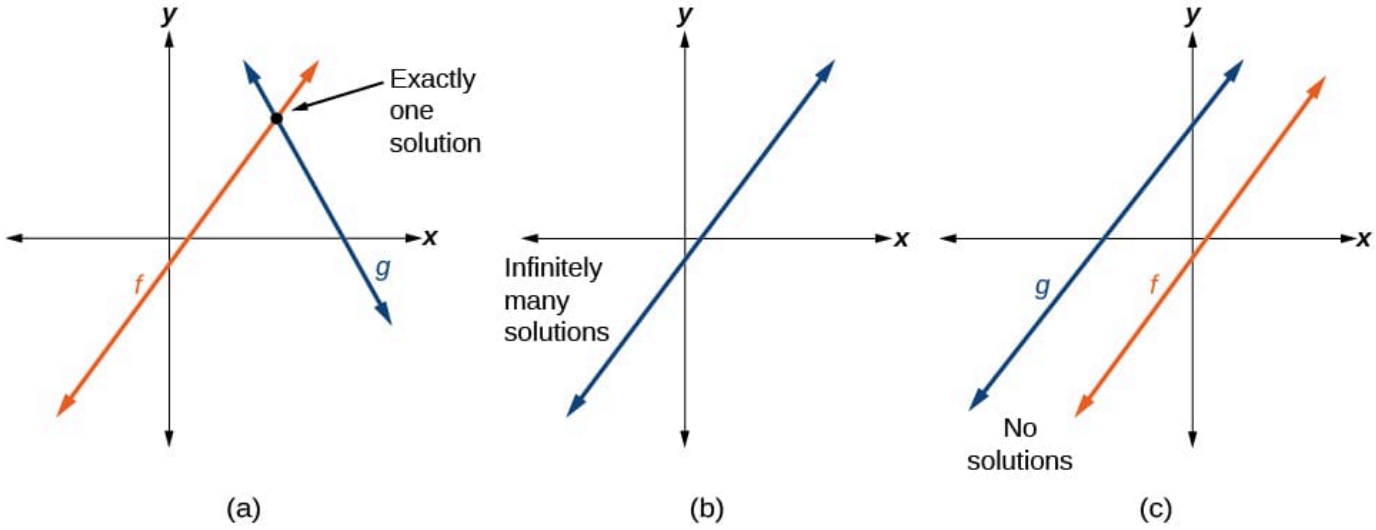


Figure 4.3.6

Given a situation that represents a system of linear equations, write the system of equations and identify the solution.

a. Identify the input and output of each linear model.
b. Identify the slope and y-intercept of each linear model.
c. Find the solution by setting the two linear functions equal to another and solving for x,or find the point of intersection on a graph.

Example 4.3.4: Building a System of Linear Models to Choose a Truck Rental Company

Jamal is choosing between two truck-rental companies. The first, Keep on Trucking, Inc., charges an up-front fee of $20, then 59 cents a mile[1]. The second, Move It Your Way, charges an up-front fee of $16, then 63 cents a mile. When will Keep on Trucking, Inc. be the better choice for Jamal?

Solution

The two important quantities in this problem are the cost and the number of miles driven. Because we have two companies to consider, we will define two functions.

- Input: d, distance driven in miles
- Outputs: $K(d)$: cost, in dollars, for renting from Keep on Trucking

  $M(d)$: cost, in dollars, for renting from Move It Your Way
- Initial Value: Up-front fee: $K(0) = 20$ and $M(0) = 16$
- Rate of Change: $K(d) = \frac{\$0.59}{\text{mile}}$ and $P(d) = \frac{\$0.63}{\text{mile}}$

A linear function is of the form $f(x) = mx + b$. Using the rates of change and initial charges, we can write the equations

$$K(d) = 0.59d + 20$$

$$M(d) = 0.63d + 16$$

Using these equations, we can determine when Keep on Trucking, Inc. will be the better choice. Because all we have to make that decision from is the costs, we are looking for when Keep on Trucking, Inc. will cost less, or when \(K(d)

These graphs are sketched in Figure $4.3.7$, with $K(d)$ in blue.

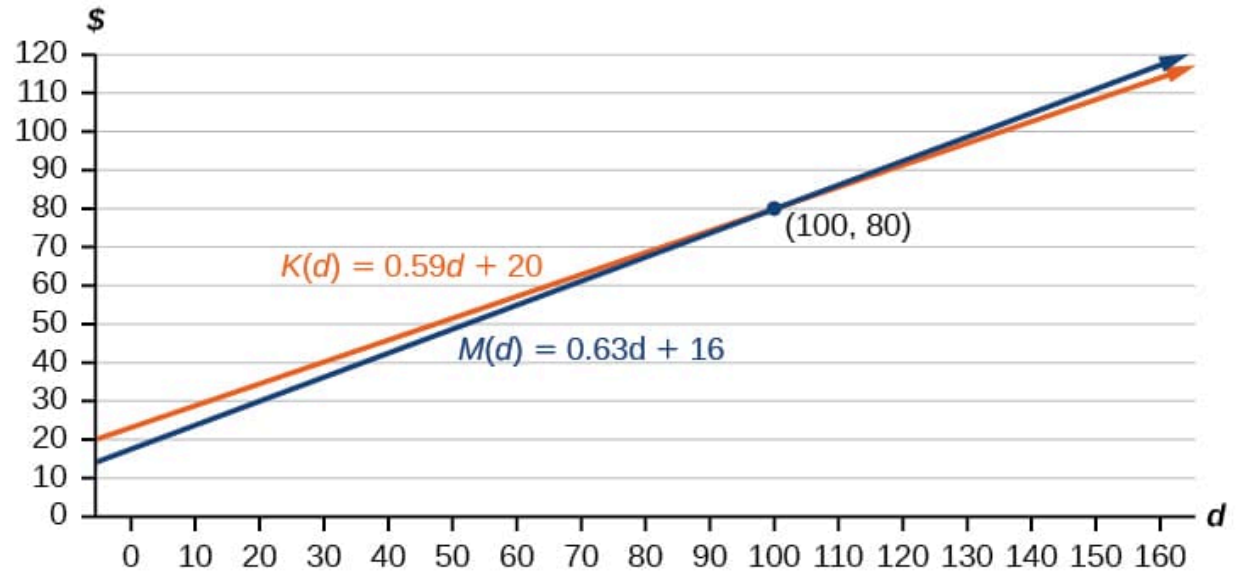


Figure $4.3.7$

To find the intersection, we set the equations equal and solve:

$$\begin{aligned} K(d) &= M(d) \\ 0.59d + 20 &= 0.63d + 16 \\ 4 &= 0.04d \\ 100 &= d \\ d &= 100 \end{aligned}$$

This tells us that the cost from the two companies will be the same if 100 miles are driven. Either by looking at the graph, or noting that $K(d)$ is growing at a slower rate, we can conclude that Keep on Trucking, Inc. will be the cheaper price when more than 100 miles are driven, that is $d > 100$.

Key Concepts

- We can use the same problem strategies that we would use for any type of function.
- When modeling and solving a problem, identify the variables and look for key values, including the slope and y-intercept.
- Draw a diagram, where appropriate.
- Check for reasonableness of the answer.
- Linear models may be built by identifying or calculating the slope and using the y-intercept.
- The x-intercept may be found by setting $y = 0$, which is setting the expression $mx + b$ equal to 0.
- The point of intersection of a system of linear equations is the point where the x- and y-values are the same.
- A graph of the system may be used to identify the points where one line falls below (or above) the other line.

Footnotes

1 Rates retrieved Aug 2, 2010 from www.budgettruck.com and http://www.uhaul.com/

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4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data

Learning Objectives

- Draw and interpret scatter diagrams.
- Use a graphing utility to find the line of best fit.
- Distinguish between linear and nonlinear relations.
- Fit a regression line to a set of data and use the linear model to make predictions.

A professor is attempting to identify trends among final exam scores. His class has a mixture of students, so he wonders if there is any relationship between age and final exam scores. One way for him to analyze the scores is by creating a diagram that relates the age of each student to the exam score received. In this section, we will examine one such diagram known as a scatter plot.

Drawing and Interpreting Scatter Plots

A scatter plot is a graph of plotted points that may show a relationship between two sets of data. If the relationship is from a **linear model**, or a model that is nearly linear, the professor can draw conclusions using his knowledge of linear functions. Figure 4.4.1 shows a sample scatter plot.



Figure 4.4.1: A scatter plot of age and final exam score variables

Notice this scatter plot does not indicate a **linear relationship**. The points do not appear to follow a trend. In other words, there does not appear to be a relationship between the age of the student and the score on the final exam.

Example 4.4.1: Using a Scatter Plot to Investigate Cricket Chirps

Table shows the number of cricket chirps in 15 seconds, for several different air temperatures, in degrees Fahrenheit[1]. Plot this data, and determine whether the data appears to be linearly related.

Table 4.4.1

Chirps	44	35	20.4	33	31	35	18.5	37	26
Temperature	80.5	70.5	57	66	68	72	52	73.5	53

Solution

Plotting this data, as depicted in Figure 4.4.2 suggests that there may be a trend. We can see from the trend in the data that the number of chirps increases as the temperature increases. The trend appears to be roughly linear, though certainly not perfectly so.

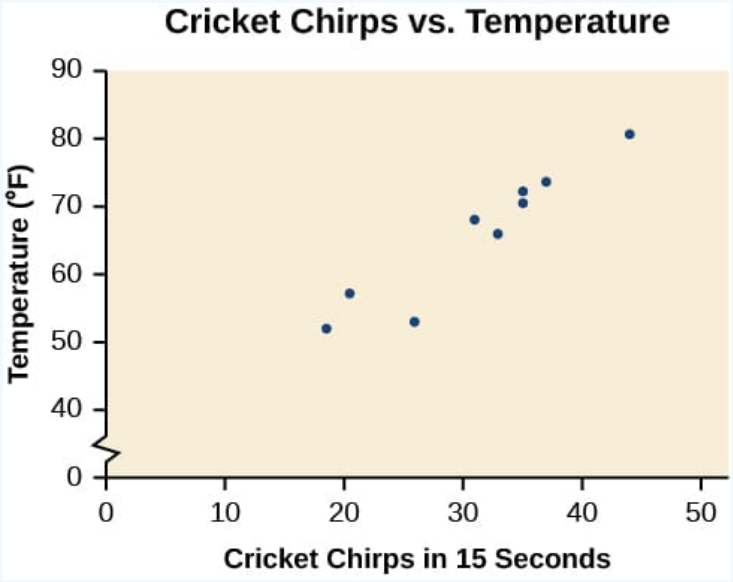


Figure 4.4.2: The line regression is generally positive.

Finding the Line of Best Fit

Once we recognize a need for a linear function to model that data, the natural follow-up question is "what is that linear function?" One way to approximate our linear function is to sketch the line that seems to best fit the data. Then we can extend the line until we can verify the y-intercept. We can approximate the slope of the line by extending it until we can estimate the $\frac{\text{rise}}{\text{run}}$.

Example 4.4.2: Finding a Line of Best Fit

Find a linear function that fits the data in Table 4.4.1 by "eyeballing" a line that seems to fit.

Solution

On a graph, we could try sketching a line.

Using the starting and ending points of our hand drawn line, points $(0, 30)$ and $(50, 90)$, this graph has a slope of

$$m = \frac{60}{50} = 1.2 \tag{4.4.1}$$

and a y-intercept at 30. This gives an equation of

$$T(c) = 1.2c + 30 \tag{4.4.2}$$

where c is the number of chirps in 15 seconds, and $T(c)$ is the temperature in degrees Fahrenheit. The resulting equation is represented in Figure 4.4.3.

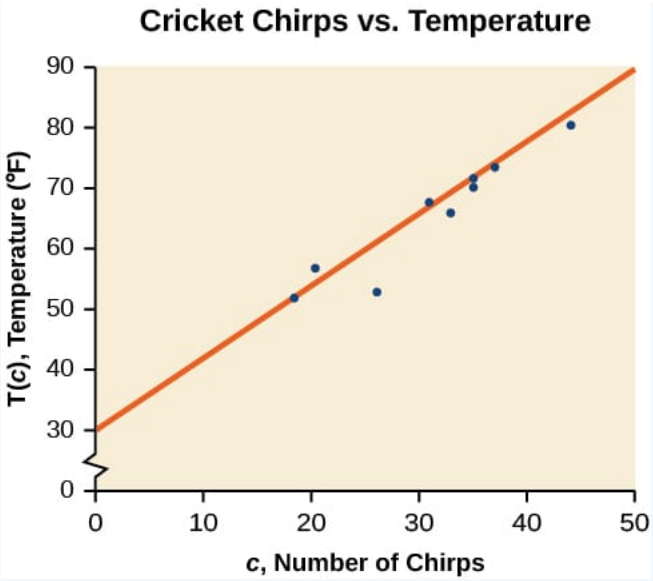


Figure 4.4.3: Scatter plot, showing the line of best fit.

Analysis

This linear equation can then be used to approximate answers to various questions we might ask about the trend.

Recognizing Interpolation or Extrapolation

While the data for most examples does not fall perfectly on the line, the equation is our best guess as to how the relationship will behave outside of the values for which we have data. We use a process known as **interpolation** when we predict a value inside the domain and range of the data. The process of **extrapolation** is used when we predict a value outside the domain and range of the data.

Figure 4.4.4 compares the two processes for the cricket-chirp data addressed in Example 4.4.2. We can see that interpolation would occur if we used our model to predict temperature when the values for chirps are between 18.5 and 44. Extrapolation would occur if we used our model to predict temperature when the values for chirps are less than 18.5 or greater than 44.

There is a difference between making predictions inside the domain and range of values for which we have data and outside that domain and range. Predicting a value outside of the domain and range has its limitations. When our model no longer applies after a certain point, it is sometimes called **model breakdown**. For example, predicting a cost function for a period of two years may involve examining the data where the input is the time in years and the output is the cost. But if we try to extrapolate a cost when $x = 50$, that is in 50 years, the model would not apply because we could not account for factors fifty years in the future.

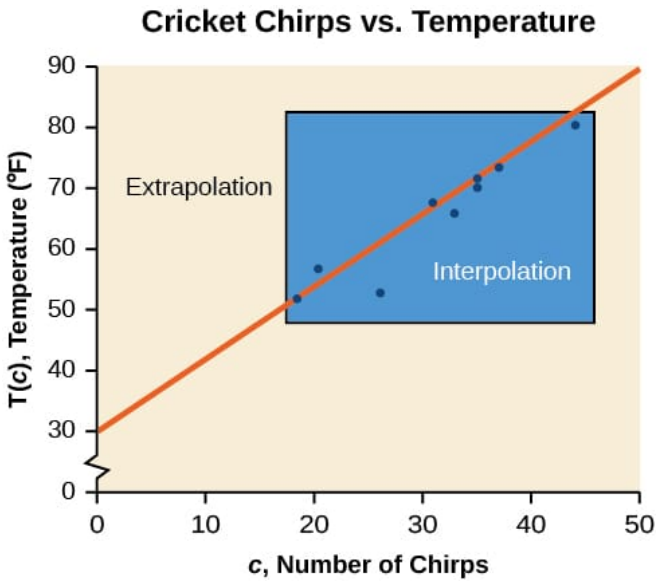


Figure 4.4.4: Interpolation occurs within the domain and range of the provided data whereas extrapolation occurs outside.

Interpolation and Extrapolation

Different methods of making predictions are used to analyze data.

- The method of **extrapolation** involves predicting a value outside the domain and/or range of the data.
- **Model breakdown** occurs at the point when the model no longer applies.

Example 4.4.3: Understanding Interpolation and Extrapolation

Use the cricket data from Table 4.4.1 to answer the following questions:

a. Would predicting the temperature when crickets are chirping 30 times in 15 seconds be interpolation or extrapolation? Make the prediction, and discuss whether it is reasonable.
b. Would predicting the number of chirps crickets will make at 40 degrees be interpolation or extrapolation? Make the prediction, and discuss whether it is reasonable.

Solution

a. The number of chirps in the data provided varied from 18.5 to 44. A prediction at 30 chirps per 15 seconds is inside the domain of our data, so would be interpolation. Using our model:

$$T(30) = 30 + 1.2(30) \tag{4.4.3}$$
$$= 66 \text{ degrees} \tag{4.4.4}$$

Based on the data we have, this value seems reasonable.
b. The temperature values varied from 52 to 80.5. Predicting the number of chirps at 40 degrees is extrapolation because 40 is outside the range of our data. Using our model:

$$40 = 30 + 1.2c \tag{4.4.5}$$
$$10 = 1.2c \tag{4.4.6}$$
$$c \approx 8.33 \tag{4.4.7}$$

We can compare the regions of interpolation and extrapolation using Figure 4.4.5.

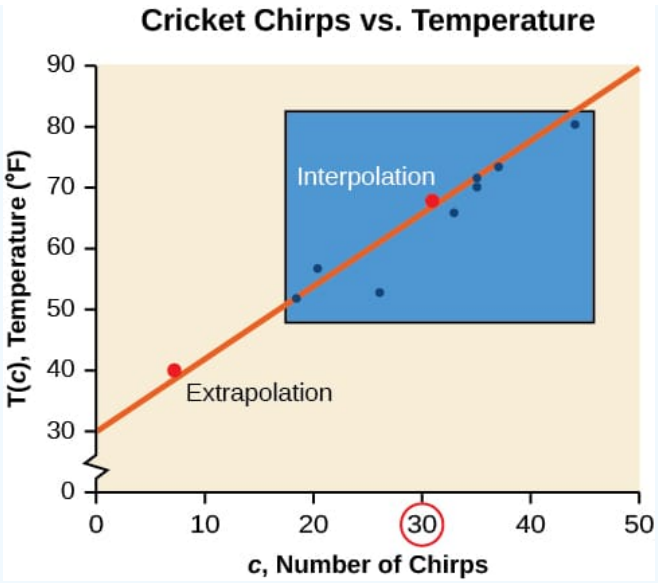


Figure 4.4.5: Scatter plot, showing the line of best fit and where interpolation and extrapolation occurs.

Analysis

Our model predicts the crickets would chirp 8.33 times in 15 seconds. While this might be possible, we have no reason to believe our model is valid outside the domain and range. In fact, generally crickets stop chirping altogether below around 50 degrees.

Exercise 4.4.1

According to the data from Table 4.4.1, what temperature can we predict it is if we counted 20 chirps in 15 seconds?

Solution

54°F

Finding the Line of Best Fit Using a Graphing Utility

While eyeballing a line works reasonably well, there are statistical techniques for fitting a line to data that minimize the differences between the line and data values[2]. One such technique is called **least squares regression** and can be computed by many graphing calculators, spreadsheet software, statistical software, and many web-based calculators[3]. Least squares regression is one means to determine the line that best fits the data, and here we will refer to this method as linear regression.

How To: Given data of input and corresponding outputs from a linear function, find the best fit line using linear regression.

1. Enter the input in List 1 (L1).
2. Enter the output in List 2 (L2).
3. On a graphing utility, select Linear Regression (LinReg).

Example 4.4.4: Finding a Least Squares Regression Line

Find the least squares regression line using the cricket-chirp data in Table 4.4.1.

Solution

Enter the input (chirps) in List 1 (L1).
Enter the output (temperature) in List 2 (L2). See Table 4.4.2.

Table 4.4.2

L1	44	35	20.4	33	31	35	18.5	37	26
L2	80.5	70.5	57	66	68	72	52	73.5	53

On a graphing utility, select Linear Regression (LinReg). Using the cricket chirp data from earlier, with technology we obtain the equation:

$$T(c) = 30.281 + 1.143c \tag{4.4.8}$$

Analysis

Notice that this line is quite similar to the equation we "eyeballed" but should fit the data better. Notice also that using this equation would change our prediction for the temperature when hearing 30 chirps in 15 seconds from 66 degrees to:

$$T(30) = 30.281 + 1.143(30) \tag{4.4.9}$$
$$= 64.571 \tag{4.4.10}$$
$$\approx 64.6 \text{ degrees} \tag{4.4.11}$$

The graph of the scatter plot with the least squares regression line is shown in Figure 4.4.6.

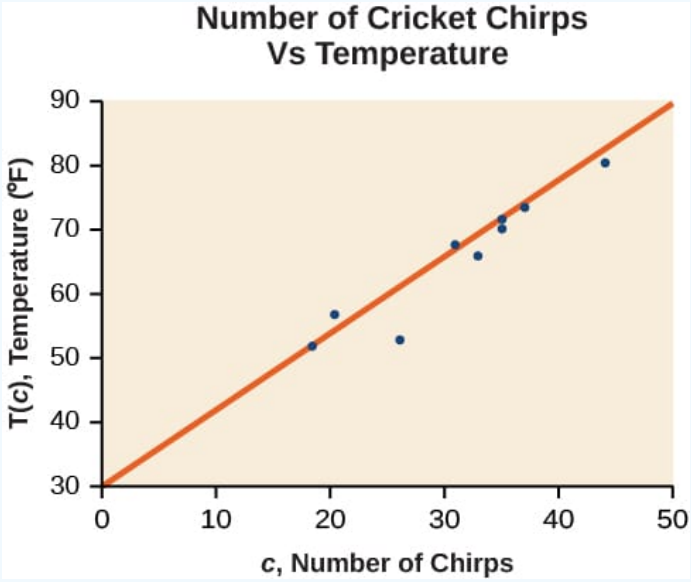


Figure 4.4.6: Scatter plot, showing the line of best fit.

Will there ever be a case where two different lines will serve as the best fit for the data?

No. There is only one best fit line.

Distinguishing Between Linear and Non-Linear Models

As we saw above with the cricket-chirp model, some data exhibit strong linear trends, but other data, like the final exam scores plotted by age, are clearly nonlinear. Most calculators and computer software can also provide us with the **correlation coefficient**, which is a measure of how closely the line fits the data. Many graphing calculators require the user to turn a "diagnostic on" selection to find the correlation coefficient, which mathematicians label as r. The correlation coefficient provides an easy way to get an idea of how close to a line the data falls.

We should compute the correlation coefficient only for data that follows a linear pattern or to determine the degree to which a data set is linear. If the data exhibits a nonlinear pattern, the correlation coefficient for a linear regression is meaningless. To get a sense for the relationship between the value of r and the graph of the data, Figure $4.4.7$ shows some large data sets with their correlation coefficients. Remember, for all plots, the horizontal axis shows the input and the vertical axis shows the output.

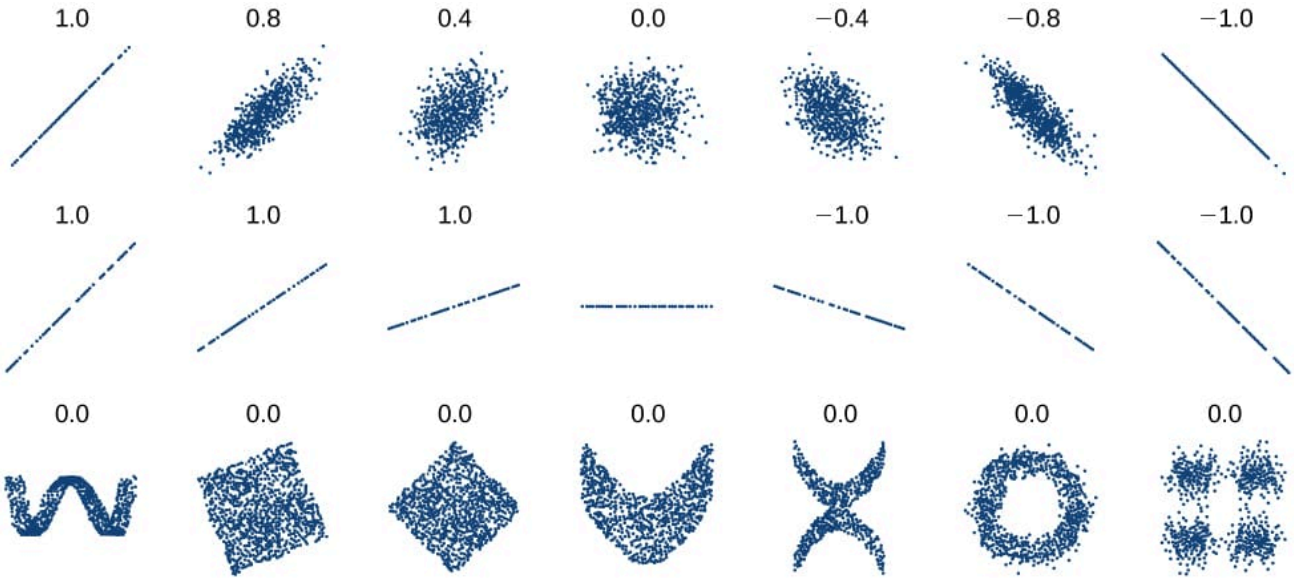


Figure $4.4.7$: Plotted data and related correlation coefficients. (credit: "DenisBoigelot," Wikimedia Commons)

Correlation Coefficient

The **correlation coefficient** is a value, r, between –1 and 1.

- $r > 0$ suggests a positive (increasing) relationship
- $r < 0$ suggests a negative (decreasing) relationship
- The closer the value is to 0, the more scattered the data.
- The closer the value is to 1 or –1, the less scattered the data is.

Example $4.4.5$: Finding a Correlation Coefficient

Calculate the correlation coefficient for cricket-chirp data in Table $4.4.1$.

Solution

Because the data appear to follow a linear pattern, we can use technology to calculate r. Enter the inputs and corresponding outputs and select the Linear Regression. The calculator will also provide you with the correlation coefficient, $r = 0.9509$. This value is very close to 1, which suggests a strong increasing linear relationship.

Note: For some calculators, the Diagnostics must be turned "on" in order to get the correlation coefficient when linear regression is performed: [2nd]>[0]>[alpha][x–1], then scroll to DIAGNOSTICSON.

Predicting with a Regression Line

Once we determine that a set of data is linear using the correlation coefficient, we can use the regression line to make predictions. As we learned above, a regression line is a line that is closest to the data in the scatter plot, which means that only one such line is a best fit for the data.

Example 4.4.6: Using a Regression Line to Make Predictions

Gasoline consumption in the United States has been steadily increasing. Consumption data from 1994 to 2004 is shown in Table 4.4.3. Determine whether the trend is linear, and if so, find a model for the data. Use the model to predict the consumption in 2008.

Table 4.4.3

Year	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04
Consumption (billions of gallons)	113	116	118	119	123	125	126	128	131	133	136

The scatter plot of the data, including the least squares regression line, is shown in Figure 4.4.8.

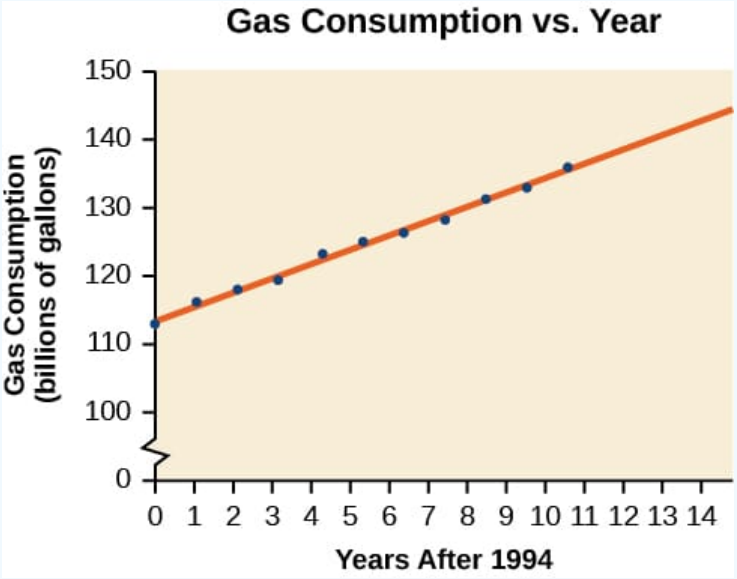


Figure 4.4.8: Scatter plot, showing the line of best fit.

We can introduce new input variable, t,representing years since 1994.

The least squares regression equation is:

$$C(t) = 113.318 + 2.209t \tag{4.4.12}$$

Using technology, the correlation coefficient was calculated to be 0.9965, suggesting a very strong increasing linear trend.

Using this to predict consumption in 2008 $(t = 14)$,

$$C(14) = 113.318 + 2.209(14) \tag{4.4.13}$$
$$= 144.244 \tag{4.4.14}$$

The model predicts 144.244 billion gallons of gasoline consumption in 2008.

Exercise 4.4.1

Use the model we created using technology in Example 4.4.6 to predict the gas consumption in 2011. Is this an interpolation or an extrapolation?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Concepts

- Scatter plots show the relationship between two sets of data.
- Scatter plots may represent linear or non-linear models.
- The line of best fit may be estimated or calculated, using a calculator or statistical software.
- Interpolation can be used to predict values inside the domain and range of the data, whereas extrapolation can be used to predict values outside the domain and range of the data.
- The correlation coefficient, r, indicates the degree of linear relationship between data.
- A regression line best fits the data.
- The least squares regression line is found by minimizing the squares of the distances of points from a line passing through the data and may be used to make predictions regarding either of the variables.

Answers

Exercise 4.4.1

150.871 billion gallons; extrapolation

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5: POLYNOMIAL AND RATIONAL FUNCTIONS

5.1: Quadratic Functions

5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions

5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions

5.4: Dividing Polynomials

5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions

5.6: Rational Functions

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5.1: Quadratic Functions

Learning Objectives

- Recognize characteristics of parabolas.
- Understand how the graph of a parabola is related to its quadratic function.
- Determine a quadratic function's minimum or maximum value.
- Solve problems involving a quadratic function's minimum or maximum value.
- Solve applications using quadratic functions.

Recognizing Characteristics of Parabolas

The graph of a quadratic function is a U-shaped curve called a parabola. One important feature of the graph is that it has an extreme point, called the **vertex**. If the parabola opens up, the vertex represents the lowest point on the graph, or the **minimum value** of the quadratic function. If the parabola opens down, the vertex represents the highest point on the graph, or the **maximum value**. In either case, the vertex is a turning point on the graph. The graph is also symmetric with a vertical line drawn through the vertex, called the **axis of symmetry**. These features are illustrated in Figure $5.1.2$.

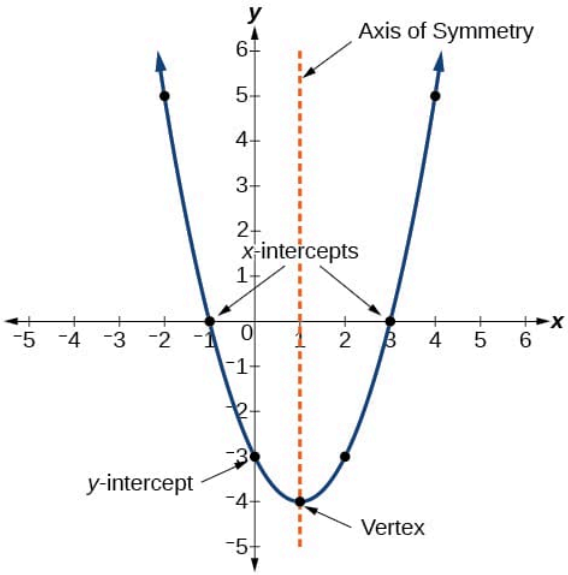


Figure $5.1.1$: Graph of a parabola showing where the x and y intercepts, vertex, and axis of symmetry are.

The y-intercept is the point at which the parabola crosses the y-axis. The x-intercepts are the points at which the parabola crosses the x-axis. If they exist, the x-intercepts represent the **zeros**, or **roots**, of the quadratic function, the values of x at which $y = 0$.

Example $5.1.1$: Identifying the Characteristics of a Parabola

Determine the vertex, axis of symmetry, zeros, and y-intercept of the parabola shown in Figure $5.1.3$.

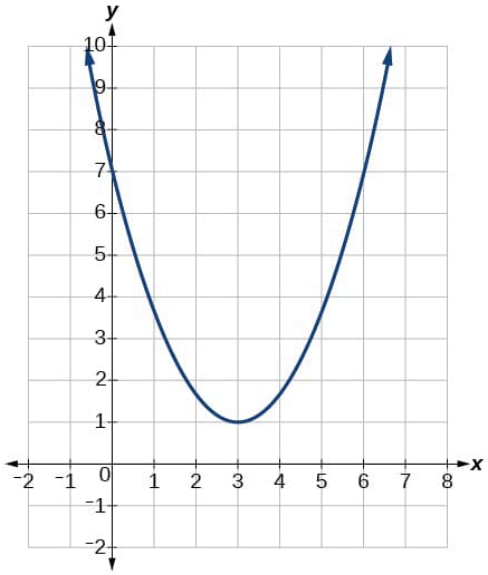


Figure 5.1.2.

Solution

The vertex is the turning point of the graph. We can see that the vertex is at $(3, 1)$. Because this parabola opens upward, the axis of symmetry is the vertical line that intersects the parabola at the vertex. So the axis of symmetry is $x = 3$. This parabola does not cross the x-axis, so it has no zeros. It crosses the y-axis at $(0, 7)$ so this is the y-intercept.

Understanding How the Graphs of Parabolas are Related to Their Quadratic Functions

Definition: Standard Form of a Quadratic Function

The **standard (or general) form of a quadratic function** is any function of the form

$$f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c \tag{5.1.1}$$

where a, b, and c are real numbers and $a \neq 0$.

If we use the quadratic formula to solve $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$, this will give the x intercepts

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a} \tag{5.1.2}$$

And, the value that is halfway between these x values can be found by

$$
\begin{aligned}
x &= \left(\frac{-b-\sqrt{b^2-4ac}}{2a} + \frac{-b+\sqrt{b^2-4ac}}{2a}\right) \div 2 \\
&= \left(\frac{-b-\sqrt{b^2-4ac}-b+\sqrt{b^2-4ac}}{2a}\right) \div 2 \\
&= \left(\frac{-b-b}{2a}\right) \div 2 \\
&= \left(\frac{-2b}{2a}\right) \div 2 \\
&= \left(\frac{-b}{a}\right) \cdot \frac{1}{2} \\
&= \frac{-b}{2a}
\end{aligned}
$$

so, we have a nice formula for the axis of symmetry $x = -\frac{b}{2a}$

Figure $5.1.4$ represents the graph of the quadratic function written in general form as $y = x^2 + 4x + 3$. In this form, $a = 1$, $b = 4$, and $c = 3$. Because $a > 0$, the parabola opens upward. The axis of symmetry is $x = -\frac{4}{2(1)} = -2$. This also makes sense because we can see from the graph that the vertical line $x = -2$ divides the graph in half. The vertex always occurs along the axis of symmetry. For a parabola that opens upward, the vertex occurs at the lowest point on the graph, in this instance, $(-2, -1)$. The x-intercepts, those points where the parabola crosses the x-axis, occur at $(-3, 0)$ and $(-1, 0)$.

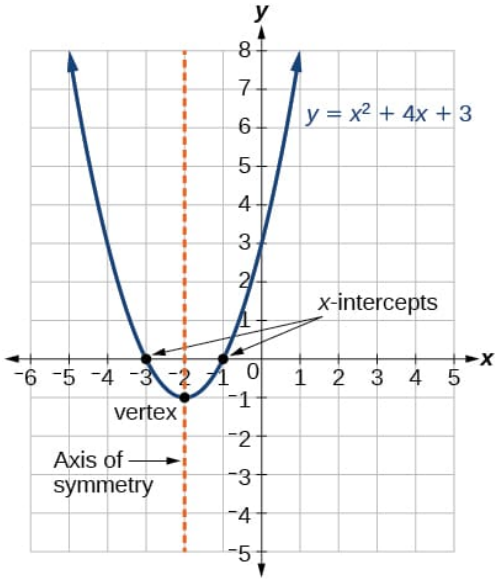


Figure $5.1.3$: Graph of a parabola showing where the x and y intercepts, vertex, and axis of symmetry are for the function $y = x^2 + 4x + 3$.

Definition: Vertex Form of a Quadratic Function

- The vertex form of a quadratic function is $f(x) = a(x - h)^2 + k$
- The vertex is (h, k) where $h = -\frac{b}{2a}$ and $k = f(h)$

As with the standard form form, if $a > 0$, the parabola opens upward and the vertex is a minimum. If $a < 0$, the parabola opens downward, and the vertex is a maximum. Figure $5.1.5$ represents the graph of the quadratic function written in standard form as $y = -3(x + 2)^2 + 4$. Since $x–h = x + 2$ in this example, $h = –2$. In this form, $a = -3$, $h = -2$, and $k = 4$. Because $a < 0$, the parabola opens downward. The vertex is at $(-2, 4)$.

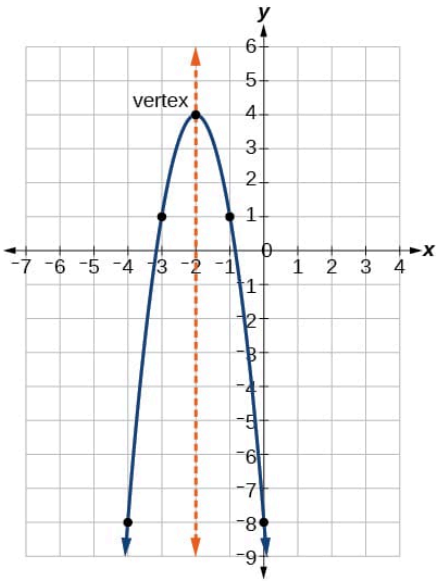


Figure $5.1.4$: Graph of a parabola showing where the x and y intercepts, vertex, and axis of symmetry are for the function $y = -3(x + 2)^2 + 4$.

The vertex

form is useful for determining how the graph is transformed from the graph of $y = x^2$. Figure $5.1.6$ is the graph of this basic function.

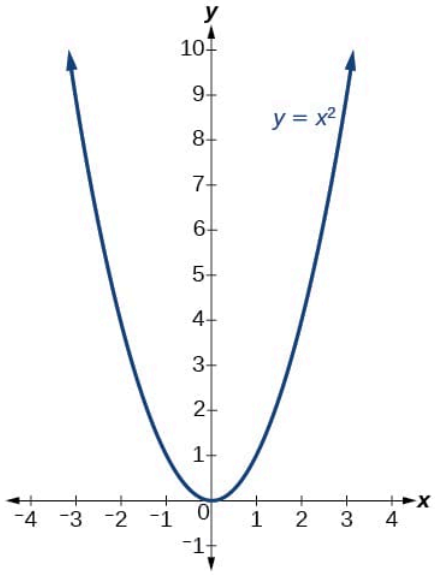


Figure $5.1.5$: Graph of $y = x^2$.

If $k > 0$, the graph shifts upward, whereas if $k < 0$, the graph shifts downward. In Figure $5.1.5$, $k > 0$, so the graph is shifted 4 units upward. If $h > 0$, the graph shifts toward the right and if $h < 0$, the graph shifts to the left. In Figure $5.1.5$, $h < 0$, so the graph is shifted 2 units to the left. The magnitude of a indicates the stretch of the graph. If $|a| > 1$, the point associated with a particular x-value shifts farther from the x-axis, so the graph appears to become narrower, and there is a vertical stretch. But if $|a| < 1$, the point associated with a particular x-value shifts closer to the x-axis, so the graph appears to become wider, but in fact there is a vertical compression. In Figure $5.1.5$, $|a| > 1$, so the graph becomes narrower.

The standard form and the general form are equivalent methods of describing the same function. We can see this by expanding out the general form and setting it equal to the standard form.

$$a(x - h)^2 + k = ax^2 + bx + c$$
$$ax^2 - 2ahx + (ah^2 + k) = ax^2 + bx + c$$

For the linear terms to be equal, the coefficients must be equal.

$$\begin{aligned} -2ah &= b \\ h &= -\frac{b}{2a} \end{aligned}$$

This is the **axis of symmetry** we defined earlier.

Setting the constant terms equal:

$$\begin{aligned} ah^2 + k &= c \\ k &= c - ah^2 \\ &= c - a \cdot \left(-\frac{b}{2a}\right)^2 \\ &= c - \frac{ab^2}{4a^2} \\ k &= c - \frac{b^2}{4a} \end{aligned}$$

In practice, though, it is usually easier to remember that k is the output value of the function when the input is h, so $f(h) = k$.

Rewriting Quadratics in Vertex Form



Given a quadratic function, find the x-intercepts by rewriting in vetrex form.

1. Substitute a and b into $h = -\frac{b}{2a}$.
2. Substitute $x = h$ into the general form of the quadratic function to find k.
3. Rewrite the quadratic in standard form using h and k.
4. Solve for when the output of the function will be zero to find the x-intercepts.

Example 5.1.2: Finding the x-Intercepts of a Parabola

Find the x-intercepts of the quadratic function $f(x) = 2x^2 + 4x - 4$.

Solution

We begin by solving for when the output will be zero.

$$0 = 2x^2 + 4x - 4$$

Because the quadratic is not easily factorable in this case, we solve for the intercepts by first rewriting the quadratic in standard form.

$$f(x) = a(x - h)^2 + k$$

We know that $a = 2$. Then we solve for h and k.

$$\begin{aligned} h &= -\frac{b}{2a} & k &= f(-1) \\ &= -\frac{4}{2(2)} & &= 2(-1)^2 + 4(-1) - 4 \\ &= -1 & &= -6 \end{aligned}$$

So now we can rewrite in standard form.

$$f(x) = 2(x+1)^2 - 6$$

We can now solve for when the output will be zero.

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= 2(x+1)^2 - 6 \\ 6 &= 2(x+1)^2 \\ 3 &= (x+1)^2 \\ x+1 &= \pm\sqrt{3} \\ x &= -1 \pm \sqrt{3} \end{aligned}$$

The graph has x-intercepts at $(-1-\sqrt{3}, 0)$ and $(-1+\sqrt{3}, 0)$.

Analysis

We can check our work by graphing the given function on a graphing utility and observing the x-intercepts. See Figure $5.1.15$.

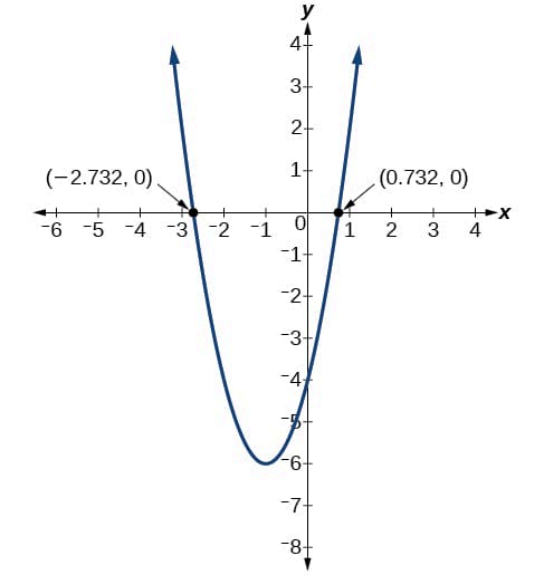


Figure $5.1.6$: Graph of a parabola which has the following x-intercepts: $(-2.732, 0)$ and $(0.732, 0)$.

Exercise $5.1.1$

Find the vertex form for the function $g(x) = 13 + x^2 - 6x$. Then find the y- and x-intercepts (if any).

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example $5.1.3$: Solving a Quadratic Equation with the Quadratic Formula

Solve $x^2 + x + 2 = 0$.

Solution

Let's begin by writing the quadratic formula: $x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2-4ac}}{2a}$.

When applying the quadratic formula, we identify the coefficients a, b and c. For the equation $x^2 + x + 2 = 0$, we have $a = 1$, $b = 1$, and $c = 2$. Substituting these values into the formula we have:

$$\begin{aligned} x &= \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2-4ac}}{2a} \\ &= \frac{-1 \pm \sqrt{1^2 - 4 \cdot 1 \cdot (2)}}{2 \cdot 1} \\ &= \frac{-1 \pm \sqrt{1-8}}{2} \\ &= \frac{-1 \pm \sqrt{-7}}{2} \\ &= \frac{-1 \pm i\sqrt{7}}{2} \end{aligned}$$

The solutions to the equation are $x = \frac{-1+i\sqrt{7}}{2}$ and $x = \frac{-1-i\sqrt{7}}{2}$ or $x = -\frac{1}{2} + \frac{i\sqrt{7}}{2}$ and $x = \frac{-1}{2} - \frac{i\sqrt{7}}{2}$.

Given a graph of a quadratic function, write the equation of the function in standard form.

1. Identify the horizontal shift of the parabola; this value is h. Identify the vertical shift of the parabola; this value is k.
2. Substitute the values of the horizontal and vertical shift for h and k. in the function $f(x) = a(x–h)^2 + k$.
3. Substitute the values of any point, other than the vertex, on the graph of the parabola for x and $f(x)$.
4. Solve for the stretch factor, $|a|$.
5. If the parabola opens up, $a > 0$. If the parabola opens down, $a < 0$ since this means the graph was reflected about the x-axis.
6. Expand and simplify to write in standard form.

Example 5.1.4: Writing the Equation of a Quadratic Function from the Graph

Write an equation for the quadratic function g in Figure 5.1.7 as a transformation of $f(x) = x^2$, and then expand the formula, and simplify terms to write the equation in general form.

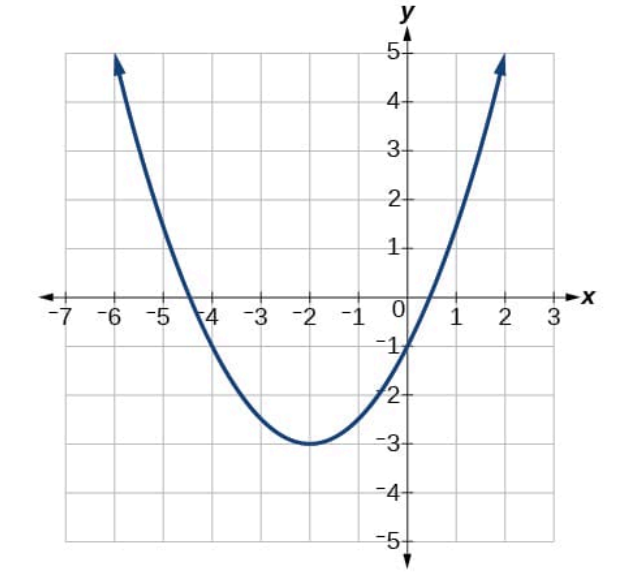


Figure 5.1.7: Graph of a parabola with its vertex at $(-2, -3)$.

Solution

We can see the graph of g is the graph of $f(x) = x^2$ shifted to the left 2 and down 3, giving a formula in the form $g(x) = a(x+2)^2–3$.

Substituting the coordinates of a point on the curve, such as $(0, -1)$, we can solve for the stretch factor.

$$-1 = a(0+2)^2 - 3 \tag{5.1.3}$$
$$2 = 4a \tag{5.1.4}$$
$$a = \frac{1}{2} \tag{5.1.5}$$

In standard form, the algebraic model for this graph is $g(x) = \frac{1}{2}(x+2)^2–3$.

To write this in general polynomial form, we can expand the formula and simplify terms.

$$g(x) = \frac{1}{2}(x+2)^2 - 3 \tag{5.1.6}$$
$$= \frac{1}{2}(x+2)(x+2) - 3 \tag{5.1.7}$$
$$= \frac{1}{2}(x^2+4x+4) - 3 \tag{5.1.8}$$
$$= \frac{1}{2}x^2 + 2x + 2 - 3 \tag{5.1.9}$$
$$= \frac{1}{2}x^2 + 2x - 1 \tag{5.1.10}$$

Notice that the horizontal and vertical shifts of the basic graph of the quadratic function determine the location of the vertex of the parabola; the vertex is unaffected by stretches and compressions.

Analysis

We can check our work using a table of values.

Table 5.1.1

x	-6	-4	-2	0	2
y	-5	-1	-3	-1	5

The ordered pairs in the table correspond to points on the graph.



Given a quadratic function in standard form, find the vertex of the parabola.

1. Identify a, b, and c.
2. Find h, the x-coordinate of the vertex, by substituting a and b into $h = -\frac{b}{2a}$.
3. Find k, the y-coordinate of the vertex, by evaluating $k = f(h) = f\left(-\frac{b}{2a}\right)$.

Example 5.1.5: Finding the Vertex of a Quadratic Function

Find the vertex of the quadratic function $f(x) = 2x^2–6x + 7$. Rewrite the quadratic in vertex form.

Solution

The horizontal coordinate of the vertex will be at

$$h = -\frac{b}{2a} \tag{5.1.11}$$
$$= -\frac{-6}{2(2)} \tag{5.1.12}$$
$$= \frac{6}{4} \tag{5.1.13}$$
$$= \frac{3}{2} \tag{5.1.14}$$

The vertical coordinate of the vertex will be at

$$k = f(h) \tag{5.1.15}$$
$$= f\left(\frac{3}{2}\right) \tag{5.1.16}$$
$$= 2\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)^2 - 6\left(\frac{3}{2}\right) + 7 \tag{5.1.17}$$
$$= \frac{5}{2} \tag{5.1.18}$$

Rewriting into standard form, the stretch factor will be the same as the a in the original quadratic.

$$f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c \tag{5.1.19}$$
$$f(x) = 2x^2 - 6x + 7$$

Using the vertex to determine the shifts,

$$f(x) = 2\left(x - \frac{3}{2}\right)^2 + \frac{5}{2} \tag{5.1.20}$$

Analysis

One reason we may want to identify the vertex of the parabola is that this point will inform us what the maximum or minimum value of the function is, (k),and where it occurs, (h).

Exercise 5.1.2

Given the equation $g(x) = 13 + x^2 - 6x$, write the equation in standard form and then in vertex form.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding the x- and y-Intercepts of a Quadratic Function

Much as we did in the application problems above, we also need to find intercepts of quadratic equations for graphing parabolas. Recall that we find the y-intercept of a quadratic by evaluating the function at an input of zero, and we find the x-intercepts at locations where the output is zero. Notice in Figure $5.1.13$ that the number of x-intercepts can vary depending upon the location of the graph.

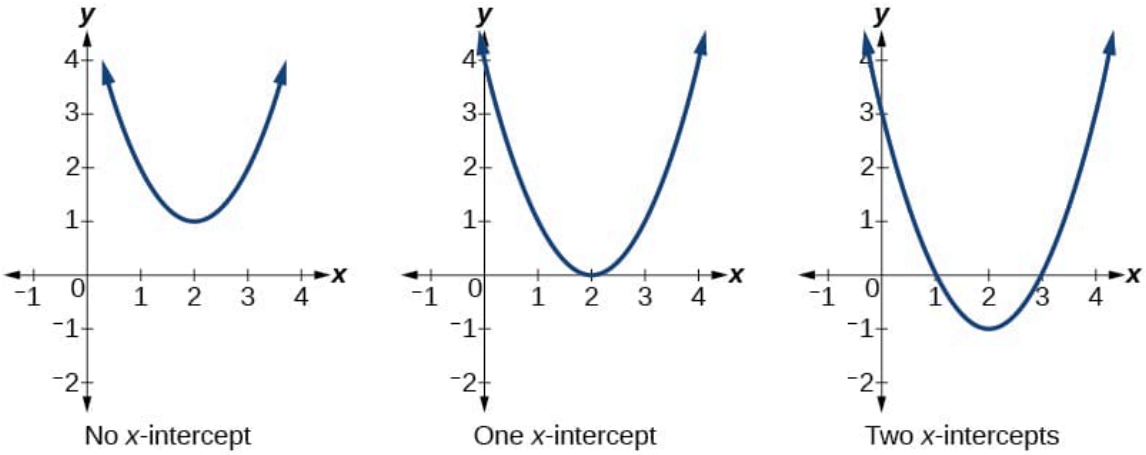


Figure 5.1.8: Number of x-intercepts of a parabola.

How To: Given a quadratic function $f(x)$, find the y- and x-intercepts.

1. Evaluate $f(0)$ to find the y-intercept.
2. Solve the quadratic equation $f(x) = 0$ to find the x-intercepts.

Example 5.1.6: Finding the y- and x-Intercepts of a Parabola

Find the y- and x-intercepts of the quadratic $f(x) = 3x^2 + 5x - 2$.

Solution

We find the y-intercept by evaluating $f(0)$.

$$f(0) = 3(0)^2 + 5(0) - 2 \tag{5.1.21}$$
$$= -2 \tag{5.1.22}$$

So the y-intercept is at $(0, -2)$.

For the x-intercepts, we find all solutions of $f(x) = 0$.

$$0 = 3x^2 + 5x - 2 \tag{5.1.23}$$

In this case, the quadratic can be factored easily, providing the simplest method for solution.

$$0 = (3x - 1)(x + 2) \tag{5.1.24}$$

$$0 = 3x - 1 \qquad 0 = x + 2 \tag{5.1.25}$$

$$x = \frac{1}{3} \quad \text{or} \quad x = -2 \tag{5.1.26}$$

So the x-intercepts are at $(\frac{1}{3}, 0)$ and $(-2, 0)$.

Analysis

By graphing the function, we can confirm that the graph crosses the y-axis at $(0, -2)$. We can also confirm that the graph crosses the x-axis at $\left(\frac{1}{3}, 0\right)$ and $(-2, 0)$. See Figure 5.1.14.

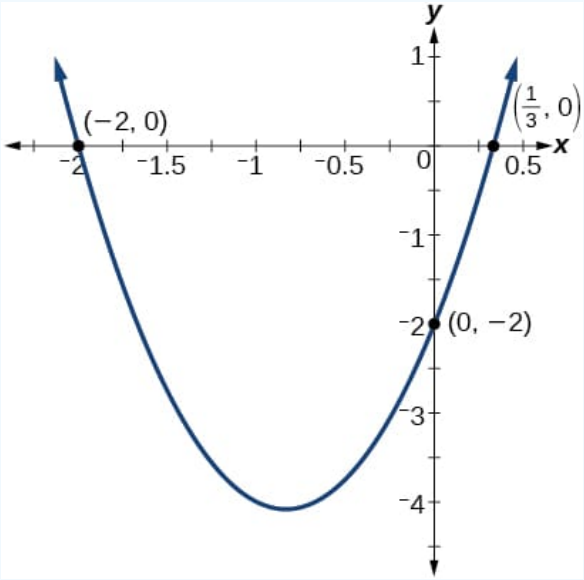


Figure 5.1.9: Graph of a parabola.

Finding the Domain and Range of a Quadratic Function

Any number can be the input value of a quadratic function. Therefore, the domain of any quadratic function is all real numbers. Because parabolas have a maximum or a minimum point, the range is restricted. Since the vertex of a parabola will be either a maximum or a minimum, the range will consist of all y-values greater than or equal to the y-coordinate at the turning point or less than or equal to the y-coordinate at the turning point, depending on whether the parabola opens up or down.

Definition: Domain and Range of a Quadratic Function

The domain of any **quadratic function** is all real numbers.

The range of a quadratic function written in general form $f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$ with $a > 0$ is $[f(-\frac{b}{2a}), \infty)$; the range of a quadratic function written in general form with $a < 0$ is $(-\infty, f(-\frac{b}{2a})]$.

The range of a quadratic function written in standard form $f(x) = a(x - h)^2 + k$ with $a > 0$ is $[k, \infty)$ the range of a quadratic function written in standard form with $a < 0$ is $(-\infty, k]$.

How To:

Given a quadratic function, find the domain and range

1. Identify the domain of any quadratic function as all real numbers.
2. Determine whether a is positive or negative. If a is positive, the parabola has a minimum. If a is negative, the parabola has a maximum.
3. Determine the maximum or minimum value of the parabola, k.
4. If the parabola has a minimum, the range is $[k, \infty)$. If the parabola has a maximum, the range is $(-\infty, k]$.

Example 5.1.4: Finding the Domain and Range of a Quadratic Function

Find the domain and range of $f(x) = -5x^2 + 9x - 1$.

Solution

As with any quadratic function, the domain is all real numbers.

Because a is negative, the parabola opens downward and has a maximum value. We need to determine the maximum value. We can begin by finding the x-value of the vertex.

$$h = -\frac{b}{2a} \tag{5.1.27}$$
$$= -\frac{9}{2(-5)} \tag{5.1.28}$$
$$= \frac{9}{10} \tag{5.1.29}$$

The maximum value is given by $f(h)$.

$$f(\frac{9}{10}) = 5(\frac{9}{10})^2 + 9(\frac{9}{10}) - 1 \tag{5.1.30}$$
$$= \frac{61}{20} \tag{5.1.31}$$

The range is $f(x) \leq \frac{61}{20}$, or $(-\infty, \frac{61}{20}]$.

Exercise 5.1.4

Find the domain and range of $f(x) = 2\left(x - \frac{4}{7}\right)^2 + \frac{8}{11}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Determining the Maximum and Minimum Values of Quadratic Functions

The output of the quadratic function at the vertex is the maximum or minimum value of the function, depending on the orientation of the **parabola**. We can see the maximum and minimum values in Figure 5.1.9.

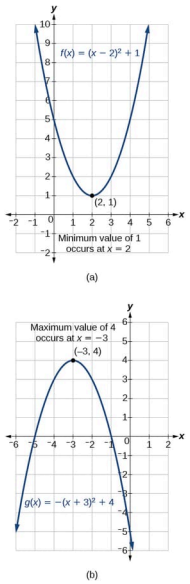


Figure 5.1.9: Minimum and maximum of two quadratic functions.

There are many real-world scenarios that involve finding the maximum or minimum value of a quadratic function, such as applications involving area and revenue.

Example 5.1.5: Finding the Maximum Value of a Quadratic Function

A backyard farmer wants to enclose a rectangular space for a new garden within her fenced backyard. She has purchased 80 feet of wire fencing to enclose three sides, and she will use a section of the backyard fence as the fourth side.

a. Find a formula for the area enclosed by the fence if the sides of fencing perpendicular to the existing fence have length L.
b. What dimensions should she make her garden to maximize the enclosed area?

Solution

Let's use a diagram such as Figure 5.1.10 to record the given information. It is also helpful to introduce a temporary variable, W, to represent the width of the garden and the length of the fence section parallel to the backyard fence.

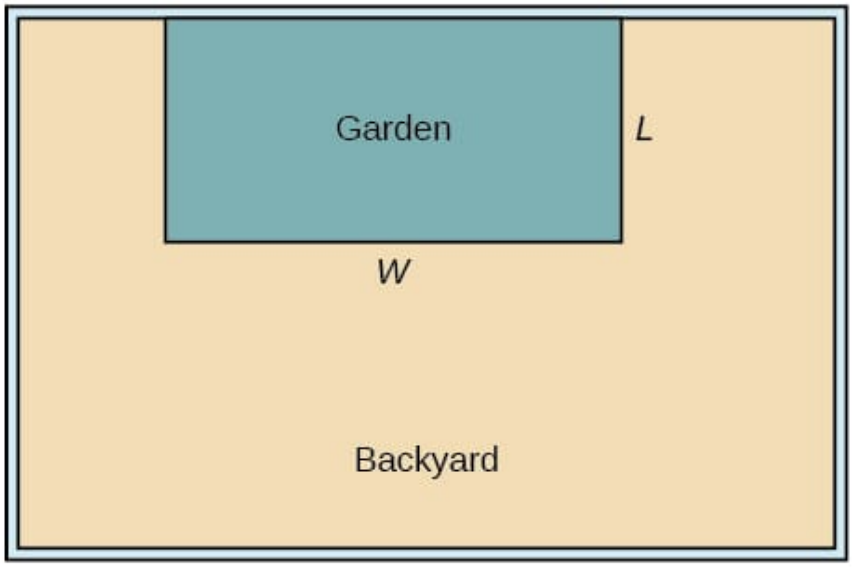


Figure 5.1.10: Diagram of the garden and the backyard.

a. We know we have only 80 feet of fence available, and $L + W + L = 80$, or more simply, $2L + W = 80$. This allows us to represent the width, W, in terms of L.

$$W = 80 - 2L \tag{5.1.32}$$

Now we are ready to write an equation for the area the fence encloses. We know the area of a rectangle is length multiplied by width, so

$$A = LW = L(80 - 2L) \tag{5.1.33}$$
$$A(L) = 80L - 2L^2 \tag{5.1.34}$$

This formula represents the area of the fence in terms of the variable length L. The function, written in general form, is

$$A(L) = -2L^2 + 80L \tag{5.1.35}$$

.

The quadratic has a negative leading coefficient, so the graph will open downward, and the vertex will be the maximum value for the area. In finding the vertex, we must be careful because the equation is not written in standard polynomial form with decreasing powers. This is why we rewrote the function in general form above. Since a is the coefficient of the squared term, $a = -2$, $b = 80$, and $c = 0$.

To find the vertex:

$$h = -\frac{80}{2(-2)} \qquad k = A(20) \tag{5.1.36}$$
$$= 20 \qquad \text{and} \qquad = 80(20) - 2(20)^2 \tag{5.1.37}$$
$$= 800 \tag{5.1.38}$$

The maximum value of the function is an area of 800 square feet, which occurs when $L = 20$ feet. When the shorter sides are 20 feet, there is 40 feet of fencing left for the longer side. To maximize the area, she should enclose the garden so the two shorter sides have length 20 feet and the longer side parallel to the existing fence has length 40 feet.

Analysis

This problem also could be solved by graphing the quadratic function. We can see where the maximum area occurs on a graph of the quadratic function in Figure 5.1.11.

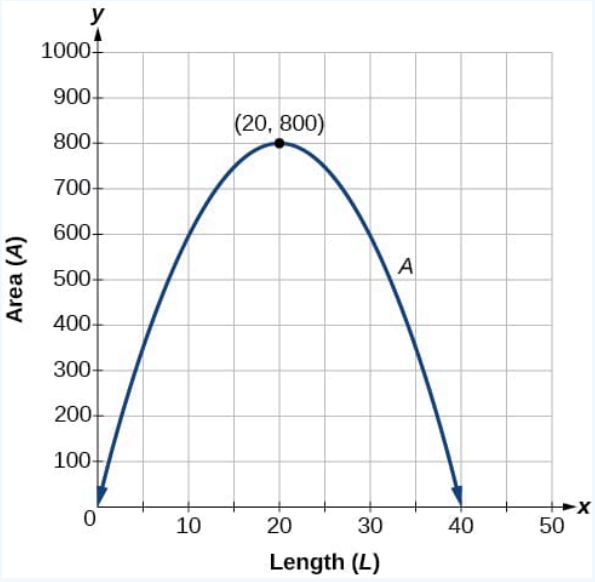


Figure 5.1.11: Graph of the parabolic function $A(L) = -2L^2 + 80L$

Given an application involving revenue, use a quadratic equation to find the maximum.

1. Write a quadratic equation for revenue.
2. Find the vertex of the quadratic equation.
3. Determine the y-value of the vertex.

Example 5.1.6: Finding Maximum Revenue

The unit price of an item affects its supply and demand. That is, if the unit price goes up, the demand for the item will usually decrease. For example, a local newspaper currently has 84,000 subscribers at a quarterly charge of $30. Market research has suggested that if the owners raise the price to $32, they would lose 5,000 subscribers. Assuming that subscriptions are linearly related to the price, what price should the newspaper charge for a quarterly subscription to maximize their revenue?

Solution

Revenue is the amount of money a company brings in. In this case, the revenue can be found by multiplying the price per subscription times the number of subscribers, or quantity. We can introduce variables, p for price per subscription and Q for quantity, giving us the equation $\text{Revenue} = pQ$.

Because the number of subscribers changes with the price, we need to find a relationship between the variables. We know that currently $p = 30$ and $Q = 84,000$. We also know that if the price rises to $32, the newspaper would lose 5,000 subscribers, giving a second pair of values, $p = 32$ and $Q = 79,000$. From this we can find a linear equation relating the two quantities. The slope will be

$$m = \frac{79,000 - 84,000}{32 - 30} \tag{5.1.39}$$
$$= -\frac{5,000}{2} \tag{5.1.40}$$
$$= -2,500 \tag{5.1.41}$$

This tells us the paper will lose 2,500 subscribers for each dollar they raise the price. We can then solve for the y-intercept.

$$Q = -2500p + b \qquad \text{Substitute in the point } Q = 84,000 \text{ and } p = 30 \tag{5.1.42}$$
$$84,000 = -2500(30) + b \qquad \text{Solve for } b \tag{5.1.43}$$
$$b = 159,000 \tag{5.1.44}$$

This gives us the linear equation $Q = -2,500p + 159,000$ relating cost and subscribers. We now return to our revenue equation.

$$\text{Revenue} = pQ \tag{5.1.45}$$
$$\text{Revenue} = p(-2,500p + 159,000) \tag{5.1.46}$$
$$\text{Revenue} = -2,500p^2 + 159,000p \tag{5.1.47}$$

We now have a quadratic function for revenue as a function of the subscription charge. To find the price that will maximize revenue for the newspaper, we can find the vertex.

$$h = -\frac{159,000}{2(-2,500)} \tag{5.1.48}$$
$$= 31.8 \tag{5.1.49}$$

The model tells us that the maximum revenue will occur if the newspaper charges $31.80 for a subscription. To find what the maximum revenue is, we evaluate the revenue function.

$$\text{maximum revenue} = -2,500(31.8)^2 + 159,000(31.8) \tag{5.1.50}$$
$$= 2,528,100 \tag{5.1.51}$$

Analysis

This could also be solved by graphing the quadratic as in Figure 5.1.12. We can see the maximum revenue on a graph of the quadratic function.

