Calculus I
Limits involving infinity

Todor Milev

2019

Outline

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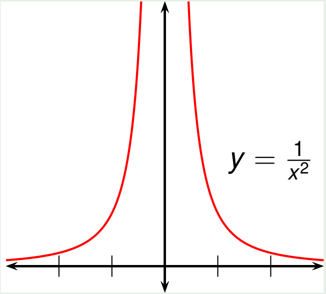
Infinite Limits

Example

Find $\lim_{x\to 0} \frac{1}{x^2}$ if it exists.



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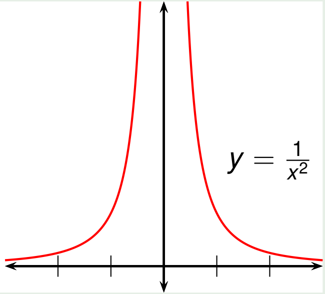

x	$\frac{1}{x^2}$
± 1	1
± 0.5	4
± 0.2	25
± 0.1	100
± 0.05	400
± 0.01	$10,000$
± 0.001	$1,000,000$

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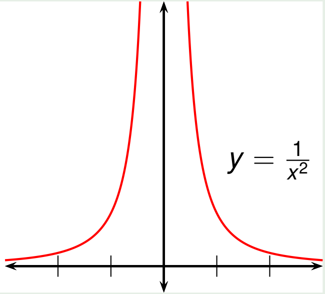

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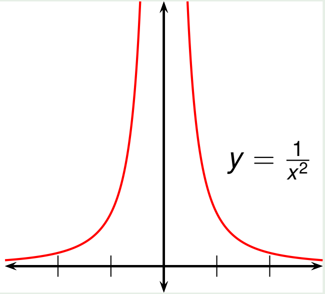

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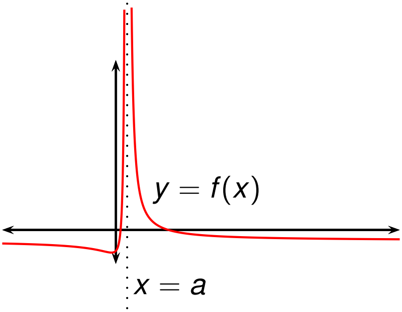
- As x gets close to 0, so does x^2, so $\frac{1}{x^2}$ gets large.
- $\frac{1}{x^2}$ can be made arbitrarily large by taking x close enough to 0.
- $f(x)$ doesn't approach a number, so $\lim\limits_{x\to 0} \frac{1}{x^2}$ doesn't exist.

Definition (Infinite Limit)

Let f be a function defined on both sides of a, except perhaps at a. Then

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

means the values of $f(x)$ can be made arbitrarily large by taking x sufficiently close to a, but not equal to a.



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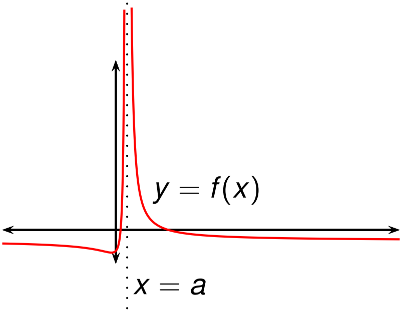

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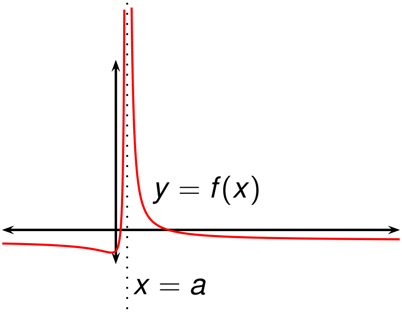

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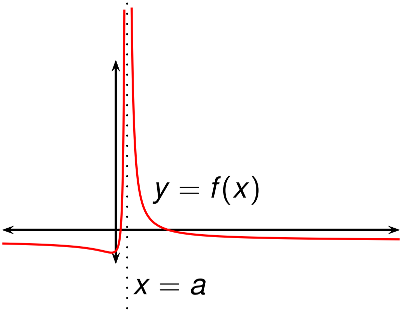

- Other notation: $f(x) \to \infty$ as $x \to a$.
- In such cases, the limit does not exist.
- ∞ is not a number. The notation $\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = \infty$ expresses the particular way in which the limit doesn't exist.

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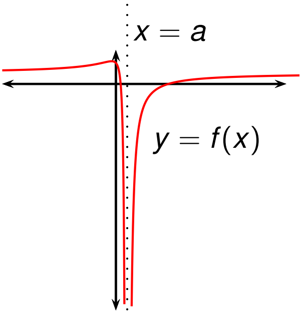

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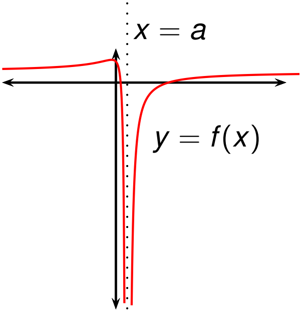

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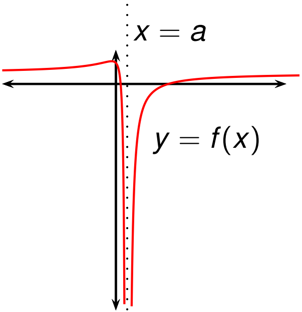

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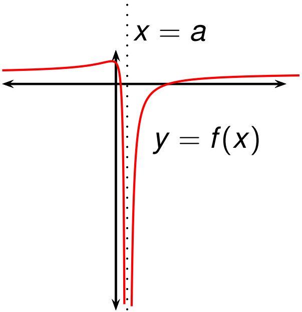
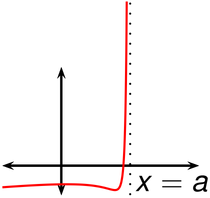
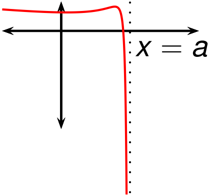


- Here, by “arbitrarily negative” we mean the number is negative with large absolute value.
- In such cases, the limit does not exist.
- $-\infty$ is not a number. The notation $\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = -\infty$ expresses the particular way in which the limit doesn’t exist.

There are similar definitions for one-sided limits:

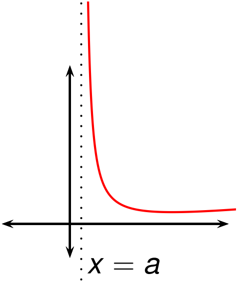


$$\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = \infty$$

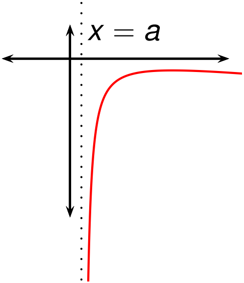


$$\lim_{x \to a^-} f(x) = -\infty$$

$x \to a^-$ means we only consider $x < a$.



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



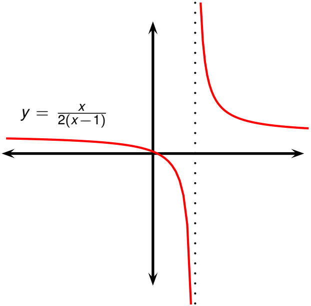
$$\lim_{x \to a^+} f(x) = -\infty$$

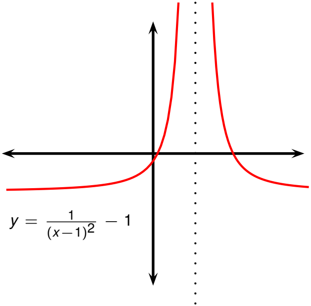
$x \to a^+$ means we only consider $x > a$.

Definition (Vertical Asymptote)

The line $x = a$ is called a vertical asymptote of the curve $y = f(x)$ if at least one of the following statements is true:

$$\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = \infty \qquad \lim_{x\to a^-} f(x) = \infty \qquad \lim_{x\to a^+} f(x) = \infty$$
$$\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = -\infty \qquad \lim_{x\to a^-} f(x) = -\infty \qquad \lim_{x\to a^+} f(x) = -\infty$$





Example

Find $\lim\limits_{x\to 3^+} \frac{2x}{x-3}$ and $\lim\limits_{x\to 3^-} \frac{2x}{x-3}$.

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- If x is near 3 but larger than 3, the denominator $x-3$ is a small positive number and $2x$ is close to 6.

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- If x is near 3 but smaller than 3, the denominator $x - 3$ is a negative number with small absolute value and $2x$ is close to 6.

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- If x is near 3 but smaller than 3, the denominator $x - 3$ is a negative number with small absolute value and $2x$ is close to 6.
- So $\frac{2x}{x-3}$ is a negative number with large absolute value.

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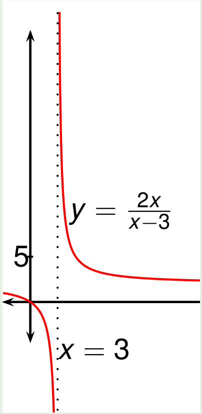

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- So $\frac{2x}{x-3}$ is a negative number with large absolute value.
- $x = 3$ is a vertical asymptote for $f(x) = \frac{2x}{x-3}$.

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

If we plug in a and get

$$f(a) = \frac{\text{something different from 0}}{0},$$

then the limit will be DNE, ∞, or $-\infty$.
To determine what the answer is, this is what we do:

1. Factor.
2. Determine if each factor is positive or negative.
3. An odd number of negative factors means the limit is $-\infty$.
4. An even number of negative factors means the limit is ∞.
5. For a two-sided limit, the answer is DNE unless the left limit and the right limit are either both ∞ or both $-\infty$.

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Find $$\lim_{x\to 1^+} \frac{x^2-3x}{x^2-3x+2}$$

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The numerator is non-zero and the denominator is zero. Therefore the answer is DNE, ∞, or $-\infty$.

