

Precalculus

Quadratic polynomials viewed as functions

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Definition

Let a, b, c be real numbers with $a \neq 0$. The function

$$f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$$

is called a *quadratic function*.

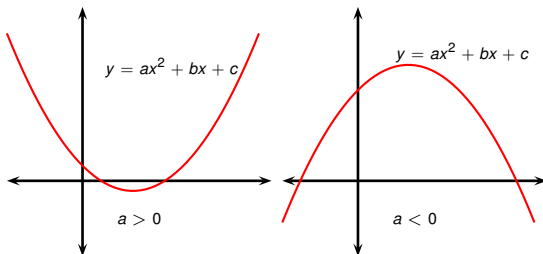
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- The graph of a quadratic function is called a parabola.



Example (Completing the square)

Complete the square.

$$3x^2 - 5x + 1$$

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$$3x^2 - 5x + 1 = 3 \left(x^2 - ? x \right) + 1$$

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Definition (Discriminant of quadratic function)

The quantity $D = b^2 - 4ac$ is called the *discriminant* of the quadratic function $ax^2 + bx + c$.

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The expression $f(x) = a(x - h)^2 + k$, where $h = -\frac{b}{2a}$ and $k = -\frac{D}{4a} = -\frac{b^2 - 4ac}{4a}$ is called the standard form of $ax^2 + bx + c$.

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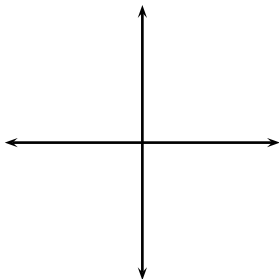
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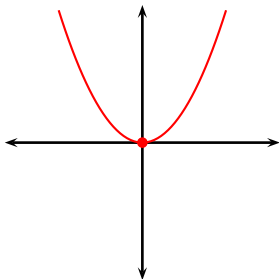
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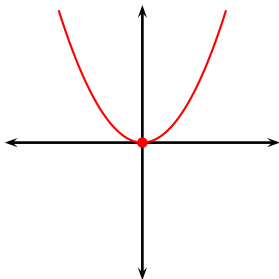
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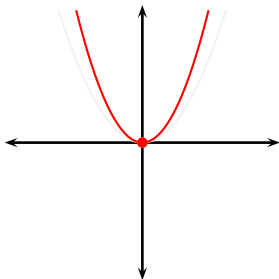
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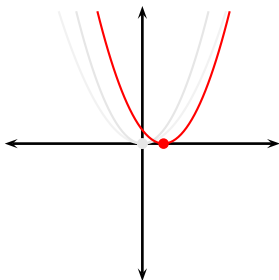
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 - ax^2 stretches $y = x^2$ by factor of a and possibly reflects across the x axis.

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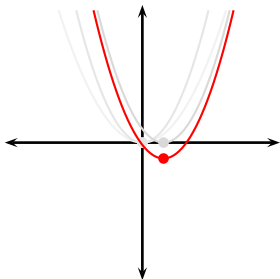
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 - ax^2 stretches $y = x^2$ by factor of a and possibly reflects across the x axis.
 - $a(x - h)^2$ shifts $y = ax^2$ by h units right.

Definition

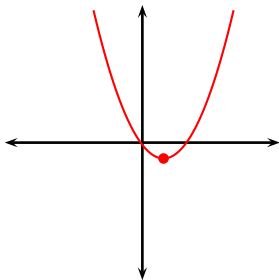
The expression $f(x) = a(x - h)^2 + k$, where $h = -\frac{b}{2a}$ and $k = -\frac{D}{4a} = -\frac{b^2 - 4ac}{4a}$ is called the standard form of $ax^2 + bx + c$.



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 - $a(x - h)^2 + k$ shifts $y = a(x - h)^2 + k$ by k units up.

