

M16600 Lecture Notes

Section 7.4: Integration of Rational Functions by Partial Fractions

■ Section 7.4 exercises, page 541: #9, 12, 19, 23, 24, 10, 11, 20, 25.

Terminologies:

- **Rational Function:** a ratio of polynomials

- **Partial Fractions Decomposition:** is the technique of decomposing rational function into a combination of simpler fractions

E.g., $\frac{x+5}{x^2+x-2} = \frac{2}{x-1} - \frac{1}{x+2}$

- **Integration by Partial Fractions:** is a method of integrating certain types of rational functions by first decomposing the rational function into simpler fractions then integrate.

E.g., $\int \frac{x+5}{x^2+x-2} dx = \int \left(\frac{2}{x-1} - \frac{1}{x+2} \right) dx = 2 \ln |x-1| - \ln |x+2| + C$

In order to perform the method of Integration by Partial Fractions, we need to be able to do these three processes:

1. Writing out the form of the partial fractions decomposition
2. Finding the values of the coefficients
3. Doing a u-substitution

Example 1 (Process 1): Write out the form of the partial fractions decomposition of the functions

Step 1: If the (highest degree of the numerator) is \geq the (highest degree of the denominator), do long division

Step 2: Factor the denominator completely

Step 3: Treat **Linear Factor** (highest degree is 1) and **Quadratic Factor** (highest degree is 2) differently

Step 4: Take care of **the multiplicity** of each factor accordingly

(a) $\frac{x+5}{x^2+x-2} = \frac{x+5}{(x-1)(x+2)}$

(b) $\frac{x^3-x+1}{x(x+4)^3(x^2+4)}$

$$\begin{aligned} x^2+x-2 &= x^2-x+2x-2 \\ &= x(x-1)+2(x-1)=(x-1)(x+2) \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{x+5}{(x-1)(x+2)} = \frac{a}{x-1} + \frac{b}{x+2}$$

$$\begin{aligned} &= \frac{a}{x} + \frac{b}{x+4} + \frac{c}{(x+4)^2} + \frac{d}{(x+4)^3} \\ &\quad + \frac{ex+f}{x^2+4} \end{aligned}$$

$$(c) \frac{x^3 + x^2 + 1}{x^2(x-1)(x^2+x+1)(x^2+1)^2}$$

$$= \frac{a}{x} + \frac{b}{x^2} + \frac{c}{x-1} + \frac{dx+e}{x^2+x+1} + \frac{fx+g}{x^2+1} + \frac{hx+i}{(x^2+1)^2}$$

Example 2 (Processes 1 and 2): Write out the form of the partial fraction decomposition of the functions then find the values of the coefficients

$$(a) \frac{x+5}{(x-1)(x+2)} = \frac{a}{x-1} + \frac{b}{x+2} \quad \Bigg] \times (x-1)(x+2)$$

$$\cancel{(x-1)}\cancel{(x+2)} \cdot \frac{x+5}{\cancel{(x-1)}\cancel{(x+2)}} = \cancel{(x-1)}\cancel{(x+2)} \cdot \frac{a}{\cancel{x-1}} + \cancel{(x-1)}\cancel{(x+2)} \cdot \frac{b}{\cancel{x+2}}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \Rightarrow x+5 &= a(x+2) + b(x-1) \\ &= ax + 2a + bx - b \\ &= (a+b)x + 2a-b \end{aligned}$$

$$\Rightarrow a+b=1 \quad \text{and} \quad 2a-b=5$$

$$\begin{array}{r} a+b=1 \\ 2a-b=5 \\ \hline 3a=6 \Rightarrow a=2 \end{array}$$

$$2+b=1 \Rightarrow b=-1$$

$$a=2, \quad b=-1$$

Alternatively

$$x+5 = a(x+2) + b(x-1)$$

Put $x=1$

$$1+5 = a(1+2) + b\cancel{(1-1)} \quad \rightarrow 0$$

$$6 = 3a \Rightarrow a=2$$

Put $x=-2$

$$-2+5 = a\cancel{(-2+2)} + b(-2-1) \quad \rightarrow 0$$

$$3 = -3b \Rightarrow b=-1$$

$$\frac{x+5}{(x-1)(x+2)} = \frac{2}{x-1} + \frac{-1}{x+2}$$

$$(b) \left[\frac{x^2 + 2x - 1}{x(2x-1)(x+2)} = \frac{a}{x} + \frac{b}{2x-1} + \frac{c}{x+2} \right] \times x(2x-1)(x+2)$$

