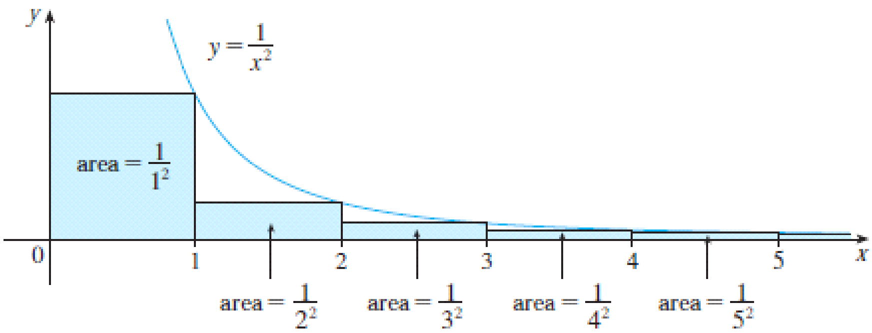
Series Convergence I

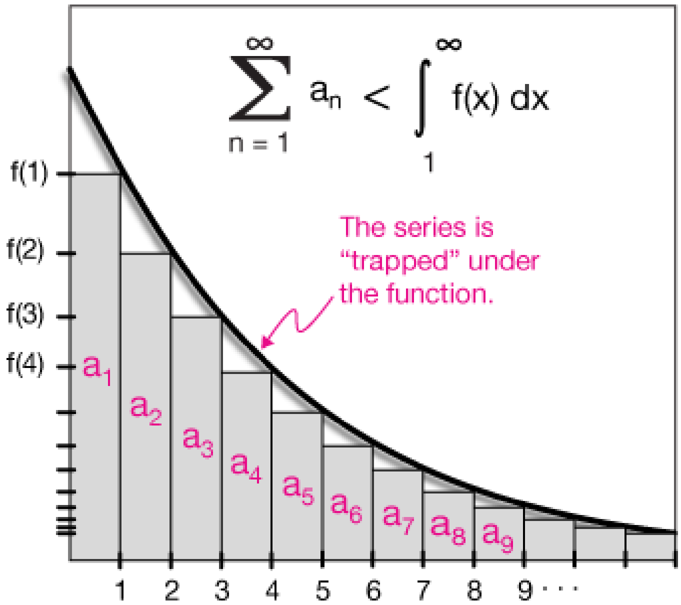
Sunday, 10 November 2024 11:24 pm

The Integral Test and Estimates of Sums

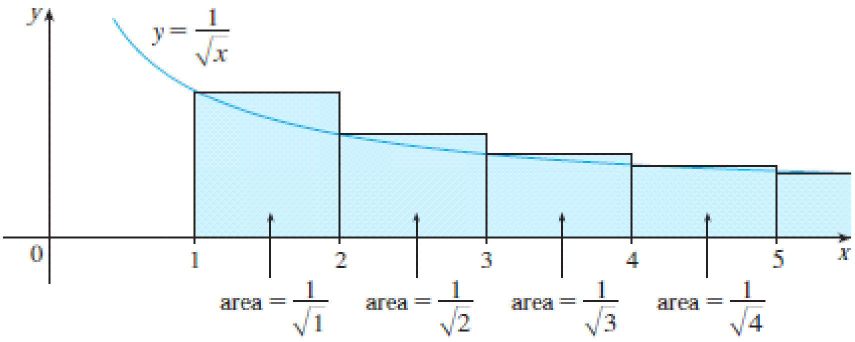
$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^2} = \frac{1}{1^2} + \frac{1}{2^2} + \frac{1}{3^2} + \frac{1}{4^2} + \frac{1}{5^2} + \cdots$$



n	$s_n = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{1}{i^2}$
5	1.4636
10	1.5498
50	1.6251
100	1.6350
500	1.6429
1000	1.6439
5000	1.6447



$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{4}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{5}} + \cdots$$



n	$s_n = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{1}{\sqrt{i}}$
5	3.2317
10	5.0210
50	12.7524
100	18.5896
500	43.2834
1000	61.8010
5000	139.9681

The Integral Test Suppose f is a continuous, positive, decreasing function on $[1, \infty)$ and let $a_n = f(n)$. Then the series $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} a_n$ is convergent if and only if the improper integral $\int_1^{\infty} f(x)\,dx$ is convergent. In other words:

(i) If $\int_1^{\infty} f(x)\,dx$ is convergent, then $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} a_n$ is convergent.

(ii) If $\int_1^{\infty} f(x)\,dx$ is divergent, then $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} a_n$ is divergent.

$\sum_{n=4}^{\infty} \frac{1}{(n-3)^2}$ we use $\int_4^{\infty} \frac{1}{(x-3)^2}\,dx$

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EXAMPLE 1 Test the series $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^2+1}$ for convergence or divergence.

