Taylor and Maclaurin Series

DEFINITIONS Let f be a function with derivatives of all orders throughout some interval containing a as an interior point. Then the **Taylor series generated by f at $x = a$** is

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{f^{(k)}(a)}{k!}(x-a)^k = f(a) + f'(a)(x-a) + \frac{f''(a)}{2!}(x-a)^2 + \cdots + \frac{f^{(n)}(a)}{n!}(x-a)^n + \cdots.$$

The **Maclaurin series generated by f** is

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{f^{(k)}(0)}{k!}x^k = f(0) + f'(0)x + \frac{f''(0)}{2!}x^2 + \cdots + \frac{f^{(n)}(0)}{n!}x^n + \cdots,$$

the Taylor series generated by f at $x = 0$.

EXAMPLE 1 Find the Taylor series generated by $f(x) = 1/x$ at $a = 2$. Where, if anywhere, does the series converge to $1/x$?

Solution We need to find $f(2), f'(2), f''(2), \ldots$. Taking derivatives we get

$$f(x) = x^{-1}, \quad f'(x) = -x^{-2}, \quad f''(x) = 2!x^{-3}, \quad \cdots, \quad f^{(n)}(x) = (-1)^n n! x^{-(n+1)},$$

so that

$$f(2) = 2^{-1} = \frac{1}{2}, \quad f'(2) = -\frac{1}{2^2}, \quad \frac{f''(2)}{2!} = 2^{-3} = \frac{1}{2^3}, \quad \cdots, \quad \frac{f^{(n)}(2)}{n!} = \frac{(-1)^n}{2^{n+1}}.$$

The Taylor series is

$$f(2) + f'(2)(x-2) + \frac{f''(2)}{2!}(x-2)^2 + \cdots + \frac{f^{(n)}(2)}{n!}(x-2)^n + \cdots$$

$$= \frac{1}{2} - \frac{(x-2)}{2^2} + \frac{(x-2)^2}{2^3} - \cdots + (-1)^n\frac{(x-2)^n}{2^{n+1}} + \cdots.$$

This is a geometric series with first term $1/2$ and ratio $r = -(x-2)/2$. It converges absolutely for $|x-2| < 2$ and its sum is

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

In this example the Taylor series generated by $f(x) = 1/x$ at $a = 2$ converges to $1/x$ for $|x-2| < 2$ or $0 < x < 4$. ■

EXAMPLE 2 Find the Taylor series and the Taylor polynomials generated by $f(x) = e^x$ at $x = 0$.

Solution Since $f^{(n)}(x) = e^x$ and $f^{(n)}(0) = 1$ for every $n = 0, 1, 2, \ldots$, the Taylor series generated by f at $x = 0$ (see Figure 10.17) is

$$
\begin{aligned}
f(0) + f'(0)x + \frac{f''(0)}{2!}x^2 + \cdots + \frac{f^{(n)}(0)}{n!}x^n + \cdots \\
&= 1 + x + \frac{x^2}{2} + \cdots + \frac{x^n}{n!} + \cdots \\
&= \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{x^k}{k!}.
\end{aligned}
$$

This is also the Maclaurin series for e^x. In the next section we will see that the series converges to e^x at every x.

