



planetmath.org

Math for the people, by the people.

ostensibly discontinuous antiderivative

Canonical name	OstensiblyDiscontinuousAntiderivative
Date of creation	2013-03-22 18:37:08
Last modified on	2013-03-22 18:37:08
Owner	pahio (2872)
Last modified by	pahio (2872)
Numerical id	7
Author	pahio (2872)
Entry type	Example
Classification	msc 26A36
Related topic	CyclometricFunctions

The real function

$$x \mapsto \frac{1}{5 - 3 \cos x} \quad (1)$$

is continuous for any x (the denominator is always positive) and therefore it has an antiderivative, defined for all x . Using the universal trigonometric substitution

$$\cos x := \frac{1-t^2}{1+t^2}, \quad dx = \frac{2dt}{1+t^2}, \quad t = \tan \frac{x}{2},$$

we obtain

$$5 - 3 \cos x = \frac{5(1+t^2) - 3(1-t^2)}{1+t^2} = \frac{2(1+4t^2)}{1+t^2},$$

whence

$$\int \frac{dx}{5 - 3 \cos x} = \int \frac{dt}{1+4t^2} = \frac{1}{2} \arctan 2t + C = \frac{1}{2} \arctan \left(2 \tan \frac{x}{2} \right) + C.$$

This result is not defined in the odd multiples of π , and it seems that the function (1) does not have a continuous antiderivative.

However, one can check that the function

$$x \mapsto \frac{x}{4} + \frac{1}{2} \arctan \frac{\sin x}{3 - \cos x} + C \quad (2)$$

is everywhere continuous and has as its derivative the function (1); one has

$$\left| \frac{\sin x}{3 - \cos x} \right| \leq \frac{1}{3-1} = \frac{1}{2} < \frac{\pi}{2}.$$

References

- [1] ERNST LINDELÖF: *Johdatus korkeampaan analyysiin*. Fourth edition. Werner Söderström Osakeyhtiö, Porvoo ja Helsinki (1956).