SOLUTION The function $f(x) = 1/(x^2+1)$ is continuous, positive, and decreasing on $[1, \infty)$ so we use the Integral Test:

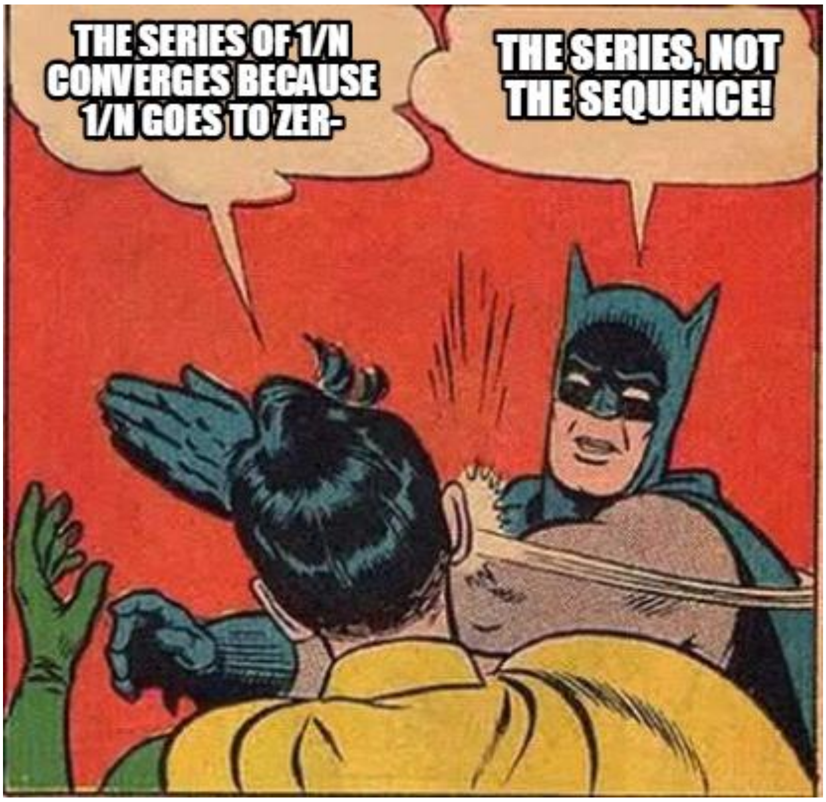
$$\int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{x^2+1}\,dx = \lim_{t\to\infty} \int_1^t \frac{1}{x^2+1}\,dx = \lim_{t\to\infty} \tan^{-1}x \Big]_1^t$$

$$= \lim_{t\to\infty}\left(\tan^{-1}t - \frac{\pi}{4}\right) = \frac{\pi}{2} - \frac{\pi}{4} = \frac{\pi}{4}$$

Thus $\int_1^{\infty} 1/(x^2+1)\,dx$ is a convergent integral and so, by the Integral Test, the series $\Sigma\, 1/(n^2+1)$ is convergent. ■

V **EXAMPLE 2** For what values of p is the series $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^p}$ convergent?

1 The p-series $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^p}$ is convergent if $p > 1$ and divergent if $p \leq 1$.



EXAMPLE 3

(a) The series

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^3} = \frac{1}{1^3} + \frac{1}{2^3} + \frac{1}{3^3} + \frac{1}{4^3} + \cdots$$

is convergent because it is a p-series with $p = 3 > 1$.

(b) The series

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^{1/3}} = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{\sqrt[3]{n}} = 1 + \frac{1}{\sqrt[3]{2}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt[3]{3}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt[3]{4}} + \cdots$$

is divergent because it is a p-series with $p = \frac{1}{3} < 1$.

NOTE We should *not* infer from the Integral Test that the sum of the series is equal to the value of the integral. In fact,

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^2} = \frac{\pi^2}{6} \qquad \text{whereas} \qquad \int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{x^2}\, dx = 1$$

Therefore, in general,

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} a_n \neq \int_1^{\infty} f(x)\, dx$$

V **EXAMPLE 4** Determine whether the series $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\ln n}{n}$ converges or diverges.

SOLUTION The function $f(x) = (\ln x)/x$ is positive and continuous for $x > 1$ because the logarithm function is continuous. But it is not obvious whether or not f is decreasing, so we compute its derivative:

$$f'(x) = \frac{(1/x)x - \ln x}{x^2} = \frac{1 - \ln x}{x^2}$$

Thus $f'(x) < 0$ when $\ln x > 1$, that is, $x > e$. It follows that f is decreasing when $x > e$ and so we can apply the Integral Test:

$$\int_1^{\infty} \frac{\ln x}{x}\,dx = \lim_{t \to \infty} \int_1^t \frac{\ln x}{x}\,dx = \lim_{t \to \infty} \frac{(\ln x)^2}{2}\bigg]_1^t$$

$$= \lim_{t \to \infty} \frac{(\ln t)^2}{2} = \infty$$

Since this improper integral is divergent, the series $\sum (\ln n)/n$ is also divergent by the Integral Test.