The Taylor polynomial of order n at $x = 0$ is

$$P_n(x) = 1 + x + \frac{x^2}{2} + \cdots + \frac{x^n}{n!}.$$

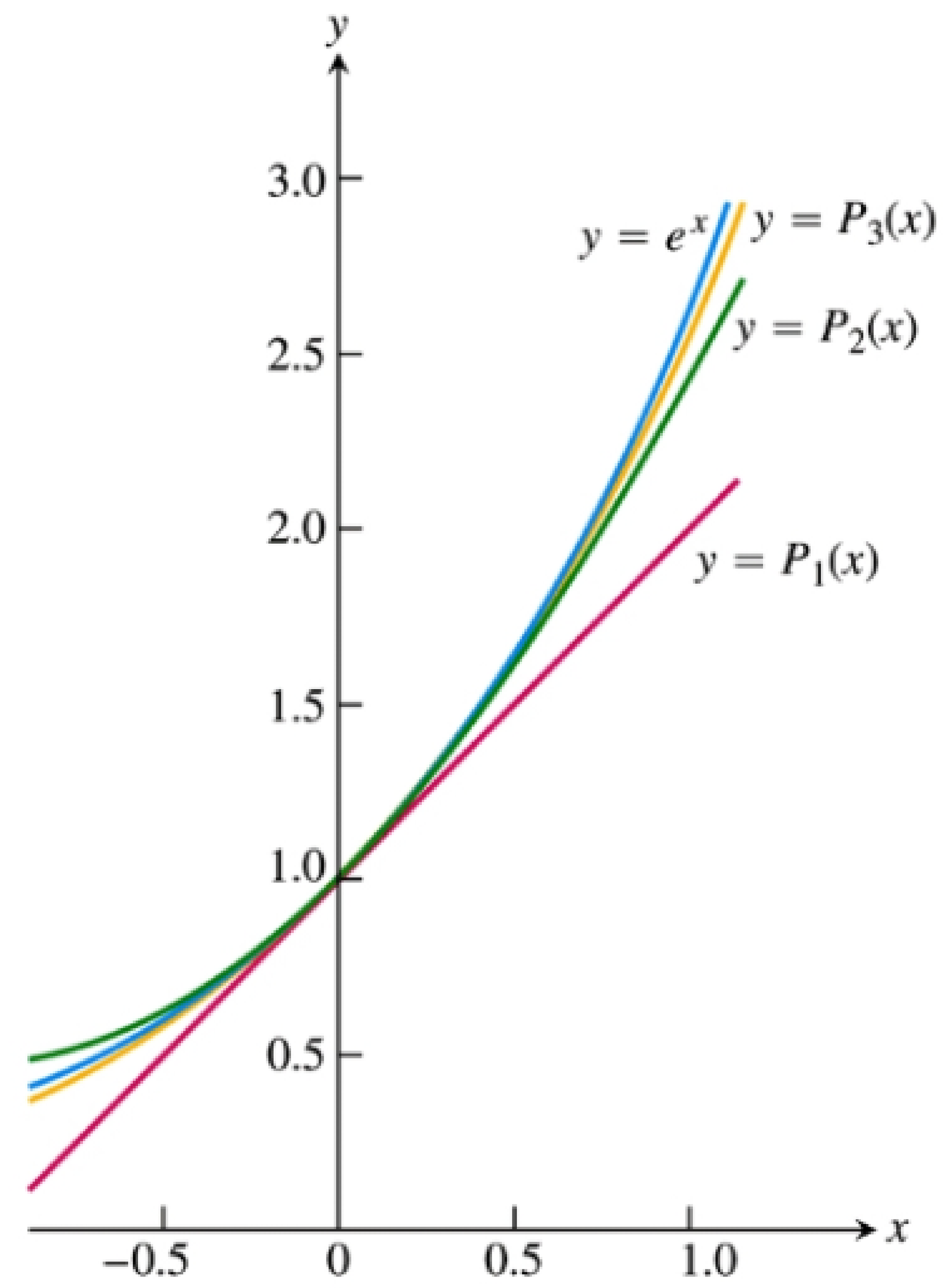

FIGURE 10.17 The graph of $f(x) = e^x$ and its Taylor polynomials

$P_1(x) = 1 + x$

$P_2(x) = 1 + x + (x^2/2!)$

$P_3(x) = 1 + x + (x^2/2!) + (x^3/3!)$.

Notice the very close agreement near the center $x = 0$ (Example 2).

EXAMPLE 3 Find the Taylor series and Taylor polynomials generated by $f(x) = \cos x$ at $x = 0$.

Solution The cosine and its derivatives are

$$
\begin{aligned}
f(x) &= \cos x, & f'(x) &= -\sin x, \\
f''(x) &= -\cos x, & f^{(3)}(x) &= \sin x, \\
&\vdots & &\vdots \\
f^{(2n)}(x) &= (-1)^n \cos x, & f^{(2n+1)}(x) &= (-1)^{n+1} \sin x.
\end{aligned}
$$

At $x = 0$, the cosines are 1 and the sines are 0, so

$$f^{(2n)}(0) = (-1)^n, \qquad f^{(2n+1)}(0) = 0.$$

The Taylor series generated by f at 0 is

$$
\begin{aligned}
f(0) + f'(0)x + \frac{f''(0)}{2!}x^2 + \frac{f'''(0)}{3!}x^3 + \cdots + \frac{f^{(n)}(0)}{n!}x^n + \cdots \\
&= 1 + 0 \cdot x - \frac{x^2}{2!} + 0 \cdot x^3 + \frac{x^4}{4!} + \cdots + (-1)^n \frac{x^{2n}}{(2n)!} + \cdots \\
&= \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^k x^{2k}}{(2k)!}.
\end{aligned}
$$

