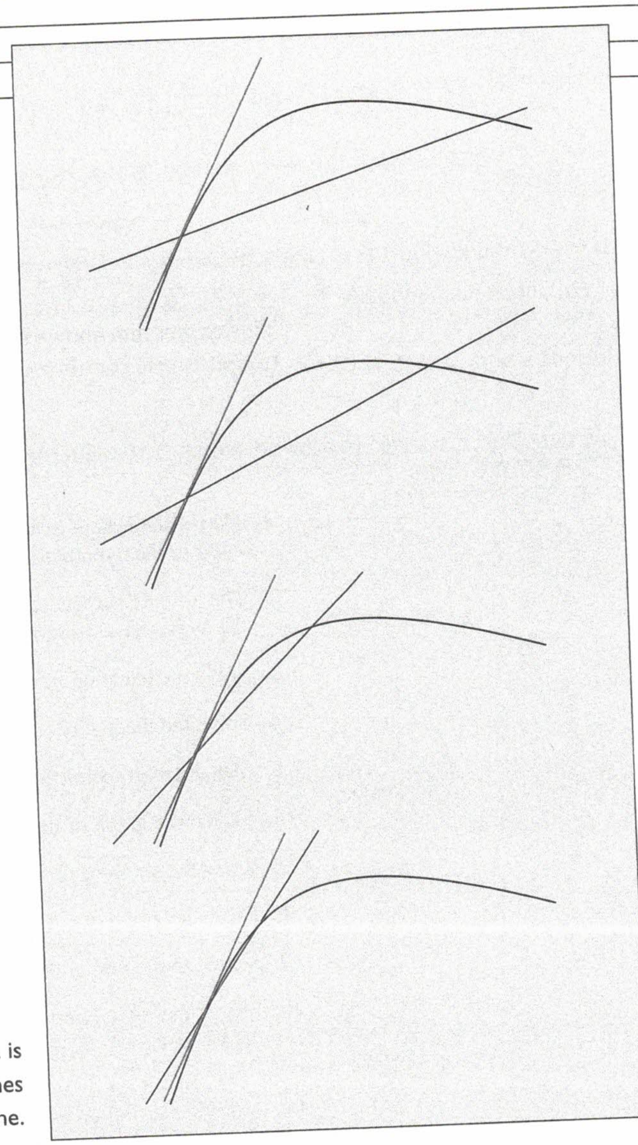
2

LIMITS



The idea of a limit is illustrated by secant lines approaching a tangent line.

In *A Preview of Calculus* (page 2) we saw how the idea of a limit underlies the various branches of calculus. It is therefore appropriate to begin our study of calculus by investigating limits and their properties.

2.1 THE TANGENT AND VELOCITY PROBLEMS

In this section we see how limits arise when we attempt to find the tangent to a curve or the velocity of an object.

THE TANGENT PROBLEM

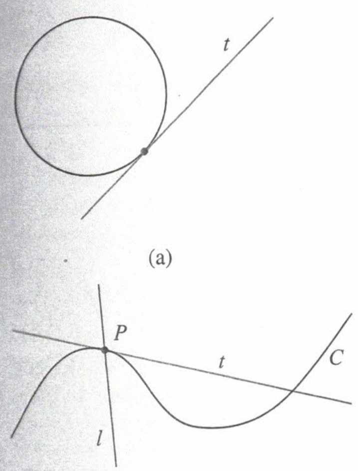


FIGURE 1

The word *tangent* is derived from the Latin word *tangens*, which means "touching." Thus a tangent to a curve is a line that touches the curve. In other words, a tangent line should have the same direction as the curve at the point of contact. How can this idea be made precise?

For a circle we could simply follow Euclid and say that a tangent is a line that intersects the circle once and only once as in Figure 1(a). For more complicated curves this definition is inadequate. Figure 1(b) shows two lines l and t passing through a point P on a curve C. The line l intersects C only once, but it certainly does not look like what we think of as a tangent. The line t, on the other hand, looks like a tangent but it intersects C twice.

To be specific, let's look at the problem of trying to find a tangent line t to the parabola $y = x^2$ in the following example.

EXAMPLE 1 Find an equation of the tangent line to the parabola $y = x^2$ at the point $P(1, 1)$.

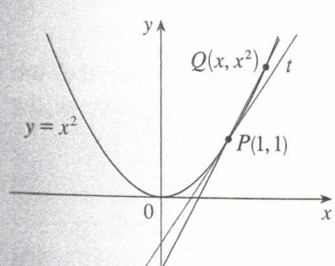


FIGURE 2

SOLUTION We will be able to find an equation of the tangent line t as soon as we know its slope m. The difficulty is that we know only one point, P, on t, whereas we need two points to compute the slope. But observe that we can compute an approximation to m by choosing a nearby point $Q(x, x^2)$ on the parabola (as in Figure 2) and computing the slope m_{PQ} of the secant line PQ.

We choose $x \neq 1$ so that $Q \neq P$. Then

$$m_{PQ} = \frac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1}$$

For instance, for the point $Q(1.5, 2.25)$ we have

$$m_{PQ} = \frac{2.25 - 1}{1.5 - 1} = \frac{1.25}{0.5} = 2.5$$

x	m_{PQ}
2	3
1.5	2.5
1.1	2.1
1.01	2.01
1.001	2.001

x	m_{PQ}
0	1
0.5	1.5
0.9	1.9
0.99	1.99
0.999	1.999

The tables in the margin show the values of m_{PQ} for several values of x close to 1. The closer Q is to P, the closer x is to 1 and, it appears from the tables, the closer m_{PQ} is to 2. This suggests that the slope of the tangent line t should be $m = 2$.

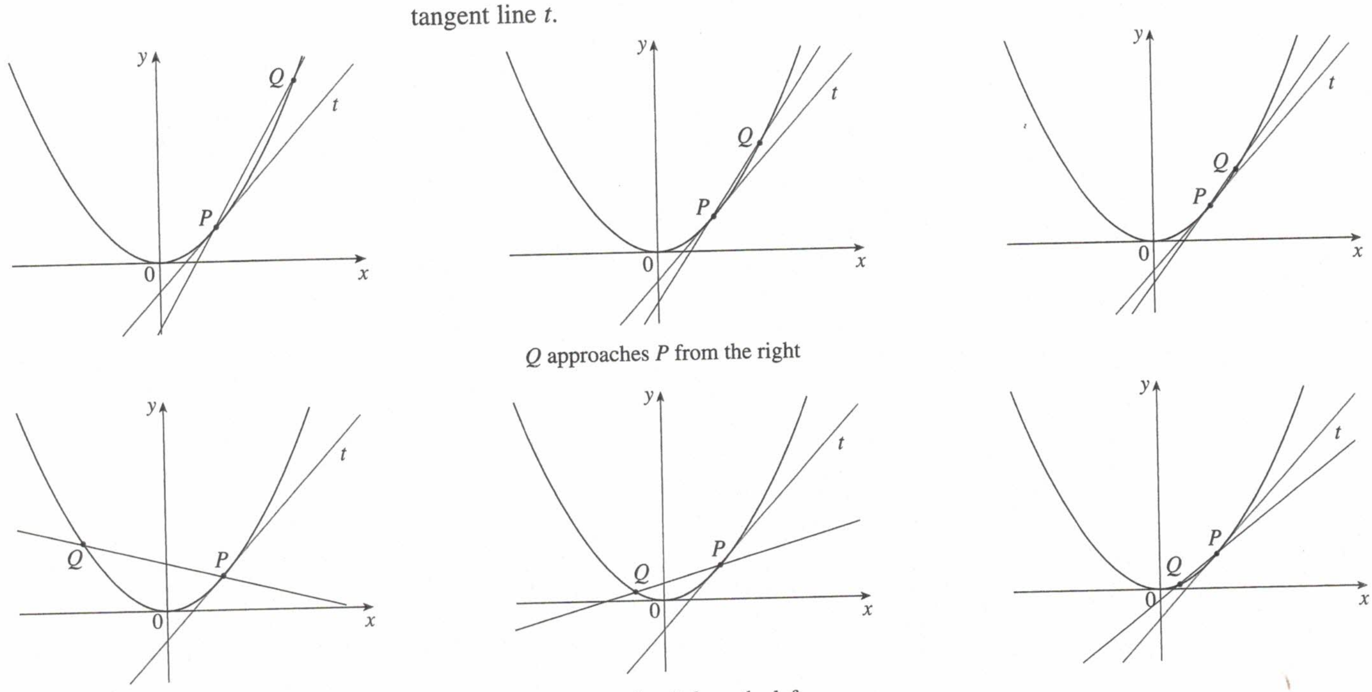
We say that the slope of the tangent line is the *limit* of the slopes of the secant lines, and we express this symbolically by writing

$$\lim_{Q \to P} m_{PQ} = m \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x \to 1} \frac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1} = 2$$

Assuming that the slope of the tangent line is indeed 2, we use the point-slope form of the equation of a line (see Appendix B) to write the equation of the tangent line through $(1, 1)$ as

$$y - 1 = 2(x - 1) \qquad \text{or} \qquad y = 2x - 1$$

Figure 3 illustrates the limiting process that occurs in this example. As Q approaches P along the parabola, the corresponding secant lines rotate about P and approach the tangent line t.



Q approaches P from the right

Q approaches P from the left

FIGURE 3

□

TEC In Visual 2.1 you can see how the process in Figure 3 works for additional functions.

Many functions that occur in science are not described by explicit equations; they are defined by experimental data. The next example shows how to estimate the slope of the tangent line to the graph of such a function.

EXAMPLE 2 The flash unit on a camera operates by storing charge on a capacitor and releasing it suddenly when the flash is set off. The data in the table describe the charge Q remaining on the capacitor (measured in microcoulombs) at time t (measured in seconds after the flash goes off). Use the data to draw the graph of this function and estimate the slope of the tangent line at the point where $t = 0.04$. [*Note:* The slope of the tangent line represents the electric current flowing from the capacitor to the flash bulb (measured in microamperes).]

t	Q
0.00	100.00
0.02	81.87
0.04	67.03
0.06	54.88
0.08	44.93
0.10	36.76

SOLUTION In Figure 4 we plot the given data and use them to sketch a curve that approximates the graph of the function.

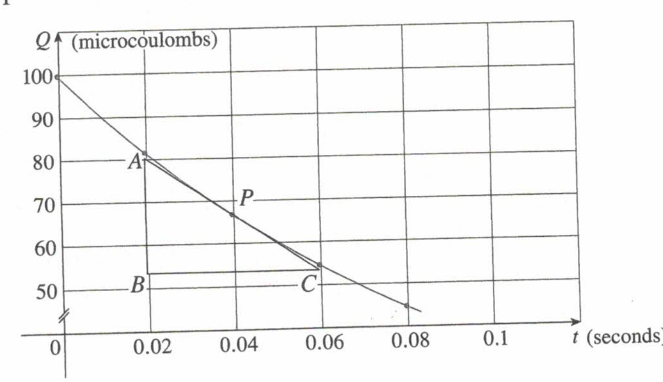


FIGURE 4

Given the points $P(0.04, 67.03)$ and $R(0.00, 100.00)$ on the graph, we find that the slope of the secant line PR is

$$m_{PR} = \frac{100.00 - 67.03}{0.00 - 0.04} = -824.25$$

R	m_{PR}
(0.00, 100.00)	−824.25
(0.02, 81.87)	−742.00
(0.06, 54.88)	−607.50
(0.08, 44.93)	−552.50
(0.10, 36.76)	−504.50

The table at the left shows the results of similar calculations for the slopes of other secant lines. From this table we would expect the slope of the tangent line at $t = 0.04$ to lie somewhere between -742 and -607.5. In fact, the average of the slopes of the two closest secant lines is

$$\tfrac{1}{2}(-742 - 607.5) = -674.75$$

So, by this method, we estimate the slope of the tangent line to be -675.

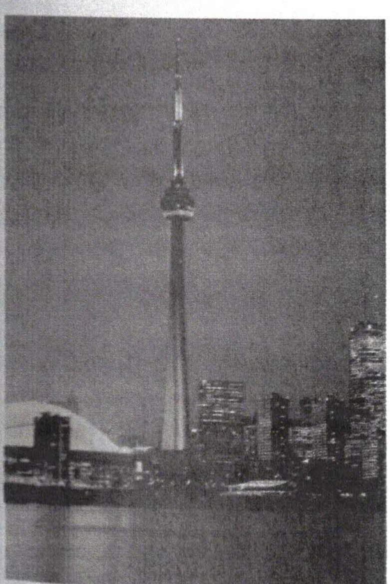
Another method is to draw an approximation to the tangent line at P and measure the sides of the triangle ABC, as in Figure 4. This gives an estimate of the slope of the tangent line as

$$-\frac{|AB|}{|BC|} \approx -\frac{80.4 - 53.6}{0.06 - 0.02} = -670$$ □

■ The physical meaning of the answer in Example 2 is that the electric current flowing from the capacitor to the flash bulb after 0.04 second is about −670 microamperes.

THE VELOCITY PROBLEM

If you watch the speedometer of a car as you travel in city traffic, you see that the needle doesn't stay still for very long; that is, the velocity of the car is not constant. We assume from watching the speedometer that the car has a definite velocity at each moment, but how is the "instantaneous" velocity defined? Let's investigate the example of a falling ball.



The CN Tower in Toronto is currently the tallest freestanding building in the world.

EXAMPLE 3 Suppose that a ball is dropped from the upper observation deck of the CN Tower in Toronto, 450 m above the ground. Find the velocity of the ball after 5 seconds.

SOLUTION Through experiments carried out four centuries ago, Galileo discovered that the distance fallen by any freely falling body is proportional to the square of the time it has been falling. (This model for free fall neglects air resistance.) If the distance fallen after t seconds is denoted by $s(t)$ and measured in meters, then Galileo's law is expressed by the equation

$$s(t) = 4.9t^2$$

The difficulty in finding the velocity after 5 s is that we are dealing with a single instant of time ($t = 5$), so no time interval is involved. However, we can approximate the desired quantity by computing the average velocity over the brief time interval of a tenth of a second from $t = 5$ to $t = 5.1$:

$$\text{average velocity} = \frac{\text{change in position}}{\text{time elapsed}}$$

$$= \frac{s(5.1) - s(5)}{0.1}$$

$$= \frac{4.9(5.1)^2 - 4.9(5)^2}{0.1} = 49.49 \text{ m/s}$$

The following table shows the results of similar calculations of the average velocity over successively smaller time periods.

Time interval	Average velocity (m/s)
$5 \leq t \leq 6$	53.9
$5 \leq t \leq 5.1$	49.49
$5 \leq t \leq 5.05$	49.245
$5 \leq t \leq 5.01$	49.049
$5 \leq t \leq 5.001$	49.0049

It appears that as we shorten the time period, the average velocity is becoming closer to 49 m/s. The **instantaneous velocity** when $t = 5$ is defined to be the limiting value of these average velocities over shorter and shorter time periods that start at $t = 5$. Thus the (instantaneous) velocity after 5 s is

$$v = 49 \text{ m/s}$$ □

You may have the feeling that the calculations used in solving this problem are very similar to those used earlier in this section to find tangents. In fact, there is a close connection between the tangent problem and the problem of finding velocities. If we draw the graph of the distance function of the ball (as in Figure 5) and we consider the points $P(a, 4.9a^2)$ and $Q(a + h, 4.9(a + h)^2)$ on the graph, then the slope of the secant line PQ is

$$m_{PQ} = \frac{4.9(a + h)^2 - 4.9a^2}{(a + h) - a}$$

which is the same as the average velocity over the time interval $[a, a + h]$. Therefore, the velocity at time $t = a$ (the limit of these average velocities as h approaches 0) must be equal to the slope of the tangent line at P (the limit of the slopes of the secant lines).

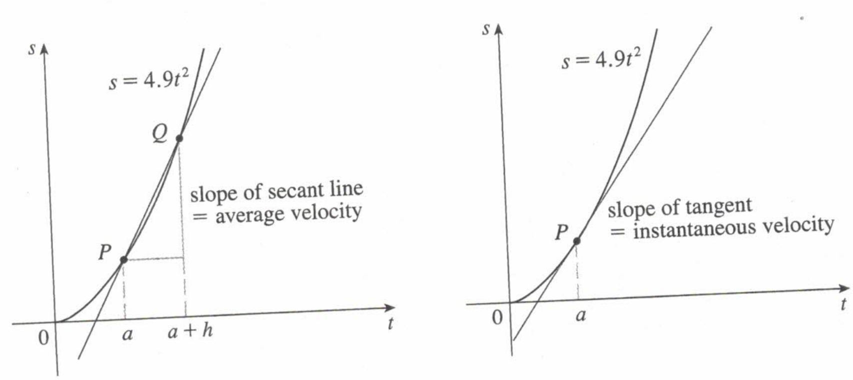


FIGURE 5

Examples 1 and 3 show that in order to solve tangent and velocity problems we must be able to find limits. After studying methods for computing limits in the rest of this chapter, we will return to the problems of finding tangents and velocities in Chapter 3.

2.1 EXERCISES

1. A tank holds 1000 gallons of water, which drains from the bottom of the tank in half an hour. The values in the table show the volume V of water remaining in the tank (in gallons) after t minutes.

t (min)	5	10	15	20	25	30
V (gal)	694	444	250	111	28	0

(a) If P is the point (15, 250) on the graph of V, find the slopes of the secant lines PQ when Q is the point on the graph with $t = 5$, 10, 20, 25, and 30.
(b) Estimate the slope of the tangent line at P by averaging the slopes of two secant lines.
(c) Use a graph of the function to estimate the slope of the tangent line at P. (This slope represents the rate at which the water is flowing from the tank after 15 minutes.)

2. A cardiac monitor is used to measure the heart rate of a patient after surgery. It compiles the number of heartbeats after t minutes. When the data in the table are graphed, the slope of the tangent line represents the heart rate in beats per minute.

t (min)	36	38	40	42	44
Heartbeats	2530	2661	2806	2948	3080

The monitor estimates this value by calculating the slope of a secant line. Use the data to estimate the patient's heart rate after 42 minutes using the secant line between the points with the given values of t.
(a) $t = 36$ and $t = 42$ (b) $t = 38$ and $t = 42$
(c) $t = 40$ and $t = 42$ (d) $t = 42$ and $t = 44$
What are your conclusions?

3. The point $P(1, \frac{1}{2})$ lies on the curve $y = x/(1 + x)$.
(a) If Q is the point $(x, x/(1 + x))$, use your calculator to find the slope of the secant line PQ (correct to six decimal places) for the following values of x:
(i) 0.5 (ii) 0.9 (iii) 0.99 (iv) 0.999
(v) 1.5 (vi) 1.1 (vii) 1.01 (viii) 1.001
(b) Using the results of part (a), guess the value of the slope of the tangent line to the curve at $P(1, \frac{1}{2})$.
(c) Using the slope from part (b), find an equation of the tangent line to the curve at $P(1, \frac{1}{2})$.

4. The point $P(3, 1)$ lies on the curve $y = \sqrt{x - 2}$.
(a) If Q is the point $(x, \sqrt{x - 2})$, use your calculator to find the slope of the secant line PQ (correct to six decimal places) for the following values of x:
(i) 2.5 (ii) 2.9 (iii) 2.99 (iv) 2.999
(v) 3.5 (vi) 3.1 (vii) 3.01 (viii) 3.001
(b) Using the results of part (a), guess the value of the slope of the tangent line to the curve at $P(3, 1)$.
(c) Using the slope from part (b), find an equation of the tangent line to the curve at $P(3, 1)$.
(d) Sketch the curve, two of the secant lines, and the tangent line.

5. If a ball is thrown into the air with a velocity of 40 ft/s, its height in feet t seconds later is given by $y = 40t - 16t^2$.
(a) Find the average velocity for the time period beginning when $t = 2$ and lasting
(i) 0.5 second (ii) 0.1 second
(iii) 0.05 second (iv) 0.01 second
(b) Estimate the instantaneous velocity when $t = 2$.

6. If a rock is thrown upward on the planet Mars with a velocity of 10 m/s, its height in meters t seconds later is given by $y = 10t - 1.86t^2$.
(a) Find the average velocity over the given time intervals:
(i) [1, 2] (ii) [1, 1.5] (iii) [1, 1.1]
(iv) [1, 1.01] (v) [1, 1.001]
(b) Estimate the instantaneous velocity when $t = 1$.

7. The table shows the position of a cyclist.

t (seconds)	0	1	2	3	4	5
s (meters)	0	1.4	5.1	10.7	17.7	25.8

(a) Find the average velocity for each time period:
(i) [1, 3] (ii) [2, 3] (iii) [3, 5] (iv) [3, 4]
(b) Use the graph of s as a function of t to estimate the instantaneous velocity when $t = 3$.

8. The displacement (in centimeters) of a particle moving back and forth along a straight line is given by the equation of motion $s = 2 \sin \pi t + 3 \cos \pi t$, where t is measured in seconds.
(a) Find the average velocity during each time period:
(i) [1, 2] (ii) [1, 1.1]
(iii) [1, 1.01] (iv) [1, 1.001]
(b) Estimate the instantaneous velocity of the particle when $t = 1$.

9. The point $P(1, 0)$ lies on the curve $y = \sin(10\pi/x)$.
(a) If Q is the point $(x, \sin(10\pi/x))$, find the slope of the secant line PQ (correct to four decimal places) for $x = 2$, 1.5, 1.4, 1.3, 1.2, 1.1, 0.5, 0.6, 0.7, 0.8, and 0.9. Do the slopes appear to be approaching a limit?
(b) Use a graph of the curve to explain why the slopes of the secant lines in part (a) are not close to the slope of the tangent line at P.
(c) By choosing appropriate secant lines, estimate the slope of the tangent line at P.

2.2 THE LIMIT OF A FUNCTION

Having seen in the preceding section how limits arise when we want to find the tangen a curve or the velocity of an object, we now turn our attention to limits in general numerical and graphical methods for computing them.

