Example 1 Expand $\left(x^2 + \dfrac{3}{x}\right)^4, x \neq 0$

Solution By using binomial theorem, we have

$$\left(x^2 + \frac{3}{x}\right)^4 = {}^4C_0(x^2)^4 + {}^4C_1(x^2)^3\left(\frac{3}{x}\right) + {}^4C_2(x^2)^2\left(\frac{3}{x}\right)^2 + {}^4C_3(x^2)\left(\frac{3}{x}\right)^3 + {}^4C_4\left(\frac{3}{x}\right)^4$$

$$= x^8 + 4.x^6 . \frac{3}{x} + 6.x^4 . \frac{9}{x^2} + 4.x^2.\frac{27}{x^3} + \frac{81}{x^4}$$

$$= x^8 + 12x^5 + 54x^2 + \frac{108}{x} + \frac{81}{x^4}.$$

Example 2 Compute $(98)^5$.

Solution We express 98 as the sum or difference of two numbers whose powers are easier to calculate, and then use Binomial Theorem.

Write $98 = 100 - 2$

Therefore, $(98)^5 = (100 - 2)^5$

$$= {}^5C_0\,(100)^5 - {}^5C_1\,(100)^4.2 + {}^5C_2\,(100)^3 2^2$$
$$- {}^5C_3\,(100)^2\,(2)^3 + {}^5C_4\,(100)\,(2)^4 - {}^5C_5\,(2)^5$$
$$= 10000000000 - 5 \times 100000000 \times 2 + 10 \times 1000000 \times 4 - 10 \times 10000$$
$$\times 8 + 5 \times 100 \times 16 - 32$$
$$= 10040008000 - 1000800032 = 9039207968.$$

Example 3 Which is larger $(1.01)^{1000000}$ or 10,000?

Solution Splitting 1.01 and using binomial theorem to write the first few terms we have

$$(1.01)^{1000000} = (1 + 0.01)^{1000000}$$

$$= {}^{1000000}C_0 + {}^{1000000}C_1(0.01) + \text{other positive terms}$$

$$= 1 + 1000000 \times 0.01 + \text{other positive terms}$$

$$= 1 + 10000 + \text{other positive terms}$$

$$> 10000$$

Hence $\quad (1.01)^{1000000} > 10000$

Example 4 Using binomial theorem, prove that $6^n–5n$ always leaves remainder 1 when divided by 25.

Solution For two numbers a and b if we can find numbers q and r such that $a = bq + r$, then we say that b divides a with q as quotient and r as remainder. Thus, in order to show that $6^n – 5n$ leaves remainder 1 when divided by 25, we prove that $6^n – 5n = 25k + 1$, where k is some natural number.

We have

$$(1 + a)^n = {}^nC_0 + {}^nC_1 a + {}^nC_2 a^2 + ... + {}^nC_n a^n$$

For $a = 5$, we get

$$(1 + 5)^n = {}^nC_0 + {}^nC_1 5 + {}^nC_2 5^2 + ... + {}^nC_n 5^n$$

i.e. $\quad (6)^n = 1 + 5n + 5^2.{}^nC_2 + 5^3.{}^nC_3 + ... + 5^n$

i.e. $\quad 6^n – 5n = 1+5^2 ({}^nC_2 + {}^nC_3 5 + ... + 5^{n-2})$

or $\quad 6^n – 5n = 1+ 25 ({}^nC_2 + 5 .{}^nC_3 + ... + 5^{n-2})$

or $\quad 6^n – 5n = 25k+1 \quad$ where $k = {}^nC_2 + 5 .{}^nC_3 + ... + 5^{n–2}$.

This shows that when divided by 25, $6^n – 5n$ leaves remainder 1.