Definition

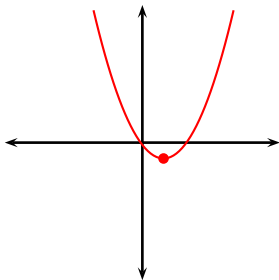
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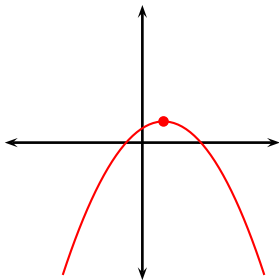
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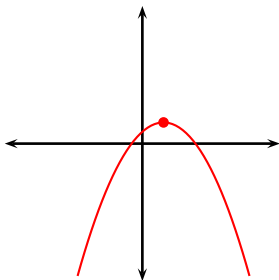
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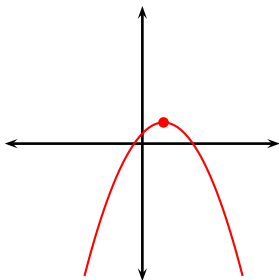
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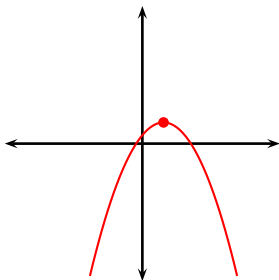
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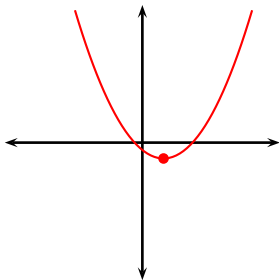
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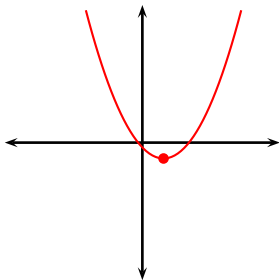
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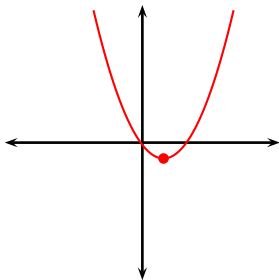
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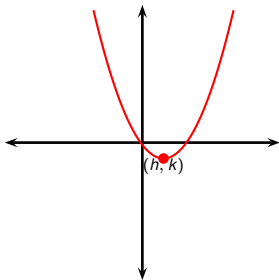
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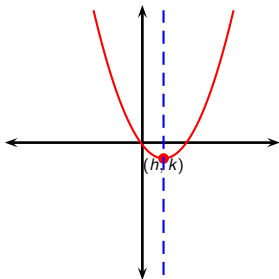
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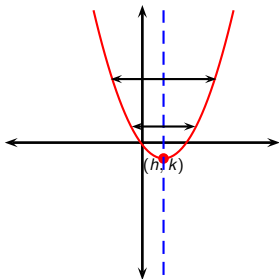
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- The point $(h, k) = \left(-\frac{b}{2a}, -\frac{D}{4a}\right)$ is called the vertex of the parabola.
- The parabola is symmetric with respect to **the line $x = h = -\frac{b}{2a}$** , i.e., the vertical line through its vertex.

Definition

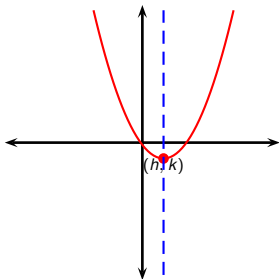
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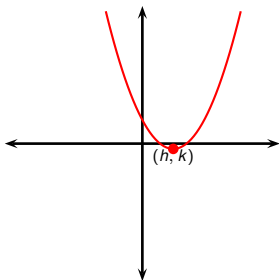
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- When we change h and k we move the vertex of the parabola without change in steepness.

Definition

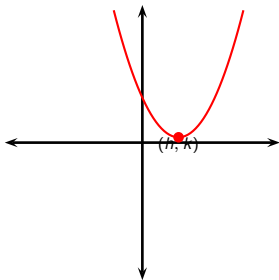
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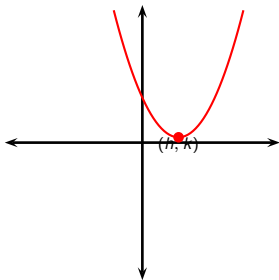
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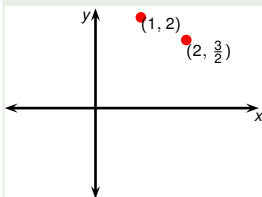
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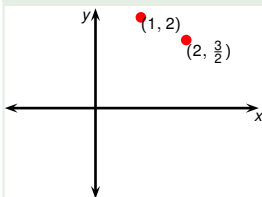
- When we change h and k we move the vertex of the parabola without change in steepness.
- Therefore when we change b and c we move the vertex of the parabola without change in steepness.

