



proof of Hermite-Hadamard integral inequality

Canonical name	ProofOfHermiteHadamardIntegralInequality
Date of creation	2013-03-22 16:59:22
Last modified on	2013-03-22 16:59:22
Owner	Andrea Ambrosio (7332)
Last modified by	Andrea Ambrosio (7332)
Numerical id	7
Author	Andrea Ambrosio (7332)
Entry type	Proof
Classification	msc 26D10
Classification	msc 26D15

First of all, let's recall that a convex function on a open interval (a, b) is continuous on (a, b) and admits left and right derivative $f^+(x)$ and $f^-(x)$ for any $x \in (a, b)$. For this reason, it's always possible to construct at least one supporting line for $f(x)$ at any $x_0 \in (a, b)$: if $f(x_0)$ is differentiable in x_0 , one has $r(x) = f(x_0) + f'(x_0)(x - x_0)$; if not, it's obvious that all $r(x) = f(x_0) + c(x - x_0)$ are supporting lines for any $c \in [f^-(x_0), f^+(x_0)]$. Let now $r(x) = f\left(\frac{a+b}{2}\right) + c\left(x - \frac{a+b}{2}\right)$ be a supporting line of $f(x)$ in $x = \frac{a+b}{2} \in (a, b)$. Then, $r(x) \leq f(x)$. On the other side, by convexity definition, having defined $s(x) = f(a) + \frac{f(b)-f(a)}{b-a}(x-a)$ the line connecting the points $(a, f(a))$ and $(b, f(b))$, one has $f(x) \leq s(x)$. Shortly,

$$r(x) \leq f(x) \leq s(x)$$

Integrating both inequalities between a and b

$$\begin{aligned} \int_a^b r(x) dx &\leq \int_a^b f(x) dx \leq \int_a^b s(x) dx \\ \int_a^b r(x) dx &= \int_a^b \left[f\left(\frac{a+b}{2}\right) + c\left(x - \frac{a+b}{2}\right) \right] dx \\ &= f\left(\frac{a+b}{2}\right)(b-a) + c \int_a^b \left(x - \frac{a+b}{2}\right) dx \\ &= f\left(\frac{a+b}{2}\right)(b-a) \\ \int_a^b s(x) dx &= \int_a^b \left[f(a) + \frac{f(b)-f(a)}{b-a}(x-a) \right] dx \\ &= f(a)(b-a) + \frac{f(b)-f(a)}{b-a} \int_a^b (x-a) dx \\ &= \frac{f(a)+f(b)}{2}(b-a) \end{aligned}$$

and so

$$f\left(\frac{a+b}{2}\right)(b-a) \leq \int_a^b f(x) dx \leq \frac{f(a)+f(b)}{2}(b-a)$$

which is the thesis.