A function that is not one-to-one is **many-to-one**.

Implied domains

If the domain of a function is not specified, then the domain is the largest subset of $\mathbb{R}$ for which the rule is defined; this is called the **implied domain** or the **maximal domain**.

Thus, for the function $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$, the implied domain is $[0, \infty)$. We write:

$$f\colon [0, \infty) \to \mathbb{R},\ f(x) = \sqrt{x}$$

Example 12

Find the implied domain and the corresponding range for the functions with rules:

a $f(x) = 2x - 3$ **b** $f(x) = \dfrac{1}{(x-2)^2}$ **c** $f(x) = \sqrt{x+6}$ **d** $f(x) = \sqrt{4 - x^2}$

Solution

a $f(x) = 2x - 3$ is defined for all x. The implied domain is $\mathbb{R}$. The range is $\mathbb{R}$.

b $f(x) = \dfrac{1}{(x-2)^2}$ is defined for $x \neq 2$. The implied domain is $\mathbb{R} \setminus \{2\}$. The range is $\mathbb{R}^+$.

c $f(x) = \sqrt{x+6}$ is defined for $x + 6 \geq 0$, i.e. for $x \geq -6$.
Thus the implied domain is $[-6, \infty)$. The range is $\mathbb{R}^+ \cup \{0\}$.

d $f(x) = \sqrt{4 - x^2}$ is defined for $4 - x^2 \geq 0$, i.e. for $x^2 \leq 4$.
Thus the implied domain is $[-2, 2]$. The range is $[0, 2]$.

Example 13

Find the implied domain of the functions with the following rules:

a $f(x) = \dfrac{2}{2x - 3}$ **b** $g(x) = \sqrt{5 - x}$

c $h(x) = \sqrt{x - 5} + \sqrt{8 - x}$ **d** $f(x) = \sqrt{x^2 - 7x + 12}$

Solution

a $f(x)$ is defined when $2x - 3 \neq 0$, i.e. when $x \neq \frac{3}{2}$. Thus the implied domain is $\mathbb{R} \setminus \{\frac{3}{2}\}$.

b $g(x)$ is defined when $5 - x \geq 0$, i.e. when $x \leq 5$. Thus the implied domain is $(-\infty, 5]$.

c $h(x)$ is defined when $x - 5 \geq 0$ and $8 - x \geq 0$, i.e. when $x \geq 5$ and $x \leq 8$. Thus the implied domain is $[5, 8]$.

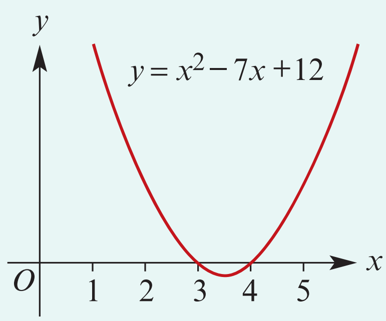
d $f(x)$ is defined when

$$x^2 - 7x + 12 \geq 0$$

which is equivalent to

$$(x - 3)(x - 4) \geq 0$$

Thus $f(x)$ is defined when $x \geq 4$ or $x \leq 3$.
The implied domain is $(-\infty, 3] \cup [4, \infty)$.



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