Example



Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at $(1, 2)$ that passes through the point $(2, \frac{3}{2})$.

Example

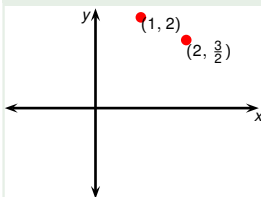


Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at $(1, 2)$ that passes through the point $(2, \frac{3}{2})$.

$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

Standard form

Example



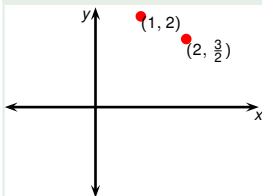
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$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

Standard form

$$a(x - ?)^2 + ? = y$$

Example



Write an equation of a parabola with **vertex at (1, 2)** that passes through the point $(2, \frac{3}{2})$.

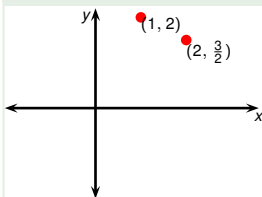
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Standard form

Vertex at (1, 2)

Example



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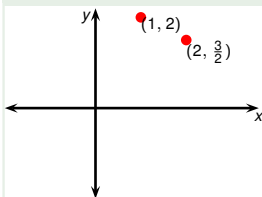
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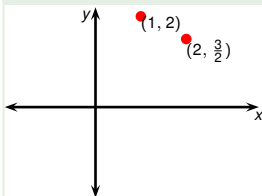
$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

$$a(x - 1)^2 + 2 = y$$

Standard form

Vertex at $(1, 2)$

Example



Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at (1, 2) that **passes through the point (2, $\frac{3}{2}$)**.

$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

$$a(x - 1)^2 + 2 = y$$

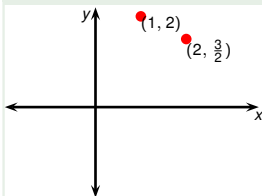
$$a(\mathbf{2} - 1)^2 + 2 = \mathbf{\frac{3}{2}}$$

Standard form

Vertex at (1, 2)

Passes through (2, $\frac{2}{3}$)

Example



Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at (1, 2) that passes through the point (2, $\frac{3}{2}$).

$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

$$a(\textcolor{red}{x} - 1)^2 + 2 = y$$

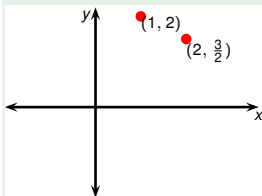
$$a(\textcolor{red}{2} - 1)^2 + 2 = \frac{3}{2}$$

Standard form

Vertex at (1, 2)

Passes through (2, $\frac{3}{2}$)

Example



Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at (1, 2) that passes through the point (2, $\frac{3}{2}$).

$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

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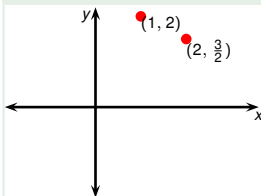
$$a(2 - 1)^2 + 2 = \frac{3}{2}$$

Standard form

Vertex at (1, 2)

Passes through (2, $\frac{3}{2}$)

Example



Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at $(1, 2)$ that passes through the point $(2, \frac{3}{2})$.

$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

$$a(x - 1)^2 + 2 = y$$

$$a(2 - 1)^2 + 2 = \frac{3}{2}$$

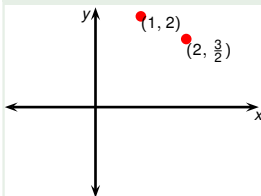
$$a = \frac{\frac{3}{2}}{2} - 2$$

Standard form

Vertex at $(1, 2)$

Passes through $(2, \frac{2}{3})$

Example



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$$a(x - 1)^2 + 2 = y$$

$$a(2 - 1)^2 + 2 = \frac{3}{2}$$

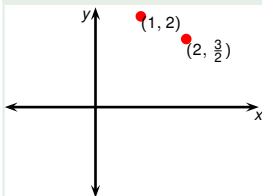
$$a = \frac{3}{2} - 2$$

Standard form

Vertex at $(1, 2)$

Passes through $(2, \frac{2}{3})$

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Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at $(1, 2)$ that passes through the point $(2, \frac{3}{2})$.