Let's investigate the behavior of the function f defined by $f(x) = x^2 - x + 2$ for ues of x near 2. The following table gives values of $f(x)$ for values of x close to 2, but equal to 2.

x	$f(x)$	x	$f(x)$
1.0	2.000000	3.0	8.000000
1.5	2.750000	2.5	5.750000
1.8	3.440000	2.2	4.640000
1.9	3.710000	2.1	4.310000
1.95	3.852500	2.05	4.152500
1.99	3.970100	2.01	4.030100
1.995	3.985025	2.005	4.015025
1.999	3.997001	2.001	4.003001

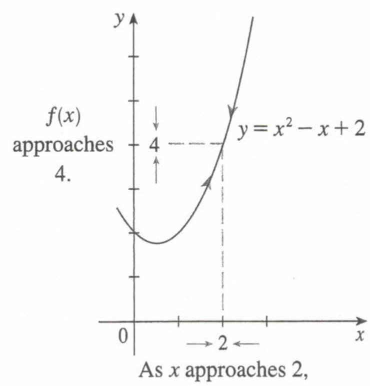


FIGURE 1

From the table and the graph of f (a parabola) shown in Figure 1 we see that when close to 2 (on either side of 2), $f(x)$ is close to 4. In fact, it appears that we can make values of $f(x)$ as close as we like to 4 by taking x sufficiently close to 2. We express by saying "the limit of the function $f(x) = x^2 - x + 2$ as x approaches 2 is equal to The notation for this is

$$\lim_{x \to 2} (x^2 - x + 2) = 4$$

In general, we use the following notation.

1 DEFINITION We write

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$$

and say "the limit of $f(x)$, as x approaches a, equals L"

if we can make the values of $f(x)$ arbitrarily close to L (as close to L as we like) by taking x to be sufficiently close to a (on either side of a) but not equal to a.

Roughly speaking, this says that the values of $f(x)$ tend to get closer and closer to number L as x gets closer and closer to the number a (from either side of a) but $x \neq$ (A more precise definition will be given in Section 2.4.)

An alternative notation for

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$$

is

$$f(x) \to L \quad \text{as} \quad x \to a$$

which is usually read "$f(x)$ approaches L as x approaches a."

Notice the phrase "but $x \neq a$" in the definition of limit. This means that in finding the limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches a, we never consider $x = a$. In fact, $f(x)$ need not even be defined when $x = a$. The only thing that matters is how f is defined *near a*.

Figure 2 shows the graphs of three functions. Note that in part (c), $f(a)$ is not defined and in part (b), $f(a) \neq L$. But in each case, regardless of what happens at a, it is true that $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$.

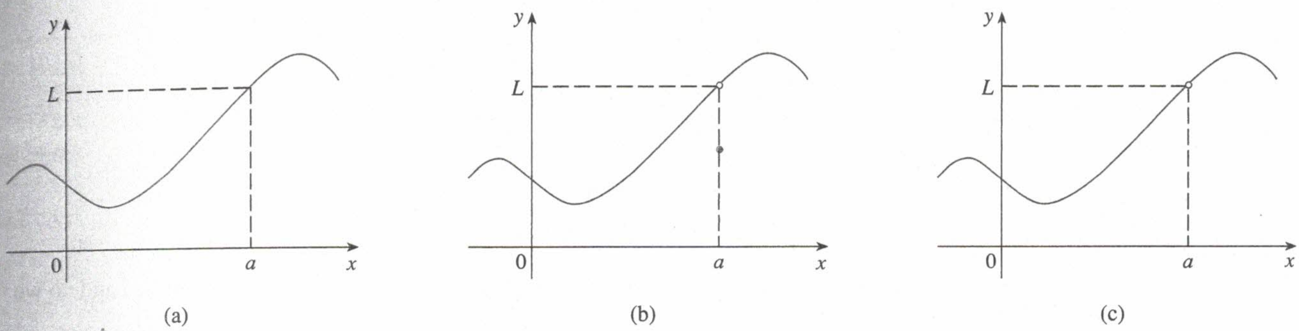


FIGURE 2 $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$ in all three cases

EXAMPLE 1 Guess the value of $\displaystyle\lim_{x \to 1} \frac{x - 1}{x^2 - 1}$.

$x < 1$	$f(x)$
0.5	0.666667
0.9	0.526316
0.99	0.502513
0.999	0.500250
0.9999	0.500025

$x > 1$	$f(x)$
1.5	0.400000
1.1	0.476190
1.01	0.497512
1.001	0.499750
1.0001	0.499975

SOLUTION Notice that the function $f(x) = (x - 1)/(x^2 - 1)$ is not defined when $x = 1$, but that doesn't matter because the definition of $\lim_{x \to a} f(x)$ says that we consider values of x that are close to a but not equal to a.

The tables at the left give values of $f(x)$ (correct to six decimal places) for values of x that approach 1 (but are not equal to 1). On the basis of the values in the tables, we make the guess that

$$\lim_{x \to 1} \frac{x - 1}{x^2 - 1} = 0.5 \qquad \square$$

Example 1 is illustrated by the graph of f in Figure 3. Now let's change f slightly by giving it the value 2 when $x = 1$ and calling the resulting function g:

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{x - 1}{x^2 - 1} & \text{if } x \neq 1 \\ 2 & \text{if } x = 1 \end{cases}$$

This new function g still has the same limit as x approaches 1. (See Figure 4.)

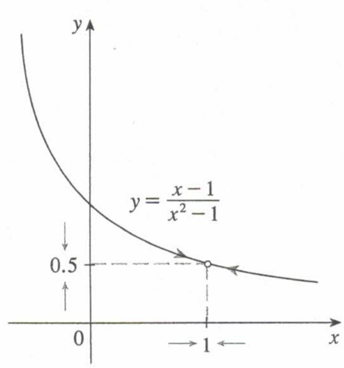


FIGURE 3

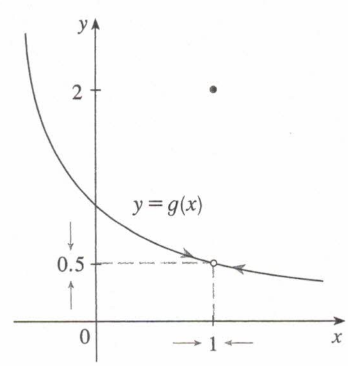


FIGURE 4

EXAMPLE 2 Estimate the value of $\lim_{t\to 0} \dfrac{\sqrt{t^2+9}-3}{t^2}$.

SOLUTION The table lists values of the function for several values of t near 0.

t	$\dfrac{\sqrt{t^2+9}-3}{t^2}$
±1.0	0.16228
±0.5	0.16553
±0.1	0.16662
±0.05	0.16666
±0.01	0.16667

As t approaches 0, the values of the function seem to approach $0.1666666\ldots$ and so we guess that

$$\lim_{t\to 0} \frac{\sqrt{t^2+9}-3}{t^2} = \frac{1}{6}$$

□

t	$\dfrac{\sqrt{t^2+9}-3}{t^2}$
±0.0005	0.16800
±0.0001	0.20000
±0.00005	0.00000
±0.00001	0.00000

In Example 2 what would have happened if we had taken even smaller values of t? The table in the margin shows the results from one calculator; you can see that something strange seems to be happening.

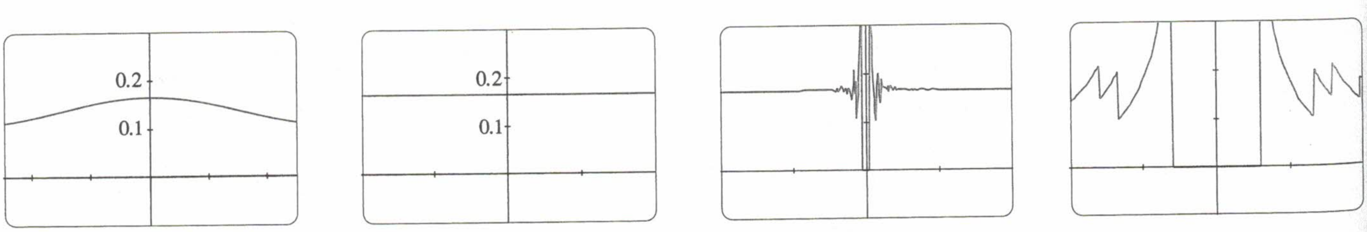
If you try these calculations on your own calculator you might get different values, but eventually you will get the value 0 if you make t sufficiently small. Does this mean that the answer is really 0 instead of $\frac{1}{6}$? No, the value of the limit is $\frac{1}{6}$, as we will show in the next section. The problem is that the calculator gave false values because $\sqrt{t^2+9}$ is very close to 3 when t is small. (In fact, when t is sufficiently small, a calculator's value for $\sqrt{t^2+9}$ is $3.000\ldots$ to as many digits as the calculator is capable of carrying.)

www.stewartcalculus.com
For a further explanation of why calculators sometimes give false values, click on *Lies My Calculator and Computer Told Me*. In particular, see the section called *The Perils of Subtraction*.

Something similar happens when we try to graph the function

$$f(t) = \frac{\sqrt{t^2+9}-3}{t^2}$$

of Example 2 on a graphing calculator or computer. Parts (a) and (b) of Figure 5 show quite accurate graphs of f, and when we use the trace mode (if available) we can estimate easily that the limit is about $\frac{1}{6}$. But if we zoom in too much, as in parts (c) and (d), then we get inaccurate graphs, again because of problems with subtraction.



(a) $[-5, 5]$ by $[-0.1, 0.3]$ (b) $[-0.1, 0.1]$ by $[-0.1, 0.3]$ (c) $[-10^{-6}, 10^{-6}]$ by $[-0.1, 0.3]$ (d) $[-10^{-7}, 10^{-7}]$ by $[-0.1, 0.3]$

FIGURE 5

EXAMPLE 3 Guess the value of $\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin x}{x}$.

SOLUTION The function $f(x) = (\sin x)/x$ is not defined when $x = 0$. Using a calculator (and remembering that, if $x \in \mathbb{R}$, $\sin x$ means the sine of the angle whose *radian* measure is x), we construct a table of values correct to eight decimal places. From the table at the left and the graph in Figure 6 we guess that

x	$\frac{\sin x}{x}$
± 1.0	0.84147098
± 0.5	0.95885108
± 0.4	0.97354586
± 0.3	0.98506736
± 0.2	0.99334665
± 0.1	0.99833417
± 0.05	0.99958339
± 0.01	0.99998333
± 0.005	0.99999583
± 0.001	0.99999983

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin x}{x} = 1$$

This guess is in fact correct, as will be proved in Chapter 3 using a geometric argument.

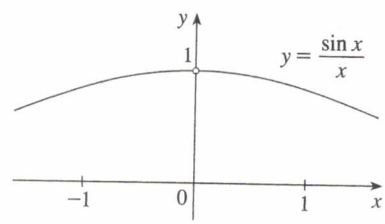


FIGURE 6

EXAMPLE 4 Investigate $\lim_{x \to 0} \sin \frac{\pi}{x}$.

SOLUTION Again the function $f(x) = \sin(\pi/x)$ is undefined at 0. Evaluating the function for some small values of x, we get

$$f(1) = \sin \pi = 0 \qquad f(\tfrac{1}{2}) = \sin 2\pi = 0$$
$$f(\tfrac{1}{3}) = \sin 3\pi = 0 \qquad f(\tfrac{1}{4}) = \sin 4\pi = 0$$
$$f(0.1) = \sin 10\pi = 0 \qquad f(0.01) = \sin 100\pi = 0$$

Similarly, $f(0.001) = f(0.0001) = 0$. On the basis of this information we might be tempted to guess that

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \sin \frac{\pi}{x} = 0$$

but this time our guess is wrong. Note that although $f(1/n) = \sin n\pi = 0$ for any integer n, it is also true that $f(x) = 1$ for infinitely many values of x that approach 0. The graph of f is given in Figure 7.

COMPUTER ALGEBRA SYSTEMS
Computer algebra systems (CAS) have commands that compute limits. In order to avoid the types of pitfalls demonstrated in Examples 2, 4, and 5, they don't find limits by numerical experimentation. Instead, they use more sophisticated techniques such as computing infinite series. If you have access to a CAS, use the limit command to compute the limits in the examples of this section and to check your answers in the exercises of this chapter.

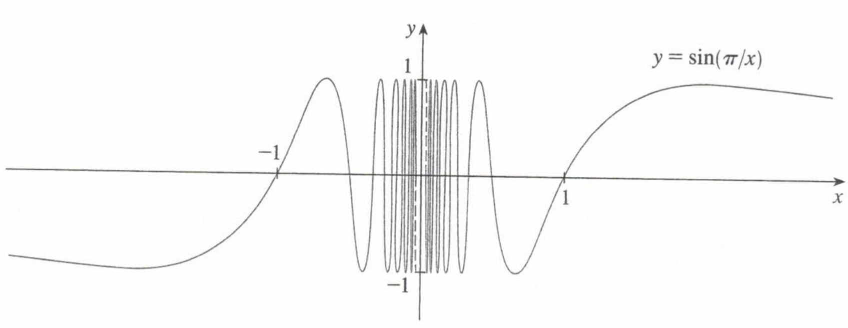


FIGURE 7

The dashed lines near the y-axis indicate that the values of $\sin(\pi/x)$ oscillate between 1 and -1 infinitely often as x approaches 0. (See Exercise 39.)

Since the values of $f(x)$ do not approach a fixed number as x approaches 0,

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \sin \frac{\pi}{x} \quad \text{does not exist}$$ □

x	$x^3 + \dfrac{\cos 5x}{10{,}000}$
1	1.000028
0.5	0.124920
0.1	0.001088
0.05	0.000222
0.01	0.000101

x	$x^3 + \dfrac{\cos 5x}{10{,}000}$
0.005	0.00010009
0.001	0.00010000

EXAMPLE 5 Find $\lim_{x \to 0} \left(x^3 + \dfrac{\cos 5x}{10{,}000} \right)$.

SOLUTION As before, we construct a table of values. From the first table in the margin it appears that

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \left(x^3 + \frac{\cos 5x}{10{,}000} \right) = 0$$

But if we persevere with smaller values of x, the second table suggests that

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \left(x^3 + \frac{\cos 5x}{10{,}000} \right) = 0.000100 = \frac{1}{10{,}000}$$

Later we will see that $\lim_{x \to 0} \cos 5x = 1$; then it follows that the limit is 0.0001. □

Examples 4 and 5 illustrate some of the pitfalls in guessing the value of a limit. It is easy to guess the wrong value if we use inappropriate values of x, but it is difficult to know when to stop calculating values. And, as the discussion after Example 2 shows, sometimes calculators and computers give the wrong values. In the next section, however, we will develop foolproof methods for calculating limits.

EXAMPLE 6 The Heaviside function H is defined by

$$H(t) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } t < 0 \\ 1 & \text{if } t \geqslant 0 \end{cases}$$

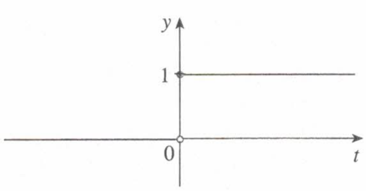


FIGURE 8

[This function is named after the electrical engineer Oliver Heaviside (1850–1925) and can be used to describe an electric current that is switched on at time $t = 0$.] Its graph is shown in Figure 8.

As t approaches 0 from the left, $H(t)$ approaches 0. As t approaches 0 from the right, $H(t)$ approaches 1. There is no single number that $H(t)$ approaches as t approaches 0. Therefore, $\lim_{t \to 0} H(t)$ does not exist. □

ONE-SIDED LIMITS

We noticed in Example 6 that $H(t)$ approaches 0 as t approaches 0 from the left and $H(t)$ approaches 1 as t approaches 0 from the right. We indicate this situation symbolically by writing

$$\lim_{t \to 0^-} H(t) = 0 \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{t \to 0^+} H(t) = 1$$

The symbol "$t \to 0^-$" indicates that we consider only values of t that are less than 0. Likewise, "$t \to 0^+$" indicates that we consider only values of t that are greater than 0.

2 DEFINITION We write

$$\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = L$$

and say the **left-hand limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches a** [or the **limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches a from the left**] is equal to L if we can make the values of $f(x)$ arbitrarily close to L by taking x to be sufficiently close to a and x less than a.

Notice that Definition 2 differs from Definition 1 only in that we require x to be less than a. Similarly, if we require that x be greater than a, we get "the **right-hand limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches a** is equal to L" and we write

$$\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = L$$

Thus the symbol "$x \to a^+$" means that we consider only $x > a$. These definitions are illustrated in Figure 9.

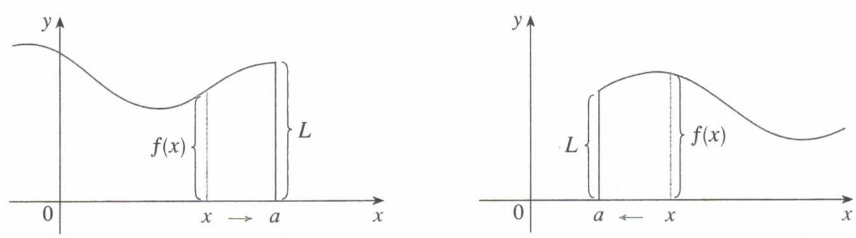


FIGURE 9 (a) $\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = L$ (b) $\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = L$

By comparing Definition 1 with the definitions of one-sided limits, we see that the following is true.

3 $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$ if and only if $\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = L$ and $\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = L$

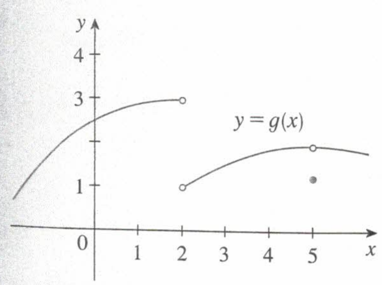


FIGURE 10

EXAMPLE 7 The graph of a function g is shown in Figure 10. Use it to state the values (if they exist) of the following:

(a) $\lim_{x \to 2^-} g(x)$ (b) $\lim_{x \to 2^+} g(x)$ (c) $\lim_{x \to 2} g(x)$

(d) $\lim_{x \to 5^-} g(x)$ (e) $\lim_{x \to 5^+} g(x)$ (f) $\lim_{x \to 5} g(x)$

SOLUTION From the graph we see that the values of $g(x)$ approach 3 as x approaches 2 from the left, but they approach 1 as x approaches 2 from the right. Therefore

$$\text{(a)} \lim_{x \to 2^-} g(x) = 3 \quad \text{and} \quad \text{(b)} \lim_{x \to 2^+} g(x) = 1$$

(c) Since the left and right limits are different, we conclude from (3) that $\lim_{x \to 2} g(x)$ does not exist.

The graph also shows that

$$\text{(d)} \lim_{x \to 5^-} g(x) = 2 \quad \text{and} \quad \text{(e)} \lim_{x \to 5^+} g(x) = 2$$

(f) This time the left and right limits are the same and so, by (3), we have

$$\lim_{x \to 5} g(x) = 2$$

Despite this fact, notice that $g(5) \neq 2$. □

INFINITE LIMITS

EXAMPLE 8 Find $\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1}{x^2}$ if it exists.

x	$\frac{1}{x^2}$
± 1	1
± 0.5	4
± 0.2	25
± 0.1	100
± 0.05	400
± 0.01	10,000
± 0.001	1,000,000

SOLUTION As x becomes close to 0, x^2 also becomes close to 0, and $1/x^2$ becomes very large. (See the table in the margin.) In fact, it appears from the graph of the function $f(x) = 1/x^2$ shown in Figure 11 that the values of $f(x)$ can be made arbitrarily large by taking x close enough to 0. Thus the values of $f(x)$ do not approach a number, so $\lim_{x \to 0} (1/x^2)$ does not exist. □

To indicate the kind of behavior exhibited in Example 8, we use the notation

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1}{x^2} = \infty$$

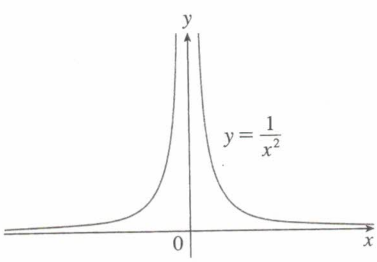


FIGURE 11

⊘ This does not mean that we are regarding ∞ as a number. Nor does it mean that the limit exists. It simply expresses the particular way in which the limit does not exist: $1/x^2$ can be made as large as we like by taking x close enough to 0.

In general, we write symbolically

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \infty$$

to indicate that the values of $f(x)$ tend to become larger and larger (or "increase without bound") as x becomes closer and closer to a.

4 DEFINITION Let f be a function defined on both sides of a, except possibly at a itself. Then

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \infty$$

means that the values of $f(x)$ can be made arbitrarily large (as large as we please) by taking x sufficiently close to a, but not equal to a.

Another notation for $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \infty$ is

$$f(x) \to \infty \qquad \text{as} \qquad x \to a$$

Again the symbol ∞ is not a number, but the expression $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \infty$ is often read as

"the limit of $f(x)$, as x approaches a, is infinity"

or "$f(x)$ becomes infinite as x approaches a"

or "$f(x)$ increases without bound as x approaches a"

This definition is illustrated graphically in Figure 12.

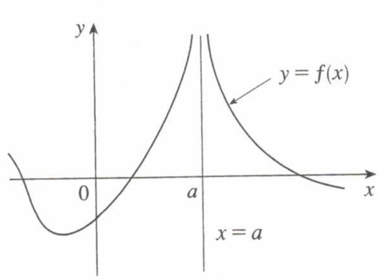


FIGURE 12
$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \infty$

When we say a number is "large negative," we mean that it is negative but its magnitude (absolute value) is large.

A similar sort of limit, for functions that become large negative as x gets close to a, is defined in Definition 5 and is illustrated in Figure 13.