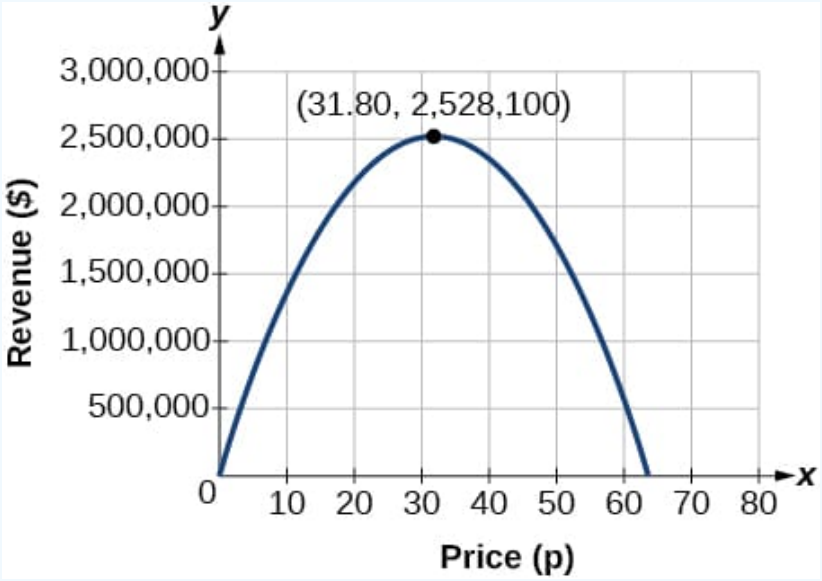


Figure 5.1.12: Graph of the parabolic function

Example 5.1.7: Applying the Vertex and x-Intercepts of a Parabola

A ball is thrown upward from the top of a 40 foot high building at a speed of 80 feet per second. The ball's height above ground can be modeled by the equation $H(t) = -16t^2 + 80t + 40$.

When does the ball reach the maximum height?
What is the maximum height of the ball?
When does the ball hit the ground?

The ball reaches the maximum height at the vertex of the parabola.

$$h = -\frac{80}{2(-16)} \tag{5.1.52}$$
$$= \frac{80}{32} \tag{5.1.53}$$
$$= \frac{5}{2} \tag{5.1.54}$$
$$= 2.5 \tag{5.1.55}$$

The ball reaches a maximum height after 2.5 seconds.

To find the maximum height, find the y-coordinate of the vertex of the parabola.

$$k = H(-\frac{b}{2a}) \tag{5.1.56}$$
$$= H(2.5) \tag{5.1.57}$$
$$= -16(2.5)^2 + 80(2.5) + 40 \tag{5.1.58}$$
$$= 140 \tag{5.1.59}$$

The ball reaches a maximum height of 140 feet.

To find when the ball hits the ground, we need to determine when the height is zero, $H(t) = 0$.

We use the quadratic formula.

$$t = \frac{-80 \pm \sqrt{80^2 - 4(-16)(40)}}{2(-16)} \tag{5.1.60}$$

$$= \frac{-80 \pm \sqrt{8960}}{-32} \tag{5.1.61}$$

Because the square root does not simplify nicely, we can use a calculator to approximate the values of the solutions.

$$t = \frac{-80 - \sqrt{8960}}{-32} \approx 5.458 \text{ or } t = \frac{-80 + \sqrt{8960}}{-32} \approx -0.458 \tag{5.1.62}$$

The second answer is outside the reasonable domain of our model, so we conclude the ball will hit the ground after about 5.458 seconds. See Figure 5.1.16.

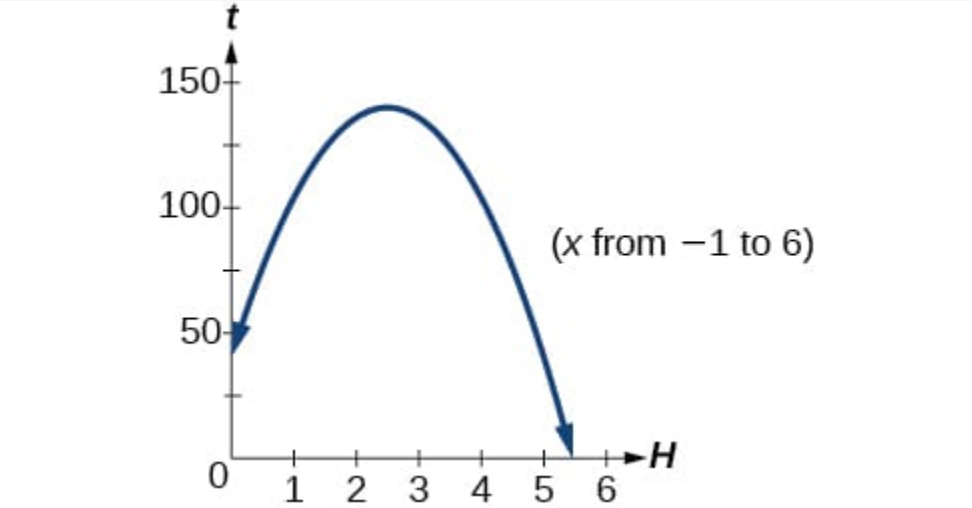


Figure \({5{.}1{.}\eatSpaces{16} \endSpaces}\

Exercise 5.1.5

A rock is thrown upward from the top of a 112-foot high cliff overlooking the ocean at a speed of 96 feet per second. The rock's height above ocean can be modeled by the equation $H(t) = -16t^2 + 96t + 112$.

a. When does the rock reach the maximum height?
b. What is the maximum height of the rock?
c. When does the rock hit the ocean?

Solution

a. 3 seconds b. 256 feet c. 7 seconds

Key Equations

- the quadratic formula: $x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$
- standard form of a quadratic function: $f(x) = a(x - h)^2 + k$
- vertex form of a quadratic function: $f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$

Key Concepts

- A polynomial function of degree two is called a quadratic function.
- The graph of a quadratic function is a parabola. A parabola is a U-shaped curve that can open either up or down.
- The axis of symmetry is the vertical line passing through the vertex. The zeros, or x-intercepts, are the points at which the parabola crosses the x-axis. The y-intercept is the point at which the parabola crosses the y-axis.
- Quadratic functions are often written in standard form.
- Vertex form is useful to easily identify the vertex of a parabola.
- Either form can be written from a graph.
- The vertex can be found from an equation representing a quadratic function. .
- The domain of a quadratic function is all real numbers.
- The range depends on the leading coefficient of the quadratic function.
- A quadratic function's minimum or maximum value is given by the y-value of the vertex.
- The minimum or maximum value of a quadratic function can be used to determine the range of the function and to solve many kinds of real-world problems, including problems involving area of a rectangle, revenue and height of a projectile.
- Quadratic equations in standard form can be solved by using the quadratic formula.
- The vertex and the intercepts can be identified and interpreted to solve real-world problems.

Glossary

axis of symmetry
a vertical line drawn through the vertex of a parabola around which the parabola is symmetric; it is defined by $x = -\frac{b}{2a}$.

general form of a quadratic function
the function that describes a parabola, written in the form $f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$, where $a, b,$ and c are real numbers and a≠0.

standard form of a quadratic function
the function that describes a parabola, written in the form $f(x) = a(x - h)^2 + k$, where (h, k) is the vertex.

vertex
the point at which a parabola changes direction, corresponding to the minimum or maximum value of the quadratic function

vertex form of a quadratic function
another name for the standard form of a quadratic function

zeros
in a given function, the values of x at which $y = 0$, also called roots

Answers

Exercise $5.1.1$
y-intercept at $(0, 13)$, No x-intercepts

Exercise $5.1.2$
$g(x) = x^2 - 6x + 13$ in standard form; $g(x) = (x - 3)^2 + 4$ in vertex form.

Exercise $5.1.4$
The domain is all real numbers. The range is $f(x) \geq \frac{8}{11}$, or $[\frac{8}{11}, \infty)$.

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5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions

Learning Objectives

- Identify power functions.
- Identify end behavior of power functions.
- Identify polynomial functions.
- Identify the degree and leading coefficient of polynomial functions.

Identifying Power Functions

In order to better understand the bird problem, we need to understand a specific type of function. A power function is a function with a single term that is the product of a real number, a coefficient, and a variable raised to a fixed real number. (A number that multiplies a variable raised to an exponent is known as a coefficient.)

As an example, consider functions for area or volume. The function for the area of a circle with radius r is

$$A(r) = \pi r^2$$

and the function for the volume of a sphere with radius r is

$$V(r) = \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$$

Both of these are examples of power functions because they consist of a coefficient, π or $\frac{4}{3}\pi$, multiplied by a variable r raised to a power.

Definition: Power Function

A *power function* is a function that can be represented in the form

$$f(x) = ax^n \tag{5.2.1}$$

where a and n are real numbers, and a is known as the *coefficient*.

Q&A: Is $f(x) = 2^x$ a power function?

No. A power function contains a variable base raised to a fixed power (Equation 5.2.1). This function has a constant base raised to a variable power. This is called an exponential function, not a power function. This function will be discussed in a later chapter.

Example 5.2.1: Identifying Power Functions

Which of the following functions are power functions?

$f(x) = 1$	Constant function
$f(x) = x$	Identify function
$f(x) = x^2$	Quadratic function
$f(x) = x^3$	Cubic function
$f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$	Reciprocal function
$f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$	Reciprocal squared function
$f(x) = \sqrt{x}$	Square root function
$f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$	Cube root function

Solution

All of the listed functions are power functions.

The constant and identity functions are power functions because they can be written as $f(x) = x^0$ and $f(x) = x^1$ respectively.

The quadratic and cubic functions are power functions with whole number powers $f(x) = x^2$ and $f(x) = x^3$.

The **reciprocal** and reciprocal squared functions are power functions with negative whole number powers because they can be written as $f(x) = x^{-1}$ and $f(x) = x^{-2}$.

The square and **cube root** functions are power functions with fractional powers because they can be written as $f(x) = x^{1/2}$ or $f(x) = x^{1/3}$.

Exercise 5.2.1

Which functions are power functions?

- $f(x) = 2x^2 \cdot 4x^3$
- $g(x) = -x^5 + 5x^3 - 4x$
- $h(x) = \frac{2x^5-1}{3x^2+4}$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Identifying End Behavior of Power Functions

Figure 5.2.2 shows the graphs of $f(x) = x^2$, $g(x) = x^4$ and and $h(x) = x^6$, which are all power functions with even, whole-number powers. Notice that these graphs have similar shapes, very much like that of the quadratic function in the toolkit. However, as the power increases, the graphs flatten somewhat near the origin and become steeper away from the origin.

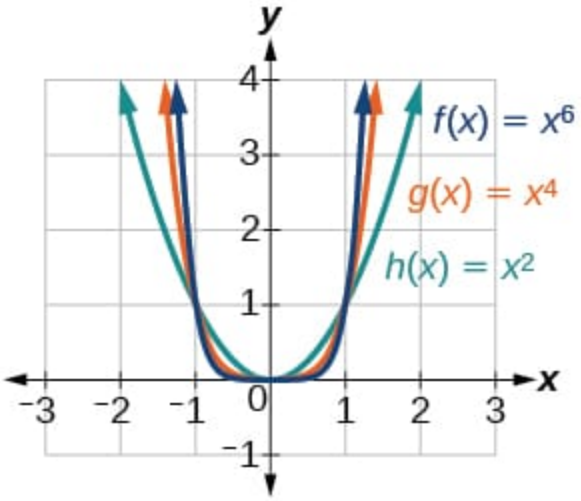


Figure 5.2.2: Even-power functions

To describe the behavior as numbers become larger and larger, we use the idea of infinity. We use the symbol ∞ for positive infinity and $-\infty$ for negative infinity. When we say that "x approaches infinity," which can be symbolically written as $x \to \infty$, we are describing a behavior; we are saying that x is increasing without bound.

With the even-power function, as the input increases or decreases without bound, the output values become very large, positive numbers. Equivalently, we could describe this behavior by saying that as x approaches positive or negative infinity, the $f(x)$ values increase without bound. In symbolic form, we could write

$$\text{as } x \to \pm\infty,\ f(x) \to \infty$$

Figure 5.2.3 shows the graphs of $f(x) = x^3$, $g(x) = x^5$, and $h(x) = x^7$, which are all power functions with odd, whole-number powers. Notice that these graphs look similar to the cubic function in the toolkit. Again, as the power increases, the graphs flatten near the origin and become steeper away from the origin.

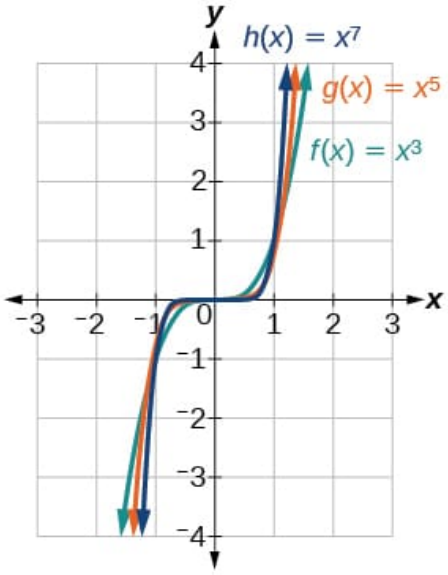


Figure 5.2.3: Odd-power function

These examples illustrate that functions of the form $f(x) = x^n$ reveal symmetry of one kind or another. First, in Figure 5.2.2 we see that even functions of the form $f(x) = x^n$, n even, are symmetric about the y-axis. In Figure 5.2.3 we see that odd functions of the form $f(x) = x^n$, n odd, are symmetric about the origin.

For these odd power functions, as x approaches negative infinity, $f(x)$ decreases without bound. As x approaches positive infinity,

$f(x)$ increases without bound. In symbolic form we write

$$\text{as } x \to -\infty,\ f(x) \to -\infty$$
$$\text{as } x \to \infty,\ f(x) \to \infty$$

The behavior of the graph of a function as the input values get very small $(x \to -\infty)$ and get very large $x \to \infty$ is referred to as the *end behavior* of the function. We can use words or symbols to describe end behavior.

Figure $5.2.4$ shows the end behavior of power functions in the form $f(x) = kx^n$ where n is a non-negative integer depending on the power and the constant.

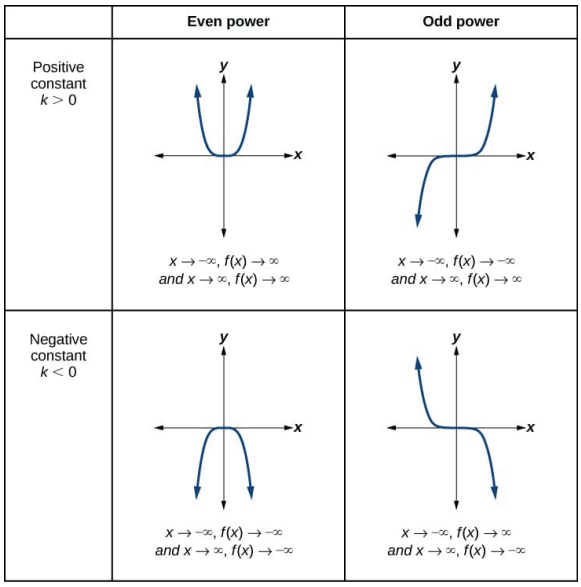


Figure $5.2.4$

How To: Given a power function $f(x) = kx^n$ where n is a non-negative integer, identify the end behavior.

1. Determine whether the power is even or odd.
2. Determine whether the constant is positive or negative.
3. Use Figure $5.2.4$ to identify the end behavior.

Example $5.2.2$: Identifying the End Behavior of a Power Function

Describe the end behavior of the graph of $f(x) = x^8$.

Solution

The coefficient is 1 (positive) and the exponent of the power function is 8 (an even number). As x approaches infinity, the output (value of $f(x)$) increases without bound. We write as $x \to \infty,\ f(x) \to \infty$. As x approaches negative infinity, the output increases without bound. In symbolic form, as $x \to -\infty,\ f(x) \to \infty$. We can graphically represent the function as shown in Figure $5.2.5$.

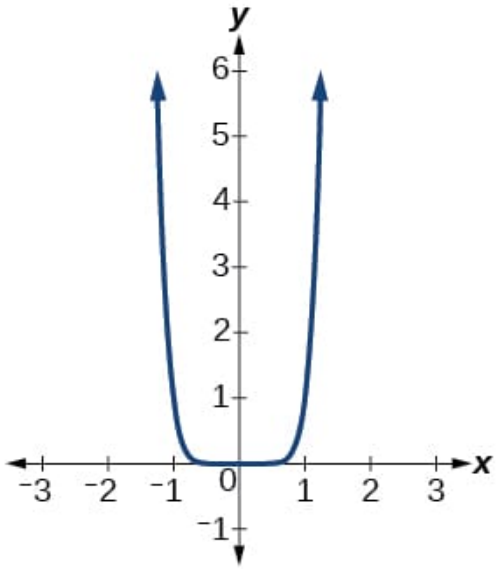


Figure 5.2.5: Graph of $f(x) = x^8$.

Example 5.2.3: Identifying the End Behavior of a Power Function.

Describe the end behavior of the graph of $f(x) = -x^9$.

Solution

The exponent of the power function is 9 (an odd number). Because the coefficient is –1 (negative), the graph is the reflection about the x-axis of the graph of $f(x) = x^9$. Figure 5.2.6 shows that as x approaches infinity, the output decreases without bound. As x approaches negative infinity, the output increases without bound. In symbolic form, we would write

$$\text{as } x \to -\infty,\ f(x) \to \infty$$
$$\text{as } x \to \infty,\ f(x) \to -\infty$$

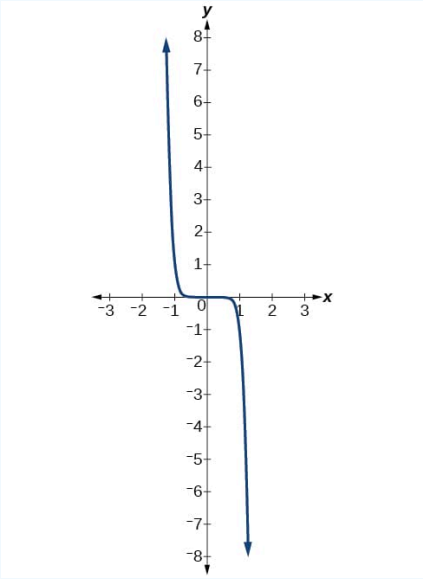


Figure 5.2.6: Graph of $f(x) = -x^9$.

Analysis

We can check our work by using the table feature on a graphing utility.

Table 5.2.2

x	$f(x)$
-10	1,000,000,000
-5	1,953,125
0	0
5	-1,953,125
10	-1,000,000,000

We can see from Table 5.2.2 that, when we substitute very small values for x, the output is very large, and when we substitute very large values for x, the output is very small (meaning that it is a very large negative value).

Exercise 5.2.2

Describe in words and symbols the end behavior of $f(x) = -5x^4$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Identifying Polynomial Functions

An oil pipeline bursts in the Gulf of Mexico, causing an oil slick in a roughly circular shape. The slick is currently 24 miles in radius, but that radius is increasing by 8 miles each week. We want to write a formula for the area covered by the oil slick by combining two functions. The radius r of the spill depends on the number of weeks w that have passed. This relationship is linear.

$$r(w) = 24 + 8w$$

We can combine this with the formula for the area A of a circle.

$$A(r) = \pi r^2$$

Composing these functions gives a formula for the area in terms of weeks.

$$\begin{aligned} A(w) &= A(r(w)) \\ &= A(24 + 8w) \\ &= \pi(24 + 8w)^2 \end{aligned}$$

Multiplying gives the formula.

$$A(w) = 576\pi + 384\pi w + 64\pi w^2$$

This formula is an example of a polynomial function. A polynomial function consists of either zero or the sum of a finite number of non-zero terms, each of which is a product of a number, called the coefficient of the term, and a variable raised to a non-negative integer power.

Definition: Polynomial Function

Let n be a non-negative integer. A *polynomial function* is a function that can be written in the form

$$f(x) = a_n x^n + \ldots + a_2 x^2 + a_1 x + a_0 \tag{5.2.2}$$

This is called the general form of a polynomial function. Each a_i is a coefficient and can be any real number. Each product $a_i x^i$ is a *term of a polynomial function*.

Example 5.2.4: Identifying Polynomial Functions

Which of the following are polynomial functions?

- $f(x) = 2x^3 \cdot 3x + 4$
- $g(x) = -x(x^2 - 4)$
- $h(x) = 5\sqrt{x} + 2$

Solution

The first two functions are examples of polynomial functions because they can be written in the form of Equation 5.2.2, where the powers are non-negative integers and the coefficients are real numbers.

- $f(x)$ can be written as $f(x) = 6x^4 + 4$.
- $g(x)$ can be written as $g(x) = -x^3 + 4x$.
- $h(x)$ cannot be written in this form and is therefore not a polynomial function.

Identifying the Degree and Leading Coefficient of a Polynomial Function

Because of the form of a polynomial function, we can see an infinite variety in the number of terms and the power of the variable. Although the order of the terms in the polynomial function is not important for performing operations, we typically arrange the terms in descending order of power, or in general form. The degree of the polynomial is the highest power of the variable that occurs in the polynomial; it is the power of the first variable if the function is in general form. The leading term is the term containing the highest power of the variable, or the term with the highest degree. The leading coefficient is the coefficient of the leading term.

Terminology of Polynomial Functions

We often rearrange polynomials so that the powers are descending.

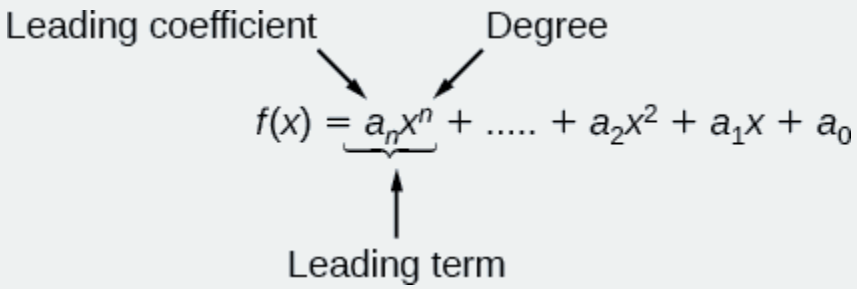


Figure 5.2.7

When a polynomial is written in this way, we say that it is in *general form*.

How To: Given a polynomial function, identify the degree and leading coefficient

1. Find the highest power of x to determine the degree function.
2. Identify the term containing the highest power of x to find the leading term.
3. Identify the coefficient of the leading term.

Example 5.2.5: Identifying the Degree and Leading Coefficient of a Polynomial Function

Identify the degree, leading term, and leading coefficient of the following polynomial functions.

$$f(x) = 3 + 2x^2 - 4x^3$$

$$g(t) = 5t^5 - 2t^3 + 7t$$

$$h(p) = 6p - p^3 - 2$$

Solution

For the function $f(x)$, the highest power of x is 3, so the degree is 3. The leading term is the term containing that degree, $-4x^3$. The leading coefficient is the coefficient of that term, –4.

For the function $g(t)$, the highest power of t is 5, so the degree is 5. The leading term is the term containing that degree, $5t^5$. The leading coefficient is the coefficient of that term, 5.

For the function $h(p)$, the highest power of p is 3, so the degree is 3. The leading term is the term containing that degree, $-p^3$; the leading coefficient is the coefficient of that term, –1.

Exercise 5.2.3

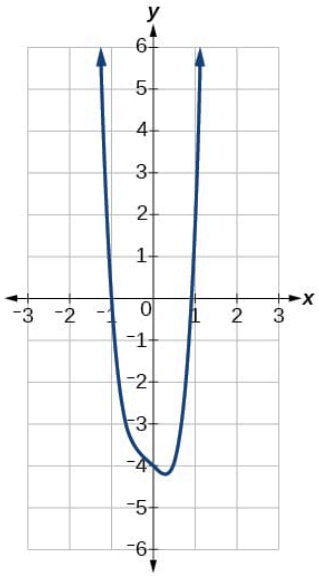
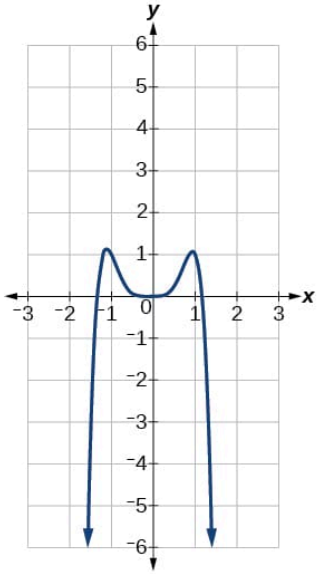
Identify the degree, leading term, and leading coefficient of the polynomial $f(x) = 4x^2 - x^6 + 2x - 6$.

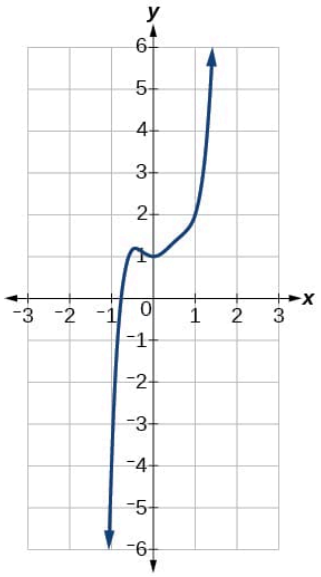
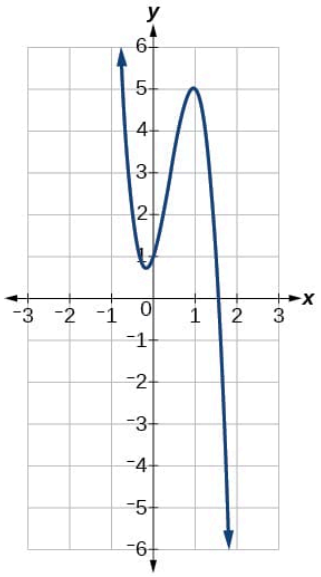
Answer available at the end of this section.

Identifying End Behavior of Polynomial Functions

Knowing the degree of a polynomial function is useful in helping us predict its end behavior. To determine its end behavior, look at the leading term of the polynomial function. Because the power of the leading term is the highest, that term will grow significantly faster than the other terms as x gets very large or very small, so its behavior will dominate the graph. For any polynomial, the end behavior of the polynomial will match the end behavior of the term of highest degree (Table 5.2.3).

Table 5.2.3

Polynomial Function	Leading Term	Graph of Polynomial Function
$f(x) = 5x^4 + 2x^3 - x - 4$	$5x^4$	
$f(x) = -2x^6 - x^5 + 3x^4 + x^3$	$-2x^6$	

Polynomial Function	Leading Term	Graph of Polynomial Function
$f(x) = 3x^5 - 4x^4 + 2x^2 + 1$	$3x^5$	
$f(x) = -6x^3 + 7x^2 + 3x + 1$	$-6x^3$	

Example 5.2.6: Identifying End Behavior and Degree of a Polynomial Function

Describe the end behavior and determine a possible degree of the polynomial function in Figure 5.2.8.

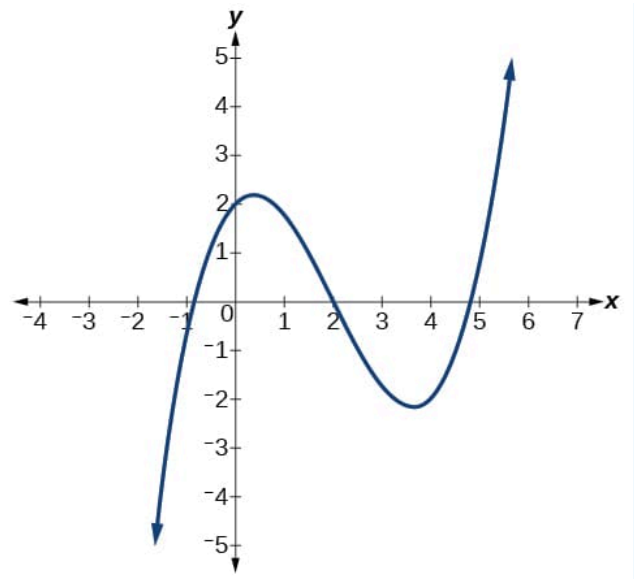


Figure 5.2.8.

Solution

As the input values x get very large, the output values $f(x)$ increase without bound. As the input values x get very small, the output values $f(x)$ decrease without bound. We can describe the end behavior symbolically by writing

$$\text{as } x \to \infty,\ f(x) \to \infty$$

$$\text{as } x \to -\infty,\ f(x) \to -\infty$$

In words, we could say that as x values approach infinity, the function values approach infinity, and as x values approach negative infinity, the function values approach negative infinity.

We can tell this graph has the shape of an odd degree power function that has not been reflected, so the degree of the polynomial creating this graph must be odd and the leading coefficient must be positive.

Exercise 5.2.4

Describe the end behavior, and determine a possible degree of the polynomial function in Figure 5.2.9.

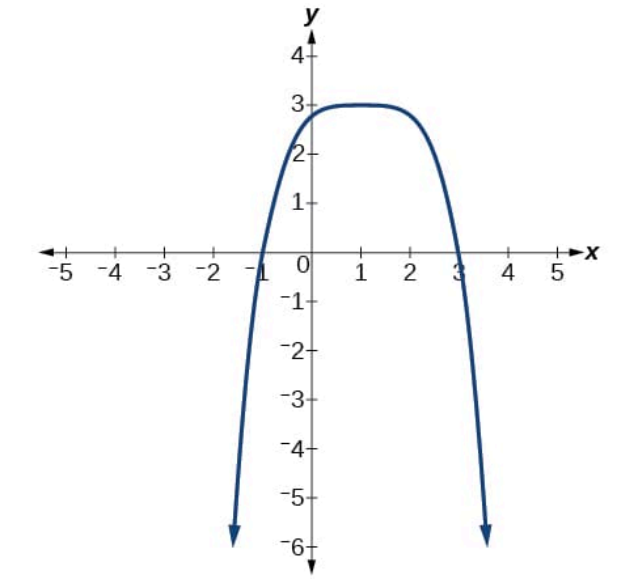


Figure 5.2.9

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 5.2.7: Identifying End Behavior and Degree of a Polynomial Function

Given the function $f(x) = -3x^2(x-1)(x+4)$, express the function as a polynomial in general form, and determine the leading term, degree, and end behavior of the function.

Solution

Obtain the general form by expanding the given expression for $f(x)$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= -3x^2(x-1)(x+4) \\ &= -3x^2(x^2+3x-4) \\ &= -3x^4 - 9x^3 + 12x^2 \end{aligned}$$

The general form is $f(x) = -3x^4 - 9x^3 + 12x^2$. The leading term is $-3x^4$; therefore, the degree of the polynomial is 4. The degree is even (4) and the leading coefficient is negative (–3), so the end behavior is

$$\text{as } x \to -\infty,\ f(x) \to -\infty$$

$$\text{as } x \to \infty,\ f(x) \to -\infty$$

Exercise 5.2.5

Given the function $f(x) = 0.2(x-2)(x+1)(x-5)$, express the function as a polynomial in general form and determine the leading term, degree, and end behavior of the function.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Identifying Local Behavior of Polynomial Functions

In addition to the end behavior of polynomial functions, we are also interested in what happens in the "middle" of the function. In particular, we are interested in locations where graph behavior changes. A **turning point** is a point at which the function values change from increasing to decreasing or decreasing to increasing.

We are also interested in the intercepts. As with all functions, the y-intercept is the point at which the graph intersects the vertical axis. The point corresponds to the coordinate pair in which the input value is zero. Because a polynomial is a function, only one output value corresponds to each input value so there can be only one y-intercept $(0, a_0)$. The x-intercepts occur at the input values that correspond to an output value of zero. It is possible to have more than one x-intercept. See Figure $5.2.10$.

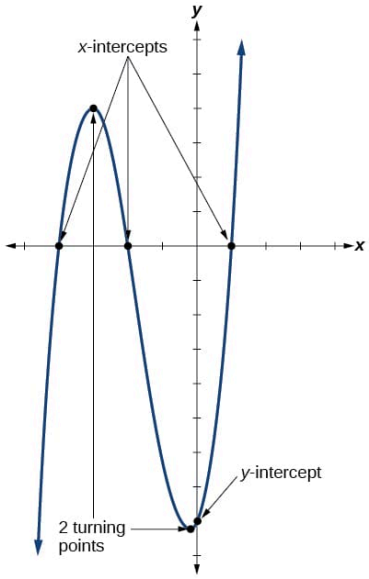


Figure $5.2.10$

Defintion: Intercepts and Turning Points of Polynomial Functions

A **turning point** of a graph is a point at which the graph changes direction from increasing to decreasing or decreasing to increasing. The y-intercept is the point at which the function has an input value of zero. The x-intercepts are the points at which the output value is zero.

How To: **Given a polynomial function, determine the intercepts.**

1. Determine the y-intercept by setting $x = 0$ and finding the corresponding output value.
2. Determine the x-intercepts by solving for the input values that yield an output value of zero.

Example $5.2.8$: Determining the Intercepts of a Polynomial Function

Given the polynomial function $f(x) = (x - 2)(x + 1)(x - 4)$, written in factored form for your convenience, determine the y- and x-intercepts.

Solution

The y-intercept occurs when the input is zero, so substitute 0 for x.

$$\begin{aligned} f(0) &= (0 - 2)(0 + 1)(0 - 4) \\ &= (-2)(1)(-4) \\ &= 8 \end{aligned}$$

The y-intercept is $(0, 8)$.

The x-intercepts occur when the output is zero.

$$0 = (x-2)(x+1)(x-4)$$

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} x-2=0 & \text{or} & x+1=0 & \text{or} & x-4=0 \\ x=2 & \text{or} & x=-1 & \text{or} & x=4 \end{array}$$

The x-intercepts are $(2,0)$,$(-1,0)$, and $(4,0)$.

We can see these intercepts on the graph of the function shown in Figure 5.2.11.

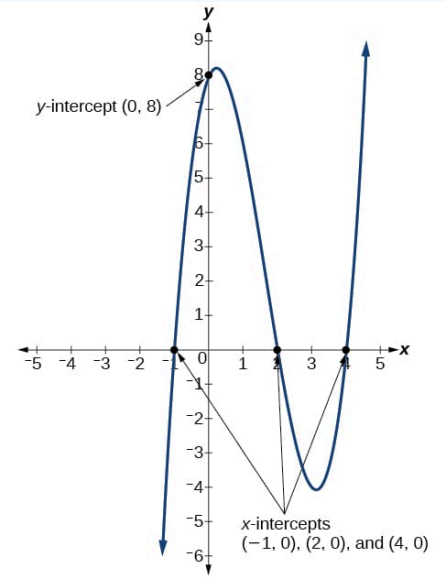


Figure 5.2.11: Graph of $f(x) = (x-2)(x+1)(x-4)$.

Example 5.2.9: Determining the Intercepts of a Polynomial Function with Factoring

Given the polynomial function $f(x) = x^4 - 4x^2 - 45$, determine the y- and x-intercepts.

Solution

The y-intercept occurs when the input is zero.

$$\begin{aligned} f(0) &= (0)^4 - 4(0)^2 - 45 \\ &= -45 \end{aligned}$$

The y-intercept is $(0,-45)$.

The x-intercepts occur when the output is zero. To determine when the output is zero, we will need to factor the polynomial.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= x^4 - 4x^2 - 45 \\ &= (x^2-9)(x^2+5) \\ &= (x-3)(x+3)(x^2+5) \end{aligned}$$

$$0 = (x-3)(x+3)(x^2+5)$$

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} x-3=0 & \text{or} & x+3=0 & \text{or} & x^2+5=0 \\ x=3 & \text{or} & x=-3 & \text{or} & (\text{no real solution}) \end{array}$$

The x-intercepts are $(3,0)$ and $(-3,0)$.

We can see these intercepts on the graph of the function shown in Figure 5.2.12. We can see that the function is even because $f(x) = f(-x)$.

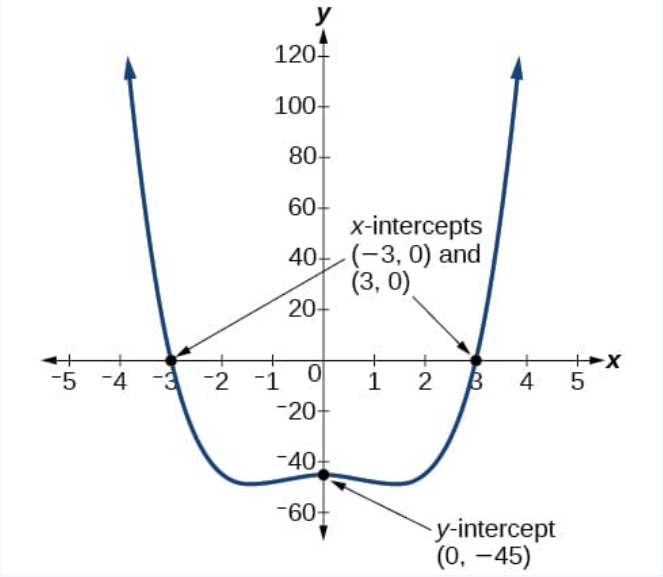


Figure 5.2.12: Graph of $f(x) = x^4 - 4x^2 - 45$.

Exercise 5.2.6

5.2.5**:** Given the polynomial function $f(x) = 2x^3 - 6x^2 - 20x$, determine the y- and x-intercepts.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Comparing Smooth and Continuous Graphs

The degree of a polynomial function helps us to determine the number of x-intercepts and the number of turning points. A polynomial function of nth degree is the product of n factors, so it will have at most n roots or zeros, or x-intercepts. The graph of the polynomial function of degree n must have at most $n–1$ turning points. This means the graph has at most one fewer turning point than the degree of the polynomial or one fewer than the number of factors.

A **continuous function** has no breaks in its graph: the graph can be drawn without lifting the pen from the paper. A smooth curve is a graph that has no sharp corners. The turning points of a smooth graph must always occur at rounded curves. The graphs of polynomial functions are both continuous and smooth.

Intercepts and Turning Points of Polynomials

A polynomial of degree n will have, at most, n x-intercepts and $n - 1$ turning points.

Example 5.2.10: Determining the Number of Intercepts and Turning Points of a Polynomial

Without graphing the function, determine the local behavior of the function by finding the maximum number of x-intercepts and turning points for $f(x) = -3x^{10} + 4x^7 - x^4 + 2x^3$.

Solution

The polynomial has a degree of **10**, so there are at most 10 x-intercepts and at most 9 turning points.

Exercise 5.2.7

Without graphing the function, determine the maximum number of x-intercepts and turning points for $f(x) = 108 - 13x^9 - 8x^4 + 14x^{12} + 2x^3$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 5.2.11: Drawing Conclusions about a Polynomial Function from the Graph

What can we conclude about the polynomial represented by the graph shown in Figure 5.2.12 based on its intercepts and turning points?

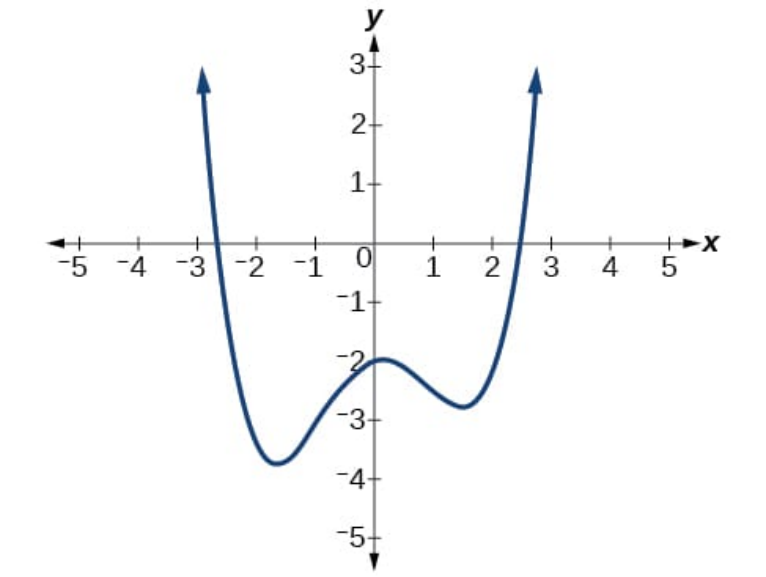


Figure 5.2.13.

Solution

The end behavior of the graph tells us this is the graph of an even-degree polynomial. See Figure 5.2.14.

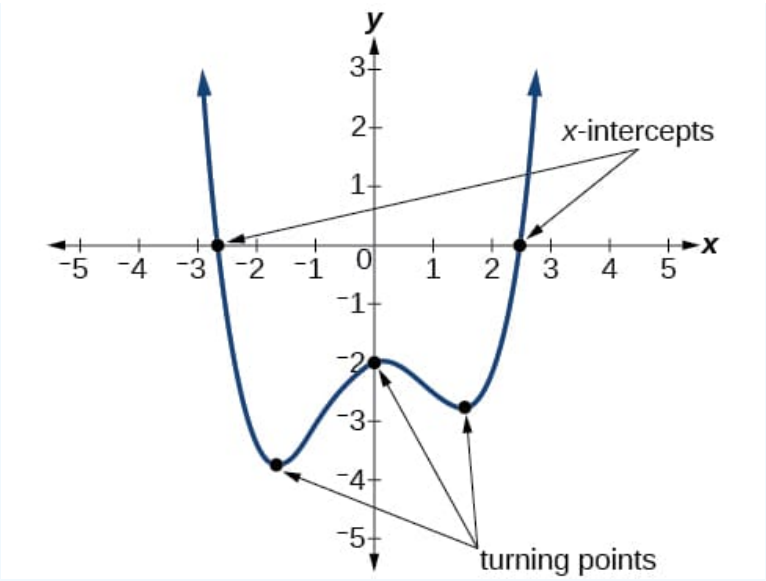


Figure 5.2.14: Graph of an even-degree polynomial.

The graph has 2 x-intercepts, suggesting a degree of 2 or greater, and 3 turning points, suggesting a degree of 4 or greater. Based on this, it would be reasonable to conclude that the degree is even and at least 4.

Exercise 5.2.8

What can we conclude about the polynomial represented by the graph shown in Figure 5.2.15 based on its intercepts and turning points?

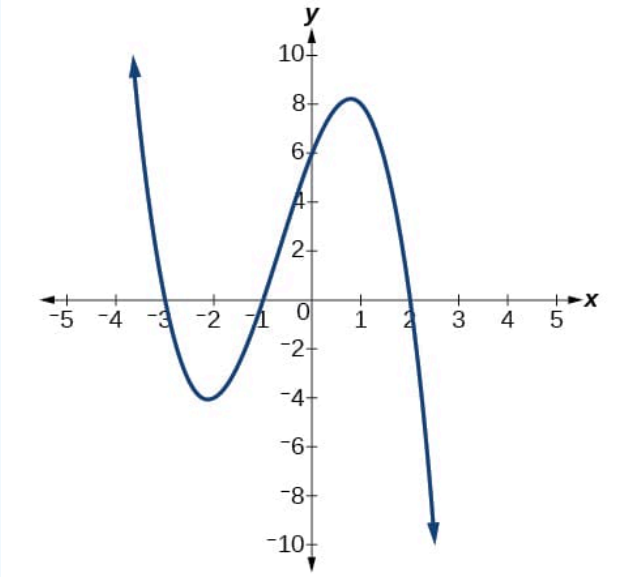


Figure 5.2.15.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Solution

The end behavior indicates an odd-degree polynomial function; there are 3 x-intercepts and 2 turning points, so the degree is odd and at least 3. Because of the end behavior, we know that the lead coefficient must be negative.

Example 5.2.12: Drawing Conclusions about a Polynomial Function from the Factors

Given the function $f(x) = -4x(x+3)(x-4)$, determine the local behavior.

Solution

The y-intercept is found by evaluating $f(0)$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(0) &= -4(0)(0+3)(0-4) \\ &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

The y-intercept is $(0, 0)$.

The x-intercepts are found by determining the zeros of the function.

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= -4x(x+3)(x-4) \\ x &= 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x+3=0 \quad \text{or} \quad x-4=0 \\ x &= 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x=-3 \quad \text{or} \quad x=4 \end{aligned}$$

The x-intercepts are $(0, 0)$,$(-3, 0)$, and $(4, 0)$.

The degree is 3 so the graph has at most 2 turning points.

Exercise 5.2.9

Given the function $f(x) = 0.2(x-2)(x+1)(x-5)$, determine the local behavior.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Equations

- general form of a polynomial function: $f(x) = a_n x^n + a_{n-1}x^{n-1} \ldots + a_2 x^2 + a_1 x + a_0$

Key Concepts

- A power function is a variable base raised to a number power.
- The behavior of a graph as the input decreases without bound and increases without bound is called the end behavior.
- The end behavior depends on whether the power is even or odd.
- A polynomial function is the sum of terms, each of which consists of a transformed power function with positive whole number power.
- The degree of a polynomial function is the highest power of the variable that occurs in a polynomial. The term containing the highest power of the variable is called the leading term. The coefficient of the leading term is called the leading coefficient.
- The end behavior of a polynomial function is the same as the end behavior of the power function represented by the leading term of the function.
- A polynomial of degree n will have at most n x-intercepts and at most $n-1$ turning points.

Glossary

coefficient

a nonzero real number that is multiplied by a variable raised to an exponent (only the number factor is the coefficient)

continuous function

a function whose graph can be drawn without lifting the pen from the paper because there are no breaks in the graph

degree

the highest power of the variable that occurs in a polynomial

end behavior

the behavior of the graph of a function as the input decreases without bound and increases without bound

leading coefficient

the coefficient of the leading term

leading term

the term containing the highest power of the variable

polynomial function

a function that consists of either zero or the sum of a finite number of non-zero terms, each of which is a product of a number, called the coefficient of the term, and a variable raised to a non-negative integer power.

power function

a function that can be represented in the form $f(x) = kx^p$ where k is a constant, the base is a variable, and the exponent, p, is a constant

smooth curve

a graph with no sharp corners

term of a polynomial function

any $a_i x^i$ of a polynomial function in the form $f(x) = a_n x^n + a_{n-1} x^{n-1} ... + a_2 x^2 + a_1 x + a_0$

turning point

the location at which the graph of a function changes direction

Answers

Exercise $5.2.1$

$f(x)$ is a power function because it can be written as $f(x) = 8x^5$. The other functions are not power functions.

Exercise $5.2.2$

As x approaches positive or negative infinity, $f(x)$ decreases without bound: as $x \to \pm\infty$, $f(x) \to -\infty$ because of the negative coefficient.

Exercise $5.2.3$

The degree is 6. The leading term is $-x^6$. The leading coefficient is -1.

Exercise $5.2.4$

As $x \to \infty$, $f(x) \to -\infty$; as $x \to -\infty$, $f(x) \to -\infty$. It has the shape of an even degree power function with a negative coefficient.

Exercise $5.2.5$

The leading term is $0.2x^3$, so it is a degree 3 polynomial. As x approaches positive infinity, $f(x)$ increases without bound; as x approaches negative infinity, $f(x)$ decreases without bound.

Exercise $5.2.6$

y-intercept $(0, 0)$; x-intercepts $(0, 0)$,$(-2, 0)$, and $(5, 0)$

Exercise $5.2.7$

There are at most 12 x-intercepts and at most 11 turning points.

Exercise $5.2.8$

The end behavior indicates that this is an odd degree polynomial. Since there are 3 x intercepts and 2 turning points, we can conclude that the degree is odd and at least 3.

Exercise $5.2.9$

The x-intercepts are $(2,0)$, $(-1,0)$, and $(5,0)$, the y-intercept is $(0,2)$, and the graph has at most 2 turning points.

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5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions

Learning Objectives

- Recognize characteristics of graphs of polynomial functions.
- Use factoring to find zeros of polynomial functions.
- Identify zeros and their multiplicities.
- Determine end behavior.
- Understand the relationship between degree and turning points.
- Graph polynomial functions.
- Use the Intermediate Value Theorem.

The revenue in millions of dollars for a fictional cable company from 2006 through 2013 is shown in Table 5.3.1.

Table 5.3.1

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Revenues	52.4	52.8	51.2	49.5	48.6	48.6	48.7	47.1

The revenue can be modeled by the polynomial function

$$R(t) = -0.037t^4 + 1.414t^3 - 19.777t^2 + 118.696t - 205.332 \tag{5.3.1}$$

where R represents the revenue in millions of dollars and t represents the year, with $t = 6$ corresponding to 2006. Over which intervals is the revenue for the company increasing? Over which intervals is the revenue for the company decreasing? These questions, along with many others, can be answered by examining the graph of the polynomial function. We have already explored the local behavior of quadratics, a special case of polynomials. In this section we will explore the local behavior of polynomials in general.

Recognizing Characteristics of Graphs of Polynomial Functions

Polynomial functions of degree 2 or more have graphs that do not have sharp corners; recall that these types of graphs are called smooth curves. Polynomial functions also display graphs that have no breaks. Curves with no breaks are called continuous. Figure 5.3.1 shows a graph that represents a **polynomial function** and a graph that represents a function that is not a polynomial.

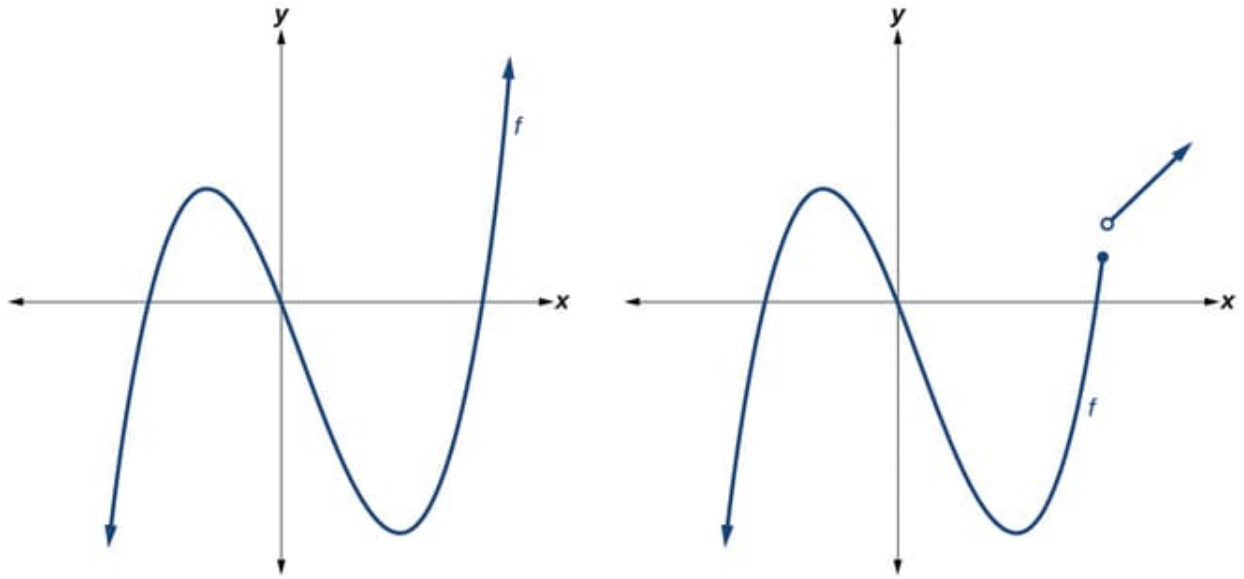


Figure 5.3.1: Graph of $f(x) = x^3 - 0.01x$.

Example 5.3.1: Recognizing Polynomial Functions

Which of the graphs in Figure 5.3.2 represents a polynomial function?

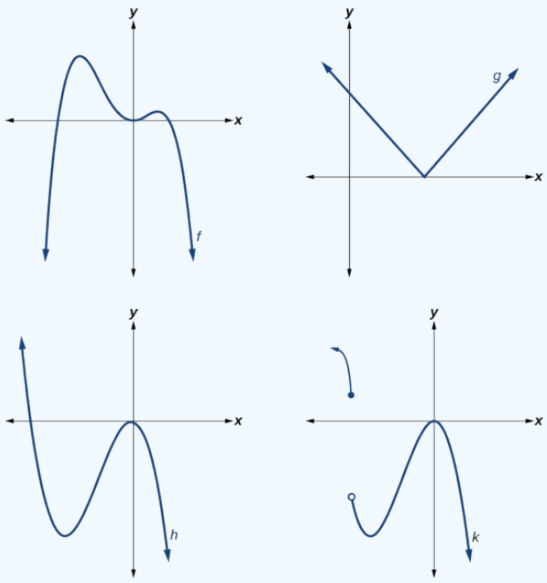


Figure 5.3.2

Solution

- The graphs of f and h are graphs of polynomial functions. They are smooth and **continuous**.
- The graphs of g and k are graphs of functions that are not polynomials. The graph of function g has a sharp corner. The graph of function k is not continuous.

Q&A

Do all polynomial functions have as their domain all real numbers?

- Yes. Any real number is a valid input for a polynomial function.

Using Factoring to Find Zeros of Polynomial Functions

Recall that if f is a polynomial function, the values of x for which $f(x) = 0$ are called **zeros** of f. If the equation of the polynomial function can be factored, we can set each factor equal to zero and solve for the zeros.

We can use this method to find x-intercepts because at the x-intercepts we find the input values when the output value is zero. For general polynomials, this can be a challenging prospect. While quadratics can be solved using the relatively simple quadratic formula, the corresponding formulas for cubic and fourth-degree polynomials are not simple enough to remember, and formulas do not exist for general higher-degree polynomials. Consequently, we will limit ourselves to three cases in this section:

The polynomial can be factored using known methods: greatest common factor and trinomial factoring.
The polynomial is given in factored form.
Technology is used to determine the intercepts.

How To: Given a polynomial function f, find the x-intercepts by factoring

1. Set $f(x) = 0$.
2. If the polynomial function is not given in factored form:
   a. Factor out any common monomial factors.
   b. Factor any factorable binomials or trinomials.
3. Set each factor equal to zero and solve to find the x-intercepts.

Example 5.3.2: Finding the x-Intercepts of a Polynomial Function by Factoring

Find the x-intercepts of $f(x) = x^6 - 3x^4 + 2x^2$.

Solution

We can attempt to factor this polynomial to find solutions for $f(x) = 0$.

$$\begin{aligned} x^6 - 3x^4 + 2x^2 &= 0 && \text{Factor out the greatest common factor.} \\ x^2(x^4 - 3x^2 + 2) &= 0 && \text{Factor the trinomial.} \\ x^2(x^2 - 1)(x^2 - 2) &= 0 && \text{Set each factor equal to zero.} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} x^2 &= 0 \\ x^2 &= 0 \\ x &= 0 \end{aligned} \quad \text{or} \quad \begin{aligned} (x^2 - 1) &= 0 \\ x^2 &= 1 \\ x &= \pm 1 \end{aligned} \quad \text{or} \quad \begin{aligned} (x^2 - 2) &= 0 \\ x^2 &= 2 \\ x &= \pm\sqrt{2} \end{aligned}$$

.

This gives us five x-intercepts: $(0, 0)$, $(1, 0)$, $(-1, 0)$, $(\sqrt{2}, 0)$,and $(-\sqrt{2}, 0)$ (Figure 5.3.3). We can see that this is an even function.

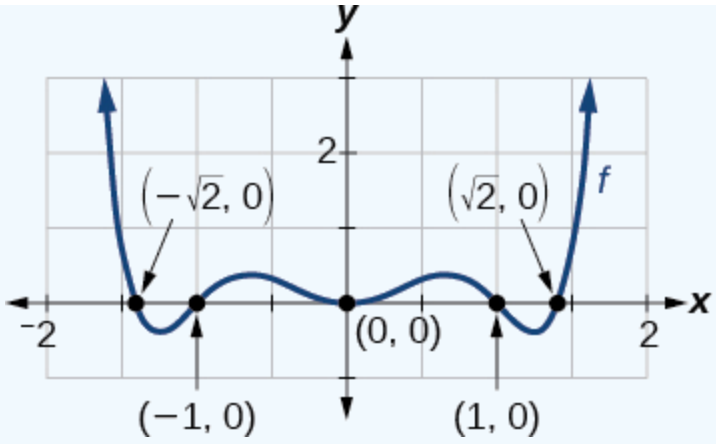


Figure 5.3.3.

Example 5.3.3: Finding the x-Intercepts of a Polynomial Function by Factoring

Find the x-intercepts of $f(x) = x^3 - 5x^2 - x + 5$.

Solution

Find solutions for $f(x) = 0$ by factoring.

$$\begin{aligned} x^3 - 5x^2 - x + 5 &= 0 && \text{Factor by grouping.} \\ x^2(x-5) - (x-5) &= 0 && \text{Factor out the common factor.} \\ (x^2-1)(x-5) &= 0 && \text{Factor the difference of squares.} \\ (x+1)(x-1)(x-5) &= 0 && \text{Set each factor equal to zero.} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} x+1 &= 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x-1 = 0 \quad \text{or} \quad x-5 = 0 \\ x &= -1 \qquad\quad x = 1 \qquad\quad x = 5 \end{aligned}$$

There are three x-intercepts: $(-1, 0)$, $(1, 0)$, and $(5, 0)$ (Figure 5.3.4).

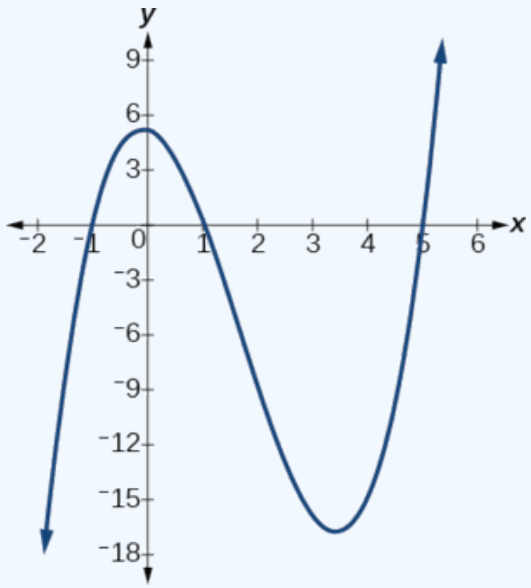


Figure 5.3.4: Graph of $f(x)$.

Example 5.3.4: Finding the y- and x-Intercepts of a Polynomial in Factored Form

Find the y- and x-intercepts of $g(x) = (x-2)^2(2x+3)$.

Solution

The y-intercept can be found by evaluating $g(0)$.

$$\begin{aligned} g(0) &= (0-2)^2(2(0)+3) \\ &= 12 \end{aligned}$$

So the y-intercept is $(0, 12)$.

The x-intercepts can be found by solving $g(x) = 0$.

$$(x-2)^2(2x+3) = 0 \tag{5.3.2}$$

$$\begin{aligned} (x-2)^2 = 0 \quad & \text{or} \quad (2x+3) = 0 \\ x-2 = 0 \quad & \text{or} \quad x = -\frac{3}{2} \\ x = 2 \quad & \end{aligned}$$

So the x-intercepts are $(2, 0)$ and $\left(-\frac{3}{2}, 0\right)$.

Analysis

We can always check that our answers are reasonable by using a graphing calculator to graph the polynomial as shown in Figure 5.3.5.

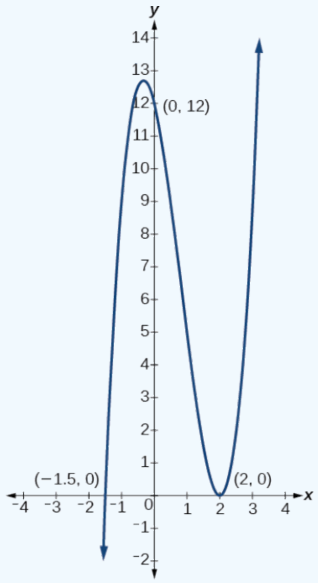


Figure 5.3.5: Graph of $g(x)$.

Example 5.3.5: Finding the x-Intercepts of a Polynomial Function Using a Graph

Find the x-intercepts of $h(x) = x^3 + 4x^2 + x - 6$.

Solution

This polynomial is not in factored form, has no common factors, and does not appear to be factorable using techniques previously discussed. Fortunately, we can use technology to find the intercepts. Keep in mind that some values make graphing difficult by hand. In these cases, we can take advantage of graphing utilities.

Looking at the graph of this function, as shown in Figure 5.3.6, it appears that there are x-intercepts at $x = -3, -2, \text{ and } 1$.

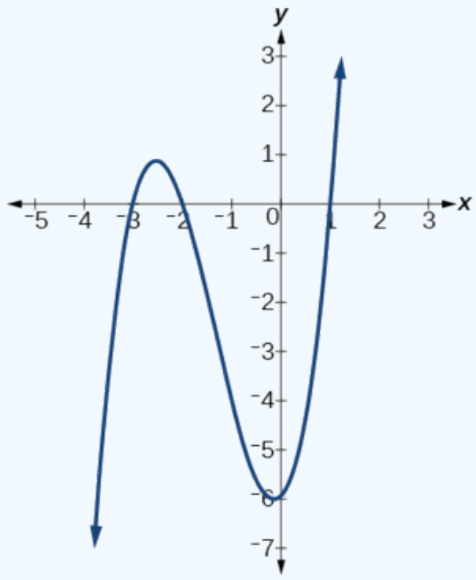


Figure 5.3.6: Graph of $h(x)$.

We can check whether these are correct by substituting these values for x and verifying that

$$h(-3) = h(-2) = h(1) = 0.$$

Since $h(x) = x^3 + 4x^2 + x - 6$, we have:

$$\begin{aligned} h(-3) &= (-3)^3 + 4(-3)^2 + (-3) - 6 = -27 + 36 - 3 - 6 = 0 \\ h(-2) &= (-2)^3 + 4(-2)^2 + (-2) - 6 = -8 + 16 - 2 - 6 = 0 \\ h(1) &= (1)^3 + 4(1)^2 + (1) - 6 = 1 + 4 + 1 - 6 = 0 \end{aligned}$$

Each x-intercept corresponds to a zero of the polynomial function and each zero yields a factor, so we can now write the polynomial in factored form.

$$\begin{aligned} h(x) &= x^3 + 4x^2 + x - 6 \\ &= (x+3)(x+2)(x-1) \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 5.3.1

Find the y-and x-intercepts of the function $f(x) = x^4 - 19x^2 + 30x$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Identifying Zeros and Their Multiplicities

Definition: Turning Point

A **turning point** is a point of a polynomial is where the graph changes from increasing to decreasing (rising to falling) or decreasing to increasing (falling to rising). These points are also called *turns*.

Graphs behave differently at various x-intercepts. Sometimes, the graph will cross over the horizontal axis at an intercept. Other times, the graph will touch the horizontal axis and turn around. Suppose, for example, we graph the function

$$f(x) = (x+3)(x-2)^2(x+1)^3. \tag{5.3.3}$$

Notice in Figure 5.3.7 that the behavior of the function at each of the x-intercepts is different.

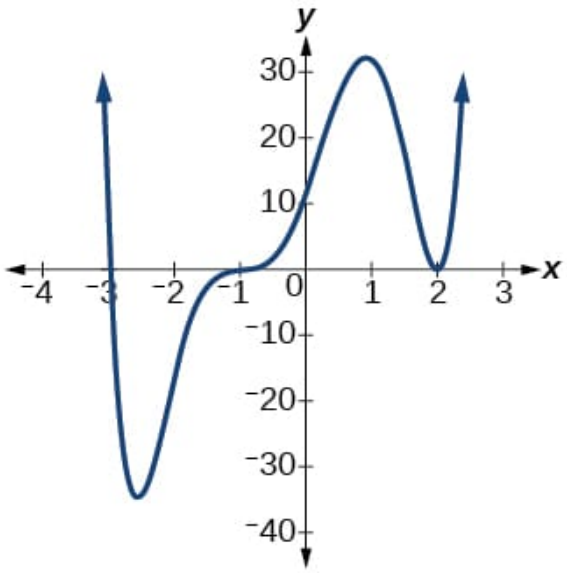


Figure 5.3.7: Identifying the behavior of the graph at an x-intercept by examining the multiplicity of the zero.

The x-intercept –3 is the solution of equation $(x+3) = 0$. The graph passes directly through thex-intercept at $x = -3$. The factor is linear (has a degree of 1), so the behavior near the intercept is like that of a line—it passes directly through the intercept. We call this a single zero because the zero corresponds to a single factor of the function.

The x-intercept 2 is the repeated solution of equation $(x-2)^2 = 0$. The graph touches the axis at the intercept and changes direction. The factor is quadratic (degree 2), so the behavior near the intercept is like that of a quadratic—it bounces off of the horizontal axis at the intercept.

$$(x-2)^2 = (x-2)(x-2) \tag{5.3.4}$$

The factor is repeated, that is, the factor $(x-2)$ appears twice. The number of times a given factor appears in the factored form of the equation of a polynomial is called the **multiplicity**. The zero associated with this factor, $x = 2$, has multiplicity 2 because the factor $(x-2)$ occurs twice.