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$$\text{Factor:} \quad \lim_{x\to 1^+} \frac{x^2-3x}{x^2-3x+2} = \lim_{x\to 1^+} \frac{x(x-3)}{(x-2)(x-1)}$$

$$\to \frac{(\ +\ )(\ -\ )}{(\ -\ )(\ +\ )}$$

$$= \mathbf{?}$$

Example (Infinite Limit)

Find $$\lim_{x\to 1^+} \frac{x^2-3x}{x^2-3x+2}$$

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$$\text{Therefore} \quad \lim_{x\to 1^+} \frac{x^2-3x}{x^2-3x+2} = +\infty.$$

Example (Infinite Limit)

Find $$\lim_{x\to -1} \frac{x^2+5x+6}{x^3+2x^2+x}$$

Example (Infinite Limit)

Find $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -1} \frac{x^2+5x+6}{x^3+2x^2+x}$

Plug in -1: $\displaystyle\frac{(-1)^2+5(-1)+6}{(-1)^3+2(-1)^2+(-1)} = \frac{?}{?}$

Example (Infinite Limit)

Find $\displaystyle \lim_{x \to -1} \frac{x^2 + 5x + 6}{x^3 + 2x^2 + x}$

Plug in -1: $\displaystyle \frac{(-1)^2 + 5(-1) + 6}{(-1)^3 + 2(-1)^2 + (-1)} = \frac{2}{\textbf{?}}$

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Factor: $\displaystyle\lim_{x\to -1} \frac{x^2+5x+6}{x^3+2x^2+x} = \lim_{x\to -1} \frac{(x+2)(x+3)}{\textbf{?}}$

Example (Infinite Limit)

$$\text{Find} \quad \lim_{x\to -1} \frac{x^2+5x+6}{x^3+2x^2+x}$$

$$\text{Plug in } -1\text{:} \quad \frac{(-1)^2+5(-1)+6}{(-1)^3+2(-1)^2+(-1)} = \frac{2}{0}$$

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$$\text{Factor:} \quad \lim_{x\to -1} \frac{x^2+5x+6}{x^3+2x^2+x} = \lim_{x\to -1} \frac{(x+2)(x+3)}{?}$$

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$$\to \frac{(\ +\ )\color{red}{(\ +\ )}}{(\mathbf{?}\ \ )(\mathbf{?}\ \ )}$$

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Example (Infinite Limit)

$$\text{Find} \quad \lim_{x\to -1} \frac{x^2+5x+6}{x^3+2x^2+x}$$

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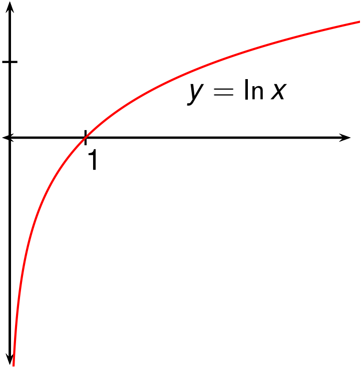
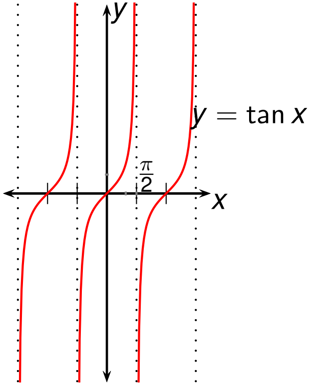
$$\text{Therefore} \quad \lim_{x\to -1} \frac{x^2+5x+6}{x^3+2x^2+x} = -\infty.$$





$$\lim_{x \to 0^+} \ln x =$$

$$\lim_{x \to \frac{\pi}{2}^+} \tan x =$$

$$\lim_{x \to \frac{\pi}{2}^-} \tan x =$$

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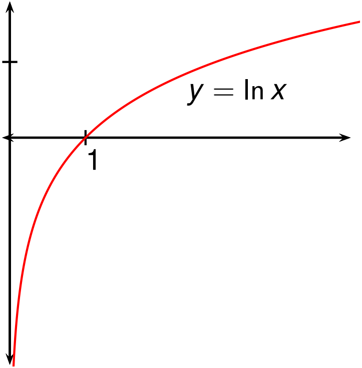

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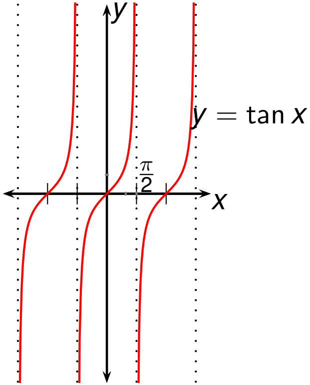

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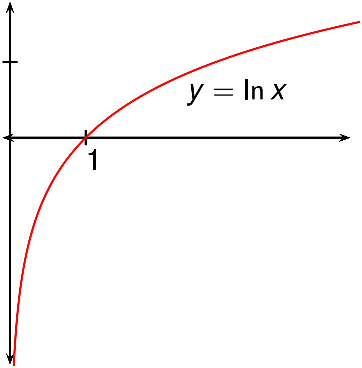

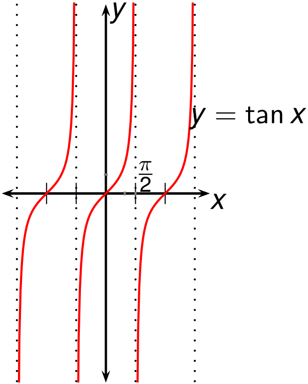

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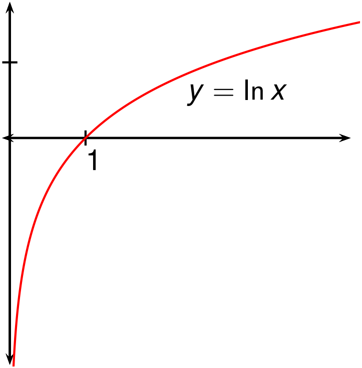

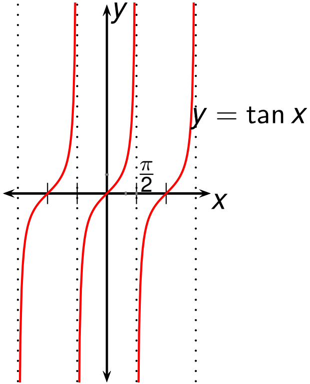

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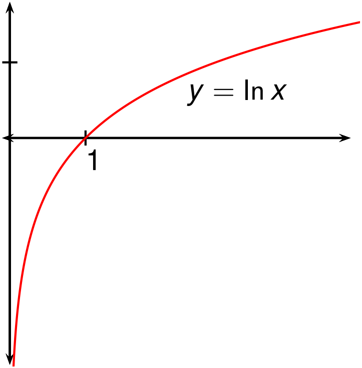

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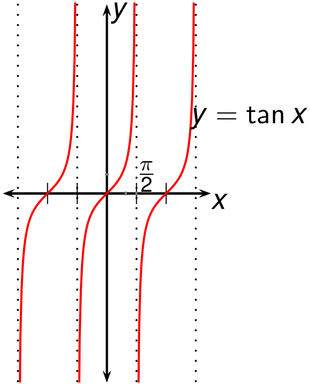

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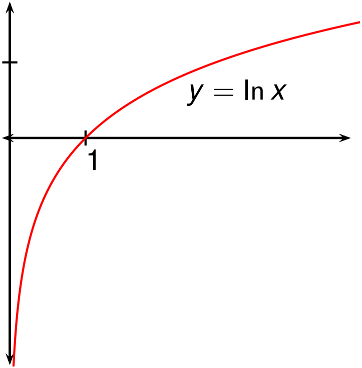

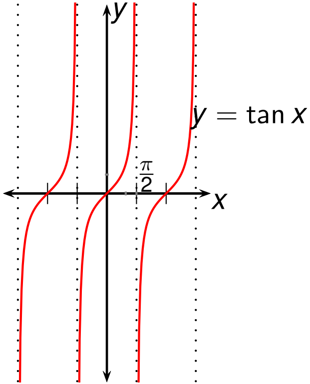

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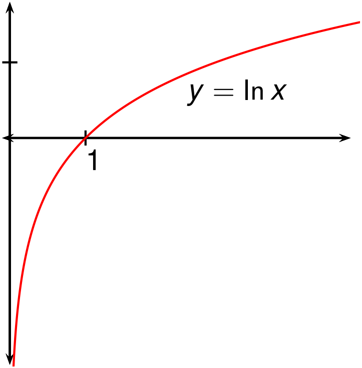

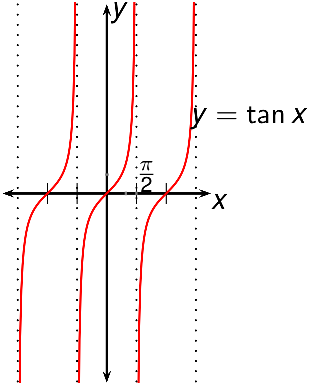

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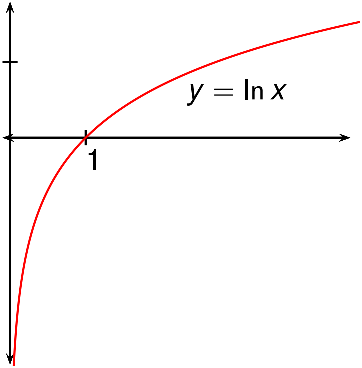

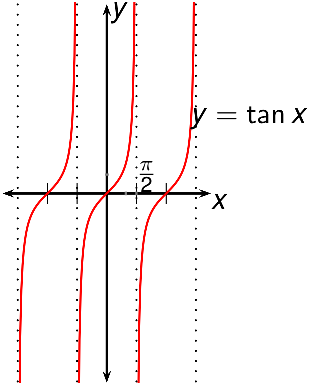

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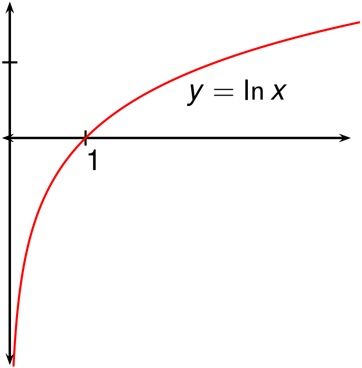

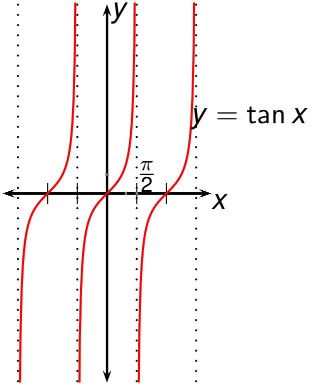

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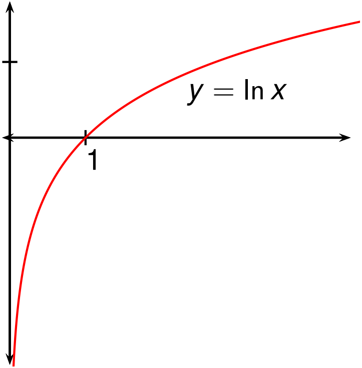

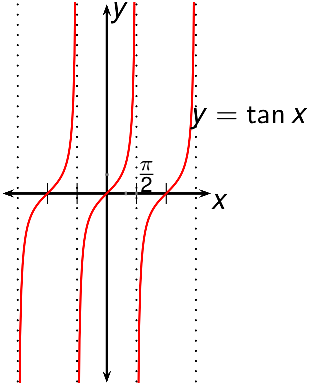

$$\lim_{x \to \frac{\pi}{2}^+} \tan x = -\infty$$

$$\lim_{x \to 0^+} \ln x = -\infty$$

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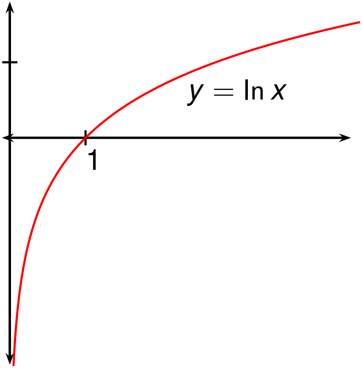

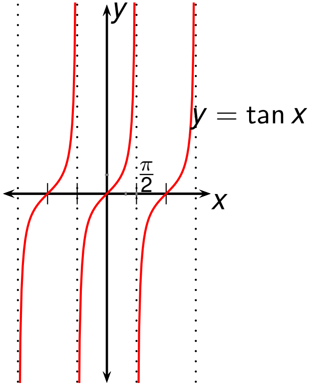

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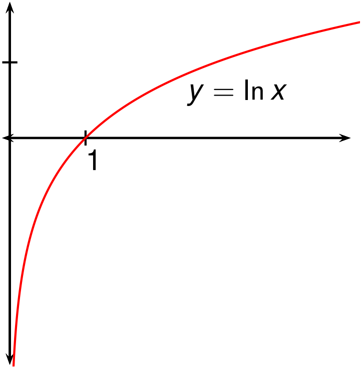