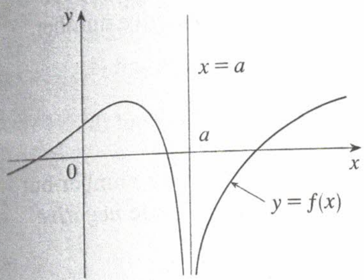


FIGURE 13
$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = -\infty$

5 DEFINITION Let f be defined on both sides of a, except possibly at a itself. Then

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = -\infty$$

means that the values of $f(x)$ can be made arbitrarily large negative by taking x sufficiently close to a, but not equal to a.

The symbol $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = -\infty$ can be read as "the limit of $f(x)$, as x approaches a, is negative infinity" or "$f(x)$ decreases without bound as x approaches a." As an example we have

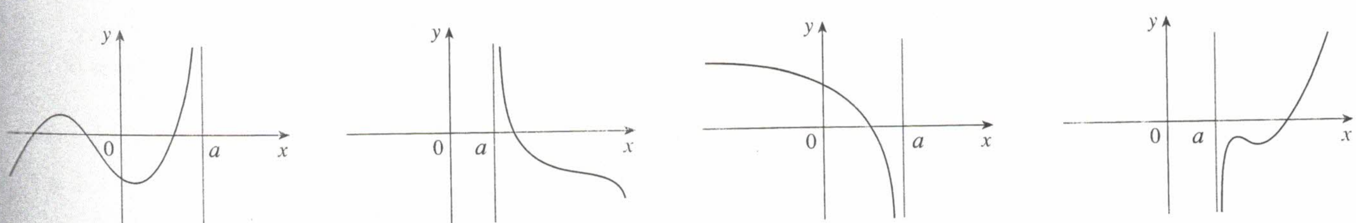
$$\lim_{x \to 0} \left(-\frac{1}{x^2} \right) = -\infty$$

Similar definitions can be given for the one-sided infinite limits

$$\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = \infty \qquad \lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = \infty$$

$$\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = -\infty \qquad \lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = -\infty$$

remembering that "$x \to a^-$" means that we consider only values of x that are less than a, and similarly "$x \to a^+$" means that we consider only $x > a$. Illustrations of these four cases are given in Figure 14.



(a) $\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = \infty$ (b) $\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = \infty$ (c) $\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = -\infty$ (d) $\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = -\infty$

FIGURE 14

6 DEFINITION The line $x = a$ is called a **vertical asymptote** of the curve $y = f(x)$ if at least one of the following statements is true:

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \infty \qquad \lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = \infty \qquad \lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = \infty$$

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = -\infty \qquad \lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = -\infty \qquad \lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = -\infty$$

For instance, the y-axis is a vertical asymptote of the curve $y = 1/x^2$ because $\lim_{x \to 0} (1/x^2) = \infty$. In Figure 14 the line $x = a$ is a vertical asymptote in each of the four cases shown. In general, knowledge of vertical asymptotes is very useful in sketching graphs.

EXAMPLE 9 Find $\lim_{x\to 3^+} \dfrac{2x}{x-3}$ and $\lim_{x\to 3^-} \dfrac{2x}{x-3}$.

SOLUTION If x is close to 3 but larger than 3, then the denominator $x - 3$ is a small positive number and $2x$ is close to 6. So the quotient $2x/(x - 3)$ is a large *positive* number. Thus, intuitively, we see that

$$\lim_{x\to 3^+} \frac{2x}{x-3} = \infty$$

Likewise, if x is close to 3 but smaller than 3, then $x - 3$ is a small negative number but $2x$ is still a positive number (close to 6). So $2x/(x - 3)$ is a numerically large *negative* number. Thus

$$\lim_{x\to 3^-} \frac{2x}{x-3} = -\infty$$

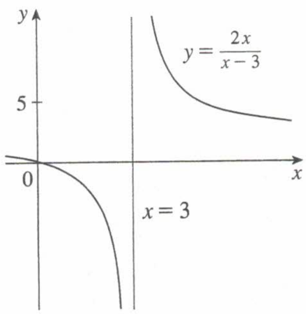


FIGURE 15

The graph of the curve $y = 2x/(x - 3)$ is given in Figure 15. The line $x = 3$ is a vertical asymptote. □

EXAMPLE 10 Find the vertical asymptotes of $f(x) = \tan x$.

SOLUTION Because

$$\tan x = \frac{\sin x}{\cos x}$$

there are potential vertical asymptotes where $\cos x = 0$. In fact, since $\cos x \to 0^+$ as $x \to (\pi/2)^-$ and $\cos x \to 0^-$ as $x \to (\pi/2)^+$, whereas $\sin x$ is positive when x is near $\pi/2$, we have

$$\lim_{x\to(\pi/2)^-} \tan x = \infty \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x\to(\pi/2)^+} \tan x = -\infty$$

This shows that the line $x = \pi/2$ is a vertical asymptote. Similar reasoning shows that the lines $x = (2n + 1)\pi/2$, where n is an integer, are all vertical asymptotes of $f(x) = \tan x$. The graph in Figure 16 confirms this. □

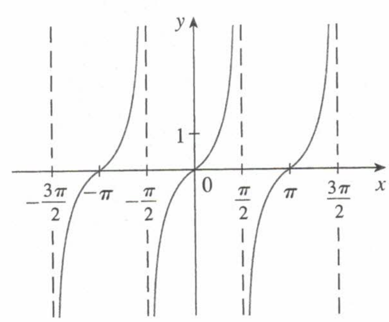


FIGURE 16
$y = \tan x$

2.2 EXERCISES

1. Explain in your own words what is meant by the equation

$$\lim_{x\to 2} f(x) = 5$$

Is it possible for this statement to be true and yet $f(2) = 3$? Explain.

2. Explain what it means to say that

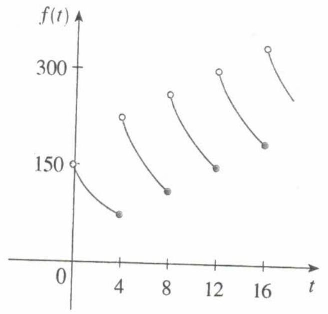
$$\lim_{x\to 1^-} f(x) = 3 \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x\to 1^+} f(x) = 7$$

In this situation is it possible that $\lim_{x\to 1} f(x)$ exists? Explain.

stream after t hours. Find

$$\lim_{t \to 12^-} f(t) \quad \text{and} \quad \lim_{t \to 12^+} f(t)$$

and explain the significance of these one-sided limits.



11. Use the graph of the function $f(x) = 1/(1 + 2^{1/x})$ to state the value of each limit, if it exists. If it does not exist, explain why.

(a) $\lim_{x \to 0^-} f(x)$ (b) $\lim_{x \to 0^+} f(x)$ (c) $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x)$

12. Sketch the graph of the following function and use it to determine the values of a for which $\lim_{x \to a} f(x)$ exists:

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} 2 - x & \text{if } x < -1 \\ x & \text{if } -1 \leqslant x < 1 \\ (x-1)^2 & \text{if } x \geqslant 1 \end{cases}$$

13–16 Sketch the graph of an example of a function f that satisfies all of the given conditions.

13. $\lim_{x \to 1^-} f(x) = 2, \quad \lim_{x \to 1^+} f(x) = -2, \quad f(1) = 2$

14. $\lim_{x \to 0^-} f(x) = 1, \quad \lim_{x \to 0^+} f(x) = -1, \quad \lim_{x \to 2^-} f(x) = 0,$
$\lim_{x \to 2^+} f(x) = 1, \quad f(2) = 1, \quad f(0)$ is undefined

15. $\lim_{x \to 3^+} f(x) = 4, \quad \lim_{x \to 3^-} f(x) = 2, \quad \lim_{x \to -2} f(x) = 2,$
$f(3) = 3, \quad f(-2) = 1$

16. $\lim_{x \to 1} f(x) = 3, \quad \lim_{x \to 4^-} f(x) = 3, \quad \lim_{x \to 4^+} f(x) = -3,$
$f(1) = 1, \quad f(4) = -1$

17–20 Guess the value of the limit (if it exists) by evaluating the function at the given numbers (correct to six decimal places).

17. $\lim_{x \to 2} \dfrac{x^2 - 2x}{x^2 - x - 2}$, $x = 2.5, 2.1, 2.05, 2.01, 2.005, 2.001,$
$1.9, 1.95, 1.99, 1.995, 1.999$

18. $\lim_{x \to -1} \dfrac{x^2 - 2x}{x^2 - x - 2}$,
$x = 0, -0.5, -0.9, -0.95, -0.99, -0.999,$
$-2, -1.5, -1.1, -1.01, -1.001$

19. $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{\sin x}{x + \tan x}$, $x = \pm 1, \pm 0.5, \pm 0.2, \pm 0.1, \pm 0.05, \pm 0.01$

20. $\lim_{x \to 16} \dfrac{\sqrt{x} - 4}{x - 16}$, $x = 17, 16.5, 16.1, 16.05, 16.01,$
$15, 15.5, 15.9, 15.95, 15.99$

21–24 Use a table of values to estimate the value of the limit. If you have a graphing device, use it to confirm your result graphically.

21. $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{\sqrt{x + 4} - 2}{x}$

22. $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{\tan 3x}{\tan 5x}$

23. $\lim_{x \to 1} \dfrac{x^6 - 1}{x^{10} - 1}$

24. $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{9^x - 5^x}{x}$

25–32 Determine the infinite limit.

25. $\lim_{x \to -3^+} \dfrac{x + 2}{x + 3}$

26. $\lim_{x \to -3^-} \dfrac{x + 2}{x + 3}$

27. $\lim_{x \to 1} \dfrac{2 - x}{(x - 1)^2}$

28. $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{x - 1}{x^2(x + 2)}$

29. $\lim_{x \to -2^+} \dfrac{x - 1}{x^2(x + 2)}$

30. $\lim_{x \to \pi^-} \cot x$

31. $\lim_{x \to 2\pi^-} x \csc x$

32. $\lim_{x \to 2^-} \dfrac{x^2 - 2x}{x^2 - 4x + 4}$

---

33. Determine $\lim_{x \to 1^-} \dfrac{1}{x^3 - 1}$ and $\lim_{x \to 1^+} \dfrac{1}{x^3 - 1}$

(a) by evaluating $f(x) = 1/(x^3 - 1)$ for values of x that approach 1 from the left and from the right,
(b) by reasoning as in Example 9, and
(c) from a graph of f.

34. (a) Find the vertical asymptotes of the function

$$y = \frac{x^2 + 1}{3x - 2x^2}$$

(b) Confirm your answer to part (a) by graphing the function.

35. (a) Estimate the value of the limit $\lim_{x \to 0} (1 + x)^{1/x}$ to five decimal places.
(b) Illustrate part (a) by graphing the function $y = (1 + x)^{1/x}$.

36. (a) By graphing the function $f(x) = (\tan 4x)/x$ and zooming in toward the point where the graph crosses the y-axis, estimate the value of $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x)$.

(b) Check your answer in part (a) by evaluating $f(x)$ for values of x that approach 0.

37. (a) Evaluate the function $f(x) = x^2 - (2^x/1000)$ for $x = 1$, 0.8, 0.6, 0.4, 0.2, 0.1, and 0.05, and guess the value of

$$\lim_{x\to 0}\left(x^2 - \frac{2^x}{1000}\right)$$

(b) Evaluate $f(x)$ for $x = 0.04, 0.02, 0.01, 0.005, 0.003$, and 0.001. Guess again.

38. (a) Evaluate $h(x) = (\tan x - x)/x^3$ for $x = 1, 0.5, 0.1, 0.05$, 0.01, and 0.005.

(b) Guess the value of $\lim_{x\to 0}\dfrac{\tan x - x}{x^3}$.

(c) Evaluate $h(x)$ for successively smaller values of x until you finally reach a value of 0 for $h(x)$. Are you still confident that your guess in part (b) is correct? Explain why you eventually obtained a value of 0. (In Section 7.8 a method for evaluating the limit will be explained.)

(d) Graph the function h in the viewing rectangle $[-1, 1]$ by $[0, 1]$. Then zoom in toward the point where the graph crosses the y-axis to estimate the limit of $h(x)$ as x approaches 0. Continue to zoom in until you observe distortions in the graph of h. Compare with the results of part (c).

39. Graph the function $f(x) = \sin(\pi/x)$ of Example 4 in the viewing rectangle $[-1, 1]$ by $[-1, 1]$. Then zoom in toward the origin several times. Comment on the behavior of this function.

40. In the theory of relativity, the mass of a particle with velocity v is

$$m = \frac{m_0}{\sqrt{1 - v^2/c^2}}$$

where m_0 is the mass of the particle at rest and c is the speed of light. What happens as $v \to c^-$?

41. Use a graph to estimate the equations of all the vertical asymptotes of the curve

$$y = \tan(2\sin x) \qquad -\pi \leqslant x \leqslant \pi$$

Then find the exact equations of these asymptotes.

42. (a) Use numerical and graphical evidence to guess the value of the limit

$$\lim_{x\to 1}\frac{x^3 - 1}{\sqrt{x} - 1}$$

(b) How close to 1 does x have to be to ensure that the function in part (a) is within a distance 0.5 of its limit?

2.3 CALCULATING LIMITS USING THE LIMIT LAWS

In Section 2.2 we used calculators and graphs to guess the values of limits, but we saw that such methods don't always lead to the correct answer. In this section we use the following properties of limits, called the *Limit Laws,* to calculate limits.

LIMIT LAWS Suppose that c is a constant and the limits

$$\lim_{x\to a} f(x) \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x\to a} g(x)$$

exist. Then

1. $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x) + g(x)] = \lim_{x\to a} f(x) + \lim_{x\to a} g(x)$

2. $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x) - g(x)] = \lim_{x\to a} f(x) - \lim_{x\to a} g(x)$

3. $\lim_{x\to a}[cf(x)] = c\lim_{x\to a} f(x)$

4. $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x)g(x)] = \lim_{x\to a} f(x)\cdot\lim_{x\to a} g(x)$

5. $\lim_{x\to a}\dfrac{f(x)}{g(x)} = \dfrac{\lim_{x\to a} f(x)}{\lim_{x\to a} g(x)}$ if $\lim_{x\to a} g(x) \neq 0$

These five laws can be stated verbally as follows:

SUM LAW
1. The limit of a sum is the sum of the limits.

DIFFERENCE LAW
2. The limit of a difference is the difference of the limits.

CONSTANT MULTIPLE LAW
3. The limit of a constant times a function is the constant times the limit of the function.

PRODUCT LAW
4. The limit of a product is the product of the limits.

QUOTIENT LAW
5. The limit of a quotient is the quotient of the limits (provided that the limit of the denominator is not 0).

It is easy to believe that these properties are true. For instance, if $f(x)$ is close to L and $g(x)$ is close to M, it is reasonable to conclude that $f(x) + g(x)$ is close to $L + M$. This gives us an intuitive basis for believing that Law 1 is true. In Section 2.4 we give a precise definition of a limit and use it to prove this law. The proofs of the remaining laws are given in Appendix F.

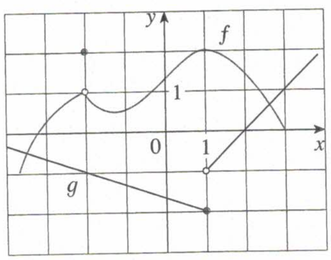


FIGURE 1

EXAMPLE 1 Use the Limit Laws and the graphs of f and g in Figure 1 to evaluate the following limits, if they exist.

(a) $\lim_{x \to -2} [f(x) + 5g(x)]$ (b) $\lim_{x \to 1} [f(x)g(x)]$ (c) $\lim_{x \to 2} \dfrac{f(x)}{g(x)}$

SOLUTION

(a) From the graphs of f and g we see that

$$\lim_{x \to -2} f(x) = 1 \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x \to -2} g(x) = -1$$

Therefore, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{x \to -2} [f(x) + 5g(x)] &= \lim_{x \to -2} f(x) + \lim_{x \to -2} [5g(x)] && \text{(by Law 1)} \\ &= \lim_{x \to -2} f(x) + 5 \lim_{x \to -2} g(x) && \text{(by Law 3)} \\ &= 1 + 5(-1) = -4 \end{aligned}$$

(b) We see that $\lim_{x \to 1} f(x) = 2$. But $\lim_{x \to 1} g(x)$ does not exist because the left and right limits are different:

$$\lim_{x \to 1^-} g(x) = -2 \qquad \lim_{x \to 1^+} g(x) = -1$$

So we can't use Law 4 for the desired limit. But we *can* use Law 4 for the one-sided limits:

$$\lim_{x \to 1^-} [f(x)g(x)] = 2 \cdot (-2) = -4 \qquad \lim_{x \to 1^+} [f(x)g(x)] = 2 \cdot (-1) = -2$$

The left and right limits aren't equal, so $\lim_{x \to 1} [f(x)g(x)]$ does not exist.

(c) The graphs show that

$$\lim_{x \to 2} f(x) \approx 1.4 \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x \to 2} g(x) = 0$$

Because the limit of the denominator is 0, we can't use Law 5. The given limit does not exist because the denominator approaches 0 while the numerator approaches a nonzero number. □

If we use the Product Law repeatedly with $g(x) = f(x)$, we obtain the following law.

POWER LAW

6. $\lim_{x \to a} [f(x)]^n = \left[\lim_{x \to a} f(x)\right]^n$ where n is a positive integer

In applying these six limit laws, we need to use two special limits:

7. $\lim_{x \to a} c = c$ **8.** $\lim_{x \to a} x = a$

These limits are obvious from an intuitive point of view (state them in words or draw graphs of $y = c$ and $y = x$), but proofs based on the precise definition are requested in the exercises for Section 2.4.

If we now put $f(x) = x$ in Law 6 and use Law 8, we get another useful special limit.

9. $\lim_{x \to a} x^n = a^n$ where n is a positive integer

A similar limit holds for roots as follows. (For square roots the proof is outlined in Exercise 37 in Section 2.4.)

10. $\lim_{x \to a} \sqrt[n]{x} = \sqrt[n]{a}$ where n is a positive integer
(If n is even, we assume that $a > 0$.)

More generally, we have the following law, which is proved in Section 2.5 as a consequence of Law 10.

ROOT LAW

11. $\lim_{x \to a} \sqrt[n]{f(x)} = \sqrt[n]{\lim_{x \to a} f(x)}$ where n is a positive integer
[If n is even, we assume that $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) > 0$.]

EXAMPLE 2 Evaluate the following limits and justify each step.

(a) $\lim_{x \to 5} (2x^2 - 3x + 4)$ (b) $\lim_{x \to -2} \dfrac{x^3 + 2x^2 - 1}{5 - 3x}$

SOLUTION

(a)
$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{x \to 5} (2x^2 - 3x + 4) &= \lim_{x \to 5} (2x^2) - \lim_{x \to 5} (3x) + \lim_{x \to 5} 4 && \text{(by Laws 2 and 1)} \\ &= 2 \lim_{x \to 5} x^2 - 3 \lim_{x \to 5} x + \lim_{x \to 5} 4 && \text{(by 3)} \\ &= 2(5^2) - 3(5) + 4 && \text{(by 9, 8, and 7)} \\ &= 39 \end{aligned}$$

NEWTON AND LIMITS

Isaac Newton was born on Christmas Day in 1642, the year of Galileo's death. When he entered Cambridge University in 1661 Newton didn't know much mathematics, but he learned quickly by reading Euclid and Descartes and by attending the lectures of Isaac Barrow. Cambridge was closed because of the plague in 1665 and 1666, and Newton returned home to reflect on what he had learned. Those two years were amazingly productive for at that time he made four of his major discoveries: (1) his representation of functions as sums of infinite series, including the binomial theorem; (2) his work on differential and integral calculus; (3) his laws of motion and law of universal gravitation; and (4) his prism experiments on the nature of light and color. Because of a fear of controversy and criticism, he was reluctant to publish his discoveries and it wasn't until 1687, at the urging of the astronomer Halley, that Newton published *Principia Mathematica*. In this work, the greatest scientific treatise ever written, Newton set forth his version of calculus and used it to investigate mechanics, fluid dynamics, and wave motion, and to explain the motion of planets and comets.

The beginnings of calculus are found in the calculations of areas and volumes by ancient Greek scholars such as Eudoxus and Archimedes. Although aspects of the idea of a limit are implicit in their "method of exhaustion," Eudoxus and Archimedes never explicitly formulated the concept of a limit. Likewise, mathematicians such as Cavalieri, Fermat, and Barrow, the immediate precursors of Newton in the development of calculus, did not actually use limits. It was Isaac Newton who was the first to talk explicitly about limits. He explained that the main idea behind limits is that quantities "approach nearer than by any given difference." Newton stated that the limit was the basic concept in calculus, but it was left to later mathematicians like Cauchy to clarify his ideas about limits.

(b) We start by using Law 5, but its use is fully justified only at the final stage when we see that the limits of the numerator and denominator exist and the limit of the denominator is not 0.

$$\lim_{x\to -2} \frac{x^3 + 2x^2 - 1}{5 - 3x} = \frac{\lim_{x\to -2} (x^3 + 2x^2 - 1)}{\lim_{x\to -2} (5 - 3x)} \qquad \text{(by Law 5)}$$

$$= \frac{\lim_{x\to -2} x^3 + 2 \lim_{x\to -2} x^2 - \lim_{x\to -2} 1}{\lim_{x\to -2} 5 - 3 \lim_{x\to -2} x} \qquad \text{(by 1, 2, and 3)}$$

$$= \frac{(-2)^3 + 2(-2)^2 - 1}{5 - 3(-2)} \qquad \text{(by 9, 8, and 7)}$$

$$= -\frac{1}{11}$$ □

NOTE If we let $f(x) = 2x^2 - 3x + 4$, then $f(5) = 39$. In other words, we would have gotten the correct answer in Example 2(a) by substituting 5 for x. Similarly, direct substitution provides the correct answer in part (b). The functions in Example 2 are a polynomial and a rational function, respectively, and similar use of the Limit Laws proves that direct substitution always works for such functions (see Exercises 53 and 54). We state this fact as follows.