The x-intercept –1 is the repeated solution of factor $(x+1)^3 = 0$.The graph passes through the axis at the intercept, but flattens out a bit first. This factor is cubic (degree 3), so the behavior near the intercept is like that of a cubic—with the same S-shape near the intercept as the toolkit function $f(x) = x^3$. We call this a triple zero, or a zero with multiplicity 3.

For **zeros** with even multiplicities, the graphs touch or are tangent to the x-axis. For zeros with odd multiplicities, the graphs cross or intersect the x-axis. See Figure 5.3.8 for examples of graphs of polynomial functions with multiplicity 1, 2, and 3.

- $p = 1$ appears *linear* as it crosses the x axis.
- $p = 2$ *turning* point on the x axis.
- $p = 3$ *inflection* point on the x axis.

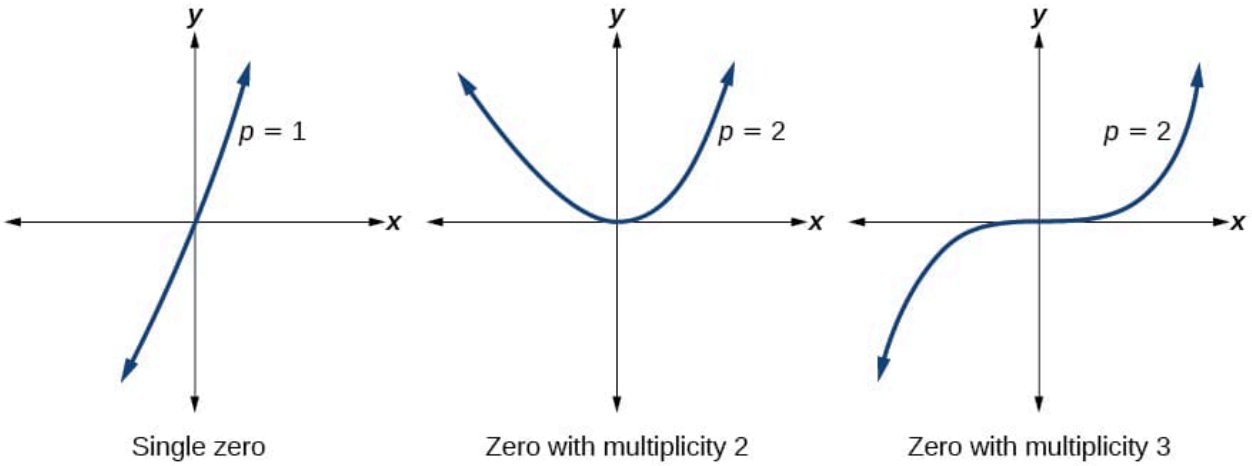


Figure 5.3.8: Three graphs showing three different polynomial functions with multiplicity 1, 2, and 3.

For higher even powers, such as 4, 6, and 8, the graph will touch the horizontal axis and turn around but, for each increasing even power, the graph will appear flatter as it approaches and leaves the x-axis.

For higher odd powers, such as 5, 7, and 9, the graph will have an inflection point on the horizontal axis, but for each increasing odd power, the graph will appear flatter as it approaches and leaves the x-axis.

Graphical Behavior of Polynomials at x-Intercepts

If a polynomial contains a factor of the form $(x-h)^p$, the behavior near the x-intercept is determined by the power p. We say that $x=h$ is a zero of **multiplicity** p.

- The graph will cross the x-axis without inflection at zeros with multiplicity equal to one.
- The graph will have an inflection point the x-axis at zeros with odd multiplicities greater than one.
- The graph of a polynomial function will have a turn on the x-axis at zeros with even multiplicities.
- The sum of the multiplicities of all zeros is equal to the degree of the polynomial.

HOW TO: Given a graph of a polynomial function of degree n, identify the zeros and their multiplicities

1. If the graph crosses the x-axis and appears linear at the intercept, then it is a zero of multiplicity ONE.
2. If the graph crosses the x-axis at an inflection point, then it is a zero with odd multiplicity greater than ONE.
3. If the graph touches the x-axis at a turning point, then it is a zero with even multiplicity.
4. The sum of the multiplicities of ALL zeros is equal to n.

Example 5.3.6: Identifying Zeros and Their Multiplicities

Use the graph of the function of degree 6 in Figure 5.3.9 to identify the zeros of the function and their possible multiplicities.

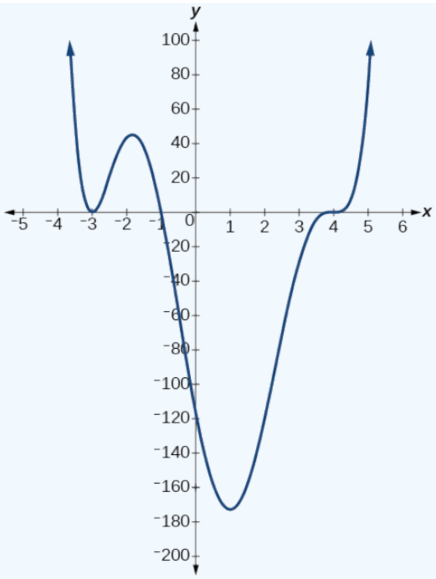


Figure 5.3.9: Graph of a polynomial function with degree 6.

Solution

The polynomial function is of degree n. The sum of the multiplicities must be n.

Starting from the left, the first zero occurs at $x = -3$. The graph has a turning point on the x-axis, so the multiplicity of that zero must be even. The zero at $x = -3$ is of multiplicity 2 or 4, since the degree of the polynomial is 6 and there are two additional zeros.

The next zero occurs at $x = -1$. The graph looks almost linear at this point. This is a zero of multiplicity 1.

The last zero occurs at $x = 4$.The graph has an inflection point on the x-axis, so the multiplicity of the zero must be odd and greater than 1. We know that the multiplicity must be 3 since there are two other zeros, a multiplicity of 5 would be too large since the degree of the polynomial is 6.

Now, we can conclude that since the sum of the multiplicities is equal to 6, we have only valid possibility 2 + 1 + 3 = 6

Hence, we can summarize the results:

The at $x = -3$ must be of multiplicity 2.

The at $x = -1$ must be of multiplicity 1.

The at $x = 4$ must be of multiplicity 3.

Exercise 5.3.2

Use the graph of the function of degree 7 in Figure 5.3.10 to identify the zeros of the function and their multiplicities.

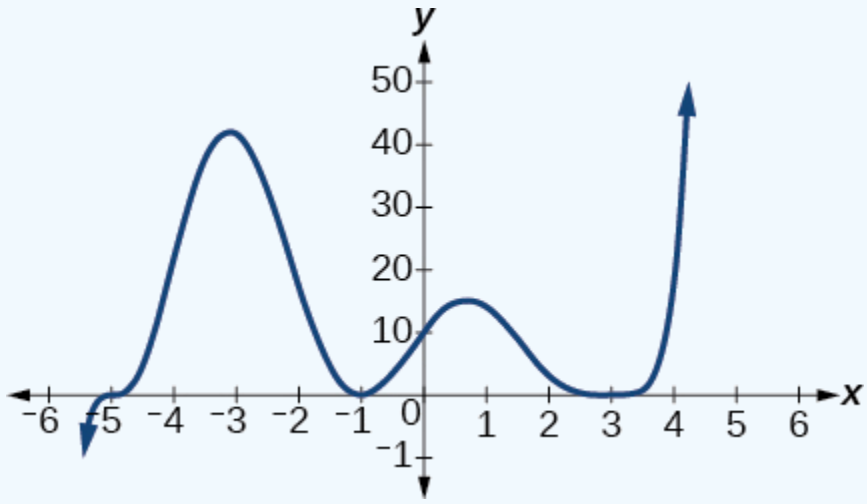


Figure $5.3.10$***:*** *Graph of a polynomial function with degree 5.*

Answer available at the end of this section.

Determining End Behavior

As we have already learned, the behavior of a graph of a polynomial function of the form

$$f(x) = a_n x^n + a_{n-1} x^{n-1} + \ldots + a_1 x + a_0 \tag{5.3.5}$$

will either ultimately rise or fall as x increases without bound and will either rise or fall as x decreases without bound. This is because for very large inputs, say 100 or 1,000, the leading term dominates the size of the output. The same is true for very small inputs, say –100 or –1,000.

Recall that we call this behavior the end behavior of a function. As we pointed out when discussing quadratic equations, when the leading term of a polynomial function, $a_n x^n$, is an even power function, as x increases or decreases without bound, $f(x)$ increases without bound. When the leading term is an odd power function, as x decreases without bound, $f(x)$ also decreases without bound; as x increases without bound, $f(x)$ also increases without bound. If the leading term is negative, it will change the direction of the end behavior. Figure $5.3.11$ summarizes all four cases.

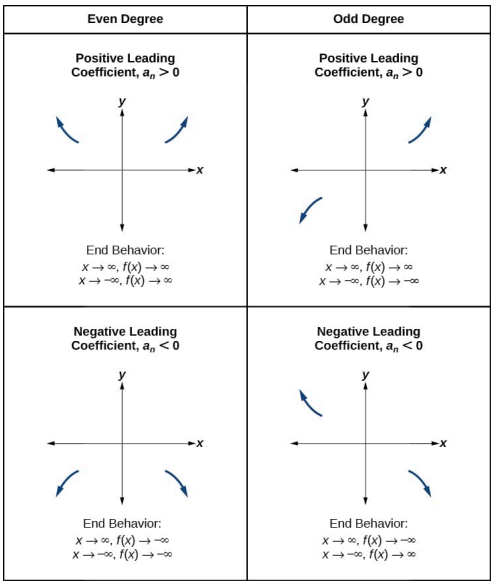


Figure 5.3.11.

Understanding the Relationship between Degree and Turning Points

In addition to the end behavior, recall that we can analyze a polynomial function's local behavior. It may have a turning point where the graph changes from increasing to decreasing (rising to falling) or decreasing to increasing (falling to rising). Look at the graph of the polynomial function $f(x) = x^4 - x^3 - 4x^2 + 4x$ in Figure 5.3.12. The graph has three turning points.

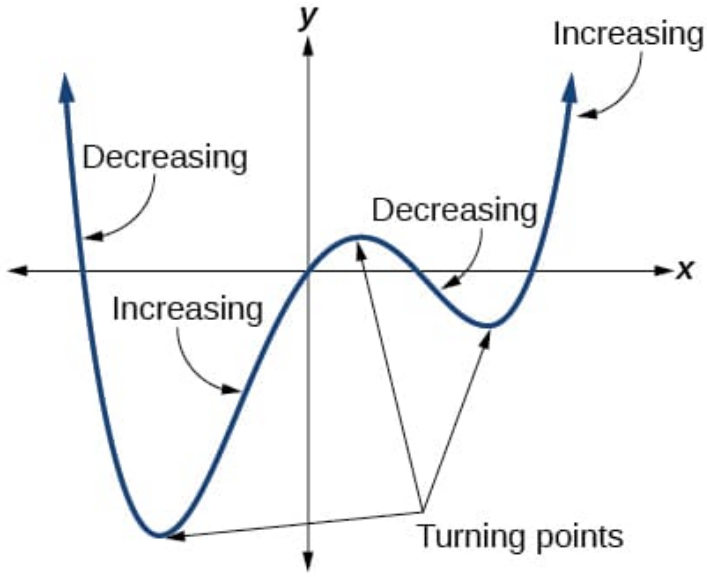


Figure 5.3.12: Graph of $f(x) = x^4 - x^3 - 4x^2 + 4x$

This function f is a 4th degree polynomial function and has 3 turning points. The maximum number of turning points of a polynomial function is always one less than the degree of the function.

Theorem 5.3.1 Turns Theorem

A polynomial of degree n will have *at most* $n - 1$ turning points.

If the graph of a polynomial has n turns, then the degree is *at least* $n + 1$

Example 5.3.7: Finding the Maximum Number of Turning Points Using the Degree of a Polynomial Function

Find the maximum number of turning points of each polynomial function.

a. $f(x) = -x^3 + 4x^5 - 3x^2 + 1$
b. $f(x) = -(x-1)^2(1+2x^2)$

Solution

a. $f(x) = -x^3 + 4x^5 - 3x^2 + 1$

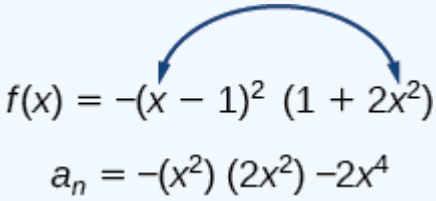
First, rewrite the polynomial function in descending order: $f(x) = 4x^5 - x^3 - 3x^2 + 1$

Identify the degree of the polynomial function. This polynomial function is of degree 5.

The maximum number of turning points is $5 - 1 = 4$.

b. $f(x) = -(x-1)^2(1+2x^2)$

First, identify the leading term of the polynomial function if the function were expanded.



Then, identify the degree of the polynomial function. This polynomial function is of degree 4.

The maximum number of turning points is $4 - 1 = 3$.

Graphing Polynomial Functions

We can use what we have learned about multiplicities, end behavior, and turning points to sketch graphs of polynomial functions. Let us put this all together and look at the steps required to graph polynomial functions.

How to: Given a polynomial function, sketch the graph

1. Find the intercepts.
2. Check for symmetry. If the function is an even function, its graph is symmetrical about the y-axis, that is, $f(-x) = f(x)$. If a function is an odd function, its graph is symmetrical about the origin, that is, $f(-x) = -f(x)$.
3. Use the multiplicities of the zeros to determine the behavior of the polynomial at the x-intercepts.
4. Determine the end behavior by examining the leading term.
5. Use the end behavior and the behavior at the intercepts to sketch a graph.
6. Ensure that the number of turning points does not exceed one less than the degree of the polynomial.
7. Optionally, use technology to check the graph.

Example 5.3.8: Sketching the Graph of a Polynomial Function

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = -2(x+3)^2(x-5)$.

Solution

This graph has two x-intercepts. At $x = -3$, the factor is squared, indicating a multiplicity of 2. The graph will bounce at this x-intercept. At $x = 5$,the function has a multiplicity of one, indicating the graph will cross through the axis at this intercept.

The y-intercept is found by evaluating $f(0)$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(0) &= -2(0+3)^2(0-5) \\ &= -2 \cdot 9 \cdot (-5) \\ &= 90 \end{aligned}$$

The y-intercept is $(0, 90)$.

Additionally, we can see the leading term, if this polynomial were multiplied out, would be $-2x3$, so the end behavior is that of a vertically reflected cubic, with the outputs decreasing as the inputs approach infinity, and the outputs increasing as the inputs approach negative infinity. See Figure $5.3.13$.

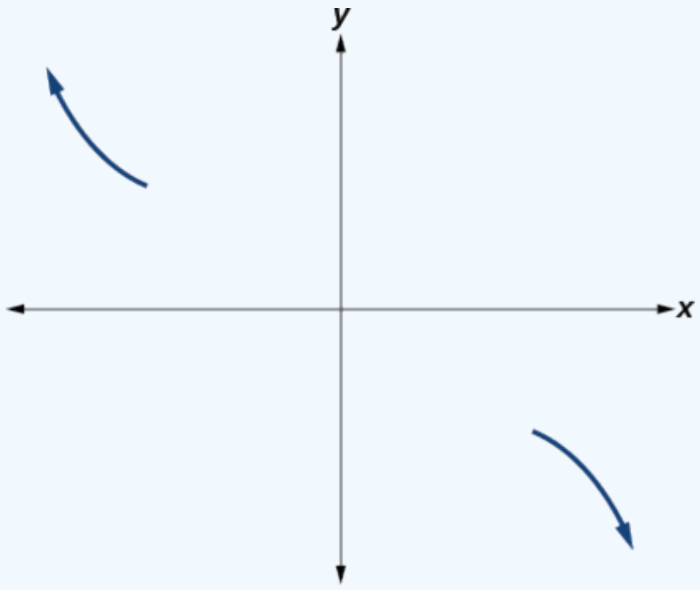


Figure $5.3.13$: Showing the distribution for the leading term.

To sketch this, we consider that:

- As $x \to -\infty$ the function $f(x) \to \infty$,so we know the graph starts in the second quadrant and is decreasing toward the x-axis.
- Since $f(-x) = -2(-x+3)^2(-x–5)$ is not equal to $f(x)$, the graph does not display symmetry.
- At $(-3, 0)$, the graph bounces off of thex-axis, so the function must start increasing.
- At $(0, 90)$, the graph crosses the y-axis at the y-intercept. See Figure $5.3.14$.

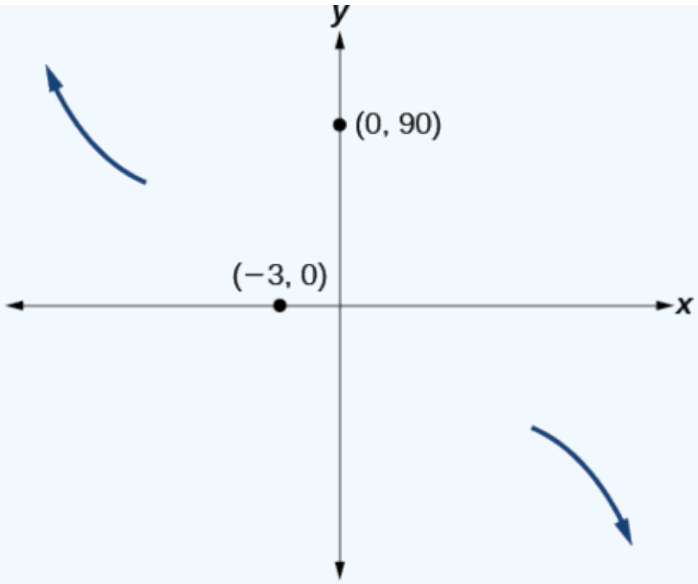


Figure 5.3.14: Graph of the end behavior and intercepts, $(-3, 0)$ and $(0, 90)$, for the function $f(x) = -2(x + 3)^2(x - 5)$.

Somewhere after this point, the graph must turn back down or start decreasing toward the horizontal axis because the graph passes through the next intercept at $(5, 0)$. See Figure 5.3.15.

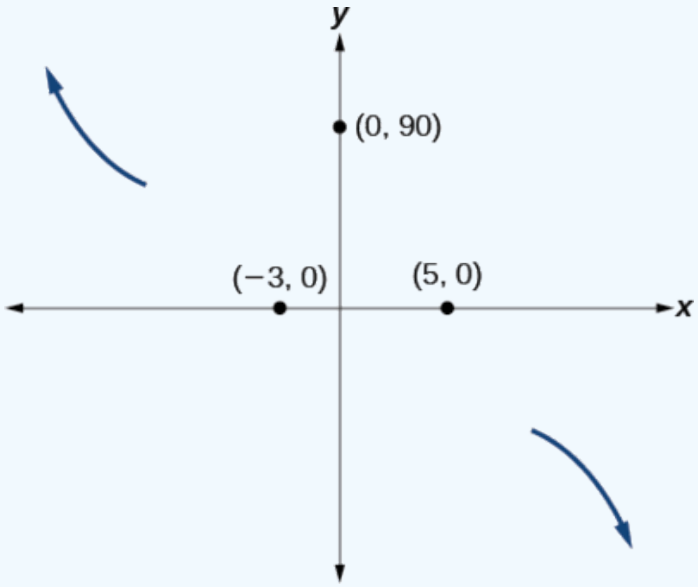


Figure 5.3.15: Graph of the end behavior and intercepts, $(-3, 0)$, $(0, 90)$ and $(5, 0)$, for the function $f(x) = -2(x + 3)^2(x - 5)$.

As $x \to \infty$ the function $f(x) \to -\infty$,

so we know the graph continues to decrease, and we can stop drawing the graph in the fourth quadrant.

Using technology, we can create the graph for the polynomial function, shown in Figure 5.3.16, and verify that the resulting graph looks like our sketch in Figure 5.3.15.

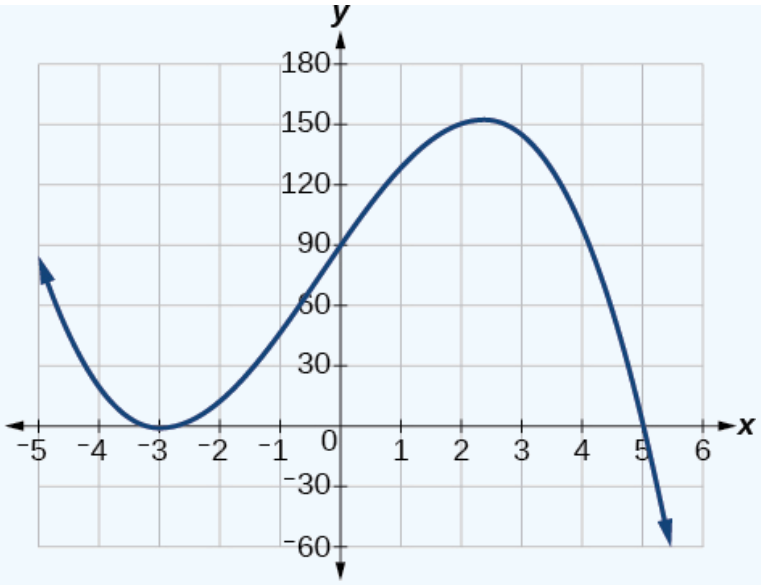


Figure $5.3.16$***:*** *The complete graph of the polynomial function* $f(x) = -2(x+3)^2(x-5)$.

Exercise $5.3.3$

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = \frac{1}{4}x(x-1)^4(x+3)^3$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Intermediate Value Theorem

In some situations, we may know two points on a graph but not the zeros. If those two points are on opposite sides of the x-axis, we can confirm that there is a zero between them. Consider a polynomial function f whose graph is smooth and continuous. The **Intermediate Value Theorem** states that for two numbers a and b in the domain of f,if \(a

In other words, the **Intermediate Value Theorem** tells us that when a polynomial function changes from a negative value to a positive value, the function must cross the x-axis. Figure $5.3.18$ shows that there is a zero between a and b.

Theorem $5.3.1$**Value Theorem**

Let f be a polynomial function. If $f(a)$ and $f(b)$ have opposite signs, then there exists at least one value c between a and b for which $f(c) = 0$.

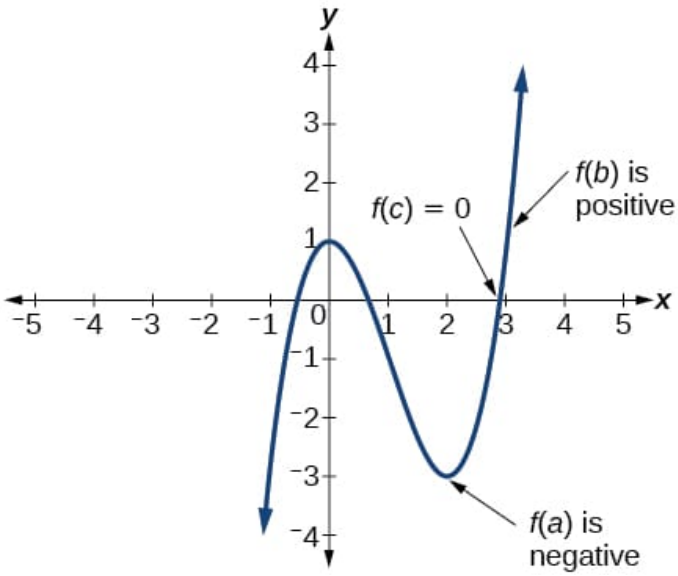


Figure 5.3.18: Using the Intermediate Value Theorem to show there exists a zero.

Example 5.3.9: Using the Intermediate Value Theorem

Show that the function $f(x) = x^3 - 5x^2 + 3x + 6$ has at least two real zeros between $x = 1$ and $x = 4$.

Solution

As a start, evaluate $f(x)$ at the integer values $x = 1,\ 2,\ 3,\ \text{and } 4$ (Table 5.3.2).

Table 5.3.2

x	1	2	3	4
$f(x)$	5	0	-3	2

We see that one zero occurs at $x = 2$. Also, since $f(3)$ is negative and $f(4)$ is positive, by the Intermediate Value Theorem, there must be at least one real zero between 3 and 4.

We have shown that there are at least two real zeros between $x = 1$ and $x = 4$.

Analysis

We can also see on the graph of the function in Figure 5.3.19 that there are two real zeros between $x = 1$ and $x = 4$.

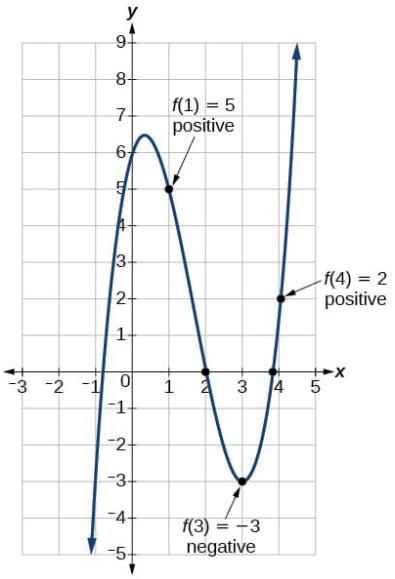


Figure 5.3.19.

Exercise 5.3.4

Show that the function $f(x) = 7x^5 - 9x^4 - x^2$ has at least one real zero between $x = 1$ and $x = 2$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Writing Formulas for Polynomial Functions

Now that we know how to find zeros of polynomial functions, we can use them to write formulas based on graphs. Because a **polynomial function** written in factored form will have an x-intercept where each factor is equal to zero, we can form a function that will pass through a set of x-intercepts by introducing a corresponding set of factors.

Note: Factored Form of Polynomials

If a polynomial of lowest degree p has horizontal intercepts at $x = x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n$, then the polynomial can be written in the factored form: $f(x) = a(x - x_1)^{p_1}(x - x_2)^{p_2} \cdots (x - x_n)^{p_n}$ where the powers p_i on each factor can be determined by the behavior of the graph at the corresponding intercept, and the stretch factor a can be determined given a value of the function other than the x-intercept.

Given a graph of a polynomial function, write a formula for the function.

1. Identify the x-intercepts of the graph to find the factors of the polynomial.
2. Examine the behavior of the graph at the x-intercepts to determine the multiplicity of each factor.
3. Find the polynomial of least degree containing all the factors found in the previous step.
4. Use any other point on the graph (the y-intercept may be easiest) to determine the stretch factor.

Example 5.3.10: Writing a Formula for a Polynomial Function from the Graph

Write a formula for the polynomial function shown in Figure 5.3.20.

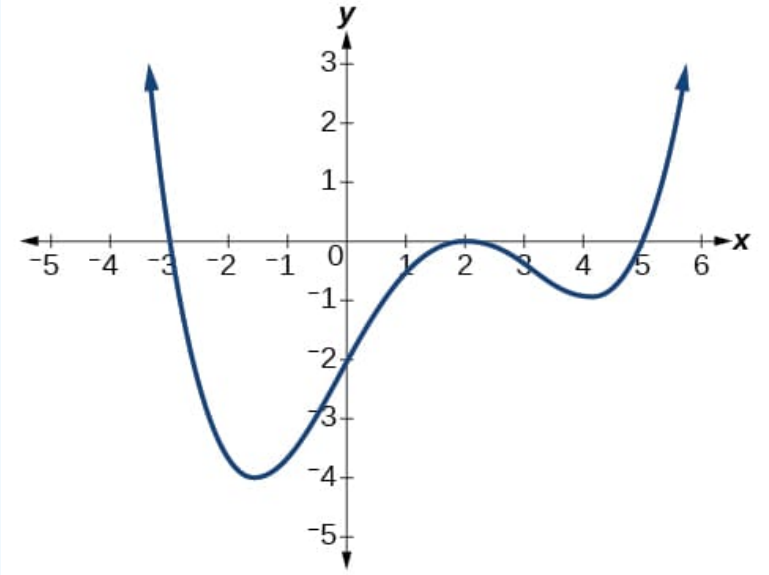


Figure 5.3.20.

Solution

This graph has three x-intercepts: $x = -3,\ 2,\ \text{and}\ 5$. The y-intercept is located at $(0, 2)$.At $x = -3$ and $x = 5$, the graph passes through the axis linearly, suggesting the corresponding factors of the polynomial will be linear. At $x = 2$, the graph bounces at the intercept, suggesting the corresponding factor of the polynomial will be second degree (quadratic). Together, this gives us

$$f(x) = a(x + 3)(x - 2)^2(x - 5) \tag{5.3.6}$$

To determine the stretch factor, we utilize another point on the graph. We will use the y-intercept $(0, -2)$, to solve for a.

$$\begin{aligned} f(0) &= a(0 + 3)(0 - 2)^2(0 - 5) \\ -2 &= a(0 + 3)(0 - 2)^2(0 - 5) \\ -2 &= -60a \\ a &= \frac{1}{30} \end{aligned}$$

The graphed polynomial appears to represent the function $f(x) = \frac{1}{30}(x + 3)(x - 2)^2(x - 5)$.

Exercise 5.3.5

Given the graph shown in Figure 5.3.21, write a formula for the function shown.

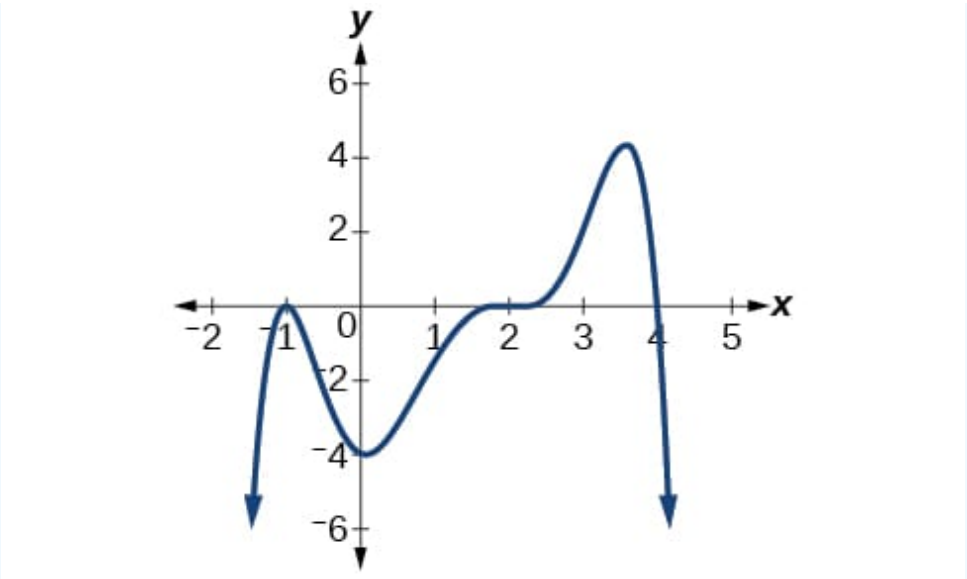


Figure 5.3.21.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using Local and Global Extrema

With quadratics, we were able to algebraically find the maximum or minimum value of the function by finding the vertex. For general polynomials, finding these turning points is not possible without more advanced techniques from calculus. Even then, finding where extrema occur can still be algebraically challenging. For now, we will estimate the locations of turning points using technology to generate a graph.

Each turning point represents a local minimum or maximum. Sometimes, a turning point is the highest or lowest point on the entire graph. In these cases, we say that the turning point is a **global maximum** or a **global minimum**. These are also referred to as the absolute maximum and absolute minimum values of the function.

Note: Local and Global Extrema

A **local maximum** or **local minimum** at $x = a$ (sometimes called the relative maximum or minimum, respectively) is the output at the highest or lowest point on the graph in an open interval around $x = a$.If a function has a local maximum at a, then $f(a) \geq f(x)$for all x in an open interval around $x = a$. If a function has a local minimum at a, then $f(a) \leq f(x)$for all x in an open interval around $x = a$.

A **global maximum** or **global minimum** is the output at the highest or lowest point of the function. If a function has a global maximum at a, then $f(a) \geq f(x)$ for all x. If a function has a global minimum at a, then $f(a) \leq f(x)$ for all x.

We can see the difference between local and global extrema in Figure 5.3.22.

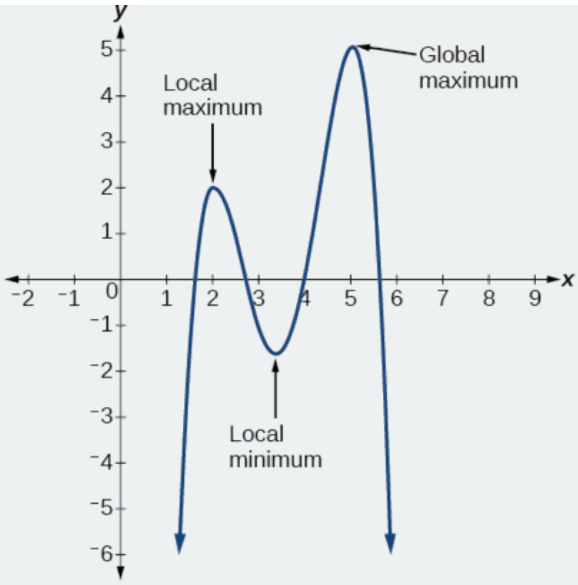


Figure 5.3.22: Graph of an even-degree polynomial that denotes the local maximum and minimum and the global maximum.

Do all polynomial functions have a global minimum or maximum?

No. Only polynomial functions of even degree have a global minimum or maximum. For example, $f(x) = x$ has neither a global maximum nor a global minimum.

Example 5.3.11: Using Local Extrema to Solve Applications

An open-top box is to be constructed by cutting out squares from each corner of a 14 cm by 20 cm sheet of plastic then folding up the sides. Find the size of squares that should be cut out to maximize the volume enclosed by the box.

Solution

We will start this problem by drawing a picture like that in Figure 5.3.23, labeling the width of the cut-out squares with a variable, w.

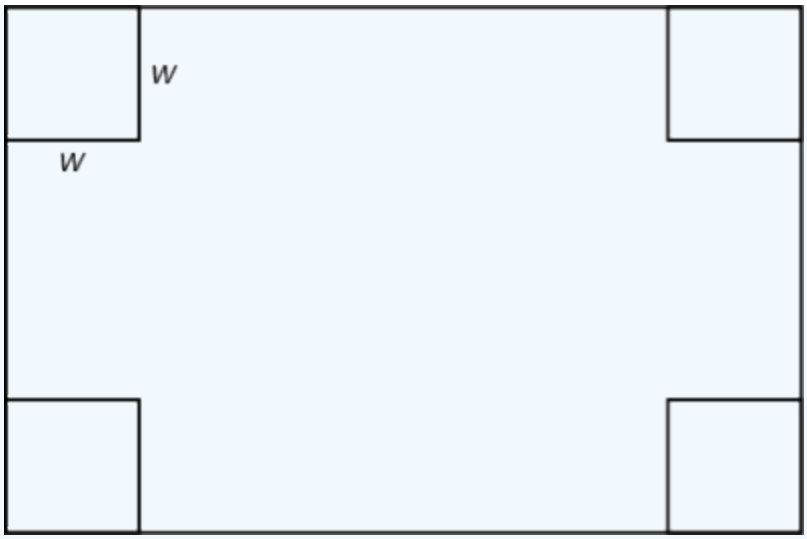


Figure 5.3.23: Diagram of a rectangle with four squares at the corners.

Notice that after a square is cut out from each end, it leaves $a(14-2w)$ cm by $(20-2w)$ cm rectangle for the base of the box, and the box will be w cm tall. This gives the volume

$$\begin{aligned} V(w) &= (20-2w)(14-2w)w \\ &= 280w - 68w^2 + 4w^3 \end{aligned}$$

Notice, since the factors are $20–2w$, $14–2w$, and w, the three zeros are $10,\ 7$, and 0, respectively. Because a height of 0 cm is not reasonable, we consider the only the zeros 10 and 7. The shortest side is 14 and we are cutting off two squares, so values w may take on are greater than zero or less than 7. This means we will restrict the domain of this function to \(0

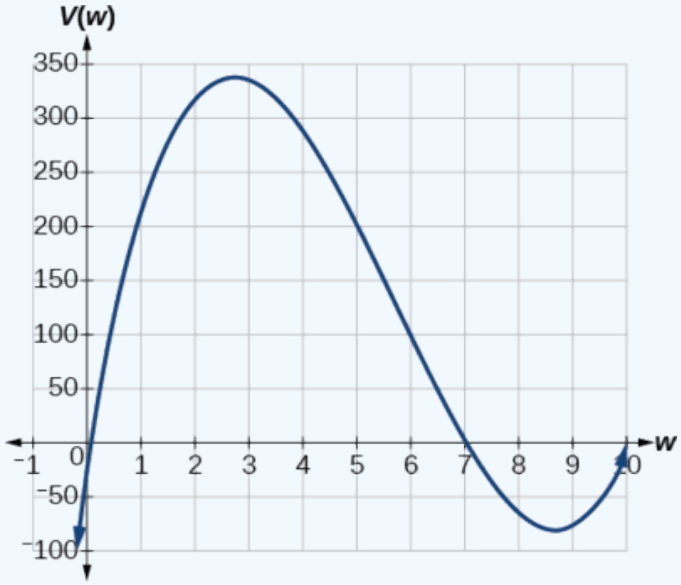


Figure 5.3.24: Graph of $V(w) = (20-2w)(14-2w)w$

From this graph, we turn our focus to only the portion on the reasonable domain, $[0, 7]$. We can estimate the maximum value to be around 340 cubic cm, which occurs when the squares are about 2.75 cm on each side. To improve this estimate, we could use advanced features of our technology, if available, or simply change our window to zoom in on our graph to produce Figure 5.3.25.

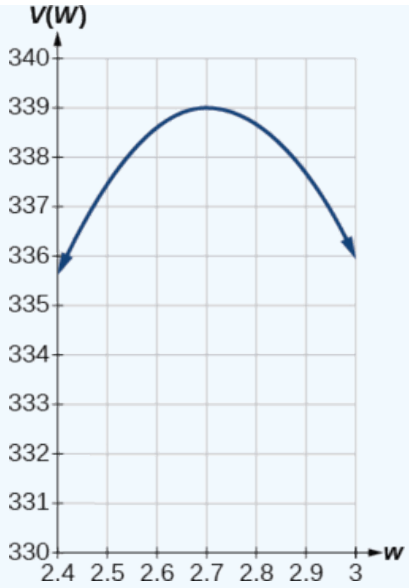


Figure 5.3.25: Graph of $V(w) = (20 - 2w)(14 - 2w)w$.

From this zoomed-in view, we can refine our estimate for the maximum volume to about 339 cubic cm, when the squares measure approximately 2.7 cm on each side.

Exercise 5.3.6

Use technology to find the maximum and minimum values on the interval $[-1, 4]$ of the function $f(x) = -0.2(x - 2)^3(x + 1)^2(x - 4)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Concepts

- Polynomial functions of degree 2 or more are smooth, continuous functions.
- To find the zeros of a polynomial function, if it can be factored, factor the function and set each factor equal to zero.
- Another way to find the x-intercepts of a polynomial function is to graph the function and identify the points at which the graph crosses the x-axis.
- The multiplicity of a zero determines how the graph behaves at the x-intercepts.
- The graph of a polynomial will cross the horizontal axis at a zero with odd multiplicity.
- The graph of a polynomial will touch the horizontal axis at a zero with even multiplicity.
- The end behavior of a polynomial function depends on the leading term.
- The graph of a polynomial function changes direction at its turning points.
- A polynomial function of degree n has at most $n - 1$ turning points.
- To graph polynomial functions, find the zeros and their multiplicities, determine the end behavior, and ensure that the final graph has at most $n - 1$ turning points.
- Graphing a polynomial function helps to estimate local and global extremas.
- The Intermediate Value Theorem tells us that if $f(a)$ and $f(b)$ have opposite signs, then there exists at least one value c between a and b for which $f(c) = 0$.

Glossary

global maximum
highest turning point on a graph; $f(a)$ where $f(a) \geq f(x)$ for all x.

global minimum

lowest turning point on a graph; $f(a)$ where $f(a) \leq f(x)$ for all x.

Intermediate Value Theorem
for two numbers a and b in the domain of f, if \(a

multiplicity
the number of times a given factor appears in the factored form of the equation of a polynomial; if a polynomial contains a factor of the form $(x-h)^p$, $x=h$ is a zero of multiplicity p.

Answers

Exercise $5.3.1$

- y-intercept $(0,0)$;
- x-intercepts $(0,0)$, $(-5,0)$, $(2,0)$, and $(3,0)$

Exercise $5.3.2$

The graph has a zero of –5 with multiplicity 3, a zero of –1 with multiplicity 2, and a zero of 3 with even multiplicity.

Exercise $5.3.3$

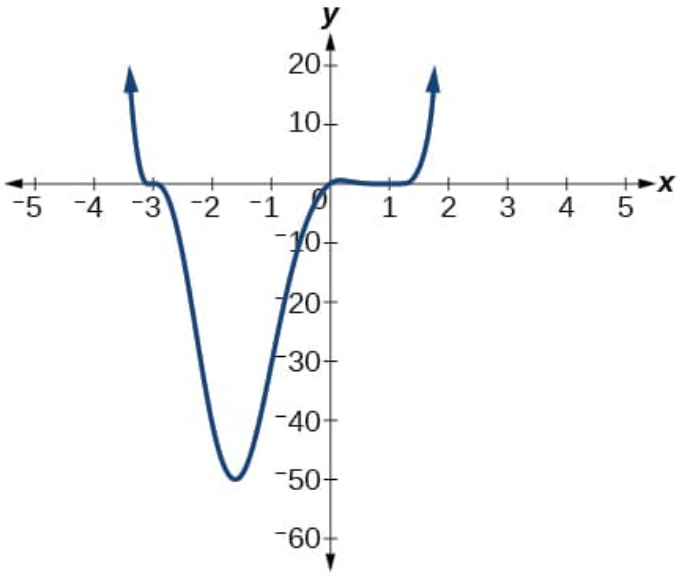


Figure $5.3.17$: Graph of $f(x)=\frac{1}{4}x(x-1)^4(x+3)^3$

Exercise $5.3.4$

Because f is a polynomial function and since $f(1)$ is negative and $f(2)$ is positive, there is at least one real zero between $x=1$ and $x=2$.

Exercise $5.3.5$

$f(x)=-\frac{1}{8}(x-2)^3(x+1)^2(x-4)$

Exercise $5.3.6$

The minimum occurs at approximately the point $(0,-6.5)$,
and the maximum occurs at approximately the point $(3.5,7)$.

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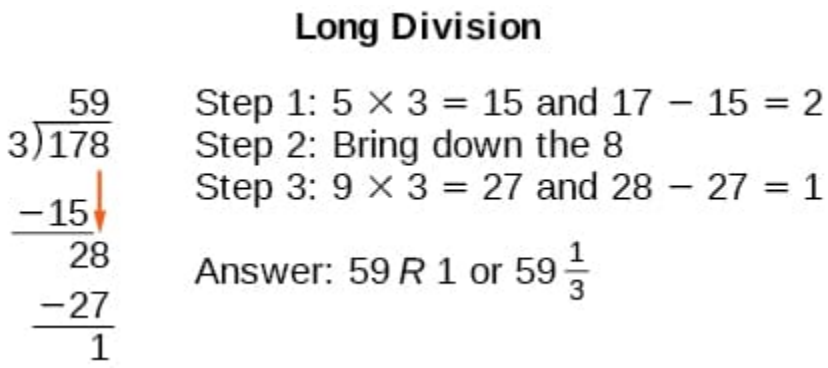
5.4: Dividing Polynomials

Learning Objectives

- Use long division to divide polynomials.
- Use synthetic division to divide polynomials.

Using Long Division to Divide Polynomials

We are familiar with the **long division** algorithm for ordinary arithmetic. We begin by dividing into the digits of the dividend that have the greatest place value. We divide, multiply, subtract, include the digit in the next place value position, and repeat. For example, let's divide 178 by 3 using long division.



Another way to look at the solution is as a sum of parts. This should look familiar, since it is the same method used to check division in elementary arithmetic.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{dividend} &= (\text{divisor}\cdot\text{quotient}) + \text{remainder} \\ 178 &= (3\cdot 59) + 1 \\ &= 177 + 1 \\ &= 178 \end{aligned}$$

We call this the **Division Algorithm** and will discuss it more formally after looking at an example.

Division of polynomials that contain more than one term has similarities to long division of whole numbers. We can write a polynomial dividend as the product of the divisor and the quotient added to the remainder. The terms of the polynomial division correspond to the digits (and place values) of the whole number division. This method allows us to divide two polynomials. For example, if we were to divide $2x^3 - 3x^2 + 4x + 5$ by $x + 2$ using the long division algorithm, it would look like this:

$$x+2\overline{)2x^3-3x^2+4x+5}$$ Set up the division problem.

$$\begin{array}{r} 2x^2 \\ x+2\overline{)2x^3-3x^2+4x+5} \end{array}$$ $2x^3$ divided by x is $2x^2$.

$$\begin{array}{r} 2x^2 \\ x+2\overline{)2x^3-3x^2+4x+5} \\ \underline{-(2x^3+4x^2)} \\ -7x^2+4x \end{array}$$ Multiply $x+2$ by $2x^2$ and subtract. Bring down the next term.

$$\begin{array}{r} 2x^2-7x \\ x+2\overline{)2x^3-3x^2+4x+5} \\ \underline{-(2x^3+4x^2)} \\ -7x^2+4x \\ \underline{-(-7x^2-14x)} \\ 18x+5 \end{array}$$ $-7x^2$ divided by x is $-7x$. Multiply $x+2$ by $-7x$. Subtract and bring down the next term.

$$\begin{array}{r} 2x^2-7x+18 \\ x+2\overline{)2x^3-3x^2+4x+5} \\ \underline{-(2x^3+4x^2)} \\ -7x^2+4x \\ \underline{-(-7x^2-14x)} \\ 18x+5 \\ \underline{-(18x+36)} \\ -31 \end{array}$$ $18x$ divided by x is 18. Multiply $x+2$ by 18. Subtract.

We have found

$$\frac{2x^3-3x^2+4x+5}{x+2}=2x^2-7x+18-\frac{31}{x+2}$$

or

$$2x^3-3x^2+4x+5=(x+2)(2x^2-7x+18)-31$$

We can identify the dividend, the **divisor**, the **quotient**, and the **remainder**.

Writing the result in this manner illustrates the Division Algorithm.

The Division Algorithm

The Division Algorithm states that, given a polynomial dividend $f(x)$ and a non-zero polynomial divisor $d(x)$ where the degree of $d(x)$ is less than or equal to the degree of $f(x)$, there exist unique polynomials $q(x)$ and $r(x)$ such that

$$f(x)=d(x)q(x)+r(x) \tag{5.4.1}$$

$q(x)$ is the quotient and $r(x)$ is the remainder. The remainder is either equal to zero or has degree strictly less than $d(x)$.

If $r(x)=0$, then $d(x)$ divides evenly into $f(x)$. This means that, in this case, both $d(x)$ and $q(x)$ are factors of $f(x)$.

Given a polynomial and a binomial, use long division to divide the polynomial by the binomial

1. Set up the division problem.
2. Determine the first term of the quotient by dividing the leading term of the dividend by the leading term of the divisor.
3. Multiply the answer by the divisor and write it below the like terms of the dividend.

4. Subtract the bottom **binomial** from the top binomial.
5. Bring down the next term of the dividend.
6. Repeat steps 2–5 until reaching the last term of the dividend.
7. If the remainder is non-zero, express as a fraction using the divisor as the denominator.

Example 5.4.1: Using Long Division to Divide a Second-Degree Polynomial

Divide $5x^2 + 3x - 2$ by $x + 1$.

Solution

$$
\begin{array}{rl}
x+1\,\overline{)\,5x^2+3x-2} & \text{Set up division problem.} \\
\quad 5x & \\
x+1\,\overline{)\,5x^2+3x-2} & 5x^2 \text{ divided by } x \text{ is } 5x. \\
\quad 5x & \\
x+1\,\overline{)\,5x^2+3x-2} & \text{Multiply } x+1 \text{ by } 5x. \\
\quad \underline{-(5x^2+5x)} & \text{Subtract.} \\
\quad -2x-2 & \\
\quad 5x-2 & \text{Bring down the next term.} \\
x+1\,\overline{)\,5x^2+3x-2} & -2x \text{ divided by } x \text{ is } -2. \\
\quad \underline{-(5x^2+5x)} & \\
\quad -2x-2 & \\
\quad \underline{-(-2x-2)} & \text{Multiply } x+1 \text{ by } -2. \\
\quad 0 & \text{Subtract.}
\end{array}
$$

The quotient is $5x - 2$. The remainder is 0. We write the result as

$$\frac{5x^2 + 3x - 2}{x + 1} = 5x - 2$$

or

$$5x^2 + 3x - 2 = (x + 1)(5x - 2)$$

Analysis

This division problem had a remainder of 0. This tells us that the dividend is divided evenly by the divisor, and that the divisor is a factor of the dividend.

Example 5.4.2: Using Long Division to Divide a Third-Degree Polynomial

Divide $6x^3 + 11x^2 - 31x + 15$ by $3x - 2$.

Solution

$$
\begin{array}{rl}
2x^2+\ 5x-\ 7 & 6x^3 \text{ divided by } 3x \text{ is } 2x^2. \\
3x-2\overline{)6x^3+11x^2-31x+15} & \\
\underline{-(6x^3-4x^2)} & \text{Multiply } 3x-2 \text{ by } 2x^2. \\
15x^2-31x & \text{Subtract. Bring down next term. } 15x^2 \text{ divided by } 3x \text{ is } 5x. \\
\underline{-(15x^2-10x)} & \text{Multiply } 3x-2 \text{ by } 5x. \\
-21x+15 & \text{Subtract. Bring down next term. } -21x \text{ divided by } 3x \text{ is } -7. \\
\underline{-(-21x+14)} & \text{Multiply } 3x-2 \text{ by } -7. \\
1 & \text{Subtract. The remainder is } 1.
\end{array}
$$

There is a remainder of 1. We can express the result as:

$$\frac{6x^3+11x^2-31x+15}{3x-2}=2x^2+5x-7+\frac{1}{3x-2}$$

Analysis

We can check our work by using the Division Algorithm to rewrite the solution. Then multiply.

$$(3x-2)(2x^2+5x-7)+1=6x^3+11x^2-31x+15$$

Notice, as we write our result,

- the dividend is $6x^3+11x^2-31x+15$
- the divisor is $3x-2$
- the quotient is $2x^2+5x-7$
- the remainder is 1

Try It! 5.4.2

Divide $16x^3-12x^2+20x-3$ by $4x+5$.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Using Synthetic Division to Divide Polynomials

As we've seen, long division of polynomials can involve many steps and be quite cumbersome. **Synthetic division** is a shorthand method of dividing polynomials for the special case of dividing by a linear factor whose leading coefficient is 1.

To illustrate the process, recall the example at the beginning of the section.

Divide $2x^3-3x^2+4x+5$ by $x+2$ using the long division algorithm.

The final form of the process looked like this:

$$
\begin{array}{r}
2x^2-7x+18 \\
x+2\overline{)2x^3-3x^2+4x+5} \\
\underline{-(2x^3+4x^2)} \\
-7x^2+4x \\
\underline{-(-7x^2-14x)} \\
18x+\ 5 \\
\underline{-(18x+36)} \\
-31
\end{array}
$$

There is a lot of repetition in the table. If we don't write the variables but, instead, line up their coefficients in columns under the division sign and also eliminate the partial products, we already have a simpler version of the entire problem.

$$
\begin{array}{r|rrrr}
2 & 2 & -3 & 4 & 5 \\
 & -2 & -4 & & \\
\hline
 & & -7 & 14 & \\
 & & & 18 & -36 \\
\hline
 & & & & -31
\end{array}
$$

Synthetic division carries this simplification even a few more steps. Collapse the table by moving each of the rows up to fill any vacant spots. Also, instead of dividing by 2, as we would in division of whole numbers, then multiplying and subtracting the middle product, we change the sign of the "divisor" to –2, multiply and add. The process starts by bringing down the leading coefficient.

$$
\begin{array}{r|rrrr}
-2 & 2 & -3 & 4 & 5 \\
 & & -4 & 14 & -36 \\
\hline
 & 2 & -7 & 18 & -31
\end{array}
$$

We then multiply it by the "divisor" and add, repeating this process column by column, until there are no entries left. The bottom row represents the coefficients of the quotient; the last entry of the bottom row is the remainder. In this case, the quotient is $2x^2–7x+18$ and the remainder is $–31$. The process will be made more clear in Example $5.4.3$.

Synthetic Division

Synthetic division is a shortcut that can be used when the divisor is a binomial in the form $x-k$. In *synthetic division*, only the coefficients are used in the division process.

Given two polynomials, use synthetic division to divide

1. Write k for the divisor.
2. Write the coefficients of the dividend.
3. Bring the lead coefficient down.
4. Multiply the lead coefficient by k. Write the product in the next column.
5. Add the terms of the second column.
6. Multiply the result by k. Write the product in the next column.
7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 for the remaining columns.
8. Use the bottom numbers to write the quotient. The number in the last column is the remainder and has degree 0, the next number from the right has degree 1, the next number from the right has degree 2, and so on.

Example $5.4.3$: Using Synthetic Division to Divide a Second-Degree Polynomial

Use synthetic division to divide $5x^2-3x-36$ by $x-3$.

Solution

Begin by setting up the synthetic division. Write k and the coefficients.

$$
\begin{array}{r|rrr}
3 & 5 & -3 & -36 \\
\hline
 & & &
\end{array}
$$

Bring down the lead coefficient. Multiply the lead coefficient by k.

$$\begin{array}{r|rrr} 3 & 5 & -3 & -36 \\ & & 15 & \\ \hline & 5 & & \end{array}$$

Continue by adding the numbers in the second column. Multiply the resulting number by k.Write the result in the next column. Then add the numbers in the third column.

$$\begin{array}{r|rrr} 3 & 5 & -3 & -36 \\ & & 15 & 36 \\ \hline & 5 & 12 & 0 \end{array}$$

The result is $5x + 12$. The remainder is 0. So $x - 3$ is a factor of the original polynomial.

Analysis

Just as with long division, we can check our work by multiplying the quotient by the divisor and adding the remainder.

$$(x - 3)(5x + 12) + 0 = 5x^2 - 3x - 36$$

Example 5.4.4: Using Synthetic Division to Divide a Third-Degree Polynomial

Use synthetic division to divide $4x^3 + 10x^2 - 6x - 20$ by $x + 2$.

Solution

The binomial divisor is $x + 2$ so $k = -2$. Add each column, multiply the result by –2, and repeat until the last column is reached.

$$\begin{array}{r|rrrr} -2 & 4 & 10 & -6 & -20 \\ & & -8 & -4 & 20 \\ \hline & 4 & 2 & -10 & 0 \end{array}$$

The result is $4x^2 + 2x - 10$.

The remainder is 0. Thus, $x + 2$ is a factor of $4x^3 + 10x^2 - 6x - 20$.

Analysis

The graph of the polynomial function $f(x) = 4x^3 + 10x^2 - 6x - 20$ in Figure 5.4.2 shows a zero at $x = k = -2$. This confirms that $x + 2$ is a factor of $4x^3 + 10x^2 - 6x - 20$.

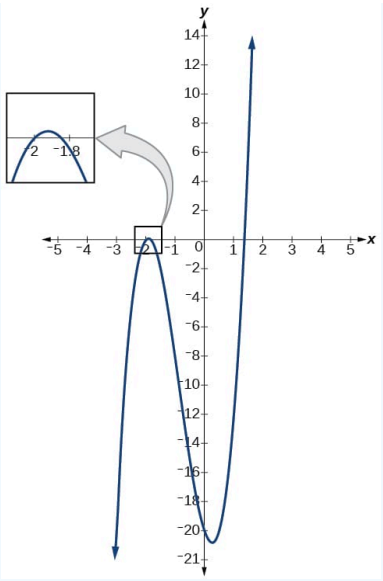


Figure 5.4.2

Example 5.4.5: Using Synthetic Division to Divide a Fourth-Degree Polynomial

Use synthetic division to divide $-9x^4 + 10x^3 + 7x^2 - 6$ by $x - 1$.

Solution

Notice there is no x-term. We will use a zero as the coefficient for that term.

$$\begin{array}{r|rrrrr} 1 & -9 & 10 & 7 & 0 & -6 \\ & & -9 & 1 & 8 & 8 \\ \hline & -9 & 1 & 8 & 8 & 2 \end{array}$$

The result is $-9x^3 + x^2 + 8x + 8 + \dfrac{2}{x-1}$.

Try It! 5.4.3

Use synthetic division to divide $3x^4 + 18x^3 - 3x + 40$ by $x + 7$.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Key Equations

Division Algorithm $f(x) = d(x)q(x) + r(x)$ where $q(x) \neq 0$

Key Concepts

- Polynomial long division can be used to divide a polynomial by any polynomial with equal or lower degree.
- The Division Algorithm tells us that a polynomial dividend can be written as the product of the divisor and the quotient added to the remainder.
- Synthetic division is a shortcut that can be used to divide a polynomial by a binomial in the form $x - k$.
- Polynomial division can be used to solve application problems, including area and volume.

Glossary

Division Algorithm

given a polynomial dividend $f(x)$ and a non-zero polynomial divisor $d(x)$ where the degree of $d(x)$ is less than or equal to the degree of $f(x)$, there exist unique polynomials $q(x)$ and $r(x)$ such that $f(x) = d(x)q(x) + r(x)$ where $q(x)$ is the quotient and $r(x)$ is the remainder. The remainder is either equal to zero or has degree strictly less than $d(x)$.

synthetic division

a shortcut method that can be used to divide a polynomial by a binomial of the form $x - k$

Answers

Try It! 5.4.2

$$4x^2 - 8x + 15 - \frac{78}{4x + 5}$$

Try It! 5.4.3

$$3x^3 - 3x^2 + 21x - 150 + \frac{1090}{x + 7}$$

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5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions

Learning Objectives

- Evaluate a polynomial using the Remainder Theorem.
- Use the Factor Theorem to solve a polynomial equation.
- Use the Rational Zero Theorem to find rational zeros.
- Find zeros of a polynomial function.
- Use the Linear Factorization Theorem to find polynomials with given zeros.
- Use Descartes' Rule of Signs.

Evaluating a Polynomial Using the Remainder Theorem

In the last section, we learned how to divide polynomials. We can now use polynomial division to evaluate polynomials using the **Remainder Theorem**. If the polynomial is divided by x–c, the remainder may be found quickly by evaluating the polynomial function at $x = c$, that is, $f(c)$. Let's walk through the proof of the theorem.

Recall that the Division Algorithm states that, given a polynomial dividend $f(x)$ and a non-zero polynomial divisor $d(x)$ where the degree of $d(x)$ is less than or equal to the degree of $f(x)$,there exist unique polynomials $q(x)$ and $r(x)$ such that

$$f(x) = d(x)q(x) + r(x)$$

If the divisor, $d(x)$, is $x - c$, this takes the form

$$f(x) = (x - c)q(x) + r$$

Since the divisor $x - c$ is linear, the remainder will be a constant, r.

And, if we evaluate this for $x = k$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} f(c) &= (c - c)q(c) + r \\ &= 0 \cdot q(k) + r \\ &= r \end{aligned}$$

In other words, $f(c)$ is the remainder obtained by dividing $f(x)$by $x - c$.

Theorem 5.5.1: The Remainder Theorem

If a polynomial $f(x)$ is divided by $x - c$, then the remainder is the value $f(c)$.

How to: Given a polynomial function f, evaluate $f(x)$ at $x = c$ using the Remainder Theorem.

Given a polynomial function f, evaluate $f(x)$ at $x = c$ using the Remainder Theorem.

1. Use synthetic division to divide the polynomial by $x - c$.
2. The remainder is the value $f(c)$.

Example 5.5.1: Using the Remainder Theorem to Evaluate a Polynomial

Use the Remainder Theorem to evaluate $f(x) = 6x^4 - x^3 - 15x^2 + 2x - 7$ at $x = 2$.

Solution

To find the remainder using the Remainder Theorem, use synthetic division to divide the polynomial by $x-2$.

$$\begin{array}{r|rrrrr} 2 & 6 & -1 & -15 & 2 & -7 \\ & & 12 & 22 & 14 & 32 \\ \hline & 6 & 11 & 7 & 16 & 25 \end{array} \tag{5.5.1}$$

The remainder is 25. Therefore, $f(2)=25$.

Analysis

We can check our answer by evaluating $f(2)$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= 6x^4 - x^3 - 15x^2 + 2x - 7 \\ f(2) &= 6(2)^4 - (2)^3 - 15(2)^2 + 2(2) - 7 \\ &= 25 \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 5.5.1

se the Remainder Theorem to evaluate $f(x)=2x^5-3x^4-9x^3+8x^2+2$ at $x=-3$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Factor Theorem to Solve a Polynomial Equation

The **Factor Theorem** is another theorem that helps us analyze polynomial equations. It tells us how the zeros of a polynomial are related to the factors. Recall that the Division Algorithm.

$$f(x)=(x-c)q(x)+r \tag{5.5.2}$$

If $x=c$ is a zero, then the remainder r is $f(c)=0$ and $f(x)=(x-c)q(x)+0$ or $f(x)=(x-c)q(x)$.

Notice, written in this form, $x-c$ is a factor of $f(x)$. We can conclude if $x=c$ is a zero of $f(x)$, then $x-c$ is a factor of $f(x)$.

Similarly, if $x-c$ is a factor of $f(x)$, then the remainder of the Division Algorithm $f(x)=(x-c)q(x)+r$ is 0. This tells us that c is a zero.

This pair of implications is the Factor Theorem. As we will soon see, a polynomial of degree n in the complex number system will have n zeros. We can use the Factor Theorem to completely factor a polynomial into the product of n factors. Once the polynomial has been completely factored, we can easily determine the zeros of the polynomial.

Theorem 5.5.2 Factor Theorem

According to the Factor Theorem, c is a zero of $f(x)$ if and only if $(x-c)$ is a factor of $f(x)$.

How to: Given a factor and a third-degree polynomial, use the Factor Theorem to factor the polynomial

1. Use synthetic division to divide the polynomial by $(x-k)$.
2. Confirm that the remainder is 0.
3. Write the polynomial as the product of $(x-k)$ and the quadratic quotient.
4. If possible, factor the quadratic.

5. Write the polynomial as the product of factors.

Example 5.5.2: Using the Factor Theorem to Solve a Polynomial Equation

Show that $(x+2)$ is a factor of x^3-6x^2-x+30. Find the remaining factors. Use the factors to determine the zeros of the **polynomial**.

Solution

We can use synthetic division to show that $(x+2)$ is a factor of the polynomial.

$$\begin{array}{r|cccc} -2 & 1 & -6 & -1 & 30 \\ & & -2 & 16 & -30 \\ \hline & 1 & -8 & 15 & 0 \end{array} \tag{5.5.3}$$

The remainder is zero, so $(x+2)$ is a factor of the polynomial. We can use the Division Algorithm to write the polynomial as the product of the divisor and the quotient:

$$(x+2)(x^2-8x+15) \tag{5.5.4}$$

We can factor the quadratic factor to write the polynomial as

$$(x+2)(x-3)(x-5) \tag{5.5.5}$$

By the Factor Theorem, the zeros of x^3-6x^2-x+30 are –2, 3, and 5.

Exercise 5.5.2

Use the Factor Theorem to find the zeros of $f(x)=x^3+4x^2-4x-16$ given that $(x-2)$ is a factor of the polynomial.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Rational Zero Theorem to Find Rational Zeros

Another use for the Remainder Theorem is to test whether a rational number is a zero for a given polynomial. But first we need a pool of rational numbers to test. The **Rational Zero Theorem** helps us to narrow down the number of possible rational zeros using the ratio of the factors of the constant term and factors of the leading **coefficient** of the polynomial

Consider a quadratic function with two zeros, $x=\frac{2}{5}$ and $x=\frac{3}{4}$. By the Factor Theorem, these zeros have factors associated with them. Let us set each factor equal to 0, and then construct the original quadratic function absent its stretching factor.

$x-\frac{2}{5}=0$ or $x-\frac{3}{4}=0$	Set each factor equal to 0.
$5x-2=0$ or $4x-3=0$	Multiply both sides of the equation to eliminate fractions.
$f(x)=(5x-2)(4x-3)$	Create the quadratic function, multiplying the factors.
$f(x)=20x^2-23x+6$	Expand the polynomial.
$f(x)=(5\cdot 4)x^2-23x+(2\cdot 3)$	

Notice that two of the factors of the constant term, 6, are the two numerators from the original rational roots: 2 and 3. Similarly, two of the factors from the leading coefficient, 20, are the two denominators from the original rational roots: 5 and 4.

We can infer that the numerators of the rational roots will always be factors of the constant term and the denominators will be factors of the leading coefficient. This is the essence of the Rational Zero Theorem; it is a means to give us a pool of possible

rational zeros.

