

Precalculus

§ Factor quadratic with rational roots

Todor Milev

2019

$$ax^2 + bx + c = a(x - x_1)(x - x_2)$$

$$\begin{aligned} x_1 + x_2 &= -\frac{b}{a} \\ x_1 x_2 &= \frac{c}{a} \end{aligned}$$

Vieta's formulas

Example

Factor the quadratic.

$$x^2 + 5x + 6 = (x + 2)(x + 3)$$

- The product of the two roots: $x_1 x_2 = 6$.
- The divisors of 6 are $\pm 1, \pm 2, \pm 3, \pm 6$.
- Therefore the pair x_1, x_2 is $\pm 1, \pm 6$ or $\pm 2, \pm 3$.
- The sum of the two roots: $x_1 + x_2 = -5$