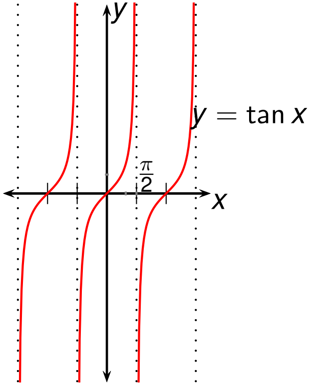

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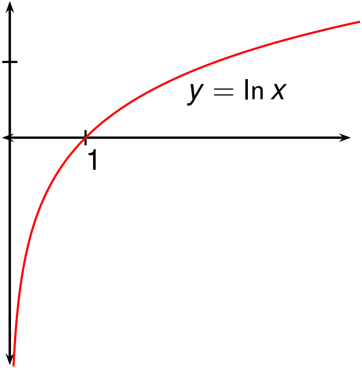
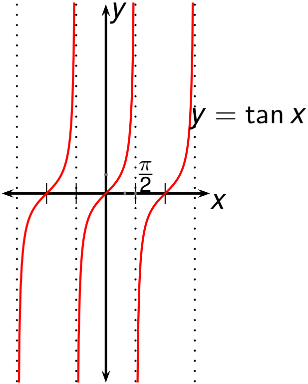
$$\lim_{x \to \frac{\pi}{2}} \tan x = \textbf{?}$$





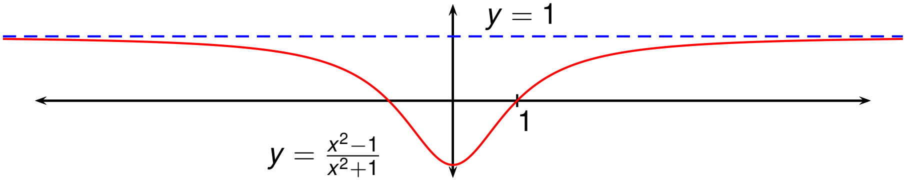
$$\lim_{x \to 0^+} \ln x = -\infty$$

$$\lim_{x \to \frac{\pi}{2}^+} \tan x = -\infty$$

$$\lim_{x \to \frac{\pi}{2}^-} \tan x = \infty$$

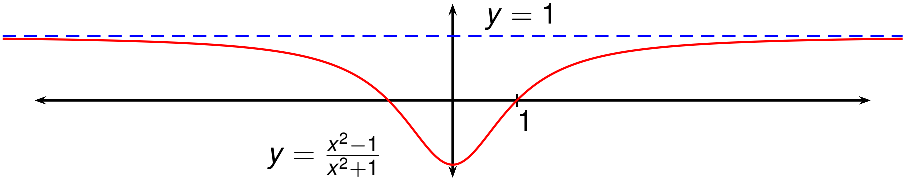
$$\lim_{x \to \frac{\pi}{2}} \tan x = \text{DNE}$$

Limits at Infinity; Horizontal Asymptotes



- Consider $f(x) = \frac{x^2-1}{x^2+1}$ as x becomes large.

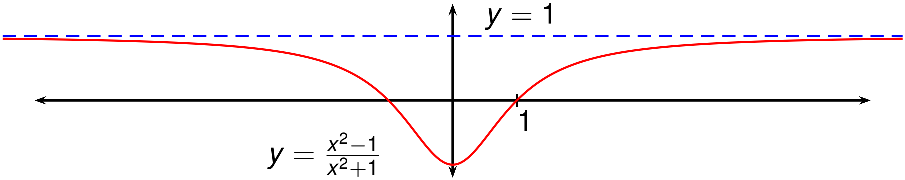
Limits at Infinity; Horizontal Asymptotes



x	$f(x)$
0	-1
±1	0
±2	0.600000
±3	0.800000
±4	0.882353
±5	0.923077
±10	0.980198

- Consider $f(x) = \frac{x^2-1}{x^2+1}$ as x becomes large.
- The values of $f(x)$ get closer and closer to 1.

Limits at Infinity; Horizontal Asymptotes



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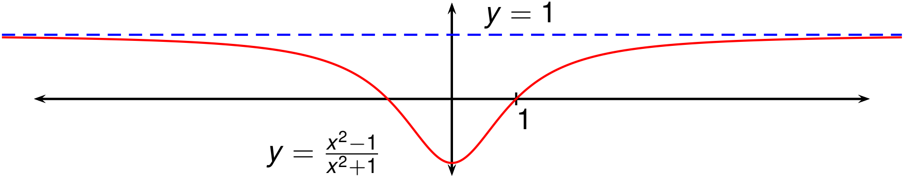

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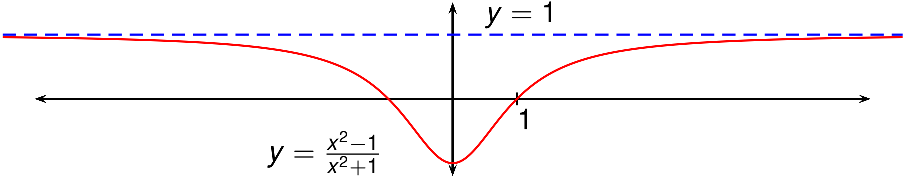
- When x is very negative, $f(x)$ is also near 1.

Limits at Infinity; Horizontal Asymptotes



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Definition (Limit at Infinity)

Let f be a function defined on some interval (a, ∞). Then

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} f(x) = L$$

means that the values of f can be made arbitrarily close to L by taking x sufficiently large.

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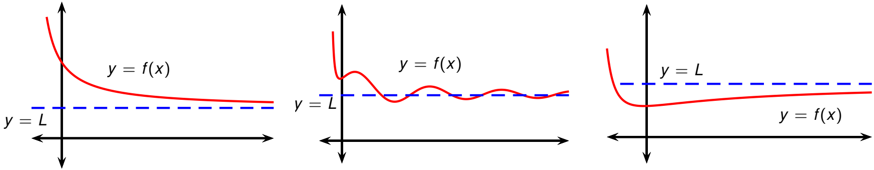

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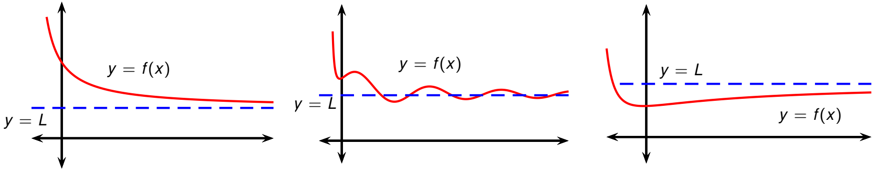

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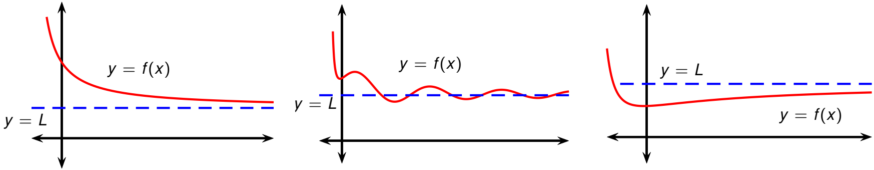

- There are many ways that this can happen.
- Other notation: $f(x) \to L$ as $x \to \infty$.
- ∞ is not a number.

Definition (Limit at Minus Infinity)

Let f be a function defined on some interval $(-\infty, b)$. Then

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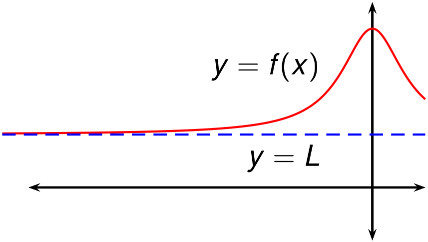
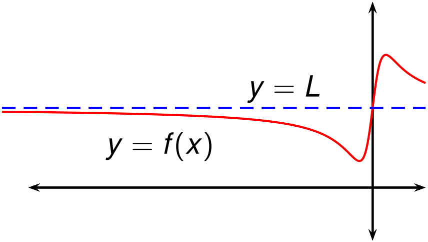
means that the values of f can be made arbitrarily close to L by taking x sufficiently negative.





Definition (Horizontal Asymptote)

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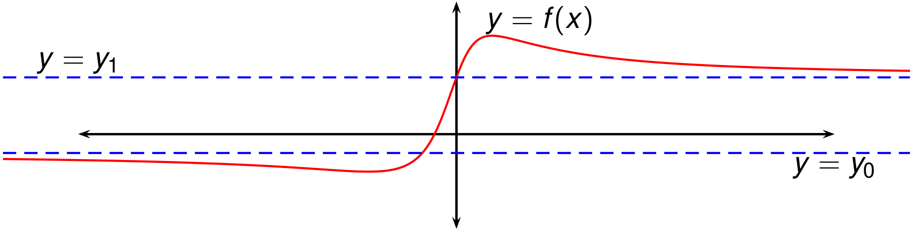
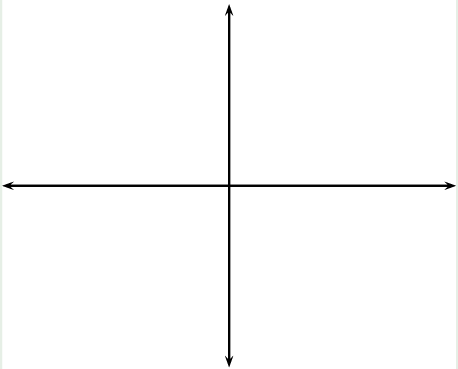
- Can a function have two horizontal asymptotes? Yes.

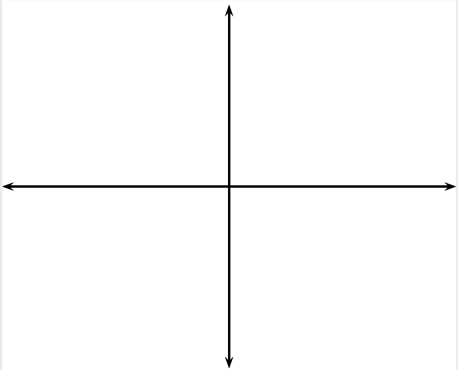


Example



Find $\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x}$ and $\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{1}{x}$.

Example

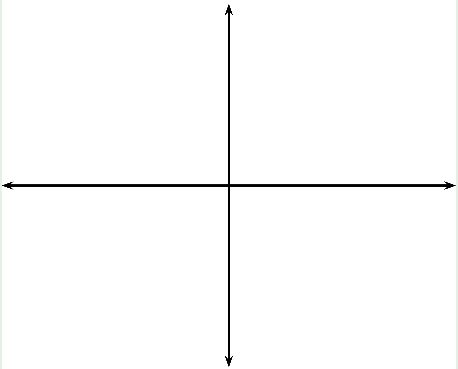


Find $\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x}$ and $\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{1}{x}$.