Theorem 5.5.3 The Rational Zeros Theorem

The Rational Zero Theorem states that, if the polynomial $f(x) = a_n x^n + a_{n-1}x^{n-1} + ... + a_1 x + a_0$ has integer coefficients, then every rational zero of $f(x)$ has the form $\frac{p}{q}$ where p is a factor of the constant term a_0 and q is a factor of the leading coefficient a_n.

When the leading coefficient is 1, the possible rational zeros are the factors of the constant term.

How to: Given a polynomial function $f(x)$, use the Rational Zero Theorem to find rational zeros.

1. Determine all factors of the constant term and all factors of the leading coefficient.
2. Determine all possible values of $\frac{p}{q}$, where p is a factor of the constant term and q is a factor of the leading coefficient. Be sure to include both positive and negative candidates.
3. Determine which possible zeros are actual zeros by evaluating each case of $f(\frac{p}{q})$.

Example 5.5.3: Listing All Possible Rational Zeros

List all possible rational zeros of $f(x) = 2x^4 - 5x^3 + x^2 - 4$.

Solution

The only possible rational zeros of $f(x)$ are the quotients of the factors of the last term, −4, and the factors of the leading coefficient, 2.

The constant term is −4; the factors of −4 are $p = \pm 1, \pm 2, \pm 4$.

The leading coefficient is 2; the factors of 2 are $q = \pm 1, \pm 2$.

If any of the four real zeros are rational zeros, then they will be of one of the following factors of −4 divided by one of the factors of 2.

$$\frac{p}{q} = \pm\frac{1}{1}, \pm\frac{1}{2} \qquad \frac{p}{q} = \pm\frac{2}{1}, \pm\frac{2}{2} \qquad \frac{p}{q} = \pm\frac{4}{1}, \pm\frac{4}{2}$$

Note that $\frac{2}{2} = 1$ and $\frac{4}{2} = 2$, which have already been listed. So we can shorten our list.

$$\frac{p}{q} = \frac{\text{Factors of the last}}{\text{Factors of the first}} = \pm 1, \pm 2, \pm 4, \pm\frac{1}{2}$$

Example 5.5.4: Using the Rational Zero Theorem to Find Rational Zeros

Use the Rational Zero Theorem to find the rational zeros of $f(x) = 2x^3 + x^2 - 4x + 1$.

Solution

The Rational Zero Theorem tells us that if $\frac{p}{q}$ is a zero of $f(x)$, then p is a factor of 1 and q is a factor of 2.

$$\frac{p}{q} = \frac{factor\ of\ constant\ term}{factor\ of\ leading\ coefficient}$$

$$= \frac{factor\ of\ 1}{factor\ of\ 2}$$

The factors of 1 are ±1 and the factors of 2 are ±1 and ±2. The possible values for $\frac{p}{q}$ are ±1 and $\pm\frac{1}{2}$. These are the possible rational zeros for the function. We can determine which of the possible zeros are actual zeros by substituting these values for x in $f(x)$.

$$f(-1) = 2(-1)^3 + (-1)^2 - 4(-1) + 1 = 4 \tag{5.5.6}$$

$$f(1) = 1(1)^3 + (1)^2 - 4(1) + 1 = 0 \tag{5.5.7}$$

$$f(-\frac{1}{2}) = 2(-\frac{1}{2})^3 + (-\frac{1}{2})^2 - 4(-\frac{1}{2}) + 1 = 3 \tag{5.5.8}$$

$$f(\frac{1}{2}) = 2(\frac{1}{2})^3 + (\frac{1}{2})^2 - 4(\frac{1}{2}) + 1 = -\frac{1}{2} \tag{5.5.9}$$

Of those, -1,$-\frac{1}{2}$, and $\frac{1}{2}$ are not zeros of $f(x)$. 1 is the only rational zero of $f(x)$.

Exercise 5.5.3

Use the Rational Zero Theorem to find the rational zeros of $f(x) = x^3 - 5x^2 + 2x + 1$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding the Zeros of Polynomial Functions

The Rational Zero Theorem helps us to narrow down the list of possible rational zeros for a polynomial function. Once we have done this, we can use **synthetic division** repeatedly to determine all of the **zeros** of a polynomial function.

How to: Given a polynomial function f, use synthetic division to find its zeros.

1. Use the Rational Zero Theorem to list all possible rational zeros of the function.
2. Use synthetic division to evaluate a given possible zero by synthetically dividing the candidate into the polynomial. If the remainder is 0, the candidate is a zero. If the remainder is not zero, discard the candidate.
3. Repeat step two using the quotient found with synthetic division. If possible, continue until the quotient is a quadratic.
4. Find the zeros of the quadratic function. Two possible methods for solving quadratics are factoring and using the quadratic formula.

Example 5.5.5: Finding the Zeros of a Polynomial Function with Repeated Real Zeros

Find the zeros of $f(x) = 4x^3 - 3x - 1$.

Solution

The Rational Zero Theorem tells us that if $\frac{p}{q}$ is a zero of $f(x)$, then p is a factor of –1 and q is a factor of 4.

$$\frac{p}{q} = \frac{factor\ of\ constant\ term}{factor\ of\ leading\ coefficient}$$
$$= \frac{factor\ of\ -1}{factor\ of\ 4}$$

The factors of –1 are ±1 and the factors of 4 are ±1,±2, and ±4. The possible values for $\frac{p}{q}$ are $\pm 1,\pm\frac{1}{2}$, and $\pm\frac{1}{4}$. These are the possible rational zeros for the function. We will use synthetic division to evaluate each possible zero until we find one that gives a remainder of 0. Let's begin with 1.

Dividing by $(x-1)$ gives a remainder of 0, so 1 is a zero of the function. The polynomial can be written as

$$(x-1)(4x^2+4x+1)$$

The quadratic is a perfect square. $f(x)$ can be written as

$$(x-1)(2x+1)^2$$

We already know that 1 is a zero. The other zero will have a multiplicity of 2 because the factor is squared. To find the other zero, we can set the factor equal to 0.

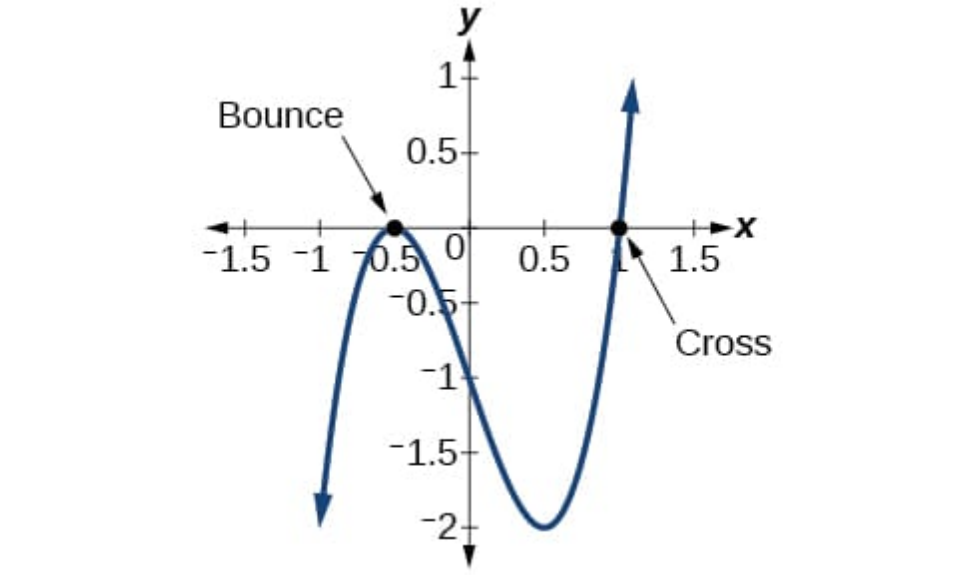
$$2x+1=0$$

$$x=-\frac{1}{2}$$

The zeros of the function are 1 and $-\frac{1}{2}$ with multiplicity 2.

Analysis

Look at the graph of the function f in Figure $5.5.1$. Notice, at $x=-0.5$, the graph bounces off the x-axis, indicating the even multiplicity (2,4,6...) for the zero –0.5. At $x=1$, the graph crosses the x-axis, indicating the odd multiplicity (1,3,5...) for the zero $x=1$.



Figure

Using the Fundamental Theorem of Algebra

Now that we can find rational zeros for a polynomial function, we will look at a theorem that discusses the number of complex zeros of a polynomial function. The **Fundamental Theorem of Algebra** tells us that every polynomial function has at least one complex zero. This theorem forms the foundation for solving polynomial equations.

Suppose f is a polynomial function of degree four, and $f(x)=0$. The Fundamental Theorem of Algebra states that there is at least one complex solution, call it c_1. By the Factor Theorem, we can write $f(x)$ as a product of $x-c_1$ and a polynomial quotient. Since $x-c_1$ is linear, the polynomial quotient will be of degree three. Now we apply the Fundamental Theorem of Algebra to the third-degree polynomial quotient. It will have at least one complex zero, call it c_2. So we can write the polynomial quotient as a product of $x-c_2$ and a new polynomial quotient of degree two. Continue to apply the Fundamental Theorem of Algebra until all of the zeros are found. There will be four of them and each one will yield a factor of $f(x)$.

Theorem 5.5.4 The Fundamental Theorem of Algebra

The *Fundamental Theorem of Algebra* states that, if $f(x)$ is a polynomial of degree $n > 0$, then $f(x)$ has at least one complex zero.

We can use this theorem to argue that, if $f(x)$ is a polynomial of degree $n > 0$, and a is a non-zero real number, then $f(x)$ has exactly n linear factors

$$f(x) = a(x - c_1)(x - c_2)...(x - c_n) \tag{5.5.10}$$

where $c_1, c_2,...,c_n$ are complex numbers. Therefore, $f(x)$ has n roots if we allow for multiplicities.

Q&A: Does every polynomial have at least one imaginary zero?

No. Real numbers are a subset of complex numbers, but not the other way around. A complex number is not necessarily imaginary. Real numbers are also complex numbers.

Example 5.5.6: Finding the Zeros of a Polynomial Function with Complex Zeros

Find the zeros of $f(x) = 3x^3 + 9x^2 + x + 3$.

Solution

The Rational Zero Theorem tells us that if $\frac{p}{q}$ is a zero of $f(x)$, then p is a factor of 3 and q is a factor of 3.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{p}{q} &= \frac{factor\ of\ constant\ term}{factor\ of\ leading\ coefficient} \\ &= \frac{factor\ of\ 3}{factor\ of\ 3}\end{aligned}$$

The factors of 3 are ±1 and ±3. The possible values for $\frac{p}{q}$, and therefore the possible rational zeros for the function, are ±3,±1, and $\pm\frac{1}{3}$. We will use synthetic division to evaluate each possible zero until we find one that gives a remainder of 0. Let's begin with –3.

Dividing by $(x + 3)$ gives a remainder of 0, so –3 is a zero of the function. The polynomial can be written as

$$(x + 3)(3x^2 + 1)$$

We can then set the quadratic equal to 0 and solve to find the other zeros of the function.

$$\begin{aligned}3x^2 + 1 &= 0 \\ x^2 &= -\frac{1}{3} \\ x &= \pm\sqrt{\frac{-1}{3}} \\ &= \pm\frac{i}{\sqrt{3}} \\ &= \pm\frac{i\sqrt{3}}{3}\end{aligned}$$

The zeros of $f(x)$ are -3 and $\pm\frac{i\sqrt{3}}{3}$.

Analysis

Look at the graph of the function f in Figure $5.5.2$. Notice that, at $x = -3$, the graph crosses the x-axis, indicating an odd multiplicity (1) for the zero $x = -3$. Also note the presence of the two turning points. This means that, since there is a 3rd degree polynomial, we are looking at the maximum number of turning points. So, the end behavior of increasing without bound to the right and decreasing without bound to the left will continue. Thus, all the x-intercepts for the function are shown. So either the multiplicity of $x = -3$ is 1 and there are two complex solutions, which is what we found, or the multiplicity at $x = -3$ is three. Either way, our result is correct.

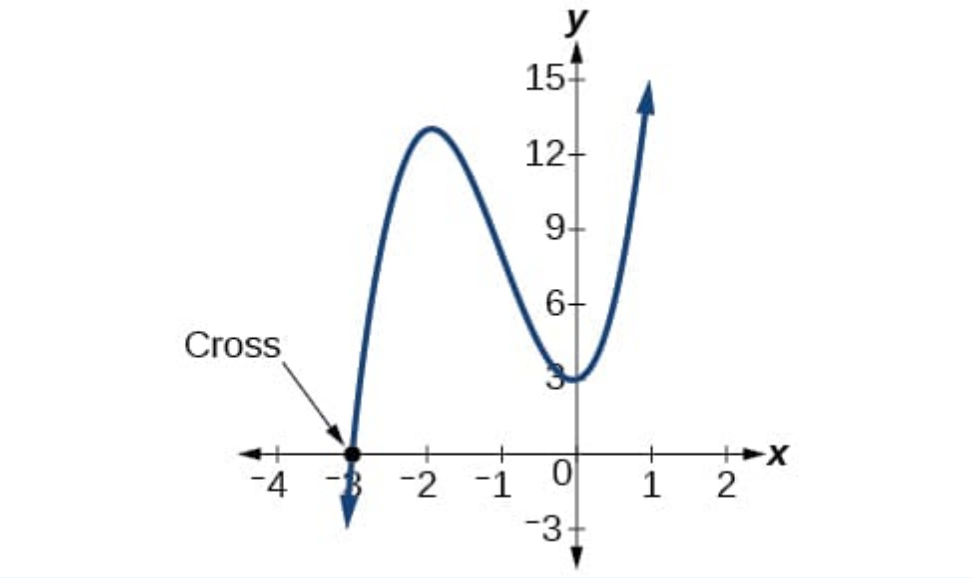


Figure $5.5.2$

Example $5.5.7$

Find the zeros of $f(x) = 2x^3 + 5x^2 - 11x + 4$.

Solution

The factors of 4 are ±1, ±2, and ±4 and the factors of 2 are ±1 and ±2. The possible values for $\frac{p}{q}$ are ±1, 2, 4 and $\pm\frac{1}{2}$.

Use synthetic division to find one rational zero. Let's start with $x = 1$

$$\begin{array}{c|cccc} 1 & 2 & 5 & -11 & 4 \\ & & 2 & 7 & -4 \\ \hline & 2 & 7 & -4 & 0 \end{array} \tag{5.5.11}$$

Since the remainder is zero, we have that $x = 1$ is a zero and $x - 1$ is a factor of $f(x)$

The quotient is $2x^2 + 7x - 4$

This can be factored as $(2x - 1)(x + 4)$

Setting this equal to zero gives us

$2x - 1 = 0$

hence,

$x = \frac{1}{2}$

And

$x + 4 = 0$

so,

$x = -4$

Therefore, the zeros are -4, $\frac{1}{2}$, and 1.

Using the Linear Factorization Theorem to Find Polynomials with Given Zeros

A vital implication of the **Fundamental Theorem of Algebra**, as we stated above, is that a polynomial function of degree n will have n zeros in the set of complex numbers, if we allow for multiplicities. This means that we can factor the polynomial function into n factors. The **Linear Factorization Theorem** tells us that a polynomial function will have the same number of factors as its degree, and that each factor will be in the form $(x - c)$, where c is a complex number.

Let f be a polynomial function with real coefficients, and suppose $a + bi$, $b \neq 0$, is a zero of $f(x)$. Then, by the Factor Theorem, $x - (a + bi)$ is a factor of $f(x)$. For f to have real coefficients, $x - (a - bi)$ must also be a factor of $f(x)$. This is true because any factor other than $x - (a - bi)$, when multiplied by $x - (a + bi)$, will leave imaginary components in the product. Only multiplication with conjugate pairs will eliminate the imaginary parts and result in real coefficients. In other words, if a polynomial function f with real coefficients has a complex zero $a + bi$, then the complex conjugate $a - bi$ must also be a zero of $f(x)$. This is called the **Complex Conjugate Theorem**.

Theorem 5.5.5 Complex Conjugate Zeros Theorem

According to the Linear Factorization Theorem, a polynomial function will have the same number of factors as its degree, and each factor will be in the form
$(x - c)$, where c is a complex number.

If the polynomial function f has real coefficients and a complex zero in the form $a + bi$, then the complex conjugate of the zero, $a - bi$, is also a zero.

How to: Given the zeros of a polynomial function f and a point $(c, f(c))$ on the graph of f, use the Linear Factorization Theorem to find the polynomial function.

1. Use the zeros to construct the linear factors of the polynomial.
2. Multiply the linear factors to expand the polynomial.
3. Substitute $(c, f(c))$ into the function to determine the leading coefficient.
4. Simplify.

Example 5.5.8: Using the Linear Factorization Theorem to Find a Polynomial with Given Zeros

Find a fourth degree polynomial with real coefficients that has zeros of -3, 2, i, such that $f(-2) = 100$.

Solution

Because $x = i$ is a zero, by the Complex Conjugate Theorem $x = -i$ is also a zero. The polynomial must have factors of $(x + 3), (x - 2), (x - i)$, and $(x + i)$. Since we are looking for a degree 4 polynomial, and now have four zeros, we have all four factors. Let's begin by multiplying these factors.

$$f(x) = a(x + 3)(x - 2)(x - i)(x + i) \tag{5.5.12}$$
$$f(x) = a(x^2 + x - 6)(x^2 + 1) \tag{5.5.13}$$
$$f(x) = a(x^4 + x^3 - 5x^2 + x - 6) \tag{5.5.14}$$

We need to find a to ensure $f(-2) = 100$. Substitute $x = -2$ and $f(-2) = 100$ into $f(x)$.

$$100 = a((-2)^4 + (-2)^3 - 5(-2)^2 + (-2) - 6) \tag{5.5.15}$$
$$100 = a(-20) \tag{5.5.16}$$
$$-5 = a \tag{5.5.17}$$

So the polynomial function is

$$f(x) = -5(x^4 + x^3 - 5x^2 + x - 6) \tag{5.5.18}$$

or

$$f(x) = -5x^4 - 5x^3 + 25x^2 - 5x + 30 \tag{5.5.19}$$

Analysis

We found that both i and $-i$ were zeros, but only one of these zeros needed to be given. If i is a zero of a polynomial with real coefficients, then $-i$ must also be a zero of the polynomial because $-i$ is the complex conjugate of i.

Q&A

If $2 + 3i$ were given as a zero of a polynomial with real coefficients, would $2 - 3i$ also need to be a zero?

Yes. When any complex number with an imaginary component is given as a zero of a polynomial with real coefficients, the conjugate must also be a zero of the polynomial.

Exercise 5.5.4

Find a third degree polynomial with real coefficients that has zeros of 5 and $-2i$ such that $f(1) = 10$.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Using Descartes' Rule of Signs

There is a straightforward way to determine the possible numbers of positive and negative real zeros for any polynomial function. If the polynomial is written in descending order, **Descartes' Rule of Signs** tells us of a relationship between the number of sign changes in $f(x)$ and the number of positive real zeros. For example, the polynomial function below has one sign change.

$$f(x) = x^4 + x^3 + x^2 + x - 1$$

This tells us that the function must have 1 positive real zero.

There is a similar relationship between the number of sign changes in $f(-x)$ and the number of negative real zeros.

$$f(-x) = (-x)^4 + (-x)^3 + (-x)^2 + (-x) - 1$$
$$f(-x) = +x^4 - x^3 + x^2 - x - 1$$

In this case, $f(-x)$ has 3 sign changes. This tells us that $f(x)$ could have 3 or 1 negative real zeros.

Theorem 5.5.6 Descartes' Rules of Signs

According to *Descartes' Rule of Signs*, if we let $f(x) = a_n x^n + a_{n-1}x^{n-1} + \ldots + a_1 x + a_0$ be a polynomial function with real coefficients:

- The number of positive real zeros is either equal to the number of sign changes of $f(x)$ or is less than the number of sign changes by an even integer.
- The number of negative real zeros is either equal to the number of sign changes of $f(-x)$ or is less than the number of sign changes by an even integer.

Example 5.5.9

Use Descartes' Rule of Signs to determine the possible numbers of positive and negative real zeros for $f(x) = -x^4 - 3x^3 + 6x^2 - 4x - 12$.

Solution

Begin by determining the number of sign changes.

There are two sign changes, so there are either 2 or 0 positive real roots. Next, we examine $f(-x)$ to determine the number of negative real roots.

$$f(-x) = -(-x)^4 - 3(-x)^3 + 6(-x)^2 - 4(-x) - 12 \quad (5.5.20)$$
$$f(-x) = -x^4 + 3x^3 + 6x^2 + 4x - 12 \quad (5.5.21)$$

$$f(-x) = -x^4 + 3x^3 + 6x^2 + 4x - 12$$

Again, there are two sign changes, so there are either 2 or 0 negative real roots.

There are four possibilities, as we can see in Table 5.5.1.

Table 5.5.1

Positive Real Zeros	Negative Real Zeros	Complex Zeros	Total Zeros
2	2	0	4
2	0	2	4
0	2	2	4
0	0	4	4

Analysis

We can confirm the numbers of positive and negative real roots by examining a graph of the function. See Figure 5.5.3. We can see from the graph that the function has 0 positive real roots and 2 negative real roots.

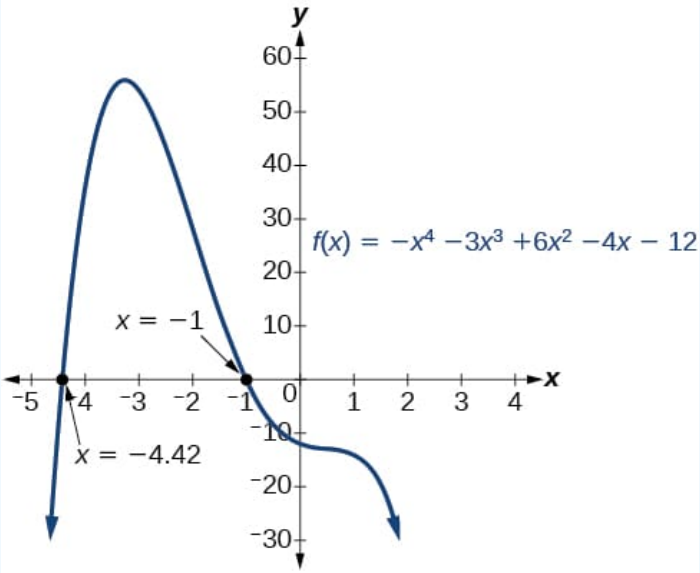


Figure 5.5.3.

Exercise 5.5.5

Use Descartes' Rule of Signs to determine the maximum possible numbers of positive and negative real zeros for $f(x) = 2x^4 - 10x^3 + 11x^2 - 15x + 12$.
Use a graph to verify the numbers of positive and negative real zeros for the function.

Solution available at the end of this section.

Key Concepts

- To find $f(k)$, determine the remainder of the polynomial $f(x)$ when it is divided by $x - k$. This is known as the Remainder Theorem. See Example 5.5.1.
- According to the Factor Theorem, k is a zero of $f(x)$ if and only if $(x - k)$ is a factor of $f(x)$. See Example5.5.2.
- According to the Rational Zero Theorem, each rational zero of a polynomial function with integer coefficients will be equal to a factor of the constant term divided by a factor of the leading coefficient. See Example 5.5.3 and Example 5.5.4.
- When the leading coefficient is 1, the possible rational zeros are the factors of the constant term.
- Synthetic division can be used to find the zeros of a polynomial function. See Example 5.5.5.
- According to the Fundamental Theorem, every polynomial function with degree greater than 0 has at least one complex zero. See Example 5.5.6.
- Allowing for multiplicities, a polynomial function will have the same number of factors as its degree. Each factor will be in the form $(x - c)$, where c is a complex number. See Example 5.5.7.
- The number of positive real zeros of a polynomial function is either the number of sign changes of the function or less than the number of sign changes by an even integer.
- The number of negative real zeros of a polynomial function is either the number of sign changes of $f(-x)$ or less than the number of sign changes by an even integer. See Example 5.5.8.
- Polynomial equations model many real-world scenarios. Solving the equations is easiest done by synthetic division. See Example 5.5.9.

Glossary of Theorems

Descartes' Rule of Signs

a rule that determines the maximum possible numbers of positive and negative real zeros based on the number of sign changes of $f(x)$ and $f(-x)$

Factor Theorem

k is a zero of polynomial function $f(x)$ if and only if $(x-k)$ is a factor of $f(x)$

Fundamental Theorem of Algebra

a polynomial function with degree greater than 0 has at least one complex zero

Linear Factorization Theorem

allowing for multiplicities, a polynomial function will have the same number of factors as its degree, and each factor will be in the form $(x-c)$, where c is a complex number

Rational Zero Theorem

the possible rational zeros of a polynomial function have the form $\frac{p}{q}$ where p is a factor of the constant term and q is a factor of the leading coefficient.

Remainder Theorem

if a polynomial $f(x)$ is divided by $x-k$,then the remainder is equal to the value $f(k)$

Answers

Exercise 5.5.1

$f(-3)=-412$

Exercise 5.5.2

The zeros are 2, –2, and –4.

Exercise 5.5.3

There are no rational zeros.

Exercise 5.5.4

$f(x)=-\frac{1}{2}x^3+\frac{5}{2}x^2-2x+10$

Exercise 5.5.5

There must be 4, 2, or 0 positive real roots and 0 negative real roots. The graph shows that there are 2 positive real zeros and 0 negative real zeros.

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5.6: Rational Functions

Learning Objectives

- Use arrow notation.
- Solve applied problems involving rational functions.
- Find the domains of rational functions.
- Identify vertical asymptotes.
- Identify horizontal asymptotes.
- Graph rational functions.

Suppose we know that the cost of making a product is dependent on the number of items, x, produced. This is given by the equation $C(x) = 15,000x - 0.1x^2 + 1000$. If we want to know the average cost for producing x items, we would divide the cost function by the number of items, x. The average cost function, which yields the average cost per item for x items produced, is

$$f(x) = \frac{15,000x - 0.1x^2 + 1000}{x}$$

Many other application problems require finding an average value in a similar way, giving us variables in the denominator. Written without a variable in the denominator, this function will contain a negative integer power.

In the last few sections, we have worked with polynomial functions, which are functions with non-negative integers for exponents. In this section, we explore rational functions, which have variables in the denominator.

Using Arrow Notation

We have seen the graphs of the basic **reciprocal function** and the squared reciprocal function from our study of toolkit functions. Examine these graphs, as shown in Figure $5.6.1$, and notice some of their features.

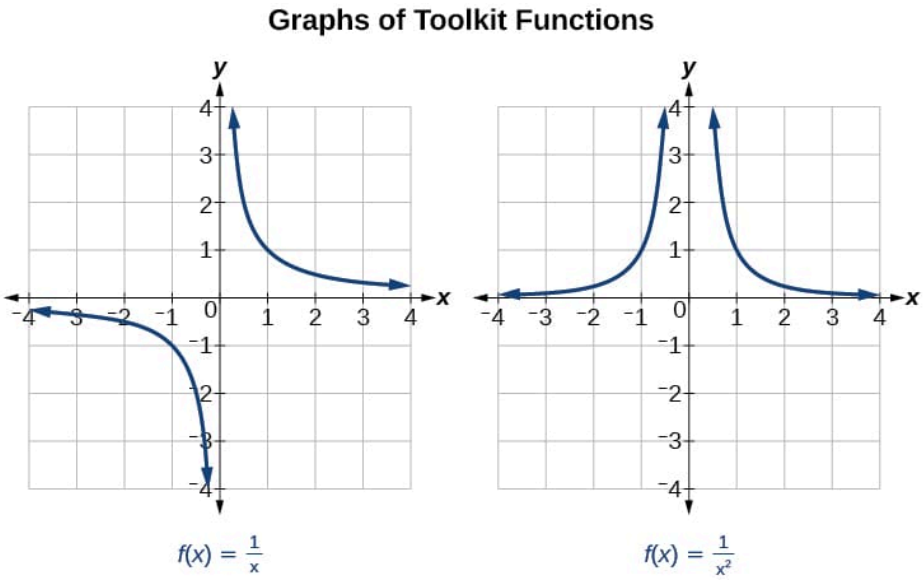


Figure $5.6.1$

Several things are apparent if we examine the graph of $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$.

- On the left branch of the graph, the curve approaches the x-axis $(y = 0)$ as $x \to -\infty$.
- As the graph approaches $x = 0$ from the left, the curve drops, but as we approach zero from the right, the curve rises.

- Finally, on the right branch of the graph, the curves approaches the x-axis $(y = 0)$ as $x \to \infty$.

To summarize, we use **arrow notation** to show that x or $f(x)$ is approaching a particular value (Table 5.6.1).

Table 5.6.1

Symbol	Meaning
$x \to a^-$	x approaches a from the left (\(x
$x \to a^+$	x approaches a from the right ($x > a$ but close to a)
$x \to \infty$	x approaches infinity (x increases without bound)
$x \to -\infty$	x approaches negative infinity (x decreases without bound)
$f(x) \to \infty$	the output approaches infinity (the output increases without bound)
$f(x) \to -\infty$	the output approaches negative infinity (the output decreases without bound)
$f(x) \to a$	the output approaches a

Local Behavior of $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$

Let's begin by looking at the reciprocal function, $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$. We cannot divide by zero, which means the function is undefined at $x = 0$; so zero is not in the domain. As the input values approach zero from the left side (becoming very small, negative values), the function values decrease without bound (in other words, they approach negative infinity). We can see this behavior in Table 5.6.2.

Table 5.6.2

x	-0.1	-0.01	-0.001	-0.0001
$f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$	-10	-100	-1000	-10,000

We write in arrow notation

$$\text{as } x \to 0^-, f(x) \to -\infty$$

As the input values approach zero from the right side (becoming very small, positive values), the function values increase without bound (approaching infinity). We can see this behavior in Table 5.6.3.

Table 5.6.3

x	0.1	0.01	0.001	0.0001
$f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$	10	100	1000	10,000

We write in arrow notation

$$\text{As } x \to 0^+, f(x) \to \infty.$$

See Figure 5.6.2.

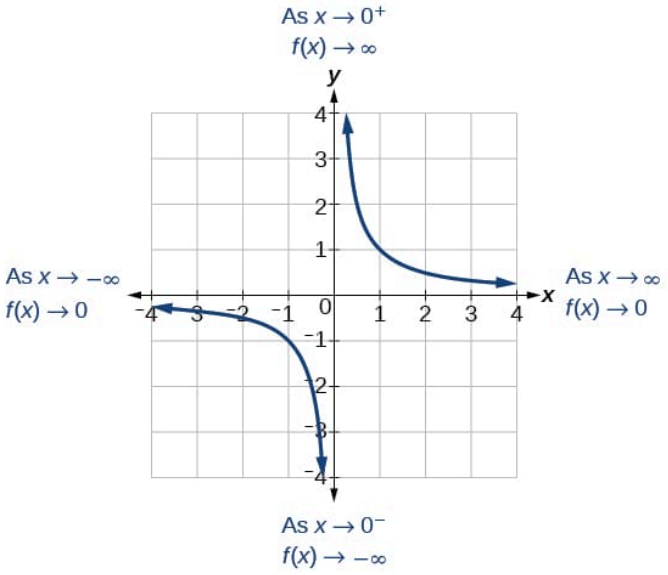


Figure 5.6.2.

This behavior creates a **vertical asymptote**, which is a vertical line that the graph approaches but never crosses. In this case, the graph is approaching the vertical line $x = 0$ as the input becomes close to zero (Figure 5.6.3).

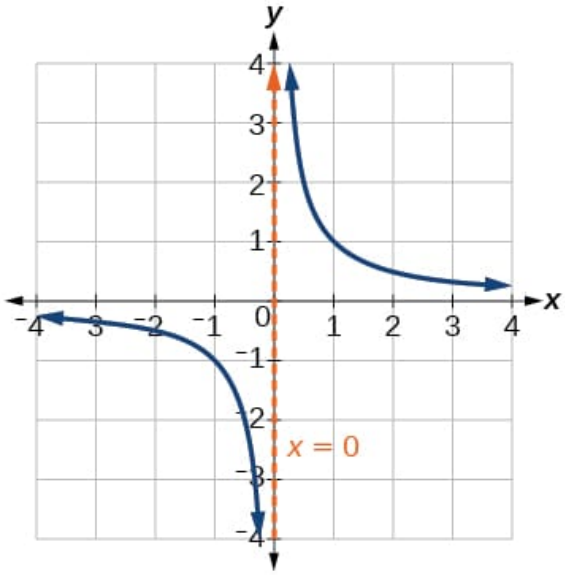


Figure 5.6.3.

Definition: VERTICAL ASYMPTOTE

A vertical asymptote of a graph is a vertical line $x = a$ where the graph tends toward positive or negative infinity as the inputs approach a. We write

As $x \to a$, $f(x) \to \infty$, or as $x \to a$, $f(x) \to -\infty$.

End Behavior of $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$

As the values of x approach infinity, the function values approach 0. As the values of x approach negative infinity, the function values approach 0 (Figure 5.6.4). Symbolically, using arrow notation

As $x \to \infty$, $f(x) \to 0$,and as $x \to -\infty$, $f(x) \to 0$.

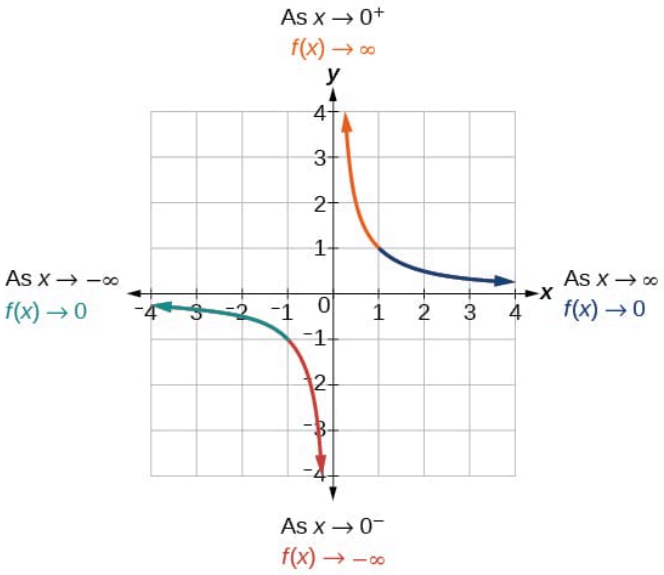


Figure 5.6.4.

Based on this overall behavior and the graph, we can see that the function approaches 0 but never actually reaches 0; it seems to level off as the inputs become large. This behavior creates a **horizontal asymptote**, a horizontal line that the graph approaches as the input increases or decreases without bound. In this case, the graph is approaching the horizontal line $y = 0$. See Figure 5.6.5.

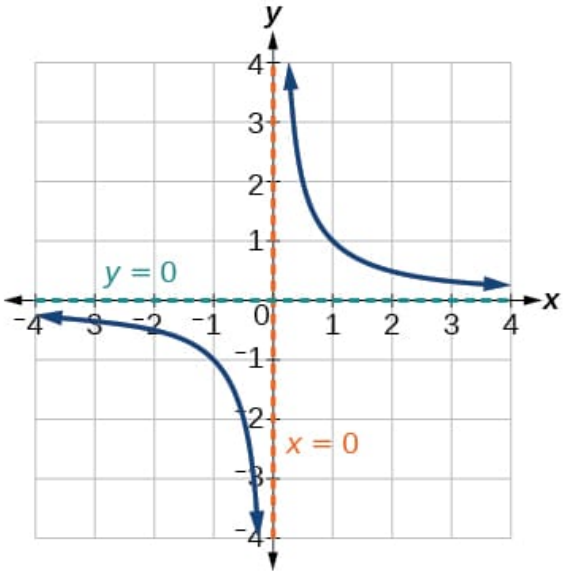


Figure 5.6.5.

Definition: HORIZONTAL ASYMPTOTE

A *horizontal asymptote* of a graph is a horizontal line $y = b$ where the graph approaches the line as the inputs increase or decrease without bound. We write

$$\text{As } x \to \infty \text{ or } x \to -\infty, f(x) \to b.$$

Example 5.6.1: Using Arrow Notation.

Use arrow notation to describe the end behavior and local behavior of the function graphed in Figure 5.6.6.

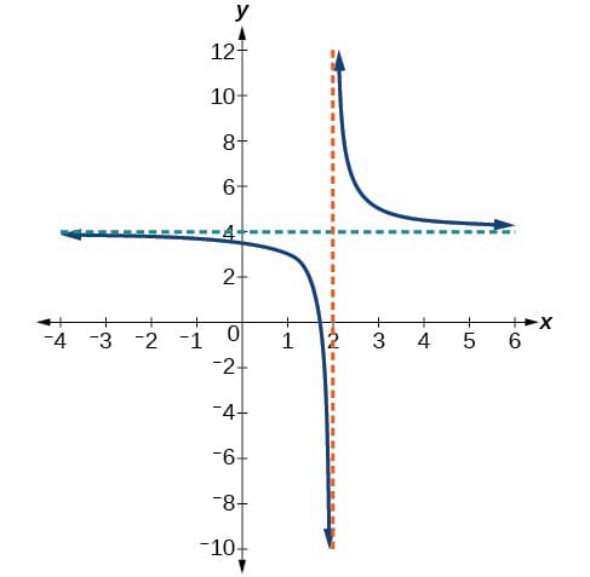


Figure 5.6.6.

Solution

Notice that the graph is showing a vertical asymptote at $x = 2$, which tells us that the function is undefined at $x = 2$.

$$\text{As } x \to 2^-,\ f(x) \to -\infty, \text{ and as } x \to 2^+,\ f(x) \to \infty.$$

And as the inputs decrease without bound, the graph appears to be leveling off at output values of 4, indicating a horizontal asymptote at $y = 4$. As the inputs increase without bound, the graph levels off at 4.

$$\text{As } x \to \infty,\ f(x) \to 4 \text{ and as } x \to -\infty,\ f(x) \to 4.$$

Exercises 5.6.1

Use arrow notation to describe the end behavior and local behavior for the reciprocal squared function.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 5.6.2: Using Transformations to Graph a Rational Function.

Sketch a graph of the reciprocal function shifted two units to the left and up three units. Identify the horizontal and vertical asymptotes of the graph, if any.

Solution

Shifting the graph left 2 and up 3 would result in the function

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{x+2} + 3 \tag{5.6.1}$$

or equivalently, by giving the terms a common denominator,

$$f(x) = \frac{3x+7}{x+2} \tag{5.6.2}$$

The graph of the shifted function is displayed in Figure 5.6.7.

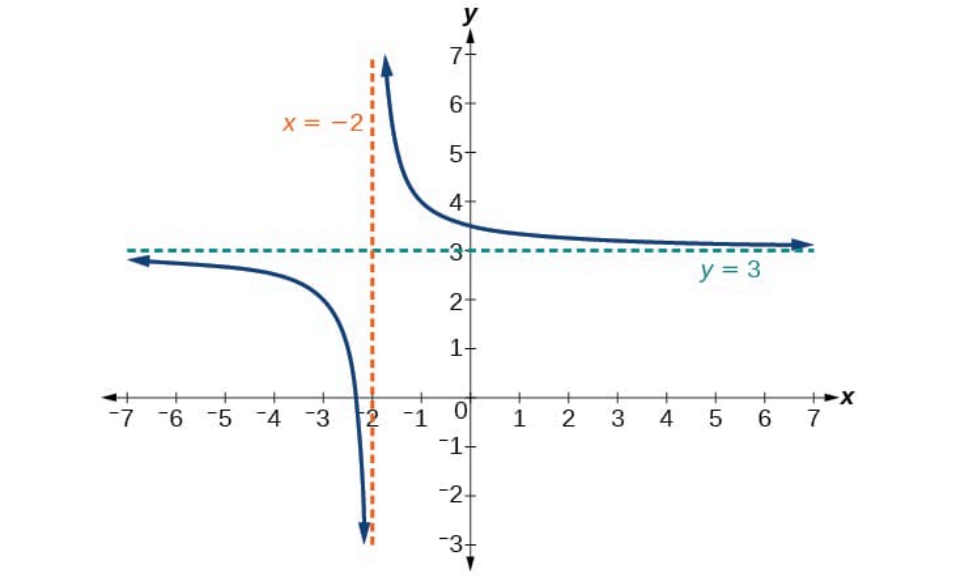


Figure 5.6.7.

Notice that this function is undefined at $x = -2$, and the graph also is showing a vertical asymptote at $x = -2$.

$$\text{As } x \to -2^-,\ f(x) \to -\infty, \text{ and as } x \to -2^+,\ f(x) \to \infty.$$

As the inputs increase and decrease without bound, the graph appears to be leveling off at output values of 3, indicating a horizontal asymptote at $y = 3$.

$$\text{As } x \to \pm\infty,\ f(x) \to 3.$$

Analysis

Notice that horizontal and vertical asymptotes are shifted left 2 and up 3 along with the function.

Exercise 5.6.2

Sketch the graph, and find the horizontal and vertical asymptotes of the reciprocal squared function that has been shifted right 3 units and down 4 units.

Solution

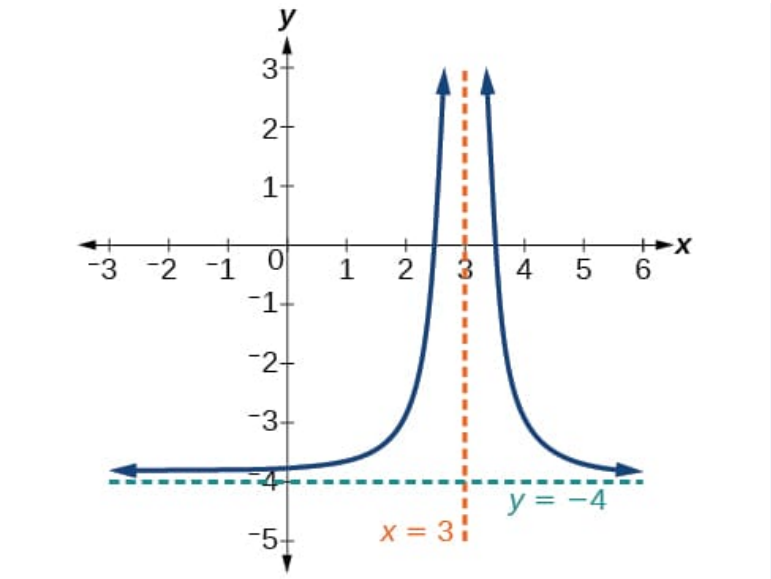


Figure 5.6.8.

The function and the asymptotes are shifted 3 units right and 4 units down. As $x \to 3$, $f(x) \to \infty$, and as $x \to \pm\infty$, $f(x) \to -4$.

The function is $f(x) = \frac{1}{(x-3)^2} - 4$.

Solving Applied Problems Involving Rational Functions

In Example 5.6.2, we shifted a toolkit function in a way that resulted in the function $f(x) = \frac{3x+7}{x+2}$. This is an example of a rational function. A *rational function* is a function that can be written as the quotient of two polynomial functions. Many real-world problems require us to find the ratio of two polynomial functions. Problems involving rates and concentrations often involve rational functions.

Definition: RATIONAL FUNCTION

A ***rational function*** is a function that can be written as the quotient of two polynomial functions $P(x)$ and $Q(x)$.

$$f(x) = \frac{P(x)}{Q(x)} = \frac{a_p x^p + a_{p-1}x^{p-1} + \ldots + a_1 x + a_0}{b_q x^q + b_{q-1}x^{q-1} + \ldots + b_1 x + b_0},\ Q(x) \neq 0 \tag{5.6.3}$$

Example 5.6.3: Solving an Applied Problem Involving a Rational Function

A large mixing tank currently contains 100 gallons of water into which 5 pounds of sugar have been mixed. A tap will open pouring 10 gallons per minute of water into the tank at the same time sugar is poured into the tank at a rate of 1 pound per minute. Find the concentration (pounds per gallon) of sugar in the tank after 12 minutes. Is that a greater concentration than at the beginning?

Solution

Let t be the number of minutes since the tap opened. Since the water increases at 10 gallons per minute, and the sugar increases at 1 pound per minute, these are constant rates of change. This tells us the amount of water in the tank is changing linearly, as is the amount of sugar in the tank. We can write an equation independently for each:

water: $W(t) = 100 + 10t$ in gallons
sugar: $S(t) = 5 + 1t$ in pounds

The concentration, C, will be the ratio of pounds of sugar to gallons of water

$$C(t) = \frac{5+t}{100+10t} \tag{5.6.4}$$

The concentration after 12 minutes is given by evaluating $C(t)$ at $t = 12$.

$$C(12) = \frac{5+12}{100+10(12)} \tag{5.6.5}$$

$$= \frac{17}{220} \tag{5.6.6}$$

This means the concentration is 17 pounds of sugar to 220 gallons of water.

At the beginning, the concentration is

$$C(0) = \frac{5+0}{100+10(0)} \tag{5.6.7}$$

$$= \frac{1}{20} \tag{5.6.8}$$

Since $\frac{17}{220} \approx 0.08 > \frac{1}{20} = 0.05$, the concentration is greater after 12 minutes than at the beginning.

Analysis

To find the horizontal asymptote, divide the leading coefficient in the numerator by the leading coefficient in the denominator:

$$\frac{1}{10} = 0.1 \tag{5.6.9}$$

Notice the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0.1$. This means the concentration, C, the ratio of pounds of sugar to gallons of water, will approach 0.1 in the long term.

Exercise 5.6.3

There are 1,200 freshmen and 1,500 sophomores at a prep rally at noon. After 12 p.m., 20 freshmen arrive at the rally every five minutes while 15 sophomores leave the rally. Find the ratio of freshmen to sophomores at 1 p.m.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding the Domains of Rational Functions

A *vertical asymptote* represents a value at which a rational function is undefined, so that value is not in the domain of the function. A reciprocal function cannot have values in its domain that cause the denominator to equal zero. In general, to find the domain of a rational function, we need to determine which inputs would cause division by zero.

Definition: DOMAIN OF A RATIONAL FUNCTION

The domain of a rational function includes all real numbers except those that cause the denominator to equal zero.

How To: Given a rational function, find the domain.

1. Set the denominator equal to zero.
2. Solve to find the x-values that cause the denominator to equal zero.
3. The domain is all real numbers except those found in Step 2.

Example 5.6.4: Finding the Domain of a Rational Function

Find the domain of $f(x) = \dfrac{x+3}{x^2-9}$.

Solution

Begin by setting the denominator equal to zero and solving.

$$x^2 - 9 = 0$$

$$x^2 = 9$$

$$x = \pm 3$$

The denominator is equal to zero when $x = \pm 3$. The domain of the function is all real numbers except $x = \pm 3$.

Analysis

A graph of this function, as shown in Figure 5.6.9, confirms that the function is not defined when $x = \pm 3$.

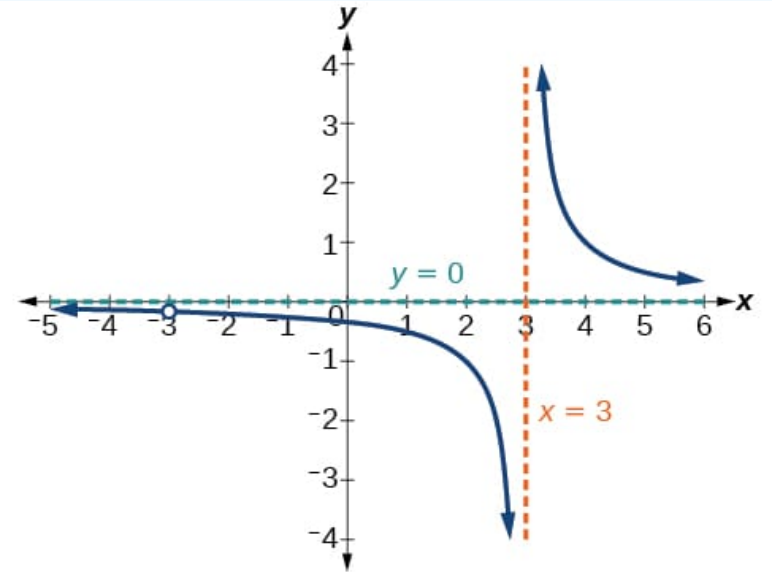


Figure 5.6.9.

There is a vertical asymptote at $x = 3$ and a hole in the graph at $x = -3$. We will discuss these types of holes in greater detail later in this section.

Exercise 5.6.4

Find the domain of $f(x) = \dfrac{4x}{5(x-1)(x-5)}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Identifying Vertical Asymptotes of Rational Functions

By looking at the graph of a rational function, we can investigate its local behavior and easily see whether there are asymptotes. We may even be able to approximate their location. Even without the graph, however, we can still determine whether a given rational function has any asymptotes, and calculate their location.

Vertical Asymptotes

The vertical asymptotes of a rational function may be found by examining the factors of the denominator that are not common to the factors in the numerator. Vertical asymptotes occur at the zeros of such factors.

How To: Given a rational function, identify any vertical asymptotes of its graph

1. Factor the numerator and denominator.
2. Note any restrictions in the domain of the function.
3. Reduce the expression by canceling common factors in the numerator and the denominator.
4. Note any values that cause the denominator to be zero in this simplified version. These are where the vertical asymptotes occur.
5. Note any restrictions in the domain where asymptotes do not occur. These are removable discontinuities, or “holes.”

Example 5.6.5: Identifying Vertical Asymptotes

Find the vertical asymptotes of the graph of $k(x) = \dfrac{5+2x^2}{2-x-x^2}$.

Solution

First, factor the numerator and denominator.

$$k(x) = \frac{5+2x^2}{2-x-x^2}$$

$$= \frac{5+2x^2}{(2+x)(1-x)}$$

To find the vertical asymptotes, we determine where this function will be undefined by setting the denominator equal to zero:

$$(2+x)(1-x) = 0$$

$$x = -2,\ x = 1$$

Neither $x = -2$ nor $x = 1$ are zeros of the numerator, so the two values indicate two vertical asymptotes. The graph in Figure 5.6.10 confirms the location of the two vertical asymptotes.

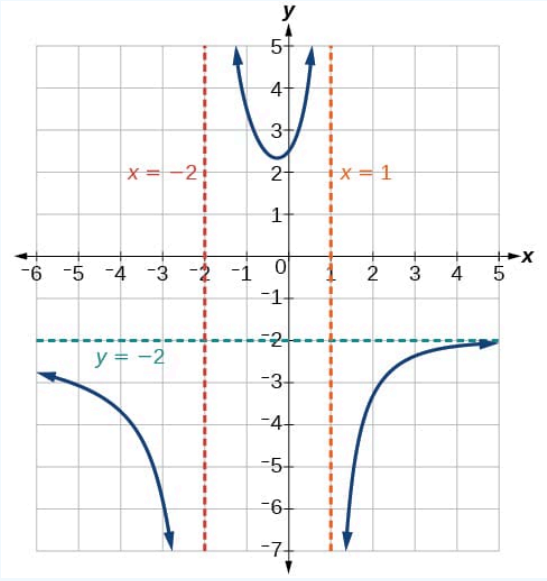


Figure 5.6.10.

Removable Discontinuities

Occasionally, a graph will contain a hole: a single point where the graph is not defined, indicated by an open circle. We call such a hole a *removable discontinuity*. For example, the function $f(x) = \dfrac{x^2-1}{x^2-2x-3}$ may be re-written by factoring the numerator and the denominator.

$$f(x) = \frac{(x+1)(x-1)}{(x+1)(x-3)}$$

Notice that $x+1$ is a common factor to the numerator and the denominator. The zero of this factor, $x=-1$, is the location of the removable discontinuity. Notice also that $(x–3)$ is not a factor in both the numerator and denominator. The zero of this factor, $x=3$, is the vertical asymptote. See Figure 5.6.11. [Note that removable discontinuities may not be visible when we use a graphing calculator, depending upon the window selected.]

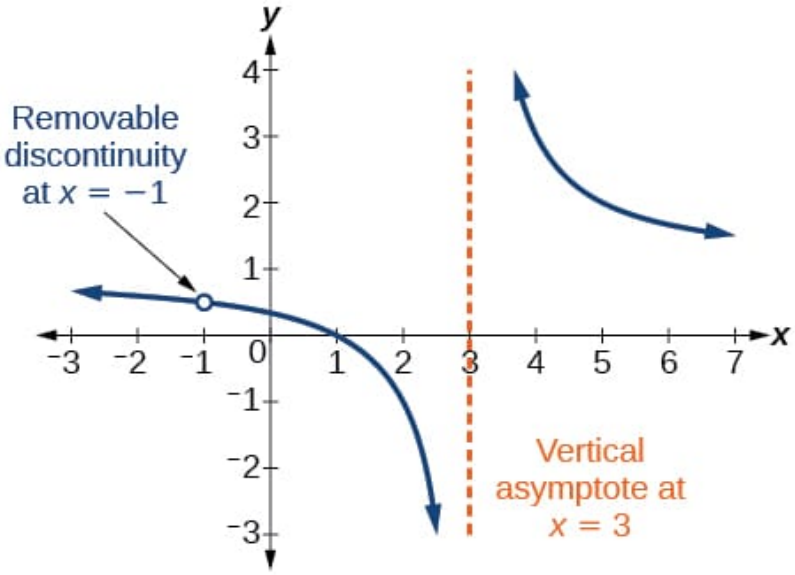


Figure 5.6.11.

REMOVABLE DISCONTINUITIES OF RATIONAL FUNCTIONS

A **removable discontinuity** occurs in the graph of a rational function at $x=a$ if a is a zero for a factor in the denominator that is common with a factor in the numerator. We factor the numerator and denominator and check for common factors. If we find any, we set the common factor equal to 0 and solve. This is the location of the removable discontinuity. This is true if the multiplicity of this factor is greater than or equal to that in the denominator. If the multiplicity of this factor is greater in the denominator, then there is still an asymptote at that value.

Example 5.6.6: Identifying Vertical Asymptotes and Removable Discontinuities for a Graph

Find the vertical asymptotes and removable discontinuities of the graph of $k(x) = \dfrac{x-2}{x^2-4}$.

Solution

Factor the numerator and the denominator.

$$k(x) = \frac{x-2}{(x-2)(x+2)}$$

Notice that there is a common factor in the numerator and the denominator, x–2. The zero for this factor is $x = 2$. This is the location of the removable discontinuity.

Notice that there is a factor in the denominator that is not in the numerator, $x + 2$. The zero for this factor is $x = -2$. The vertical asymptote is $x = -2$. See Figure 5.6.12.

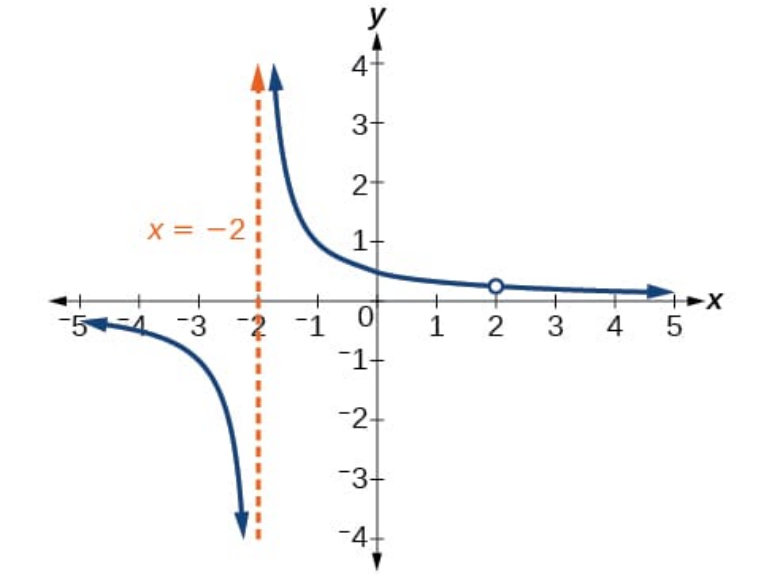


Figure 5.6.12.

The graph of this function will have the vertical asymptote at $x = -2$, but at $x = 2$ the graph will have a hole.

Exercise 5.6.5

Find the vertical asymptotes and removable discontinuities of the graph of $f(x) = \frac{x^2 - 25}{x^3 - 6x^2 + 5x}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Identifying Horizontal Asymptotes of Rational Functions

While vertical asymptotes describe the behavior of a graph as the *output* gets very large or very small, horizontal asymptotes help describe the behavior of a graph as the *input* gets very large or very small. Recall that a polynomial's end behavior will mirror that of the leading term. Likewise, a rational function's end behavior will mirror that of the ratio of the function that is the ratio of the leading terms.

There are three distinct outcomes when checking for horizontal asymptotes:

Case 1: If the degree of the denominator > degree of the numerator, there is a **horizontal asymptote** at $y = 0$.

Example: $f(x) = \frac{4x + 2}{x^2 + 4x - 5}$

In this case, the end behavior is $f(x) \approx \frac{4x}{x^2} = \frac{4}{x}$. This tells us that, as the inputs increase or decrease without bound, this function will behave similarly to the function $g(x) = \frac{4}{x}$, and the outputs will approach zero, resulting in a horizontal asymptote at $y = 0$. See **Figure** 5.6.13. Note that this graph crosses the horizontal asymptote.

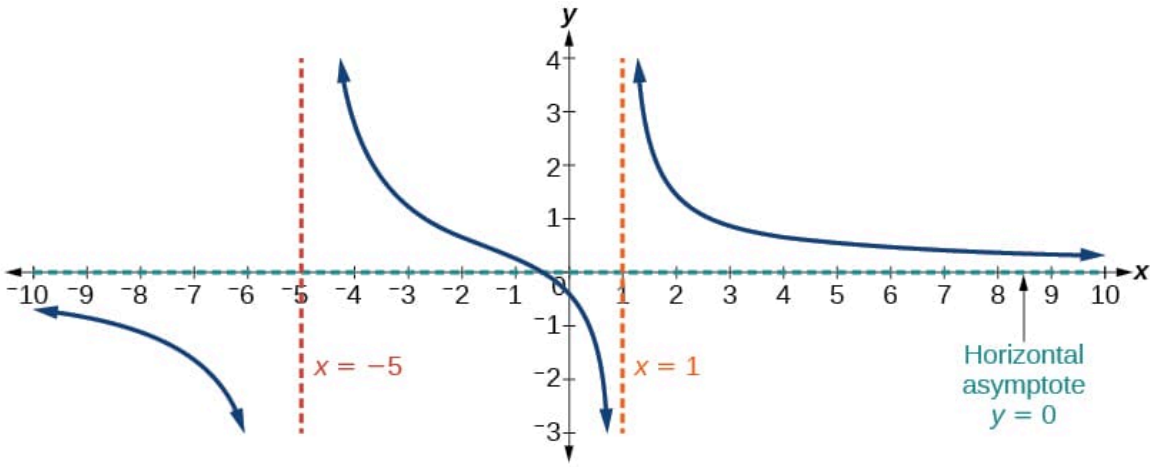


Figure 5.6.13: Horizontal asymptote $y = 0$ when $f(x) = \dfrac{p(x)}{q(x)}$, $q(x) \neq 0$ where degree of p < degree of q.

Case 2: If the degree of the denominator < degree of the numerator by one, we get a slant asymptote.

Example: $f(x) = \dfrac{3x^2 - 2x + 1}{x - 1}$

In this case, the end behavior is $f(x) \approx \dfrac{3x^2}{x} = 3x$. This tells us that as the inputs increase or decrease without bound, this function will behave similarly to the function $g(x) = 3x$. As the inputs grow large, the outputs will grow and not level off, so this graph has no horizontal asymptote. However, the graph of $g(x) = 3x$ looks like a diagonal line, and since f will behave similarly to g, it will approach a line close to $y = 3x$. This line is a slant asymptote.

To find the equation of the slant asymptote, divide $\dfrac{3x^2 - 2x + 1}{x - 1}$. The quotient is $3x + 1$, and the remainder is 2. The slant asymptote is the graph of the line $g(x) = 3x + 1$. See Figure 5.6.14.

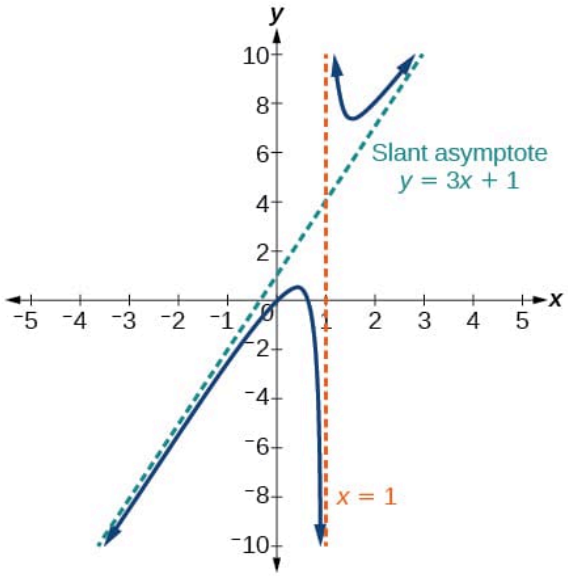


Figure 5.6.14: Slant asymptote when $f(x) = \dfrac{p(x)}{q(x)}$, $q(x) \neq 0$ where degree of p >degree of q by 1.

Case 3: If the degree of the denominator = degree of the numerator, there is a horizontal asymptote at $y = \frac{a_n}{b_n}$, where a_n and b_n are respectively the leading coefficients of $p(x)$ and $q(x)$ for $f(x) = \frac{p(x)}{q(x)}$, $q(x) \neq 0$.

Example: $f(x) = \frac{3x^2 + 2}{x^2 + 4x - 5}$

In this case, the end behavior is $f(x) \approx \frac{3x^2}{x^2} = 3$. This tells us that as the inputs grow large, this function will behave like the function $g(x) = 3$, which is a horizontal line. As $x \to \pm\infty$, $f(x) \to 3$, resulting in a horizontal asymptote at $y = 3$. See Figure 5.6.15. Note that this graph crosses the horizontal asymptote.

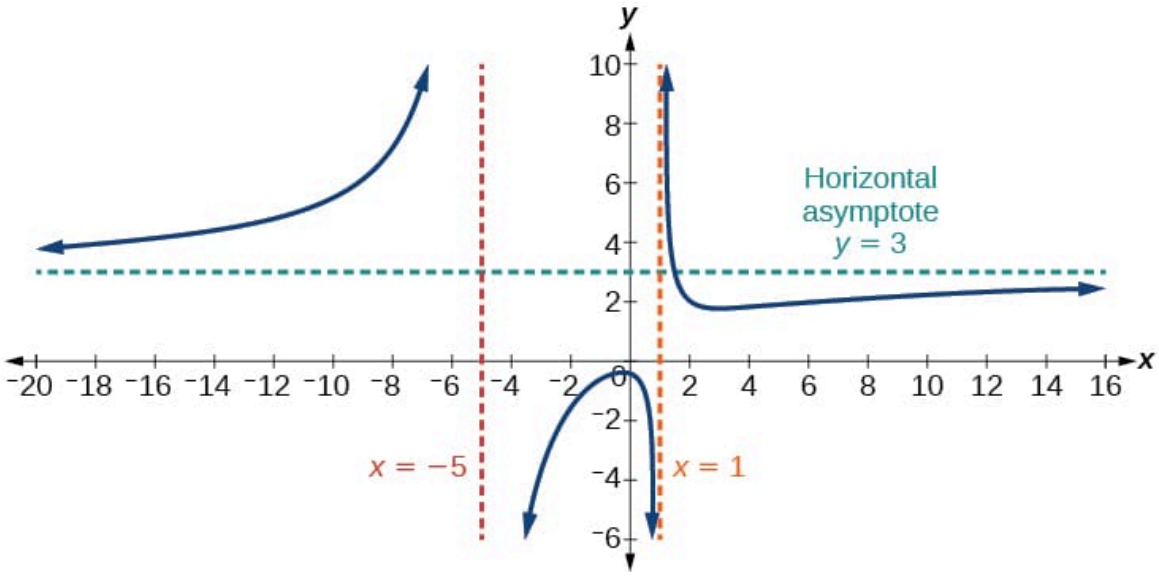


Figure 5.6.15: Horizontal asymptote when $f(x) = \frac{p(x)}{q(x)}$, $q(x) \neq 0$ where degree of p = degree of q.

Notice that, while the graph of a rational function will never cross a **vertical asymptote**, the graph may or may not cross a horizontal or slant asymptote. Also, although the graph of a rational function may have many vertical asymptotes, the graph will have at most one horizontal (or slant) asymptote.

It should be noted that, if the degree of the numerator is larger than the degree of the denominator by more than one, the **end behavior** of the graph will mimic the behavior of the reduced end behavior fraction. For instance, if we had the function

$$f(x) = \frac{3x^5 - x^2}{x + 3}$$

with end behavior

$$f(x) \approx \frac{3x^5}{x} = 3x^4$$

the end behavior of the graph would look similar to that of an even polynomial with a positive leading coefficient.

$$x \to \pm\infty, f(x) \to \infty$$

HORIZONTAL ASYMPTOTES OF RATIONAL FUNCTIONS

The **horizontal asymptote** of a rational function can be determined by looking at the degrees of the numerator and denominator.