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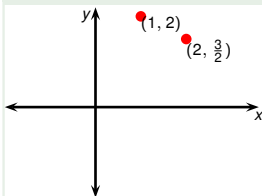
$$a = \frac{3}{2} - 2 = -\frac{1}{2}$$

Standard form

Vertex at $(1, 2)$

Passes through $(2, \frac{2}{3})$

Example



Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at $(1, 2)$ that passes through the point $(2, \frac{3}{2})$.

$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

Standard form

$$a(x - 1)^2 + 2 = y$$

Vertex at $(1, 2)$

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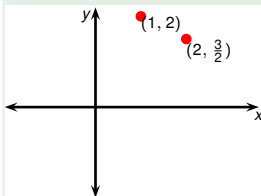
Passes through $(2, \frac{2}{3})$

$$a = \frac{\frac{3}{2}}{2} - 2 = -\frac{1}{2}$$

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

Final answer

Example



Write an equation of a parabola with vertex at (1, 2) that passes through the point $(2, \frac{3}{2})$.

$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

Standard form

$$a(x - 1)^2 + 2 = y$$

Vertex at (1, 2)

$$a(2 - 1)^2 + 2 = \frac{3}{2}$$

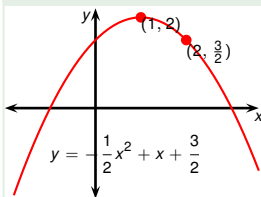
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$$a(x - h)^2 + k = y$$

Standard form

$$a(x - 1)^2 + 2 = y$$

Vertex at $(1, 2)$

$$a(2 - 1)^2 + 2 = \frac{3}{2}$$

Passes through $(2, \frac{2}{3})$

$$a = \frac{3}{2} - 2 = -\frac{1}{2}$$

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

Final answer

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

Alternative answer

Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$ax^2 + bx + c = 0$$

Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$\begin{aligned} ax^2 + bx + c &= 0 & | \text{ complete the square} \\ a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a} &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$\begin{array}{l|l} ax^2 + bx + c = 0 & \text{complete the square} \\ a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a} = 0 & \text{where } D = b^2 - 4ac \end{array}$$

Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$\begin{array}{lcl} ax^2 + bx + c & = & 0 \\ a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a} & = & 0 \\ a \left(\left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a^2} \right) & = & 0 \end{array} \quad \left| \begin{array}{l} \text{complete the square} \\ \text{where } D = b^2 - 4ac \end{array} \right.$$

Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

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Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$\begin{array}{lcl}
 ax^2 + bx + c & = & 0 \\
 a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a} & = & 0 \\
 a \left(\left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a^2} \right) & = & 0 \\
 a \left(\left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \left(\frac{\sqrt{D}}{2a} \right)^2 \right) & = & 0
 \end{array}
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Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$ax^2 + bx + c = 0$$

complete the square

$$a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a} = 0$$

where $D = b^2 - 4ac$

$$a \left(\left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a^2} \right) = 0$$

$$a \left(\left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \left(\frac{\sqrt{D}}{2a} \right)^2 \right) = 0$$

$$a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} - \frac{\sqrt{D}}{2a} \right) \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} + \frac{\sqrt{D}}{2a} \right) = 0$$

use $A^2 - B^2$
 $= (A - B)(A + B)$

Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$ax^2 + bx + c = 0$$

complete the square

$$a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a} = 0$$

where $D = b^2 - 4ac$

$$a \left(\left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a^2} \right) = 0$$

$$a \left(\left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \left(\frac{\sqrt{D}}{2a} \right)^2 \right) = 0$$

$$a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} - \frac{\sqrt{D}}{2a} \right) \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} + \frac{\sqrt{D}}{2a} \right) = 0$$

use $A^2 - B^2 = (A - B)(A + B)$

Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$ax^2 + bx + c = 0$$

complete the square

$$a \left(x + \frac{b}{2a} \right)^2 - \frac{D}{4a} = 0$$

where $D = b^2 - 4ac$

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use $A^2 - B^2 = (A - B)(A + B)$

