Math 31
Limits and the Derivative

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February 22, 2021

Unfinished!

Contents

Factoring Brief Review

Differences of Square

$x^2 - 4 = (x+2)(x-2)$

Polynomial

$2x^2 + 3x - 2$
$\longrightarrow (2x^2 + 4x)(-x - 2)$
$\longrightarrow\ 2x(x+2) - 1(x+2)$
$\longrightarrow (2x-1)(x+2)$

Radical Fractions

- Multiply everything by monomial denominator
  $\frac{2}{\sqrt{2x}} \longrightarrow \frac{2\sqrt{2x}}{2x} \longrightarrow \frac{\sqrt{2x}}{x}$
- Multiply everything by conjugate for polynomial denominators
  $\frac{3}{2+\sqrt{x}} \times \frac{2-\sqrt{x}}{2-\sqrt{x}} = \frac{6-3\sqrt{x}}{4-2\sqrt{2}+2\sqrt{x}-x} = \frac{6-3\sqrt{x}}{4-x}$

Mixed Radicals

$\sqrt{162} \longrightarrow \sqrt{9^2 \times 2} \longrightarrow \sqrt{9^2} \times \sqrt{2} \longrightarrow 9\sqrt{2}$

Absolute Polynomial

$|x-1| = 3$

$x - 1 = 3,\ x = 4$
$x - 1 = -3,\ x = -2$

Adding/Subtracting Fractions

Multiply both terms so that the denominators are the same, then add/subtract.
$\frac{2}{x-1} - \frac{3}{x+3}$
$\longrightarrow \frac{2(x+3)}{(x-1)(x+3)} - \frac{3(x-1)}{(x-1)(x+3)}$

$\longrightarrow \frac{(2x+6)-(3x-3)}{(x-1)(x+3)}$
$= \frac{-x+3}{(x-1)(x+3)}$

Piecewise Functions

Piecewise functions are functions with multiple inequalities/restrictions that dictate which function to use at specific x values.

When graphing...

- if an inequality is less/greater than a value, the plot point is not filled in
- if an inequality is less/greater than OR equal to a value, the plot point is filled in
- if x of different functions equal the same value, the graphs are continuous, and are filled in if one of the functions is inclusive

If the inequalities do not state a function for a specific x value (e.g. $x = 2$ for $2 < x < 2$) then that value **DNE**. (does not exist)

Rational Function

A function with a polynomial in the numerator and denominator.

Vertical Asymptotes

Zeros of the denominator of a rational function.

x may approach these values, but never touch them.

Point of Discontinuity

Any vertical asymptote (zeros of denominator) before simplifying a rational function.

These vertical asymptotes only applies to the unsimplified form; this makes it a point of discontinuity.

These points are gaps in a graph line, have no y value, and therefore make a graph discontinuous.

Horizontal Asymptotes

Horizontal asymptotes describe the trend of a function.

The graph line can cross over it fine, as opposed to vertical asymptotes.

Determining Horizontal Asymptotes

- degree of numerator $<$ degree of denominator
  $\longrightarrow y = 0$

- degree of numerator $=$ degree of denominator
  $\longrightarrow y = \frac{\text{leading coefficient of numerator}}{\text{leading coefficient of denominator}}$

- degree of numerator $>$ degree of denominator
  $\longrightarrow$ Divergent (no horizontal asymptote)

Limits

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = b$$

The limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches a is b.

A limit is the value of y as the x approaches a specific value, as opposed to equaling a specific value. This is useful for points of discontinuity, where the exact value doesn't exist, but the value approaching does.