- Degree of numerator is less than degree of denominator: horizontal asymptote at $y = 0$.
- Degree of numerator is greater than degree of denominator by one: no horizontal asymptote; slant asymptote.
- Degree of numerator is equal to degree of denominator: horizontal asymptote at ratio of leading coefficients.

Example 5.6.7: Identifying Horizontal and Slant Asymptotes

For the functions listed, identify the horizontal or slant asymptote.

1. $g(x) = \dfrac{6x^3 - 10x}{2x^3 + 5x^2}$
2. $h(x) = \dfrac{x^2 - 4x + 1}{x + 2}$
3. $k(x) = \dfrac{x^2 + 4x}{x^3 - 8}$

Solution

For these solutions, we will use $f(x) = \dfrac{p(x)}{q(x)},\ q(x) \neq 0$.

1. $g(x) = \dfrac{6x^3 - 10x}{2x^3 + 5x^2}$: The degree of $p =$ degree of $q = 3$, so we can find the horizontal asymptote by taking the ratio of the leading terms. There is a horizontal asymptote at $y = \frac{6}{2}$ or $y = 3$.
2. $h(x) = \dfrac{x^2 - 4x + 1}{x + 2}$: The degree of $p = 2$ and degree of $q = 1$. Since $p > q$ by 1, there is a slant asymptote found at $\dfrac{x^2 - 4x + 1}{x + 2}$.

$$\begin{array}{r|rr} -2 & 1 & -4 & 1 \\ & & -2 & 12 \\ \hline & 1 & -6 & 13 \end{array}$$

3. $k(x) = \dfrac{x^2 + 4x}{x^3 - 8}$: The degree of $p = 2$ < degree of $q = 3$, so there is a horizontal asymptote $y = 0$.

Example 5.6.8 Identifying Horizontal Asymptotes

In the sugar concentration problem earlier, we created the equation $C(t) = \dfrac{5 + t}{100 + 10t}$.

Find the horizontal asymptote and interpret it in context of the problem.

Solution

Both the numerator and denominator are linear (degree 1). Because the degrees are equal, there will be a horizontal asymptote at the ratio of the leading coefficients. In the numerator, the leading term is t, with coefficient 1. In the denominator, the leading term is 10t, with coefficient 10. The horizontal asymptote will be at the ratio of these values:

$$t \to \infty,\ C(t) \to \tfrac{1}{10}$$

This function will have a horizontal asymptote at $y = \frac{1}{10}$.

This tells us that as the values of t increase, the values of C will approach $\frac{1}{10}$. In context, this means that, as more time goes by, the concentration of sugar in the tank will approach one-tenth of a pound of sugar per gallon of water or $\frac{1}{10}$ pounds per gallon.

Example 5.6.9: Identifying Horizontal and Vertical Asymptotes

Find the horizontal and vertical asymptotes of the function $f(x) = \dfrac{(x-2)(x+3)}{(x-1)(x+2)(x-5)}$

Solution

First, note that this function has no common factors, so there are no potential removable discontinuities.

The function will have vertical asymptotes when the denominator is zero, causing the function to be undefined. The denominator will be zero at $x = 1, -2,$and 5, indicating vertical asymptotes at these values.

The numerator has degree 2, while the denominator has degree 3. Since the degree of the denominator is greater than the degree of the numerator, the denominator will grow faster than the numerator, causing the outputs to tend towards zero as the inputs get large, and so as $x \to \pm\infty$, $f(x) \to 0$. This function will have a horizontal asymptote at $y = 0$. See Figure 5.6.16.

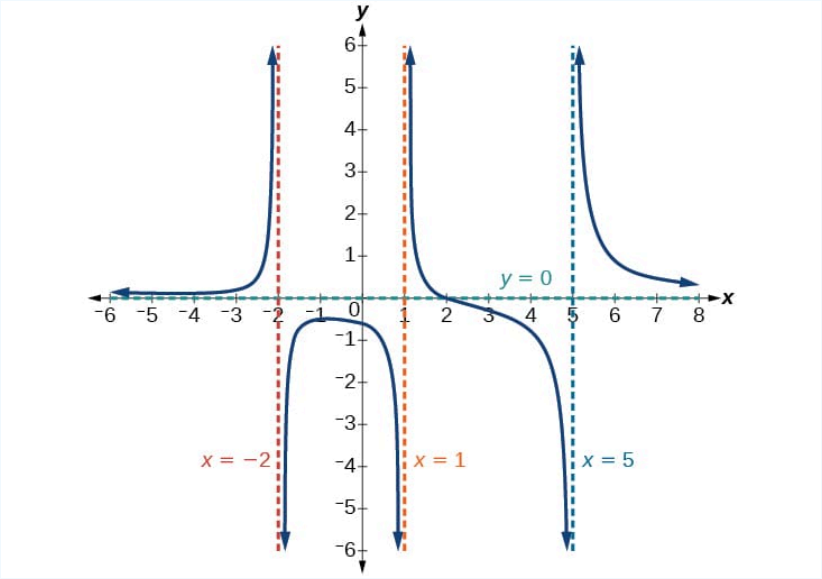


Figure 5.6.16.

Exercise 5.6.6

Find the vertical and horizontal asymptotes of the function:

$$f(x) = \frac{(2x-1)(2x+1)}{(x-2)(x+3)}$$

Answer available at the end of this section.

INTERCEPTS OF RATIONAL FUNCTIONS

A *rational function* will have a y-intercept at $f(0)$, if the function is defined at zero. A rational function will not have a y -intercept if the function is not defined at zero.

Likewise, a rational function will have x-intercepts at the inputs that cause the output to be zero. Since a fraction is only equal to zero when the numerator is zero, x-intercepts can only occur when the numerator of the rational function is equal to zero.

Example 5.6.10: Finding the Intercepts of a Rational Function

Find the intercepts of $f(x) = \dfrac{(x-2)(x+3)}{(x-1)(x+2)(x-5)}$.

Solution

We can find the y-intercept by evaluating the function at zero

$$\begin{aligned} f(0) &= \frac{(0-2)(0+3)}{(0-1)(0+2)(0-5)} \\ &= -\frac{6}{10} \\ &= -\frac{3}{5} \\ &= -0.6 \end{aligned}$$

The x-intercepts will occur when the function is equal to zero:

$$0 = \frac{(x-2)(x+3)}{(x-1)(x+2)(x-5)} \quad \text{This is zero when the numerator is zero.}$$

$$0 = (x-2)(x+3)$$

$$x = 2, x = -3$$

The y-intercept is $(0, -0.6)$, the x-intercepts are $(2, 0)$ and $(-3, 0)$. See Figure 5.6.17.

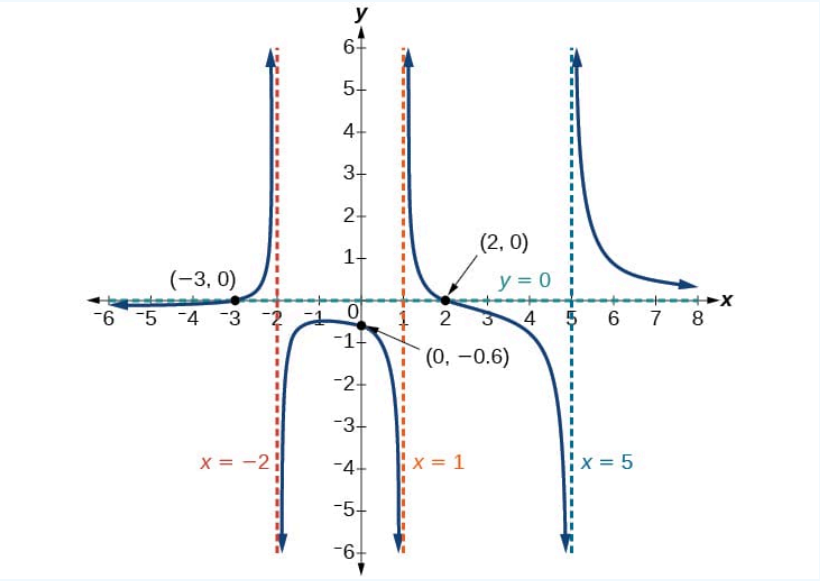


Figure 5.6.17.

Exercise 5.6.7

Given the reciprocal squared function that is shifted right 3 units and down 4 units, write this as a rational function. Then, find the x- and y-intercepts and the horizontal and vertical asymptotes.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Rational Functions

In Example 5.6.10, we see that the numerator of a rational function reveals the *x*-intercepts of the graph, whereas the denominator reveals the vertical asymptotes of the graph. As with polynomials, factors of the numerator may have integer powers greater than one. Fortunately, the effect on the shape of the graph at those intercepts is the same as we saw with polynomials.

The vertical asymptotes associated with the factors of the denominator will mirror one of the two toolkit reciprocal functions. When the degree of the factor in the denominator is odd, the distinguishing characteristic is that on one side of the vertical asymptote the graph heads towards positive infinity, and on the other side the graph heads towards negative infinity. See Figure 5.6.18.

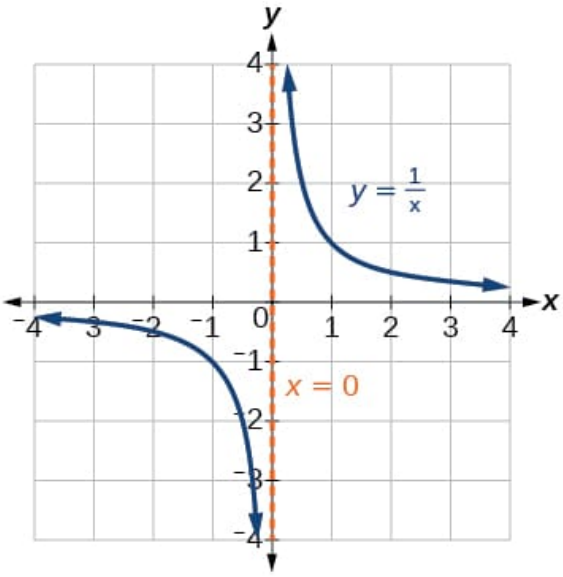


Figure 5.6.18.

When the degree of the factor in the denominator is even, the distinguishing characteristic is that the graph either heads toward positive infinity on both sides of the vertical asymptote or heads toward negative infinity on both sides. See Figure 5.6.19.

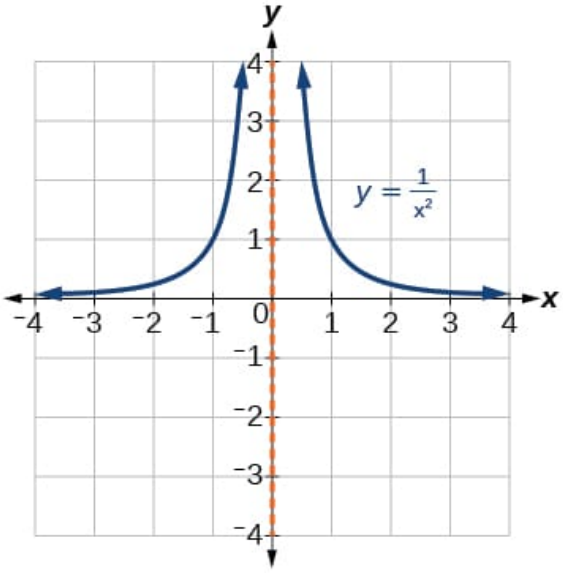


Figure 5.6.19.

For example, the graph of $f(x) = \dfrac{(x+1)^2(x-3)}{(x+3)^2(x-2)}$ is shown in Figure 5.6.20.

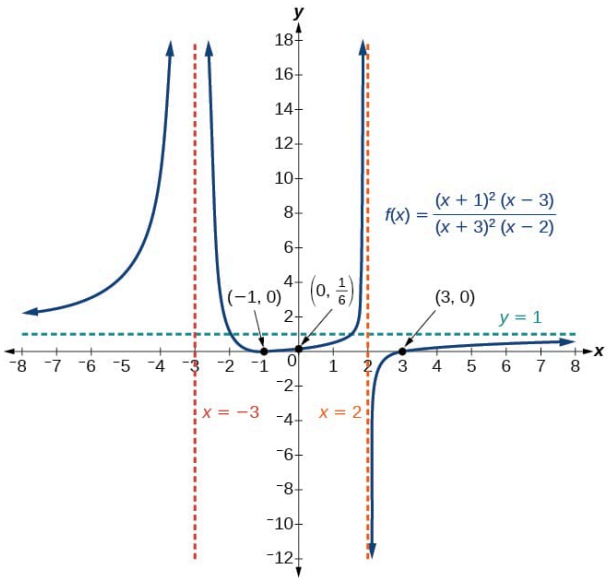


Figure 5.6.20.

- At the x-intercept $x = -1$ corresponding to the $(x+1)^2$ factor of the numerator, the graph "bounces", consistent with the quadratic nature of the factor.
- At the x-intercept $x = 3$ corresponding to the $(x-3)$ factor of the numerator, the graph passes through the axis as we would expect from a linear factor.
- At the vertical asymptote $x = -3$ corresponding to the $(x+3)^2$ factor of the denominator, the graph heads towards positive infinity on both sides of the asymptote, consistent with the behavior of the function $f(x) = \dfrac{1}{x^2}$.
- At the vertical asymptote $x = 2$, corresponding to the $(x-2)$ factor of the denominator, the graph heads towards positive infinity on the left side of the asymptote and towards negative infinity on the right side, consistent with the behavior of the function $f(x) = \dfrac{1}{x}$.

Howto: Given a rational function, sketch a graph.

1. Evaluate the function at 0 to find the y-intercept.
2. Factor the numerator and denominator.
3. For factors in the numerator not common to the denominator, determine where each factor of the numerator is zero to find the x-intercepts.
4. Find the multiplicities of the x-intercepts to determine the behavior of the graph at those points.
5. For factors in the denominator, note the multiplicities of the zeros to determine the local behavior. For those factors not common to the numerator, find the vertical asymptotes by setting those factors equal to zero and then solve.
6. For factors in the denominator common to factors in the numerator, find the removable discontinuities by setting those factors equal to 0 and then solve.
7. Compare the degrees of the numerator and the denominator to determine the horizontal or slant asymptotes.
8. Sketch the graph.

Example 5.6.11: Graphing a Rational Function

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = \frac{(x+2)(x-3)}{(x+1)^2(x-2)}$.

Solution

We can start by noting that the function is already factored, saving us a step.

Next, we will find the intercepts. Evaluating the function at zero gives the y-intercept:

$$f(0) = \frac{(0+2)(0-3)}{(0+1)^2(0-2)} = 3$$

To find the x-intercepts, we determine when the numerator of the function is zero. Setting each factor equal to zero, we find x-intercepts at $x = -2$ and $x = 3$. At each, the behavior will be linear (multiplicity 1), with the graph passing through the intercept.

We have a y-intercept at $(0, 3)$ and x-intercepts at $(-2, 0)$ and $(3, 0)$.

To find the vertical asymptotes, we determine when the denominator is equal to zero. This occurs when $x + 1 = 0$ and when $x - 2 = 0$, giving us vertical asymptotes at $x = -1$ and $x = 2$.

There are no common factors in the numerator and denominator. This means there are no removable discontinuities.

Finally, the degree of denominator is larger than the degree of the numerator, telling us this graph has a horizontal asymptote at $y = 0$.

To sketch the graph, we might start by plotting the three intercepts. Since the graph has no x-intercepts between the vertical asymptotes, and the y-intercept is positive, we know the function must remain positive between the asymptotes, letting us fill in the middle portion of the graph as shown in Figure 5.6.21.

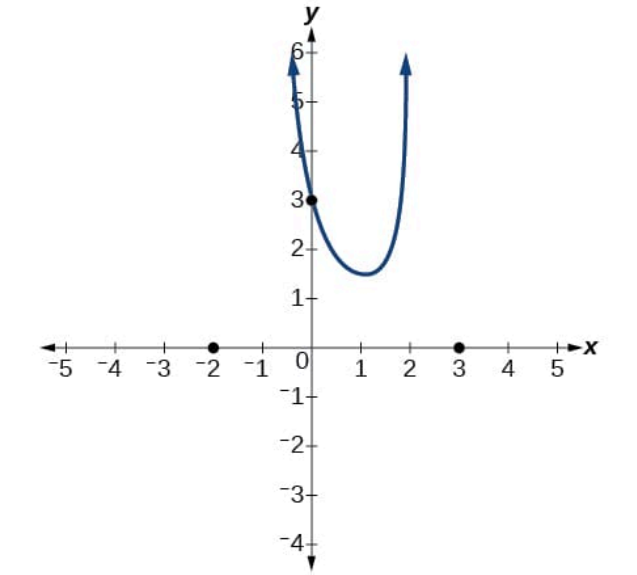


Figure 5.6.21.

The factor associated with the vertical asymptote at $x = -1$ was squared, so we know the behavior will be the same on both sides of the asymptote. The graph heads toward positive infinity as the inputs approach the asymptote on the right, so the graph will head toward positive infinity on the left as well.

For the vertical asymptote at $x = 2$, the factor was not squared, so the graph will have opposite behavior on either side of the asymptote. See Figure 5.6.22. After passing through the x-intercepts, the graph will then level off toward an output of zero, as indicated by the horizontal asymptote.

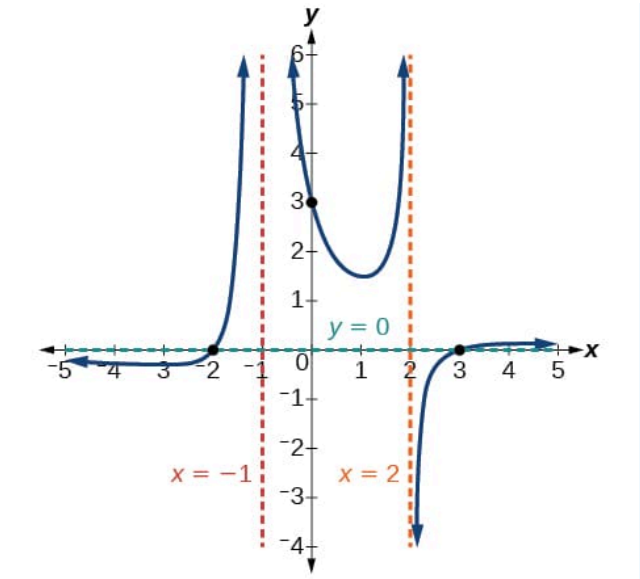


Figure 5.6.22.

Exercise 5.6.8

Given the function $f(x) = \frac{(x+2)^2(x-2)}{2(x-1)^2(x-3)}$, use the characteristics of polynomials and rational functions to describe its behavior and sketch the function.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Writing Rational Functions

Now that we have analyzed the equations for rational functions and how they relate to a graph of the function, we can use information given by a graph to write the function. A rational function written in factored form will have an *x*-intercept where each factor of the numerator is equal to zero. (An exception occurs in the case of a removable discontinuity.) As a result, we can form a numerator of a function whose graph will pass through a set of *x*-intercepts by introducing a corresponding set of factors. Likewise, because the function will have a vertical asymptote where each factor of the denominator is equal to zero, we can form a denominator that will produce the vertical asymptotes by introducing a corresponding set of factors.

WRITING RATIONAL FUNCTIONS FROM INTERCEPTS AND ASYMPTOTES

If a **rational function** has x-intercepts at $x = x_1, x_2, ..., x_n$, vertical asymptotes at $x = v_1, v_2, ..., v_m$, and no $x_i =$ any v_j, then the function can be written in the form:

$$f(x) = a\frac{(x-x_1)^{p_1}(x-x_2)^{p_2}\cdots(x-x_n)^{p_n}}{(x-v_1)^{q_1}(x-v_2)^{q_2}\cdots(x-v_m)^{q_n}}$$

where the powers p_i or q_i on each factor can be determined by the behavior of the graph at the corresponding intercept or asymptote, and the stretch factor a can be determined given a value of the function other than the x-intercept or by the horizontal asymptote if it is nonzero.

Given a graph of a rational function, write the function.

1. Determine the factors of the numerator. Examine the behavior of the graph at the *x*-intercepts to determine the zeroes and their multiplicities. (This is easy to do when finding the "simplest" function with small multiplicities—such as 1 or 3—but may be difficult for larger multiplicities—such as 5 or 7, for example.)
2. Determine the factors of the denominator. Examine the behavior on both sides of each vertical asymptote to determine the factors and their powers.
3. Use any clear point on the graph to find the stretch factor.

Example 5.6.12: Writing a Rational Function from Intercepts and Asymptotes

Write an equation for the rational function shown in Figure 5.6.24.

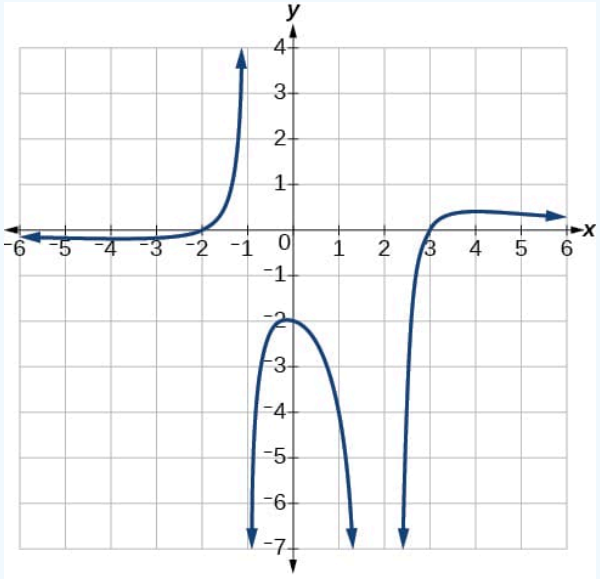


Figure 5.6.24.

Solution

The graph appears to have x-intercepts at $x = -2$ and $x = 3$. At both, the graph passes through the intercept, suggesting linear factors. The graph has two vertical asymptotes. The one at $x = -1$ seems to exhibit the basic behavior similar to $\frac{1}{x}$, with the graph heading toward positive infinity on one side and heading toward negative infinity on the other. The asymptote at $x = 2$ is exhibiting a behavior similar to $\frac{1}{x^2}$, with the graph heading toward negative infinity on both sides of the asymptote. See Figure 5.6.25.

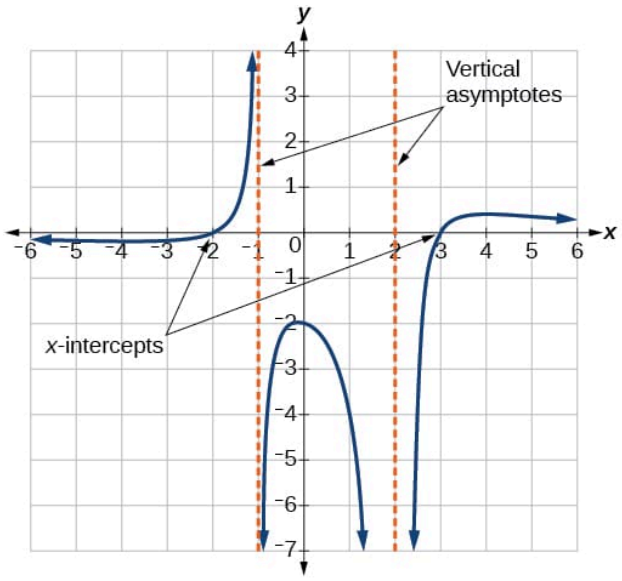


Figure 5.6.25.

We can use this information to write a function of the form

$$f(x) = a\frac{(x+2)(x-3)}{(x+1)(x-2)^2}$$

To find the stretch factor, we can use another clear point on the graph, such as the *y*-intercept $(0,-2)$.

$$-2 = a\frac{(0+2)(0-3)}{(0+1)(0-2)^2}$$
$$-2 = a\frac{-6}{4}$$
$$a = \frac{-8}{-6} = \frac{4}{3}$$

This gives us a final function of $f(x) = \dfrac{4(x+2)(x-3)}{3(x+1)(x-2)^2}$.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with rational functions.

- Graphing Rational Functions
- Find the Equation of a Rational Function
- Determining Vertical and Horizontal Asymptotes
- Find the Intercepts, Asymptotes, and Hole of a Rational Function

Key Equations

Rational Function	$f(x) = \dfrac{P(x)}{Q(x)} = \dfrac{a_p x^p + a_{p-1}x^{p-1} + \ldots + a_1 x + a_0}{b_q x^q + b_{q-1}x^{q-1} + \ldots + b_1 x + b_0},\ Q(x) \neq 0$

Key Concepts

- We can use arrow notation to describe local behavior and end behavior of the toolkit functions $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$ and $f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$. See Example 5.6.1.
- A function that levels off at a horizontal value has a horizontal asymptote. A function can have more than one vertical asymptote. See Example.
- Application problems involving rates and concentrations often involve rational functions. See Example.
- The domain of a rational function includes all real numbers except those that cause the denominator to equal zero. See Example.
- The vertical asymptotes of a rational function will occur where the denominator of the function is equal to zero and the numerator is not zero. See Example.
- A removable discontinuity might occur in the graph of a rational function if an input causes both numerator and denominator to be zero. See Example.
- A rational function's end behavior will mirror that of the ratio of the leading terms of the numerator and denominator functions. See Example, Example, Example, and Example.
- Graph rational functions by finding the intercepts, behavior at the intercepts and asymptotes, and end behavior. See Example.
- If a rational function has x-intercepts at $x = x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n$, vertical asymptotes at $x = v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_m$, and no $x_i =$ any v_j, then the function can be written in the form

Answers

Exercises 5.6.1

End behavior: as $x \to \pm\infty$, $f(x) \to 0$;

Local behavior: as $x \to 0$, $f(x) \to \infty$ (there are no x- or y-intercepts)

Exercise 5.6.3

$\frac{12}{11}$

Exercise 5.6.4

The domain is all real numbers except $x = 1$ and $x = 5$.

Exercise 5.6.5

Removable discontinuity at $x = 5$.

Vertical asymptotes: $x = 0$, $x = 1$.

Exercise 5.6.6

Vertical asymptotes at $x = 2$ and $x = -3$

horizontal asymptote at $y = 4$.

Exercise 5.6.7

For the transformed reciprocal squared function, we find the rational form.

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{(x-3)^2} - 4 = \frac{1-4(x-3)^2}{(x-3)^2} = \frac{1-4(x^2-6x+9)}{(x-3)(x-3)} = \frac{-4x^2+24x-35}{x^2-6x+9}$$

Because the numerator is the same degree as the denominator we know that as $x \to \pm\infty$, $f(x) \to -4$; so $y = -4$ is the horizontal asymptote. Next, we set the denominator equal to zero, and find that the vertical asymptote is $x = 3$, because as $x \to 3$, $f(x) \to \infty$. We then set the numerator equal to 0 and find the x-intercepts are at $(2.5, 0)$ and $(3.5, 0)$. Finally, we evaluate the function at 0 and find the y-intercept to be at $(0, -\frac{35}{9})$.

Exercise 5.6.8

Horizontal asymptote at $y = \frac{1}{2}$. Vertical asymptotes at $x = 1$ and $x = 3$. y-intercept at $(0, \frac{4}{3})$.

x-intercepts at $(2, 0)$ and $(-2, 0)$. $(-2, 0)$ is a zero with multiplicity 2, and the graph bounces off the x-axis at this point. $(2, 0)$ is a single zero and the graph crosses the axis at this point.

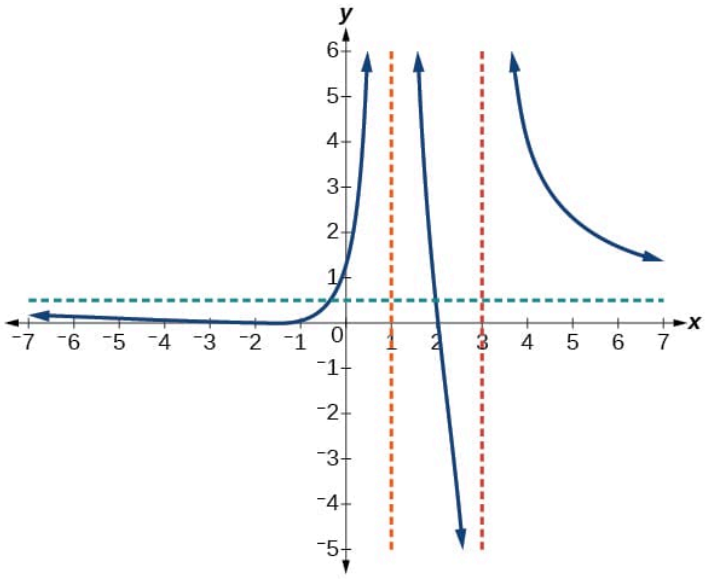


Figure 5.6.23.

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6: EXPONENTIAL AND LOGARITHMIC FUNCTIONS

In this chapter, we will explore exponential functions, which can be used for, among other things, modeling growth patterns such as those found in bacteria. We will also investigate logarithmic functions, which are closely related to exponential functions. Both types of functions have numerous real-world applications when it comes to modeling and interpreting data.

6.1: Exponential Functions

6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions

6.3: Logarithmic Functions

6.4: Graphs of Logarithmic Functions

6.5: Logarithmic Properties

6.6: Exponential and Logarithmic Equations

6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions

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6.1: Exponential Functions

Learning Objectives

- Evaluate exponential functions.
- Find the equation of an exponential function.
- Use compound interest formulas.
- Evaluate exponential functions with base e.

India is the second most populous country in the world with a population of about 1.25 billion people in 2013. The population is growing at a rate of about $.2\%$ each year. If this rate continues, the population of India will exceed China's population by the year 2031. When populations grow rapidly, we often say that the growth is "exponential," meaning that something is growing very rapidly. To a mathematician, however, the term *exponential growth* has a very specific meaning. In this section, we will take a look at *exponential functions*, which model this kind of rapid growth.

Identifying Exponential Functions

When exploring linear growth, we observed a constant rate of change—a constant number by which the output increased for each unit increase in input. For example, in the equation $f(x) = 3x + 4$, the slope tells us the output increases by 3 each time the input increases by 1. The scenario in the India population example is different because we have a *percent* change per unit time (rather than a constant change) in the number of people.

Defining an Exponential Function

A study found that the percent of the population who are vegans in the United States doubled from 2009 to 2011. In 2011, 2.5% of the population was vegan, adhering to a diet that does not include any animal products—no meat, poultry, fish, dairy, or eggs. If this rate continues, vegans will make up 10% of the U.S. population in 2015, 40% in 2019, and 80% in 2050.

What exactly does it mean to *grow exponentially*? What does the word *double* have in common with *percent increase*? People toss these words around errantly. Are these words used correctly? The words certainly appear frequently in the media.

- **Percent change** refers to a *change* based on a *percent* of the original amount.
- **Exponential growth** refers to an *increase* based on a constant multiplicative rate of change over equal increments of time, that is, a *percent* increase of the original amount over time.
- **Exponential decay** refers to a *decrease* based on a constant multiplicative rate of change over equal increments of time, that is, a *percent* decrease of the original amount over time.

For us to gain a clear understanding of **exponential growth**, let us contrast exponential growth with **linear growth**. We will construct two functions. The first function is exponential. We will start with an input of 0, and increase each input by 1. We will double the corresponding consecutive outputs. The second function is linear. We will start with an input of 0, and increase each input by 1. We will add 2 to the corresponding consecutive outputs (Table $6.1.1$).

From Table $6.1.1$ we can infer that for these two functions, exponential growth dwarfs linear growth.

- **Exponential growth** refers to the original value from the range increases by the *same percentage* over equal increments found in the domain.
- **Linear growth** refers to the original value from the range increases by the *same amount* over equal increments found in the domain.

Table 6.1.1

x	$f(x) = 2^x$	$g(x) = 2x$
0	1	0
1	2	2
2	4	4
3	8	6
4	16	8
5	32	10
6	64	12

Apparently, the difference between “the same percentage” and “the same amount” is quite significant. For exponential growth, over equal increments, the constant multiplicative rate of change resulted in doubling the output whenever the input increased by one. For linear growth, the constant additive rate of change over equal increments resulted in adding 2 to the output whenever the input was increased by one.

A basic **exponential function** is $f(x) = a^x$, where a is a positive real number not equal to 1.

- If $a > 1$,the function grows at a rate proportional to its size.
- If \(0

Let’s look at the function $f(x) = 2^x$ from our example. We will create a table (Table $6.1.2$) to determine the corresponding outputs over an interval in the domain from -3 to 3.

Table 6.1.2

x	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
$f(x) = 2^x$	$2^{-3} = \frac{1}{8}$	$2^{-2} = \frac{1}{4}$	$2^{-1} = \frac{1}{2}$	$2^0 = 1$	$2^1 = 2$	$2^2 = 4$	$2^3 = 8$

Let us examine the graph of f by plotting the ordered pairs from Table $6.1.2$ and then make a few observations $6.1.1$.

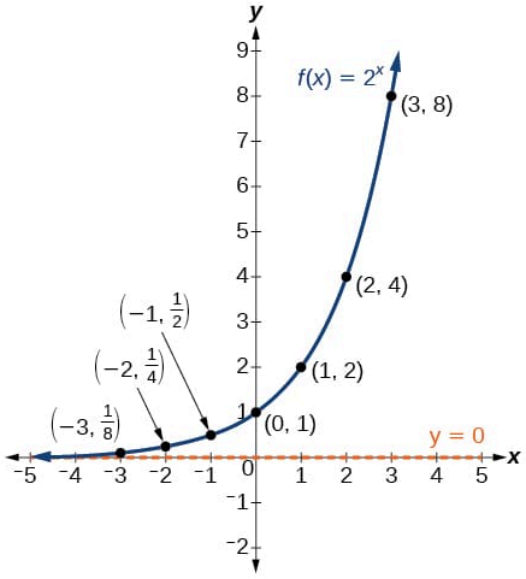


Figure 6.1.1

Let’s define the behavior of the graph of the exponential function $f(x) = 2^x$ and highlight some its key characteristics.

- the domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$,

- the range is $(0, \infty)$,
- as $x \to \infty$, $f(x) \to \infty$,
- as $x \to -\infty$, $f(x) \to 0$,
- $f(x)$ is always increasing,
- the graph of $f(x)$ will never touch the *x*-axis because base two raised to any exponent never has the result of zero.
- $y = 0$ is the horizontal asymptote.
- the *y*-intercept is 1.

Definition: Exponential Functions (General Form)

For any real number x, an **exponential function** in general form is a function with the form

$$f(x) = Ca^x \tag{6.1.1}$$

where

- C is a non-zero real number called the initial value and
- a is any positive real number such that $a \neq 1$.
- The domain of f is all real numbers.
- The range of f is all positive real numbers if $C > 0$.
- The range of f is all negative real numbers if $C < 0$.
- The *y*-intercept is $(0, C)$,and the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.

Note: Since the value a is called the "base", we sometimes use the letter b instead of a.

Example 6.1.1: Identifying Exponential Functions

Which of the following equations are *not* exponential functions?

- $f(x) = 4^{3(x-2)}$
- $g(x) = x^3$
- $h(x) = \left(\frac{1}{3}\right)^x$
- $j(x) = (-2)^x$

Solution

By definition, an exponential function has a constant as a base and an independent variable as an exponent. Thus, $g(x) = x^3$ does not represent an exponential function because the base is an independent variable. In fact, $g(x) = x^3$ is a power function.

Recall that the base b of an exponential function is always a positive constant, and $b \neq 1$. Thus, $j(x) = (-2)^x$ does not represent an exponential function because the base, -2, is less than 0.

Exercise 6.1.1

Which of the following equations represent exponential functions?

- $f(x) = 2x^2 - 3x + 1$
- $g(x) = 0.875^x$
- $h(x) = 1.75x + 2$
- $j(x) = 1095.6^{-2x}$

Answer available at the end of this section.

Evaluating Exponential Functions

Recall that the base of an exponential function must be a positive real number other than 1.Why do we limit the base bb to positive values? To ensure that the outputs will be real numbers. Observe what happens if the base is not positive:

- Let $b=-9$ and $x=\frac{1}{2}$. Then $f(x)=f\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)=(-9)^{\frac{1}{2}}=\sqrt{-9}$,which is not a real number.

Why do we limit the base to positive values other than 1? Because base 1 results in the constant function. Observe what happens if the base is 1:

- Let $b=1$. Then $f(x)=1^x=1$ for any value of x.

To evaluate an exponential function with the form $f(x)=b^x$,we simply substitute x with the given value, and calculate the resulting power. For example:

Let $f(x)=2^x$. What is $f(3)$?

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= 2^x \\ f(3) &= 2^3 && \text{Substitute } x=3 \\ &= 8 && \text{Evaluate the power} \end{aligned}$$

To evaluate an exponential function with a form other than the basic form, it is important to follow the order of operations. For example:

Let $f(x)=30(2)^x$. What is $f(3)$?

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= 30(2)^x \\ f(3) &= 30(2)^3 && \text{Substitute } x=3 \\ &= 30(8) && \text{Simplify the power first} \\ &= 240 && \text{Multiply} \end{aligned}$$

Note that if the order of operations were not followed, the result would be incorrect:

$$f(3)=30(2)^3 \neq 60^3=216,000$$

Example $6.1.2$: Evaluating Exponential Functions

Let $f(x)=5(3)^{x+1}$. Evaluate $f(2)$ without using a calculator.

Solution

Follow the order of operations. Be sure to pay attention to the parentheses.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= 5(3)^{x+1} \\ f(2) &= 5(3)^{2+1} && \text{Substitute } x=2 \\ &= 5(3)^3 && \text{Add the exponents} \\ &= 5(27) && \text{Simplify the power} \\ &= 135 && \text{Multiply} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise $6.1.2$

Let $f(x)=8(1.2)^{x-5}$. Evaluate $f(3)$ using a calculator. Round to four decimal places.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Defining Exponential Growth

Because the output of exponential functions increases very rapidly, the term “exponential growth” is often used in everyday language to describe anything that grows or increases rapidly. However, exponential growth can be defined more precisely in a mathematical sense. If the growth rate is proportional to the amount present, the function models exponential growth.

Definition: Exponential Growth

A function that models exponential growth by a rate proportional to the amount present. For any real number x and any positive real numbers C and b such that $b > 1$,an exponential growth function has the form

$$f(x) = Cb^x \tag{6.1.2}$$

where

- C is the initial or starting value of the function.
- b is the growth factor or growth multiplier per unit x.

In more general terms, we have an *exponential function*, in which a constant base is raised to a variable exponent. To differentiate between linear and exponential functions, let’s consider two companies, A and B. Company A has 100 stores and expands by opening 50 new stores a year, so its growth can be represented by the function $A(x) = 100 + 50x$. Company B has 100 stores and expands by increasing the number of stores by 50% each year, so its growth can be represented by the function $B(x) = 100(1 + 0.5)^x$.

A few years of growth for these companies are illustrated in Table $6.1.3$.

Table $6.1.3$

Year, x	Stores, Company A	Stores, Company B
0	$100 + 50(0) = 100$	$100(1 + 0.5)^0 = 100$
1	$100 + 50(1) = 150$	$100(1 + 0.5)^1 = 150$
2	$100 + 50(2) = 200$	$100(1 + 0.5)^2 = 225$
3	$100 + 50(3) = 250$	$100(1 + 0.5)^3 = 337.5$
x	$A(x) = 100 + 50x$	$B(x) = 100(1 + 0.5)^x$

The graphs comparing the number of stores for each company over a five-year period are shown in Figure $6.1.2$. We can see that, with exponential growth, the number of stores increases much more rapidly than with linear growth.

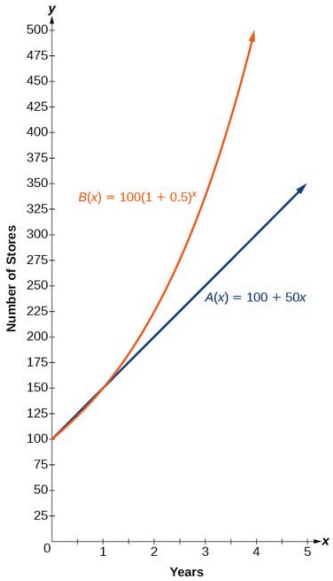


Figure 6.1.2: The graph shows the numbers of stores Companies A and B opened over a five-year period.

Notice that the domain for both functions is $[0, \infty)$,and the range for both functions is $[100, \infty)$. After year 1, Company B always has more stores than Company A.

Now we will turn our attention to the function representing the number of stores for Company B, $B(x) = 100(1 + 0.5)^x$. In this exponential function, 100 represents the initial number of stores, 0.50 represents the growth rate, and $1 + 0.5 = 1.5$ represents the growth factor. Generalizing further, we can write this function as $B(x) = 100(1.5)^x$,where 100 is the initial value, 1.5 is called the *base*, and x is called the *exponent*.

Example 6.1.3: Evaluating a Real-World Exponential Model

At the beginning of this section, we learned that the population of India was about 1.25 billion in the year 2013, with an annual growth rate of about 1.2%. This situation is represented by the growth function $P(t) = 1.25(1.012)^t$, where t is the number of years since 2013. To the nearest thousandth, what will the population of India be in 2031?

Solution

To estimate the population in 2031, we evaluate the models for $t = 18$, because 2031 is 18 years after 2013. Rounding to the nearest thousandth,

$$P(18) = 1.25(1.012)^{18} \approx 1.549$$

There will be about 1.549 billion people in India in the year 2031.

Exercise 6.1.3

The population of China was about 1.39 billion in the year 2013, with an annual growth rate of about 0.6%. This situation is represented by the growth function $P(t) = 1.39(1.006)^t$, where t is the number of years since 2013.To the nearest thousandth, what will the population of China be for the year 2031? How does this compare to the population prediction we made for India in Example 6.1.3?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Finding Equations of Exponential Functions

In the previous examples, we were given an exponential function, which we then evaluated for a given input. Sometimes we are given information about an exponential function without knowing the function explicitly. We must use the information to first write the form of the function, then determine the constants a, a and b, b,and evaluate the function.

How to: Given two data points, write an exponential model

1. If one of the data points has the form $(0, C)$, then C is the initial value. Using C, substitute the second point into the equation $f(x) = C(a)^x$, and solve for a.
2. If neither of the data points have the form $(0, C)$, substitute both points into two equations with the form $f(x) = C(a)^x$. Solve the resulting system of two equations in two unknowns to find C and a.
3. Using the C and a found in the steps above, write the exponential function in the form $f(x) = C(a)^x$.

Example 6.1.4: Writing an Exponential Model When the Initial Value Is Known

In 2006, 80 deer were introduced into a wildlife refuge. By 2012, the population had grown to 180 deer. The population was growing exponentially. Write an algebraic function $N(t)$ representing the population (N) of deer over time t.

Solution

We let our independent variable t be the number of years after 2006. Thus, the information given in the problem can be written as input-output pairs: (0, 80) and (6, 180). Notice that by choosing our input variable to be measured as years after 2006, we have given ourselves the initial value for the function, $C = 80$. We can now substitute the second point into the equation $N(t) = 80b^t$ to find b:

$$\begin{aligned} N(t) &= 80b^t \\ 180 &= 80b^6 \qquad \text{Substitute using point } (6, 180) \\ \frac{9}{4} &= b^6 \qquad \text{Divide and write in lowest terms} \\ b &= \left(\frac{9}{4}\right)^{\frac{1}{6}} \qquad \text{Isolate b using properties of exponents} \\ b &\approx 1.1447 \qquad \text{Round to 4 decimal places} \end{aligned}$$

> Unless otherwise stated, do not round any intermediate calculations. Then round the final answer to four places for the remainder of this section.

The exponential model for the population of deer is $N(t) = 80(1.1447)^t$. (Note that this exponential function models short-term growth. As the inputs gets large, the output will get increasingly larger, so much so that the model may not be useful in the long term.)

We can graph our model to observe the population growth of deer in the refuge over time. Notice that the graph in Figure $6.1.3$ passes through the initial points given in the problem, $(0, 80)$ and $(6, 180)$. We can also see that the domain for the function is $[0, \infty)$,and the range for the function is $[80, \infty)$.

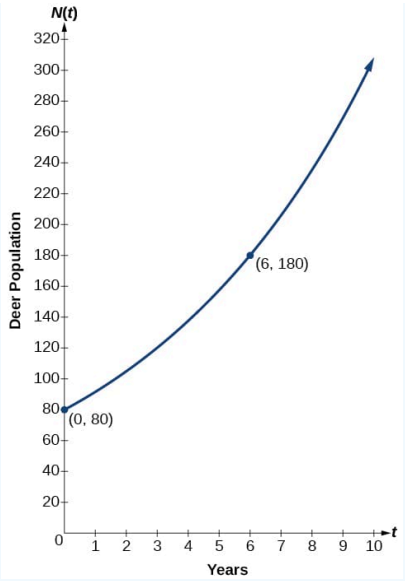


Figure 6.1.3: Graph showing the population of deer over time, $N(t) = 80(1.1447)^t$, t years after 2006

Exercise 6.1.4

A wolf population is growing exponentially. In 2011, 129 wolves were counted. By 2013, the population had reached 236 wolves. What two points can be used to derive an exponential equation modeling this situation? Write the equation representing the population N of wolves over time t.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.1.5: Writing an Exponential Model When the Initial Value is Not Known

Find an exponential function that passes through the points $(-2, 6)$ and $(2, 1)$.

Solution

Because we don't have the initial value, we substitute both points into an equation of the form $f(x) = ab^x$, and then solve the system for a and b.

- Substituting $(-2, 6)$ gives $6 = Ca^{-2}$
- Substituting $(2, 1)$ gives $1 = Ca^2$

Use the first equation to solve for a in terms of b:

$$\begin{aligned} 6 &= Ca^{-2} \\ \frac{6}{a^{-2}} &= C \quad \text{Divide} \\ C &= 6a^2 \quad \text{Use properties of exponents to rewrite the denominator} \end{aligned}$$

Substitute a in the second equation, and solve for b:

$$\begin{aligned} 1 &= Ca^2 \\ 1 &= 6a^2 \\ &= 6a^4 \quad \text{Substitute C} \\ a &= \left(\frac{1}{6}\right)^{\frac{1}{4}} \quad \text{Round 4 decimal places rewrite the denominator} \\ a &\approx 0.6389 \end{aligned}$$

Use the value of a in the first equation to solve for the value of C:

$$\begin{aligned} C &= 6a^2 \\ &\approx 6(0.6389)^2 \\ &\approx 2.4492 \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the equation is $f(x) = 2.4492(0.6389)^x$.

We can graph our model to check our work. Notice that the graph in Figure $6.1.4$ passes through the initial points given in the problem, $(-2, 6)$ and $(2, 1)$. The graph is an example of an exponential decay function.

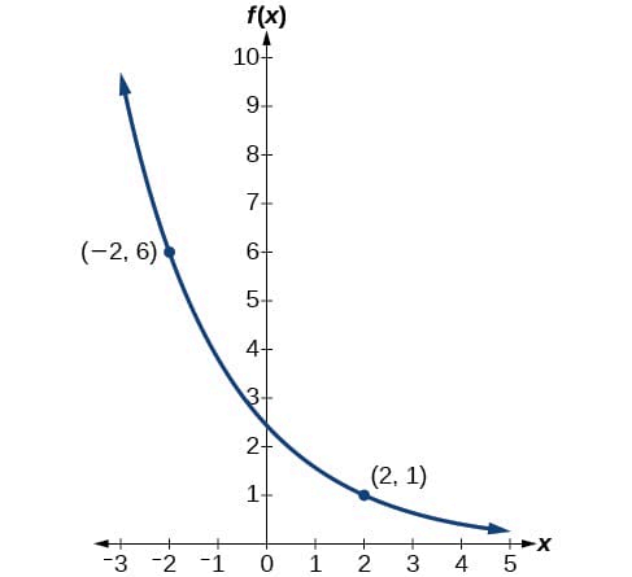


Figure $6.1.4$: The graph of $f(x) = 2.4492(0.6389)^x$ models exponential decay.

Definition: Exponential Decay

A function that models exponential decay by a rate proportional to the amount present. For any real number x and any positive real numbers C and b such that \(0

$$f(x) = Ca^x \tag{6.1.3}$$

where

- C is the initial or starting value of the function.
- a is the decay factor per unit x

Exercise $6.1.5$

Given the two points $(1, 3)$ and $(2, 4.5)$,find the equation of the exponential function that passes through these two points.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Do two points always determine a unique exponential function?

Yes, provided the two points are either both above the x-axis or both below the x-axis and have different x-coordinates. But keep in mind that we also need to know that the graph is, in fact, an exponential function. Not every graph that looks exponential really is exponential. We need to know the graph is based on a model that shows the same percent growth with each unit increase in x, which in many real world cases involves time.

How to: Given the graph of an exponential function, write its equation

1. First, identify two points on the graph. Choose the y-intercept as one of the two points whenever possible. Try to choose points that are as far apart as possible to reduce round-off error.
2. If one of the data points is the y-intercept $(0, C)$, then C is the initial value. Using C, substitute the second point into the equation $f(x) = C(a)^x$, and solve for a
3. If neither of the data points have the form $(0, C)$, substitute both points into two equations with the form $f(x) = C(a)^x$. Solve the resulting system of two equations in two unknowns to find C and a.
4. Write the exponential function, $f(x) = C(a)^x$.

Example 6.1.6: Writing an Exponential Function Given Its Graph

Find an equation for the exponential function graphed in Figure 6.1.5.

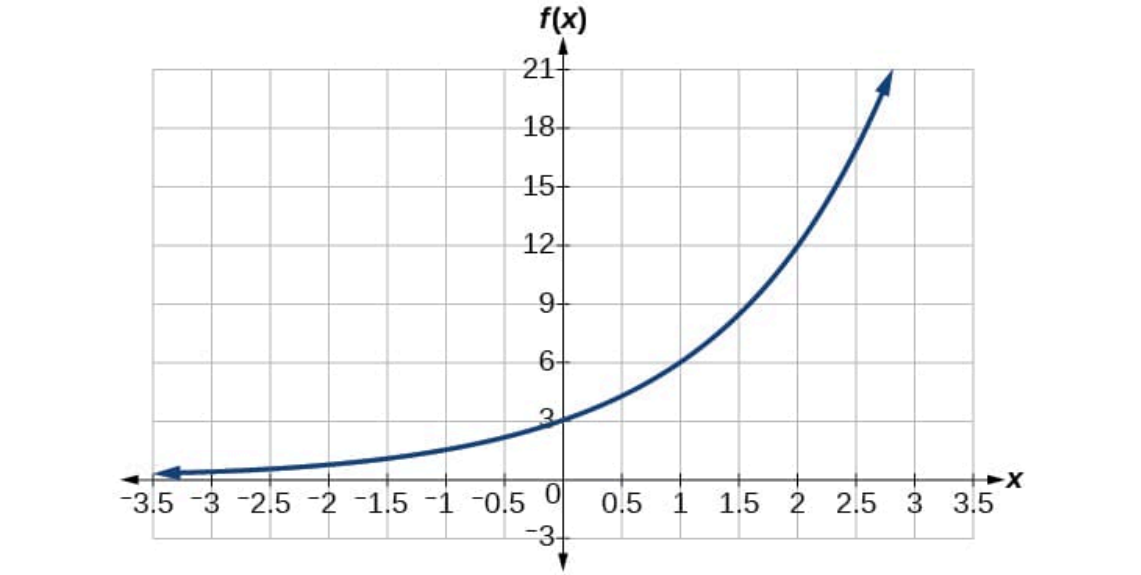


Figure 6.1.5

Solution

We can choose the y-intercept of the graph, $(0, 3)$, as our first point. This gives us the initial value, $a = 3$. Next, choose a point on the curve some distance away from $(0, 3)$ that has integer coordinates. One such point is $(2, 12)$.

$$
\begin{aligned}
y &= Ca^x && \text{Write the general form of an exponential equation} \\
y &= 3a^x && \text{Substitute the initial value 3 for } a \\
12 &= 3a^2 && \text{Substitute in 12 for } y \text{ and 2 for } x \\
4 &= a^2 && \text{Divide by 3} \\
b &= \pm 2 && \text{Take the square root}
\end{aligned}
$$

Because we restrict ourselves to positive values of a, we will use $a = 2$. Substitute C and a into the standard form to yield the equation $f(x) = 3(2)^x$.

Exercise 6.1.6

Find an equation for the exponential function graphed in Figure 6.1.6.

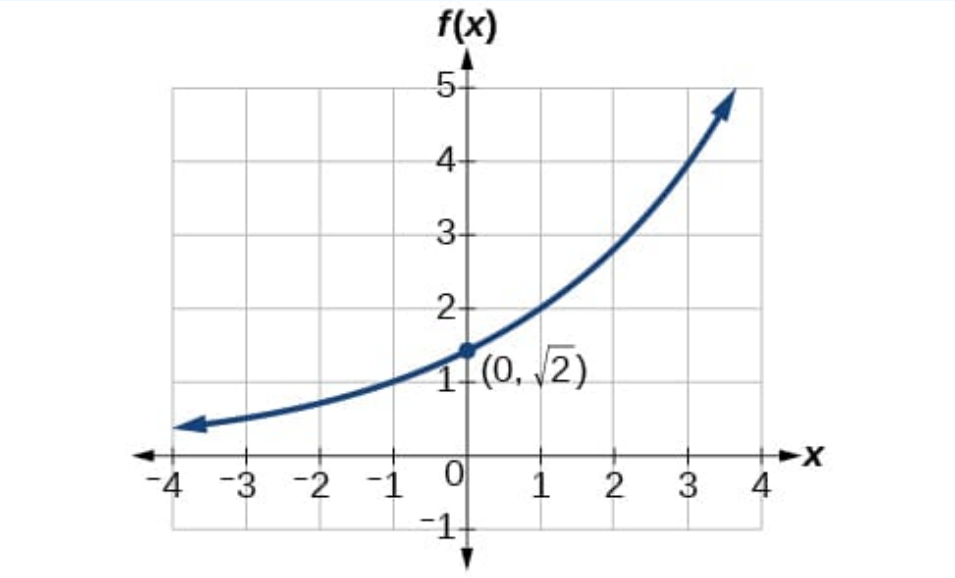


Figure 6.1.6

Answer available at the end of this section.

Applying the Compound-Interest Formula

Savings instruments in which earnings are continually reinvested, such as mutual funds and retirement accounts, use **compound interest**. The term *compounding* refers to interest earned not only on the original value, but on the accumulated value of the account.

The **annual percentage rate (APR)** of an account, also called the **nominal rate**, is the yearly interest rate earned by an investment account. The term *nominal* is used when the compounding occurs a number of times other than once per year. In fact, when interest is compounded more than once a year, the effective interest rate ends up being *greater* than the nominal rate! This is a powerful tool for investing.

We can calculate the compound interest using the compound interest formula, which is an exponential function of the variables time t, principal P, APR r, and number of compounding periods in a year n:

$$A(t) = P\left(1 + \frac{r}{n}\right)^{nt}$$

For example, observe Table 6.1.4, which shows the result of investing $\$1,000$ at 10% for one year. Notice how the value of the account increases as the compounding frequency increases.

Table 6.1.4

Frequency	Value after 1 year
Annually	$\$1100$
Semiannually	$\$1102.50$

Frequency	Value after 1 year
Quarterly	$1103.81
Monthly	$1104.71
Daily	$1105.16

Definition: Compound Interest

Compound interest can be calculated using the formula

$$A(t) = P\left(1 + \frac{r}{n}\right)^{nt} \tag{6.1.4}$$

where

- $A(t)$ is the account value,
- t is measured in years,
- P is the starting amount of the account, often called the principal, or more generally present value,
- r is the annual percentage rate (APR) expressed as a decimal, and
- n is the number of compounding periods in one year.

Example 6.1.8: Calculating Compound Interest

If we invest $\$3,000$ in an investment account paying 3% interest compounded quarterly, how much will the account be worth in 10 years?

Solution

Because we are starting with $\$3,000$, $P = 3000$. Our interest rate is 3%, so $r = 0.03$. Because we are compounding quarterly, we are compounding 4 times per year, so $n = 4$. We want to know the value of the account in 10 years, so we are looking for $A(10)$,the value when $t = 10$.

$$\begin{aligned} A(t) &= P\left(1 + \frac{r}{n}\right)^{nt} && \text{Use the compound interest formula} \\ A(10) &= 3000\left(1 + \frac{0.03}{4}\right)^{(4)\cdot(10)} && \text{Substitute using given values} \\ &\approx \$4045.05 && \text{Round to two decimal places} \end{aligned}$$

The account will be worth about $\$4,045.05$ in 10 years.

Exercise 6.1.8

An initial investment of $\$100,000$ at 12% interest is compounded weekly (use 52 weeks in a year). What will the investment be worth in 30 years?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.1.9: Using the Compound Interest Formula to Solve for the Principal

A 529 Plan is a college-savings plan that allows relatives to invest money to pay for a child's future college tuition; the account grows tax-free. Lily wants to set up a 529 account for her new granddaughter and wants the account to grow to $\$40,000$ over 18 years. She believes the account will earn 6% compounded semi-annually (twice a year). To the nearest dollar, how much will Lily need to invest in the account now?

Solution

The nominal interest rate is 6%, so $r = 0.06$. Interest is compounded twice a year, so $k = 2$.

We want to find the initial investment, P, needed so that the value of the account will be worth $\$40,000$ in 18 years. Substitute the given values into the compound interest formula, and solve for P.

$$\begin{aligned} A(t) &= P\left(1+\frac{r}{n}\right)^{nt} && \text{Use the compound interest formula} \\ 40,000 &= P\left(1+\frac{0.06}{2}\right)^{2(18)} && \text{Substitute using given values } A, r, n, t \\ 40,000 &= P(1.03)^{36} && \text{Simplify} \\ \frac{40,000}{(1.03)^{36}} &= P && \text{Isolate } P \\ P &\approx \$13,801 && \text{Divide and round to the nearest dollar} \end{aligned}$$

Lily will need to invest $\$13,801$ to have $\$40,000$ in 18 years.

Exercise 6.1.9

Refer to Example $6.1.9$. To the nearest dollar, how much would Lily need to invest if the account is compounded quarterly?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Evaluating Functions with Base e

As we saw earlier, the amount earned on an account increases as the compounding frequency increases. Table $6.1.5$ shows that the increase from annual to semi-annual compounding is larger than the increase from monthly to daily compounding. This might lead us to ask whether this pattern will continue.

Examine the value of $\$1$ invested at 100% interest for 1 year, compounded at various frequencies, listed in Table $6.1.5$.

Table $6.1.5$

Frequency	$A(t) = \left(1+\frac{1}{n}\right)^n$	Value
Annually	$\left(1+\frac{1}{1}\right)^1$	$\$2$
Semiannually	$\left(1+\frac{1}{2}\right)^2$	$\$2.25$
Quarterly	$\left(1+\frac{1}{4}\right)^4$	$\$2.441406$
Monthly	$\left(1+\frac{1}{12}\right)^{12}$	$\$2.613035$
Daily	$\left(1+\frac{1}{365}\right)^{365}$	$\$2.714567$
Hourly	$\left(1+\frac{1}{8760}\right)^{8760}$	$\$2.718127$
Once per minute	$\left(1+\frac{1}{525600}\right)^{525600}$	$\$2.718279$
Once per second	$\left(1+\frac{1}{31536000}\right)^{31536000}$	$\$2.718282$

These values appear to be approaching a limit as n increases without bound. In fact, as n gets larger and larger, the expression

$\left(1+\frac{1}{n}\right)^n$ approaches a number used so frequently in mathematics that it has its own name: the letter e. This value is an irrational number, which means that its decimal expansion goes on forever without repeating. Its approximation to six decimal places is shown below.

Definition: The Number e

The letter e represents the irrational number

$$\left(1+\frac{1}{n}\right)^n \tag{6.1.5}$$

as n increases without bound

The letter e is used as a base for many real-world exponential models. To work with base e, we use the approximation, $e \approx 2.718282$. The constant was named by the Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler (1707–1783) who first investigated and discovered many of its properties.

Example 6.1.10: Using a Calculator to Find Powers of e

Calculate e^2. Round to four decimal places.

Solution

On a calculator, press the button labeled $[e^x]$. The window shows $[e^(]$. Type 2 and then close parenthesis, $[)]$. Press [ENTER]. Rounding to 4 decimal places, $e^2 \approx 7.3891$.

Exercise 6.1.10

Use a calculator to find $e^{-0.5}$. Round to four decimal places.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Investigating Continuous Growth

So far we have worked with rational bases for exponential functions. For most real-world phenomena, however, e is used as the base for exponential functions. Exponential models that use e as the base are called continuous growth or decay models. We see these models in finance, computer science, and most of the sciences, such as physics, toxicology, and fluid dynamics.

Definition: The Continuous Growth/decay Formula

For all real numbers t,and all positive numbers C and k, continuous growth or decay is represented by the formula

$$f(t) = Ce^{kt} \tag{6.1.6}$$

where

- C is the initial value,
- k is the continuous growth rate per unit time,
- t is the elapsed time.

If $k > 0$, then the formula represents continuous growth. If $k < 0$, then the formula represents continuous decay.

For business applications, the continuous growth formula is called the continuous compounding formula and takes the form

$$A(t) = Pe^{rt} \tag{6.1.7}$$

where

- P is the principal or the initial invested,
- r is the growth or interest rate per unit time,
- t is the period or term of the investment.

How to: Given the initial value, rate of growth or decay, and time t, solve a continuous growth or decay function

1. Use the information in the problem to determine a, the initial value of the function.
2. Use the information in the problem to determine the growth rate r.
   - If the problem refers to continuous growth, then $r > 0$.
   - If the problem refers to continuous decay, then $r < 0$.
3. Use the information in the problem to determine the time t.
4. Substitute the given information into the continuous growth formula and solve for $A(t)$.

Example 6.1.11: Calculating Continuous Growth

A person invested $\$1,000$ in an account earning a nominal 10% per year compounded continuously. How much was in the account at the end of one year?

Solution

Since the account is growing in value, this is a continuous compounding problem with growth rate $r = 0.10$. The initial investment was $\$1,000$, so $P = 1000$. We use the continuous compounding formula to find the value after $t = 1$ year:

$$\begin{aligned} A(t) &= Pe^{rt} && \text{Use the continuous compounding formula} \\ &= 1000(e)^{0.1} && \text{Substitute known values for } P, r, t \\ &\approx 1105.17 && \text{Use a calculator to approximate} \end{aligned}$$

The account is worth $\$1,105.17$ after one year.

Exercise 6.1.11

A person invests $\$100,000$ at a nominal 12% interest per year compounded continuously. What will be the value of the investment in 30 years?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.1.12: Calculating Continuous Decay

$Radon - 222$ decays at a continuous rate of 17.3% per day. How much will $100mg$ of $Radon - 222$ decay to in 3 days?

Solution

Since the substance is decaying, the rate, 17.3%, is negative. So, $r = -0.173$. The initial amount of $Radon - 222$ was 100 mg, so $a = 100$. We use the continuous decay formula to find the value after $t = 3$ days:

$$\begin{aligned} A(t) &= ae^{rt} && \text{Use the continuous growth formula} \\ &= 100e6{-}0.173(3) && \text{Substitute known values for } a, r, t \\ &\approx 59.5115 && \text{Use a calculator to approximate} \end{aligned}$$

So 59.5115 mg of $Radon-222$ will remain.

Exercise 6.1.12

Using the data in Example $6.1.12$, how much $Radon-222$ will remain after one year?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with exponential functions.

- Exponential Growth Function
- Compound Interest

Key Equations

definition of the exponential function	$f(x) = b^x$, where $b > 0$, $b \neq 1$
definition of exponential growth	$f(x) = ab^x$, where $a > 0$, $b > 0$, $b \neq 1$
compound interest formula	$A(t) = P(1 + \frac{r}{n})^{nt}$, where $A(t)$ is the account value at time t t is the number of years P is the initial investment, often called the principal r is the annual percentage rate (APR), or nominal rate n is the number of compounding periods in one year
continuous growth formula	$A(t) = ae^{rt}$, where t is the number of unit time periods of growth a is the starting amount (in the continuous compounding formula a is replaced with P, the principal) e is the mathematical constant, $e \approx 2.718282$

Key Concepts

- An exponential function is defined as a function with a positive constant other than 1 raised to a variable exponent. See Example.
- A function is evaluated by solving at a specific value. See Example and Example.
- An exponential model can be found when the growth rate and initial value are known. See Example.
- An exponential model can be found when the two data points from the model are known. See Example.
- An exponential model can be found using two data points from the graph of the model. See Example.
- An exponential model can be found using two data points from the graph and a calculator. See Example.

- The value of an account at any time t can be calculated using the compound interest formula when the principal, annual interest rate, and compounding periods are known. See Example.
- The initial investment of an account can be found using the compound interest formula when the value of the account, annual interest rate, compounding periods, and life span of the account are known. See Example.
- The number e is a mathematical constant often used as the base of real world exponential growth and decay models. Its decimal approximation is $e \approx 2.718282$.
- Scientific and graphing calculators have the key $[ex]$ or $[exp(x)]$ for calculating powers of e. See Example**.**
- Continuous growth or decay models are exponential models that use e as the base. Continuous growth and decay models can be found when the initial value and growth or decay rate are known. See Example and Example.