- When x is large, $\frac{1}{x}$ is small.

$$\frac{1}{100} = 0.01, \qquad \frac{1}{10,000} = 0.0001$$
$$\frac{1}{1,000,000} = 0.000001$$

Example



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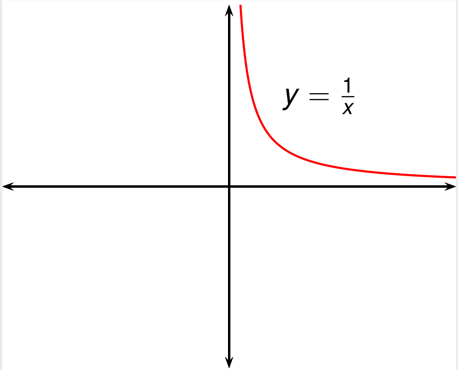

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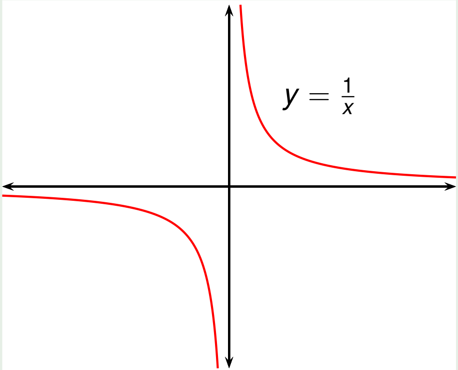

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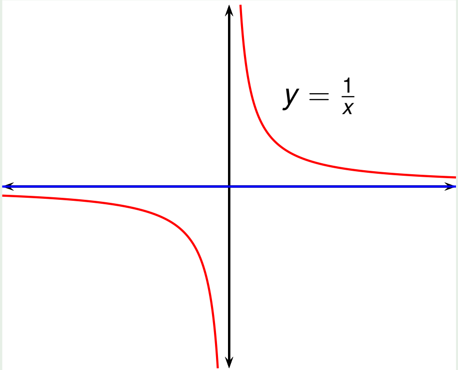

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- Therefore $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x} = 0$.
- Similarly, $\lim\limits_{x\to-\infty} \frac{1}{x} = 0$.
- $y = 0$ (the x-axis) is a horizontal asymptote for the curve $y = \frac{1}{x}$.

We can generalize the previous example to other powers of x:

Theorem (Infinite Limits of $\frac{1}{x^r}$)

If $r > 0$ is a rational number, then

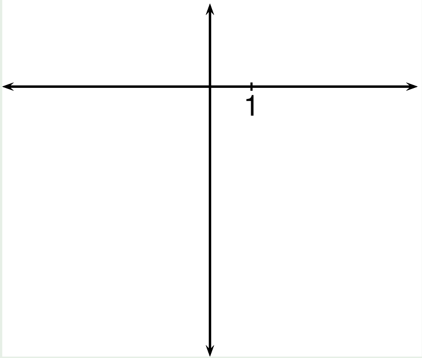
$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x^r} = 0.$$

If $r > 0$ is a rational number such that x^r is defined for all x, then

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{1}{x^r} = 0.$$

Example

Evaluate $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{3x^2-x-2}{5x^2+4x+1}$.



$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{(3x^2 - x - 2)}{(5x^2 + 4x + 1)}$$

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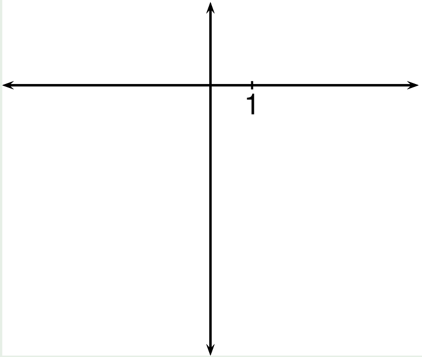

Standard approach: divide top and bottom by the highest power of x in the denominator.

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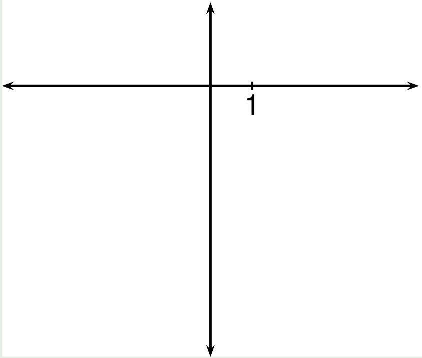

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$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\left(3x^2-x-2\right)}{\left(5x^2+4x+1\right)} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{x^2}}{\frac{1}{x^2}}$$

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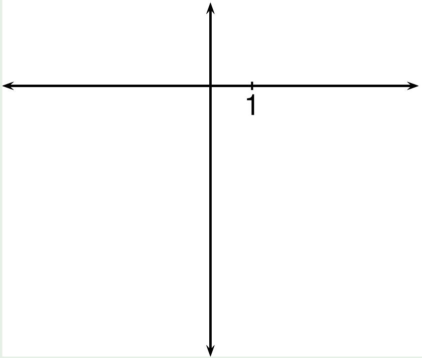

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$$= \quad \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{?}{}$$

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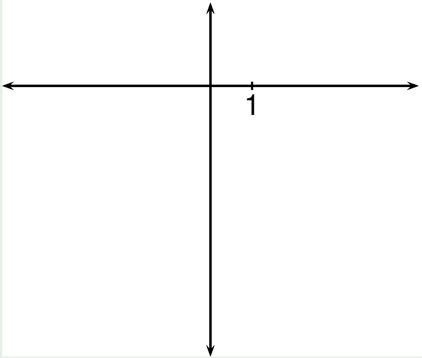

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$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{(3x^2 - x - 2)}{(5x^2+4x+1)} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{x^2}}{\frac{1}{x^2}}$$

$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{3 - \frac{1}{x} - \frac{2}{x^2}}{}$$

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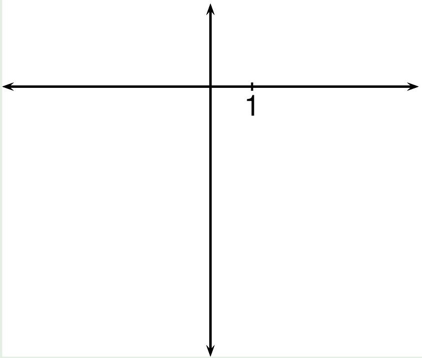
Evaluate $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{3x^2-x-2}{5x^2+4x+1}$.



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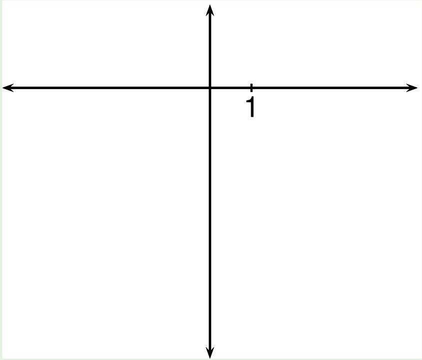

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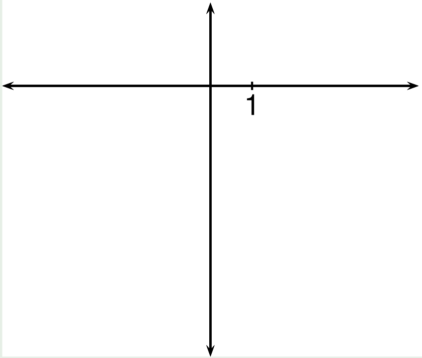

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$$
\begin{aligned}
& \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\left(3x^2-x-2\right)}{\left(5x^2+4x+1\right)} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{x^2}}{\frac{1}{x^2}} \\
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= & \frac{\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} 3 - \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x} - 2\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x^2}}{\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} 5 + 4\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x} + \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x^2}}
\end{aligned}
$$

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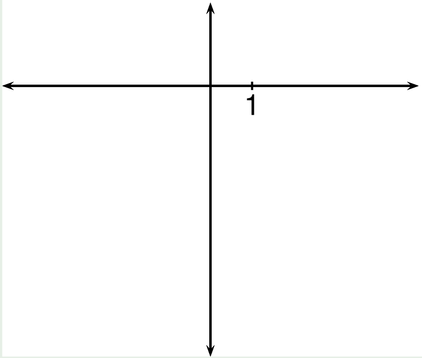
Evaluate $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{3x^2-x-2}{5x^2+4x+1}$.



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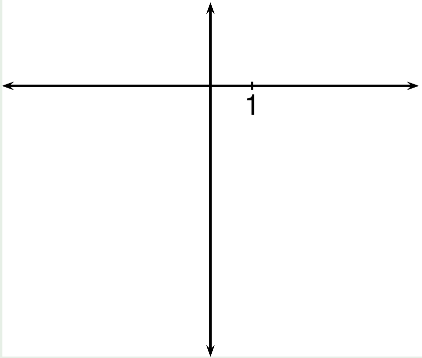

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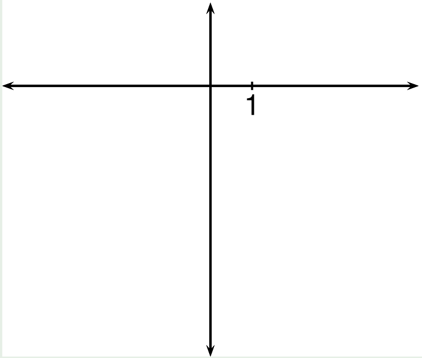
= \quad & \frac{3 - \mathbf{?} - \mathbf{?}}{\mathbf{?} + \mathbf{?} + \mathbf{?}}
\end{aligned}$$

Example

Evaluate $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{3x^2-x-2}{5x^2+4x+1}$.



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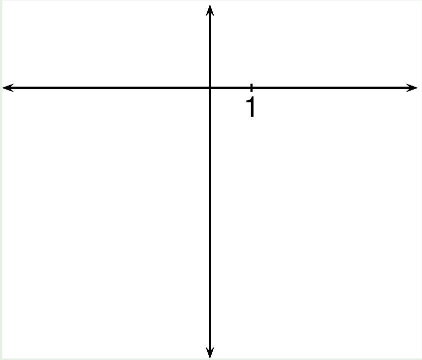

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$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{(3x^2 - x - 2)}{(5x^2 + 4x + 1)} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{x^2}}{\frac{1}{x^2}}$$

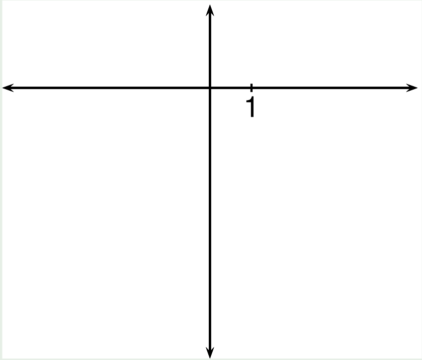
$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{3 - \frac{1}{x} - \frac{2}{x^2}}{5 + \frac{4}{x} + \frac{1}{x^2}}$$

$$= \frac{\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} 3 - \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x} - 2\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x^2}}{\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} 5 + 4\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x} + \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x^2}}$$

$$= \frac{3 - 0 - \mathbf{?}}{\mathbf{?} + \mathbf{?} + \mathbf{?}}$$

Example

Evaluate $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{3x^2-x-2}{5x^2+4x+1}$.