DIRECT SUBSTITUTION PROPERTY If f is a polynomial or a rational function and a is in the domain of f, then

$$\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = f(a)$$

Functions with the Direct Substitution Property are called *continuous at a* and will be studied in Section 2.5. However, not all limits can be evaluated by direct substitution, as the following examples show.

EXAMPLE 3 Find $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 1} \frac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1}$.

SOLUTION Let $f(x) = (x^2 - 1)/(x - 1)$. We can't find the limit by substituting $x = 1$ because $f(1)$ isn't defined. Nor can we apply the Quotient Law, because the limit of the denominator is 0. Instead, we need to do some preliminary algebra. We factor the numerator as a difference of squares:

$$\frac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1} = \frac{(x - 1)(x + 1)}{x - 1}$$

The numerator and denominator have a common factor of $x - 1$. When we take the limit as x approaches 1, we have $x \neq 1$ and so $x - 1 \neq 0$. Therefore we can cancel the common factor and compute the limit as follows:

$$\lim_{x\to 1} \frac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1} = \lim_{x\to 1} \frac{(x - 1)(x + 1)}{x - 1} = \lim_{x\to 1} (x + 1) = 1 + 1 = 2$$

The limit in this example arose in Section 2.1 when we were trying to find the tangent to the parabola $y = x^2$ at the point $(1, 1)$. □

NOTE In Example 3 we were able to compute the limit by replacing the given function $f(x) = (x^2 - 1)/(x - 1)$ by a simpler function, $g(x) = x + 1$, with the same limit.

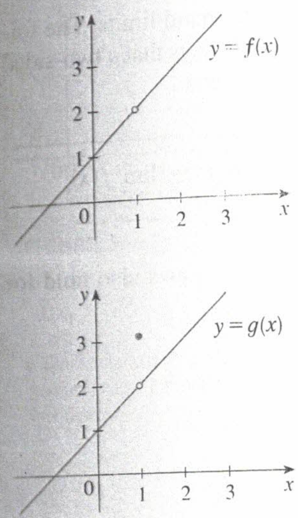


FIGURE 2
The graphs of the functions f (from Example 3) and g (from Example 4)

This is valid because $f(x) = g(x)$ except when $x = 1$, and in computing a limit as x approaches 1 we don't consider what happens when x is actually *equal* to 1. In general, we have the following useful fact.

> If $f(x) = g(x)$ when $x \neq a$, then $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \lim_{x \to a} g(x)$, provided the limits exist.

EXAMPLE 4 Find $\lim_{x \to 1} g(x)$ where

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} x + 1 & \text{if } x \neq 1 \\ \pi & \text{if } x = 1 \end{cases}$$

SOLUTION Here g is defined at $x = 1$ and $g(1) = \pi$, but the value of a limit as x approaches 1 does not depend on the value of the function at 1. Since $g(x) = x + 1$ for $x \neq 1$, we have

$$\lim_{x \to 1} g(x) = \lim_{x \to 1} (x + 1) = 2$$ □

Note that the values of the functions in Examples 3 and 4 are identical except when $x = 1$ (see Figure 2) and so they have the same limit as x approaches 1.

V EXAMPLE 5 Evaluate $\lim_{h \to 0} \dfrac{(3 + h)^2 - 9}{h}$.

SOLUTION If we define

$$F(h) = \frac{(3 + h)^2 - 9}{h}$$

then, as in Example 3, we can't compute $\lim_{h \to 0} F(h)$ by letting $h = 0$ since $F(0)$ is undefined. But if we simplify $F(h)$ algebraically, we find that

$$F(h) = \frac{(9 + 6h + h^2) - 9}{h} = \frac{6h + h^2}{h} = 6 + h$$

(Recall that we consider only $h \neq 0$ when letting h approach 0.) Thus

$$\lim_{h \to 0} \frac{(3 + h)^2 - 9}{h} = \lim_{h \to 0} (6 + h) = 6$$ □

EXAMPLE 6 Find $\lim_{t \to 0} \dfrac{\sqrt{t^2 + 9} - 3}{t^2}$.

SOLUTION We can't apply the Quotient Law immediately, since the limit of the denominator is 0. Here the preliminary algebra consists of rationalizing the numerator:

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{t \to 0} \frac{\sqrt{t^2 + 9} - 3}{t^2} &= \lim_{t \to 0} \frac{\sqrt{t^2 + 9} - 3}{t^2} \cdot \frac{\sqrt{t^2 + 9} + 3}{\sqrt{t^2 + 9} + 3} \\ &= \lim_{t \to 0} \frac{(t^2 + 9) - 9}{t^2\left(\sqrt{t^2 + 9} + 3\right)} = \lim_{t \to 0} \frac{t^2}{t^2\left(\sqrt{t^2 + 9} + 3\right)} \\ &= \lim_{t \to 0} \frac{1}{\sqrt{t^2 + 9} + 3} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{\lim_{t \to 0} (t^2 + 9)} + 3} = \frac{1}{3 + 3} = \frac{1}{6} \end{aligned}$$

This calculation confirms the guess that we made in Example 2 in Section 2.2. □

Some limits are best calculated by first finding the left- and right-hand limits. The following theorem is a reminder of what we discovered in Section 2.2. It says that a two-sided limit exists if and only if both of the one-sided limits exist and are equal.

1 THEOREM $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$ if and only if $\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = L = \lim_{x \to a^+} f(x)$

When computing one-sided limits, we use the fact that the Limit Laws also hold for one-sided limits.

■ The result of Example 7 looks plausible from Figure 3.

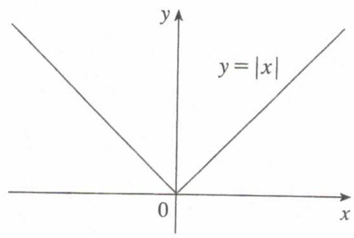


FIGURE 3

EXAMPLE 7 Show that $\lim_{x \to 0} |x| = 0$.

SOLUTION Recall that

$$|x| = \begin{cases} x & \text{if } x \geqslant 0 \\ -x & \text{if } x < 0 \end{cases}$$

Since $|x| = x$ for $x > 0$, we have

$$\lim_{x \to 0^+} |x| = \lim_{x \to 0^+} x = 0$$

For $x < 0$ we have $|x| = -x$ and so

$$\lim_{x \to 0^-} |x| = \lim_{x \to 0^-} (-x) = 0$$

Therefore, by Theorem 1,

$$\lim_{x \to 0} |x| = 0$$

□

EXAMPLE 8 Prove that $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{|x|}{x}$ does not exist.

SOLUTION

$$\lim_{x \to 0^+} \frac{|x|}{x} = \lim_{x \to 0^+} \frac{x}{x} = \lim_{x \to 0^+} 1 = 1$$

$$\lim_{x \to 0^-} \frac{|x|}{x} = \lim_{x \to 0^-} \frac{-x}{x} = \lim_{x \to 0^-} (-1) = -1$$

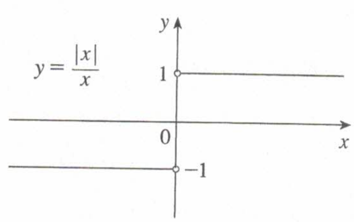


FIGURE 4

Since the right- and left-hand limits are different, it follows from Theorem 1 that $\lim_{x \to 0} |x|/x$ does not exist. The graph of the function $f(x) = |x|/x$ is shown in Figure 4 and supports the one-sided limits that we found. □

EXAMPLE 9 If

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \sqrt{x - 4} & \text{if } x > 4 \\ 8 - 2x & \text{if } x < 4 \end{cases}$$

determine whether $\lim_{x \to 4} f(x)$ exists.

■ It is shown in Example 3 in Section 2.4 that $\lim_{x \to 0^+} \sqrt{x} = 0$.

SOLUTION Since $f(x) = \sqrt{x - 4}$ for $x > 4$, we have

$$\lim_{x \to 4^+} f(x) = \lim_{x \to 4^+} \sqrt{x - 4} = \sqrt{4 - 4} = 0$$

Since $f(x) = 8 - 2x$ for $x < 4$, we have

$$\lim_{x\to 4^-} f(x) = \lim_{x\to 4^-} (8 - 2x) = 8 - 2\cdot 4 = 0$$

The right- and left-hand limits are equal. Thus the limit exists and

$$\lim_{x\to 4} f(x) = 0$$

The graph of f is shown in Figure 5. □

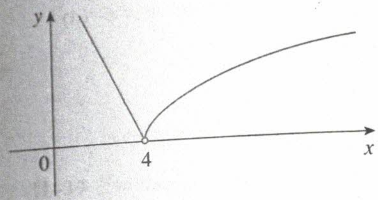


FIGURE 5

EXAMPLE 10 The **greatest integer function** is defined by $[\![x]\!]$ = the largest integer that is less than or equal to x. (For instance, $[\![4]\!] = 4$, $[\![4.8]\!] = 4$, $[\![\pi]\!] = 3$, $[\![\sqrt{2}]\!] = 1$, $[\![-\frac{1}{2}]\!] = -1$.) Show that $\lim_{x\to 3} [\![x]\!]$ does not exist.

■ Other notations for $[\![x]\!]$ are $[x]$ and $\lfloor x \rfloor$. The greatest integer function is sometimes called the *floor function*.

SOLUTION The graph of the greatest integer function is shown in Figure 6. Since $[\![x]\!] = 3$ for $3 \leqslant x < 4$, we have

$$\lim_{x\to 3^+} [\![x]\!] = \lim_{x\to 3^+} 3 = 3$$

Since $[\![x]\!] = 2$ for $2 \leqslant x < 3$, we have

$$\lim_{x\to 3^-} [\![x]\!] = \lim_{x\to 3^-} 2 = 2$$

Because these one-sided limits are not equal, $\lim_{x\to 3} [\![x]\!]$ does not exist by Theorem 1. □

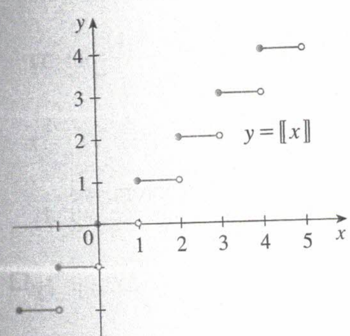


FIGURE 6
Greatest integer function

The next two theorems give two additional properties of limits. Their proofs can be found in Appendix F.

[2] **THEOREM** If $f(x) \leqslant g(x)$ when x is near a (except possibly at a) and the limits of f and g both exist as x approaches a, then

$$\lim_{x\to a} f(x) \leqslant \lim_{x\to a} g(x)$$

[3] **THE SQUEEZE THEOREM** If $f(x) \leqslant g(x) \leqslant h(x)$ when x is near a (except possibly at a) and

$$\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = \lim_{x\to a} h(x) = L$$

then
$$\lim_{x\to a} g(x) = L$$

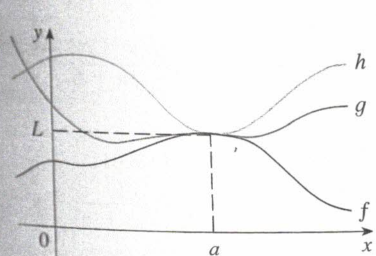


FIGURE 7

The Squeeze Theorem, which is sometimes called the Sandwich Theorem or the Pinching Theorem, is illustrated by Figure 7. It says that if $g(x)$ is squeezed between $f(x)$ and $h(x)$ near a, and if f and h have the same limit L at a, then g is forced to have the same limit L at a.

EXAMPLE 11 Show that $\lim_{x \to 0} x^2 \sin \frac{1}{x} = 0$.

SOLUTION First note that we **cannot** use

$$\lim_{x \to 0} x^2 \sin \frac{1}{x} = \lim_{x \to 0} x^2 \cdot \lim_{x \to 0} \sin \frac{1}{x}$$

because $\lim_{x \to 0} \sin(1/x)$ does not exist (see Example 4 in Section 2.2). However, since

$$-1 \leqslant \sin \frac{1}{x} \leqslant 1$$

we have, as illustrated by Figure 8,

$$-x^2 \leqslant x^2 \sin \frac{1}{x} \leqslant x^2$$

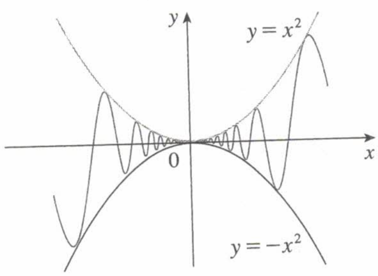


FIGURE 8
$y = x^2 \sin(1/x)$

We know that

$$\lim_{x \to 0} x^2 = 0 \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x \to 0} (-x^2) = 0$$

Taking $f(x) = -x^2$, $g(x) = x^2 \sin(1/x)$, and $h(x) = x^2$ in the Squeeze Theorem, we obtain

$$\lim_{x \to 0} x^2 \sin \frac{1}{x} = 0$$

□

2.3 EXERCISES

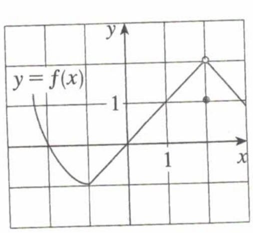
1. Given that

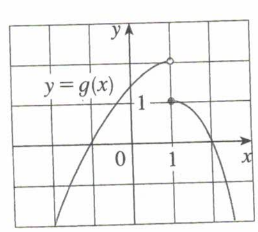
$$\lim_{x \to 2} f(x) = 4 \qquad \lim_{x \to 2} g(x) = -2 \qquad \lim_{x \to 2} h(x) = 0$$

find the limits that exist. If the limit does not exist, explain why.

(a) $\lim_{x \to 2} [f(x) + 5g(x)]$
(b) $\lim_{x \to 2} [g(x)]^3$
(c) $\lim_{x \to 2} \sqrt{f(x)}$
(d) $\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{3f(x)}{g(x)}$
(e) $\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{g(x)}{h(x)}$
(f) $\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{g(x)h(x)}{f(x)}$

2. The graphs of f and g are given. Use them to evaluate each limit, if it exists. If the limit does not exist, explain why.





(a) $\lim_{x \to 2} [f(x) + g(x)]$
(b) $\lim_{x \to 1} [f(x) + g(x)]$
(c) $\lim_{x \to 0} [f(x)g(x)]$
(d) $\lim_{x \to -1} \frac{f(x)}{g(x)}$
(e) $\lim_{x \to 2} [x^3 f(x)]$
(f) $\lim_{x \to 1} \sqrt{3 + f(x)}$

3–9 Evaluate the limit and justify each step by indicating the appropriate Limit Law(s).

3. $\lim_{x \to -2} (3x^4 + 2x^2 - x + 1)$

4. $\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{2x^2 + 1}{x^2 + 6x - 4}$

5. $\lim_{x \to 8} (1 + \sqrt[3]{x})(2 - 6x^2 + x^3)$

6. $\lim_{t \to -1} (t^2 + 1)^3 (t + 3)^5$

7. $\lim_{x \to 1} \left(\frac{1 + 3x}{1 + 4x^2 + 3x^4} \right)^3$

8. $\lim_{u \to -2} \sqrt{u^4 + 3u + 6}$

9. $\lim_{x \to 4^-} \sqrt{16 - x^2}$

10. (a) What is wrong with the following equation?

$$\frac{x^2 + x - 6}{x - 2} = x + 3$$

(b) In view of part (a), explain why the equation

$$\lim_{x\to 2}\frac{x^2+x-6}{x-2}=\lim_{x\to 2}(x+3)$$

is correct.

11–30 Evaluate the limit, if it exists.

11. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 2}\frac{x^2+x-6}{x-2}$

12. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -4}\frac{x^2+5x+4}{x^2+3x-4}$

13. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 2}\frac{x^2-x+6}{x-2}$

14. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 4}\frac{x^2-4x}{x^2-3x-4}$

15. $\displaystyle\lim_{t\to -3}\frac{t^2-9}{2t^2+7t+3}$

16. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -1}\frac{x^2-4x}{x^2-3x-4}$

17. $\displaystyle\lim_{h\to 0}\frac{(4+h)^2-16}{h}$

18. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 1}\frac{x^3-1}{x^2-1}$

19. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -2}\frac{x+2}{x^3+8}$

20. $\displaystyle\lim_{h\to 0}\frac{(2+h)^3-8}{h}$

21. $\displaystyle\lim_{t\to 9}\frac{9-t}{3-\sqrt{t}}$

22. $\displaystyle\lim_{h\to 0}\frac{\sqrt{1+h}-1}{h}$

23. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 7}\frac{\sqrt{x+2}-3}{x-7}$

24. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -1}\frac{x^2+2x+1}{x^4-1}$

25. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -4}\frac{\frac{1}{4}+\frac{1}{x}}{4+x}$

26. $\displaystyle\lim_{t\to 0}\left(\frac{1}{t}-\frac{1}{t^2+t}\right)$

27. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 16}\frac{4-\sqrt{x}}{16x-x^2}$

28. $\displaystyle\lim_{h\to 0}\frac{(3+h)^{-1}-3^{-1}}{h}$

29. $\displaystyle\lim_{t\to 0}\left(\frac{1}{t\sqrt{1+t}}-\frac{1}{t}\right)$

30. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -4}\frac{\sqrt{x^2+9}-5}{x+4}$

---

31. (a) Estimate the value of

$$\lim_{x\to 0}\frac{x}{\sqrt{1+3x}-1}$$

by graphing the function $f(x)=x/(\sqrt{1+3x}-1)$.

(b) Make a table of values of $f(x)$ for x close to 0 and guess the value of the limit.

(c) Use the Limit Laws to prove that your guess is correct.

32. (a) Use a graph of

$$f(x)=\frac{\sqrt{3+x}-\sqrt{3}}{x}$$

to estimate the value of $\lim_{x\to 0}f(x)$ to two decimal places.

(b) Use a table of values of $f(x)$ to estimate the limit to four decimal places.

(c) Use the Limit Laws to find the exact value of the limit.

33. Use the Squeeze Theorem to show that $\lim_{x\to 0}(x^2\cos 20\pi x)=0$. Illustrate by graphing the functions $f(x)=-x^2$, $g(x)=x^2\cos 20\pi x$, and $h(x)=x^2$ on the same screen.

34. Use the Squeeze Theorem to show that

$$\lim_{x\to 0}\sqrt{x^3+x^2}\,\sin\frac{\pi}{x}=0$$

Illustrate by graphing the functions f, g, and h (in the notation of the Squeeze Theorem) on the same screen.

35. If $4x-9\leqslant f(x)\leqslant x^2-4x+7$ for $x\geqslant 0$, find $\lim_{x\to 4}f(x)$.

36. If $2x\leqslant g(x)\leqslant x^4-x^2+2$ for all x, evaluate $\lim_{x\to 1}g(x)$.

37. Prove that $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0}x^4\cos\frac{2}{x}=0$.

38. Prove that $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0^+}\sqrt{x}\,[1+\sin^2(2\pi/x)]=0$.

39–44 Find the limit, if it exists. If the limit does not exist, explain why.

39. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 3}(2x+|x-3|)$

40. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -6}\frac{2x+12}{|x+6|}$

41. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0.5^-}\frac{2x-1}{|2x^3-x^2|}$

42. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -2}\frac{2-|x|}{2+x}$

43. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0^-}\left(\frac{1}{x}-\frac{1}{|x|}\right)$

44. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0^+}\left(\frac{1}{x}-\frac{1}{|x|}\right)$

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45. The *signum* (or sign) *function*, denoted by sgn, is defined by

$$\operatorname{sgn}x=\begin{cases}-1 & \text{if } x<0\\ 0 & \text{if } x=0\\ 1 & \text{if } x>0\end{cases}$$

(a) Sketch the graph of this function.

(b) Find each of the following limits or explain why it does not exist.

(i) $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0^+}\operatorname{sgn}x$ (ii) $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0^-}\operatorname{sgn}x$

(iii) $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0}\operatorname{sgn}x$ (iv) $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 0}|\operatorname{sgn}x|$

46. Let

$$f(x)=\begin{cases}4-x^2 & \text{if } x\leqslant 2\\ x-1 & \text{if } x>2\end{cases}$$

(a) Find $\lim_{x\to 2^-}f(x)$ and $\lim_{x\to 2^+}f(x)$.

(b) Does $\lim_{x\to 2}f(x)$ exist?

(c) Sketch the graph of f.

47. Let $F(x)=\dfrac{x^2-1}{|x-1|}$.

(a) Find

(i) $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 1^+}F(x)$ (ii) $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 1^-}F(x)$

(b) Does $\lim_{x \to 1} F(x)$ exist?
(c) Sketch the graph of F.

48. Let

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} x & \text{if } x < 1 \\ 3 & \text{if } x = 1 \\ 2 - x^2 & \text{if } 1 < x \leq 2 \\ x - 3 & \text{if } x > 2 \end{cases}$$

(a) Evaluate each of the following limits, if it exists.
(i) $\lim_{x \to 1^-} g(x)$ (ii) $\lim_{x \to 1} g(x)$ (iii) $g(1)$
(iv) $\lim_{x \to 2^-} g(x)$ (v) $\lim_{x \to 2^+} g(x)$ (vi) $\lim_{x \to 2} g(x)$
(b) Sketch the graph of g.

49. (a) If the symbol $[\![\ ]\!]$ denotes the greatest integer function defined in Example 10, evaluate
(i) $\lim_{x \to -2^+} [\![x]\!]$ (ii) $\lim_{x \to -2} [\![x]\!]$ (iii) $\lim_{x \to -2.4} [\![x]\!]$
(b) If n is an integer, evaluate
(i) $\lim_{x \to n^-} [\![x]\!]$ (ii) $\lim_{x \to n^+} [\![x]\!]$
(c) For what values of a does $\lim_{x \to a} [\![x]\!]$ exist?

50. Let $f(x) = [\![\cos x]\!]$, $-\pi \leq x \leq \pi$.
(a) Sketch the graph of f.
(b) Evaluate each limit, if it exists.
(i) $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x)$ (ii) $\lim_{x \to (\pi/2)^-} f(x)$
(iii) $\lim_{x \to (\pi/2)^+} f(x)$ (iv) $\lim_{x \to \pi/2} f(x)$
(c) For what values of a does $\lim_{x \to a} f(x)$ exist?

