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QUIZ 5 ◇

MATH 200
January 30, 2026

1. Use a limit definition of the derivative to find the derivative of the function $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$.

$$\begin{aligned}
 f'(x) &= \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{f(z) - f(x)}{z - x} = \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{\frac{1}{z} - \frac{1}{x}}{z - x} \\
 &= \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{\frac{1}{z} - \frac{1}{x}}{z - x} \cdot \frac{zx}{zx} = \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{x - z}{(z - x)zx} \\
 &= \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{- (z - x)}{(z - x)zx} = \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{-1}{zx} = \frac{-1}{xx} = \frac{-1}{x^2} \\
 \therefore \boxed{f'(x) = \frac{-1}{x^2}}
 \end{aligned}$$

Alternate method:

$$\begin{aligned}
 f'(x) &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{\frac{1}{x+h} - \frac{1}{x}}{h} \\
 &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{\frac{1}{x+h} - \frac{1}{x}}{h} \cdot \frac{x(x+h)}{x(x+h)} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{x - (x+h)}{h x(x+h)} \\
 &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{-h}{h x(x+h)} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{-1}{x(x+h)} = \frac{-1}{x(x+0)} = \frac{-1}{x^2} \\
 \therefore \boxed{f'(x) = \frac{-1}{x^2}}
 \end{aligned}$$

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1. Use a limit definition of the derivative to find the derivative of the function $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$.

$$\begin{aligned}
 f'(x) &= \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{f(z) - f(x)}{z - x} = \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{\sqrt{z} - \sqrt{x}}{z - x} \\
 &= \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{\sqrt{z} - \sqrt{x}}{\sqrt{z^2} - \sqrt{x^2}} = \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{\cancel{\sqrt{z} - \sqrt{x}}}{(\sqrt{z} - \sqrt{x})(\sqrt{z} + \sqrt{x})} \\
 &= \lim_{z \rightarrow x} \frac{1}{\sqrt{z} + \sqrt{x}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{x} + \sqrt{x}} = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{x}} \\
 \therefore f'(x) &= \boxed{\frac{1}{2\sqrt{x}}}
 \end{aligned}$$

Alternate method:

$$\begin{aligned}
 f'(x) &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sqrt{x+h} - \sqrt{x}}{h} \\
 &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sqrt{x+h} - \sqrt{x}}{h} \cdot \frac{\sqrt{x+h} + \sqrt{x}}{\sqrt{x+h} + \sqrt{x}} \\
 &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sqrt{x+h}^2 + \sqrt{x+h}\sqrt{x} - \sqrt{x}\sqrt{x+h} - \sqrt{x}^2}{h(\sqrt{x+h} + \sqrt{x})} \\
 &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{x+h - x}{h(\sqrt{x+h} + \sqrt{x})} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{h}{h(\sqrt{x+h} + \sqrt{x})} \\
 &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{1}{\sqrt{x+h} + \sqrt{x}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{x+0} + \sqrt{x}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{x} + \sqrt{x}} = \boxed{\frac{1}{2\sqrt{x}}}
 \end{aligned}$$