THEOREM 23—Taylor's Theorem If f and its first n derivatives $f', f'', \ldots, f^{(n)}$ are continuous on the closed interval between a and b, and $f^{(n)}$ is differentiable on the open interval between a and b, then there exists a number c between a and b such that

$$\begin{aligned} f(b) = f(a) + f'(a)(b-a) + \frac{f''(a)}{2!}(b-a)^2 + \cdots \\ + \frac{f^{(n)}(a)}{n!}(b-a)^n + \frac{f^{(n+1)}(c)}{(n+1)!}(b-a)^{n+1}. \end{aligned}$$

Taylor's Formula

If f has derivatives of all orders in an open interval I containing a, then for each positive integer n and for each x in I,

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) = f(a) + f'(a)(x-a) + \frac{f''(a)}{2!}(x-a)^2 + \cdots \\ + \frac{f^{(n)}(a)}{n!}(x-a)^n + R_n(x), \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

where

$$R_n(x) = \frac{f^{(n+1)}(c)}{(n+1)!}(x-a)^{n+1} \quad \text{for some } c \text{ between } a \text{ and } x. \tag{2}$$

If $R_n(x) \to 0$ as $n \to \infty$ for all $x \in I$, we say that the Taylor series generated by f at $x = a$ **converges** to f on I, and we write

$$f(x) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{f^{(k)}(a)}{k!}(x-a)^k.$$

EXAMPLE 1 Show that the Taylor series generated by $f(x) = e^x$ at $x = 0$ converges to $f(x)$ for every real value of x.

Solution The function has derivatives of all orders throughout the interval $I = (-\infty, \infty)$. Equations (1) and (2) with $f(x) = e^x$ and $a = 0$ give

$$e^x = 1 + x + \frac{x^2}{2!} + \cdots + \frac{x^n}{n!} + R_n(x)$$ Polynomial from Section 10.8, Example 2

and

$$R_n(x) = \frac{e^c}{(n+1)!}x^{n+1} \qquad \text{for some } c \text{ between 0 and } x.$$

Since e^x is an increasing function of x, e^c lies between $e^0 = 1$ and e^x. When x is negative, so is c, and $e^c < 1$. When x is zero, $e^x = 1$ and $R_n(x) = 0$. When x is positive, so is c, and $e^c < e^x$. Thus, for $R_n(x)$ given as above,

$$|R_n(x)| \le \frac{|x|^{n+1}}{(n+1)!} \qquad \text{when } x \le 0,$$ $e^c < 1$

and

$$|R_n(x)| < e^x \frac{x^{n+1}}{(n+1)!} \qquad \text{when } x > 0.$$ $e^c < e^x$

Finally, because

$$\lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{x^{n+1}}{(n+1)!} = 0 \qquad \text{for every } x,$$ Section 10.1, Theorem 5

$\lim_{n\to\infty} R_n(x) = 0$, and the series converges to e^x for every x. Thus,

$$e^x = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{x^k}{k!} = 1 + x + \frac{x^2}{2!} + \cdots + \frac{x^k}{k!} + \cdots. \tag{3}$$

■

THEOREM 24—The Remainder Estimation Theorem If there is a positive constant M such that $|f^{(n+1)}(t)| \le M$ for all t between x and a, inclusive, then the remainder term $R_n(x)$ in Taylor's Theorem satisfies the inequality

$$|R_n(x)| \le M \frac{|x-a|^{n+1}}{(n+1)!}.$$

If this inequality holds for every n and the other conditions of Taylor's Theorem are satisfied by f, then the series converges to $f(x)$.

EXAMPLE 2 Show that the Taylor series for $\sin x$ at $x = 0$ converges for all x.

Solution The function and its derivatives are

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= \sin x, & f'(x) &= \cos x, \\ f''(x) &= -\sin x, & f'''(x) &= -\cos x, \\ &\vdots & &\vdots \\ f^{(2k)}(x) &= (-1)^k \sin x, & f^{(2k+1)}(x) &= (-1)^k \cos x, \end{aligned}$$

so

$$f^{(2k)}(0) = 0 \quad \text{and} \quad f^{(2k+1)}(0) = (-1)^k.$$

The series has only odd-powered terms and, for $n = 2k + 1$, Taylor's Theorem gives

$$\sin x = x - \frac{x^3}{3!} + \frac{x^5}{5!} - \cdots + \frac{(-1)^k x^{2k+1}}{(2k+1)!} + R_{2k+1}(x).$$