51. If $f(x) = [\![x]\!] + [\![-x]\!]$, show that $\lim_{x \to 2} f(x)$ exists but is not equal to $f(2)$.

52. In the theory of relativity, the Lorentz contraction formula

$$L = L_0 \sqrt{1 - v^2/c^2}$$

expresses the length L of an object as a function of its velocity v with respect to an observer, where L_0 is the length of the object at rest and c is the speed of light. Find $\lim_{v \to c^-} L$ and interpret the result. Why is a left-hand limit necessary?

53. If p is a polynomial, show that $\lim_{x \to a} p(x) = p(a)$.

54. If r is a rational function, use Exercise 53 to show that $\lim_{x \to a} r(x) = r(a)$ for every number a in the domain of r.

55. If $\lim_{x \to 1} \dfrac{f(x) - 8}{x - 1} = 10$, find $\lim_{x \to 1} f(x)$.

56. If $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{f(x)}{x^2} = 5$, find the following limits.
(a) $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x)$ (b) $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{f(x)}{x}$

57. If

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} x^2 & \text{if } x \text{ is rational} \\ 0 & \text{if } x \text{ is irrational} \end{cases}$$

prove that $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x) = 0$.

58. Show by means of an example that $\lim_{x \to a} [f(x) + g(x)]$ may exist even though neither $\lim_{x \to a} f(x)$ nor $\lim_{x \to a} g(x)$ exists.

59. Show by means of an example that $\lim_{x \to a} [f(x)g(x)]$ may exist even though neither $\lim_{x \to a} f(x)$ nor $\lim_{x \to a} g(x)$ exists.

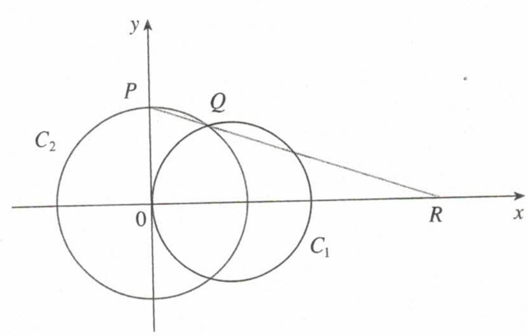
60. Evaluate $\lim_{x \to 2} \dfrac{\sqrt{6 - x} - 2}{\sqrt{3 - x} - 1}$.

61. Is there a number a such that

$$\lim_{x \to -2} \frac{3x^2 + ax + a + 3}{x^2 + x - 2}$$

exists? If so, find the value of a and the value of the limit.

62. The figure shows a fixed circle C_1 with equation $(x - 1)^2 + y^2 = 1$ and a shrinking circle C_2 with radius r and center the origin. P is the point $(0, r)$, Q is the upper point of intersection of the two circles, and R is the point of intersection of the line PQ and the x-axis. What happens to R as C_2 shrinks, that is, as $r \to 0^+$?



2.4 THE PRECISE DEFINITION OF A LIMIT

The intuitive definition of a limit given in Section 2.2 is inadequate for some purposes because such phrases as "x is close to 2" and "$f(x)$ gets closer and closer to L" are vague. In order to be able to prove conclusively that

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \left(x^3 + \frac{\cos 5x}{10{,}000} \right) = 0.0001 \qquad \text{or} \qquad \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin x}{x} = 1$$

we must make the definition of a limit precise.

To motivate the precise definition of a limit, let's consider the function

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} 2x - 1 & \text{if } x \neq 3 \\ 6 & \text{if } x = 3 \end{cases}$$

Intuitively, it is clear that when x is close to 3 but $x \neq 3$, then $f(x)$ is close to 5, and so $\lim_{x \to 3} f(x) = 5$.

To obtain more detailed information about how $f(x)$ varies when x is close to 3, we ask the following question:

How close to 3 does x have to be so that $f(x)$ differs from 5 by less than 0.1?

The distance from x to 3 is $|x - 3|$ and the distance from $f(x)$ to 5 is $|f(x) - 5|$, so our problem is to find a number δ such that

■ It is traditional to use the Greek letter δ (delta) in this situation.

$$|f(x) - 5| < 0.1 \qquad \text{if} \qquad |x - 3| < \delta \quad \text{but } x \neq 3$$

If $|x - 3| > 0$, then $x \neq 3$, so an equivalent formulation of our problem is to find a number δ such that

$$|f(x) - 5| < 0.1 \qquad \text{if} \qquad 0 < |x - 3| < \delta$$

Notice that if $0 < |x - 3| < (0.1)/2 = 0.05$, then

$$|f(x) - 5| = |(2x - 1) - 5| = |2x - 6| = 2|x - 3| < 0.1$$

that is, $$|f(x) - 5| < 0.1 \qquad \text{if} \qquad 0 < |x - 3| < 0.05$$

Thus an answer to the problem is given by $\delta = 0.05$; that is, if x is within a distance of 0.05 from 3, then $f(x)$ will be within a distance of 0.1 from 5.

If we change the number 0.1 in our problem to the smaller number 0.01, then by using the same method we find that $f(x)$ will differ from 5 by less than 0.01 provided that x differs from 3 by less than $(0.01)/2 = 0.005$:

$$|f(x) - 5| < 0.01 \qquad \text{if} \qquad 0 < |x - 3| < 0.005$$

Similarly,

$$|f(x) - 5| < 0.001 \qquad \text{if} \qquad 0 < |x - 3| < 0.0005$$

The numbers 0.1, 0.01, and 0.001 that we have considered are *error tolerances* that we might allow. For 5 to be the precise limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches 3, we must not only be able to bring the difference between $f(x)$ and 5 below each of these three numbers; we must be able to bring it below *any* positive number. And, by the same reasoning, we can! If we write ε (the Greek letter epsilon) for an arbitrary positive number, then we find as before that

$$\boxed{1} \qquad |f(x) - 5| < \varepsilon \quad \text{if} \quad 0 < |x - 3| < \delta = \frac{\varepsilon}{2}$$

This is a precise way of saying that $f(x)$ is close to 5 when x is close to 3 because (1) says that we can make the values of $f(x)$ within an arbitrary distance ε from 5 by taking the values of x within a distance $\varepsilon/2$ from 3 (but $x \neq 3$).

Note that (1) can be rewritten as follows:

$$\text{if} \quad 3 - \delta < x < 3 + \delta \quad (x \neq 3) \quad \text{then} \quad 5 - \varepsilon < f(x) < 5 + \varepsilon$$

and this is illustrated in Figure 1. By taking the values of x ($\neq 3$) to lie in the interval $(3 - \delta, 3 + \delta)$ we can make the values of $f(x)$ lie in the interval $(5 - \varepsilon, 5 + \varepsilon)$.

Using (1) as a model, we give a precise definition of a limit.

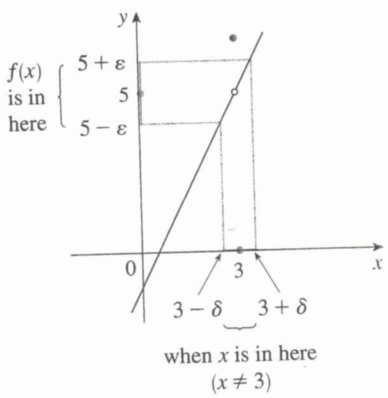


FIGURE 1

> $\boxed{2}$ **DEFINITION** Let f be a function defined on some open interval that contains the number a, except possibly at a itself. Then we say that the **limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches a is L**, and we write
>
> $$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$$
>
> if for every number $\varepsilon > 0$ there is a number $\delta > 0$ such that
>
> $$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |f(x) - L| < \varepsilon$$

Since $|x - a|$ is the distance from x to a and $|f(x) - L|$ is the distance from $f(x)$ to L, and since ε can be arbitrarily small, the definition of a limit can be expressed in words as follows:

> $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$ means that the distance between $f(x)$ and L can be made arbitrarily small by taking the distance from x to a sufficiently small (but not 0).

Alternatively,

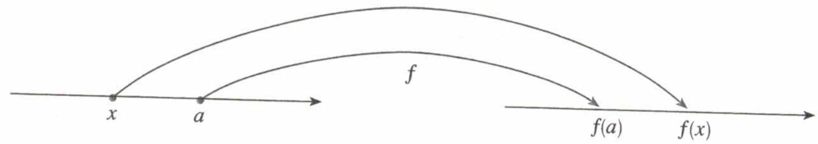
> $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$ means that the values of $f(x)$ can be made as close as we please to L by taking x close enough to a (but not equal to a).

We can also reformulate Definition 2 in terms of intervals by observing that the inequality $|x - a| < \delta$ is equivalent to $-\delta < x - a < \delta$, which in turn can be written as $a - \delta < x < a + \delta$. Also $0 < |x - a|$ is true if and only if $x - a \neq 0$, that is, $x \neq a$. Similarly, the inequality $|f(x) - L| < \varepsilon$ is equivalent to the pair of inequalities $L - \varepsilon < f(x) < L + \varepsilon$. Therefore, in terms of intervals, Definition 2 can be stated as follows:

> $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$ means that for every $\varepsilon > 0$ (no matter how small ε is) we can find $\delta > 0$ such that if x lies in the open interval $(a - \delta, a + \delta)$ and $x \neq a$, then $f(x)$ lies in the open interval $(L - \varepsilon, L + \varepsilon)$.

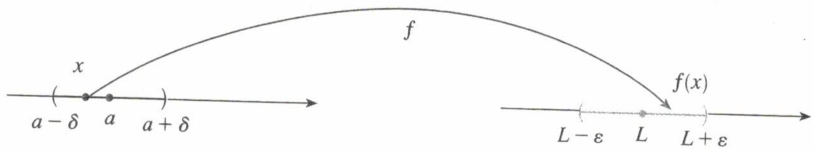
We interpret this statement geometrically by representing a function by an arrow diagram as in Figure 2, where f maps a subset of $\mathbb{R}$ onto another subset of $\mathbb{R}$.

FIGURE 2



The definition of limit says that if any small interval $(L - \varepsilon, L + \varepsilon)$ is given around L, then we can find an interval $(a - \delta, a + \delta)$ around a such that f maps all the points in $(a - \delta, a + \delta)$ (except possibly a) into the interval $(L - \varepsilon, L + \varepsilon)$. (See Figure 3.)

FIGURE 3



Another geometric interpretation of limits can be given in terms of the graph of a function. If $\varepsilon > 0$ is given, then we draw the horizontal lines $y = L + \varepsilon$ and $y = L - \varepsilon$ and the graph of f. (See Figure 4.) If $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$, then we can find a number $\delta > 0$ such that if we restrict x to lie in the interval $(a - \delta, a + \delta)$ and take $x \neq a$, then the curve $y = f(x)$ lies between the lines $y = L - \varepsilon$ and $y = L + \varepsilon$. (See Figure 5.) You can see that if such a δ has been found, then any smaller δ will also work.

It is important to realize that the process illustrated in Figures 4 and 5 must work for *every* positive number ε, no matter how small it is chosen. Figure 6 shows that if a smaller ε is chosen, then a smaller δ may be required.

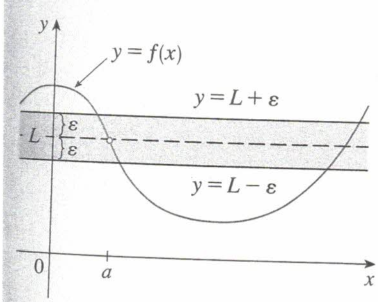


FIGURE 4

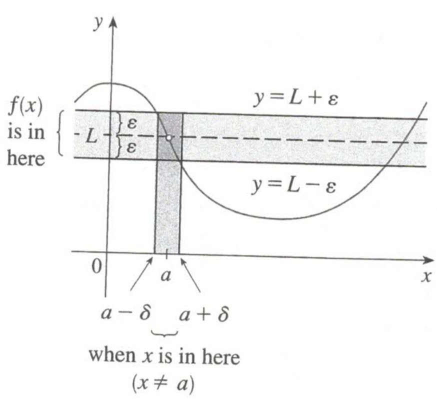


FIGURE 5

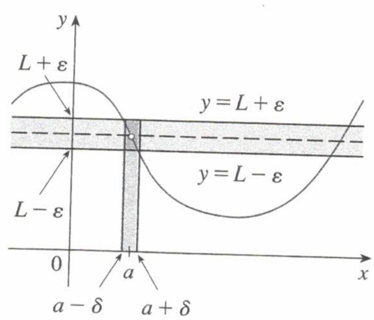


FIGURE 6

EXAMPLE 1 Use a graph to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad |x - 1| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |(x^3 - 5x + 6) - 2| < 0.2$$

In other words, find a number δ that corresponds to $\varepsilon = 0.2$ in the definition of a limit for the function $f(x) = x^3 - 5x + 6$ with $a = 1$ and $L = 2$.

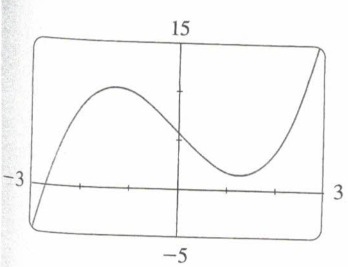


FIGURE 7

SOLUTION A graph of f is shown in Figure 7; we are interested in the region near the point $(1, 2)$. Notice that we can rewrite the inequality

$$|(x^3 - 5x + 6) - 2| < 0.2$$

as

$$1.8 < x^3 - 5x + 6 < 2.2$$

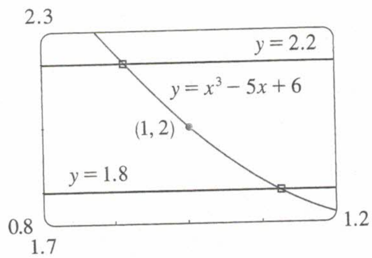


FIGURE 8

So we need to determine the values of x for which the curve $y = x^3 - 5x + 6$ lies between the horizontal lines $y = 1.8$ and $y = 2.2$. Therefore we graph the curves $y = x^3 - 5x + 6$, $y = 1.8$, and $y = 2.2$ near the point $(1, 2)$ in Figure 8. Then we use the cursor to estimate that the x-coordinate of the point of intersection of the line $y = 2.2$ and the curve $y = x^3 - 5x + 6$ is about 0.911. Similarly, $y = x^3 - 5x + 6$ intersects the line $y = 1.8$ when $x \approx 1.124$. So, rounding to be safe, we can say that

$$\text{if} \quad 0.92 < x < 1.12 \quad \text{then} \quad 1.8 < x^3 - 5x + 6 < 2.2$$

This interval $(0.92, 1.12)$ is not symmetric about $x = 1$. The distance from $x = 1$ to the left endpoint is $1 - 0.92 = 0.08$ and the distance to the right endpoint is 0.12. We can choose δ to be the smaller of these numbers, that is, $\delta = 0.08$. Then we can rewrite our inequalities in terms of distances as follows:

$$\text{if} \quad |x - 1| < 0.08 \quad \text{then} \quad |(x^3 - 5x + 6) - 2| < 0.2$$

This just says that by keeping x within 0.08 of 1, we are able to keep $f(x)$ within 0.2 of 2.

Although we chose $\delta = 0.08$, any smaller positive value of δ would also have worked. □

The graphical procedure in Example 1 gives an illustration of the definition for $\varepsilon = 0.2$, but it does not *prove* that the limit is equal to 2. A proof has to provide a δ for *every* ε.

In proving limit statements it may be helpful to think of the definition of limit as a challenge. First it challenges you with a number ε. Then you must be able to produce a suitable δ. You have to be able to do this for *every* $\varepsilon > 0$, not just a particular ε.

TEC In Module 2.4/4.4 you can explore the precise definition of a limit both graphically and numerically.

Imagine a contest between two people, A and B, and imagine yourself to be B. Person A stipulates that the fixed number L should be approximated by the values of $f(x)$ to within a degree of accuracy ε (say, 0.01). Person B then responds by finding a number δ such that if $0 < |x - a| < \delta$, then $|f(x) - L| < \varepsilon$. Then A may become more exacting and challenge B with a smaller value of ε (say, 0.0001). Again B has to respond by finding a corresponding δ. Usually the smaller the value of ε, the smaller the corresponding value of δ must be. If B always wins, no matter how small A makes ε, then $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$.

V EXAMPLE 2 Prove that $\lim_{x \to 3} (4x - 5) = 7$.

SOLUTION

1. *Preliminary analysis of the problem (guessing a value for δ).* Let ε be a given positive number. We want to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - 3| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |(4x - 5) - 7| < \varepsilon$$

But $|(4x - 5) - 7| = |4x - 12| = |4(x - 3)| = 4|x - 3|$. Therefore we want

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - 3| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad 4|x - 3| < \varepsilon$$

that is,

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - 3| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |x - 3| < \frac{\varepsilon}{4}$$

This suggests that we should choose $\delta = \varepsilon/4$.

2. *Proof (showing that this δ works).* Given $\varepsilon > 0$, choose $\delta = \varepsilon/4$. If $0 < |x - 3| < \delta$, then

$$|(4x - 5) - 7| = |4x - 12| = 4|x - 3| < 4\delta = 4\left(\frac{\varepsilon}{4}\right) = \varepsilon$$

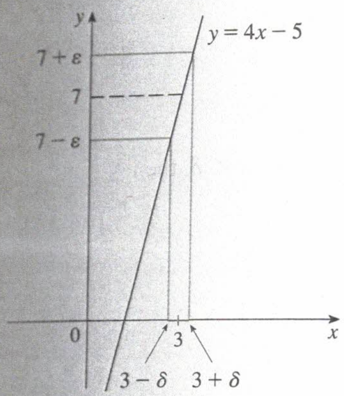


FIGURE 9

Thus

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - 3| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |(4x - 5) - 7| < \varepsilon$$

Therefore, by the definition of a limit,

$$\lim_{x \to 3} (4x - 5) = 7$$

This example is illustrated by Figure 9. □

Note that in the solution of Example 2 there were two stages—guessing and proving. We made a preliminary analysis that enabled us to guess a value for δ. But then in the second stage we had to go back and prove in a careful, logical fashion that we had made a correct guess. This procedure is typical of much of mathematics. Sometimes it is necessary to first make an intelligent guess about the answer to a problem and then prove that the guess is correct.

The intuitive definitions of one-sided limits that were given in Section 2.2 can be precisely reformulated as follows.

3 DEFINITION OF LEFT-HAND LIMIT

$$\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = L$$

if for every number $\varepsilon > 0$ there is a number $\delta > 0$ such that

$$\text{if} \quad a - \delta < x < a \quad \text{then} \quad |f(x) - L| < \varepsilon$$

4 DEFINITION OF RIGHT-HAND LIMIT

$$\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = L$$

if for every number $\varepsilon > 0$ there is a number $\delta > 0$ such that

$$\text{if} \quad a < x < a + \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |f(x) - L| < \varepsilon$$

Notice that Definition 3 is the same as Definition 2 except that x is restricted to lie in the *left* half $(a - \delta, a)$ of the interval $(a - \delta, a + \delta)$. In Definition 4, x is restricted to lie in the *right* half $(a, a + \delta)$ of the interval $(a - \delta, a + \delta)$.

V EXAMPLE 3 Use Definition 4 to prove that $\lim_{x \to 0^+} \sqrt{x} = 0$.

SOLUTION

1. *Guessing a value for δ.* Let ε be a given positive number. Here $a = 0$ and $L = 0$, so we want to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < x < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |\sqrt{x} - 0| < \varepsilon$$

that is,

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < x < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad \sqrt{x} < \varepsilon$$

CAUCHY AND LIMITS

After the invention of calculus in the 17th century, there followed a period of free development of the subject in the 18th century. Mathematicians like the Bernoulli brothers and Euler were eager to exploit the power of calculus and boldly explored the consequences of this new and wonderful mathematical theory without worrying too much about whether their proofs were completely correct.

The 19th century, by contrast, was the Age of Rigor in mathematics. There was a movement to go back to the foundations of the subject—to provide careful definitions and rigorous proofs. At the forefront of this movement was the French mathematician Augustin-Louis Cauchy (1789–1857), who started out as a military engineer before becoming a mathematics professor in Paris. Cauchy took Newton's idea of a limit, which was kept alive in the 18th century by the French mathematician Jean d'Alembert, and made it more precise. His definition of a limit reads as follows: "When the successive values attributed to a variable approach indefinitely a fixed value so as to end by differing from it by as little as one wishes, this last is called the *limit* of all the others." But when Cauchy used this definition in examples and proofs, he often employed delta-epsilon inequalities similar to the ones in this section. A typical Cauchy proof starts with: "Designate by δ and ε two very small numbers; . . ." He used ε because of the correspondence between epsilon and the French word *erreur* and δ because delta corresponds to *différence*. Later, the German mathematician Karl Weierstrass (1815–1897) stated the definition of a limit exactly as in our Definition 2.

or, squaring both sides of the inequality $\sqrt{x} < \varepsilon$, we get

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < x < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad x < \varepsilon^2$$

This suggests that we should choose $\delta = \varepsilon^2$.

2. *Showing that this δ works.* Given $\varepsilon > 0$, let $\delta = \varepsilon^2$. If $0 < x < \delta$, then

$$\sqrt{x} < \sqrt{\delta} = \sqrt{\varepsilon^2} = \varepsilon$$

so

$$|\sqrt{x} - 0| < \varepsilon$$

According to Definition 4, this shows that $\lim_{x \to 0^+} \sqrt{x} = 0$.

EXAMPLE 4 Prove that $\lim_{x \to 3} x^2 = 9$.

SOLUTION

1. *Guessing a value for δ.* Let $\varepsilon > 0$ be given. We have to find a number $\delta > 0$ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - 3| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |x^2 - 9| < \varepsilon$$

To connect $|x^2 - 9|$ with $|x - 3|$ we write $|x^2 - 9| = |(x + 3)(x - 3)|$. Then we want

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - 3| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |x + 3||x - 3| < \varepsilon$$

Notice that if we can find a positive constant C such that $|x + 3| < C$, then

$$|x + 3||x - 3| < C|x - 3|$$

and we can make $C|x - 3| < \varepsilon$ by taking $|x - 3| < \varepsilon/C = \delta$.

