



Why

We define the area under an extended real function.

Definition

The *positive part* of an extended-real-valued function is the function mapping each element to the maximum of the function's result and zero. The *negative part* of an extended-real-valued function is the function mapping each element to the maximum of the additive inverse of function's result and zero.

We decompose an extended-real-valued function as the difference of its positive part and its negative part. Both the positive and negative parts are non-negative extended-real-valued functions.

Consider a measure space. An *integrable* function is a measurable extended-real-valued function for which the non-negative integral of the positive part and the non-negative integral of the negative part of the function are finite. The *integral* of an integrable function is the difference of the non-negative integral of the positive part and the non-negative integral of the negative part.

If one but not both of the parts of the function are finite, we say that the integral *exists* and again define it as before. In this way we avoid arithmetic between two infinities.

Notation

Suppose A nonempty and $g : A \rightarrow \bar{\mathbf{R}}$. We denote the positive part of g by g^+ and the negative part of g by g^- so that

$$g^+(x) = \max\{g(x), 0\} \quad \text{and} \quad g^-(x) = \max\{-g(x), 0\} \quad \text{for all } x \in A$$

and $g = g^+ - g^-$. Of course, $g^+ \geq 0$ and $g^- \geq 0$.

Suppose (X, \mathcal{A}, μ) is a measure space and $f : X \rightarrow \bar{\mathbf{R}}$ is measurable and one of $\int f^+ d\mu$ or $\int f^- d\mu$ is finite (if both are finite, f is integrable).

We denote the integral of f with respect to the measure μ by $\int f d\mu$ so that

$$\int f d\mu = \int f^+ d\mu - \int f^- d\mu$$

