Chain Rule & Implicit Differentiation

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The Chain Rule

$$F(x) = \sqrt{x^2 + 1}$$

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{dy}{du}\frac{du}{dx}$$

The Chain Rule If g is differentiable at x and f is differentiable at $g(x)$, then the composite function $F = f \circ g$ defined by $F(x) = f(g(x))$ is differentiable at x and F' is given by the product

$$F'(x) = f'(g(x)) \cdot g'(x)$$

In Leibniz notation, if $y = f(u)$ and $u = g(x)$ are both differentiable functions, then

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{dy}{du}\frac{du}{dx}$$

$$\frac{d}{dx} \underbrace{f}_{\text{outer function}} \underbrace{(g(x))}_{\text{evaluated at inner function}} = \underbrace{f'}_{\text{derivative of outer function}} \underbrace{(g(x))}_{\text{evaluated at inner function}} \cdot \underbrace{g'(x)}_{\text{derivative of inner function}}$$

EXAMPLE 1 Find $F'(x)$ if $F(x) = \sqrt{x^2 + 1}$.

SOLUTION 1 (using Equation 2): At the beginning of this section we expressed F as $F(x) = (f \circ g)(x) = f(g(x))$ where $f(u) = \sqrt{u}$ and $g(x) = x^2 + 1$. Since

$$f'(u) = \tfrac{1}{2}u^{-1/2} = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{u}} \qquad \text{and} \qquad g'(x) = 2x$$

we have

$$\begin{aligned} F'(x) &= f'(g(x)) \cdot g'(x) \\ &= \frac{1}{2\sqrt{x^2+1}} \cdot 2x = \frac{x}{\sqrt{x^2+1}} \end{aligned}$$

V **EXAMPLE 2** Differentiate (a) $y = \sin(x^2)$ and (b) $y = \sin^2 x$.

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{d}{dx} \underbrace{\sin}_{\substack{\text{outer}\\\text{function}}} \underbrace{(x^2)}_{\substack{\text{evaluated}\\\text{at inner}\\\text{function}}} = \underbrace{\cos}_{\substack{\text{derivative}\\\text{of outer}\\\text{function}}} \underbrace{(x^2)}_{\substack{\text{evaluated}\\\text{at inner}\\\text{function}}} \cdot \underbrace{2x}_{\substack{\text{derivative}\\\text{of inner}\\\text{function}}}$$

$$= 2x\cos(x^2)$$

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{d}{dx} \underbrace{(\sin x)^2}_{\substack{\text{inner}\\\text{function}}} = \underbrace{2}_{\substack{\text{derivative}\\\text{of outer}\\\text{function}}} \cdot \underbrace{(\sin x)}_{\substack{\text{evaluated}\\\text{at inner}\\\text{function}}} \cdot \underbrace{\cos x}_{\substack{\text{derivative}\\\text{of inner}\\\text{function}}}$$

EXAMPLE 3 Differentiate $y = (x^3 - 1)^{100}$.

Taking $u = g(x) = x^3 - 1$ and $n = 100$ in $\boxed{4}$, we have

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{d}{dx}(x^3 - 1)^{100} = 100(x^3 - 1)^{99}\frac{d}{dx}(x^3 - 1)$$

$$= 100(x^3 - 1)^{99} \cdot 3x^2 = 300x^2(x^3 - 1)^{99}$$

EXAMPLE 5 Find the derivative of the function

$$g(t) = \left(\frac{t-2}{2t+1}\right)^9$$

$$g'(t) = 9\left(\frac{t-2}{2t+1}\right)^8 \frac{d}{dt}\left(\frac{t-2}{2t+1}\right)$$

$$= 9\left(\frac{t-2}{2t+1}\right)^8 \frac{(2t+1)\cdot 1 - 2(t-2)}{(2t+1)^2} = \frac{45(t-2)^8}{(2t+1)^{10}}$$

EXAMPLE 6 Differentiate $y = (2x+1)^5(x^3 - x + 1)^4$.

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = (2x+1)^5 \frac{d}{dx}(x^3 - x + 1)^4 + (x^3 - x + 1)^4 \frac{d}{dx}(2x+1)^5$$

$$= (2x+1)^5 \cdot 4(x^3 - x + 1)^3 \frac{d}{dx}(x^3 - x + 1)$$

$$+ (x^3 - x + 1)^4 \cdot 5(2x+1)^4 \frac{d}{dx}(2x+1)$$

$$= 4(2x+1)^5(x^3 - x + 1)^3(3x^2 - 1) + 5(x^3 - x + 1)^4(2x+1)^4 \cdot 2$$

EXAMPLE 7 Differentiate $y = e^{\sin x}$.

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{d}{dx}(e^{\sin x}) = e^{\sin x} \frac{d}{dx}(\sin x) = e^{\sin x} \cos x$$

Implicit Differentiation

$y = \sqrt{x^3 + 1}$ or $y = x \sin x$

$$x^2 + y^2 = 25$$

$$x^3 + y^3 = 6xy$$

V EXAMPLE 1

(a) If $x^2 + y^2 = 25$, find $\dfrac{dy}{dx}$

SOLUTION 1

(a) Differentiate both sides of the equation $x^2 + y^2 = 25$:

$$\frac{d}{dx}(x^2 + y^2) = \frac{d}{dx}(25)$$

$$\frac{d}{dx}(x^2) + \frac{d}{dx}(y^2) = 0$$

Remembering that y is a function of x and using the Chain Rule, we have

$$\frac{d}{dx}(y^2) = \frac{d}{dy}(y^2)\frac{dy}{dx} = 2y\frac{dy}{dx}$$

Thus

$$2x + 2y\frac{dy}{dx} = 0$$

Now we solve this equation for dy/dx:

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = -\frac{x}{y}$$

V EXAMPLE 2

(a) Find y' if $x^3 + y^3 = 6xy$.

SOLUTION

(a) Differentiating both sides of $x^3 + y^3 = 6xy$ with respect to x, regarding y as a function of x, and using the Chain Rule on the term y^3 and the Product Rule on the term $6xy$, we get

$$3x^2 + 3y^2y' = 6xy' + 6y$$

or

$$x^2 + y^2y' = 2xy' + 2y$$

We now solve for y':

$$y^2y' - 2xy' = 2y - x^2$$

$$(y^2 - 2x)y' = 2y - x^2$$

$$y' = \frac{2y - x^2}{y^2 - 2x}$$