$$x^2 + 2x - 1 = \cancel{x(2x-1)(x+2)} \frac{a}{\cancel{x}} + \cancel{x(2x-1)(x+2)} \frac{b}{\cancel{2x-1}} + \cancel{x(2x-1)(x+2)} \frac{c}{\cancel{x+2}}$$

$$x^2 + 2x - 1 = a(2x-1)(x+2) + b x(x+2) + c x(2x-1)$$

$$x^2 + 2x - 1 = a(2x^2 + 3x - 2) + b(x^2 + 2x) + c(2x^2 - x)$$

$$= (2a + b + 2c)x^2 + (3a + 2b - c)x - 2a$$

$$\begin{cases} 2a + b + 2c = 1 \\ 3a + 2b - c = 2 \\ -2a = -1 \Rightarrow a = \frac{1}{2} \end{cases}$$

$$3a + 2b - c = 2$$

$$-2a = -1 \Rightarrow a = \frac{1}{2}$$

$$\rightarrow \cancel{x} + b + 2c = \cancel{x} \Rightarrow b = -2c$$

$$\rightarrow 3\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) + 2(-2c) - c = 2$$

$$\frac{3}{2} - 4c - c = 2 \Rightarrow -5c = \frac{1}{2}$$

$$\Rightarrow c = -\frac{1}{10}$$

$$\Rightarrow b = -2c = \frac{1}{5}$$

Alternatively

Put $x = 0$:

$$-1 = a(-1)(2) \Rightarrow -1 = -2a$$

$$\Rightarrow a = \frac{1}{2}$$

Put $x = \frac{1}{2}$:

$$\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^2 + 2\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) - 1 = b \cdot \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{2} + 2\right)$$

$$\frac{1}{4} + 1 - 1 = b \cdot \frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{5}{2}$$

$$\frac{1}{4} = \frac{5}{4} \cdot b \Rightarrow b = \frac{1}{5}$$

Put $x = -2$:

$$(-2)^2 + 2(-2) - 1 = c(-2)(-4-1)$$

$$4 - 4 - 1 = 10c \Rightarrow c = -\frac{1}{10}$$

$$\frac{x^2 + 2x - 1}{x(2x-1)(x+2)} = \frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{1}{x} + \frac{1}{5} \cdot \frac{1}{2x-1} - \frac{1}{10} \cdot \frac{1}{x+2}$$

$$\int \frac{x^2 + 2x - 1}{x(2x-1)(x+2)} dx = \frac{1}{2} \int \frac{1}{x} dx + \frac{1}{5} \int \frac{1}{2x-1} dx - \frac{1}{10} \int \frac{1}{x+2} dx$$

$$= \frac{1}{2} \ln|x| + \frac{1}{5} \cdot \frac{1}{2} \ln|2x-1| - \frac{1}{10} \ln|x+2| + C$$

Example 3 (Process 3): Evaluate

$$1. \int \frac{1}{x+2} dx$$

$$= \ln|x+2| + C$$

$$2. \int \frac{2}{x-1} dx$$

$$= 2 \ln|x-1| + C$$

$$3. \int \frac{1}{5} \frac{1}{2x-1} dx$$

$$\swarrow = \frac{1}{5} \cdot \frac{1}{2} \ln|2x-1| + C$$

$$u = 2x - 1$$

$$4. \int \frac{2}{(x-1)^2} dx = 2 \int \frac{1}{(x-1)^2} dx$$

$$u = x - 1$$

$$du = dx$$

$$= 2 \int \frac{1}{u^2} du$$

$$= 2 \frac{u^{-2+1}}{-2+1} + C = 2 \frac{u^{-1}}{-1} + C = \frac{-2}{x-1} + C$$

Example 4: Evaluate $\int \frac{5x+1}{(2x+1)(x-1)} dx$

$$\left[\frac{5x+1}{(2x+1)(x-1)} = \frac{a}{2x+1} + \frac{b}{x-1} \right] \times (2x+1)(x-1)$$

$$\Rightarrow 5x+1 = a(x-1) + b(2x+1)$$

Put $x=1$:

$$6 = b(3)$$

$$\Rightarrow b=2$$

Put $x=-\frac{1}{2}$:

$$-\frac{5}{2}+1 = a\left(-\frac{1}{2}-1\right)$$

$$-\frac{3}{2} = a\left(-\frac{3}{2}\right) \Rightarrow a=1$$

$$\frac{5x+1}{(2x+1)(x-1)} = \frac{1}{2x+1} + \frac{2}{x-1}$$

$$\int \frac{5x+1}{(2x+1)(x-1)} dx = \int \frac{1}{2x+1} dx + 2 \int \frac{1}{x-1} dx$$