Answers

Exercise $6.1.1$

$g(x) = 0.875^x$ and $j(x) = 1095.6^{-2x}$ represent exponential functions.

Exercise $6.1.2$

5.5556

Exercise $6.1.3$

About 1.548 billion people; by the year 2031, India's population will exceed China's by about 0.001 billion, or 1 million people.

Exercise $6.1.4$

$(0, 129)$ and $(2, 236)$; $N(t) = 129(1.3526)^t$

Exercise $6.1.5$

$f(x) = 2(1.5)^x$

Exercise $6.1.6$

$f(x) = \sqrt{2}(\sqrt{2})^x$. Answers may vary due to round-off error. The answer should be very close to $1.4142(1.4142)^x$.

Exercise $6.1.8$

about $\$3,644,675.88$

Exercise $6.1.9$

$\$13,693$

Exercise $6.1.10$

$e^{-0.5} \approx 0.6065$

Exercise $6.1.11$

$\$3,659,823.44$

Exercise $6.1.12$

$3.77E-26$ (This is calculator notation for the number written as 3.77×10^{-26} in scientific notation. While the output of an exponential function is never zero, this number is so close to zero that for all practical purposes we can accept zero as the answer.)

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6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions

Learning Objectives

- Graph exponential functions.
- Graph exponential functions using transformations.

As we discussed in the previous section, exponential functions are used for many real-world applications such as finance, forensics, computer science, and most of the life sciences. Working with an equation that describes a real-world situation gives us a method for making predictions. Most of the time, however, the equation itself is not enough. We learn a lot about things by seeing their pictorial representations, and that is exactly why graphing exponential equations is a powerful tool. It gives us another layer of insight for predicting future events.

Graphing Exponential Functions

Before we begin graphing, it is helpful to review the behavior of exponential growth. Recall the table of values for a function of the form $f(x) = b^x$ whose base is greater than one. We'll use the function $f(x) = 2^x$. Observe how the output values in Table $6.2.1$ change as the input increases by 1.

Table $6.2.1$

x	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
$f(x) = 2^x$	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	2	4	8

Each output value is the product of the previous output and the base, 2. We call the base 2 the *constant ratio*. In fact, for any exponential function with the form $f(x) = b^x$, b is the constant ratio of the function. This means that as the input increases by 1, the output value will increase by a multiple of the base.

Notice from the table that

- the output values are positive for all values of x;
- as x increases, the output values increase without bound; and
- as x decreases, the output values grow smaller, approaching zero.

Figure $6.2.1$ shows the exponential growth function $f(x) = 2^x$.

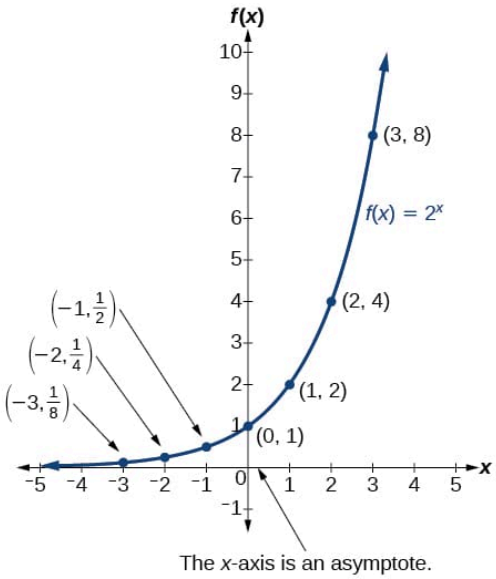


Figure $6.2.1$: Notice that the graph gets close to the x-axis, but never touches it.

The domain of $f(x) = 2^x$ is all real numbers, the range is $(0, \infty)$, and the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.

To get a sense of the behavior of exponential decay, we can create a table of values for a function of the form $f(x) = b^x$ whose base is between zero and one. We'll use the function $g(x) = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^x$. Observe how the output values in Table $6.2.2$ change as the input increases by 1.

Table $6.2.2$

x	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
$g(x) = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^x$	8	4	2	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{8}$

Again, because the input is increasing by 1, each output value is the product of the previous output and the base, or constant ratio $\frac{1}{2}$.

Notice from the table that

- the output values are positive for all values of x;
- as x increases, the output values grow smaller, approaching zero; and
- as x decreases, the output values grow without bound.

Figure $6.2.2$ shows the exponential decay function, $g(x) = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^x$.

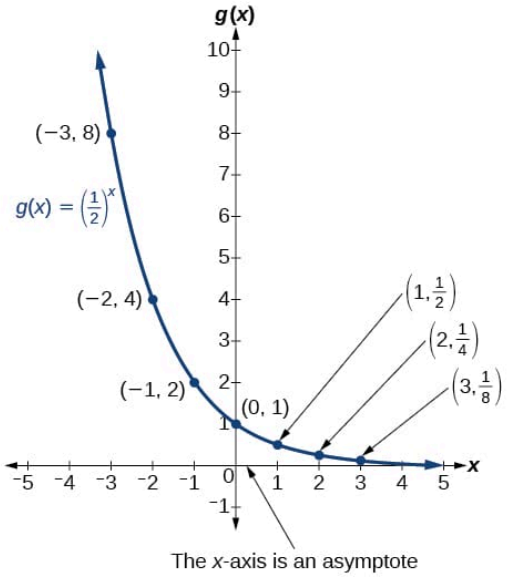


Figure $6.2.2$

The domain of $g(x) = (\frac{1}{2})^{x}$ is all real numbers, the range is $(0, \infty)$,and the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GRAPH OF THE PARENT FUNCTION $f(X) = b^x$

An exponential function with the form $f(x) = b^x, b > 0, b \neq 1$,has these characteristics:

- one-to-one function
- horizontal asymptote: $y = 0$
- domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
- range: $(0, \infty)$
- *x*-intercept: none
- *y*-intercept: $(0, 1)$
- increasing if $b > 1$
- decreasing if $b < 1$

Figure $6.2.3$ compares the graphs of exponential growth and decay functions.

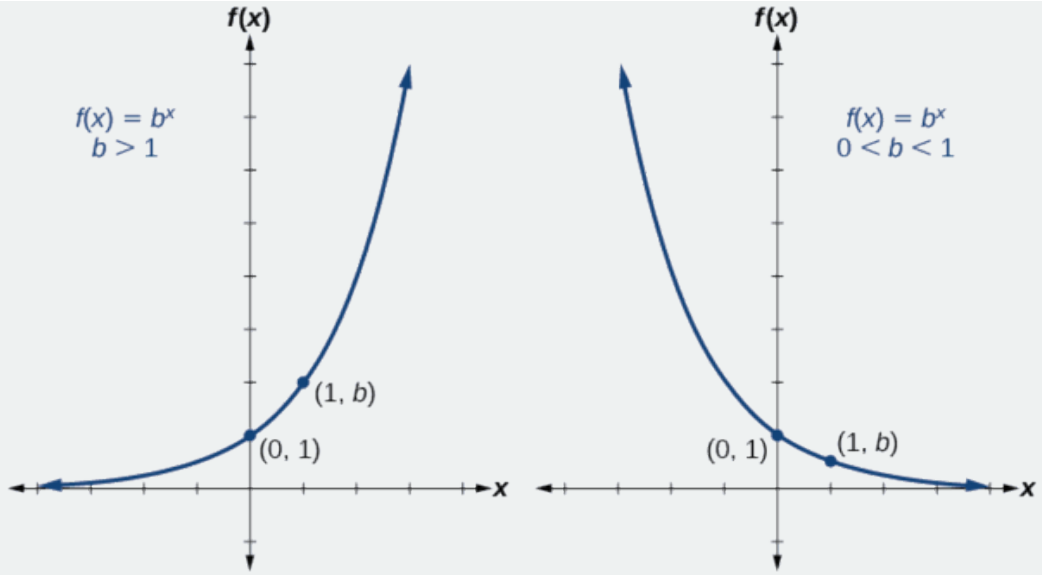


Figure 6.2.3

How to: Given an exponential function of the form $f(x) = b^x$,graph the function

1. Create a table of points.
2. Plot at least 3 point from the table, including the *y*-intercept $(0, 1)$.
3. Draw a smooth curve through the points.
4. State the domain, $(-\infty, \infty)$,the range, $(0, \infty)$,and the horizontal asymptote, $y = 0$.

Example 6.2.1: Sketching the Graph of an Exponential Function of the Form $f(x) = b^x$

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = 0.25^x$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Before graphing, identify the behavior and create a table of points for the graph.

Table 6.2.3

x	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
$f(x) = 0.25^x$	64	16	4	1	0.25	\(0.0625\0	0.015625

- Since $b = 0.25$ is between zero and one, we know the function is decreasing. The left tail of the graph will increase without bound, and the right tail will approach the asymptote $y = 0$.
- Create a table of points as in Table 6.2.3.
- Plot the *y*-intercept, $(0, 1)$,along with two other points. We can use $(-1, 4)$ and $(1, 0.25)$.

Draw a smooth curve connecting the points as in Figure 6.2.4.

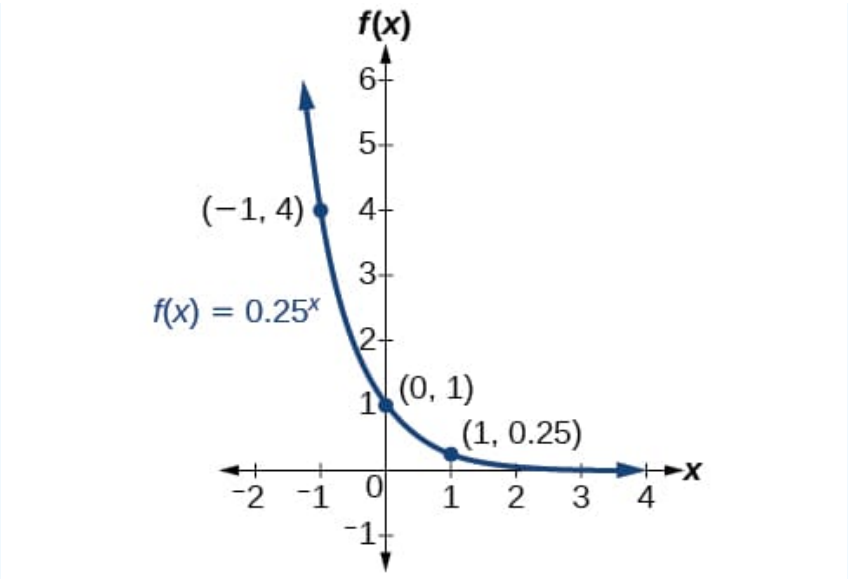


Figure 6.2.4

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(0, \infty)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.

Exercise 6.2.1

Sketch the graph of $f(x) = 4^x$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Transformations of Exponential Functions

Transformations of exponential graphs behave similarly to those of other functions. Just as with other parent functions, we can apply the four types of transformations—shifts, reflections, stretches, and compressions—to the parent function $f(x) = b^x$ without loss of shape. For instance, just as the quadratic function maintains its parabolic shape when shifted, reflected, stretched, or compressed, the exponential function also maintains its general shape regardless of the transformations applied.

Graphing a Vertical Shift

The first transformation occurs when we add a constant d to the parent function $f(x) = b^x$, giving us a vertical shiftd d units in the same direction as the sign. For example, if we begin by graphing a parent function, $f(x) = 2^x$, we can then graph two vertical shifts alongside it, using $d = 3$: the upward shift, $g(x) = 2^x + 3$ and the downward shift, $h(x) = 2^x - 3$. Both vertical shifts are shown in Figure 6.2.5.

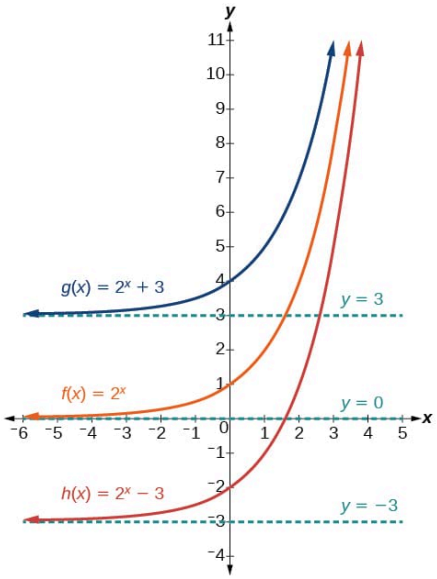


Figure 6.2.5

Observe the results of shifting $f(x) = 2^x$ vertically:

- The domain, $(-\infty, \infty)$ remains unchanged.
- When the function is shifted up 3 units to $g(x) = 2^x + 3$:
  - The *y*-intercept shifts up 3 units to $(0, 4)$.
  - The asymptote shifts up 3 units to $y = 3$.
  - The range becomes $(3, \infty)$.
- When the function is shifted down 3 units to $h(x) = 2^x - 3$:
  - The *y*-intercept shifts down 3 units to $(0, -2)$.
  - The asymptote also shifts down 3 units to $y = -3$.
  - The range becomes $(-3, \infty)$.

Graphing a Horizontal Shift

The next transformation occurs when we add a constant c to the input of the parent function $f(x) = b^x$, giving us a horizontal shift c units in the *opposite* direction of the sign. For example, if we begin by graphing the parent function $f(x) = 2^x$, we can then graph two horizontal shifts alongside it, using $c = 3$: the shift left, $g(x) = 2^{x+3}$, and the shift right, $h(x) = 2^{x-3}$. $h(x) = 2^{x-3}$. Both horizontal shifts are shown in Figure 6.2.6.

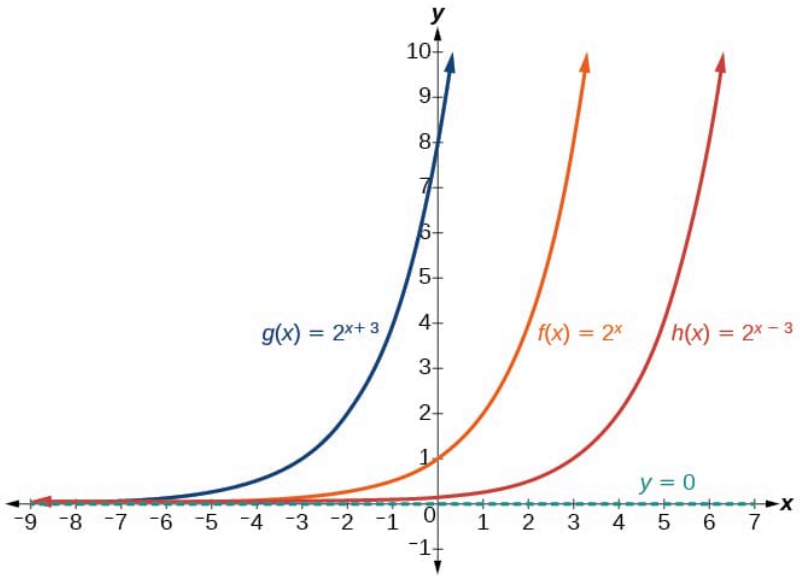


Figure 6.2.6

Observe the results of shifting $f(x) = 2^x$ horizontally:

- The domain, $(-\infty, \infty)$,remains unchanged.
- The asymptote, $y = 0$,remains unchanged.
- The *y*-intercept shifts such that:
  - When the function is shifted left 3 units to $g(x) = 2^{x+3}$,the *y*-intercept becomes $(0, 8)$. This is because $2^{x+3} = (8)2^x$,so the initial value of the function is 8.
  - When the function is shifted right 3 units to $h(x) = 2^{x-3}$,the *y*-intercept becomes $(0, \frac{1}{8})$. Again, see that $2^{x-3} = (\frac{1}{8})2^x$,so the initial value of the function is $\frac{1}{8}$.

SHIFTS OF THE PARENT FUNCTION $f(X) = b^x$

For any constants h and k,the function $f(x) = b^{x+h} + k$ shifts the parent function $f(x) = b^x$

- vertically k units, in the *same* direction of the sign of k.
- horizontally h units, in the *opposite* direction of the sign of h.
- The *y*-intercept becomes $(0, b^h + k)$.
- The horizontal asymptote becomes $y = k$.
- The range becomes (k, ∞).
- The domain, $(-\infty, \infty)$,remains unchanged.

How to: Given an exponential function with the form $f(x) = b^{x+c} + d$, graph the translation

1. Draw the horizontal asymptote $y = k$.
2. Identify the shift as $(-h, k)$. Shift the graph of $f(x) = b^x$ left h units if h is positive, and right h units if h is negative.
3. Shift the graph of $f(x) = b^x$ up k units if k is positive, and down k units if k is negative.
4. State the domain, $(-\infty, \infty)$,the range, (k, ∞),and the horizontal asymptote $y = k$.

Example 6.2.2: Graphing a Shift of an Exponential Function

Graph $f(x) = 2^{x+1} - 3$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

We have an exponential equation of the form $f(x) = b^{x+h} + k$, with $b = 2$, $h = 1$, and $k = -3$.

Draw the horizontal asymptote $y = k$, so draw $y = -3$.

Identify the shift as $(-h, k)$, so the shift is $(-1, -3)$.

Shift the graph of $f(x) = b^x$ left 1 units and down 3 units.

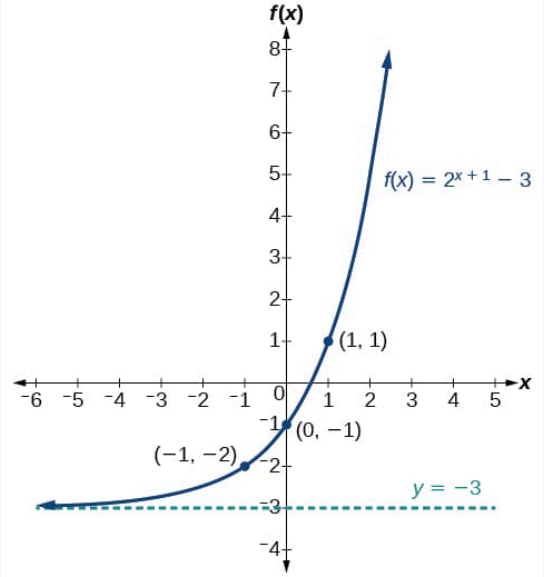


Figure $6.2.7$

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(-3, \infty)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = -3$.

Exercise $6.2.2$

Graph $f(x) = 2^{x-1} + 3$. State domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing a Stretch or Compression

While horizontal and vertical shifts involve adding constants to the input or to the function itself, a **stretch** or **compression** occurs when we multiply the parent function $f(x) = b^x$ by a constant $|a| > 0$. For example, if we begin by graphing the parent function $f(x) = 2^x$,we can then graph the stretch, using $a = 3$,to get $g(x) = 3(2)^x$ as shown on the left in Figure $6.2.8$, and the compression, using $a = \frac{1}{3}$,to get $h(x) = \frac{1}{3}(2)^x$ as shown on the right in Figure $6.2.8$.

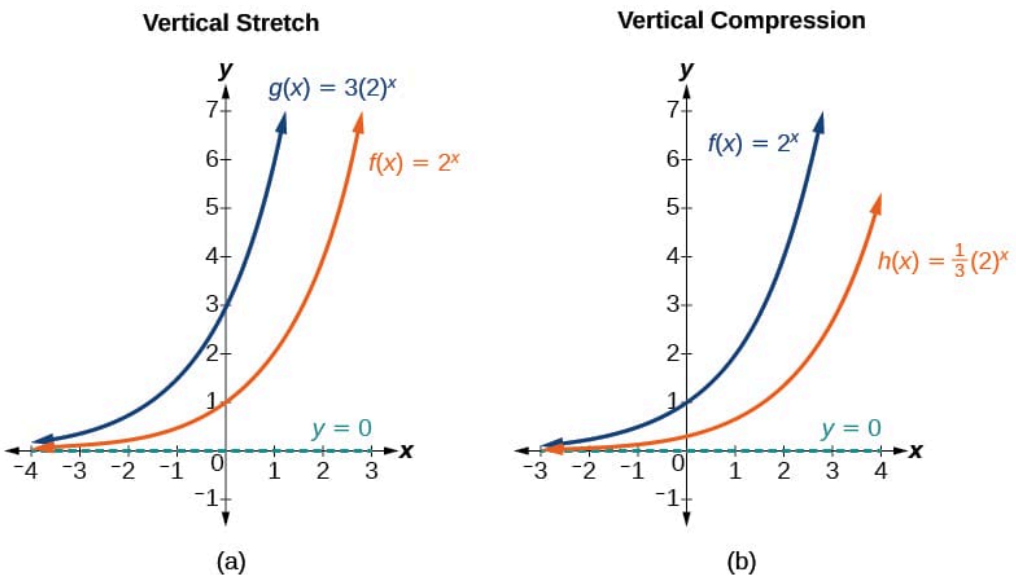


Figure 6.2.8: (a) $g(x) = 3(2)^x$ stretches the graph of $f(x) = 2^x$ vertically by a factor of 3. (b) $h(x) = \frac{1}{3}(2)^x$ compresses the graph of $f(x) = 2^x$ vertically by a factor of $\frac{1}{3}$.

STRETCHES AND COMPRESSIONS OF THE PARENT FUNCTION $f(x) = b^x$

For any factor $C > 0$,the function $f(x) = C(b)^x$

- is stretched vertically by a factor of C if $|C| > 1$.
- is compressed vertically by a factor of C if $|C| < 1$.
- has a *y*-intercept of $(0, C)$.
- has a horizontal asymptote at $y = 0$, a range of $(0, \infty)$, and a domain of $(-\infty, \infty)$,which are unchanged from the parent function.

Example 6.2.4: Graphing the Stretch of an Exponential Function

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = 4\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^x$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Before graphing, identify the behavior and key points on the graph.

- Since $b = \frac{1}{2}$ is between zero and one, the left tail of the graph will increase without bound as x decreases, and the right tail will approach the *x*-axis as x increases.
- Since $a = 4$,the graph of $f(x) = (\frac{1}{2})^x$ will be stretched by a factor of 4.
- Create a table of points as shown in Table 6.2.4.

Table 6.2.4

x	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
$f(x) = 4(\frac{1}{2})^x$	32	16	8	4	2	1	0.5

- Plot the *y*-intercept, $(0, 4)$,along with two other points. We can use $(-1, 8)$ and $(1, 2)$.

Draw a smooth curve connecting the points, as shown in Figure 6.2.9.

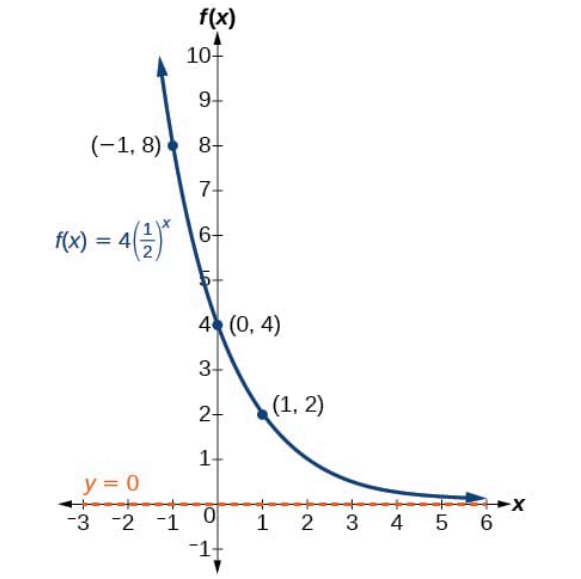


Figure $6.2.9$

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(0, \infty)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.

Exercise $6.2.4$

Sketch the graph of $f(x) = \frac{1}{2}(4)^x$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Reflections

In addition to shifting, compressing, and stretching a graph, we can also reflect it about the *x*-axis or the *y*-axis. When we multiply the parent function $f(x) = b^x$ by -1,we get a reflection about the *x*-axis. When we multiply the input by -1,we get a reflection about the *y*-axis. For example, if we begin by graphing the parent function $f(x) = 2^x$, we can then graph the two reflections alongside it. The reflection about the *x*-axis, $g(x) = -2^x$,is shown on the left side of Figure $6.2.10$, and the reflection about the y-axis $h(x) = 2^{-x}$, is shown on the right side of Figure $6.2.10$.

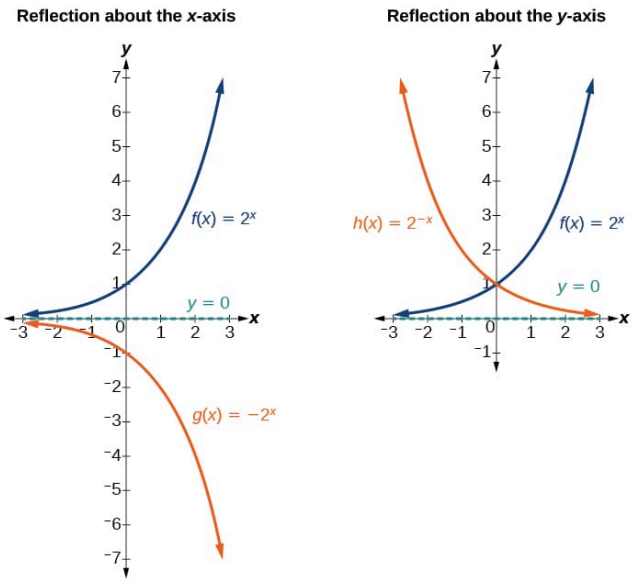


Figure 6.2.10: (a) $g(x) = -2^x$ reflects the graph of $f(x) = 2^x$ about the x-axis. (b) $g(x) = 2^{-x}$ reflects the graph of $f(x) = 2^x$ about the y-axis.

REFLECTIONS OF THE PARENT FUNCTION $f(X) = b^x$

The function $f(x) = -b^x$

- reflects the parent function $f(x) = b^x$ about the *x*-axis.
- has a *y*-intercept of $(0, -1)$.
- has a range of $(-\infty, 0)$
- has a horizontal asymptote at $y = 0$ and domain of $(-\infty, \infty)$,which are unchanged from the parent function.

The function $f(x) = b^{-x}$

- reflects the parent function $f(x) = b^x$ about the *y*-axis.
- has a *y*-intercept of $(0, 1)$, a horizontal asymptote at $y = 0$, a range of $(0, \infty)$, and a domain of $(-\infty, \infty)$, which are unchanged from the parent function.

Example 6.2.5: Writing and Graphing the Reflection of an Exponential Function

Find and graph the equation for a function, $g(x)$,that reflects $f(x) = (\frac{1}{4})^x$ about the *x*-axis. State its domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Since we want to reflect the parent function $f(x) = (\frac{1}{4})^x$ about the *x*-axis, we multiply $f(x)$ by -1 to get, $g(x) = -(\frac{1}{4})^x$. Next we create a table of points as in Table 6.2.5.

Table 6.2.5

x	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
$g(x) = -(\frac{1}{4})^x$	-64	-16	-4	-1	-0.25	-0.0625	-0.0156

Plot the *y*-intercept, $(0, -1)$,along with two other points. We can use $(-1, -4)$ and $(1, -0.25)$.

Draw a smooth curve connecting the points:

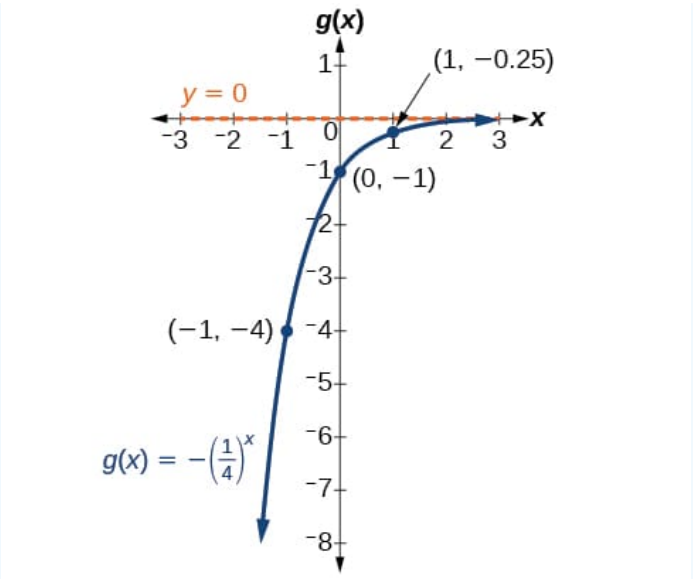


Figure 6.2.11

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(-\infty, 0)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.

Exercise 6.2.5

Find and graph the equation for a function, $g(x)$, that reflects $f(x) = 1.25^x$ about the *y*-axis. State its domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Summarizing Translations of the Exponential Function

Now that we have worked with each type of translation for the exponential function, we can summarize them in **Table** 6.2.6 to arrive at the general equation for translating exponential functions.

Table 6.2.6*: Translations of the Parent Function* $f(x) = b^x$

Translation	Form
Shift • Horizontally h units to the left • Vertically k units up	$f(x) = b^{x+h} + k$
Stretch and Compress • Stretch if $\|C\| > 1$ • Compression if $0 < \|C\| < 1$	$f(x) = Cb^x$
Reflect about the x-axis	$f(x) = -b^x$
Reflect about the y-axis	$f(x) = b^{-x} = (\frac{1}{b})^x$
General equation for all translations	$f(x) = Cb^{x+h} + k$

TRANSFORMATIONS OF EXPONENTIAL FUNCTIONS

A transformation of an exponential function has the form

$$f(x) = Cb^{x+h} + k$$

Where the parent function, $y = b^x, b \neq 1$,is

- shifted horizontally h units (right if $h < 0$ and left if $h > 0$)
- stretched vertically by a factor of $|C|$ if $|C| > 1$.
- compressed vertically by a factor of $|C|$ if $0 < |C| < 1$.
- shifted vertically k units (down if $k < 0$ and up if $k > 0$)
- reflected about the *x*-axis when $C < 0$.

Note the order of the shifts, transformations, and reflections follow the order of operations.

Example 6.2.6: Writing a Function from a Description

Write the equation for the function described below. Give the horizontal asymptote, the domain, and the range.

$f(x) = e^x$ is vertically stretched by a factor of 2 , reflected across the *y*-axis, and then shifted up 4 units.

Solution

We want to find an equation of the general form $f(x) = Cb^(x + h) + k$. We use the description provided to find C, b, (\h\), and k.

- We are given the parent function $f(x) = e^x$, so $b = e$.
- The function is stretched by a factor of 2, so $C = 2$.
- The function is reflected about the *y*-axis. We replace x with $-x$ to get: e^{-x}.
- The graph is shifted vertically 4 units, so $k = 4$.

Substituting in the general form we get,

$$f(x) = Cb^{x+h} + k$$

$$= 2e^{-x+0} + 4$$

$$= 2e^{-x} + 4$$

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(4, \infty)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 4$.

Exercise 6.2.6

Write the equation for function described below. Give the horizontal asymptote, the domain, and the range.

$f(x) = e^x$ is compressed vertically by a factor of $\frac{1}{3}$, reflected across the *x*-axis and then shifted down 2 units.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Equations

General Form for the Translation of the Parent Function $f(x) = b^x$	$f(x) = Cb^{x+h} + k$

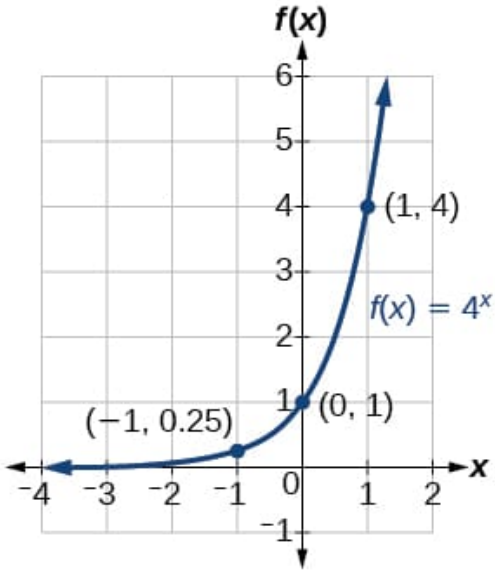
Key Concepts

- The graph of the function $f(x) = b^x$ has a *y*-intercept at $(0, 1)$,domain $(-\infty, \infty)$,range $(0, \infty)$, and horizontal asymptote $y = 0$. See Example.
- If $b > 1$,the function is increasing. The left tail of the graph will approach the asymptote $y = 0$, and the right tail will increase without bound.
- If \(0
- The equation $f(x) = b^x + d$ represents a vertical shift of the parent function $f(x) = b^x$.
- The equation $f(x) = b^{x+c}$ represents a horizontal shift of the parent function $f(x) = b^x$. See Example.
- Approximate solutions of the equation $f(x) = b^{(x+h)} + k$ can be found using a graphing calculator. See Example.
- The equation $f(x) = Cb^x$, where $C > 0$, represents a vertical stretch if $|C| > 1$ or compression if $0 < |C| < 1$ of the parent function $f(x) = b^x$. See Example.
- When the parent function $f(x) = b^x$ is multiplied by -1,the result, $f(x) = -b^x$, is a reflection about the *x*-axis. When the input is multiplied by -1,the result, $f(x) = b^{-x}$, is a reflection about the *y*-axis. See Example.
- All translations of the exponential function can be summarized by the general equation $f(x) = Cb^{(x+h)} + k$. See Table.
- Using the general equation $f(x) = Cb^{(x+h)} + k$, we can write the equation of a function given its description. See Example.

Answers

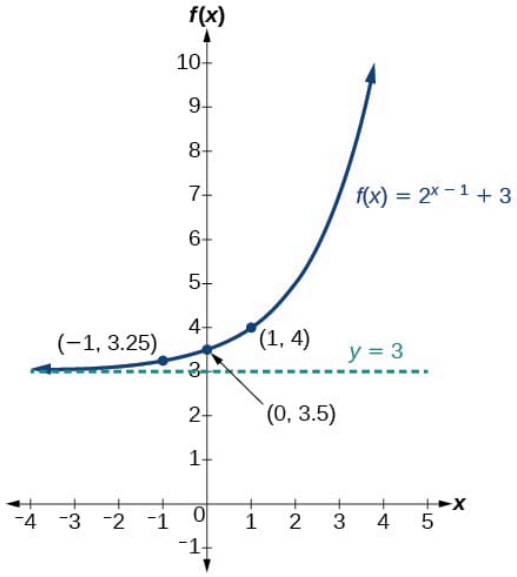
Exercise 6.2.1

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(0, \infty)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.



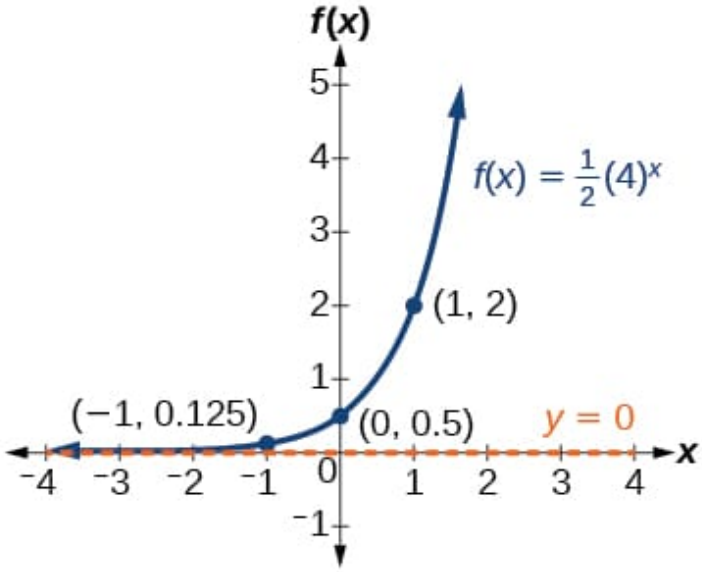
Exercise 6.2.2

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(3, \infty)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 3$.



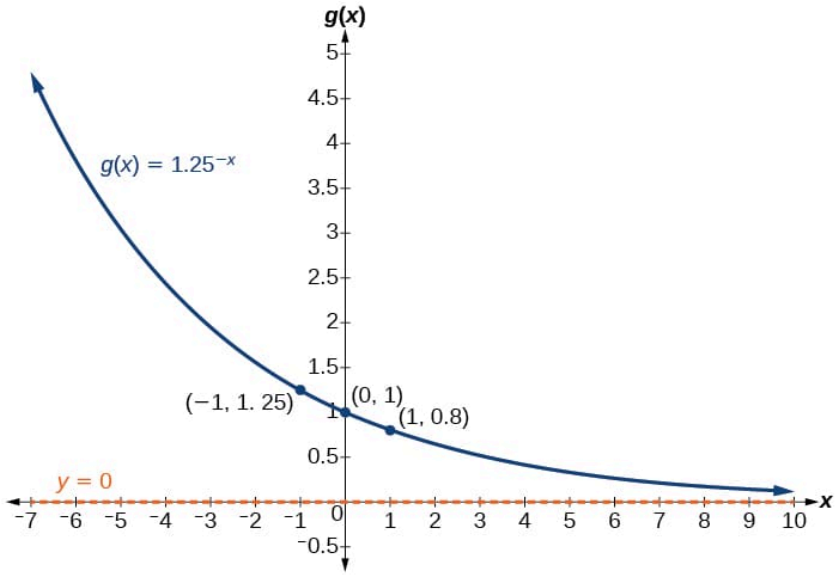
Exercise 6.2.4

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(0, \infty)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.



Exercise 6.2.5

The domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(0, \infty)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 0$.



Exercise $6.2.6$

$f(x) = -\frac{1}{3}e^x - 2$; the domain is $(-\infty, \infty)$; the range is $(-\infty, 2)$; the horizontal asymptote is $y = 2$.

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6.3: Logarithmic Functions

Learning Objectives

- Convert from logarithmic to exponential form.
- Convert from exponential to logarithmic form.
- Evaluate logarithms.
- Use common logarithms.
- Use natural logarithms.

In 2010, a major earthquake struck Haiti, destroying or damaging over 285,000 homes. One year later, another, stronger earthquake devastated Honshu, Japan, destroying or damaging over 332,000 buildings, like those shown in Figure $6.3.1$. Even though both caused substantial damage, the earthquake in 2011 was 100 times stronger than the earthquake in Haiti. How do we know? The magnitudes of earthquakes are measured on a scale known as the Richter Scale. The Haitian earthquake registered a 7.0 on the Richter Scale whereas the Japanese earthquake registered a 9.0.



Figure $6.3.1$***:*** *Devastation of March 11, 2011 earthquake in Honshu, Japan. (credit: Daniel Pierce).*

The Richter Scale is a base-ten logarithmic scale. In other words, an earthquake of magnitude 8 is not twice as great as an earthquake of magnitude 4. It is

$$10^{8-4} = 10^4 = 10,000$$

times as great! In this lesson, we will investigate the nature of the Richter Scale and the base-ten function upon which it depends.

Converting from Logarithmic to Exponential Form

In order to analyze the magnitude of earthquakes or compare the magnitudes of two different earthquakes, we need to be able to convert between logarithmic and exponential form. For example, suppose the amount of energy released from one earthquake were 500 times greater than the amount of energy released from another. We want to calculate the difference in magnitude. The equation that represents this problem is $10^x = 500$, where x represents the difference in magnitudes on the Richter Scale. How would we solve for x?

We have not yet learned a method for solving exponential equations. None of the algebraic tools discussed so far is sufficient to solve $10^x = 500$. We know that $10^2 = 100$ and $10^3 = 1000$, so it is clear that x must be some value between 2 and 3, since $y = 10^x$ is increasing. We can examine a graph, as in Figure $6.3.1$, to better estimate the solution.

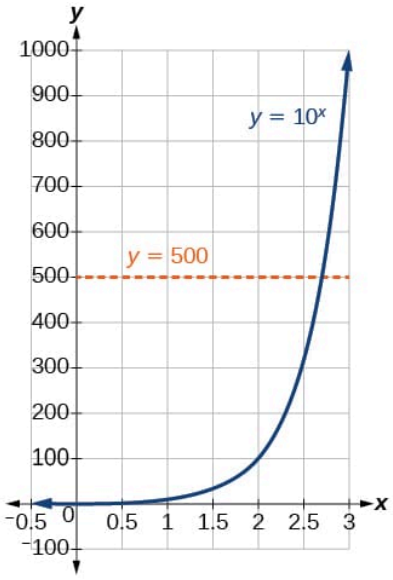


Figure $6.3.2$

Estimating from a graph, however, is imprecise. To find an algebraic solution, we must introduce a new function. Observe that the graph in Figure $6.3.2$ passes the horizontal line test. The exponential function $y = b^x$ is one-to-one, so its inverse, $x = b^y$ is also a function. As is the case with all inverse functions, we simply interchange x and y and solve for y to find the inverse function. To represent y as a function of x, we use a logarithmic function of the form $y = \log_b(x)$. The base b **logarithm** of a number is the exponent by which we must raise b to get that number.

We read a logarithmic expression as, "The logarithm with base b of x is equal to y," or, simplified, "log base b of x is y." We can also say, "b raised to the power of y is x," because logs are exponents. For example, the base 2 logarithm of 32 is 5, because 5 is the exponent we must apply to 2 to get 32. Since $2^5 = 32$, we can write $\log_2 32 = 5$. We read this as "log base 2 of 32 is 5."

We can express the relationship between logarithmic form and its corresponding exponential form as follows:

$$\log_b(x) = y \Leftrightarrow b^y = x, b > 0, b \neq 1 \tag{6.3.1}$$

Note that the base b is always positive.



Because logarithm is a function, it is most correctly written as $\log_b(x)$, using parentheses to denote function evaluation, just as we would with $f(x)$. However, when the input is a single variable or number, it is common to see the parentheses dropped and the expression written without parentheses, as $\log_b x$. Note that many calculators require parentheses around the x.

We can illustrate the notation of logarithms as follows:

Notice that, comparing the logarithm function and the exponential function, the input and the output are switched. This means $y = \log^b(x)$ and $y = b^x$ are inverse functions.

Definition: Logarithmic Function

A logarithm base b of a positive number x satisfies the following definition.

For $x > 0$, $b > 0$, $b \neq 1$,

$$y = \log_b(x) \text{ is equivalent to } b^y = x \tag{6.3.2}$$

where,

- we read $\log_b(x)$ as, "the logarithm with base b of x" or the "log base b of x."
- the logarithm y is the exponent to which b must be raised to get x.

Also, since the logarithmic and exponential functions switch the x and y values, the domain and range of the exponential function are interchanged for the logarithmic function. Therefore,

- the domain of the logarithm function with base b is $(0, \infty)$.
- the range of the logarithm function with base b is $(-\infty, \infty)$.

Q&A: Can we take the logarithm of a negative number?

No. Because the base of an exponential function is always positive, no power of that base can ever be negative. We can never take the logarithm of a negative number. Also, we cannot take the logarithm of zero. Calculators may output a log of a negative number when in complex mode, but the log of a negative number is not a real number.

How to: Given an equation in logarithmic form $\log_b(x) = y$, convert it to exponential form

1. Examine the equation $y = \log_b x$ and identify b, y,and x.
2. Rewrite $\log_b x = y$ as $b^y = x$.

Example 6.3.1: Converting from Logarithmic Form to Exponential Form

Write the following logarithmic equations in exponential form.

a. $\log_6(\sqrt{6}) = \frac{1}{2}$
b. $\log_3(9) = 2$

Solution

First, identify the values of b, y,and x. Then, write the equation in the form $b^y = x$.

a. $\log_6(\sqrt{6}) = \frac{1}{2}$

Here, $b = 6$, $y = \frac{1}{2}$,and $x = \sqrt{6}$. Therefore, the equation $\log_6(\sqrt{6}) = \frac{1}{2}$ is equivalent to

$$6^{\frac{1}{2}} = \sqrt{6}$$

b. $\log_3(9) = 2$

Here, $b = 3$, $y = 2$,and $x = 9$. Therefore, the equation $\log_3(9) = 2$ is equivalent to

$$3^2 = 9$$

Exercise 6.3.1

Write the following logarithmic equations in exponential form.

a. $\log_{10}(1,000,000) = 6$
b. $\log_5(25) = 2$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Answer b available at the end of this section.

Converting from Exponential to Logarithmic Form

To convert from exponents to logarithms, we follow the same steps in reverse. We identify the base b,exponent x,and output y. Then we write $x = \log_b(y)$.

Example 6.3.2: Converting from Exponential Form to Logarithmic Form

Write the following exponential equations in logarithmic form.

a. $2^3 = 8$
b. $5^2 = 25$
c. $10^{-4} = \dfrac{1}{10,000}$

Solution

First, identify the values of b, y,and x. Then, write the equation in the form $x = \log_b(y)$.

a. $2^3 = 8$

Here, $b = 2$, $x = 3$,and $y = 8$. Therefore, the equation $2^3 = 8$ is equivalent to $\log_2(8) = 3$.

b. $5^2 = 25$

Here, $b = 5$, $x = 2$,and $y = 25$. Therefore, the equation $5^2 = 25$ is equivalent to $\log_5(25) = 2$.

c. $10^{-4} = \dfrac{1}{10,000}$

Here, $b = 10$, $x = -4$,and $y = \dfrac{1}{10,000}$. Therefore, the equation $10^{-4} = \dfrac{1}{10,000}$ is equivalent to $\log_{10}\left(\dfrac{1}{10,000}\right) = -4$.

Exercise 6.3.2

Write the following exponential equations in logarithmic form.

a. $3^2 = 9$
b. $5^3 = 125$
c. $2^{-1} = \dfrac{1}{2}$

Answer a available at the end of this section.

Answer b available at the end of this section.

Answer c available at the end of this section.

Evaluating Logarithms

Knowing the squares, cubes, and roots of numbers allows us to evaluate many logarithms mentally. For example, consider $\log_2 8$. We ask, "To what exponent must 2 be raised in order to get 8?" Because we already know $2^3 = 8$, it follows that $\log_2 8 = 3$.

Now consider solving $\log_7 49$ and $\log_3 27$ mentally.

- We ask, "To what exponent must 7 be raised in order to get 49?" We know $7^2 = 49$. Therefore, $\log_7 49 = 2$
- We ask, "To what exponent must 3 be raised in order to get 27?" We know $3^3 = 27$. Therefore, $\log_3 27 = 3$

Even some seemingly more complicated logarithms can be evaluated without a calculator. For example, let's evaluate $\log_{\frac{2}{3}} \frac{4}{9}$ mentally.

- We ask, "To what exponent must $\frac{2}{3}$ be raised in order to get $\frac{4}{9}$? " We know $2^2 = 4$ and $3^2 = 9$, so

$$\left(\frac{2}{3}\right)^2 = \frac{4}{9}.$$

Therefore,

$$\log_{\frac{2}{3}} \left(\frac{4}{9}\right) = 2.$$

How to: Given a logarithm of the form $y = \log_b(x)$,evaluate it mentally

1. Rewrite the argument x as a power of b: $b^y = x$.
2. Use previous knowledge of powers of b identify y by asking, "To what exponent should b be raised in order to get x?"

Example 6.3.3: Solving Logarithms Mentally

Solve $y = \log_4(64)$ without using a calculator.

Solution

First we rewrite the logarithm in exponential form: $4^y = 64$. Next, we ask, "To what exponent must 4 be raised in order to get 64?"

We know

$$4^3 = 64$$

Therefore,

$$\log_4(64) = 3$$

Exercise 6.3.3

Solve $y = \log_{121}(11)$ without using a calculator.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.3.4: Evaluating the Logarithm of a Reciprocal

Evaluate $y = \log_3\left(\frac{1}{27}\right)$ without using a calculator.

Solution

First we rewrite the logarithm in exponential form: $3^y = \frac{1}{27}$. Next, we ask, "To what exponent must 3 be raised in order to get $\frac{1}{27}$?"

We know $3^3 = 27$,but what must we do to get the reciprocal, $\frac{1}{27}$? Recall from working with exponents that $b^{-a} = \frac{1}{b^a}$. We use this information to write

$$\begin{aligned} 3^{-3} &= \frac{1}{3^3} \\ &= \frac{1}{27} \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $\log_3\left(\frac{1}{27}\right) = -3$.

Exercise 6.3.4

Evaluate $y = \log_2\left(\frac{1}{32}\right)$ without using a calculator.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using Common Logarithms

Sometimes we may see a logarithm written without a base. In this case, we assume that the base is 10. In other words, the expression $\log(x)$ means $\log_{10}(x)$. We call a base -10 logarithm a *common logarithm*. Common logarithms are used to measure the Richter Scale mentioned at the beginning of the section. Scales for measuring the brightness of stars and the pH of acids and bases also use common logarithms.

Definition: Common Log

A common logarithm is a logarithm with base 10. We write $\log_{10}(x)$ simply as $\log(x)$. The common logarithm of a positive number x satisfies the following definition.

For $x > 0$,

$$y = \log(x) \text{ is equivalent to } 10^y = x \tag{6.3.3}$$

We read $\log(x)$ as, "the logarithm with base 10 of x " or "log base 10 of x."

The logarithm y is the exponent to which 10 must be raised to get x.

How to: Given a common logarithm of the form $y = \log(x)$, evaluate it mentally

1. Rewrite the argument x as a power of 10: $10^y = x$.
2. Use previous knowledge of powers of 10 to identify y by asking, "To what exponent must 10 be raised in order to get x?"

Example 6.3.5: Finding the Value of a Common Logarithm Mentally

Evaluate $y = \log(1000)$ without using a calculator.

Solution

First we rewrite the logarithm in exponential form: $10^y = 1000$. Next, we ask, "To what exponent must 10 be raised in order to get 1000?" We know

$$10^3 = 1000$$

Therefore, $\log(1000) = 3$.

Exercise 6.3.5

Evaluate $y = \log(1,000,000)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

How to: Given a common logarithm with the form $y = \log(x)$,evaluate it using a calculator

1. Press **[LOG]**.
2. Enter the value given for x,followed by **[ )]**.
3. Press **[ENTER]**.

Example 6.3.6: Finding the Value of a Common Logarithm Using a Calculator

Evaluate $y = \log(321)$ to four decimal places using a calculator.

Solution

- Press **[LOG]**.
- Enter 321, followed by **[ )]**.
- Press **[ENTER]**.

Rounding to four decimal places, $\log(321) \approx 2.5065$.

Analysis

Note that $10^2 = 100$ and that $10^3 = 1000$. Since 321 is between 100 and 1000, we know that $\log(321)$ must be between $\log(100)$ and $\log(1000)$. This gives us the following:

$$100 < 321 < 1000$$

$$2 < 2.5065 < 3$$

Exercise 6.3.6

Evaluate $y = \log(123)$ to four decimal places using a calculator.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.3.7: Rewriting and Solving a Real-World Exponential Model

The amount of energy released from one earthquake was 500 times greater than the amount of energy released from another. The equation $10^x = 500$ represents this situation, where x is the difference in magnitudes on the Richter Scale. To the nearest thousandth, what was the difference in magnitudes?

Solution

We begin by rewriting the exponential equation in logarithmic form.

$$10^x = 500$$

$$\log(500) = x \text{ Use the definition of the common log.}$$

Next we evaluate the logarithm using a calculator:

- Press **[LOG]**.
- Enter 500,followed by **[ )]**.
- Press **[ENTER]**.
- To the nearest thousandth, $\log(500) \approx 2.699$.

The difference in magnitudes was about 2.699.

Exercise 6.3.7

The amount of energy released from one earthquake was $8,500$ times greater than the amount of energy released from another. The equation $10^x = 8500$ represents this situation, where x is the difference in magnitudes on the Richter Scale. To the nearest thousandth, what was the difference in magnitudes?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using Natural Logarithms

The most frequently used base for logarithms is e. Base e logarithms are important in calculus and some scientific applications; they are called **natural logarithms**. The base e logarithm, $\log_e(x)$, has its own notation,$\ln(x)$. Most values of $\ln(x)$ can be found only using a calculator. The major exception is that, because the logarithm of 1 is always 0 in any base, $\ln 1 = 0$. For other natural logarithms, we can use the $\ln$ key that can be found on most scientific calculators. We can also find the natural logarithm of any power of e using the inverse property of logarithms.

Definition: Natural Log

A natural logarithm is a logarithm with base e. We write $\log_e(x)$ simply as $\ln(x)$. The natural logarithm of a positive number x satisfies the following definition.

For $x > 0$,

$$y = \ln(x) \text{ is equivalent to } e^y = x$$

We read $\ln(x)$ as, "the logarithm with base e of x" or "the natural logarithm of x."

The logarithm y is the exponent to which e must be raised to get x.

Since the functions $y = e^x$ and $y = \ln(x)$ are inverse functions, $\ln(e^x) = x$ for all x and $e^{\ln(x)} = x$ for $x > 0$.

How to: Given a natural logarithm with the form $y = \ln(x)$, evaluate it using a calculator

1. Press **[LN]**.
2. Enter the value given for x, followed by **[ )]**.
3. Press **[ENTER]**.

Example 6.3.8: Evaluating a Natural Logarithm Using a Calculator

Evaluate $y = \ln(500)$ to four decimal places using a calculator.

Solution

- Press **[LN]**.
- Enter 500,followed by **[ )]**.
- Press **[ENTER]**.

Rounding to four decimal places, $\ln(500) \approx 6.2146$

Exercise 6.3.8

Evaluate $\ln(-500)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Key Equations

Definition of the logarithmic function	For $x > 0$, $b > 0$, $b \neq 1$, $y = \log_b(x)$ if and only if $b^y = x$.
Definition of the common logarithm	For $x > 0$, $y = \log(x)$ if and only if $10^y = x$.
Definition of the natural logarithm	For $x > 0$, $y = \ln(x)$ if and only if $e^y = x$.

Key Concepts

- The inverse of an exponential function is a logarithmic function, and the inverse of a logarithmic function is an exponential function.
- Logarithmic equations can be written in an equivalent exponential form, using the definition of a logarithm. See Example 6.3.1.
- Exponential equations can be written in their equivalent logarithmic form using the definition of a logarithm See Example 6.3.2.
- Logarithmic functions with base b can be evaluated mentally using previous knowledge of powers of b. See Example 6.3.3 and Example 6.3.4.
- Common logarithms can be evaluated mentally using previous knowledge of powers of 10. See Example 6.3.5.
- When common logarithms cannot be evaluated mentally, a calculator can be used. See Example 6.3.6.
- Real-world exponential problems with base 10 can be rewritten as a common logarithm and then evaluated using a calculator. See Example 6.3.7.
- Natural logarithms can be evaluated using a calculator Example 6.3.8.

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Answers

Exercise 6.3.1

$\log_{10}(1,000,000) = 6$ is equivalent to $10^6 = 1,000,000$

Exercise 6.3.1

$\log_5(25) = 2$ is equivalent to $5^2 = 25$

Exercise 6.3.2

$3^2 = 9$ is equivalent to $\log_3(9) = 2$

Exercise 6.3.2

$5^3 = 125$ is equivalent to $\log_5(125) = 3$

Exercise 6.3.2

$2^{-1} = \frac{1}{2}$ is equivalent to $\log_2\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) = -1$

Exercise 6.3.3

$\log_{121}(11) = \frac{1}{2}$ (recalling that $\sqrt{121} = (121)^{\frac{1}{2}} = 11$)

Exercise 6.3.4

$\log_2\left(\frac{1}{32}\right) = -5$

Exercise 6.3.5

$\log(1,000,000) = 6$

Exercise 6.3.6

$\log(123) \approx 2.0899$

Exercise 6.3.7

The difference in magnitudes was about 3.929.

Exercise 6.3.8

It is not possible to take the logarithm of a negative number in the set of real numbers.

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6.4: Graphs of Logarithmic Functions

Learning Objectives

- Identify the domain of a logarithmic function.
- Graph logarithmic functions.

In the Section on Graphs of Exponential Functions, we saw how creating a graphical representation of an exponential model gives us another layer of insight for predicting future events. How do logarithmic graphs give us insight into situations? Because every logarithmic function is the inverse function of an exponential function, we can think of every output on a logarithmic graph as the input for the corresponding inverse exponential equation. In other words, logarithms give the *cause* for an *effect*.

To illustrate, suppose we invest $\$2500$ in an account that offers an annual interest rate of 5%, compounded continuously. We already know that the balance in our account for any year t can be found with the equation $A = 2500e^{0.05t}$.

But what if we wanted to know the year for any balance? We would need to create a corresponding new function by interchanging the input and the output; thus we would need to create a logarithmic model for this situation. By graphing the model, we can see the output (year) for any input (account balance). For instance, what if we wanted to know how many years it would take for our initial investment to double? Figure $6.4.1$ shows this point on the logarithmic graph.

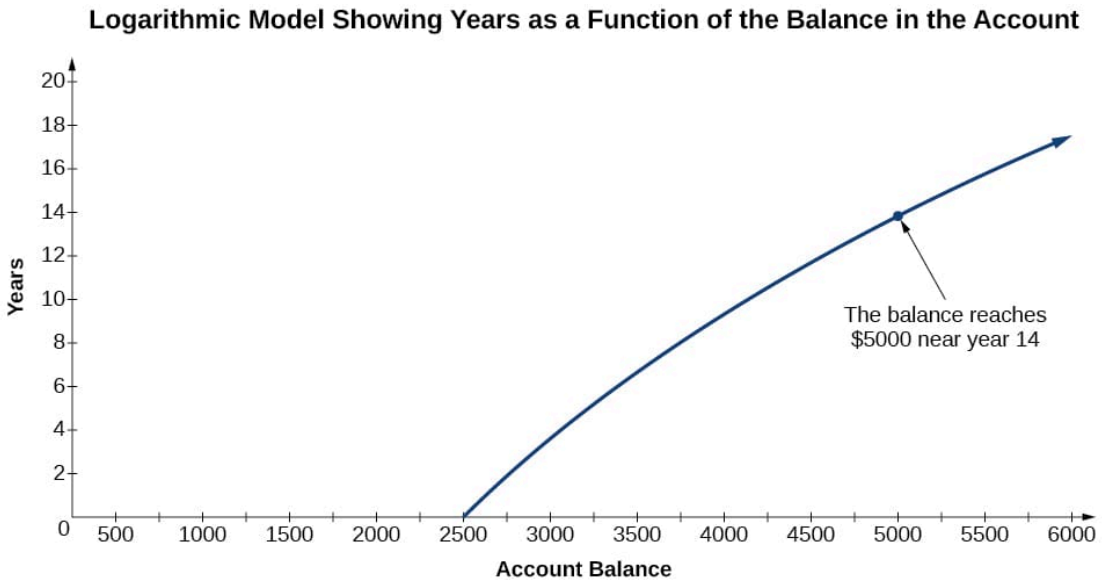


Figure $6.4.1$

In this section we will discuss the values for which a logarithmic function is defined, and then turn our attention to graphing the family of logarithmic functions.

Finding the Domain of a Logarithmic Function

Before working with graphs, we will take a look at the domain (the set of input values) for which the logarithmic function is defined.

Recall that the exponential function is defined as $y = b^x$ for any real number x and constant $b > 0$, $b \neq 1$, where

- The domain of y is $(-\infty, \infty)$.
- The range of y is $(0, \infty)$.

In the last section we learned that the logarithmic function $y = \log_b(x)$ is the inverse of the exponential function $y = b^x$. So, as

inverse functions:

- The domain of $y = \log_b(x)$ is the range of $y = b^x$: $(0, \infty)$.
- The range of $y = \log_b(x)$ is the domain of $y = b^x$: $(-\infty, \infty)$.

Transformations of the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ behave similarly to those of other functions. Just as with other parent functions, we can apply the four types of transformations—shifts, stretches, compressions, and reflections—to the parent function without loss of shape.

In Graphs of Exponential Functions we saw that certain transformations can change the *range* of $y = b^x$. Similarly, applying transformations to the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ can change the *domain*. When finding the domain of a logarithmic function, therefore, it is important to remember that the domain consists *only of positive real numbers*. That is, the argument of the logarithmic function must be greater than zero.

For example, consider $f(x) = \log_4(2x - 3)$. This function is defined for any values of x such that the argument, in this case $2x - 3$,is greater than zero. To find the domain, we set up an inequality and solve for x:

$$\begin{aligned} 2x - 3 &> 0 \quad \text{Show the argument greater than zero} \\ 2x &> 3 \quad \text{Add 3} \\ x &> 1.5 \quad \text{Divide by 2} \end{aligned}$$

In interval notation, the domain of $f(x) = \log_4(2x - 3)$ is $(1.5, \infty)$.

Given a logarithmic function, identify the domain

1. Set up an inequality showing the argument greater than zero.
2. Solve for x.
3. Write the domain in interval notation.

Example 6.4.1: Identifying the Domain of a Logarithmic Shift

What is the domain of $f(x) = \log_2(x + 3)$?

Solution

The logarithmic function is defined only when the input is positive, so this function is defined when $x + 3 > 0$. Solving this inequality,

$$\begin{aligned} x + 3 &> 0 \quad \text{The input must be positive} \\ x &> -3 \quad \text{Subtract 3} \end{aligned}$$

The domain of $f(x) = \log_2(x + 3)$ is $(-3, \infty)$.

Exercise 6.4.1

What is the domain of $f(x) = \log_5(x - 2) + 1$?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.4.2: Identifying the Domain of a Logarithmic Shift and Reflection

What is the domain of $f(x) = \log(5 - 2x)$?

Solution

The logarithmic function is defined only when the input is positive, so this function is defined when $5–2x > 0$. Solving this inequality,

$$\begin{aligned} 5-2x &> 0 && \text{The input must be positive} \\ -2x &> -5 && \text{Subtract 5} \\ x &< \frac{5}{2} && \text{Divide by -2 and switch the inequality} \end{aligned}$$

The domain of $f(x) = \log(5-2x)$ is $\left(-\infty, \frac{5}{2}\right)$.

Exercise 6.4.2

What is the domain of $f(x) = \log(x-5)+2$?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Logarithmic Functions

Now that we have a feel for the set of values for which a logarithmic function is defined, we move on to graphing logarithmic functions. The family of logarithmic functions includes the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ along with all its transformations: shifts, stretches, compressions, and reflections.

We begin with the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$. Because every logarithmic function of this form is the inverse of an exponential function with the form $y = b^x$, their graphs will be reflections of each other across the line $y = x$. To illustrate this, we can observe the relationship between the input and output values of $y = 2^x$ and its equivalent $x = \log_2(y)$ in Table 6.4.1.

Table 6.4.1

x	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
$2^x = y$	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	2	4	8
$\log_2(y) = x$	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3

Using the inputs and outputs from Table 6.4.1, we can build another table to observe the relationship between points on the graphs of the inverse functions $f(x) = 2^x$ and $g(x) = \log_2(x)$. See Table 6.4.2.

Table 6.4.2

$f(x) = 2^x$	$\left(-3, \frac{1}{8}\right)$	$\left(-2, \frac{1}{4}\right)$	$\left(-1, \frac{1}{2}\right)$	$(0,1)$	$(1,2)$	$(2,4)$	$(3,8)$
$g(x) = \log_2(x)$	$\left(\frac{1}{8}, -3\right)$	$\left(\frac{1}{4}, -2\right)$	$\left(\frac{1}{2}, -1\right)$	$(1,0)$	$(2,1)$	$(4,2)$	$(8,3)$

As we'd expect, the x- and y-coordinates are reversed for the inverse functions. Figure 6.4.2 shows the graph of f and g.

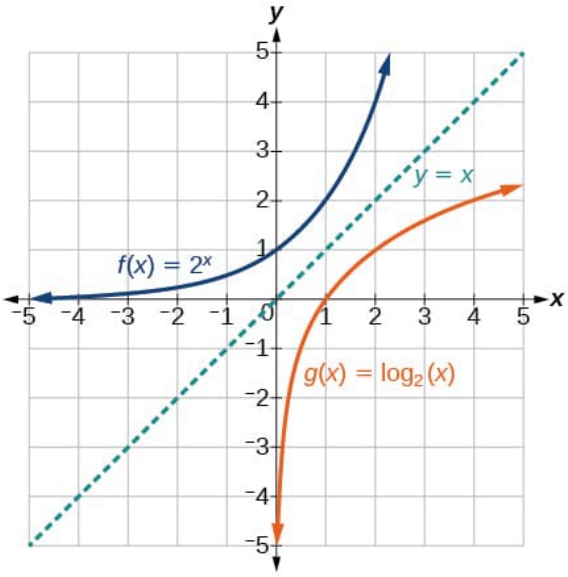


Figure 6.4.2: Notice that the graphs of $f(x) = 2^x$ and $g(x) = \log_2(x)$ are reflections about the line $y = x$.

Observe the following from the graph:

- $f(x) = 2^x$ has a y-intercept at $(0, 1)$ and $g(x) = \log_2(x)$ has an x- intercept at $(1, 0)$.
- The domain of $f(x) = 2^x$, $(-\infty, \infty)$, is the same as the range of $g(x) = \log_2(x)$.
- The range of $f(x) = 2^x$, $(0, \infty)$, is the same as the domain of $g(x) = \log_2(x)$.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GRAPH OF THE PARENT FUNCTION, $f(X) = log_b(x)$

For any real number x and constant $b > 0$, $b \neq 1$, we can see the following characteristics in the graph of $f(x) = \log_b(x)$:

- one-to-one function
- vertical asymptote: $x = 0$
- domain: $(0, \infty)$
- range: $(-\infty, \infty)$
- x-intercept: $(1, 0)$ and key point $(b, 1)$
- y-intercept: none
- increasing if $b > 1$
- decreasing if \(0

See Figure 6.4.3.

