

SEC 5.4A SOLVING EXPONENTIAL EQUATIONS

REVIEW:

1) SAME BASE PROPERTY:

IF $a^x = a^y$, THEN $x = y$

EX. $2^x = \cancel{32} 2^5$

↑ ↑
SAME
BASE

$$\boxed{x = 5}$$

2) CHANGE OF BASE FORMULA:

$$\log_a x = \frac{\log x}{\log a}$$

EXAMPLE:

$$\ln 2^x = \ln 7 \Rightarrow$$

$$2^x = 7$$

$$x \frac{\ln 2}{\cancel{\ln 2}} = \frac{\ln 7}{\ln 2}$$

$$\log_2 7 = x$$

$$\boxed{x = \frac{\ln 7}{\ln 2}}$$

$$\frac{\log 7}{\log 2} = x$$

$$\boxed{x \approx 2.80735}$$

1) STEPS FOR SOLVING EXPONENTIAL EQUATIONS.

A) ISOLATE THE EXPONENTIAL EXPRESSION
MEANING a^x ON ONE SIDE OF
EQUATION.

B) CONVERT TO LOGARITHM &
USE CHANGE OF BASE FORMULA

OR

"ln" BOTH SIDES TO BRING THE
EXPONENT "DOWN" $\rightarrow x \cdot \ln a = \ln b$

C) THEN SOLVE FOR x .

D) CHECK SOLUTION

EXAMPLE:

$$\frac{1}{8} e^{2x} = \frac{20}{8} \div 4$$

$$\ln e^{2x} = \ln \frac{5}{2}$$

$$\frac{2}{2} x = \frac{\ln \frac{5}{2}}{2}$$

$$x = \frac{\ln \frac{5}{2}}{2}$$

EXAMPLE

$$e^{2x} - e^x - 6 = 0$$

$$\text{LET } u = e^x$$

$$u^2 - u - 6 = 0$$

$$(u - 3)(u + 2) = 0$$

$$(e^x - 3)(e^x + 2) = 0$$

$$e^x - 3 = 0$$

$$e^x + 2 = 0$$

$$\ln e^x = \ln 3$$

$$\ln e^x = \ln 2$$

$$x = \ln 3$$

$$x = \ln(-2)$$