$$= \frac{1}{2} \ln|2x+1| + 2 \ln|x-1| + C$$

Example 5: Evaluate $\int \frac{4x}{(x-1)^2(x+1)} dx$

$$\left[\frac{4x}{(x-1)^2(x+1)} = \frac{a}{x-1} + \frac{b}{(x-1)^2} + \frac{c}{x+1} \right] \times (x-1)^2(x+1)$$

$$4x = a(x-1)(x+1) + b(x+1) + c(x-1)^2$$

Put $x=1$:

$$4 = 2b \\ \Rightarrow b = 2$$

Put $x=-1$:

$$-4 = c(-1-1)^2 \\ -4 = 4c \Rightarrow c = -1$$

Put $x=0$:

$$0 = -a + b + c \\ 0 = -a + 2 + (-1) \\ \Rightarrow a = 1$$

$$\frac{4x}{(x-1)^2(x+1)} = \frac{1}{x-1} + \frac{2}{(x-1)^2} - \frac{1}{x+1}$$

$$\int \frac{4x}{(x-1)^2(x+1)} dx = \int \frac{1}{x-1} dx + 2 \int \frac{1}{(x-1)^2} dx - \int \frac{1}{x+1} dx$$

$$= \ln|x-1| + 2 \int \frac{1}{u^2} du - \ln|x+1| + C$$

$\swarrow u = x-1$

$$= \ln|x-1| - \frac{2}{x-1} - \ln|x+1| + C$$

$$\frac{u^{-2+1}}{-2+1}$$

It is useful to remember this integral formula

$$\int \frac{1}{x^2 + a^2} dx = \frac{1}{a} \tan^{-1} \left(\frac{x}{a} \right) + C$$

When $a = 1$, the above formula becomes one we already know $\int \frac{1}{x^2 + 1} dx = \tan^{-1}(x) + C$.

Example 6: Evaluate $\int \frac{2x^2 - x + 1}{x^3 + x} dx$

$$\left[\frac{2x^2 - x + 1}{x^3 + x} = \frac{2x^2 - x + 1}{x(x^2 + 1)} = \frac{a}{x} + \frac{bx + c}{x^2 + 1} \right] x(x^2 + 1)$$

$$\Rightarrow 2x^2 - x + 1 = a(x^2 + 1) + (bx + c)x$$

Put $x = 0$:

$$1 = a(0^2 + 1)$$

$$\Rightarrow a = 1$$

Put $x = 1$:

$$2 - 1 + 1 = a(2) + b + c$$

$$2 = 2a + b + c$$

Put $x = -1$:

$$2 + 1 + 1 = a(2) + (-b + c)(-1)$$

$$4 = 2a + b - c$$

$$\begin{array}{c} \uparrow \qquad \qquad \qquad \uparrow \\ b + c = 0 \\ b - c = 2 \end{array}$$

$$b + c = 0$$

$$b - c = 2$$

$$\Rightarrow 2b = 2 \Rightarrow b = 1$$

$$\Rightarrow c = -1$$

$$\frac{2x^2 - x + 1}{x^3 + x} = \frac{1}{x} + \frac{x - 1}{x^2 + 1}$$

$$= \frac{1}{x} + \frac{x - 1}{x^2 + 1}$$

$$\int \frac{2x^2 - x + 1}{x^3 + x} dx = \underbrace{\int \frac{1}{x} dx}_{\ln|x|} + \int \frac{x - 1}{x^2 + 1}$$

$$\int \frac{x-1}{x^2+1} = \int \frac{x}{x^2+1} dx - \underbrace{\int \frac{1}{x^2+1} dx}_{\tan^{-1}(x)}$$

\uparrow
 $u = x^2 + 1$

$$\Rightarrow du = 2x dx \Rightarrow \frac{1}{2} du = x dx$$

$$\begin{aligned} \int \frac{x}{x^2+1} dx &= \int \frac{1}{u} \cdot \frac{1}{2} du = \frac{1}{2} \ln|u| + C \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \ln|x^2+1| + C \end{aligned}$$

$$\int \frac{2x^2 - x + 1}{x^3 + x} dx = \int \frac{1}{x} dx + \int \frac{x-1}{x^2+1}$$

$$= \ln|x| + \int \frac{x}{x^2+1} dx - \int \frac{1}{x^2+1} dx$$

$$= \ln|x| + \frac{1}{2} \ln|x^2+1| - \arctan(x) + C$$