For instance, if the point of discontinuity of $f(x)$ is $x = -1$, then...

$$f(-1) = \text{DNE}$$

$$\lim_{x \to -1} f(x) = -1$$

Properties

- $c =$ constant value
  $\lim\limits_{x \to a} c = c$
  $\lim\limits_{x \to a} cf(x) = c \lim\limits_{x \to a} f(x)$
- $\lim\limits_{x \to a} [f(x)]^n = [\lim\limits_{x \to a} f(x)]^n$
- $\lim\limits_{x \to a} \sqrt[n]{f(x)} = \sqrt[n]{\lim\limits_{x \to a} f(x)}$
- The rest of the rules can be summarized as limits have distributive property.
  e.g. $\lim\limits_{x \to a} [f(x) + g(x)] = \lim\limits_{x \to a} f(x) + \lim\limits_{x \to a} g(x)$

Limits of Continuous Functions

Any Polynomial

$y = f(x)$ is continuous at every value of a.

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) = f(a)$$

Just substitute x in the function with a.

Any Rational Function

$y = \frac{f(x)}{g(x)}$ is continuous at every value of a as long as $g(x) \neq 0$. (cannot divide by zero)

$$\lim_{x \to a} \frac{f(x)}{g(x)} = \frac{f(a)}{g(a)},\ g(a) \neq 0$$

Just substitute x in the function with a, unless a makes the denominator equal to zero. If so, refer to the next section.

Any Radical Function

$y = \sqrt{f(x)}$ is continuous at every value of a as long as $f(x) \geq 0$. (cannot root negatives)

$$\lim_{x \to a} \sqrt{f(x)} = \sqrt{f(a)},\ f(a) \geq 0$$

Just substitute x in the function with a, unless a makes the function equal to a negative. If so, refer to the next section.

Limits of Discontinuous Functions

Identically to finding points of discontinuity, simplify/rationalize the function in a limit if it does illegal math (divide by zero, root negatives) until it doesn't.

$$\lim_{x \to 4} (\frac{x^2 - 16}{x - 4})$$

$$\lim_{x \to 4} (\frac{(x-4)(x+4)}{x - 4})$$

$$\lim_{x \to 4} (x + 4) = 8$$

One-sided Limits

Limits of a function can be seperated into the value of approaching from the left and from the right. This is denoted with a superscript on a.

- From the left ($x < a$): $\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x)$
- From the right ($x > a$): $\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x)$

This is only really relevant for graphs that end (such as $y = \sqrt{x}$, approaching from the side without a line is DNE) or piecewise functions.

Continuous or Discontinous?

Continuous

Continuous functions have a left approaching limit and a right approaching limit equal to one another.

$$\text{if } \lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = \lim_{x \to a^+} f(x)$$
$$\text{then } \lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \lim_{x \to a} f(a)$$

Discontinuous

Discontinuous functions have a left approaching limit and a right approaching limit not equal to one another.

$$\text{if } \lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) \neq \lim_{x \to a^+} f(x)$$
$$\text{then } \lim_{x \to a} f(x) = \text{DNE}$$

Limits to Infinity

Limits of infinity either approach a value or DNE.

Rules

- Limits to infinity of normal numbers is often DNE. e.g.
  - $\lim_{n\to\infty} r^n = \text{DNE}$ (*iff* $|r| > 1$)
  - $\lim_{x\to\infty} 2^x = \text{DNE}$
  - $\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x^{-3}} = \text{DNE}$
- Limits to infinity of fractions with variable denominators is often infinity small, so 0. e.g.
  - $\lim_{n\to\infty} r^n = 0$ (*iff* $|r| < 1$)
  - $\lim_{n\to\infty} \frac{1}{n} = 0$
- The limit of infinity does not exist.
  $\lim_{n\to\infty} 3^n = DNE$
- $\lim_{n\to\infty} (-1)^n = DNE$

Finding Limits to Infinity

- Any fraction with a variable in the denominator will be zero.

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{a}{x^b} = 0$$

- Because of this, multiply a limit by something in order to put a variable under the terms, making them equal zero. e.g.