All the derivatives of $\sin x$ have absolute values less than or equal to 1, so we can apply the Remainder Estimation Theorem with $M = 1$ to obtain

$$|R_{2k+1}(x)| \le 1 \cdot \frac{|x|^{2k+2}}{(2k+2)!}.$$

From Theorem 5, Rule 6, we have $(|x|^{2k+2}/(2k+2)!) \to 0$ as $k \to \infty$, whatever the value of x, so $R_{2k+1}(x) \to 0$ and the Maclaurin series for $\sin x$ converges to $\sin x$ for every x. Thus,

$$\sin x = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^k x^{2k+1}}{(2k+1)!} = x - \frac{x^3}{3!} + \frac{x^5}{5!} - \frac{x^7}{7!} + \cdots. \tag{4}$$

■

EXAMPLE 3 Show that the Taylor series for $\cos x$ at $x = 0$ converges to $\cos x$ for every value of x.

Solution We add the remainder term to the Taylor polynomial for $\cos x$ (Section 10.8, Example 3) to obtain Taylor's formula for $\cos x$ with $n = 2k$:

$$\cos x = 1 - \frac{x^2}{2!} + \frac{x^4}{4!} - \cdots + (-1)^k \frac{x^{2k}}{(2k)!} + R_{2k}(x).$$

Because the derivatives of the cosine have absolute value less than or equal to 1, the Remainder Estimation Theorem with $M = 1$ gives

$$|R_{2k}(x)| \le 1 \cdot \frac{|x|^{2k+1}}{(2k+1)!}.$$

For every value of x, $R_{2k}(x) \to 0$ as $k \to \infty$. Therefore, the series converges to $\cos x$ for every value of x. Thus,

$$\cos x = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^k x^{2k}}{(2k)!} = 1 - \frac{x^2}{2!} + \frac{x^4}{4!} - \frac{x^6}{6!} + \cdots. \tag{5}$$

Finding Taylor Polynomials

In Exercises 1–10, find the Taylor polynomials of orders 0, 1, 2, and 3 generated by f at a.

1. $f(x) = e^{2x}, \quad a = 0$
2. $f(x) = \sin x, \quad a = 0$
3. $f(x) = \ln x, \quad a = 1$
4. $f(x) = \ln(1 + x), \quad a = 0$
5. $f(x) = 1/x, \quad a = 2$
6. $f(x) = 1/(x + 2), \quad a = 0$
7. $f(x) = \sin x, \quad a = \pi/4$
8. $f(x) = \tan x, \quad a = \pi/4$
9. $f(x) = \sqrt{x}, \quad a = 4$
10. $f(x) = \sqrt{1 - x}, \quad a = 0$

Finding Taylor Series at $x = 0$ (Maclaurin Series)

Find the Maclaurin series for the functions in Exercises 11–22.

11. e^{-x}
12. xe^x
13. $\dfrac{1}{1 + x}$
14. $\dfrac{2 + x}{1 - x}$
15. $\sin 3x$
16. $\sin \dfrac{x}{2}$
17. $7 \cos(-x)$
18. $5 \cos \pi x$

Finding Taylor and Maclaurin Series

In Exercises 23–32, find the Taylor series generated by f at $x = a$.

23. $f(x) = x^3 - 2x + 4, \quad a = 2$
24. $f(x) = 2x^3 + x^2 + 3x - 8, \quad a = 1$

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25. $f(x) = x^4 + x^2 + 1, \quad a = -2$
26. $f(x) = 3x^5 - x^4 + 2x^3 + x^2 - 2, \quad a = -1$
27. $f(x) = 1/x^2, \quad a = 1$
28. $f(x) = 1/(1 - x)^3, \quad a = 0$

In Exercises 33–36, find the first three nonzero terms of the Maclaurin series for each function and the values of x for which the series converges absolutely.

33. $f(x) = \cos x - (2/(1 - x))$
34. $f(x) = (1 - x + x^2)e^x$
35. $f(x) = (\sin x) \ln(1 + x)$
36. $f(x) = x \sin^2 x$

Use substitution (as in Example 4) to find the Taylor series at $x = 0$ of the functions in Exercises 1–10.

1. e^{-5x}
2. $e^{-x/2}$
3. $5 \sin(-x)$
4. $\sin\left(\dfrac{\pi x}{2}\right)$
5. $\cos 5x^2$
6. $\cos\left(x^{2/3}/\sqrt{2}\right)$