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= \quad & \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{3-\frac{1}{x}-\frac{2}{x^2}}{5+\frac{4}{x}+\frac{1}{x^2}} \\
= \quad & \frac{\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} 3 - \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x} - 2\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x^2}}{\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} 5 + 4\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x} + \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{x^2}} \\
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\end{aligned}$$

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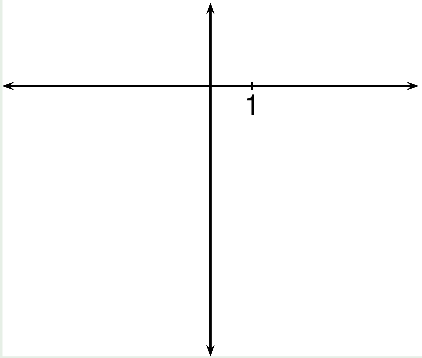
Evaluate $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{3x^2-x-2}{5x^2+4x+1}$.



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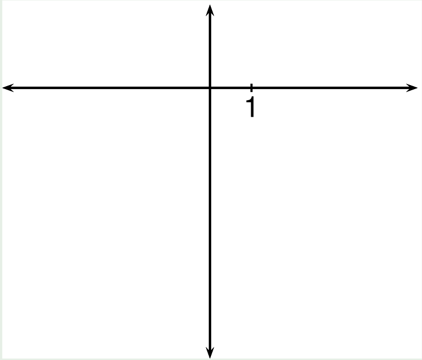

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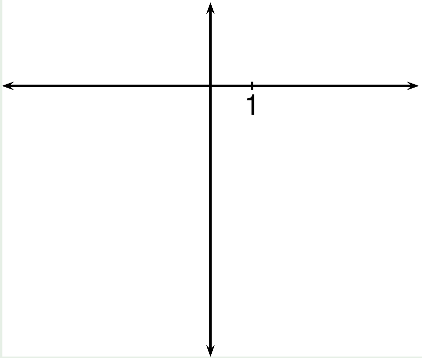

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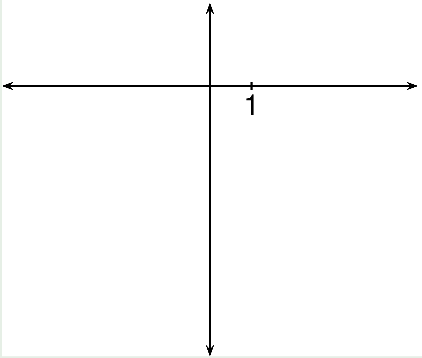

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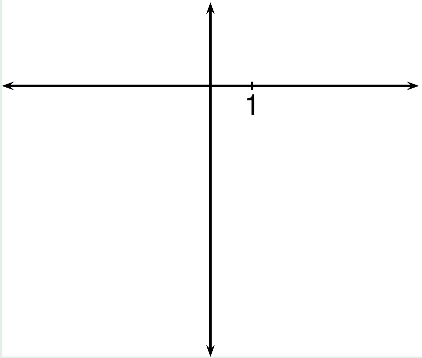

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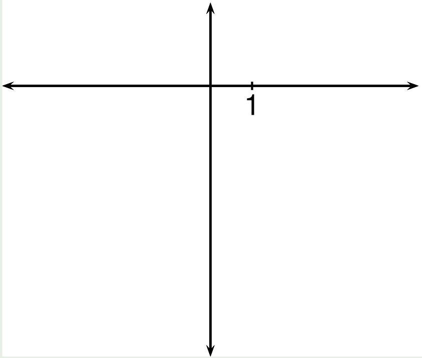

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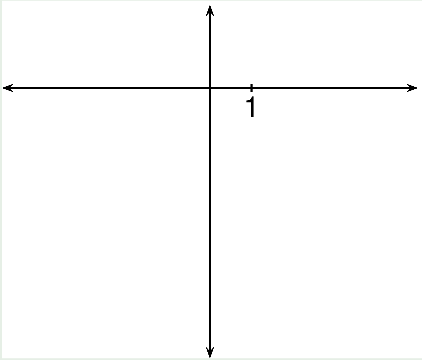

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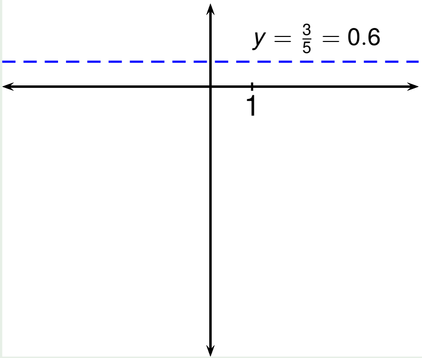
Evaluate $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} \frac{3x^2-x-2}{5x^2+4x+1}$.



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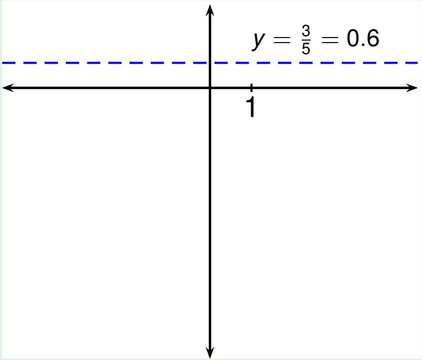

A similar calculation shows that the limit as $x \to -\infty$ is also $\frac{3}{5}$.

Standard approach: divide top and bottom by the highest power of x in the denominator.

$$
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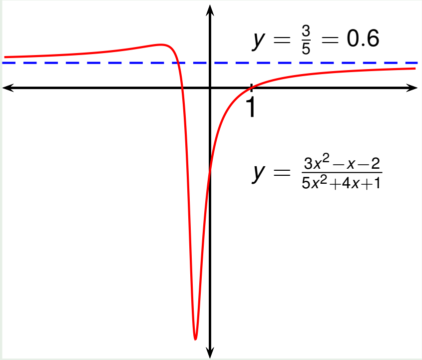
Example

Evaluate $\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{3x^2-x-2}{5x^2+4x+1}$.



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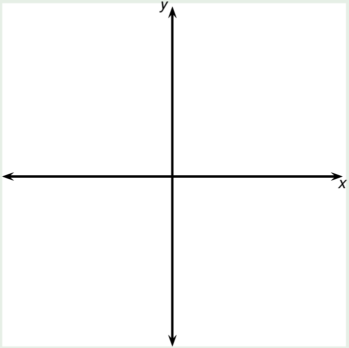
= & \frac{3 - 0 - 0}{5 + 0 + 0} = \frac{3}{5}
\end{aligned}$$

Example

Find the horizontal and vertical asymptotes of $f(x) = \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$.



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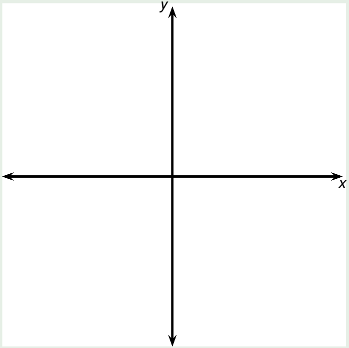

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$$

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$$

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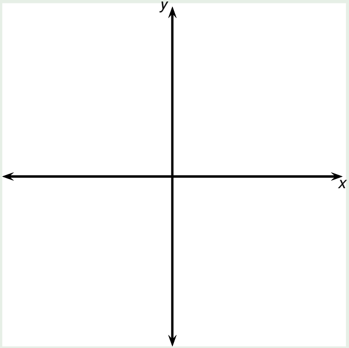
Find the horizontal and vertical asymptotes of $f(x) = \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$.

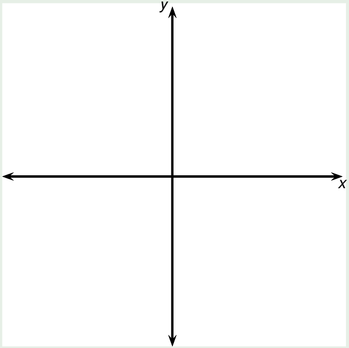


$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{x}}{\frac{1}{x}}$$

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$$

Example

Find the horizontal and vertical asymptotes of $f(x) = \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$.



$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{x}}{\frac{1}{x}} = \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{\sqrt{x^2}}}{\frac{1}{x}}$$

If $x > 0$ then $x = \sqrt{x^2}$.

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$$

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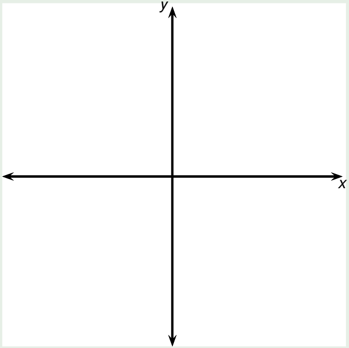

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$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\sqrt{?}}{?}$$

If $x > 0$ then $x = \sqrt{x^2}$.

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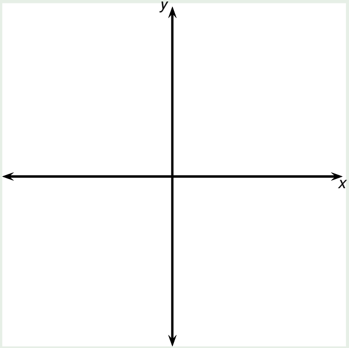
Example

Find the horizontal and vertical asymptotes of $f(x) = \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$.



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$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3+\frac{1}{x^2}}}{\textbf{?}}$$

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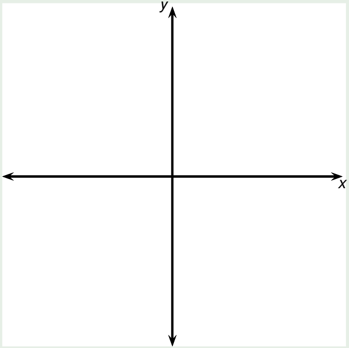

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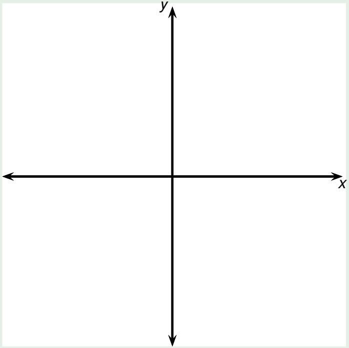

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If $x > 0$ then $x = \sqrt{x^2}$.

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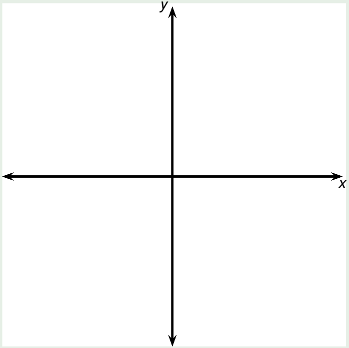

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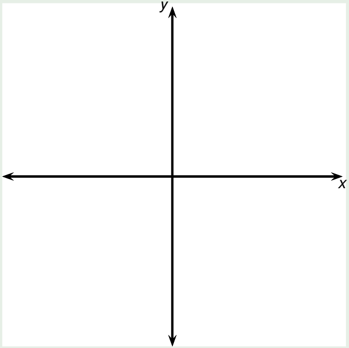

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$$= \frac{\sqrt{\mathbf{?}+\mathbf{?}}}{\mathbf{?}-\mathbf{?}}$$

If $x > 0$ then $x = \sqrt{x^2}$.