Problem (Quadratic equation formula)

Solve the general quadratic equation

$$ax^2 + bx + c = 0 \quad \left| \begin{array}{l} \text{complete the square} \\ \text{where } D = b^2 - 4ac \end{array} \right.$$

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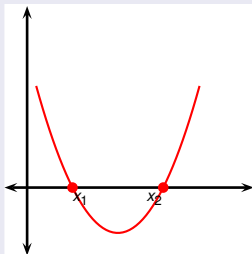
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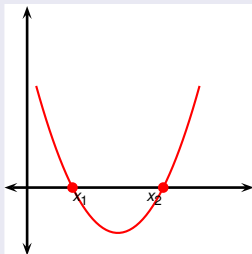
$$ax^2 + bx + c = 0$$

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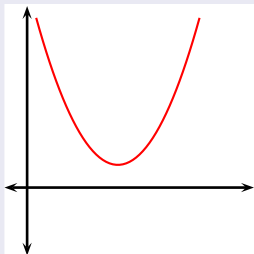
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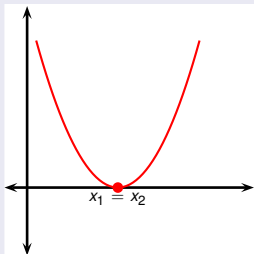
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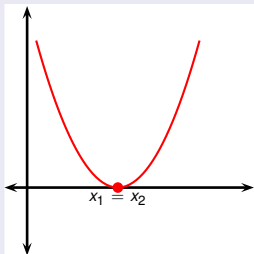
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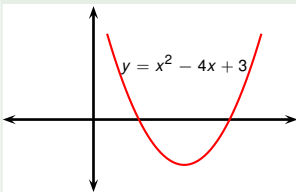
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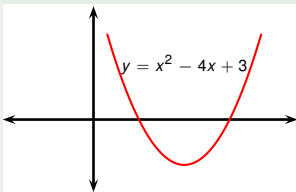
- If $D < 0$ then \sqrt{D} is not a real \Rightarrow quadratic has no real solutions.
- If $D = 0$ then $x_1 = x_2$, the equation has only one zero (with multiplicity two). The zero is located at the vertex of the parabola.

Example



Find the x -intercepts of $x^2 - 4x + 3$.

