

Let F be a function on (a, b) with two continuous derivatives.
By Taylor's theorem,

$$F'(y) = F'(x) + (y - x)F''(x) + (y - x)\eta(x)$$

with $\lim_{x \rightarrow y} \eta(x) = 0$. Setting

$$\psi(x) = \eta(y - x)$$

we get

$$F'(y) = F'(x) + (y - x)F''(x) + (y - x)\psi(y - x)$$

with $\lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \psi(h) = 0$.

Then

$$\begin{aligned} & F(x + h) - F(x) \\ &= \int_x^{x+h} F'(y) dy \\ &= \int_x^{x+h} F'(x) dy + \int_x^{x+h} (y - x)F''(x) dy + \int_x^{x+h} (y - x)\psi(y - x) dy \\ &= hF'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2}F''(x) + h^2\varphi(h), \end{aligned}$$

where in the last line we use

$$\begin{aligned} \int_x^{x+h} (y - x)\psi(y - x) dy &= \int_0^h t\psi(t) dt \\ &= \psi(\eta) \int_0^h t dt \\ &= \frac{h^2}{2}\psi(\eta) \end{aligned}$$

for some η between 0 and h and set $\varphi(h) = \psi(\eta)/2$. Then $\varphi(h) \rightarrow 0$ as $h \rightarrow 0$.

Hence,

$$F(x + h) = F(x) + hF'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2}F''(x) + h^2\varphi(h)$$

with $\lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \varphi(h) = 0$.

Hence

$$\begin{aligned} & F(x + h) + F(x - h) - 2F(x) \\ &= F(x) + hF'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2}F''(x) + h^2\varphi(h) \\ &\quad + F(x) - hF'(x) + \frac{h^2}{2}F''(x) + h^2\varphi(-h) \\ &\quad - 2F(x) \\ &= h^2F''(x) + h^2\varphi(h) + h^2\varphi(-h). \end{aligned}$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned}\lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{F(x+h) + F(x-h) - 2F(x)}{h^2} &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} (F''(x) + \varphi(h) + \varphi(-h)) \\ &= F''(x),\end{aligned}$$

where we use the fact that $\varphi(h) \rightarrow 0$ as $h \rightarrow 0$.

□