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$$

Example

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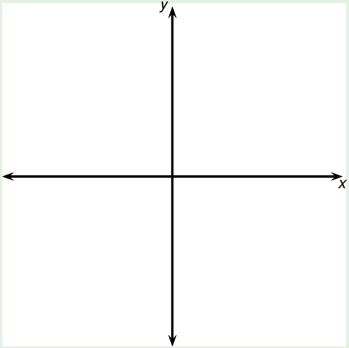

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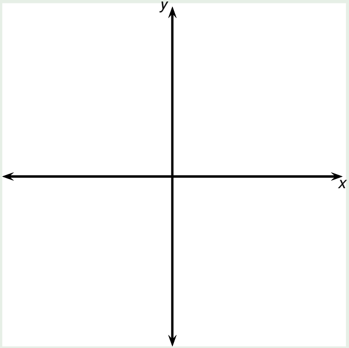
$$= \frac{\sqrt{3+\textbf{?}}}{\textbf{?}-\textbf{?}}$$

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$$

Example

Find the horizontal and vertical asymptotes of $f(x) = \frac{\sqrt{3x^2+1}}{2x-3}$.



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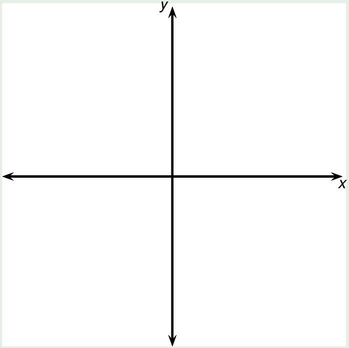

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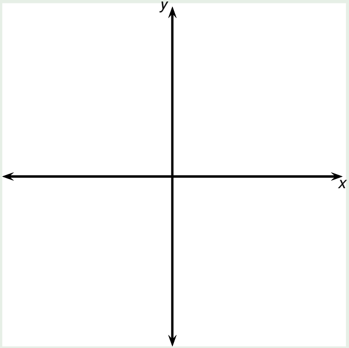

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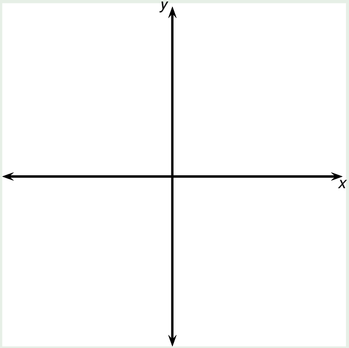

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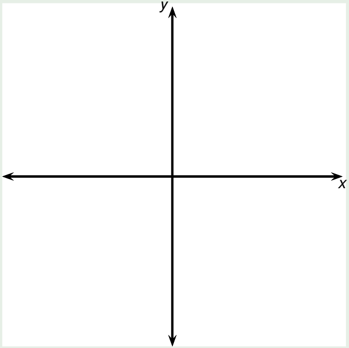

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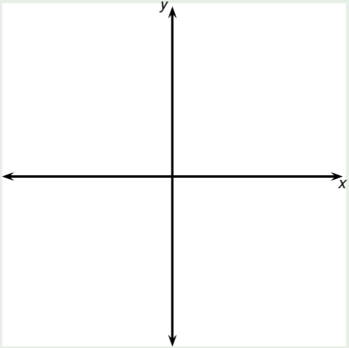

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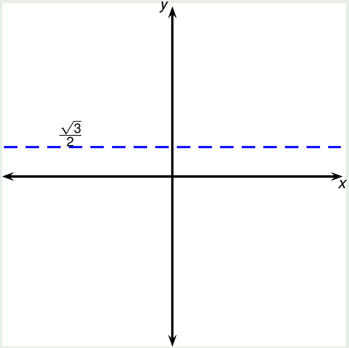

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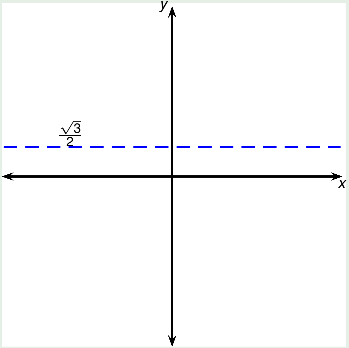

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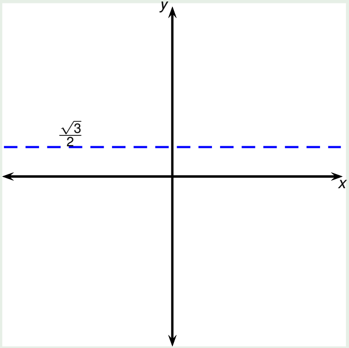

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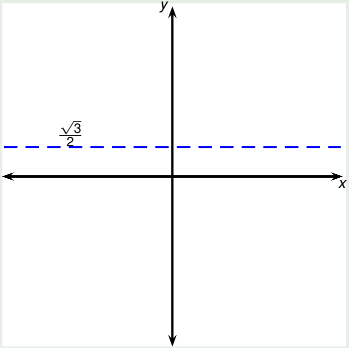

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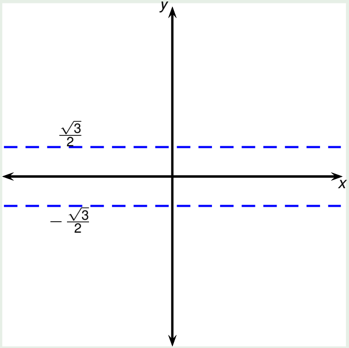

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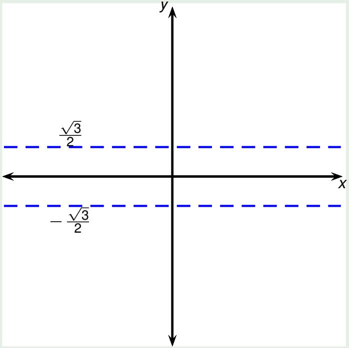

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Vertical Asymptote:

Example

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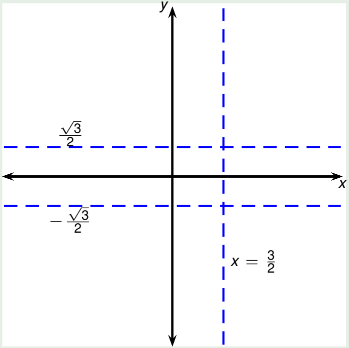

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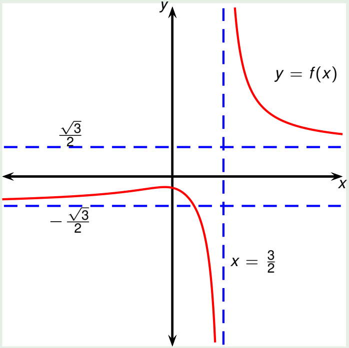

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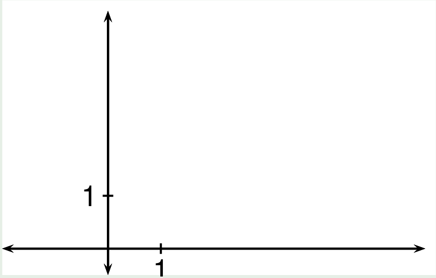
Example

Evaluate $\lim_{x\to\infty} \sqrt{x^2+1} - x$.



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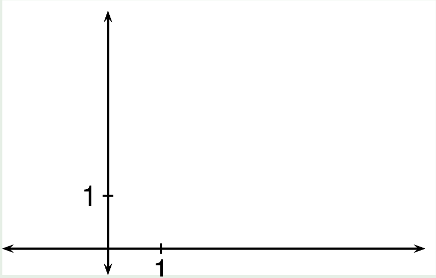
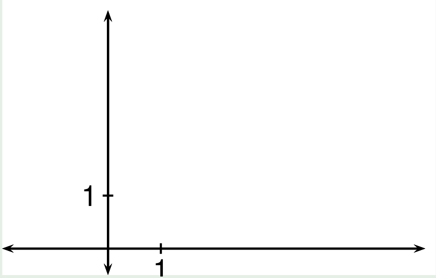


$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \left(\sqrt{x^2+1} - x\right)$$

- $\sqrt{x^2+1} \to \infty$ and $x \to \infty$ as $x \to \infty$.
- It isn't clear what happens to the difference.

Example

Evaluate $\lim_{x\to\infty} \sqrt{x^2+1} - x$.



- Standard approach: multiply top and bottom by $\pm$conjugate radical.

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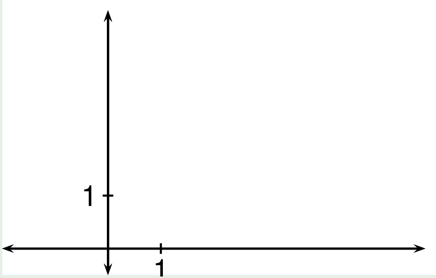

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$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \left(\sqrt{x^2+1} - x\right) \frac{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}$$

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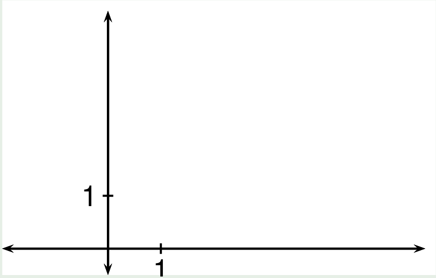

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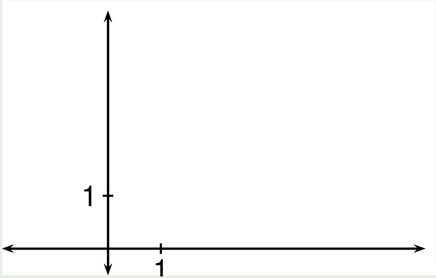

- $\sqrt{x^2+1} \to \infty$ and $x \to \infty$ as $x \to \infty$.
- It isn't clear what happens to the difference.

- Standard approach: multiply top and bottom by $\pm$conjugate radical.