We can find such a number C if we restrict x to lie in some interval centered at 3. In fact, since we are interested only in values of x that are close to 3, it is reasonable to assume that x is within a distance 1 from 3, that is, $|x - 3| < 1$. Then $2 < x < 4$, so $5 < x + 3 < 7$. Thus we have $|x + 3| < 7$, and so $C = 7$ is a suitable choice for the constant.

But now there are two restrictions on $|x - 3|$, namely

$$|x - 3| < 1 \quad \text{and} \quad |x - 3| < \frac{\varepsilon}{C} = \frac{\varepsilon}{7}$$

To make sure that both of these inequalities are satisfied, we take δ to be the smaller the two numbers 1 and $\varepsilon/7$. The notation for this is $\delta = \min\{1, \varepsilon/7\}$.

2. *Showing that this δ works.* Given $\varepsilon > 0$, let $\delta = \min\{1, \varepsilon/7\}$. If $0 < |x - 3|$ then $|x - 3| < 1 \Rightarrow 2 < x < 4 \Rightarrow |x + 3| < 7$ (as in part 1). We also have $|x - 3| < \varepsilon/7$, so

$$|x^2 - 9| = |x + 3||x - 3| < 7 \cdot \frac{\varepsilon}{7} = \varepsilon$$

This shows that $\lim_{x \to 3} x^2 = 9$.

As Example 4 shows, it is not always easy to prove that limit statements ar using the ε, δ definition. In fact, if we had been given a more complicated functio as $f(x) = (6x^2 - 8x + 9)/(2x^2 - 1)$, a proof would require a great deal of ing

Fortunately this is unnecessary because the Limit Laws stated in Section 2.3 can be proved using Definition 2, and then the limits of complicated functions can be found rigorously from the Limit Laws without resorting to the definition directly.

For instance, we prove the Sum Law: If $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$ and $\lim_{x \to a} g(x) = M$ both exist, then

$$\lim_{x \to a} [f(x) + g(x)] = L + M$$

The remaining laws are proved in the exercises and in Appendix F.

PROOF OF THE SUM LAW Let $\varepsilon > 0$ be given. We must find $\delta > 0$ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |f(x) + g(x) - (L + M)| < \varepsilon$$

■ Triangle Inequality:

$$|a + b| \leq |a| + |b|$$

(See Appendix A.)

Using the Triangle Inequality we can write

$$\boxed{5} \qquad \begin{aligned} |f(x) + g(x) - (L + M)| &= |(f(x) - L) + (g(x) - M)| \\ &\leq |f(x) - L| + |g(x) - M| \end{aligned}$$

We make $|f(x) + g(x) - (L + M)|$ less than ε by making each of the terms $|f(x) - L|$ and $|g(x) - M|$ less than $\varepsilon/2$.

Since $\varepsilon/2 > 0$ and $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$, there exists a number $\delta_1 > 0$ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta_1 \quad \text{then} \quad |f(x) - L| < \frac{\varepsilon}{2}$$

Similarly, since $\lim_{x \to a} g(x) = M$, there exists a number $\delta_2 > 0$ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta_2 \quad \text{then} \quad |g(x) - M| < \frac{\varepsilon}{2}$$

Let $\delta = \min\{\delta_1, \delta_2\}$. Notice that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta_1 \quad \text{and} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta_2$$

and so
$$|f(x) - L| < \frac{\varepsilon}{2} \quad \text{and} \quad |g(x) - M| < \frac{\varepsilon}{2}$$

Therefore, by (5),

$$\begin{aligned} |f(x) + g(x) - (L + M)| &\leq |f(x) - L| + |g(x) - M| \\ &< \frac{\varepsilon}{2} + \frac{\varepsilon}{2} = \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

To summarize,

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |f(x) + g(x) - (L + M)| < \varepsilon$$

Thus, by the definition of a limit,

$$\lim_{x \to a} [f(x) + g(x)] = L + M$$ □

INFINITE LIMITS

Infinite limits can also be defined in a precise way. The following is a precise version of Definition 4 in Section 2.2.

> **6 DEFINITION** Let f be a function defined on some open interval that contains the number a, except possibly at a itself. Then
>
> $$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \infty$$
>
> means that for every positive number M there is a positive number δ such that
>
> $$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad f(x) > M$$

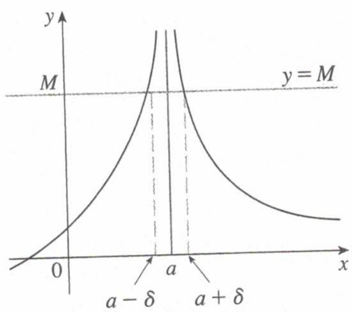


FIGURE 10

This says that the values of $f(x)$ can be made arbitrarily large (larger than any given number M) by taking x close enough to a (within a distance δ, where δ depends on M, but with $x \neq a$). A geometric illustration is shown in Figure 10.

Given any horizontal line $y = M$, we can find a number $\delta > 0$ such that if we restrict x to lie in the interval $(a - \delta, a + \delta)$ but $x \neq a$, then the curve $y = f(x)$ lies above the line $y = M$. You can see that if a larger M is chosen, then a smaller δ may be required.

EXAMPLE 5 Use Definition 6 to prove that $\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1}{x^2} = \infty$.

SOLUTION Let M be a given positive number. We want to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad 1/x^2 > M$$

But

$$\frac{1}{x^2} > M \iff x^2 < \frac{1}{M} \iff |x| < \frac{1}{\sqrt{M}}$$

So if we choose $\delta = 1/\sqrt{M}$ and $0 < |x| < \delta = 1/\sqrt{M}$, then $1/x^2 > M$. This shows that $1/x^2 \to \infty$ as $x \to 0$. □

Similarly, the following is a precise version of Definition 5 in Section 2.2. It is illustrated by Figure 11.

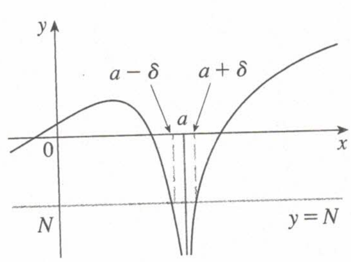


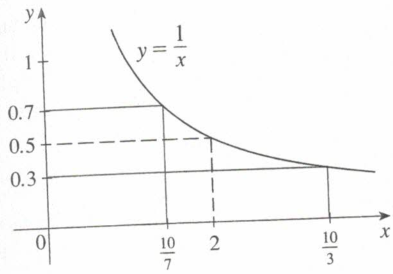
FIGURE 11

> **7 DEFINITION** Let f be a function defined on some open interval that contains the number a, except possibly at a itself. Then
>
> $$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = -\infty$$
>
> means that for every negative number N there is a positive number δ such that
>
> $$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - a| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad f(x) < N$$

2.4 EXERCISES

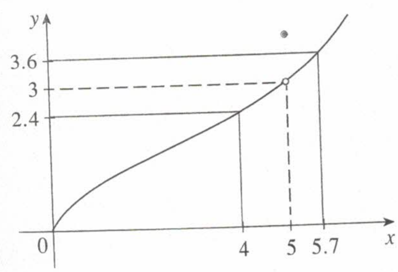
1. Use the given graph of $f(x) = 1/x$ to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad |x - 2| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad \left|\frac{1}{x} - 0.5\right| < 0.2$$



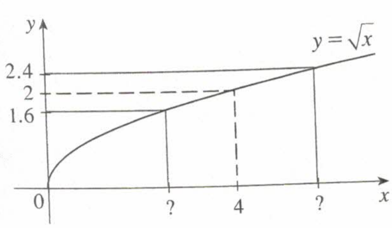
2. Use the given graph of f to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 0 < |x - 5| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |f(x) - 3| < 0.6$$



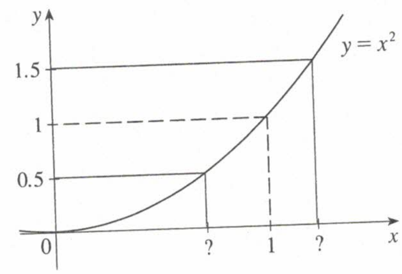
3. Use the given graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$ to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad |x - 4| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |\sqrt{x} - 2| < 0.4$$



4. Use the given graph of $f(x) = x^2$ to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad |x - 1| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |x^2 - 1| < \tfrac{1}{2}$$



5. Use a graph to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad \left|x - \frac{\pi}{4}\right| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad |\tan x - 1| < 0.2$$

6. Use a graph to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad |x - 1| < \delta \quad \text{then} \quad \left|\frac{2x}{x^2 + 4} - 0.4\right| < 0.1$$

7. For the limit

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

illustrate Definition 2 by finding values of δ that correspond to $\varepsilon = 1$ and $\varepsilon = 0.1$.

8. For the limit

$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{4x + 1}{3x - 4} = 4.5$$

illustrate Definition 2 by finding values of δ that correspond to $\varepsilon = 0.5$ and $\varepsilon = 0.1$.

9. Given that $\lim_{x \to \pi/2} \tan^2 x = \infty$, illustrate Definition 6 by finding values of δ that correspond to (a) $M = 1000$ and (b) $M = 10{,}000$.

10. Use a graph to find a number δ such that

$$\text{if} \quad 5 < x < 5 + \delta \quad \text{then} \quad \frac{x^2}{\sqrt{x - 5}} > 100$$

11. A machinist is required to manufacture a circular metal disk with area 1000 cm^2.
    (a) What radius produces such a disk?
    (b) If the machinist is allowed an error tolerance of $\pm 5\ \text{cm}^2$ in the area of the disk, how close to the ideal radius in part (a) must the machinist control the radius?
    (c) In terms of the ε, δ definition of $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$, what is x? What is $f(x)$? What is a? What is L? What value of ε is given? What is the corresponding value of δ?

12. A crystal growth furnace is used in research to determine how best to manufacture crystals used in electronic components for the space shuttle. For proper growth of the crystal, the temperature must be controlled accurately by adjusting the input power. Suppose the relationship is given by

$$T(w) = 0.1w^2 + 2.155w + 20$$

where T is the temperature in degrees Celsius and w is the power input in watts.
(a) How much power is needed to maintain the temperature at 200°C?
(b) If the temperature is allowed to vary from 200°C by up to ±1°C, what range of wattage is allowed for the input power?
(c) In terms of the ε, δ definition of $\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = L$, what is x? What is $f(x)$? What is a? What is L? What value of ε is given? What is the corresponding value of δ?

13. (a) Find a number δ such that if $|x - 2| < \delta$, then $|4x - 8| < \varepsilon$, where $\varepsilon = 0.1$.
(b) Repeat part (a) with $\varepsilon = 0.01$.

14. Given that $\lim_{x\to 2}(5x - 7) = 3$, illustrate Definition 2 by finding values of δ that correspond to $\varepsilon = 0.1$, $\varepsilon = 0.05$, and $\varepsilon = 0.01$.

15–18 Prove the statement using the ε, δ definition of limit and illustrate with a diagram like Figure 9.

15. $\lim_{x\to 1}(2x + 3) = 5$

16. $\lim_{x\to -2}\left(\frac{1}{2}x + 3\right) = 2$

17. $\lim_{x\to -3}(1 - 4x) = 13$

18. $\lim_{x\to 4}(7 - 3x) = -5$

19–32 Prove the statement using the ε, δ definition of limit.

19. $\lim_{x\to 3}\frac{x}{5} = \frac{3}{5}$

20. $\lim_{x\to 6}\left(\frac{x}{4} + 3\right) = \frac{9}{2}$

21. $\lim_{x\to 2}\frac{x^2 + x - 6}{x - 2} = 5$

22. $\lim_{x\to -1.5}\frac{9 - 4x^2}{3 + 2x} = 6$

23. $\lim_{x\to a} x = a$

24. $\lim_{x\to a} c = c$

25. $\lim_{x\to 0} x^2 = 0$

26. $\lim_{x\to 0} x^3 = 0$

27. $\lim_{x\to 0} |x| = 0$

28. $\lim_{x\to 9^-}\sqrt[4]{9 - x} = 0$

29. $\lim_{x\to 2}(x^2 - 4x + 5) = 1$

30. $\lim_{x\to 3}(x^2 + x - 4) = 8$

31. $\lim_{x\to -2}(x^2 - 1) = 3$

32. $\lim_{x\to 2} x^3 = 8$

33. Verify that another possible choice of δ for showing that $\lim_{x\to 3} x^2 = 9$ in Example 4 is $\delta = \min\{2, \varepsilon/8\}$.

34. Verify, by a geometric argument, that the largest possible choice of δ for showing that $\lim_{x\to 3} x^2 = 9$ is $\delta = \sqrt{9 + \varepsilon} - 3$.

CAS 35. (a) For the limit $\lim_{x\to 1}(x^3 + x + 1) = 3$, use a graph to find a value of δ that corresponds to $\varepsilon = 0.4$.
(b) By using a computer algebra system to solve the cubic equation $x^3 + x + 1 = 3 + \varepsilon$, find the largest possible value of δ that works for any given $\varepsilon > 0$.
(c) Put $\varepsilon = 0.4$ in your answer to part (b) and compare with your answer to part (a).

36. Prove that $\lim_{x\to 2}\frac{1}{x} = \frac{1}{2}$.

37. Prove that $\lim_{x\to a}\sqrt{x} = \sqrt{a}$ if $a > 0$.

$$\left[\textit{Hint: } \text{Use } \left|\sqrt{x} - \sqrt{a}\right| = \frac{|x - a|}{\sqrt{x} + \sqrt{a}}.\right]$$

38. If H is the Heaviside function defined in Example 6 in Section 2.2, prove, using Definition 2, that $\lim_{t\to 0} H(t)$ does not exist. [*Hint:* Use an indirect proof as follows. Suppose that the limit is L. Take $\varepsilon = \frac{1}{2}$ in the definition of a limit and try to arrive at a contradiction.]

39. If the function f is defined by

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } x \text{ is rational} \\ 1 & \text{if } x \text{ is irrational} \end{cases}$$

prove that $\lim_{x\to 0} f(x)$ does not exist.

40. By comparing Definitions 2, 3, and 4, prove Theorem 1 in Section 2.3.

41. How close to -3 do we have to take x so that

$$\frac{1}{(x + 3)^4} > 10{,}000$$

42. Prove, using Definition 6, that $\lim_{x\to -3}\frac{1}{(x + 3)^4} = \infty$.

43. Prove that $\lim_{x\to -1^-}\frac{5}{(x + 1)^3} = -\infty$.

44. Suppose that $\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = \infty$ and $\lim_{x\to a} g(x) = c$, where c is a real number. Prove each statement.
(a) $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x) + g(x)] = \infty$
(b) $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x)g(x)] = \infty$ if $c > 0$
(c) $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x)g(x)] = -\infty$ if $c < 0$

2.5 CONTINUITY

We noticed in Section 2.3 that the limit of a function as x approaches a can often be found simply by calculating the value of the function at a. Functions with this property are called *continuous at a*. We will see that the mathematical definition of continuity corresponds closely with the meaning of the word *continuity* in everyday language. (A continuous process is one that takes place gradually, without interruption or abrupt change.)

1 DEFINITION A function f is **continuous at a number a** if

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = f(a)$$

■ As illustrated in Figure 1, if f is continuous, then the points $(x, f(x))$ on the graph of f approach the point $(a, f(a))$ on the graph. So there is no gap in the curve.

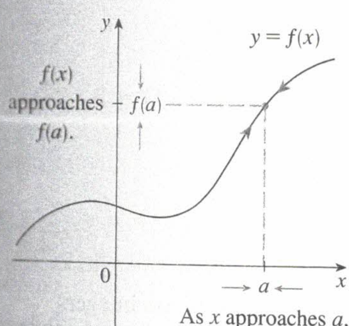


FIGURE 1

Notice that Definition 1 implicitly requires three things if f is continuous at a:

1. $f(a)$ is defined (that is, a is in the domain of f)
2. $\lim_{x \to a} f(x)$ exists
3. $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = f(a)$

The definition says that f is continuous at a if $f(x)$ approaches $f(a)$ as x approaches a. Thus a continuous function f has the property that a small change in x produces only a small change in $f(x)$. In fact, the change in $f(x)$ can be kept as small as we please by keeping the change in x sufficiently small.

If f is defined near a (in other words, f is defined on an open interval containing a, except perhaps at a), we say that f is **discontinuous at a** (or f has a **discontinuity** at a) if f is not continuous at a.

Physical phenomena are usually continuous. For instance, the displacement or velocity of a vehicle varies continuously with time, as does a person's height. But discontinuities do occur in such situations as electric currents. [See Example 6 in Section 2.2, where the Heaviside function is discontinuous at 0 because $\lim_{t \to 0} H(t)$ does not exist.]

Geometrically, you can think of a function that is continuous at every number in an interval as a function whose graph has no break in it. The graph can be drawn without removing your pen from the paper.

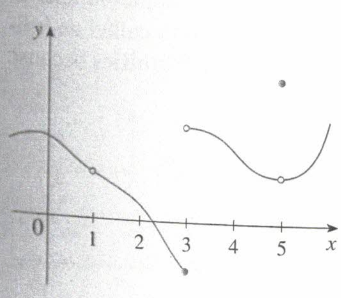


FIGURE 2

EXAMPLE 1 Figure 2 shows the graph of a function f. At which numbers is f discontinuous? Why?

SOLUTION It looks as if there is a discontinuity when $a = 1$ because the graph has a break there. The official reason that f is discontinuous at 1 is that $f(1)$ is not defined.

The graph also has a break when $a = 3$, but the reason for the discontinuity is different. Here, $f(3)$ is defined, but $\lim_{x \to 3} f(x)$ does not exist (because the left and right limits are different). So f is discontinuous at 3.

What about $a = 5$? Here, $f(5)$ is defined and $\lim_{x \to 5} f(x)$ exists (because the left and right limits are the same). But

$$\lim_{x \to 5} f(x) \neq f(5)$$

So f is discontinuous at 5. □

Now let's see how to detect discontinuities when a function is defined by a formula.

EXAMPLE 2 Where are each of the following functions discontinuous?

(a) $f(x) = \dfrac{x^2 - x - 2}{x - 2}$ (b) $f(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{1}{x^2} & \text{if } x \neq 0 \\ 1 & \text{if } x = 0 \end{cases}$

(c) $f(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{x^2 - x - 2}{x - 2} & \text{if } x \neq 2 \\ 1 & \text{if } x = 2 \end{cases}$ (d) $f(x) = [\![x]\!]$

SOLUTION

(a) Notice that $f(2)$ is not defined, so f is discontinuous at 2. Later we'll see why f is continuous at all other numbers.

(b) Here $f(0) = 1$ is defined but

$$\lim_{x \to 0} f(x) = \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1}{x^2}$$

does not exist. (See Example 8 in Section 2.2.) So f is discontinuous at 0.

(c) Here $f(2) = 1$ is defined and

$$\lim_{x \to 2} f(x) = \lim_{x \to 2} \frac{x^2 - x - 2}{x - 2} = \lim_{x \to 2} \frac{(x - 2)(x + 1)}{x - 2} = \lim_{x \to 2} (x + 1) = 3$$

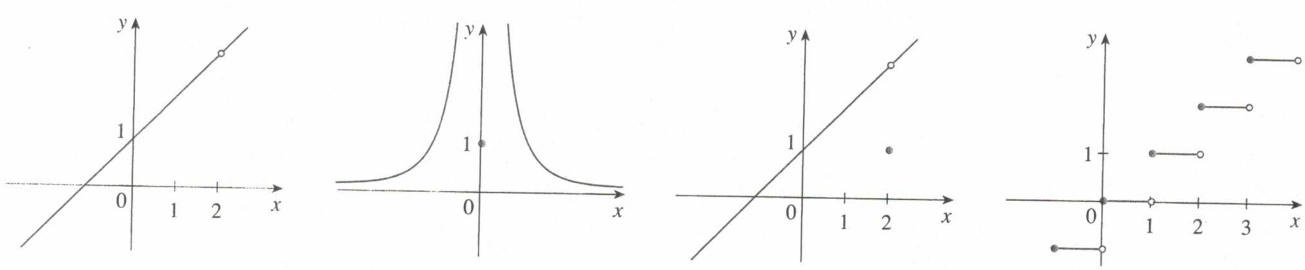
exists. But

$$\lim_{x \to 2} f(x) \neq f(2)$$

so f is not continuous at 2.

(d) The greatest integer function $f(x) = [\![x]\!]$ has discontinuities at all of the integers because $\lim_{x \to n} [\![x]\!]$ does not exist if n is an integer. (See Example 10 and Exercise 49 Section 2.3.)

Figure 3 shows the graphs of the functions in Example 2. In each case the graph ca be drawn without lifting the pen from the paper because a hole or break or jump occur the graph. The kind of discontinuity illustrated in parts (a) and (c) is called **remova** because we could remove the discontinuity by redefining f at just the single numbe [The function $g(x) = x + 1$ is continuous.] The discontinuity in part (b) is called an **i nite discontinuity**. The discontinuities in part (d) are called **jump discontinuities** beca the function "jumps" from one value to another.



(a) $f(x) = \dfrac{x^2 - x - 2}{x - 2}$ (b) $f(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{1}{x^2} & \text{if } x \neq 0 \\ 1 & \text{if } x = 0 \end{cases}$ (c) $f(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{x^2 - x - 2}{x - 2} & \text{if } x \neq 2 \\ 1 & \text{if } x = 2 \end{cases}$ (d) $f(x) = [\![x]\!]$

FIGURE 3 Graphs of the functions in Example 2

2 DEFINITION A function f is **continuous from the right at a number a** if

$$\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = f(a)$$

and f is **continuous from the left at a** if

$$\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = f(a)$$

EXAMPLE 3 At each integer n, the function $f(x) = [\![x]\!]$ [see Figure 3(d)] is continuous from the right but discontinuous from the left because

$$\lim_{x \to n^+} f(x) = \lim_{x \to n^+} [\![x]\!] = n = f(n)$$

but

$$\lim_{x \to n^-} f(x) = \lim_{x \to n^-} [\![x]\!] = n - 1 \neq f(n)$$

□

3 DEFINITION A function f is **continuous on an interval** if it is continuous at every number in the interval. (If f is defined only on one side of an endpoint of the interval, we understand *continuous* at the endpoint to mean *continuous from the right* or *continuous from the left.*)

EXAMPLE 4 Show that the function $f(x) = 1 - \sqrt{1 - x^2}$ is continuous on the interval $[-1, 1]$.