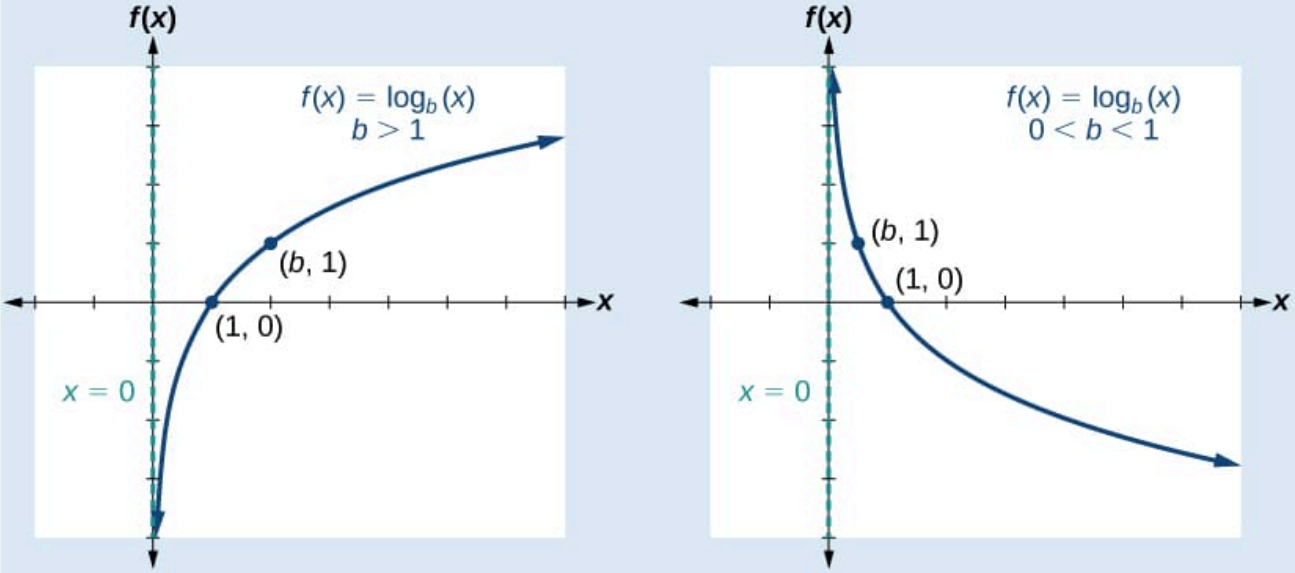


Figure 6.4.3

Figure 6.4.4 shows how changing the base b in $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ can affect the graphs. Observe that the graphs compress vertically as the value of the base increases. (Note: recall that the function $\ln(x)$ has base $e \approx 2.718$.)

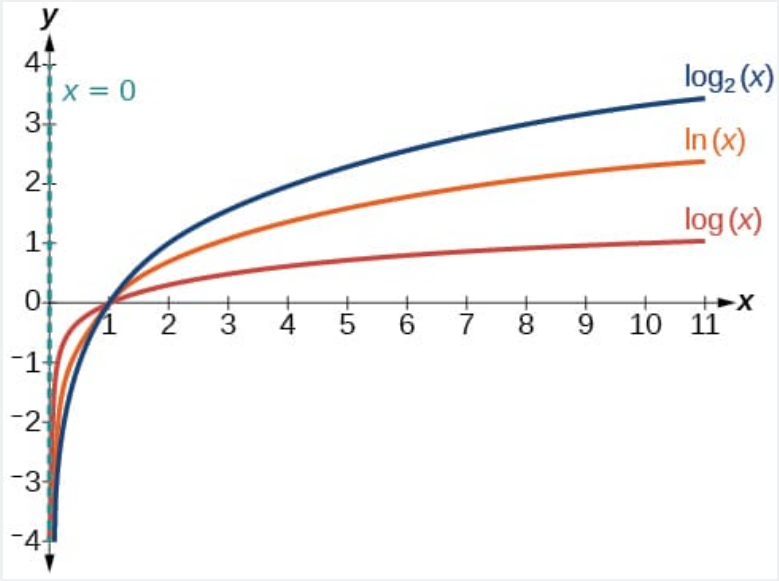


Figure 6.4.4: The graphs of three logarithmic functions with different bases, all greater than 1.

Given a logarithmic function with the form $f(x) = \log_b(x)$, graph the function.

1. Draw and label the vertical asymptote, $x = 0$.
2. Plot the *x*-intercept, $(1, 0)$.
3. Plot the key point $(b, 1)$.
4. Draw a smooth curve through the points.
5. State the domain, $(0, \infty)$,the range, $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote, $x = 0$.

Example 6.4.3: Graphing a Logarithmic Function with the Form $f(x) = log_b(x)$

Graph $f(x) = \log_5(x)$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Before graphing, identify the behavior and key points for the graph.

- Since $b = 5$ is greater than one, we know the function is increasing. The left tail of the graph will approach the vertical asymptote $x = 0$, and the right tail will increase slowly without bound.
- The x-intercept is $(1, 0)$.
- The key point $(5, 1)$ is on the graph.
- We draw and label the asymptote, plot and label the points, and draw a smooth curve through the points (see Figure $6.4.5$).

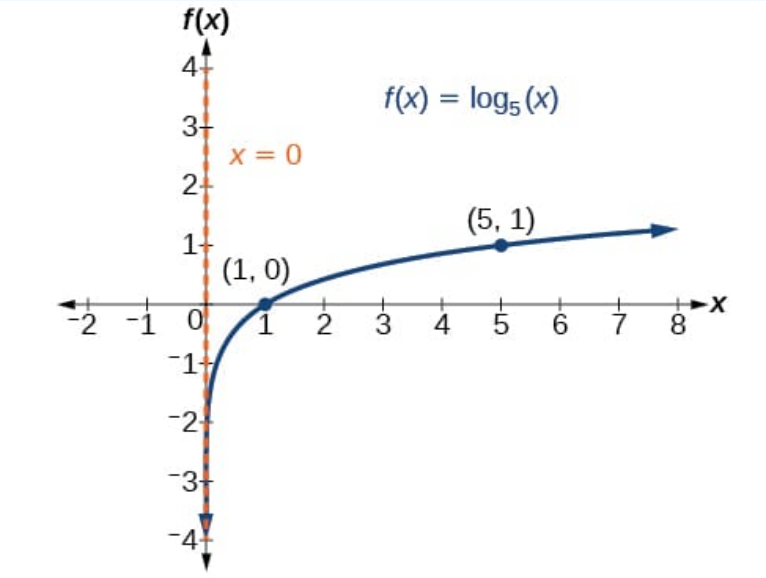


Figure $6.4.5$

The domain is $(0, \infty)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Exercise $6.4.3$

Graph $f(x) = \log_{\frac{1}{5}}(x)$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Transformations of Logarithmic Functions

As we mentioned in the beginning of the section, transformations of logarithmic graphs behave similarly to those of other parent functions. We can shift, stretch, compress, and reflect the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ without loss of shape.

Graphing a Horizontal Shift of $f(x) = log_b(x)$

When a constant c is added to the input of the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$, the result is a horizontal shift c units in the *opposite* direction of the sign on c. To visualize horizontal shifts, we can observe the general graph of the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ and for $c > 0$ alongside the shift left, $g(x) = \log_b(x + c)$, and the shift right, $h(x) = \log_b(x - c)$. See Figure $6.4.7$.

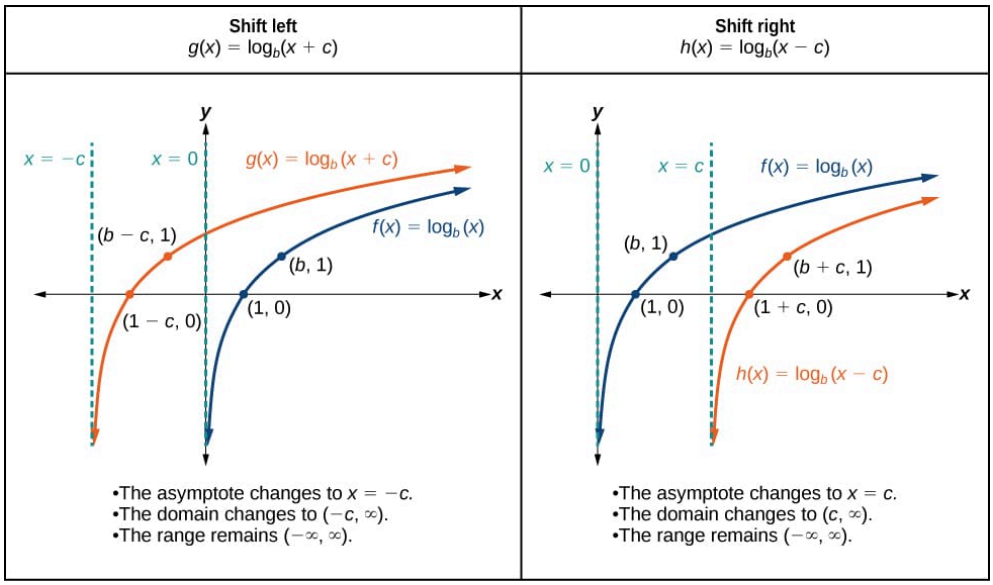


Figure 6.4.7

HORIZONTAL SHIFTS OF THE PARENT FUNCTION $y = log_b(x)$

For any constant c,the function $f(x) = \log_b(x + c)$

- shifts the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ left c units if $c > 0$.
- shifts the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ right c units if $c < 0$.
- has the vertical asymptote $x = -c$.
- has domain $(-c, \infty)$.
- has range $(-\infty, \infty)$.

Given a logarithmic function with the form $f(x) = \log_b(x + c)$, graph the translation.

1. Identify the horizontal shift:
   - If $c > 0$,shift the graph of $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ left c units.
   - If $c < 0$,shift the graph of $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ right c units.
2. Draw the vertical asymptote $x = -c$.
3. Identify three key points from the parent function. Find new coordinates for the shifted functions by subtracting c from the x coordinate.
4. Label the three points.
5. The Domain is $(-c, \infty)$,the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = -c$.

Example 6.4.4: Graphing a Horizontal Shift of the Parent Function $y = log_b(x)$

Sketch the horizontal shift $f(x) = \log_3(x - 2)$ alongside its parent function. Include the key points and asymptotes on the graph. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Since the function is $f(x) = \log_3(x - 2)$, we notice $x + (-2) = x$–2.

Thus $h = -2$, so $h < 0$. This means we will shift the function $f(x) = \log_3(x)$ right 2 units.

The vertical asymptote is $x = -(-2)$ or $x = 2$.

Consider the three key points from the parent function, $\left(\frac{1}{3}, -1\right)$, $(1, 0)$,and $(3, 1)$.

The new coordinates are found by adding 2 to the x coordinates.

Label the points $\left(\frac{7}{3}, -1\right)$, $(3, 0)$,and $(5, 1)$.

The domain is $(2, \infty)$,the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$,and the vertical asymptote is $x = 2$.

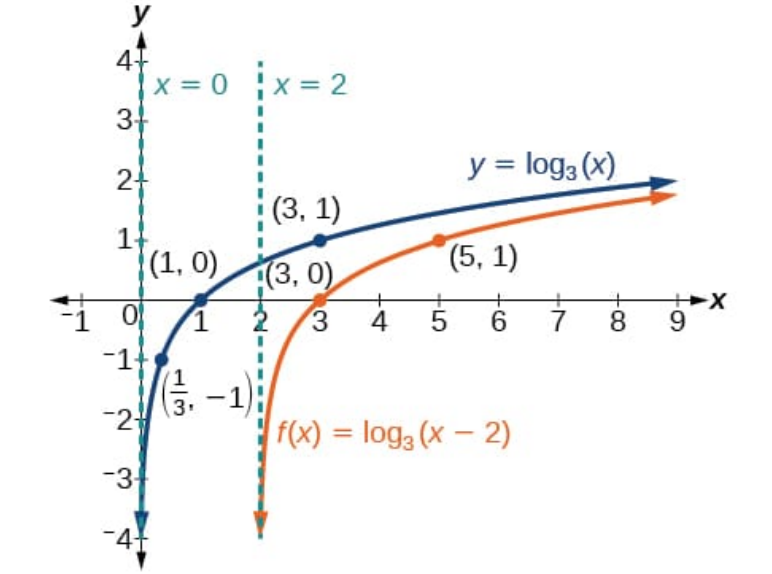


Figure $6.4.8$

Exercise $6.4.4$

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = \log_3(x + 4)$ alongside its parent function. Include the key points and asymptotes on the graph. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing a Vertical Shift of $y = log_b(x)$

When a constant d is added to the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$,the result is a vertical shift d units in the direction of the sign on d. To visualize vertical shifts, we can observe the general graph of the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ alongside the shift up, $g(x) = \log_b(x) + d$ and the shift down, $h(x) = \log_b(x) - d$.See Figure $6.4.10$.

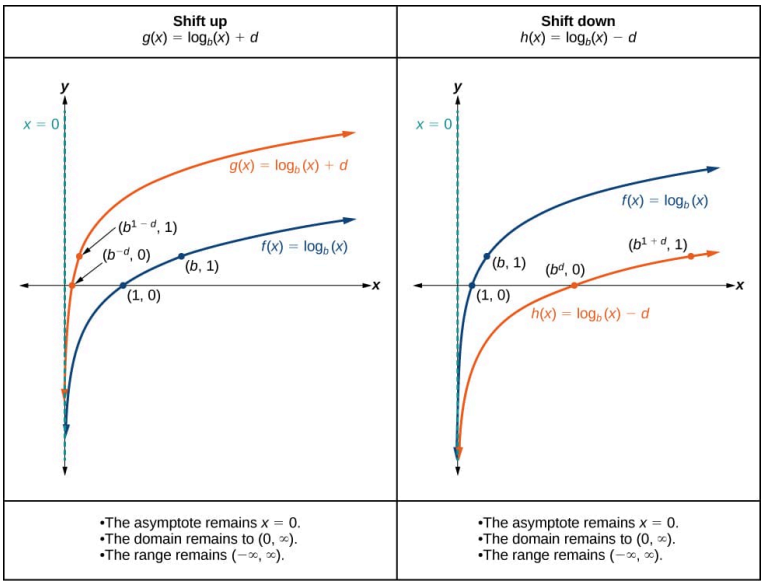


Figure 6.4.10

VERTICAL SHIFTS OF THE PARENT FUNCTION $Y = LOG_B(X)$

For any constant d,the function $f(x) = \log_b(x) + d$

- shifts the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ up d units if $d > 0$.
- shifts the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ down d units if $d < 0$.
- has the vertical asymptote $x = 0$.
- has domain $(0, \infty)$.
- has range $(-\infty, \infty)$.

Given a logarithmic function with the form $f(x) = \log_b(x) + d$, graph the translation.

1. Identify the vertical shift:
   - If $d > 0$, shift the graph of $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ up d units.
   - If $d < 0$, shift the graph of $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ down d units.
2. Draw the vertical asymptote $x = 0$.
3. Identify three key points from the parent function. Find new coordinates for the shifted functions by adding d to the y coordinate.
4. Label the three points.
5. The domain is $(0, \infty)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$,and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Example 6.4.5: Graphing a Vertical Shift of the Parent Function $y = log_b(x)$

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = \log_3(x) - 2$ alongside its parent function. Include the key points and asymptote on the graph. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Since the function is $f(x) = \log_3(x) - 2$,we will notice $d = -2$. Thus $d < 0$.

This means we will shift the function $f(x) = \log_3(x)$ down 2 units.

The vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Consider the three key points from the parent function, $\left(\frac{1}{3}, -1\right)$, $(1, 0)$,and $(3, 1)$.

The new coordinates are found by subtracting 2 from the *y* coordinates.

Label the points $\left(\frac{1}{3}, -3\right)$, $(1, -2)$, and $(3, -1)$.

The domain is $(0, \infty)$,the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

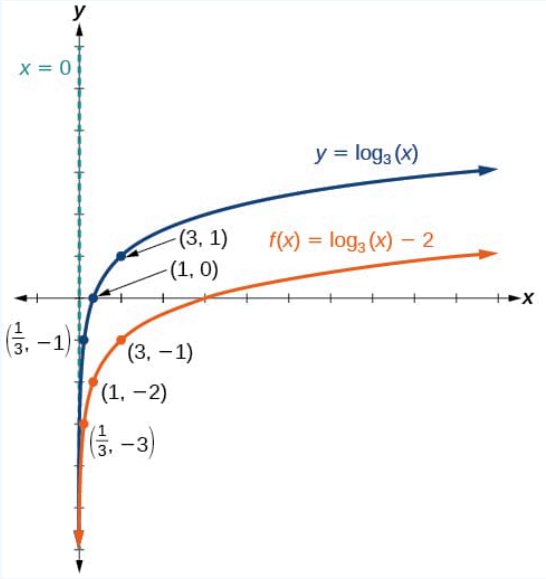


Figure $6.4.11$

The domain is $(0, \infty)$,the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$,and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Exercise $6.4.5$

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = \log_2(x) + 2$ alongside its parent function. Include the key points and asymptote on the graph. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Stretches and Compressions of $y = log_b(x)$

When the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ is multiplied by a constant $a > 0$, the result is a vertical stretch or compression of the original graph. To visualize stretches and compressions, we set $a > 1$ and observe the general graph of the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ alongside the vertical stretch, $g(x) = a\log_b(x)$ and the vertical compression, $h(x) = \frac{1}{a}\log_b(x)$.See Figure $6.4.13$.

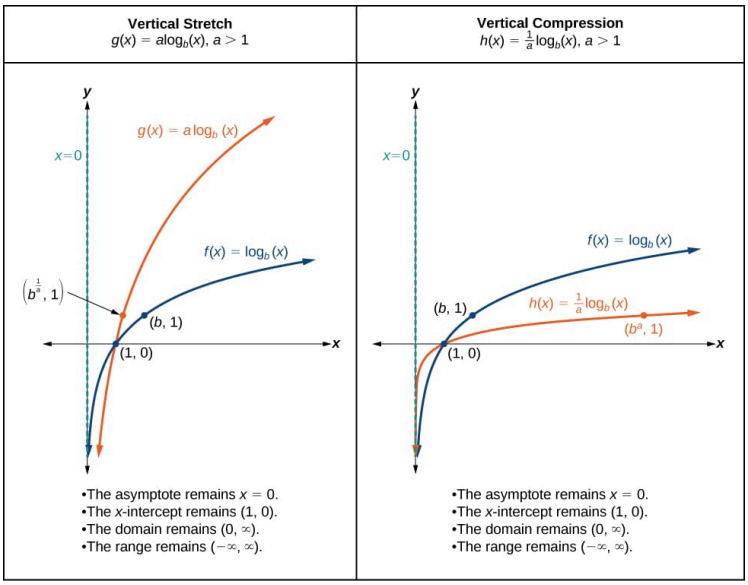


Figure 6.4.13

VERTICAL STRETCHES AND COMPRESSIONS OF THE PARENT FUNCTION $Y = LOG_B(X)$

For any constant $a > 1$,the function $f(x) = a\log_b(x)$

- stretches the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ vertically by a factor of a if $a > 1$.
- compresses the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ vertically by a factor of a if \(0
- has the vertical asymptote $x = 0$.
- has the x-intercept $(1, 0)$.
- has domain $(0, \infty)$.
- has range $(-\infty, \infty)$.

Given a logarithmic function with the form $f(x) = a\log_b(x)$, $a > 0$,graph the translation.

1. Identify the vertical stretch or compressions:
   - If $|a| > 1$, the graph of $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ is stretched by a factor of a units.
   - If $|a| < 1$, the graph of $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ is compressed by a factor of a units.
2. Draw the vertical asymptote $x = 0$.
3. Identify three key points from the parent function. Find new coordinates for the shifted functions by multiplying they y coordinates by a.
4. Label the three points.
5. The domain is $(0, \infty)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Example 6.4.6: Graphing a Stretch or Compression of the Parent Function $y = log_b(x)$

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = 2\log_4(x)$ alongside its parent function. Include the key points and asymptote on the graph. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Since the function is $f(x) = 2\log_4(x)$,we will notice $a = 2$.

This means we will stretch the function $f(x) = \log_4(x)$ by a factor of 2.

The vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Consider the three key points from the parent function, $\left(\frac{1}{4}, -1\right)$, $(1, 0)$, and $(4, 1)$.

The new coordinates are found by multiplying the y coordinates by 2.

Label the points $\left(\frac{1}{4}, -2\right)$, $(1, 0)$, and $(4, 2)$.

The domain is $(0, \infty)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$. See Figure $6.4.14$.

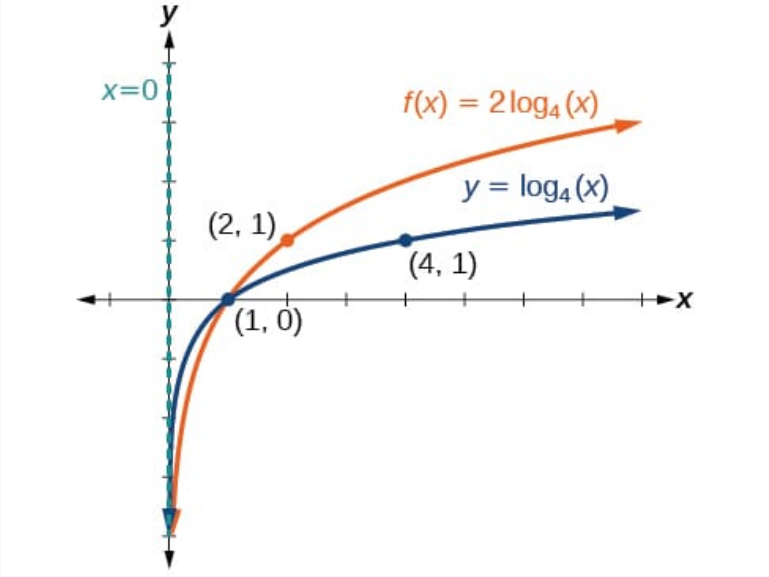


Figure $6.4.14$

The domain is $(0, \infty)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Exercise $6.4.6$

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = \frac{1}{2}\log_4(x)$ alongside its parent function. Include the key points and asymptote on the graph. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example $6.4.7$: Combining a Shift and a Stretch

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = 5\log(x + 2)$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Remember: what happens inside parentheses happens first. First, we move the graph left 2 units, then stretch the function vertically by a factor of 5, as in Figure $6.4.16$. The vertical asymptote will be shifted to $x = -2$. The x-intercept will be $(-1, 0)$. The domain will be $(-2, \infty)$. Two points will help give the shape of the graph: $(-1, 0)$ and $(8, 5)$. We chose $x = 8$ as the x-coordinate of one point to graph because when $x = 8$, $x + 2 = 10$, the base of the common logarithm.

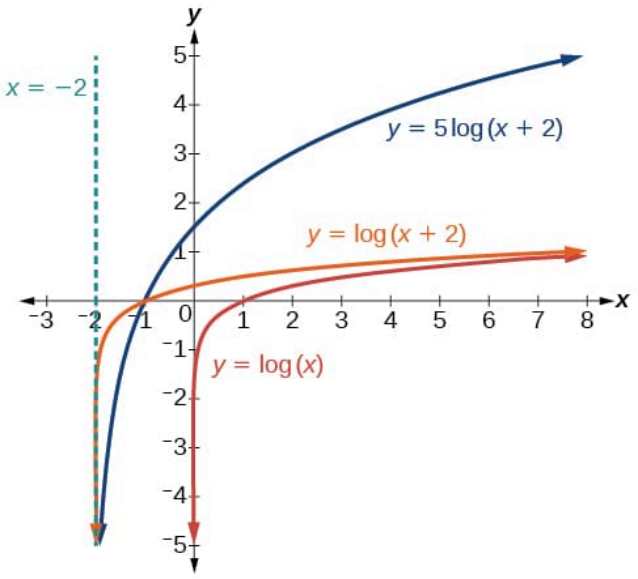


Figure 6.4.16

The domain is $(-2, \infty)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$,and the vertical asymptote is $x = -2$.

Exercise 6.4.7

Sketch a graph of the function $f(x) = 3\log(x - 2) + 1$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Graphing Reflections of $f(x) = log_b(x)$

When the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ is multiplied by -1,the result is a reflection about the x-axis. When the *input* is multiplied by -1,the result is a reflection about the y-axis. To visualize reflections, we restrict $b > 1$, and observe the general graph of the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ alongside the reflection about the x-axis, $g(x) = -\log_b(x)$ and the reflection about the y-axis, $h(x) = \log_b(-x)$.

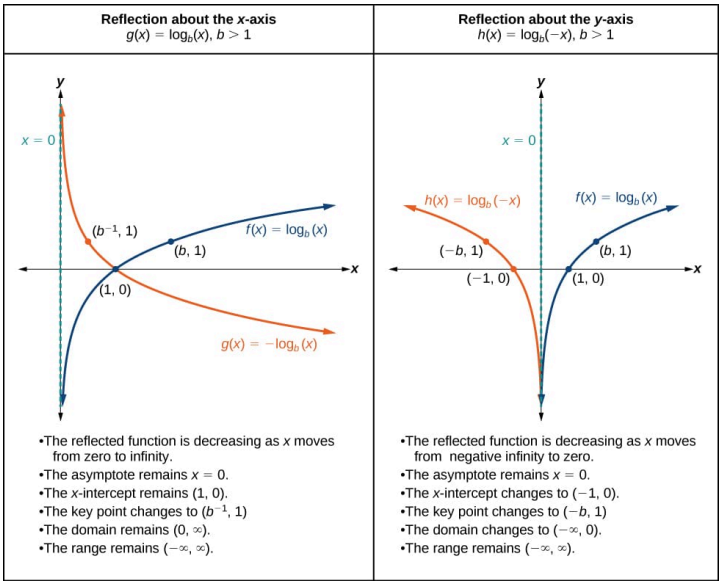


Figure 6.4.18

REFLECTIONS OF THE PARENT FUNCTION $Y = LOG_B(X)$

The function $f(x) = -\log_b(x)$

- reflects the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ about the x-axis.
- has domain, $(0, \infty)$, range, $(-\infty, \infty)$, and vertical asymptote, $x = 0$, which are unchanged from the parent function.

The function $f(x) = \log_b(-x)$

- reflects the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ about the y-axis.
- has domain $(-\infty, 0)$.
- has range, $(-\infty, \infty)$, and vertical asymptote, $x = 0$, which are unchanged from the parent function.

Given a logarithmic function with the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$, graph a translation.

Table 6.4.3

If $f(x) = -\log_b(x)$	**If** $f(x) = \log_b(-x)$
1. Draw the vertical asymptote, $x = 0$.	1. Draw the vertical asymptote, $x = 0$.
2. Plot the *x*-intercept, $(1, 0)$.	2. Plot the *x*-intercept, $(1, 0)$.
3. Reflect the graph of the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ about the *x*-axis.	3. Reflect the graph of the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ about the *y*-axis.
4. Draw a smooth curve through the points.	4. Draw a smooth curve through the points.
5. State the domain, $(0, \infty)$, the range, $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote $x = 0$.	5. State the domain, $(-\infty, 0)$, the range, $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote $x = 0$.

Example 6.4.8: Graphing a Reflection of a Logarithmic Function

Sketch a graph of $f(x) = \log(-x)$ alongside its parent function. Include the key points and asymptote on the graph. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Solution

Before graphing $f(x) = log(-x)$, $f(x) = log(-x)$,identify the behavior and key points for the graph.

- Since $b = 10$ is greater than one, we know that the parent function is increasing. Since the *input* value is multiplied by -1, $f(x)$ is a reflection of the parent graph about the y-axis. Thus, $f(x) = \log(-x)$ will be decreasing as x moves from negative infinity to zero, and the right tail of the graph will approach the vertical asymptote $x = 0$.
- The x-intercept is $(-1, 0)$.
- We draw and label the asymptote, plot and label the points, and draw a smooth curve through the points.

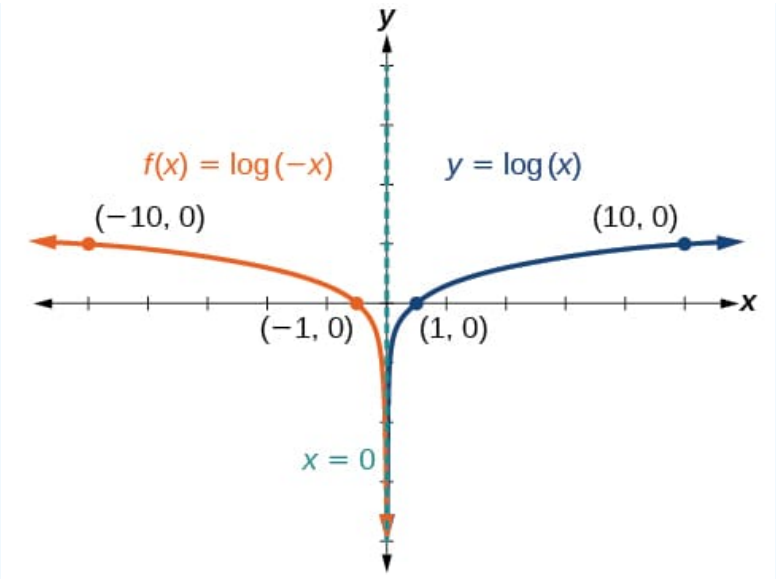


Figure 6.4.19

The domain is $(-\infty, 0)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Exercise 6.4.8

Graph $f(x) = -\log(-x)$. State the domain, range, and asymptote.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Given a logarithmic equation, use a graphing calculator to approximate solutions.

1. Press **[Y=]**. Enter the given logarithm equation or equations as **Y_1=** and, if needed, **Y_2=**.
2. Press **[GRAPH]** to observe the graphs of the curves and use **[WINDOW]** to find an appropriate view of the graphs, including their point(s) of intersection.
3. To find the value of x, we compute the point of intersection. Press **[2ND]** then **[CALC]**. Select "intersect" and press **[ENTER]** three times. The point of intersection gives the value of x,for the point(s) of intersection.

Example 6.4.9: Approximating the Solution of a Logarithmic Equation

Solve $4\ln(x) + 1 = -2\ln(x - 1)$ graphically. Round to the nearest thousandth.

Solution

Press **[Y=]** and enter $4\ln(x) + 1$ next to **Y_1=**. Then enter $-2\ln(x - 1)$ next to **Y_2=**. For a window, use the values 0 to 5 for $x\backslash 0 \; and \backslash (-10$ to 10 for y. Press **[GRAPH]**. The graphs should intersect somewhere a little to right of $x = 1$.

For a better approximation, press **[2ND]** then **[CALC]**. Select **[5: intersect]** and press **[ENTER]** three times. The *x*-coordinate of the point of intersection is displayed as 1.3385297. (Your answer may be different if you use a different window or use a different value for **Guess?**) So, to the nearest thousandth, $x \approx 1.339$.

Exercise 6.4.9

Solve $5\log(x+2) = 4 - \log(x)$ graphically. Round to the nearest thousandth.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Summarizing Translations of the Logarithmic Function

Now that we have worked with each type of translation for the logarithmic function, we can summarize each in Table 6.4.4 to arrive at the general equation for translating exponential functions.

Table 6.4.4

Translations of the Parent Function $y = \log_b(x)$	
Translation	**Form**
Shift Horizontally c units to the left Vertically d units up	$y = \log_b(x+c) + d$
Stretch and Compress Stretch if $\lvert a\rvert > 1$ Compression if $\lvert a\rvert < 1$	$y = a\log_b(x)$
Reflect about the x-axis	$y = -\log_b(x)$
Reflect about the y-axis	$y = \log_b(-x)$
General equation for all translations	$y = a\log_b(x+c) + d$

TRANSLATIONS OF LOGARITHMIC FUNCTIONS

All translations of the parent logarithmic function, $y = \log_b(x)$, have the form

$$f(x) = a\log_b(x+c) + d$$

where the parent function, $y = \log_b(x)$, $b > 1$,is

- shifted vertically up d units.
- shifted horizontally to the left c units.
- stretched vertically by a factor of $|a|$ if $|a| > 0$.
- compressed vertically by a factor of $|a|$ if $0 < |a| < 1$.
- reflected about the *x*-axis when $a < 0$.

For $f(x) = \log(-x)$, the graph of the parent function is reflected about the *y*-axis.

Example 6.4.10: Finding the Vertical Asymptote of a Logarithm Graph

What is the vertical asymptote of $f(x) = -2\log_3(x+4) + 5$?

Solution

The vertical asymptote is at $x = -4$.

Analysis

The coefficient, the base, and the upward translation do not affect the asymptote. The shift of the curve 4 units to the left shifts the vertical asymptote to$x = -4$.

Exercise 6.4.10

What is the vertical asymptote of $f(x) = 3 + \ln(x-1)$?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.4.11: Finding the Equation from a Graph

Find a possible equation for the common logarithmic function graphed in Figure 6.4.21.

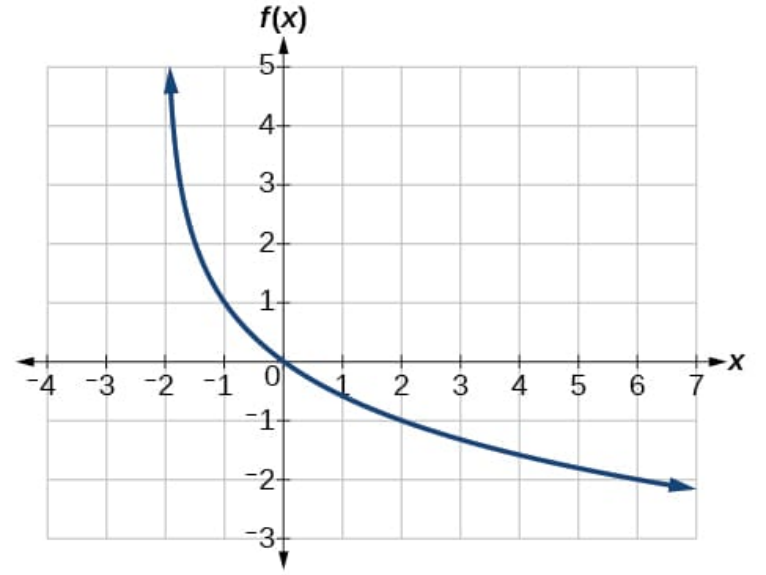


Figure 6.4.21

Solution

This graph has a vertical asymptote at $x = -2$ and has been vertically reflected. We do not know yet the vertical shift or the vertical stretch. We know so far that the equation will have form:

$$f(x) = -a\log(x+2) + k$$

It appears the graph passes through the points $(-1, 1)$ and $(2, -1)$. Substituting $(-1, 1)$,

$$\begin{aligned} 1 &= -a\log(-1+2)+k \quad \text{Substitute}(-1,1) \\ 1 &= -a\log(1)+k \quad \text{Arithmetic} \\ 1 &= k\log(1) \\ &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

Next, substituting in $(2,-1)$,

$$\begin{aligned} -1 &= -a\log(2+2)+1 \quad \text{Substitute}(2,-1) \\ -2 &= -a\log(4) \quad \text{Arithmetic} \\ a &= \frac{2}{\log(4)} \quad \text{Solve for a} \end{aligned}$$

This gives us the equation $f(x) = -\frac{2}{\log(4)}\log(x+2)+1$.

Analysis

We can verify this answer by comparing the function values in Table 6.4.5 with the points on the graph in Figure 6.4.21.

Table 6.4.5

x	–1	0	1	2	3
$f(x)$	1	0	–0.58496	–1	–1.3219
x	4	5	6	7	8
$f(x)$	–1.5850	–1.8074	–2	–2.1699	–2.3219

Exercise 6.4.11

Give the equation of the natural logarithm graphed in Figure 6.4.22.

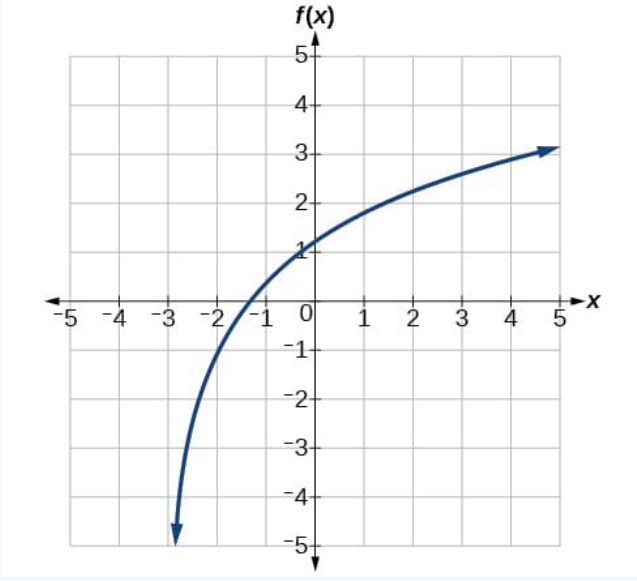


Figure 6.4.22

Answer available at the end of this section.

Media: Is it possible to tell the domain and range and describe the end behavior of a function just by looking at the graph?

Yes, if we know the function is a general logarithmic function. For example, look at the graph in Figure $6.4.22$. The graph approaches $x = -3$ (or thereabouts) more and more closely, so $x = -3$ is, or is very close to, the vertical asymptote. It approaches from the right, so the domain is all points to the right, $x|x > -3$. The range, as with all general logarithmic functions, is all real numbers. And we can see the end behavior because the graph goes down as it goes left and up as it goes right. The end behavior is that as $x \to -3^+$, $f(x) \to -\infty$ and as $x \to \infty$, $f(x) \to \infty$.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with graphing logarithms.

- Graph an Exponential Function and Logarithmic Function
- Match Graphs with Exponential and Logarithmic Functions
- Find the Domain of Logarithmic Functions

Key Equations

General Form for the Translation of the Parent Logarithmic Function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$	$f(x) = a\log_b(x + c) + d$

Key Concepts

- To find the domain of a logarithmic function, set up an inequality showing the argument greater than zero, and solve for x. See Example $6.4.1$ and Example $6.4.2$
- The graph of the parent function $f(x) = \log_b(x)$ has an *x*-intercept at $(1, 0)$,domain $(0, \infty)$,range $(-\infty, \infty)$,vertical asymptote $x = 0$,and
- ◦ if $b > 1$,the function is increasing.
  ◦ if \(0
  See Example $6.4.3$.
- The equation $f(x) = \log_b(x + c)$ shifts the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ horizontally
  ◦ left c units if $c > 0$.
  ◦ right c units if $c < 0$.
  See Example $6.4.4$.
- The equation $f(x) = \log_b(x) + d$ shifts the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ vertically
  ◦ up d units if $d > 0$.
  ◦ down d units if $d < 0$.
  See Example $6.4.5$.
- For any constant $a > 0$, the equation $f(x) = a\log_b(x)$
  ◦ stretches the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ vertically by a factor of a if $|a| > 1$.
  ◦ compresses the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ vertically by a factor of a if $|a| <$1.
  See Example $6.4.6$ and Example $6.4.7$.
- When the parent function $y = \log_b(x)$ is multiplied by -1, the result is a reflection about the *x*-axis. When the input is multiplied by -1, the result is a reflection about the *y*-axis.
  ◦ The equation $f(x) = -\log_b(x)$ represents a reflection of the parent function about the *x*-axis.
  ◦ The equation $f(x) = \log_b(-x)$ represents a reflection of the parent function about the *y*-axis.
  See Example $6.4.8$.
  ◦ A graphing calculator may be used to approximate solutions to some logarithmic equations See Example $6.4.9$.
- All translations of the logarithmic function can be summarized by the general equation $f(x) = a\log_b(x + c) + d$. See Table $6.4.4$.
- Given an equation with the general form $f(x) = a\log_b(x + c) + d$,we can identify the vertical asymptote $x = -c$ for the transformation. See Example $6.4.10$.
- Using the general equation $f(x) = a\log_b(x + c) + d$, we can write the equation of a logarithmic function given its graph. See

Example 6.4.11.

Answers

Exercise 6.4.1

$(2, \infty)$

Exercise 6.4.2

$(5, \infty)$

Exercise 6.4.3

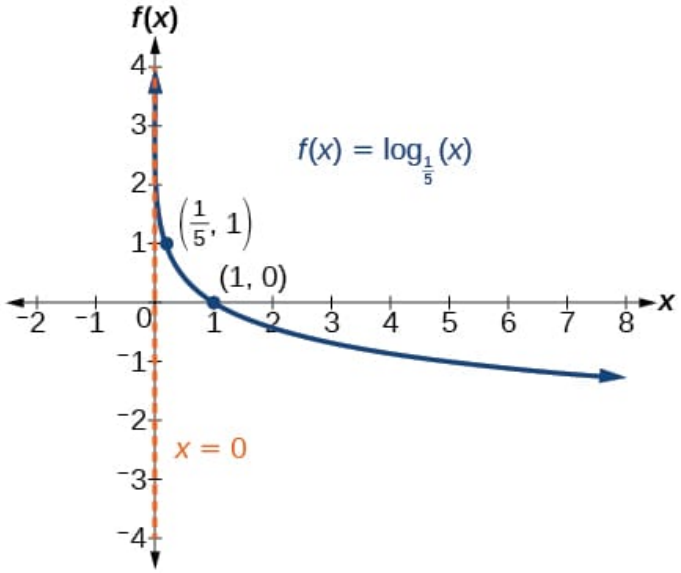


Figure 6.4.6

The domain is $(0, \infty)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Exercise 6.4.4

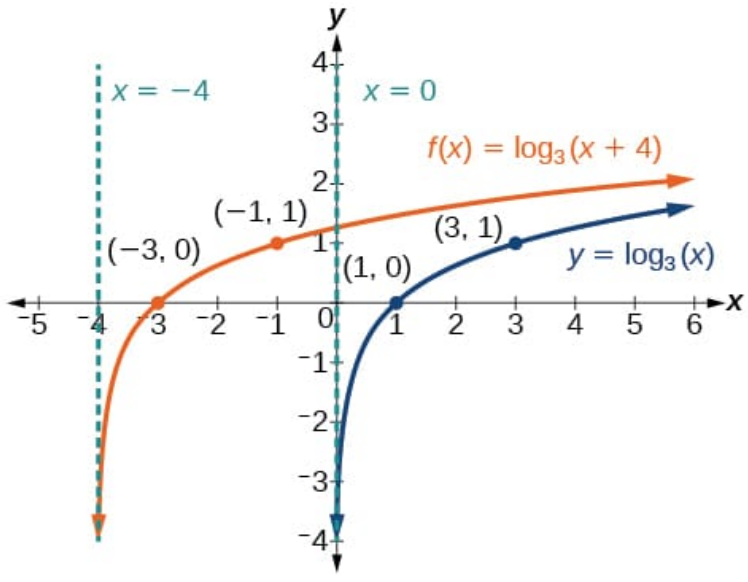


Figure 6.4.9

The domain is $(-4, \infty)$,the range $(-\infty, \infty)$,and the asymptote $x = -4$.

Exercise 6.4.5

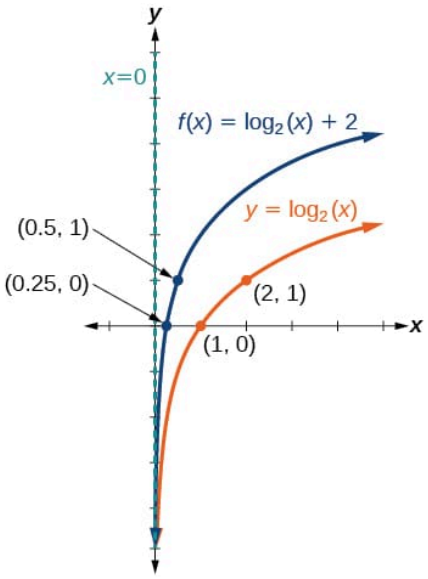


Figure 6.4.12

The domain is $(0, \infty)$,the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Exercise 6.4.6

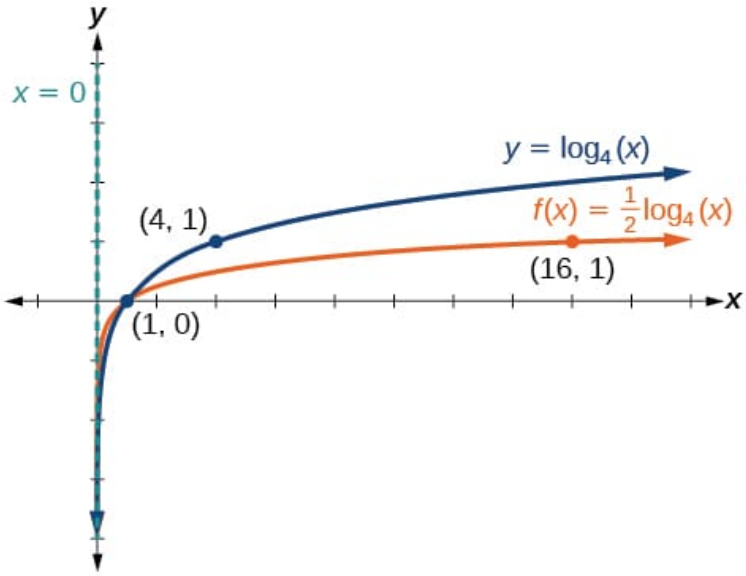


Figure 6.4.15

The domain is $(0, \infty)$, the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$,and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Exercise 6.4.7

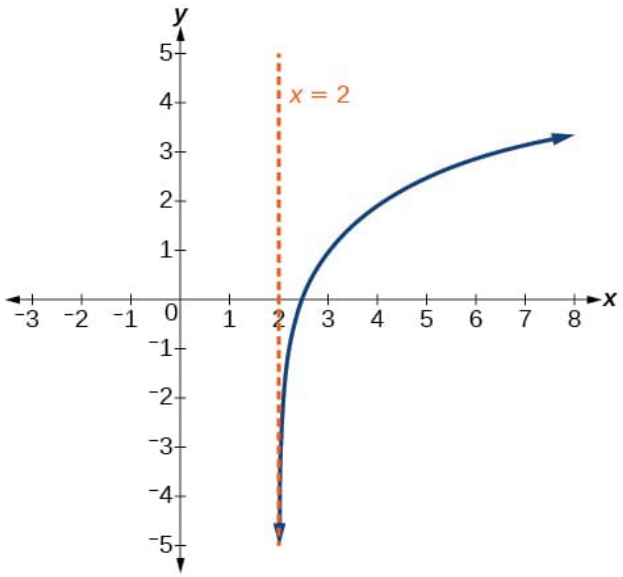


Figure 6.4.17

The domain is $(2, \infty)$,the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$, and the vertical asymptote is $x = 2$.

Exercise 6.4.8

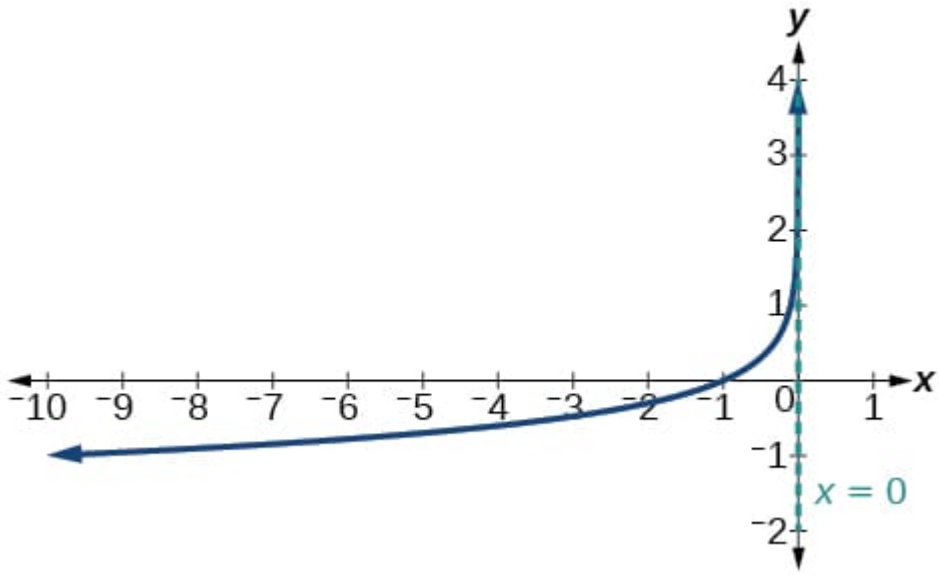


Figure 6.4.20

The domain is $(-\infty, 0)$,the range is $(-\infty, \infty)$,and the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$.

Exercise 6.4.9

$x \approx 3.049$

Exercise 6.4.10

$x = 1$

Exercise 6.4.11

$f(x) = 2\ln(x + 3) - 1$

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6.5: Logarithmic Properties

Learning Objectives

- Use the product rule for logarithms.
- Use the quotient rule for logarithms.
- Use the power rule for logarithms.
- Expand logarithmic expressions.
- Condense logarithmic expressions.
- Use the change-of-base formula for logarithms.

In chemistry, the pH scale is used as a measure of the acidity or alkalinity of a substance. Substances with a pH less than 7 are considered acidic, and substances with a pH greater than 7 are said to be alkaline. Our bodies, for instance, must maintain a pH close to 7.35 in order for enzymes to work properly. To get a feel for what is acidic and what is alkaline, consider the following pH levels of some common substances:

- Battery acid: 0.8
- Stomach acid: 2.7
- Orange juice: 3.3
- Pure water: 7 at $25^{\circ}C$
- Human blood: 7.35
- Fresh coconut: 7.8
- Sodium hydroxide (lye): 14

To determine whether a solution is acidic or alkaline, we find its pH, which is a measure of the number of active positive hydrogen ions in the solution. The pH is defined by the following formula, where $[\mathrm{H}^+]$ is the concentration of hydrogen ions in the solution

$$pH = -\log([\mathrm{H}^+]) \tag{6.5.1}$$

$$= \log\left(\frac{1}{[\mathrm{H}^+]}\right) \tag{6.5.2}$$

The equivalence of Equations $6.5.1$ and $6.5.2$ is one of the logarithm properties we will examine in this section.



Figure $6.5.1$: The pH of hydrochloric acid is tested with litmus paper. (credit: David Berardan).

Using the Product Rule for Logarithms

Recall that the logarithmic and exponential functions "undo" each other. This means that logarithms have similar properties to exponents. Some important properties of logarithms are given here. First, the following properties are easy to prove.

$$\log_b 1 = 0$$
$$\log_b b = 1$$

For example, $\log_5 1 = 0$ since $5^0 = 1$. And $\log_5 5 = 1$ since $5^1 = 5$.

Next, we have the inverse property.

$$\log_b(b^x) = x$$
$$b^{\log_b x} = x,\ x > 0$$

For example, to evaluate $\log(100)$, we can rewrite the logarithm as $\log_{10}(10^2)$, and then apply the inverse property $\log_b(b^x) = x$ to get $\log_{10}(10^2) = 2$.

To evaluate $e^{\ln(7)}$, we can rewrite the logarithm as $e^{\log_e 7}$, and then apply the inverse property $b^{\log_b x} = x$ to get $e^{\log_e 7} = 7$.

Finally, we have the one-to-one property.

$$\log_b M = \log_b N \text{ if and only if } M = N \tag{6.5.3}$$

We can use the one-to-one property to solve the equation $\log_3(3x) = \log_3(2x + 5)$ for x. Since the bases are the same, we can apply the one-to-one property by setting the arguments equal and solving for x:

$3x = 2x + 5$ Set the arguments equal.

$x = 5$ Subtract $2x$.

But what about the equation $\log_3(3x) + \log_3(2x + 5) = 2$? The one-to-one property does not help us in this instance. Before we can solve an equation like this, we need a method for combining terms on the left side of the equation.

Recall that we use the *product rule of exponents* to combine the product of exponents by adding: $x^a x^b = x^{a+b}$. We have a similar property for logarithms, called the **product rule for logarithms**, which says that the logarithm of a product is equal to a sum of logarithms. Because logs are exponents, and we multiply like bases, we can add the exponents. We will use the inverse property to derive the product rule below.

Given any positive real numbers M, N, and b, where $b \neq 1$, we will show

$$\log_b(MN) = \log_b(M) + \log_b(N).$$

Let $m = \log_b M$ and $n = \log_b N$. In exponential form, these equations are $b^m = M$ and $b^n = N$. It follows that

$$\begin{aligned}
\log_b(MN) &= \log_b(b^m b^n) && \text{Substitute for M and N} \\
&= \log_b(b^{m+n}) && \text{Apply the product rule for exponents} \\
&= m + n && \text{Apply the inverse property of logs} \\
&= \log_b(M) + \log_b(N) && \text{Substitute for m and n}
\end{aligned}$$

Note that repeated applications of the product rule for logarithms allow us to simplify the logarithm of the product of any number of factors. For example, consider $\log_b(wxyz)$. Using the product rule for logarithms, we can rewrite this logarithm of a product as the sum of logarithms of its factors:

$$\log_b(wxyz) = \log_b w + \log_b x + \log_b y + \log_b z$$

The Product Rule for Logarithms

The product rule for logarithms can be used to simplify a logarithm of a product by rewriting it as a sum of individual logarithms.

$$\log_b(MN) = \log_b(M) + \log_b(N) \tag{6.5.4}$$

How to: Given the logarithm of a product, use the product rule of logarithms to write an equivalent sum of logarithms

1. Factor the argument completely, expressing each whole number factor as a product of primes.
2. Write the equivalent expression by summing the logarithms of each factor.

Example 6.5.1: Using the Product Rule for Logarithms

Expand $\log_3(30x(3x+4))$.

Solution

We begin by factoring the argument completely, expressing 30 as a product of primes.

$$\log_3(30x(3x+4)) = \log_3(2 \cdot 3 \cdot 5 \cdot x \cdot (3x+4))$$

Next we write the equivalent equation by summing the logarithms of each factor.

$$\log_3(30x(3x+4)) = \log_3(2) + \log_3(3) + \log_3(5) + \log_3(x) + \log_3(3x+4)$$

Exercise 6.5.1

Expand $\log_b(8k)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Quotient Rule for Logarithms

For quotients, we have a similar rule for logarithms. Recall that we use the *quotient rule of exponents* to combine the quotient of exponents by subtracting: $x^{\frac{a}{b}} = x^{a-b}$. The **quotient rule for logarithms** says that the logarithm of a quotient is equal to a difference of logarithms.

The Quotient Rule for Logarithms

The quotient rule for logarithms can be used to simplify a logarithm or a quotient by rewriting it as the difference of individual logarithms.

$$\log_b\left(\frac{M}{N}\right) = \log_b M - \log_b N \tag{6.5.5}$$

Just as with the product rule, we can use the inverse property to derive the quotient rule.

Proof of the Quotient Rule

For any positive real numbers M, N, and b, where $b \neq 1$, we will show

$$\log_b\left(\frac{M}{N}\right) = \log_b(M) - \log_b(N).$$

Let $m = \log_b M$ and $n = \log_b N$. In exponential form, these equations are $b^m = M$ and $b^n = N$. It follows that

$$\begin{aligned}
\log_b\left(\frac{M}{N}\right) &= \log_b\left(\frac{b^m}{b^n}\right) && \text{Substitute for M and N} \\
&= \log_b(b^{m-n}) && \text{Apply the quotient rule for exponents} \\
&= m - n && \text{Apply the inverse property of logs} \\
&= \log_b(M) - \log_b(N) && \text{Substitute for m and n}
\end{aligned}$$

For example, to expand $\log\left(\frac{2x^2+6x}{3x+9}\right)$, we must first express the quotient in lowest terms. Factoring and canceling we get,

$$\begin{aligned}
\log\left(\frac{2x^2+6x}{3x+9}\right) &= \log\left(\frac{2x(x+3)}{3(x+3)}\right) && \text{Factor the numerator and denominator} \\
&= \log\left(\frac{2x}{3}\right) && \text{Cancel the common factors}
\end{aligned}$$

Next we apply the quotient rule by subtracting the logarithm of the denominator from the logarithm of the numerator. Then we apply the product rule.

$$\begin{aligned}
\log\left(\frac{2x}{3}\right) &= \log(2x) - \log(3) \\
&= \log(2) + \log(x) - \log(3)
\end{aligned}$$

How to: Given the logarithm of a quotient, use the quotient rule of logarithms to write an equivalent difference of logarithms

1. Express the argument in lowest terms by factoring the numerator and denominator and canceling common terms.
2. Write the equivalent expression by subtracting the logarithm of the denominator from the logarithm of the numerator.
3. Check to see that each term is fully expanded. If not, apply the product rule for logarithms to expand completely.

Example 6.5.2: Using the Quotient Rule for Logarithms

Expand $log_2\left(\frac{15x(x-1)}{(3x+4)(2-x)}\right)$.

Solution

First we note that the quotient is factored and in lowest terms, so we apply the quotient rule.

$$\log_2(\frac{15x(x-1)}{(3x+4)(2-x)}) = \log_2(15x(x-1)) - \log_2((3x+4)(2-x))$$

Notice that the resulting terms are logarithms of products. To expand completely, we apply the product rule, noting that the prime factors of the factor 15 are 3 and 5.

$$\begin{aligned}
\log_2(15x(x-1)) - \log_2((3x+4)(2-x)) &= [\log_2(3) + \log_2(5) + \log_2(x) + \log_2(x-1)] - [\log_2(3x+4) + \log_2(2-x)] \\
&= \log_2(3) + \log_2(5) + \log_2(x) + \log_2(x-1) - \log_2(3x+4) - \log_2(2-x)
\end{aligned}$$

Analysis

There are exceptions to consider in this and later examples. First, because denominators must never be zero, this expression is not defined for $x = -\frac{4}{3}$ and $x = 2$. Also, since the argument of a logarithm must be positive, we note as we observe the expanded logarithm, that $x > 0$, $x > 1$, $x > -\frac{4}{3}$, and $x < 2$. Combining these conditions is beyond the scope of this section, and we will not consider them here or in subsequent exercises.

Exercise 6.5.2

Expand $\log_3\left(\frac{7x^2+21x}{7x(x-1)(x-2)}\right)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Power Rule for Logarithms

We've explored the product rule and the quotient rule, but how can we take the logarithm of a power, such as x^2? One method is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\log_b(x^2) &= \log_b(x \cdot x)\\ &= \log_b x + \log_b x\\ &= 2\log_b x\end{aligned}$$

Notice that we used the **product rule for logarithms** to find a solution for the example above. By doing so, we have derived the **power rule for logarithms**, which says that the log of a power is equal to the exponent times the log of the base. Keep in mind that, although the input to a logarithm may not be written as a power, we may be able to change it to a power. For example,

$$100 = 10^2 \quad \sqrt{3} = 3^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad \frac{1}{e} = e^{-1}$$

The Power Rule for Logarithms

The power rule for logarithms can be used to simplify the logarithm of a power by rewriting it as the product of the exponent times the logarithm of the base.

$$\log_b(M^n) = n\log_b M \tag{6.5.6}$$

How to: Given the logarithm of a power, use the power rule of logarithms to write an equivalent product of a factor and a logarithm

1. Express the argument as a power, if needed.
2. Write the equivalent expression by multiplying the exponent times the logarithm of the base.

Example 6.5.3: Expanding a Logarithm with Powers

Expand $\log_2 x^5$.

Solution

The argument is already written as a power, so we identify the exponent, 5, and the base, x, and rewrite the equivalent expression by multiplying the exponent times the logarithm of the base.

$$\log_2(x^5) = 5\log_2 x$$

Exercise 6.5.3

Expand $\ln x^2$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.5.4: Rewriting an Expression as a Power before Using the Power Rule

Expand $\log_3(25)$ using the power rule for logs.

Solution

Expressing the argument as a power, we get $\log_3(25) = \log_3(5^2)$.

Next we identify the exponent, 2, and the base, 5, and rewrite the equivalent expression by multiplying the exponent times the logarithm of the base.

$$\log_3(52) = 2\log_3(5)$$

Exercise 6.5.4

Expand $\ln\left(\frac{1}{x^2}\right)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.5.5: Using the Power Rule in Reverse

Rewrite $4\ln(x)$ using the power rule for logs to a single logarithm with a leading coefficient of 1.

Solution

Because the logarithm of a power is the product of the exponent times the logarithm of the base, it follows that the product of a number and a logarithm can be written as a power. For the expression $4\ln(x)$, we identify the factor, 4, as the exponent and the argument, x, as the base, and rewrite the product as a logarithm of a power: $4\ln(x) = \ln(x^4)$.

Exercise 6.5.5

Rewrite $2\log_3 4$ using the power rule for logs to a single logarithm with a leading coefficient of 1.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Expanding Logarithmic Expressions

Taken together, the product rule, quotient rule, and power rule are often called “laws of logs.” Sometimes we apply more than one rule in order to simplify an expression. For example:

$$\log_b\left(\frac{6x}{y}\right) = \log_b(6x) - \log_b y$$
$$= \log_b 6 + \log_b x - \log_b y$$

We can use the power rule to expand logarithmic expressions involving negative and fractional exponents. Here is an alternate proof of the quotient rule for logarithms using the fact that a reciprocal is a negative power:

$$\log_b\left(\frac{A}{C}\right) = \log_b(AC^{-1})$$
$$= \log_b(A) + \log_b(C^{-1})$$
$$= \log_b A + (-1)\log_b C$$
$$= \log_b A - \log_b C$$

We can also apply the product rule to express a sum or difference of logarithms as the logarithm of a product.

With practice, we can look at a logarithmic expression and expand it mentally, writing the final answer. Remember, however, that we can only do this with products, quotients, powers, and roots—never with addition or subtraction inside the argument of the logarithm.

Example 6.5.6: Expanding Logarithms Using Product, Quotient, and Power Rules

Rewrite $ln\left(\frac{x^4y}{7}\right)$ as a sum or difference of logs.

Solution

First, because we have a quotient of two expressions, we can use the quotient rule:

$$\ln\left(\frac{x^4y}{7}\right) = \ln(x^4y) - \ln(7)$$

Then seeing the product in the first term, we use the product rule:

$$\ln(x^4y) - \ln(7) = \ln(x^4) + \ln(y) - \ln(7)$$

Finally, we use the power rule on the first term:

$$\ln(x^4) + \ln(y) - \ln(7) = 4\ln(x) + \ln(y) - \ln(7)$$

Exercise 6.5.6

Expand $\log\left(\frac{x^2y^3}{z^4}\right)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.5.7: Using the Power Rule for Logarithms to Simplify the Logarithm of a Radical Expression

Expand $\log(\sqrt{x})$.

Solution

$$\log(\sqrt{x}) = \log(x^{\frac{1}{2}})$$
$$= \frac{1}{2}\log x$$
$$= \frac{\log x}{2}$$

Exercise 6.5.7

Expand $\ln(\sqrt[3]{x^2})$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Can we expand $\ln(x^2 + y^2)$?

No. There is no way to expand the logarithm of a sum or difference inside the argument of the logarithm.

Example 6.5.8: Expanding Complex Logarithmic Expressions

Expand $\log_6\left(\frac{64x^3(4x+1)}{(2x-1)}\right)$.

Solution

We can expand by applying the Product and Quotient Rules.

$$\log_6\left(\frac{64x^3(4x+1)}{(2x-1)}\right) = \log_6 64 + \log_6 x^3 + \log_6(4x+1) - \log_6(2x-1) \quad \text{Apply the Quotient Rule}$$
$$= \log_6 26 + \log_6 x^3 + \log_6(4x+1) - \log_6(2x-1) \quad \text{Simplify by writing 64 as } 2^6$$
$$= 6\log_6 2 + 3\log_6 x + \log_6(4x+1) - \log_6(2x-1) \quad \text{Apply the Power Rule}$$

Exercise 6.5.8

Expand $\ln\left(\frac{\sqrt{(x-1)(2x+1)^2}}{(x^2-9)}\right)$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Condensing Logarithmic Expressions

We can use the rules of logarithms we just learned to condense sums, differences, and products with the same base as a single logarithm. It is important to remember that the logarithms must have the same base to be combined. We will learn later how to change the base of any logarithm before condensing.

How to: Given a sum, difference, or product of logarithms with the same base, write an equivalent expression as a single logarithm

1. Apply the power property first. Identify terms that are products of factors and a logarithm, and rewrite each as the logarithm of a power.

2. Next apply the product property. Rewrite sums of logarithms as the logarithm of a product.
3. Apply the quotient property last. Rewrite differences of logarithms as the logarithm of a quotient.

Example 6.5.9: Using the Product and Quotient Rules to Combine Logarithms

Write $\log_3(5)+\log_3(8)-\log_3(2)$ as a single logarithm.

Solution

Using the product and quotient rules

$$\log_3(5)+\log_3(8)=\log_3(5\cdot 8)=\log_3(40)$$

This reduces our original expression to

$$\log_3(40)-\log_3(2)$$

Then, using the quotient rule

$$\log_3(40)-\log_3(2)=\log_3\left(\frac{40}{2}\right)=\log_3(20)$$

Exercise 6.5.9

Condense $\log_3-\log_4+\log_5-\log_6$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.5.10: Condensing Complex Logarithmic Expressions

Condense $\log_2(x^2)+\frac{1}{2}\log_2(x-1)-3\log_2((x+3)^2)$.