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \lim_{x\to\infty} \left(\sqrt{x^2+1} - x\right) \frac{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x} \\
= & \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{(\cancel{x^2}+1) - \cancel{x^2}}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x} \\
= & \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{\left(\sqrt{x^2+1}+x\right)}
\end{aligned}
$$

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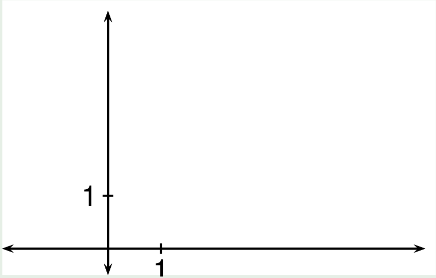

- $\sqrt{x^2+1} \to \infty$ and $x \to \infty$ as $x \to \infty$.
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$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \left(\sqrt{x^2+1} - x\right) \frac{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}$$

$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{(\cancel{x^2}+1) - \cancel{x^2}}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}$$

$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{\left(\sqrt{x^2+1}+x\right)} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{x}}{\frac{1}{x}}$$

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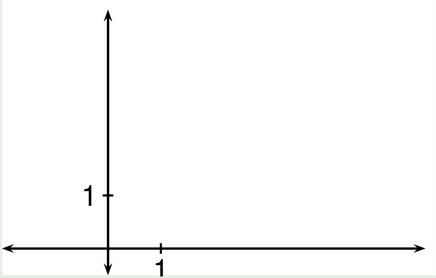

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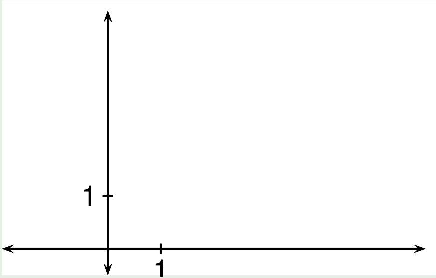

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$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{(\cancel{x^2}+1) - \cancel{x^2}}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}$$

$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{\left(\sqrt{x^2+{\color{red}1}}+x\right)} \cdot \frac{\frac{1}{x}}{{\color{red}\frac{1}{x}}}$$

$$= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\frac{1}{x}}{\sqrt{1+{\color{red}\frac{1}{x^2}}}+1}$$

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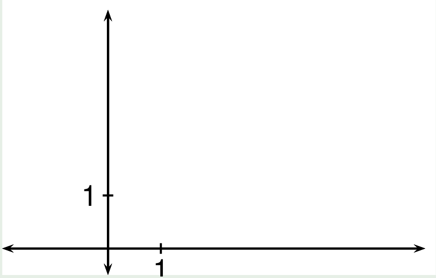

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\end{aligned}$$

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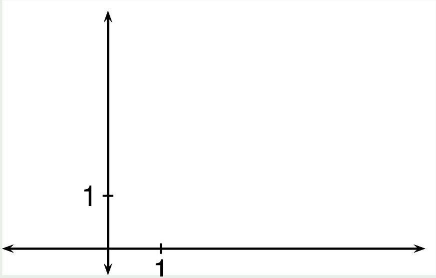

- Standard approach: multiply top and bottom by $\pm$conjugate radical.

$$\lim_{x\to\infty}\left(\sqrt{x^2+1}-x\right)\frac{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}$$
$$=\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{(\cancel{x^2}+1)-\cancel{x^2}}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}$$
$$=\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{1}{\left(\sqrt{x^2+1}+x\right)}\cdot\frac{\frac{1}{x}}{\frac{1}{x}}$$
$$=\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{\frac{1}{x}}{\sqrt{1+\frac{1}{x^2}}+1}$$
$$=\frac{0}{\sqrt{1+0}+1}$$

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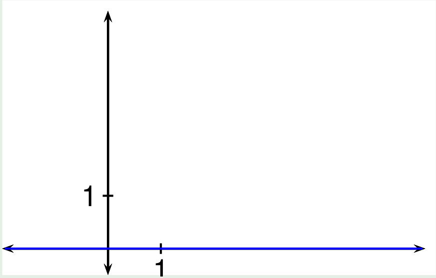

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\begin{aligned}
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&=\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{(\cancel{x^2}+1)-\cancel{x^2}}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}\\
&=\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{1}{\left(\sqrt{x^2+1}+x\right)}\cdot\frac{\frac{1}{x}}{\frac{1}{x}}\\
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\end{aligned}
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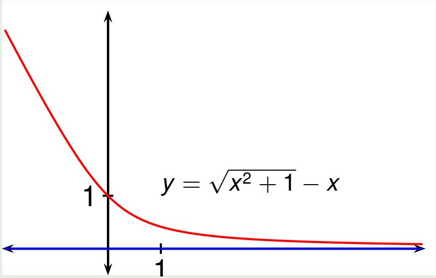

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&\lim_{x\to\infty} \left(\sqrt{x^2+1} - x\right) \frac{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}{\sqrt{x^2+1}+x}\\
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&= \lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{\frac{1}{x}}{\sqrt{1+\frac{1}{x^2}}+1}\\
&= \frac{0}{\sqrt{1+0}+1} = 0
\end{aligned}
$$

Infinite Limits at Infinity

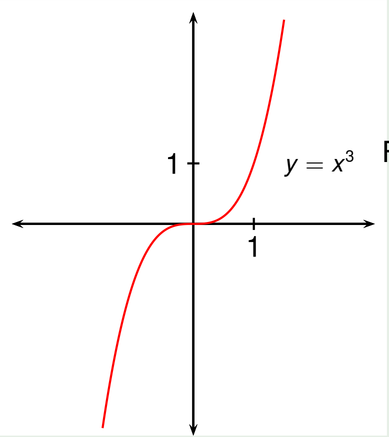
We write

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

to mean that $f(x)$ becomes large as x becomes large. We attach similar meaning to

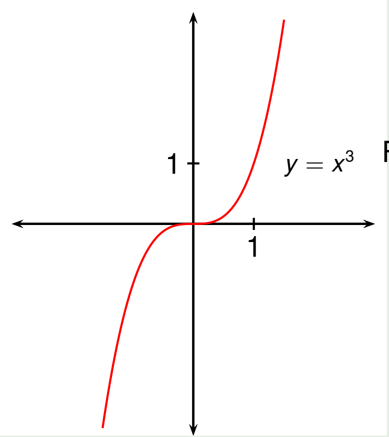
$$\lim_{x \to \infty} f(x) = -\infty, \qquad \lim_{x \to -\infty} f(x) = \infty, \qquad \lim_{x \to -\infty} = -\infty$$

Example



Find $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty} x^3$ and $\lim\limits_{x\to-\infty} x^3$.

Example

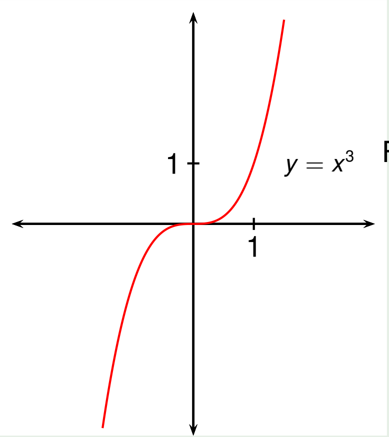


Find $\lim_{x\to\infty} x^3$ and $\lim_{x\to-\infty} x^3$.

- When x is large, so is x^3.

$10^3 = 1000, \qquad 100^3 = 1,000,000,$
$1000^3 = 1,000,000,000$

Example



Find $\lim_{x\to\infty} x^3$ and $\lim_{x\to-\infty} x^3$.

- When x is large, so is x^3.
- By taking x large enough, we can make x^3 arbitrarily large.

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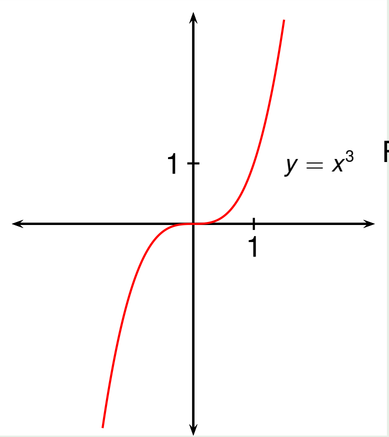
Example



Find $\lim_{x\to\infty} x^3$ and $\lim_{x\to-\infty} x^3$.

- When x is large, so is x^3.
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- Therefore $\lim_{x\to\infty} x^3 = \infty$.

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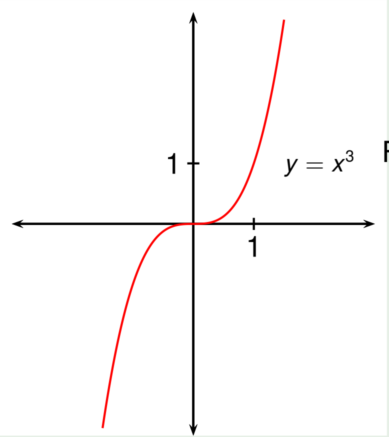
Example



Find $\lim_{x\to\infty} x^3$ and $\lim_{x\to-\infty} x^3$.

- When x is large, so is x^3.
- By taking x large enough, we can make x^3 arbitrarily large.
- Therefore $\lim_{x\to\infty} x^3 = \infty$.
- Similarly, $\lim_{x\to-\infty} x^3 = -\infty$.

$10^3 = 1000, \qquad 100^3 = 1,000,000,$
$1000^3 = 1,000,000,000$

Example

Find $\lim_{x\to\infty}(x^2 - x)$.

Example

Find $\lim_{x\to\infty}(x^2 - x)$.

- WRONG: $\lim_{x\to\infty}(x^2 - x) = \lim_{x\to\infty} x^2 - \lim_{x\to\infty} x = \infty - \infty = 0.$

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- WRONG: $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty}(x^2 - x) = \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} x^2 - \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} x = \infty - \infty = 0$.
- The limit laws don't apply here as the limits on the right don't exist (recall: limits equal to ∞ don't exist).

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- Instead: $\lim_{x\to\infty}(x^2 - x) = \lim_{x\to\infty} x(x-1) = \infty$.

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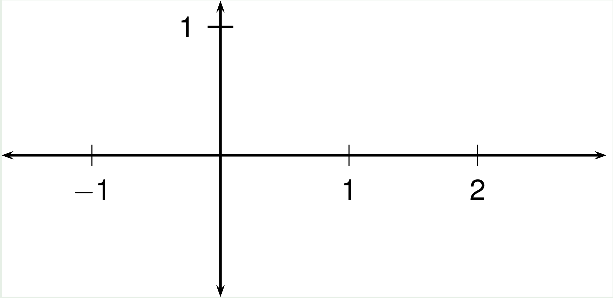
- The limit laws don't apply here as the limits on the right don't exist (recall: limits equal to ∞ don't exist).
- Furthermore arithmetics with ∞ is not allowed: ∞ isn't a number.
- Instead: $\lim\limits_{x\to\infty}(x^2 - x) = \lim\limits_{x\to\infty} x(x-1) = \infty$.
- This is because x and $x - 1$ both become arbitrarily large as $x \to \infty$.