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{6n+9}{3n-2}$$

$$\frac{6n+9}{3n-2} \times \frac{\frac{1}{n}}{\frac{1}{n}}$$

$$\frac{6+\frac{9}{n}}{3-\frac{2}{n}} \longrightarrow \frac{6+0}{3-0}$$

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{6n+9}{3n-2} = 2$$

Derivatives

The derivative of a function gives the slope of a tangent line that just touches the point $(x, f(x))$.

Formulas

$$f'(x) = y' = \frac{dy}{dx} = \lim_{h\to 0} \frac{f(x+h)-f(x)}{h}$$

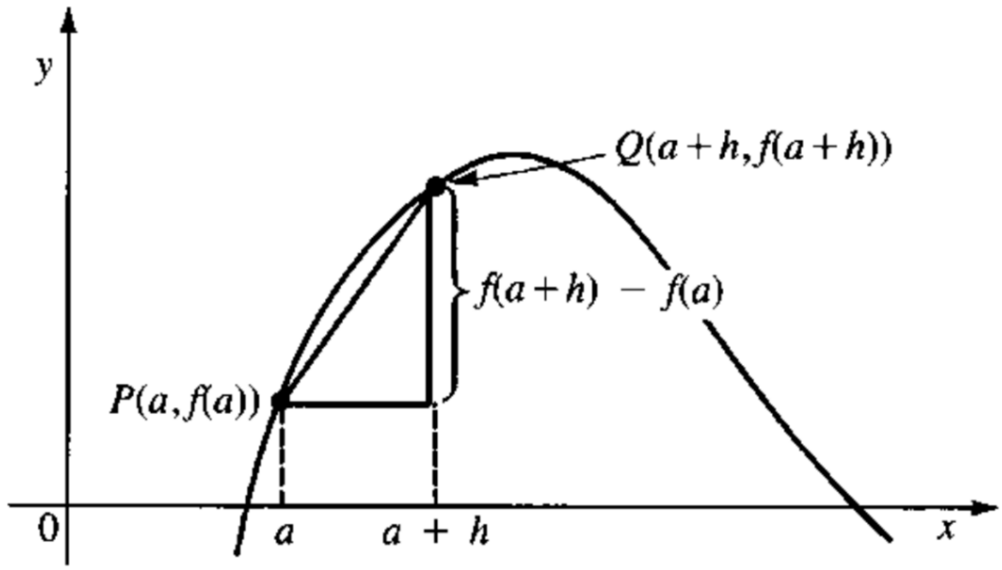

Figure 1: The limits formula calculates the slope of a secant line (between two points on curve) and shrinks said line (by h approaching zero) until it becomes a tangent line (the instantaneous slope of a point)

Limits Method

Slope at Specific Point

e.g. $f(x) = 3x^2 - 5x + 4$, find $f'(2)$

$$f(2) = 3(2)^2 - 5(2) + 4 = 6$$

$$\lim_{h \to 0} \frac{f(2+h) - f(2)}{h} \longrightarrow \lim_{h \to 0} \frac{[3(2+h)^2 - 5(2+h) + 4] - [6]}{h}$$

Expand and simplify until you are no longer dividing by zero.

$$\lim_{h \to 0} 3h + 7$$

Calculate the limit: subsitute h with 0

$$m = 7$$

General Expression

This is the actual derivative of a function. Inputting any value of x into this expression is equivalent to the previous step.

e.g. $f(x) = 3x^2 - 5x + 4$, find $f'(x)$

$$\lim_{h \to 0} \frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h} \longrightarrow \lim_{h \to 0} \frac{[3(x+h)^2 - 5(x+h) + 4] - [3x^2 - 5x + 4]}{h}$$

Some tears and bloodshed later...

$$f'(x) = 6x - 5$$

For instance, the previous section can be solved using this function.

$$f'(2) = 6(2) - 5 = 7$$

Slope to Equation

To get an equation such as $y = mx + b$ from just a slope (m) and a given point (x_1, y_1).

$$y - y_1 = m(x - x_1)$$