SOLUTION If $-1 < a < 1$, then using the Limit Laws, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\lim_{x \to a} f(x) &= \lim_{x \to a} \left(1 - \sqrt{1 - x^2}\right) \\
&= 1 - \lim_{x \to a} \sqrt{1 - x^2} && \text{(by Laws 2 and 7)} \\
&= 1 - \sqrt{\lim_{x \to a} (1 - x^2)} && \text{(by 11)} \\
&= 1 - \sqrt{1 - a^2} && \text{(by 2, 7, and 9)} \\
&= f(a)
\end{aligned}$$

Thus, by Definition l, f is continuous at a if $-1 < a < 1$. Similar calculations show that

$$\lim_{x \to -1^+} f(x) = 1 = f(-1) \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x \to 1^-} f(x) = 1 = f(1)$$

so f is continuous from the right at -1 and continuous from the left at 1. Therefore, according to Definition 3, f is continuous on $[-1, 1]$.

The graph of f is sketched in Figure 4. It is the lower half of the circle

$$x^2 + (y - 1)^2 = 1$$

□

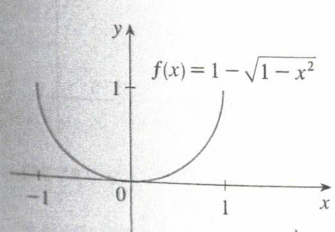


FIGURE 4

Instead of always using Definitions 1, 2, and 3 to verify the continuity of a function as we did in Example 4, it is often convenient to use the next theorem, which shows how to build up complicated continuous functions from simple ones.

4 THEOREM If f and g are continuous at a and c is a constant, then the following functions are also continuous at a:

1. $f + g$ **2.** $f - g$ **3.** cf

4. fg **5.** $\dfrac{f}{g}$ if $g(a) \neq 0$

PROOF Each of the five parts of this theorem follows from the corresponding Limit Law in Section 2.3. For instance, we give the proof of part 1. Since f and g are continuous a[t] a, we have

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = f(a) \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x \to a} g(x) = g(a)$$

Therefore

$$\begin{aligned}
\lim_{x \to a} (f + g)(x) &= \lim_{x \to a} [f(x) + g(x)] \\
&= \lim_{x \to a} f(x) + \lim_{x \to a} g(x) \qquad \text{(by Law 1)} \\
&= f(a) + g(a) \\
&= (f + g)(a)
\end{aligned}$$

This shows that $f + g$ is continuous at a.

It follows from Theorem 4 and Definition 3 that if f and g are continuous on an int[er]val, then so are the functions $f + g$, $f - g$, cf, fg, and (if g is never 0) f/g. The followi[ng] theorem was stated in Section 2.3 as the Direct Substitution Property.

5 THEOREM

(a) Any polynomial is continuous everywhere; that is, it is continuous on $\mathbb{R} = (-\infty, \infty)$.

(b) Any rational function is continuous wherever it is defined; that is, it is continuous on its domain.

PROOF

(a) A polynomial is a function of the form

$$P(x) = c_n x^n + c_{n-1} x^{n-1} + \cdots + c_1 x + c_0$$

where $c_0, c_1, \ldots, c_n$ are constants. We know that

$$\lim_{x \to a} c_0 = c_0 \qquad \text{(by Law 7)}$$

and

$$\lim_{x \to a} x^m = a^m \qquad m = 1, 2, \ldots, n \qquad \text{(by 9)}$$

This equation is precisely the statement that the function $f(x) = x^m$ is a continuous function. Thus, by part 3 of Theorem 4, the function $g(x) = cx^m$ is continuous. Since [P] is a sum of functions of this form and a constant function, it follows from part 1 of Theorem 4 that P is continuous.

(b) A rational function is a function of the form

$$f(x) = \frac{P(x)}{Q(x)}$$

where P and Q are polynomials. The domain of f is $D = \{x \in \mathbb{R} \mid Q(x) \neq 0\}$. We know from part (a) that P and Q are continuous everywhere. Thus, by part 5 of Theorem 4, f is continuous at every number in D. □

As an illustration of Theorem 5, observe that the volume of a sphere varies continuously with its radius because the formula $V(r) = \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$ shows that V is a polynomial function of r. Likewise, if a ball is thrown vertically into the air with a velocity of 50 ft/s, then the height of the ball in feet t seconds later is given by the formula $h = 50t - 16t^2$. Again this is a polynomial function, so the height is a continuous function of the elapsed time.

Knowledge of which functions are continuous enables us to evaluate some limits very quickly, as the following example shows. Compare it with Example 2(b) in Section 2.3.

EXAMPLE 5 Find $\lim_{x \to -2} \frac{x^3 + 2x^2 - 1}{5 - 3x}$.

SOLUTION The function

$$f(x) = \frac{x^3 + 2x^2 - 1}{5 - 3x}$$

is rational, so by Theorem 5 it is continuous on its domain, which is $\{x \mid x \neq \frac{5}{3}\}$. Therefore

$$\lim_{x \to -2} \frac{x^3 + 2x^2 - 1}{5 - 3x} = \lim_{x \to -2} f(x) = f(-2)$$

$$= \frac{(-2)^3 + 2(-2)^2 - 1}{5 - 3(-2)} = -\frac{1}{11}$$ □

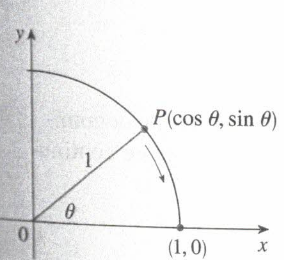


FIGURE 5

■ Another way to establish the limits in (6) is to use the Squeeze Theorem with the inequality $\sin\theta < \theta$ (for $\theta > 0$), which is proved in Section 3.3.

It turns out that most of the familiar functions are continuous at every number in their domains. For instance, Limit Law 10 (page 79) is exactly the statement that root functions are continuous.

From the appearance of the graphs of the sine and cosine functions (Figure 18 in Section 1.2), we would certainly guess that they are continuous. We know from the definitions of $\sin\theta$ and $\cos\theta$ that the coordinates of the point P in Figure 5 are $(\cos\theta, \sin\theta)$. As $\theta \to 0$, we see that P approaches the point $(1, 0)$ and so $\cos\theta \to 1$ and $\sin\theta \to 0$. Thus

6 $$\lim_{\theta \to 0} \cos\theta = 1 \qquad \lim_{\theta \to 0} \sin\theta = 0$$

Since $\cos 0 = 1$ and $\sin 0 = 0$, the equations in (6) assert that the cosine and sine functions are continuous at 0. The addition formulas for cosine and sine can then be used to deduce that these functions are continuous everywhere (see Exercises 56 and 57).

It follows from part 5 of Theorem 4 that

$$\tan x = \frac{\sin x}{\cos x}$$

is continuous except where $\cos x = 0$. This happens when x is an odd integer multipl $\pi/2$, so $y = \tan x$ has infinite discontinuities when $x = \pm\pi/2, \pm3\pi/2, \pm5\pi/2$, and so (see Figure 6).

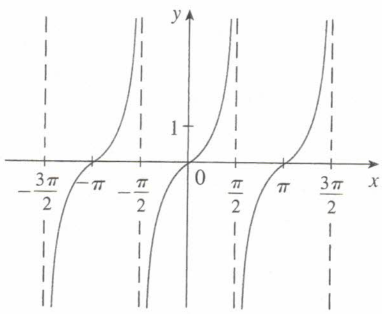


FIGURE 6 $y = \tan x$

7 THEOREM The following types of functions are continuous at every number in their domains:

polynomials	rational functions
root functions	trigonometric functions

EXAMPLE 6 On what intervals is each function continuous?

(a) $f(x) = x^{100} - 2x^{37} + 75$ (b) $g(x) = \dfrac{x^2 + 2x + 17}{x^2 - 1}$

(c) $h(x) = \sqrt{x} + \dfrac{x + 1}{x - 1} - \dfrac{x + 1}{x^2 + 1}$

SOLUTION

(a) f is a polynomial, so it is continuous on $(-\infty, \infty)$ by Theorem 5(a).

(b) g is a rational function, so by Theorem 5(b), it is continuous on its domain, which $D = \{x \mid x^2 - 1 \neq 0\} = \{x \mid x \neq \pm1\}$. Thus g is continuous on the intervals $(-\infty, -1)$, $(-1, 1)$, and $(1, \infty)$.

(c) We can write $h(x) = F(x) + G(x) - H(x)$, where

$$F(x) = \sqrt{x} \qquad G(x) = \frac{x + 1}{x - 1} \qquad H(x) = \frac{x + 1}{x^2 + 1}$$

F is continuous on $[0, \infty)$ by Theorem 7. G is a rational function, so it is continuous everywhere except when $x - 1 = 0$, that is, $x = 1$. H is also a rational function, but it denominator is never 0, so H is continuous everywhere. Thus, by parts 1 and 2 of Theo rem 4, h is continuous on the intervals $[0, 1)$ and $(1, \infty)$.

EXAMPLE 7 Evaluate $\displaystyle\lim_{x \to \pi} \frac{\sin x}{2 + \cos x}$.

SOLUTION Theorem 7 tells us that $y = \sin x$ is continuous. The function in the denominator, $y = 2 + \cos x$, is the sum of two continuous functions and is therefore continuous. Notice that this function is never 0 because $\cos x \geqslant -1$ for all x and so $2 + \cos x > 0$ everywhere. Thus the ratio

$$f(x) = \frac{\sin x}{2 + \cos x}$$

is continuous everywhere. Hence, by the definition of a continuous function,

$$\lim_{x \to \pi} \frac{\sin x}{2 + \cos x} = \lim_{x \to \pi} f(x) = f(\pi) = \frac{\sin \pi}{2 + \cos \pi} = \frac{0}{2 - 1} = 0$$

Another way of combining continuous functions f and g to get a new continuous fu tion is to form the composite function $f \circ g$. This fact is a consequence of the follow theorem.

■ This theorem says that a limit symbol can be moved through a function symbol if the function is continuous and the limit exists. In other words, the order of these two symbols can be reversed.

8 THEOREM If f is continuous at b and $\lim_{x\to a} g(x) = b$, then $\lim_{x\to a} f(g(x)) = f(b)$. In other words,

$$\lim_{x\to a} f(g(x)) = f\left(\lim_{x\to a} g(x)\right)$$

Intuitively, Theorem 8 is reasonable because if x is close to a, then $g(x)$ is close to b, and since f is continuous at b, if $g(x)$ is close to b, then $f(g(x))$ is close to $f(b)$. A proof of Theorem 8 is given in Appendix F.

Let's now apply Theorem 8 in the special case where $f(x) = \sqrt[n]{x}$, with n being a positive integer. Then

$$f(g(x)) = \sqrt[n]{g(x)}$$

and

$$f\left(\lim_{x\to a} g(x)\right) = \sqrt[n]{\lim_{x\to a} g(x)}$$

If we put these expressions into Theorem 8, we get

$$\lim_{x\to a} \sqrt[n]{g(x)} = \sqrt[n]{\lim_{x\to a} g(x)}$$

and so Limit Law 11 has now been proved. (We assume that the roots exist.)

9 THEOREM If g is continuous at a and f is continuous at $g(a)$, then the composite function $f \circ g$ given by $(f \circ g)(x) = f(g(x))$ is continuous at a.

This theorem is often expressed informally by saying "a continuous function of a continuous function is a continuous function."

PROOF Since g is continuous at a, we have

$$\lim_{x\to a} g(x) = g(a)$$

Since f is continuous at $b = g(a)$, we can apply Theorem 8 to obtain

$$\lim_{x\to a} f(g(x)) = f(g(a))$$

which is precisely the statement that the function $h(x) = f(g(x))$ is continuous at a; that is, $f \circ g$ is continuous at a. □

V EXAMPLE 8 Where are the following functions continuous?

(a) $h(x) = \sin(x^2)$ (b) $F(x) = \dfrac{1}{\sqrt{x^2 + 7} - 4}$

SOLUTION

(a) We have $h(x) = f(g(x))$, where

$$g(x) = x^2 \qquad \text{and} \qquad f(x) = \sin x$$

Now g is continuous on $\mathbb{R}$ since it is a polynomial, and f is also continuous everywhere. Thus $h = f \circ g$ is continuous on $\mathbb{R}$ by Theorem 9.

(b) Notice that F can be broken up as the composition of four continuous functions:

$$F = f \circ g \circ h \circ k \qquad \text{or} \qquad F(x) = f(g(h(k(x))))$$

where $f(x) = \dfrac{1}{x} \qquad g(x) = x - 4 \qquad h(x) = \sqrt{x} \qquad k(x) = x^2 + 7$

We know that each of these functions is continuous on its domain (by Theorems 5
so by Theorem 9, F is continuous on its domain, which is

$$\{x \in \mathbb{R} \mid \sqrt{x^2+7} \neq 4\} = \{x \mid x \neq \pm 3\} = (-\infty, -3) \cup (-3, 3) \cup (3, \infty)$$

An important property of continuous functions is expressed by the following th
whose proof is found in more advanced books on calculus.

10 THE INTERMEDIATE VALUE THEOREM Suppose that f is continuous on the closed interval $[a, b]$ and let N be any number between $f(a)$ and $f(b)$, where $f(a) \neq f(b)$. Then there exists a number c in (a, b) such that $f(c) = N$.

The Intermediate Value Theorem states that a continuous function takes on ever
mediate value between the function values $f(a)$ and $f(b)$. It is illustrated by Figure
that the value N can be taken on once [as in part (a)] or more than once [as in part

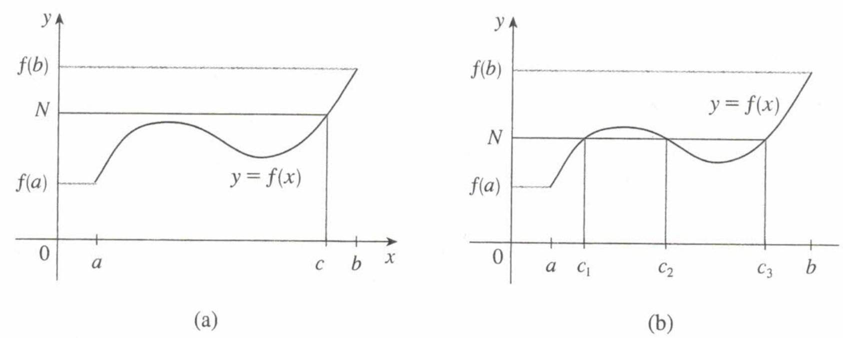


FIGURE 7

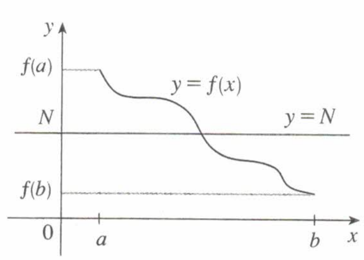


FIGURE 8

If we think of a continuous function as a function whose graph has no hole or
then it is easy to believe that the Intermediate Value Theorem is true. In geometric
says that if any horizontal line $y = N$ is given between $y = f(a)$ and $y = f(b)$ as
ure 8, then the graph of f can't jump over the line. It must intersect $y = N$ some

It is important that the function f in Theorem 10 be continuous. The Intermediat
Theorem is not true in general for discontinuous functions (see Exercise 44).

One use of the Intermediate Value Theorem is in locating roots of equations a
following example.

EXAMPLE 9 Show that there is a root of the equation

$$4x^3 - 6x^2 + 3x - 2 = 0$$

between 1 and 2.

SOLUTION Let $f(x) = 4x^3 - 6x^2 + 3x - 2$. We are looking for a solution of the giv
equation, that is, a number c between 1 and 2 such that $f(c) = 0$. Therefore we ta
$a = 1$, $b = 2$, and $N = 0$ in Theorem 10. We have

$$f(1) = 4 - 6 + 3 - 2 = -1 < 0$$

and

$$f(2) = 32 - 24 + 6 - 2 = 12 > 0$$

Thus $f(1) < 0 < f(2)$; that is, $N = 0$ is a number between $f(1)$ and $f(2)$. Now f is continuous since it is a polynomial, so the Intermediate Value Theorem says there is a number c between 1 and 2 such that $f(c) = 0$. In other words, the equation $4x^3 - 6x^2 + 3x - 2 = 0$ has at least one root c in the interval $(1, 2)$.

In fact, we can locate a root more precisely by using the Intermediate Value Theorem again. Since

$$f(1.2) = -0.128 < 0 \quad \text{and} \quad f(1.3) = 0.548 > 0$$

a root must lie between 1.2 and 1.3. A calculator gives, by trial and error,

$$f(1.22) = -0.007008 < 0 \quad \text{and} \quad f(1.23) = 0.056068 > 0$$

so a root lies in the interval $(1.22, 1.23)$. □

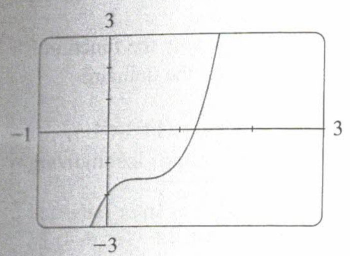


FIGURE 9

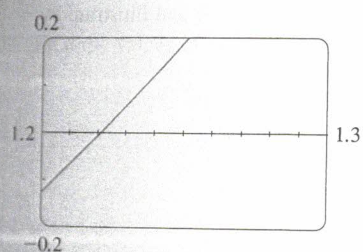


FIGURE 10

We can use a graphing calculator or computer to illustrate the use of the Intermediate Value Theorem in Example 9. Figure 9 shows the graph of f in the viewing rectangle $[-1, 3]$ by $[-3, 3]$ and you can see that the graph crosses the x-axis between 1 and 2. Figure 10 shows the result of zooming in to the viewing rectangle $[1.2, 1.3]$ by $[-0.2, 0.2]$.

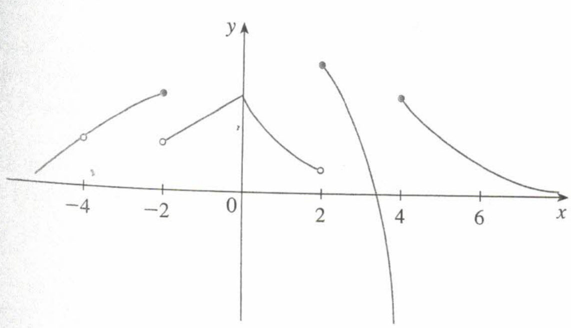
In fact, the Intermediate Value Theorem plays a role in the very way these graphing devices work. A computer calculates a finite number of points on the graph and turns on the pixels that contain these calculated points. It assumes that the function is continuous and takes on all the intermediate values between two consecutive points. The computer therefore connects the pixels by turning on the intermediate pixels.

2.5 EXERCISES

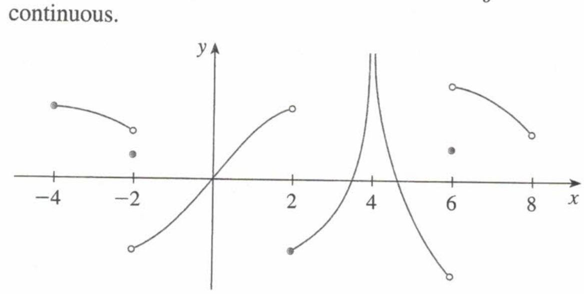
1. Write an equation that expresses the fact that a function f is continuous at the number 4.

2. If f is continuous on $(-\infty, \infty)$, what can you say about its graph?

3. (a) From the graph of f, state the numbers at which f is discontinuous and explain why.
(b) For each of the numbers stated in part (a), determine whether f is continuous from the right, or from the left, or neither.



4. From the graph of g, state the intervals on which g is continuous.



5. Sketch the graph of a function that is continuous everywhere except at $x = 3$ and is continuous from the left at 3.

6. Sketch the graph of a function that has a jump discontinuity at $x = 2$ and a removable discontinuity at $x = 4$, but is continuous elsewhere.

7. A parking lot charges \$3 for the first hour (or part of an hour) and \$2 for each succeeding hour (or part), up to a daily maximum of \$10.
(a) Sketch a graph of the cost of parking at this lot as a function of the time parked there.

(b) Discuss the discontinuities of this function and their significance to someone who parks in the lot.

8. Explain why each function is continuous or discontinuous.
   (a) The temperature at a specific location as a function of time
   (b) The temperature at a specific time as a function of the distance due west from New York City
   (c) The altitude above sea level as a function of the distance due west from New York City
   (d) The cost of a taxi ride as a function of the distance traveled
   (e) The current in the circuit for the lights in a room as a function of time

9. If f and g are continuous functions with $f(3) = 5$ and $\lim_{x\to 3}[2f(x) - g(x)] = 4$, find $g(3)$.

10–12 Use the definition of continuity and the properties of limits to show that the function is continuous at the given number a.

10. $f(x) = x^2 + \sqrt{7 - x}, \quad a = 4$

11. $f(x) = (x + 2x^3)^4, \quad a = -1$

12. $h(t) = \dfrac{2t - 3t^2}{1 + t^3}, \quad a = 1$

13–14 Use the definition of continuity and the properties of limits to show that the function is continuous on the given interval.

13. $f(x) = \dfrac{2x + 3}{x - 2}, \quad (2, \infty)$

14. $g(x) = 2\sqrt{3 - x}, \quad (-\infty, 3]$

15–20 Explain why the function is discontinuous at the given number a. Sketch the graph of the function.