The Comparison Tests

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{2^n + 1}$$

$$\frac{1}{2^n + 1} < \frac{1}{2^n}$$

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{2^n + 1} < 1$$

The Comparison Test Suppose that $\sum a_n$ and $\sum b_n$ are series with positive terms.

(i) If $\sum b_n$ is convergent and $a_n \leqslant b_n$ for all n, then $\sum a_n$ is also convergent.

(ii) If $\sum b_n$ is divergent and $a_n \geqslant b_n$ for all n, then $\sum a_n$ is also divergent.

V **EXAMPLE 1** Determine whether the series $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{5}{2n^2 + 4n + 3}$ converges or diverges.

$$\frac{5}{2n^2 + 4n + 3} < \frac{5}{2n^2}$$

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{5}{2n^2} = \frac{5}{2} \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^2}$$

is convergent because it's a constant times a p-series with $p = 2 > 1$. Therefore

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{5}{2n^2 + 4n + 3}$$

is convergent by part (i) of the Comparison Test.

NOTE 1 Although the condition $a_n \leqslant b_n$ or $a_n \geqslant b_n$ in the Comparison Test is given for all n, we need verify only that it holds for $n \geqslant N$, where N is some fixed integer, because the convergence of a series is not affected by a finite number of terms. This is illustrated in the next example.

V EXAMPLE 2 Test the series $\displaystyle\sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{\ln k}{k}$ for convergence or divergence.

SOLUTION We used the Integral Test to test this series in Example 4 of Section 11.3, but we can also test it by comparing it with the harmonic series. Observe that $\ln k > 1$ for $k \geqslant 3$ and so

$$\frac{\ln k}{k} > \frac{1}{k} \qquad k \geqslant 3$$

We know that $\Sigma\, 1/k$ is divergent (p-series with $p = 1$). Thus the given series is divergent by the Comparison Test. ■

NOTE 2 The terms of the series being tested must be smaller than those of a convergent series or larger than those of a divergent series. If the terms are larger than the terms of a convergent series or smaller than those of a divergent series, then the Comparison Test doesn't apply. Consider, for instance, the series

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{2^n - 1}$$

The inequality

$$\frac{1}{2^n - 1} > \frac{1}{2^n}$$

is useless as far as the Comparison Test is concerned because $\Sigma\, b_n = \Sigma\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^n$ is convergent and $a_n > b_n$. Nonetheless, we have the feeling that $\Sigma\, 1/(2^n - 1)$ ought to be convergent because it is very similar to the convergent geometric series $\Sigma\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^n$. In such cases the following test can be used.

The Limit Comparison Test Suppose that $\Sigma\, a_n$ and $\Sigma\, b_n$ are series with positive terms. If

$$\lim_{n \to \infty} \frac{a_n}{b_n} = c$$

where c is a finite number and $c > 0$, then either both series converge or both diverge.

EXAMPLE 3 Test the series $\displaystyle\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{2^n - 1}$ for convergence or divergence.

SOLUTION We use the Limit Comparison Test with

$$a_n = \frac{1}{2^n - 1} \qquad b_n = \frac{1}{2^n}$$

and obtain

$$\lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{a_n}{b_n} = \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{1/(2^n - 1)}{1/2^n} = \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{2^n}{2^n - 1} = \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{1}{1 - 1/2^n} = 1 > 0$$

Since this limit exists and $\Sigma\, 1/2^n$ is a convergent geometric series, the given series converges by the Limit Comparison Test.

EXAMPLE 4 Determine whether the series $\displaystyle\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{2n^2 + 3n}{\sqrt{5 + n^5}}$ converges or diverges.

SOLUTION The dominant part of the numerator is $2n^2$ and the dominant part of the denominator is $\sqrt{n^5} = n^{5/2}$. This suggests taking

$$a_n = \frac{2n^2 + 3n}{\sqrt{5 + n^5}} \qquad b_n = \frac{2n^2}{n^{5/2}} = \frac{2}{n^{1/2}}$$

$$\lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{a_n}{b_n} = \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{2n^2 + 3n}{\sqrt{5 + n^5}} \cdot \frac{n^{1/2}}{2} = \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{2n^{5/2} + 3n^{3/2}}{2\sqrt{5 + n^5}}$$

$$= \lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{2 + \dfrac{3}{n}}{2\sqrt{\dfrac{5}{n^5} + 1}} = \frac{2 + 0}{2\sqrt{0 + 1}} = 1$$

Since $\Sigma\, b_n = 2\,\Sigma\, 1/n^{1/2}$ is divergent (p-series with $p = \frac{1}{2} < 1$), the given series diverges by the Limit Comparison Test.