Solution

We apply the power rule first:

$$\log_2(x^2)+\frac{1}{2}\log_2(x-1)-3\log_2((x+3)^2)=\log_2(x^2)+\log_2(\sqrt{x-1})-\log_2((x+3)^6)$$

Next we apply the product rule to the sum:

$$\log_2(x^2)+\log_2(\sqrt{x-1})-\log_2((x+3)^6)=\log_2(x^2\sqrt{x-1})-\log_2((x+3)^6)$$

Finally, we apply the quotient rule to the difference:

$$\log_2(x^2\sqrt{x-1})-\log_2((x+3)^6)=\log_2\frac{x^2\sqrt{x-1}}{(x+3)^6}$$

Example 6.5.11: Rewriting as a Single Logarithm

Rewrite $2\log x-4\log(x+5)+\frac{1}{x}\log(3x+5)$ as a single logarithm.

Solution

We apply the power rule first:

$$2\log x - 4\log(x+5) + \frac{1}{x}\log(3x+5) = \log(x^2) - \log(x+5)^4 + \log((3x+5)^{x^{-1}})$$

Next we rearrange and apply the product rule to the sum:

$$\begin{aligned}\log(x^2) - \log(x+5)^4 + \log((3x+5)^{x^{-1}}) &= \log(x^2) + \log((3x+5)^{x^{-1}} - \log(x+5)^4 \\ &= \log(x^2(3x+5)^{x^{-1}}) - \log(x+5)^4 \\ &= \log\frac{x^2(3x+5)^{x^{-1}}}{(x+5)^4} \qquad \text{Apply the quotient rule to the difference}\end{aligned}$$

Exercise 6.5.10

Rewrite $\log(5) + 0.5\log(x) - \log(7x-1) + 3\log(x-1)$ as a single logarithm.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Exercise 6.5.11

Condense $4(3\log(x) + \log(x+5) - \log(2x+3))$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.5.12: Applying of the Laws of Logs

Recall that, in chemistry, $pH = -\log[H+]$. If the concentration of hydrogen ions in a liquid is doubled, what is the effect on pH?

Solution

Suppose C is the original concentration of hydrogen ions, and P is the original pH of the liquid. Then $P = -\log(C)$. If the concentration is doubled, the new concentration is $2C$. Then the pH of the new liquid is

$$pH = -\log(2C)$$

Using the product rule of logs

$$pH = -\log(2C) = -(\log(2) + \log(C)) = -\log(2) - \log(C)$$

Since $P = -\log(C)$,the new pH is

$$pH = P - \log(2) \approx P - 0.301$$

Exercise 6.5.12

When the concentration of hydrogen ions is doubled, the pH decreases by about 0.301.

How does the pH change when the concentration of positive hydrogen ions is decreased by half?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the Change-of-Base Formula for Logarithms

Most calculators can evaluate only common and natural logs. In order to evaluate logarithms with a base other than 10 ore, e,we use the **change-of-base formula** to rewrite the logarithm as the quotient of logarithms of any other base; when using a calculator, we would change them to common or natural logs.

To derive the change-of-base formula, we use the **one-to-one** property and **power rule for logarithms**.

Given any positive real numbers M, b, and n, where $n \neq 1$ and $b \neq 1$,we show

$$\log_b M = \frac{\log_n M}{\log_n b}$$

Let $y = \log_b M$. By taking the log base n of both sides of the equation, we arrive at an exponential form, namely $b^y = M$. It follows that

$$\begin{aligned} \log_n(b^y) &= \log_n M && \text{Apply the one-to-one property} \\ y\log_n b &= \log_n M && \text{Apply the power rule for logarithms} \\ y &= \frac{\log_n M}{\log_n b} && \text{Isolate y} \\ \log_b M &= \frac{\log_n M}{\log_n b} && \text{Substitute for y} \end{aligned}$$

For example, to evaluate $\log_5 36$ using a calculator, we must first rewrite the expression as a quotient of common or natural logs. We will use the common log.

$$\begin{aligned} \log_5 36 &= \frac{\log(36)}{\log(5)} && \text{Apply the change of base formula using base 10} \\ &\approx 2.2266 && \text{Use a calculator to evaluate to 4 decimal places} \end{aligned}$$

THE CHANGE-OF-BASE FORMULA

The change-of-base formula can be used to evaluate a logarithm with any base.

For any positive real numbers M, b, and n, where $n \neq 1$ and $b \neq 1$,

$$\log_b M = \frac{\log_n M}{\log_n b} \tag{6.5.7}$$

It follows that the change-of-base formula can be used to rewrite a logarithm with any base as the quotient of common or natural logs.

$$\log_b M = \frac{\ln M}{\ln b} \tag{6.5.8}$$

and

$$\log_b M = \frac{\log M}{\log b} \tag{6.5.9}$$

How to: Given a logarithm with the form $\log_b M$, use the change-of-base formula to rewrite it as a quotient of logs with any positive base n, where $n \neq 1$

1. Determine the new base n, remembering that the common log, $\log(x)$, has base 10, and the natural log, $\ln(x)$,has base e.
2. Rewrite the log as a quotient using the change-of-base formula
   - The numerator of the quotient will be a logarithm with base n and argument M.

- The denominator of the quotient will be a logarithm with base n and argument b.

Example 6.5.13: Changing Logarithmic Expressions to Expressions Involving Only Natural Logs

Change $\log_5 3$ to a quotient of natural logarithms.

Solution

Because we will be expressing $\log_5 3$ as a quotient of natural logarithms, the new base, $n = e$.

We rewrite the log as a quotient using the change-of-base formula. The numerator of the quotient will be the natural log with argument 3. The denominator of the quotient will be the natural log with argument 5.

$$\log_b M = \frac{\ln M}{\ln b}$$

$$\log_5 3 = \frac{\ln 3}{\ln 5}$$

Exercise 6.5.13

Change $\log 0.58$ to a quotient of natural logarithms.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Can we change common logarithms to natural logarithms?

Yes. Remember that $\log 9$ *means*l $\log_{10} 9$. *So,* $\log 9 = \frac{\ln 9}{\ln 10}$.

Example 6.5.14: Using the Change-of-Base Formula with a Calculator

Evaluate $\log_2(10)$ using the change-of-base formula with a calculator.

Solution

According to the change-of-base formula, we can rewrite the log base 2 as a logarithm of any other base. Since our calculators can evaluate the natural log, we might choose to use the natural logarithm, which is the log base e.

$$\begin{aligned} \log_2 10 &= \frac{\ln 10}{\ln 2} && \text{Apply the change of base formula using base } e \\ &\approx 3.3219 && \text{Use a calculator to evaluate to 4 decimal places} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 6.5.14

Evaluate $\log_5(100)$ using the change-of-base formula.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with laws of logarithms.

- The Properties of Logarithms
- Expand Logarithmic Expressions
- Evaluate a Natural Logarithmic Expression

Key Equations

The Product Rule for Logarithms	$\log_b(MN) = \log_b(M) + \log_b(N)$
The Quotient Rule for Logarithms	$\log_b(\frac{M}{N}) = \log_b M - \log_b N$
The Power Rule for Logarithms	$\log_b(M^n) = n\log_b M$
The Change-of-Base Formula	$\log_b M = \frac{\log_n M}{\log_n b}$ $n > 0$, $n \neq 1$, $b \neq 1$

Key Concepts

- We can use the product rule of logarithms to rewrite the log of a product as a sum of logarithms. See Example $6.5.1$.
- We can use the quotient rule of logarithms to rewrite the log of a quotient as a difference of logarithms. See Example $6.5.2$.
- We can use the power rule for logarithms to rewrite the log of a power as the product of the exponent and the log of its base. See Example $6.5.3$, Example $6.5.4$, and Example $6.5.5$.
- We can use the product rule, the quotient rule, and the power rule together to combine or expand a logarithm with a complex input. See Example $6.5.6$, Example $6.5.7$, and Example $6.5.8$.
- The rules of logarithms can also be used to condense sums, differences, and products with the same base as a single logarithm. See Example $6.5.9$, Example $6.5.10$, Example $6.5.11$, and Example $6.5.12$.
- We can convert a logarithm with any base to a quotient of logarithms with any other base using the change-of-base formula. See Example $6.5.13$.
- The change-of-base formula is often used to rewrite a logarithm with a base other than 10 and e as the quotient of natural or common logs. That way a calculator can be used to evaluate. See Example $6.5.14$.

Answers

Exercise $6.5.1$

$\log_b 2 + \log_b 2 + \log_b 2 + \log_b k = 3\log_b 2 + \log_b k$

Exercise $6.5.2$

$\log_3(x+3) - \log_3(x-1) - \log_3(x-2)$

Exercise $6.5.3$

$2\ln x$

Exercise $6.5.4$

$-2\ln(x)$

Exercise $6.5.5$

$\log_3 16$

Exercise $6.5.6$

$2\log x + 3\log y - 4\log z$

Exercise $6.5.7$

$\frac{2}{3}\ln x$

Exercise $6.5.8$

$\frac{1}{2}\ln(x-1) + \ln(2x+1) - \ln(x+3) - \ln(x-3)$

Exercise $6.5.9$

$\log\left(\frac{3\cdot 5}{4\cdot 6}\right)$; can also be written $\log\left(\frac{5}{8}\right)$ by reducing the fraction to lowest terms.

Exercise $6.5.10$

$\log\frac{5(x-1)^3\sqrt{x}}{(7x-1)}$

Exercise $6.5.11$

$\log \dfrac{x^{12}(x+5)^4}{(2x+3)^4}$; this answer could also be written $\log\left(\dfrac{x^3(x+5)}{(2x+3)}\right)^4$

Exercise $6.5.12$

The pH increases by about 0.301.

Exercise $6.5.13$

$\dfrac{\ln 8}{\ln 0.5}$

Exercise $6.5.14$

$\dfrac{\ln 100}{\ln 5} \approx \dfrac{4.6051}{1.6094} = 2.861$

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6.6: Exponential and Logarithmic Equations

Learning Objectives

- Use like bases to solve exponential equations.
- Use logarithms to solve exponential equations.
- Use the definition of a logarithm to solve logarithmic equations.
- Use the one-to-one property of logarithms to solve logarithmic equations.
- Solve applied problems involving exponential and logarithmic equations.

In 1859, an Australian landowner named Thomas Austin released 24 rabbits into the wild for hunting. Because Australia had few predators and ample food, the rabbit population exploded. In fewer than ten years, the rabbit population numbered in the millions.



Figure $6.6.1$: Wild rabbits in Australia. The rabbit population grew so quickly in Australia that the event became known as the "rabbit plague." (credit: Richard Taylor, Flickr)

Uncontrolled population growth, as in the wild rabbits in Australia, can be modeled with exponential functions. Equations resulting from those exponential functions can be solved to analyze and make predictions about exponential growth. In this section, we will learn techniques for solving exponential functions.

Using Like Bases to Solve Exponential Equations

The first technique involves two functions with like bases. Recall that the one-to-one property of exponential functions tells us that, for any real numbers b, S, and T, where $b > 0$, $b \neq 1$, $b^S = b^T$ if and only if $S = T$.

In other words, when an **exponential equation** has the same base on each side, the exponents must be equal. This also applies when the exponents are algebraic expressions. Therefore, we can solve many exponential equations by using the rules of exponents to rewrite each side as a power with the same base. Then, we use the fact that exponential functions are one-to-one to set the exponents equal to one another, and solve for the unknown.

For example, consider the equation $3^{4x-7} = \dfrac{3^{2x}}{3}$. To solve for x, we use the division property of exponents to rewrite the right side so that both sides have the common base, 3. Then we apply the one-to-one property of exponents by setting the exponents equal to one another and solving for x:

$$
\begin{aligned}
3^{4x-7} &= \frac{3^{2x}}{3} \\
3^{4x-7} &= \frac{3^{2x}}{3^1} && \text{Rewrite 3 as } 3^1 \\
3^{4x-7} &= 3^{2x-1} && \text{Use the division property of exponents} \\
4x-7 &= 2x-1 && \text{Apply the one-to-one property of exponents} \\
2x &= 6 && \text{Subtract 2x and add 7 to both sides} \\
x &= 3 && \text{Divide by 3}
\end{aligned}
$$

USING THE ONE-TO-ONE PROPERTY OF EXPONENTIAL FUNCTIONS TO SOLVE EXPONENTIAL EQUATIONS

For any algebraic expressions S and T, and any positive real number $b \neq 1$,

$$b^S = b^T \text{ if and only if } S = T \tag{6.6.1}$$

How to: Given an exponential equation with the form $b^S = b^T$, where S and T are algebraic expressions with an unknown, solve for the unknown.

1. Use the rules of exponents to simplify, if necessary, so that the resulting equation has the form $b^S = b^T$.
2. Use the one-to-one property to set the exponents equal.
3. Solve the resulting equation, $S = T$, for the unknown.

Example 6.6.1: Solving an Exponential Equation with a Common Base

Solve $2^{x-1} = 2^{2x-4}$.

Solution

$$
\begin{aligned}
2^{x-1} &= 2^{2x-4} && \text{The common base is 2} \\
x-1 &= 2x-4 && \text{By the one-to-one property the exponents must be equal} \\
x &= 3 && \text{Solve for x}
\end{aligned}
$$

Exercise 6.6.1

Solve $5^{2x} = 5^{3x+2}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Rewrite Equations So All Powers Have the Same Base

Sometimes the *common base* for an exponential equation is not explicitly shown. In these cases, we simply rewrite the terms in the equation as powers with a common base, and solve using the one-to-one property.

For example, consider the equation $256 = 4^{x-5}$. We can rewrite both sides of this equation as a power of 2. Then we apply the rules of exponents, along with the one-to-one property, to solve for x:

$$
\begin{aligned}
256 &= 4^{x-5} && \\
2^8 &= (2^2)^{x-5} && \text{Rewrite each side as a power with base 2} \\
2^8 &= 2^{2x-10} && \text{Use the one-to-one property of exponents} \\
8 &= 2x-10 && \text{Apply the one-to-one property of exponents} \\
18 &= 2x && \text{Add 10 to both sides} \\
x &= 9 && \text{Divide by 2}
\end{aligned}
$$

How to: Given an exponential equation with unlike bases, use the one-to-one property to solve it.

1. Rewrite each side in the equation as a power with a common base.
2. Use the rules of exponents to simplify, if necessary, so that the resulting equation has the form $b^S = b^T$.
3. Use the one-to-one property to set the exponents equal.
4. Solve the resulting equation, $S = T$, for the unknown.

Example 6.6.2: Solving Equations by Rewriting Them to Have a Common Base

Solve $8^{x+2} = 16^{x+1}$.

Solution

$$
\begin{aligned}
8^{x+2} &= 16^{x+1} && \\
(2^3)^{x+2} &= (2^4)^{x+1} && \text{Write 8 and 16 as powers of 2} \\
2^{3x+6} &= 2^{4x+4} && \text{To take a power of a power, multiply exponents} \\
3x+6 &= 4x+4 && \text{Use the one-to-one property to set the exponents equal} \\
x &= 2 && \text{Solve for x}
\end{aligned}
$$

Exercise 6.6.2

Solve $5^{2x} = 25^{3x+2}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.6.3: Solving Equations by Rewriting Roots with Fractional Exponents to Have a Common Base

Solve $2^{5x} = \sqrt{2}$.

Solution

$$
\begin{aligned}
2^{5x} &= 2^{\frac{1}{2}} && \text{Write the square root of 2 as a power of 2} \\
5x &= \frac{1}{2} && \text{Use the one-to-one property} \\
x &= \frac{1}{10} && \text{Solve for x}
\end{aligned}
$$

Exercise 6.6.3

Solve $5^x = \sqrt{5}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Do all exponential equations have a solution? If not, how can we tell if there is a solution during the problem-solving process?

No. Recall that the range of an exponential function is always positive. While solving the equation, we may obtain an expression that is undefined.

Example 6.6.4: Solving an Equation with Positive and Negative Powers

Solve $3^{x+1} = -2$.

Solution

This equation has no solution. There is no real value of x that will make the equation a true statement because any power of a positive number is positive.

Analysis

Figure 6.6.2 shows that the two graphs do not cross so the left side is never equal to the right side. Thus the equation has no solution.

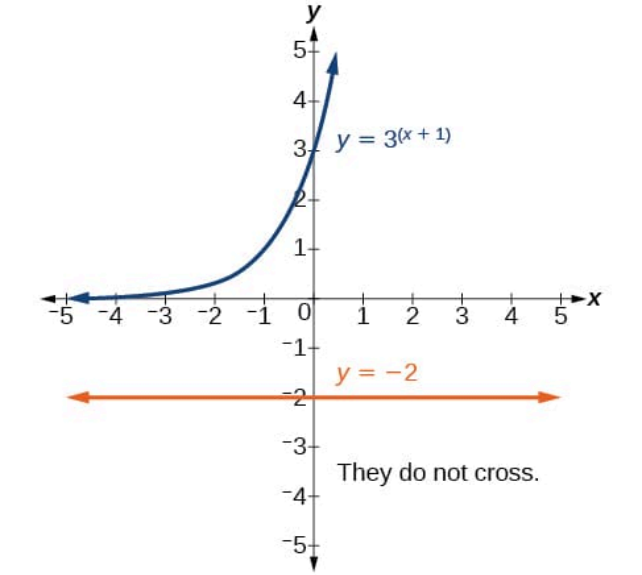


Figure 6.6.2

Exercise 6.6.4

Solve $2^x = -100$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Solving Exponential Equations Using Logarithms

Sometimes the terms of an exponential equation cannot be rewritten with a common base. In these cases, we solve by taking the logarithm of each side. Recall, since $\log(a) = \log(b)$ is equivalent to $a = b$, we may apply logarithms with the same base on both sides of an exponential equation.

How to: Given an exponential equation in which a common base cannot be found, solve for the unknown

1. Apply the logarithm of both sides of the equation.
   - If one of the terms in the equation has base 10, use the common logarithm.
   - If none of the terms in the equation has base 10, use the natural logarithm.
2. Use the rules of logarithms to solve for the unknown.

Example 6.6.5: Solving an Equation Containing Powers of Different Bases

Solve $5^{x+2} = 4^x$.

Solution

$$
\begin{aligned}
5^{x+2} &= 4^x && \text{There is no easy way to get the powers to have the same base}\\
\ln 5^{x+2} &= \ln 4^x && \text{Take ln of both sides}\\
(x+2)\ln 5 &= x \ln 4 && \text{Use laws of logs}\\
x\ln 5 + 2\ln 5 &= x\ln 4 && \text{Use the distributive law}\\
x\ln 5 - x\ln 4 &= -2\ln 5 && \text{Get terms containing x on one side, terms without x on the other}\\
x(\ln 5 - \ln 4) &= -2\ln 5 && \text{On the left hand side, factor out an x}\\
x\ln\left(\frac{5}{4}\right) &= \ln\left(\frac{1}{25}\right) && \text{Use the laws of logs}\\
x &= \frac{\ln\left(\frac{1}{25}\right)}{\ln\left(\frac{5}{4}\right)} && \text{Divide by the coefficient of x}
\end{aligned}
$$

Exercise 6.6.5

Solve $2^x = 3^{x+1}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Is there any way to solve $2^x = 3^x$?

Yes. The solution is 0.

Equations Containing e

One common type of exponential equations are those with base e. This constant occurs again and again in nature, in mathematics, in science, in engineering, and in finance. When we have an equation with a base e on either side, we can use the natural logarithm to solve it.

How to: Given an equation of the form $y = Ae^{kt}$, solve for t.

1. Divide both sides of the equation by A.
2. Apply the natural logarithm of both sides of the equation.
3. Divide both sides of the equation by k.

Example 6.6.6: Solve an Equation of the Form $y = Ae^{kt}$

Solve $100 = 20e^{2t}$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} 100 &= 20e^{2t} \\ 5 &= e^{2t} && \text{Divide by the coefficient of the power} \\ \ln 5 &= 2t && \text{Take ln of both sides. Use the fact that } ln(x) \text{ and } e^x \text{ are inverse functions} \\ t &= \frac{\ln 5}{2} && \text{Divide by the coefficient of t} \end{aligned}$$

Analysis

Using laws of logs, we can also write this answer in the form $t = \ln \sqrt{5}$. If we want a decimal approximation of the answer, we use a calculator.

Exercise 6.6.6

Solve $3e^{0.5t} = 11$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Does every equation of the form $y = Ae^{kt}$ have a solution?

No. There is a solution when $k \neq 0$,and when y and A are either both 0 or neither 0, and they have the same sign. An example of an equation with this form that has no solution is $2 = -3e^t$.

Example 6.6.7: Solving an Equation That Can Be Simplified to the Form $y = Ae^{kt}$

Solve $4e^{2x} + 5 = 12$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} 4e^{2x} + 5 &= 12 \\ 4e^{2x} &= 7 && \text{Combine like terms} \\ e^{2x} &= \frac{7}{4} && \text{Divide by the coefficient of the power} \\ 2x &= \ln\left(\frac{7}{4}\right) && \text{Take ln of both sides} \\ x &= \frac{1}{2}\ln\left(\frac{7}{4}\right) && \text{Solve for x} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 6.6.7

Solve $3 + e^{2t} = 7e^{2t}$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Extraneous Solutions

Sometimes the methods used to solve an equation introduce an **extraneous solution**, which is a solution that is correct

algebraically but does not satisfy the conditions of the original equation. One such situation arises in solving when the logarithm is taken on both sides of the equation. In such cases, remember that the argument of the logarithm must be positive. If the number we are evaluating in a logarithm function is negative, there is no output.

Example 6.6.8: Solving Exponential Functions in Quadratic Form

Solve $e^{2x} - e^x = 56$.

Solution

$$
\begin{aligned}
e^{2x} - e^x &= 56 && \\
e^{2x} - e^x - 56 &= 0 && \text{Get one side of the equation equal to zero} \\
(e^x + 7)(e^x - 8) &= 0 && \text{Factor by the FOIL method} \\
e^x + 7 &= 0 && \text{or} \\
e^x - 8 &= 0 && \text{If a product is zero, then one factor must be zero} \\
e^x &= -7 && \text{or} \\
e^x &= 8 && \text{Isolate the exponentials} \\
e^x &= 8 && \text{Reject the equation in which the power equals a negative number} \\
x &= \ln 8 && \text{Solve the equation in which the power equals a positive number}
\end{aligned}
$$

Analysis

When we plan to use factoring to solve a problem, we always get zero on one side of the equation, because zero has the unique property that when a product is zero, one or both of the factors must be zero. We reject the equation $e^x = -7$ because a positive number never equals a negative number. The solution $\ln(-7)$ is not a real number, and in the real number system this solution is rejected as an extraneous solution.

Exercise 6.6.8

Solve $e^{2x} = e^x + 2$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Q&A: Does every logarithmic equation have a solution?

No. Keep in mind that we can only apply the logarithm to a positive number. Always check for extraneous solutions.

Using the Definition of a Logarithm to Solve Logarithmic Equations

We have already seen that every logarithmic equation $\log_b(x) = y$ is equivalent to the exponential equation $b^y = x$. We can use this fact, along with the rules of logarithms, to solve logarithmic equations where the argument is an algebraic expression.

For example, consider the equation $\log_2(2) + \log_2(3x - 5) = 3$. To solve this equation, we can use rules of logarithms to rewrite the left side in compact form and then apply the definition of logs to solve for x:

$$
\begin{aligned}
\log_2(2) + \log_2(3x - 5) &= 3 && \\
\log_2(2(3x - 5)) &= 3 && \text{Apply the product rule of logarithms} \\
\log_2(6x - 10) &= 3 && \text{Distribute} \\
2^3 &= 6x - 10 && \text{Apply the definition of a logarithm} \\
8 &= 6x - 10 && \text{Calculate } 2^3 \\
18 &= 6x && \text{Add 10 to both sides} \\
x &= 3 && \text{Divide by 6}
\end{aligned}
$$

USING THE DEFINITION OF A LOGARITHM TO SOLVE LOGARITHMIC EQUATIONS

For any algebraic expression S and real numbers b and c,where $b > 0$, $b \neq 1$,

$$\log_b(S) = c \text{ if and only if } b^c = S \tag{6.6.2}$$

Example 6.6.9: Using Algebra to Solve a Logarithmic Equation

Solve $2\ln x + 3 = 7$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} 2\ln x + 3 &= 7 \\ 2\ln x &= 4 \quad \text{Subtract 3} \\ \ln x &= 2 \quad \text{Divide by 2} \\ x &= e^2 \quad \text{Rewrite in exponential form} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 6.6.9

Solve $6 + \ln x = 10$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.6.10: Using Algebra Before and After Using the Definition of the Natural Logarithm

Solve $2\ln(6x) = 7$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} 2\ln(6x) &= 7 \\ \ln(6x) &= \frac{7}{2} \quad \text{Divide by 2} \\ 6x &= e^{\left(\frac{7}{2}\right)} \quad \text{Use the definition of ln} \\ x &= \frac{1}{6}e^{\left(\frac{7}{2}\right)} \quad \text{Divide by 6} \end{aligned}$$

Exercise 6.6.10

Solve $2\ln(x + 1) = 10$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Example 6.6.11: Using a Graph to Understand the Solution to a Logarithmic Equation

Solve $\ln x = 3$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned} \ln x &= 3 \\ x &= e^3 \quad \text{Use the definition of the natural logarithm} \end{aligned}$$

Figure $6.6.3$ represents the graph of the equation. On the graph, the *x*-coordinate of the point at which the two graphs intersect is close to 20. In other words $e^3 \approx 20$. A calculator gives a better approximation: $e^3 \approx 20.0855$.

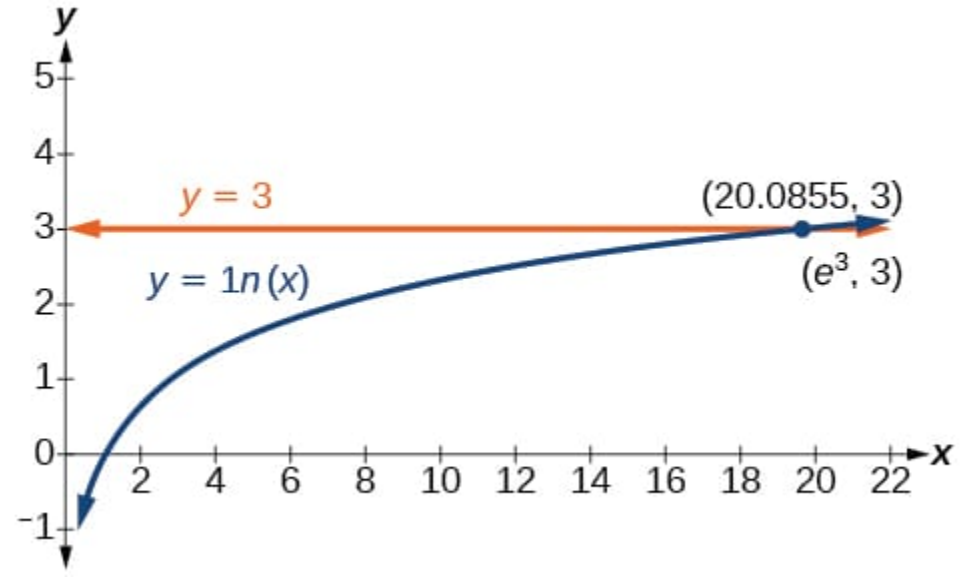


Figure $6.6.3$: The graphs of $y = \ln x$ and $y = 3$ cross at the point $(e^3, 3)$, which is approximately $(20.0855, 3)$.

Exercise $6.6.11$

Use a graphing calculator to estimate the approximate solution to the logarithmic equation $2^x = 1000$ to 2 decimal places.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Using the One-to-One Property of Logarithms to Solve Logarithmic Equations

As with exponential equations, we can use the one-to-one property to solve logarithmic equations. The one-to-one property of logarithmic functions tells us that, for any real numbers $x > 0$, $S > 0$, $T > 0$ and any positive real number b, where $b \neq 1$,

$$\log_b S = \log_b T \text{ if and only if } S = T.$$

For example,

$$\text{If } \log_2(x-1) = \log_2(8), \text{ then } x - 1 = 8.$$

So, if $x - 1 = 8$, then we can solve for x,and we get $x = 9$. To check, we can substitute $x = 9$ into the original equation: $\log_2(9 - 1) = \log_2(8) = 3$. In other words, when a logarithmic equation has the same base on each side, the arguments must be equal. This also applies when the arguments are algebraic expressions. Therefore, when given an equation with logs of the same base on each side, we can use rules of logarithms to rewrite each side as a single logarithm. Then we use the fact that logarithmic functions are one-to-one to set the arguments equal to one another and solve for the unknown.

For example, consider the equation $\log(3x - 2) - \log(2) = \log(x + 4)$. To solve this equation, we can use the rules of logarithms to rewrite the left side as a single logarithm, and then apply the one-to-one property to solve for x:

$$\begin{aligned}
\log(3x-2)-\log(2) &= \log(x+4)\\
\log\left(\frac{3x-2}{2}\right) &= \log(x+4) && \text{Apply the quotient rule of logarithms}\\
\frac{3x-2}{2} &= x+4 && \text{Apply the one to one property of a logarithm}\\
3x-2 &= 2x+8 && \text{Multiply both sides of the equation by 2}\\
x &= 10 && \text{Subtract 2x and add 2}
\end{aligned}$$

To check the result, substitute $x = 10$ into $\log(3x-2)-\log(2) = \log(x+4)$.

$$\begin{aligned}
\log(3(10)-2)-\log(2) &= \log((10)+4)\\
\log(28)-\log(2) &= \log(14)\\
\log\left(\frac{28}{2}\right) &= \log(14) && \text{The solution checks}
\end{aligned}$$

USING THE ONE-TO-ONE PROPERTY OF LOGARITHMS TO SOLVE LOGARITHMIC EQUATIONS

For any algebraic expressions S and T and any positive real number b, where $b \neq 1$,

$$\log_b(S) = \log_b(T) \text{ if and only if } S = T \tag{6.6.3}$$

Note, when solving an equation involving logarithms, always check to see if the answer is correct or if it is an extraneous solution.

How to: Given an equation containing logarithms, solve it using the one-to-one property

1. If necessary, use the rules of logarithms to combine both sides into single logarithms, so that the resulting equation has the form $\log_b S = \log_b T$.
2. Use the one-to-one property to set the arguments equal.
3. Solve the resulting equation, $S = T$, for the unknown.

Example 6.6.12: Solving an Equation Using the One-to-One Property of Logarithms

Solve $\ln(x^2) = \ln(2x+3)$.

Solution

$$\begin{aligned}
\ln(x^2) &= \ln(2x+3)\\
x^2 &= 2x+3 && \text{Use the one-to-one property of the logarithm}\\
x^2-2x-3 &= 0 && \text{Get zero on one side before factoring}\\
(x-3)(x+1) &= 0 && \text{Factor using FOIL}\\
x-3=0 \quad &\text{or} \quad x+1=0 && \text{Zero Product Principle}\\
x=3 \quad &\text{or} \quad x=-1 && \text{Solve for x}
\end{aligned}$$

Analysis

There are two solutions: 3 or -1. The solution -1 is negative, but it checks when substituted into the original equation because the argument of the logarithm functions is still positive.

Exercise 6.6.12

Solve $\ln(x^2) = \ln 1$.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Solving Applied Problems Using Exponential and Logarithmic Equations

In previous sections, we learned the properties and rules for both exponential and logarithmic functions. We have seen that any exponential function can be written as a logarithmic function and vice versa. We have used exponents to solve logarithmic equations and logarithms to solve exponential equations. We are now ready to combine our skills to solve equations that model real-world situations, whether the unknown is in an exponent or in the argument of a logarithm.

One such application is in science, in calculating the time it takes for half of the unstable material in a sample of a radioactive substance to decay, called its **half-life**. Table $6.6.1$ lists the half-life for several of the more common radioactive substances.

Table $6.6.1$

Substance	Use	Half-life
gallium-67	*nuclear medicine*	*80 hours*
cobalt-60	*manufacturing*	*5.3 years*
technetium-99m	*nuclear medicine*	*6 hours*
americium-241	*construction*	*432 years*
carbon-14	*archeological dating*	*5,715 years*
uranium-235	*atomic power*	*703,800,000 years*

We can see how widely the half-lives for these substances vary. Knowing the half-life of a substance allows us to calculate the amount remaining after a specified time. We can use the formula for radioactive decay:

$$A(t) = A_0 e^{\frac{\ln(0.5)}{T}t} \tag{6.6.4}$$

$$A(t) = A_0 e^{\frac{\ln(0.5)t}{T}} \tag{6.6.5}$$

$$A(t) = A_0 (e^{\ln(0.5)})^{\frac{t}{T}} \tag{6.6.6}$$

$$A(t) = A_0 \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^{\frac{t}{T}} \tag{6.6.7}$$

where

- A_0 is the amount initially present
- T is the half-life of the substance
- t is the time period over which the substance is studied
- y is the amount of the substance present after time t

Example $6.6.13$: Using the Formula for Radioactive Decay to Find the Quantity of a Substance

How long will it take for ten percent of a 1000-gram sample of uranium-235 to decay?

Solution

$$
\begin{aligned}
y &= 1000e^{\frac{\ln(0.5)}{703{,}800{,}000}t} \\
900 &= 1000e^{\frac{\ln(0.5)}{703{,}800{,}000}t} && \text{After 10\% decays, 900 grams are left} \\
0.9 &= e^{\frac{\ln(0.5)}{703{,}800{,}000}t} && \text{Divide by 1000} \\
\ln(0.9) &= \ln\left(e^{\frac{\ln(0.5)}{703{,}800{,}000}t}\right) && \text{Take ln of both sides} \\
\ln(0.9) &= \frac{\ln(0.5)}{703,800,000}t && \ln(e^M) = M \\
t &= 703,800,000 \times \frac{\ln(0.9)}{\ln(0.5)} && \text{years Solve for t} \\
t &\approx 106,979,777 && \text{years}
\end{aligned}
$$

Analysis

Ten percent of 1000 grams is 100 grams. If 100 grams decay, the amount of uranium-235 remaining is 900 grams.

Exercise 6.6.13

How long will it take before twenty percent of our 1000-gram sample of uranium-235 has decayed?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Media

Access these online resources for additional instruction and practice with exponential and logarithmic equations.

- Solving Logarithmic Equations
- Solving Exponential Equations with Logarithms

Key Equations

One-to-one property for exponential functions	For any algebraic expressions S and T and any positive real number b, where $b^S = b^T$ if and only if $S = T$.
Definition of a logarithm	For any algebraic expression S and positive real numbers b and c, where $b \neq 1$, $\log_b(S) = c$ if and only if $b^c = S$.
One-to-one property for logarithmic functions	For any algebraic expressions S and T and any positive real number b, where $b \neq 1$, $\log_b S = \log_b T$ if and only if $S = T$.

Key Concepts

- We can solve many exponential equations by using the rules of exponents to rewrite each side as a power with the same base. Then we use the fact that exponential functions are one-to-one to set the exponents equal to one another and solve for the unknown.
- When we are given an exponential equation where the bases are explicitly shown as being equal, set the exponents equal to one another and solve for the unknown. See Example $6.6.1$.
- When we are given an exponential equation where the bases are *not* explicitly shown as being equal, rewrite each side of the equation as powers of the same base, then set the exponents equal to one another and solve for the unknown. See Example $6.6.2$, Example $6.6.3$, and Example $6.6.4$.
- When an exponential equation cannot be rewritten with a common base, solve by taking the logarithm of each side. See Example $6.6.5$.

- We can solve exponential equations with base e,by applying the natural logarithm of both sides because exponential and logarithmic functions are inverses of each other. See Example $6.6.6$ and Example $6.6.7$.
- After solving an exponential equation, check each solution in the original equation to find and eliminate any extraneous solutions. See Example $6.6.8$.
- When given an equation of the form $\log_b(S) = c$, where S is an algebraic expression, we can use the definition of a logarithm to rewrite the equation as the equivalent exponential equation $b^c = S$, and solve for the unknown. See Example $6.6.9$ and Example $6.6.10$.
- We can also use graphing to solve equations with the form $\log_b(S) = c$. We graph both equations $y = \log_b(S)$ and $y = c$ on the same coordinate plane and identify the solution as the *x*-value of the intersecting point. See Example $6.6.11$.
- When given an equation of the form $\log_b S = \log_b T$, where S and T are algebraic expressions, we can use the one-to-one property of logarithms to solve the equation $S = T$ for the unknown. See Example $6.6.12$.
- Combining the skills learned in this and previous sections, we can solve equations that model real world situations, whether the unknown is in an exponent or in the argument of a logarithm. See Example $6.6.13$.

Answers

Exercise $6.6.1$

$x = -2$

Exercise $6.6.2$

$x = -1$

Exercise $6.6.3$

$x = \frac{1}{2}$

Exercise $6.6.4$

The equation has no solution.

Exercise $6.6.5$

$x = \frac{\ln 3}{\ln\left(\frac{2}{3}\right)}$

Exercise $6.6.6$

$t = 2\ln\left(\frac{11}{3}\right)$ or $\ln\left(\frac{11}{3}\right)^2$

Exercise $6.6.7$

$t = \ln\left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\right) = -\frac{1}{2}\ln(2)$

Exercise $6.6.8$

$x = \ln 2$

Exercise $6.6.9$

$x = e^4$

Exercise $6.6.10$

$x = e^5 - 1$

Exercise $6.6.11$

$x \approx 9.97$

Exercise $6.6.12$

$x = 1$ or $x = -1$

Exercise $6.6.13$

$t = 703,800,000 \times \frac{\ln(0.8)}{\ln(0.5)}$years ≈ 226,572,993 years.

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6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions

Learning Objectives

- Build an exponential growth model
- Build an exponential decay model
- Use a model to solve application problems

In previous sections of this chapter, we were either given a function explicitly to graph or evaluate. In this section, we will use as set of data to "model" the situation with an exponential function. Then, we can use that function to answer questions about that particular problem.

Do not be confused by the word *model*. In mathematics, we often use the terms *function*, *equation*, and *model* interchangeably, even though they each have their own formal definition. The term *model* is typically used to indicate that the equation or function approximates a real-world situation.

We will concentrate on two types of models in this section: exponential growth and exponential decay. Having already worked with each of these functions gives us an advantage. Knowing their formal definitions, the behavior of their graphs, and some of their real-world applications gives us the opportunity to deepen our understanding. As each regression model is presented, key features and definitions of its associated function are included for review. Take a moment to rethink each of these functions, reflect on the work we've done so far, and then explore the ways regression is used to model real-world phenomena.

Building an Exponential Model from Data

As we've learned, there are a multitude of situations that can be modeled by exponential functions, such as investment growth, radioactive decay, atmospheric pressure changes, and temperatures of a cooling object. What do these phenomena have in common? For one thing, all the models either increase or decrease as time moves forward. But that's not the whole story. It's the *way* data increase or decrease that helps us determine whether it is best modeled by an exponential equation. Knowing the behavior of exponential functions in general allows us to recognize when to use exponential regression, so let's review exponential growth and decay.

Recall that exponential functions have the form $y = Ca^x$ or $y = Ce^{kx}$. When performing regression analysis, we use the form most commonly used on graphing utilities, $y = Ca^x$. Take a moment to reflect on the characteristics we've already learned about the exponential function $y = Ca^x$ (assume $a > 0$):

- a must be greater than zero and not equal to one.
- The initial value of the model is $y = C$.
  - If $a > 1$, the function models **exponential growth**. As x increases, the outputs of the model increase slowly at first, but then increase more and more rapidly, without bound.
  - If \(0exponential decay. As x increases, the outputs for the model decrease rapidly at first and then level off to become asymptotic to the *x*-axis. In other words, the outputs never become equal to or less than zero.

In real-world applications, we need to model the behavior of a function. In mathematical modeling, we choose a familiar general function with properties that suggest that it will model the real-world phenomenon we wish to analyze. In the case of rapid growth, we may choose the exponential growth function:

$$y = Ce^{kt} \tag{6.7.1}$$

where C is equal to the value at time zero, e is Euler's constant, and k is a positive constant that determines the rate (percentage) of growth. We may use the exponential growth function in applications involving **doubling time**, the time it takes for a quantity to double. Such phenomena as wildlife populations, financial investments, biological samples, and natural resources may exhibit growth based on a doubling time. In some applications, however, as we will see when we discuss the logistic equation, the logistic

model sometimes fits the data better than the exponential model.

On the other hand, if a quantity is falling rapidly toward zero, without ever reaching zero, then we should probably choose the **exponential decay** model. Again, we have the form $y = Ce^{kt}$ where C is the starting value, and e is Euler's constant. Now k is a negative constant that determines the rate of decay. We may use the exponential decay model when we are calculating half-life, or the time it takes for a substance to exponentially decay to half of its original quantity. We use half-life in applications involving radioactive isotopes.

In our choice of a function to serve as a mathematical model, we often use data points gathered by careful observation and measurement to construct points on a graph and hope we can recognize the shape of the graph. Exponential growth and decay graphs have a distinctive shape, as we can see in Figure $6.7.2$ and Figure $6.7.3$. It is important to remember that, although parts of each of the two graphs seem to lie on the x-axis, they are really a tiny distance above the x-axis.

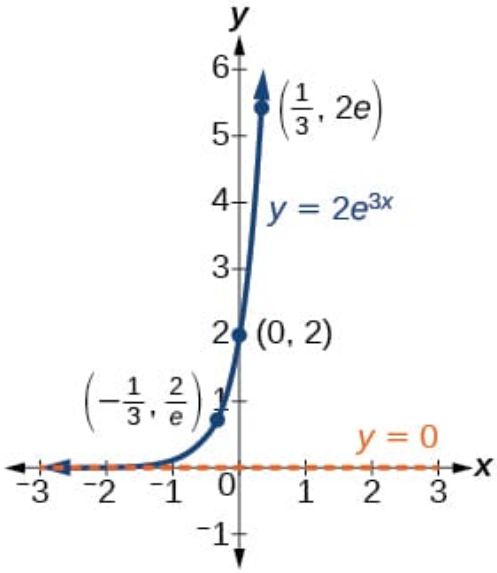


Figure $6.7.2$: A graph showing exponential growth. The equation is $y = 2e^{3x}$.

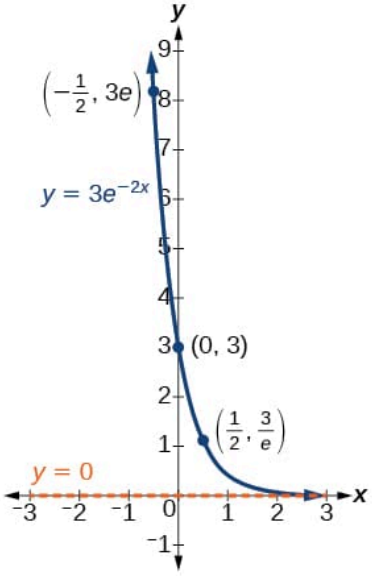


Figure $6.7.3$: A graph showing exponential decay. The equation is $y = 3e^{-2x}$.

Exponential growth and decay often involve very large or very small numbers. To describe these numbers, we often use orders of magnitude. The **order of magnitude** is the power of ten, when the number is expressed in scientific notation, with one digit to the left of the decimal. For example, the distance to the nearest star, **Proxima Centauri**, measured in kilometers, is $40,113,497,200,000$ kilometers. Expressed in scientific notation, this is 4.01134972×1013. So, we could describe this number as

having order of magnitude 1013.

$y = Ce^{kt}$

An exponential function with the form $y = Ce^{kt}$ has the following characteristics:

- one-to-one function
- horizontal asymptote: $y = 0$
- domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
- range: $(0, \infty)$
- x intercept: none
- y-intercept: $(0, C)$
- increasing if $k > 0$
- decreasing if $k < 0$

Example 6.7.1: Graphing Exponential Growth

A population of bacteria doubles every hour. If the culture started with 10 bacteria, graph the population as a function of time.

Solution

When an amount grows at a fixed percent per unit time, the growth is exponential. To find C we use the fact that C is the amount at time zero, so $C = 10$. To find k, use the fact that after one hour $(t = 1)$ the population doubles from 10 to 20.The formula is derived as follows

$$\begin{aligned} 20 &= 10e^{k \cdot 1} \\ 2 &= e^k \qquad \text{Divide by } 10 \\ \ln 2 &= k \qquad \text{Take the natural logarithm} \end{aligned}$$

so $k = \ln(2)$. Thus the equation we want to graph is $y = 10e^{(\ln 2)t} = 10(e^{\ln 2})^t = 10 \cdot 2^t$. The graph is shown in Figure $6.7.5$.

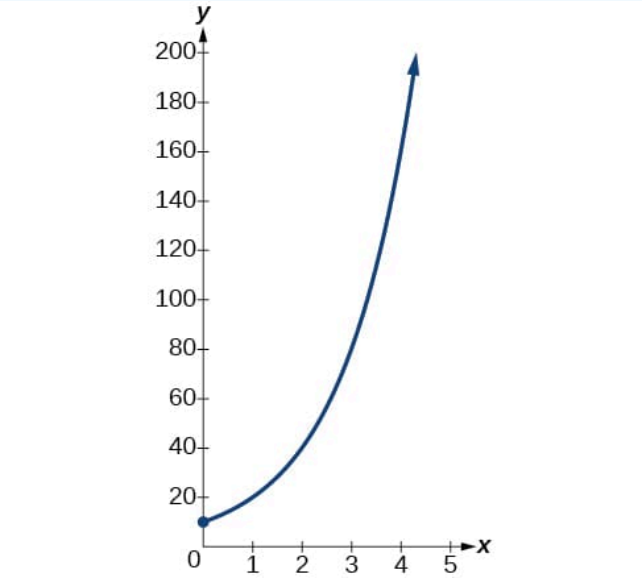


Figure $6.7.5$: The graph of $y = 10e^{(\ln 2)t}$

Analysis

The population of bacteria after ten hours is $10,240$. We could describe this amount is being of the order of magnitude 10^4. The population of bacteria after twenty hours is $10,485,760$ which is of the order of magnitude 10^7, so we could say that the population has increased by three orders of magnitude in ten hours.

Calculating Doubling Time

For decaying quantities, we determined how long it took for half of a substance to decay. For growing quantities, we might want to find out how long it takes for a quantity to double. As we mentioned above, the time it takes for a quantity to double is called the **doubling time**.

Given the basic **exponential growth** equation $y = Ce^{kt}$, doubling time can be found by solving for when the original quantity has doubled, that is, by solving $2C = Ce^{kt}$.

The formula is derived as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} 2A_0 &= Ce^{kt} \\ 2 &= e^{kt} && \text{Divide by } C \\ \ln 2 &= kt && \text{Take the natural logarithm} \\ t &= \frac{\ln 2}{k} && \text{Divide by the coefficient of t} \end{aligned}$$

Thus the doubling time is

$$t = \frac{\ln 2}{k} \tag{6.7.2}$$

Example 6.7.4: Finding a Function That Describes Exponential Growth

According to Moore's Law, the doubling time for the number of transistors that can be put on a computer chip is approximately two years. Give a function that describes this behavior.

Solution

The formula is derived as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} t &= \frac{\ln 2}{k} && \text{The doubling time formula} \\ 2 &= \frac{\ln 2}{k} && \text{Use a doubling time of two years} \\ k &= \frac{\ln 2}{2} && \text{Multiply by k and divide by 2} \\ y &= Ce^{\frac{\ln 2}{2}t} && \text{Substitute k into the continuous growth formula} \end{aligned}$$

The function is $y = Ce^{(\frac{\ln 2}{2})t}$.

Exercise 6.7.3

Recent data suggests that, as of 2013, the rate of growth predicted by Moore's Law no longer holds. Growth has slowed to a doubling time of approximately three years. Find the new function that takes that longer doubling time into account.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Half-Life

We now turn to **exponential decay**. One of the common terms associated with exponential decay, as stated above, is **half-life**, the length of time it takes an exponentially decaying quantity to decrease to half its original amount. Every radioactive isotope has a half-life, and the process describing the exponential decay of an isotope is called radioactive decay.

To find the half-life of a function describing exponential decay, solve the following equation:

$$\frac{1}{2}C = Ce^{kt}$$

We find that the half-life depends only on the constant k and not on the starting quantity C.

The formula is derived as follows

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{2}A_0 &= Ce^{kt} \\ \frac{1}{2} &= e^{kt} && \text{Divide by } C \\ \ln\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) &= ktv && \text{Take the natural log} \\ -\ln(2) &= kt && \text{Apply laws of logarithms} \\ -\ln(2)k &= t && \text{Divide by k} \end{aligned}$$

Since t, the time, is positive, k must, as expected, be negative. This gives us the half-life formula

$$t = -\frac{\ln(2)}{k} \tag{6.7.3}$$

Given the half-life, find the decay rate.

1. Write $y = Ce^{kt}$.
2. Replace y by $\frac{1}{2}C$ and replace t by the given half-life.
3. Solve to find k. Express k as an exact value (do not round).

Note: It is also possible to find the decay rate using $k = -\ln(2)t$.

Example 6.7.2: Finding the Function that Describes Radioactive Decay

The half-life of carbon-14 is $5,730$ years. Express the amount of carbon-14 remaining as a function of time, t.

Solution

This formula is derived as follows.

$$\begin{aligned} y &= Ce^{kt} && \text{The continuous growth formula} \\ 0.5C &= Ce^{k\cdot 5730} && \text{Substitute the half-life for t and } 0.5A_0 \text{ for } f(t) \\ 0.5 &= e^{5730k} && \text{Divide by } C \\ \ln(0.5) &= 5730k && \text{Take the natural log of both sides} \\ k &= \frac{\ln(0.5)}{5730} && \text{Divide by the coefficient of k} \\ y &= Ce^{\left(\frac{\ln(0.5)}{5730}\right)t} && \text{Substitute for r in the continuous growth formula} \end{aligned}$$

The function that describes this continuous decay is $f(t) = Ce^{\left(\frac{\ln(0.5)}{5730}\right)t}$. We observe that the coefficient of t, $\frac{\ln(0.5)}{5730} \approx -1.2097 \times 10^{-4}$ is negative, as expected in the case of exponential decay.

Exercise 6.7.1

The half-life of plutonium-244 is $80,000,000$ years. Find function gives the amount of carbon-14 remaining as a function of time, measured in years.

Answer available at the end of this section.

Radiocarbon Dating

The formula for radioactive decay is important in **radiocarbon dating**, which is used to calculate the approximate date a plant or animal died. Radiocarbon dating was discovered in 1949 by Willard Libby, who won a Nobel Prize for his discovery. It compares the difference between the ratio of two isotopes of carbon in an organic artifact or fossil to the ratio of those two isotopes in the air. It is believed to be accurate to within about 1% error for plants or animals that died within the last $60,000$ years.

Carbon-14 is a radioactive isotope of carbon that has a half-life of $5,730$ years. It occurs in small quantities in the carbon dioxide in the air we breathe. Most of the carbon on Earth is carbon-12, which has an atomic weight of 12 and is not radioactive. Scientists have determined the ratio of carbon-14 to carbon-12 in the air for the last $60,000$ years, using tree rings and other organic samples of known dates—although the ratio has changed slightly over the centuries.

As long as a plant or animal is alive, the ratio of the two isotopes of carbon in its body is close to the ratio in the atmosphere. When it dies, the carbon-14 in its body decays and is not replaced. By comparing the ratio of carbon-14 to carbon-12 in a decaying sample to the known ratio in the atmosphere, the date the plant or animal died can be approximated.

Since the half-life of carbon-14 is $5,730$ years, the formula for the amount of carbon-14 remaining after t years is

$$y \approx Ce^{\left(\frac{\ln(0.5)}{5730}\right)t}$$

where

- y is the amount of carbon-14 remaining
- C is the amount of carbon-14 when the plant or animal began decaying.

This formula is derived as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
y &= Ce^{kt} && \text{The continuous growth formula} \\
0.5C &= Ce^{k\cdot 5730} && \text{Substitute the half-life for t and } 0.5C \text{ for f(t)} \\
0.5 &= e^{5730k} && \text{Divide by } C \\
\ln(0.5) &= 5730k && \text{Take the natural log of both sides} \\
k &= \frac{\ln(0.5)}{5730} && \text{Divide by the coefficient of k} \\
y &= Ce^{\left(\frac{\ln(0.5)}{5730}\right)t} && \text{Substitute for r in the continuous growth formula}
\end{aligned}$$

To find the age of an object, we solve this equation for t:

$$t = \frac{\ln\left(\frac{y}{C}\right)}{-0.000121}$$

Out of necessity, we neglect here the many details that a scientist takes into consideration when doing carbon-14 dating, and we only look at the basic formula. The ratio of carbon-14 to carbon-12 in the atmosphere is approximately 0.0000000001. Let r be the ratio of carbon-14 to carbon-12 in the organic artifact or fossil to be dated, determined by a method called liquid scintillation. From the equation $y \approx Ce^{-0.000121t}$ we know the ratio of the percentage of carbon-14 in the object we are dating to the percentage of carbon-14 in the atmosphere is $r = \frac{y}{C} \approx e^{-0.000121t}$. We solve this equation for t, to get

$$t = \frac{\ln(r)}{-0.000121}$$

Given the percentage of carbon-14 in an object, determine its age.

1. Express the given percentage of carbon-14 as an equivalent decimal, k.
2. Substitute for k in the equation $t = \dfrac{\ln(r)}{-0.000121}$ and solve for the age, t.

Example 6.7.3: Finding the Age of a Bone

A bone fragment is found that contains 20% of its original carbon-14. To the nearest year, how old is the bone?

Solution

We substitute $20\% = 0.20$ for k in the equation and solve for t:

$$\begin{aligned} t &= \frac{\ln(r)}{-0.000121} && \text{Use the general form of the equation} \\ &= \frac{\ln(0.20)}{-0.000121} && \text{Substitute for r} \\ &\approx 13301 && \text{Round to the nearest year} \end{aligned}$$

The bone fragment is about $13,301$ years old.

Analysis

The instruments that measure the percentage of carbon-14 are extremely sensitive and, as we mention above, a scientist will need to do much more work than we did in order to be satisfied. Even so, carbon dating is only accurate to about 1%, so this age should be given as $13,301$ years $\pm 1\%$ or $13,301$ years ± 133 years.

Exercise 6.7.2

Cesium-137 has a half-life of about 30 years. If we begin with 200 mg of cesium-137, will it take more or less than 230 years until only 1 milligram remains?

Answer available at the end of this section.

Answers

Exercise $6.7.3$

$f(t) = Ce^{\frac{\ln 2}{3}t}$

Exercise $6.7.1$

$f(t) = Ce^{-0.0000000087t}$

Exercise $6.7.2$

less than 230 years, 229.3157 to be exact

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INDEX

A

absolute value equations
2.6: Other Types of Equations

Absolute Value Function
2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities

absolute value inequalities
2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities

Aconstant rate of change
4.3: More Linear Models

algebraic expression
1.1: Real Numbers

associative property of addition
1.1: Real Numbers

associative property of multiplication
1.1: Real Numbers

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2: Equations and Inequalities
2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs
2.2: Linear Equations
2.3: Models and Applications
2.4: Complex Numbers
2.6: Other Types of Equations
3: Functions
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
3.2: Domain and Range
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs
3.4: Composition of Functions
3.5: Transformation of Functions
3.6: Inverse Functions
4: Linear Functions
4.2: Linear Functions with Applications
5: Polynomial and Rational Functions
5.1: Quadratic Functions
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions
5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions
5.4: Dividing Polynomials
5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions
5.6: Rational Functions
6: Exponential and Logarithmic Functions
6.1: Exponential Functions
6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions
6.3: Logarithmic Functions
6.4: Graphs of Logarithmic Functions
6.5: Logarithmic Properties
6.6: Exponential and Logarithmic Equations
6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions
Math 10: College Algebra

average rate of change
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs

axis of symmetry
5.1: Quadratic Functions

B

base
1.1: Real Numbers

C

coefficient
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions

common logarithms
6.3: Logarithmic Functions

commutative property of addition
1.1: Real Numbers

completing the square
2.5: Quadratic Equations

complex number
2.4: Complex Numbers

complex plane
2.4: Complex Numbers

composite function
3.4: Composition of Functions

compound inequalities
2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities

compression
6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions

conditional equation
2.2: Linear Equations

constant
1.1: Real Numbers

constant rate of change
4.3: More Linear Models

Continuous decay model
6.1: Exponential Functions

continuous function
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions

Continuous growth model
6.1: Exponential Functions

correlation coefficient
4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data

cssscreen:default
2: Equations and Inequalities
2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs
2.2: Linear Equations
2.3: Models and Applications
2.4: Complex Numbers
2.5: Quadratic Equations
2.6: Other Types of Equations
2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities
3: Functions
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
3.2: Domain and Range
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs
3.4: Composition of Functions
3.5: Transformation of Functions
3.6: Inverse Functions
4: Linear Functions
4.2: Linear Functions with Applications
5: Polynomial and Rational Functions
5.1: Quadratic Functions
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions
5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions
5.4: Dividing Polynomials
5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions
5.6: Rational Functions
6: Exponential and Logarithmic Functions
6.1: Exponential Functions
6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions
6.3: Logarithmic Functions
6.4: Graphs of Logarithmic Functions
6.5: Logarithmic Properties
6.6: Exponential and Logarithmic Equations
6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions
Math 10: College Algebra

D

degree
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions

degree of a polynomial
1.3: Polynomials

dependent variable
3.1: Functions and Function Notation

Descartes' Rule of Signs
5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions

difference of cubes
1.4: Factoring

difference of squares
1.3: Polynomials
1.4: Factoring

discriminant
2.5: Quadratic Equations

Distance Formula
2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs

Distributive Property
1.1: Real Numbers

Division Algorithm
5.4: Dividing Polynomials

domain
3.1: Functions and Function Notation

domain of a logarithmic function
6.4: Graphs of Logarithmic Functions

E

end behavior
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions

equation
1.1: Real Numbers

equation in two variables
2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs

even function
3.5: Transformation of Functions

exponent
1.1: Real Numbers

exponential equations
6.3: Logarithmic Functions
6.6: Exponential and Logarithmic Equations

exponential model
6.1: Exponential Functions

exponential notation
1.1: Real Numbers
1.2: Exponents

exponential regression
6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions

exponentials
6.1: Exponential Functions

extrapolation
4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data

extrema
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs

F

factor theorem
5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions
FOIL
1.3: Polynomials
formula
1.1: Real Numbers
function
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
Fundamental Theorem of Algebra
5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions

G

general form of a quadratic function
5.1: Quadratic Functions
global maximum
5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions
global minimum
5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions
graph in two variables
2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs
Graphing Reflections
6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions
greatest common factor
1.4: Factoring
grouping method
2.5: Quadratic Equations
2.5: Quadratic Equations

H

horizontal asymptote
5.6: Rational Functions
horizontal compression
3.5: Transformation of Functions
horizontal line
2.2: Linear Equations
horizontal line test
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
horizontal reflection
3.5: Transformation of Functions
horizontal shift
3.5: Transformation of Functions
horizontal stretch
3.5: Transformation of Functions
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3.6: Inverse Functions

I

identity equation
2.2: Linear Equations
identity property of addition
1.1: Real Numbers
identity property of multiplication
1.1: Real Numbers
imaginary axis
2.4: Complex Numbers
inconsistent equation
2.2: Linear Equations
independent variable
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
input
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
integers
1.1: Real Numbers
intercepts
2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs
intermediate value theorem
5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions
interpolation
4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data
interval notation
2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities
3.2: Domain and Range
inverse
3.6: Inverse Functions
inverse function
3.6: Inverse Functions
inverse property of addition
1.1: Real Numbers
inverse property of multiplication
1.1: Real Numbers
irrational numbers
1.1: Real Numbers

L

leading coefficient
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions
least common denominator
2.2: Linear Equations
least squares regression
4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data
line
4.2: Linear Functions with Applications
linear equation
2.3: Models and Applications
Linear Factorization Theorem
5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions
linear function
4.3: More Linear Models
linear model
4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data
linear model,
4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data
linear relationship
4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data
local extrema
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs
local maximum
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs
local minimum
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs
logarithmic equations
6.3: Logarithmic Functions
logarithmic function
6.3: Logarithmic Functions
logarithmic regression
6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions
logistic regression
6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions

M

maxima
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs
maximum
5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions
Midpoint Formula
2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs
minima
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs
minimum
5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions
model breakdown
4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data
modeling
4.3: More Linear Models
multiplicity
5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions

N

natural logarithms.
6.3: Logarithmic Functions
natural numbers
1.1: Real Numbers
Negative rule
1.2: Exponents

O

odd function
3.5: Transformation of Functions
order of operations
1.1: Real Numbers
output
3.1: Functions and Function Notation

P

perfect square trinomial
1.4: Factoring
Perfect square trinomials
1.3: Polynomials
piecewise function
3.2: Domain and Range
polynomial
1.3: Polynomials
polynomial function
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions
population growth
6.6: Exponential and Logarithmic Equations
power function
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions
Power of a product rule
1.2: Exponents
Power of a quotient rule
1.2: Exponents
power rule
1.2: Exponents
6.5: Logarithmic Properties
power rule for logarithms
6.5: Logarithmic Properties
product rule
1.2: Exponents
6.5: Logarithmic Properties
product rule of logarithms
6.5: Logarithmic Properties

properties of exponents
1.2: Exponents
Pythagorean Theorem
2.1: The Rectangular Coordinate Systems and Graphs
2.5: Quadratic Equations

Q

quadratic equations
2.5: Quadratic Equations
quadratic formula
2.5: Quadratic Equations
2.5: Quadratic Equations
quotient rule
1.2: Exponents
6.5: Logarithmic Properties
quotient rule of logarithms
6.5: Logarithmic Properties

R

range
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
rate of change
3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs
rate of change is constant
4.3: More Linear Models
rational exponents
2.6: Other Types of Equations
rational function's end behavior
5.6: Rational Functions
rational numbers
1.1: Real Numbers
Rational Zero Theorem
5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions
real number line
1.1: Real Numbers
real numbers
1.1: Real Numbers
regression
6.7: Applications of Exponential Functions
relation
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
remainder theorem
5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions
removable discontinuity
5.6: Rational Functions

S

scientific notation
1.2: Exponents
slope
2.2: Linear Equations
4.2: Linear Functions with Applications
smooth curve
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions
square root function
2.4: Complex Numbers
standard form of a quadratic function
5.1: Quadratic Functions
stretch
6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions
sum of cubes
1.4: Factoring
synthetic division
5.4: Dividing Polynomials

T

tabular function
3.6: Inverse Functions
term of a polynomial function
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions
translations of the exponential function
6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions
turning point
5.2: Power Functions and Polynomial Functions

V

variable
1.1: Real Numbers
vertex
5.1: Quadratic Functions
vertex form of a quadratic function
5.1: Quadratic Functions
vertical asymptotes
5.6: Rational Functions
vertical compression
3.5: Transformation of Functions
vertical line
2.2: Linear Equations
vertical line test
3.1: Functions and Function Notation
vertical reflection
3.5: Transformation of Functions
vertical shift
3.5: Transformation of Functions
6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions
vertical stretch
3.5: Transformation of Functions

W

whole numbers
1.1: Real Numbers

Z

Zero exponent rule
1.2: Exponents
zeros
5.1: Quadratic Functions

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S

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    - 3.6: Inverse Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
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    - 4.2: Linear Functions with Applications - *CC BY 4.0*
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    - 4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data - *CC BY 4.0*
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    - 5.1: Quadratic Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
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    - 5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 5.4: Dividing Polynomials - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 5.6: Rational Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
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    - 6.1: Exponential Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.3: Logarithmic Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.4: Graphs of Logarithmic Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
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    - 2.2: Linear Equations - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 2.3: Models and Applications - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 2.4: Complex Numbers - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 2.5: Quadratic Equations - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 2.6: Other Types of Equations - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 2.7: Linear Inequalities and Absolute Value Inequalities - *CC BY 4.0*
  - 3: Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 3.1: Functions and Function Notation - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 3.2: Domain and Range - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 3.3: Rates of Change and Behavior of Graphs - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 3.4: Composition of Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 3.5: Transformation of Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 3.6: Inverse Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
  - 4: Linear Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 4.1: Introduction to Linear Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 4.2: Linear Functions with Applications - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 4.3: More Linear Models - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 4.4: Fitting Linear Models to Data - *CC BY 4.0*
  - 5: Polynomial and Rational Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 5.1: Quadratic Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
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    - 5.3: Graphs of Polynomial Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 5.4: Dividing Polynomials - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 5.5: Zeros of Polynomial Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 5.6: Rational Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
  - 6: Exponential and Logarithmic Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.1: Exponential Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.2: Graphs of Exponential Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.3: Logarithmic Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.4: Graphs of Logarithmic Functions - *CC BY 4.0*
    - 6.5: Logarithmic Properties - *CC BY 4.0*
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