15. $f(x) = -\dfrac{1}{(x - 1)^2} \qquad a = 1$

16. $f(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{1}{x - 1} & \text{if } x \neq 1 \\ 2 & \text{if } x = 1 \end{cases} \qquad a = 1$

17. $f(x) = \begin{cases} 1 - x^2 & \text{if } x < 1 \\ 1/x & \text{if } x \geqslant 1 \end{cases} \qquad a = 1$

18. $f(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{x^2 - x}{x^2 - 1} & \text{if } x \neq 1 \\ 1 & \text{if } x = 1 \end{cases} \qquad a = 1$

19. $f(x) = \begin{cases} \cos x & \text{if } x < 0 \\ 0 & \text{if } x = 0 \\ 1 - x^2 & \text{if } x > 0 \end{cases} \qquad a = 0$

20. $f(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{2x^2 - 5x - 3}{x - 3} & \text{if } x \neq 3 \\ 6 & \text{if } x = 3 \end{cases} \qquad a = 3$

21–28 Explain, using Theorems 4, 5, 7, and 9, why the function is continuous at every number in its domain. State the domain.

21. $F(x) = \dfrac{x}{x^2 + 5x + 6}$

22. $G(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}\,(1 + x^3)$

23. $R(x) = x^2 + \sqrt{2x - 1}$

24. $h(x) = \dfrac{\sin x}{x + 1}$

25. $h(x) = \cos(1 - x^2)$

26. $h(x) = \tan 2x$

27. $F(x) = \sqrt{x}\sin x$

28. $F(x) = \sin(\cos(\sin x))$

29–30 Locate the discontinuities of the function and illustrate by graphing.

29. $y = \dfrac{1}{1 + \sin x}$

30. $y = \tan\sqrt{x}$

31–34 Use continuity to evaluate the limit.

31. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 4} \frac{5 + \sqrt{x}}{\sqrt{5 + x}}$

32. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to \pi} \sin(x + \sin x)$

33. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to \pi/4} x\cos^2 x$

34. $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to 2} (x^3 - 3x + 1)^{-3}$

35–36 Show that f is continuous on $(-\infty, \infty)$.

35. $f(x) = \begin{cases} x^2 & \text{if } x < 1 \\ \sqrt{x} & \text{if } x \geqslant 1 \end{cases}$

36. $f(x) = \begin{cases} \sin x & \text{if } x < \pi/4 \\ \cos x & \text{if } x \geqslant \pi/4 \end{cases}$

37–39 Find the numbers at which f is discontinuous. At which of these numbers is f continuous from the right, from the left, or neither? Sketch the graph of f.

37. $f(x) = \begin{cases} 1 + x^2 & \text{if } x \leqslant 0 \\ 2 - x & \text{if } 0 < x \leqslant 2 \\ (x - 2)^2 & \text{if } x > 2 \end{cases}$

38. $f(x) = \begin{cases} x + 1 & \text{if } x \leqslant 1 \\ 1/x & \text{if } 1 < x < 3 \\ \sqrt{x - 3} & \text{if } x \geqslant 3 \end{cases}$

39. $f(x) = \begin{cases} x + 2 & \text{if } x < 0 \\ 2x^2 & \text{if } 0 \leqslant x \leqslant 1 \\ 2 - x & \text{if } x > 1 \end{cases}$

40. The gravitational force exerted by the earth on a unit mass at a distance r from the center of the planet is

$$F(r) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{GMr}{R^3} & \text{if } r < R \\ \dfrac{GM}{r^2} & \text{if } r \geqslant R \end{cases}$$

where M is the mass of the earth, R is its radius, and G is the gravitational constant. Is F a continuous function of r?

41. For what value of the constant c is the function f continuous on $(-\infty, \infty)$?

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} cx^2 + 2x & \text{if } x < 2 \\ x^3 - cx & \text{if } x \geqslant 2 \end{cases}$$

42. Find the values of a and b that make f continuous everywhere.

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \dfrac{x^2 - 4}{x - 2} & \text{if } x < 2 \\ ax^2 - bx + 3 & \text{if } 2 < x < 3 \\ 2x - a + b & \text{if } x \geqslant 3 \end{cases}$$

43. Which of the following functions f has a removable discontinuity at a? If the discontinuity is removable, find a function g that agrees with f for $x \neq a$ and is continuous at a.

(a) $f(x) = \dfrac{x^4 - 1}{x - 1}, \quad a = 1$

(b) $f(x) = \dfrac{x^3 - x^2 - 2x}{x - 2}, \quad a = 2$

(c) $f(x) = [\![\sin x]\!], \quad a = \pi$

44. Suppose that a function f is continuous on $[0, 1]$ except at 0.25 and that $f(0) = 1$ and $f(1) = 3$. Let $N = 2$. Sketch two possible graphs of f, one showing that f might not satisfy the conclusion of the Intermediate Value Theorem and one showing that f might still satisfy the conclusion of the Intermediate Value Theorem (even though it doesn't satisfy the hypothesis).

45. If $f(x) = x^2 + 10 \sin x$, show that there is a number c such that $f(c) = 1000$.

46. Suppose f is continuous on $[1, 5]$ and the only solutions of the equation $f(x) = 6$ are $x = 1$ and $x = 4$. If $f(2) = 8$, explain why $f(3) > 6$.

47–50 Use the Intermediate Value Theorem to show that there is a root of the given equation in the specified interval.

47. $x^4 + x - 3 = 0, \quad (1, 2)$

48. $\sqrt[3]{x} = 1 - x, \quad (0, 1)$

49. $\cos x = x, \quad (0, 1)$

50. $\tan x = 2x, \quad (0, 1.4)$

51–52 (a) Prove that the equation has at least one real root.
(b) Use your calculator to find an interval of length 0.01 that contains a root.

51. $\cos x = x^3$

52. $x^5 - x^2 + 2x + 3 = 0$

53–54 (a) Prove that the equation has at least one real root.
(b) Use your graphing device to find the root correct to three decimal places.

53. $x^5 - x^2 - 4 = 0$

54. $\sqrt{x - 5} = \dfrac{1}{x + 3}$

55. Prove that f is continuous at a if and only if

$$\lim_{h \to 0} f(a + h) = f(a)$$

56. To prove that sine is continuous, we need to show that $\lim_{x \to a} \sin x = \sin a$ for every real number a. By Exercise 55 an equivalent statement is that

$$\lim_{h \to 0} \sin(a + h) = \sin a$$

Use (6) to show that this is true.

57. Prove that cosine is a continuous function.

58. (a) Prove Theorem 4, part 3.
(b) Prove Theorem 4, part 5.

59. For what values of x is f continuous?

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } x \text{ is rational} \\ 1 & \text{if } x \text{ is irrational} \end{cases}$$

60. For what values of x is g continuous?

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } x \text{ is rational} \\ x & \text{if } x \text{ is irrational} \end{cases}$$

61. Is there a number that is exactly 1 more than its cube?

62. If a and b are positive numbers, prove that the equation

$$\frac{a}{x^3 + 2x^2 - 1} + \frac{b}{x^3 + x - 2} = 0$$

has at least one solution in the interval $(-1, 1)$.

63. Show that the function

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} x^4 \sin(1/x) & \text{if } x \neq 0 \\ 0 & \text{if } x = 0 \end{cases}$$

is continuous on $(-\infty, \infty)$.

64. (a) Show that the absolute value function $F(x) = |x|$ is continuous everywhere.
(b) Prove that if f is a continuous function on an interval, then so is $|f|$.

(c) Is the converse of the statement in part (b) also true? In other words, if $|f|$ is continuous, does it follow that f is continuous? If so, prove it. If not, find a counterexample.

65. A Tibetan monk leaves the monastery at 7:00 AM and takes his usual path to the top of the mountain, arriving at 7:00 PM. The following morning, he starts at 7:00 AM at the top and takes the same path back, arriving at the monastery at 7:00 PM. Use the Intermediate Value Theorem to show that there is a point on the path that the monk will cross at exactly the same time of day on both days.

2 REVIEW

CONCEPT CHECK

1. Explain what each of the following means and illustrate with a sketch.
(a) $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = L$
(b) $\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = L$
(c) $\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = L$
(d) $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \infty$
(e) $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = -\infty$

2. Describe several ways in which a limit can fail to exist. Illustrate with sketches.

3. What does it mean to say that the line $x = a$ is a vertical asymptote of the curve $y = f(x)$? Draw curves to illustrate the various possibilities.

4. State the following Limit Laws.
(a) Sum Law
(b) Difference Law
(c) Constant Multiple Law
(d) Product Law
(e) Quotient Law
(f) Power Law
(g) Root Law

5. What does the Squeeze Theorem say?

6. (a) What does it mean for f to be continuous at a?
(b) What does it mean for f to be continuous on the interval $(-\infty, \infty)$? What can you say about the graph of such a function?

7. What does the Intermediate Value Theorem say?

TRUE-FALSE QUIZ

Determine whether the statement is true or false. If it is true, explain why. If it is false, explain why or give an example that disproves the statement.

1. $\lim_{x \to 4} \left(\dfrac{2x}{x-4} - \dfrac{8}{x-4} \right) = \lim_{x \to 4} \dfrac{2x}{x-4} - \lim_{x \to 4} \dfrac{8}{x-4}$

2. $\lim_{x \to 1} \dfrac{x^2 + 6x - 7}{x^2 + 5x - 6} = \dfrac{\lim_{x \to 1} (x^2 + 6x - 7)}{\lim_{x \to 1} (x^2 + 5x - 6)}$

3. $\lim_{x \to 1} \dfrac{x - 3}{x^2 + 2x - 4} = \dfrac{\lim_{x \to 1} (x - 3)}{\lim_{x \to 1} (x^2 + 2x - 4)}$

4. If $\lim_{x \to 5} f(x) = 2$ and $\lim_{x \to 5} g(x) = 0$, then $\lim_{x \to 5} [f(x)/g(x)]$ does not exist.

5. If $\lim_{x \to 5} f(x) = 0$ and $\lim_{x \to 5} g(x) = 0$, then $\lim_{x \to 5} [f(x)/g(x)]$ does not exist.

6. If $\lim_{x \to 6} [f(x)g(x)]$ exists, then the limit must be $f(6)g(6)$.

7. If p is a polynomial, then $\lim_{x \to b} p(x) = p(b)$.

8. If $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x) = \infty$ and $\lim_{x \to 0} g(x) = \infty$, then $\lim_{x \to 0} [f(x) - g(x)] = 0$.

9. If the line $x = 1$ is a vertical asymptote of $y = f(x)$, then f is not defined at 1.

10. If $f(1) > 0$ and $f(3) < 0$, then there exists a number c between 1 and 3 such that $f(c) = 0$.

11. If f is continuous at 5 and $f(5) = 2$ and $f(4) = 3$, then $\lim_{x \to 2} f(4x^2 - 11) = 2$.

12. If f is continuous on $[-1, 1]$ and $f(-1) = 4$ and $f(1) = 3$, then there exists a number r such that $|r| < 1$ and $f(r) = \pi$.

13. Let f be a function such that $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x) = 6$. Then there exists a number δ such that if $0 < |x| < \delta$, then $|f(x) - 6| < 1$.

14. If $f(x) > 1$ for all x and $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x)$ exists, then $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x) > 1$.

15. The equation $x^{10} - 10x^2 + 5 = 0$ has a root in the interval $(0, 2)$.

EXERCISES

1. The graph of f is given.

(a) Find each limit, or explain why it does not exist.

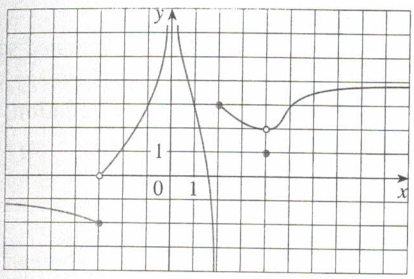
(i) $\lim_{x \to 2^+} f(x)$ (ii) $\lim_{x \to -3^+} f(x)$

(iii) $\lim_{x \to -3} f(x)$ (iv) $\lim_{x \to 4} f(x)$

(v) $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x)$ (vi) $\lim_{x \to 2^-} f(x)$

(b) State the equations of the vertical asymptotes.

(c) At what numbers is f discontinuous? Explain.



2. Sketch the graph of an example of a function f that satisfies all of the following conditions:

$\lim_{x \to 0^+} f(x) = -2$, $\lim_{x \to 0^-} f(x) = 1$, $f(0) = -1$,

$\lim_{x \to 2^-} f(x) = \infty$, $\lim_{x \to 2^+} f(x) = -\infty$

3–16 Find the limit.

3. $\lim_{x \to 0} \cos(x + \sin x)$

4. $\lim_{x \to 3} \dfrac{x^2 - 9}{x^2 + 2x - 3}$

5. $\lim_{x \to -3} \dfrac{x^2 - 9}{x^2 + 2x - 3}$

6. $\lim_{x \to 1^+} \dfrac{x^2 - 9}{x^2 + 2x - 3}$

7. $\lim_{h \to 0} \dfrac{(h - 1)^3 + 1}{h}$

8. $\lim_{t \to 2} \dfrac{t^2 - 4}{t^3 - 8}$

9. $\lim_{r \to 9} \dfrac{\sqrt{r}}{(r - 9)^4}$

10. $\lim_{v \to 4^+} \dfrac{4 - v}{|4 - v|}$

11. $\lim_{u \to 1} \dfrac{u^4 - 1}{u^3 + 5u^2 - 6u}$

12. $\lim_{x \to 3} \dfrac{\sqrt{x + 6} - x}{x^3 - 3x^2}$

13. $\lim_{s \to 16} \dfrac{4 - \sqrt{s}}{s - 16}$

14. $\lim_{v \to 2} \dfrac{v^2 + 2v - 8}{v^4 - 16}$

15. $\lim_{x \to 0} \dfrac{1 - \sqrt{1 - x^2}}{x}$

16. $\lim_{x \to 1} \left(\dfrac{1}{x - 1} + \dfrac{1}{x^2 - 3x + 2} \right)$

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17. If $2x - 1 \leqslant f(x) \leqslant x^2$ for $0 < x < 3$, find $\lim_{x \to 1} f(x)$.

18. Prove that $\lim_{x \to 0} x^2 \cos(1/x^2) = 0$.

19–22 Prove the statement using the precise definition of a limit.

19. $\lim_{x \to 2} (14 - 5x) = 4$

20. $\lim_{x \to 0} \sqrt[3]{x} = 0$

21. $\lim_{x \to 2} (x^2 - 3x) = -2$

22. $\lim_{x \to 4^+} \dfrac{2}{\sqrt{x - 4}} = \infty$

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23. Let

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \sqrt{-x} & \text{if } x < 0 \\ 3 - x & \text{if } 0 \leqslant x < 3 \\ (x - 3)^2 & \text{if } x > 3 \end{cases}$$

(a) Evaluate each limit, if it exists.

(i) $\lim_{x \to 0^+} f(x)$ (ii) $\lim_{x \to 0^-} f(x)$ (iii) $\lim_{x \to 0} f(x)$

(iv) $\lim_{x \to 3^-} f(x)$ (v) $\lim_{x \to 3^+} f(x)$ (vi) $\lim_{x \to 3} f(x)$

(b) Where is f discontinuous?

(c) Sketch the graph of f.

24. Let

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} 2x - x^2 & \text{if } 0 \leqslant x \leqslant 2 \\ 2 - x & \text{if } 2 < x \leqslant 3 \\ x - 4 & \text{if } 3 < x < 4 \\ \pi & \text{if } x \geqslant 4 \end{cases}$$

(a) For each of the numbers 2, 3, and 4, discover whether g is continuous from the left, continuous from the right, or continuous at the number.

(b) Sketch the graph of g.

25–26 Show that each function is continuous on its domain. State the domain.

25. $h(x) = \sqrt[4]{x} + x^3 \cos x$

26. $g(x) = \dfrac{\sqrt{x^2 - 9}}{x^2 - 2}$

27–28 Use the Intermediate Value Theorem to show that there is a root of the equation in the given interval.

27. $2x^3 + x^2 + 2 = 0$, $(-2, -1)$

28. $2 \sin x = 3 - 2x$, $(0, 1)$

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29. Suppose that $|f(x)| \leqslant g(x)$ for all x, where $\lim_{x \to a} g(x) = 0$. Find $\lim_{x \to a} f(x)$.

30. Let $f(x) = [\![x]\!] + [\![-x]\!]$.

(a) For what values of a does $\lim_{x \to a} f(x)$ exist?

(b) At what numbers is f discontinuous?

PROBLEMS PLUS

In our discussion of the principles of problem solving we considered the problem-sol strategy of *introducing something extra* (see page 54). In the following example we s how this principle is sometimes useful when we evaluate limits. The idea is to change variable—to introduce a new variable that is related to the original variable—in such a as to make the problem simpler. Later, in Section 5.5, we will make more extensive us this general idea.

EXAMPLE 1 Evaluate $\displaystyle\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sqrt[3]{1 + cx} - 1}{x}$, where c is a nonzero constant.

SOLUTION As it stands, this limit looks challenging. In Section 2.3 we evaluated several li its in which both numerator and denominator approached 0. There our strategy was to p form some sort of algebraic manipulation that led to a simplifying cancellation, but her it's not clear what kind of algebra is necessary.

So we introduce a new variable t by the equation

$$t = \sqrt[3]{1 + cx}$$

We also need to express x in terms of t, so we solve this equation:

$$t^3 = 1 + cx \qquad x = \frac{t^3 - 1}{c}$$

Notice that $x \to 0$ is equivalent to $t \to 1$. This allows us to convert the given limit into involving the variable t:

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sqrt[3]{1 + cx} - 1}{x} = \lim_{t \to 1} \frac{t - 1}{(t^3 - 1)/c} = \lim_{t \to 1} \frac{c(t - 1)}{t^3 - 1}$$

The change of variable allowed us to replace a relatively complicated limit by a simple one of a type that we have seen before. Factoring the denominator as a difference of cubes, we get

$$\lim_{t \to 1} \frac{c(t - 1)}{t^3 - 1} = \lim_{t \to 1} \frac{c(t - 1)}{(t - 1)(t^2 + t + 1)} = \lim_{t \to 1} \frac{c}{t^2 + t + 1} = \frac{c}{3}$$

The following problems are meant to test and challenge your problem-solving sk Some of them require a considerable amount of time to think through, so don't be disc aged if you can't solve them right away. If you get stuck, you might find it helpful to r to the discussion of the principles of problem solving on page 54.

PROBLEMS

1. Evaluate $\lim_{x\to 1} \dfrac{\sqrt[3]{x} - 1}{\sqrt{x} - 1}$.

2. Find numbers a and b such that $\lim_{x\to 0} \dfrac{\sqrt{ax+b} - 2}{x} = 1$.

3. Evaluate $\lim_{x\to 0} \dfrac{|2x-1| - |2x+1|}{x}$.

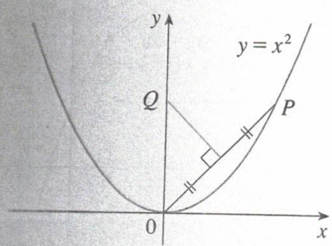

FIGURE FOR PROBLEM 4

4. The figure shows a point P on the parabola $y = x^2$ and the point Q where the perpendicular bisector of OP intersects the y-axis. As P approaches the origin along the parabola, what happens to Q? Does it have a limiting position? If so, find it.

5. Evaluate the following limits, if they exist, where $[\![x]\!]$ denotes the greatest integer function.
   (a) $\lim_{x\to 0} \dfrac{[\![x]\!]}{x}$ (b) $\lim_{x\to 0} x[\![1/x]\!]$

6. Sketch the region in the plane defined by each of the following equations.
   (a) $[\![x]\!]^2 + [\![y]\!]^2 = 1$ (b) $[\![x]\!]^2 - [\![y]\!]^2 = 3$ (c) $[\![x+y]\!]^2 = 1$ (d) $[\![x]\!] + [\![y]\!] = 1$

7. Find all values of a such that f is continuous on $\mathbb{R}$:

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} x+1 & \text{if } x \leqslant a \\ x^2 & \text{if } x > a \end{cases}$$

8. A **fixed point** of a function f is a number c in its domain such that $f(c) = c$. (The function doesn't move c; it stays fixed.)
   (a) Sketch the graph of a continuous function with domain $[0, 1]$ whose range also lies in $[0, 1]$. Locate a fixed point of f.
   (b) Try to draw the graph of a continuous function with domain $[0, 1]$ and range in $[0, 1]$ that does *not* have a fixed point. What is the obstacle?
   (c) Use the Intermediate Value Theorem to prove that any continuous function with domain $[0, 1]$ and range a subset of $[0, 1]$ must have a fixed point.

9. If $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x) + g(x)] = 2$ and $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x) - g(x)] = 1$, find $\lim_{x\to a}[f(x)g(x)]$.

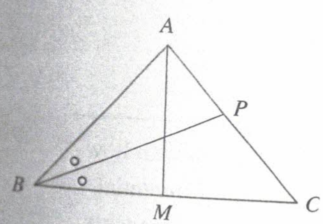

FIGURE FOR PROBLEM 10

10. (a) The figure shows an isosceles triangle ABC with $\angle B = \angle C$. The bisector of angle B intersects the side AC at the point P. Suppose that the base BC remains fixed but the altitude $|AM|$ of the triangle approaches 0, so A approaches the midpoint M of BC. What happens to P during this process? Does it have a limiting position? If so, find it.
    (b) Try to sketch the path traced out by P during this process. Then find an equation of this curve and use this equation to sketch the curve.

11. (a) If we start from 0° latitude and proceed in a westerly direction, we can let $T(x)$ denote the temperature at the point x at any given time. Assuming that T is a continuous function of x, show that at any fixed time there are at least two diametrically opposite points on the equator that have exactly the same temperature.
    (b) Does the result in part (a) hold for points lying on any circle on the earth's surface?
    (c) Does the result in part (a) hold for barometric pressure and for altitude above sea level?