Example

Find the limits as $x \to \infty$ and $x \to -\infty$ of

$$y = \frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4(x+1)^3(x-1).$$



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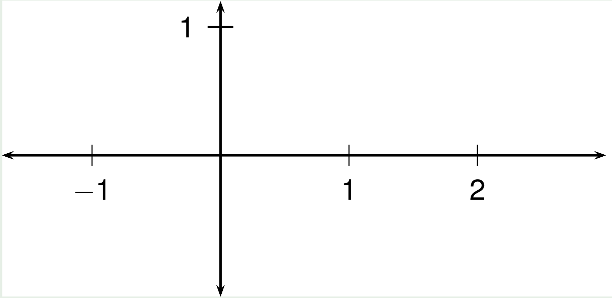

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4(x+1)^3(x-1) \quad =$$

$$(\quad)\qquad(\quad)\quad(\quad)$$

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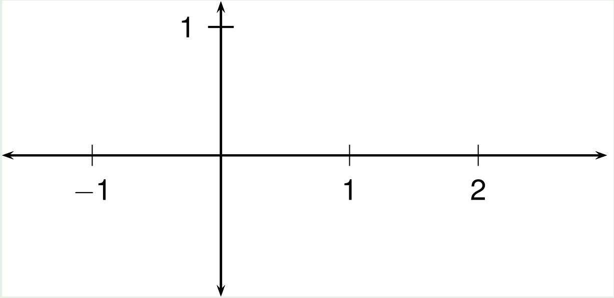

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4(x+1)^3(x-1) =$$

$$(\mathbf{?}\ )\qquad(\mathbf{?}\ )\quad(\mathbf{?}\ )$$

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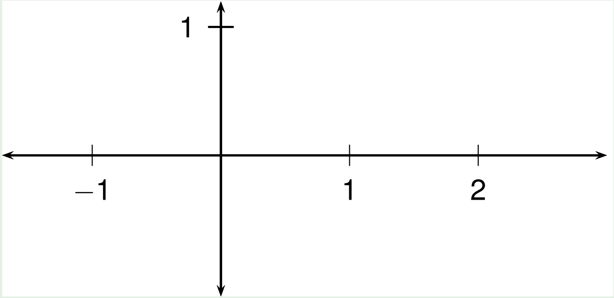

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$$(+) \quad (\mathbf{?}\ ) \quad (\mathbf{?}\ )$$

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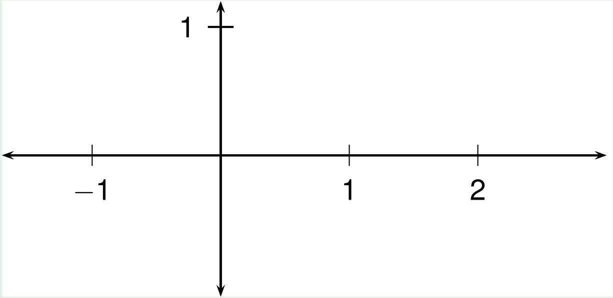

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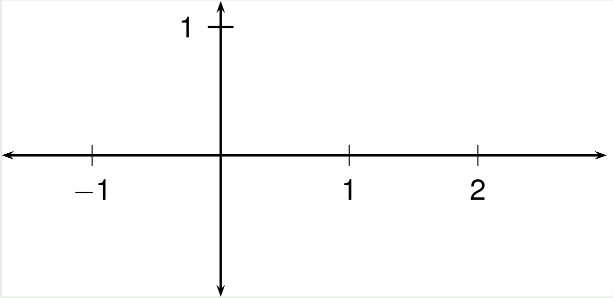

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4{\color{red}(x+1)^3}(x-1) \quad =$$

$$(+) \qquad ({\color{red}+}) \qquad (\mathbf{?}\ )$$

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4(x+1)^3(x-1) \quad =$$

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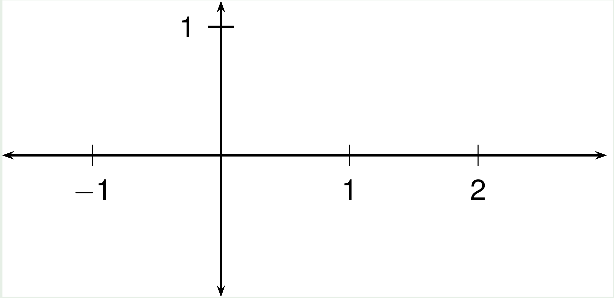

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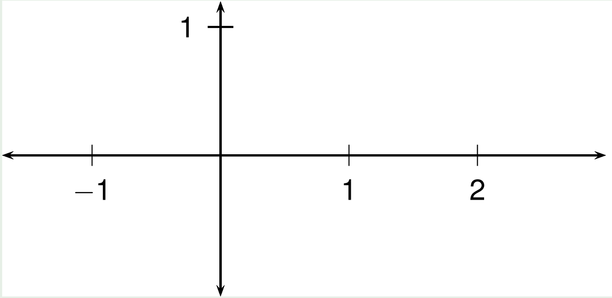

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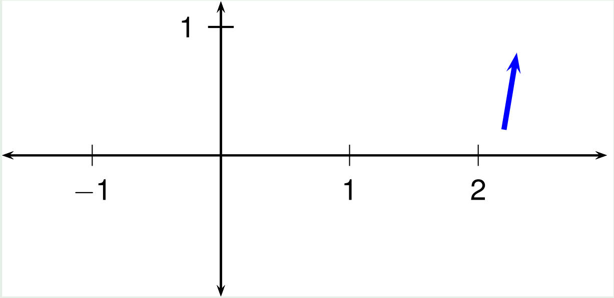

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{24}\underset{(+)}{(x-2)^4}\underset{(+)}{(x+1)^3}\underset{(+)}{(x-1)} = \infty$$

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{1}{24}\underset{(?\ )}{(x-2)^4}\underset{(?\ )}{(x+1)^3}\underset{(?\ )}{(x-1)} =$$

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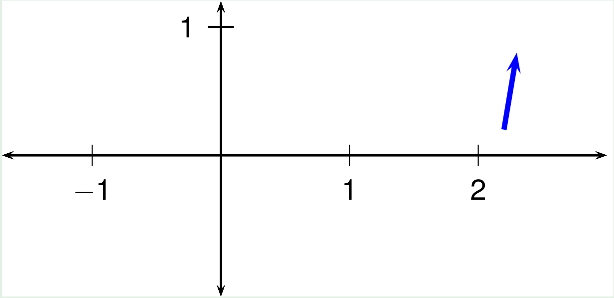

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{24}\underbrace{(x-2)^4}_{(+)}\underbrace{(x+1)^3}_{(+)}\underbrace{(x-1)}_{(+)} = \infty$$

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{1}{24}\underbrace{(x-2)^4}_{(?)}\underbrace{(x+1)^3}_{(?)}\underbrace{(x-1)}_{(?)} =$$

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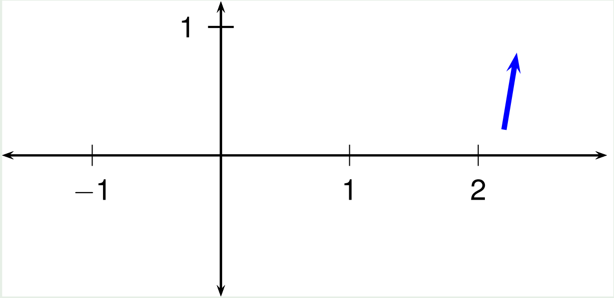

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{24}\underbrace{(x-2)^4}_{(+)}\underbrace{(x+1)^3}_{(+)}\underbrace{(x-1)}_{(+)} = \infty$$

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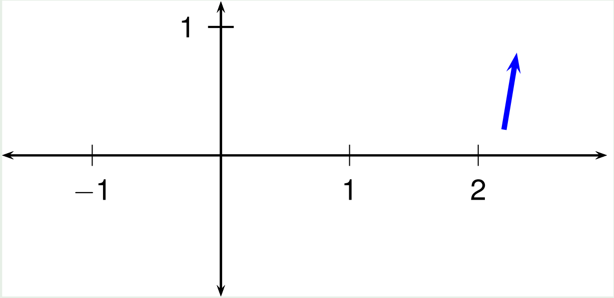

$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \underset{(+)}{\frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4}\underset{(+)}{(x+1)^3}\underset{(+)}{(x-1)} = \infty$$

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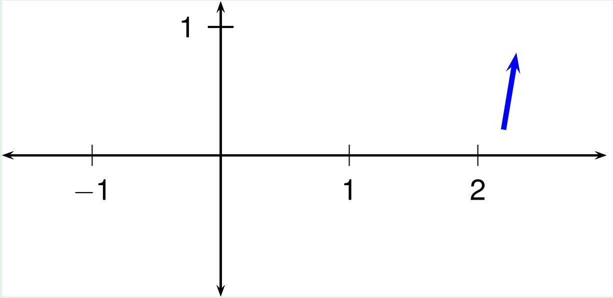
Find the limits as $x \to \infty$ and $x \to -\infty$ of

$$y = \frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4(x+1)^3(x-1).$$



$$\lim_{x\to\infty} \underset{(+)}{\frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4}\underset{(+)}{(x+1)^3}\underset{(+)}{(x-1)} = \infty$$

$$\lim_{x\to-\infty} \underset{(+)}{\frac{1}{24}(x-2)^4}\underset{(-)}{(x+1)^3}\underset{(\mathbf{?}\ )}{(x-1)} =$$

Example

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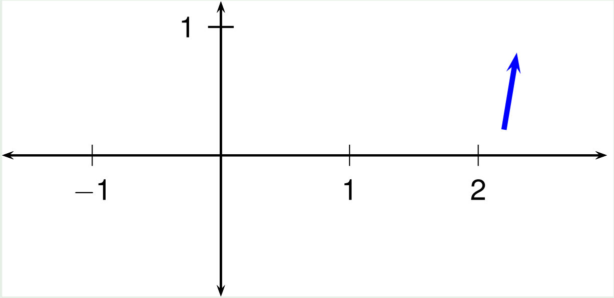

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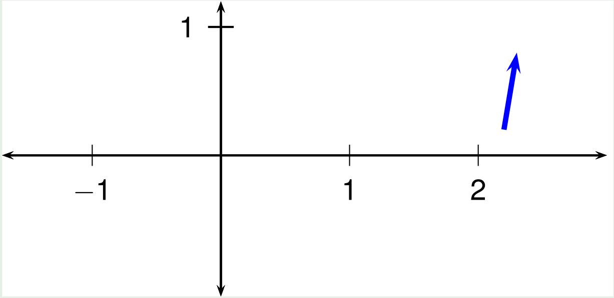

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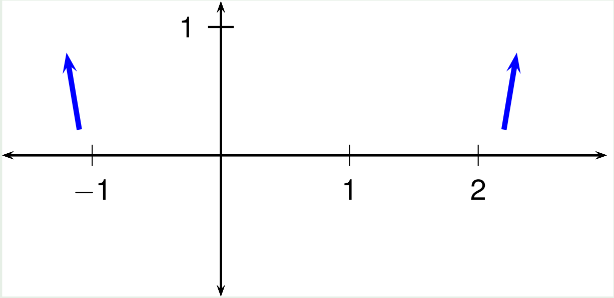

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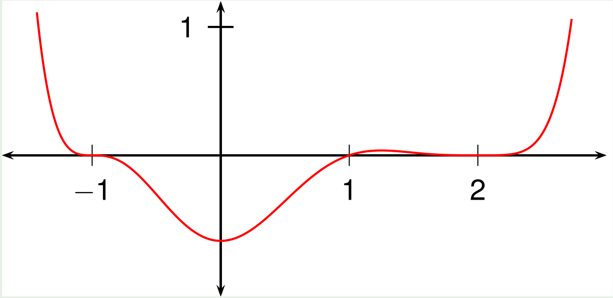

$$\begin{array}{rcl}\displaystyle\lim_{x\to\infty} \frac{1}{24}\underset{(+)}{(x-2)^4}\underset{(+)}{(x+1)^3}\underset{(+)}{(x-1)} & = & \infty\end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{rcl}\displaystyle\lim_{x\to-\infty} \frac{1}{24}\underset{(+)}{(x-2)^4}\underset{(-)}{(x+1)^3}\underset{(-)}{(x-1)} & = & \infty\end{array}$$