

(b) Prove that the real function $x \mapsto 3x^4 + 4x^3 + 6x^2 + 1$ is positive.

Proof. Let the real function

$$f(x) = 3x^4 + 4x^3 + 6x^2 + 1, \forall x \in \mathbb{R}. \quad (1)$$

Then we should prove that $f(x) \geq 0$, for $\forall x \in \mathbb{R}$.

Let take the first and second derivative of $f(x)$:

$$f'(x) = 12x(x^2 + x + 1), \quad (2)$$

$$f''(x) = 12(3x^2 + 2x + 1). \quad (3)$$

Note the equation $3x^2 + 2x + 1 = 0$, $\Delta = 2^2 - 4 \times 3 \times 1 < 0$, so it is easy to know there doesn't have a solution to $f''(x) = 0$, which implies that $f''(x) > 0$, for $\forall x \in \mathbb{R}$. Hence

1. (b) PROOF. Let $f(x) = 3x^4 + 4x^3 + 6x^2 + 1$, and we need to show that $\forall x \in \mathbb{R}, f(x) > 0$. And denote the derivative function of f as $f'(x)$. By using formula $(x^n)' = nx^{n-1}$ ($n \neq 0$) and $c' = 0$ (c is a constant), we get $f'(x) = 12x^3 + 12x^2 + 12x$, which is also equal to $f'(x) = 12x(x^2 + x + 1)$ according to factorization. And we know that the function f reaches the maximum or minimum value when

$$f'(x) = 0 \quad (1)$$