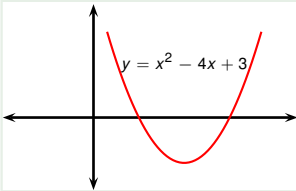
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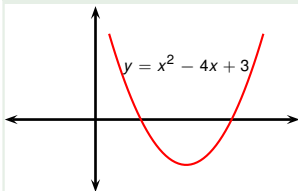
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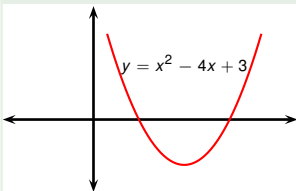
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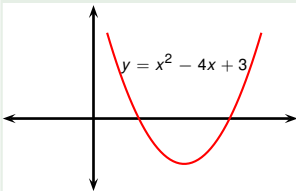
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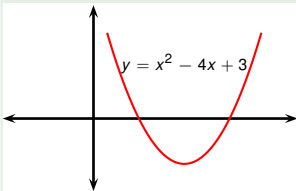
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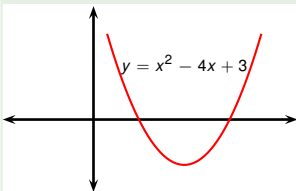
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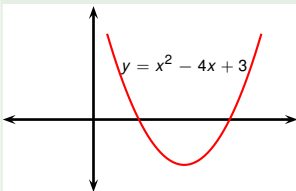
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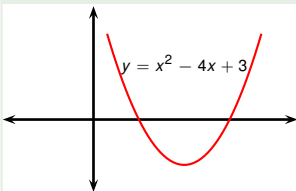
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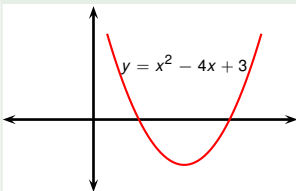
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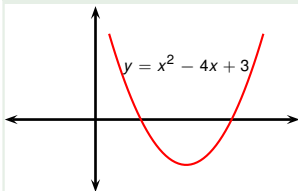
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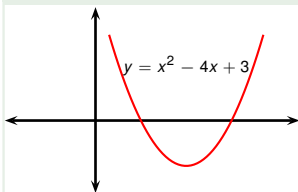
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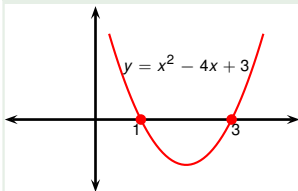
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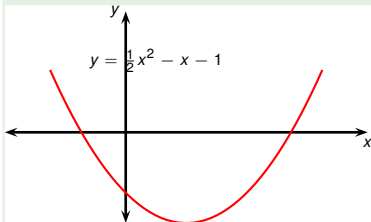
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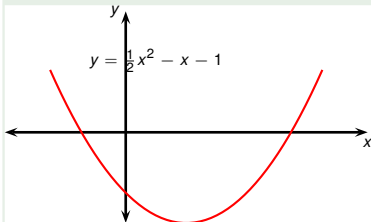
$$\begin{aligned}
 x_1, x_2 &= \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a} \\
 &= \frac{-(-4) \pm \sqrt{(-4)^2 - 4 \cdot 1 \cdot 3}}{2 \cdot 1} \\
 &= \frac{4 \pm \sqrt{4}}{2} \\
 &= \frac{4 \pm 2}{2} \\
 &= \begin{cases} \frac{4+2}{2} = \frac{6}{2} = 3 \\ \frac{4-2}{2} = \frac{2}{2} = 1 \end{cases}
 \end{aligned}$$

Example



Find the x -intercepts of $\frac{x^2}{2} - x - 1$.

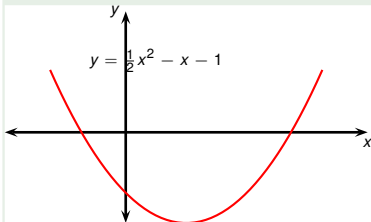
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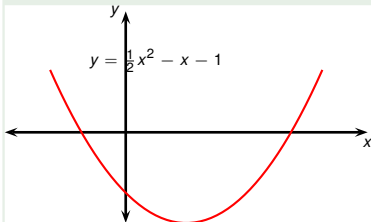
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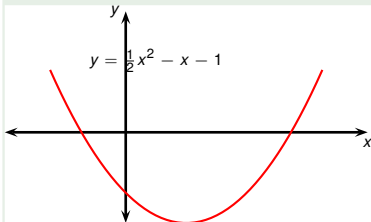
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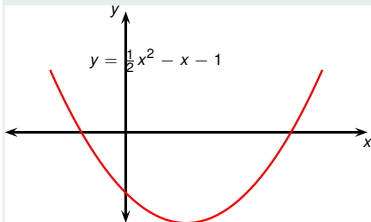
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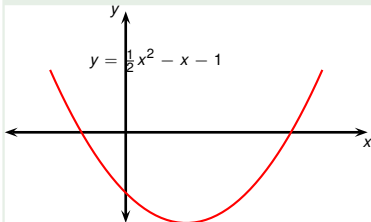
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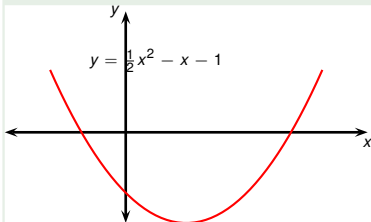
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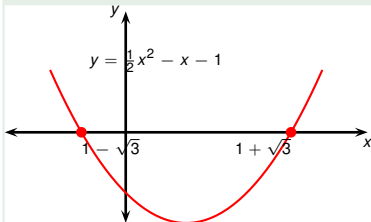
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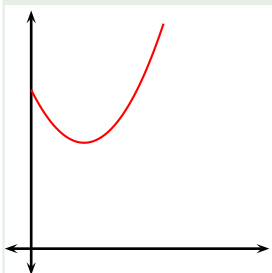
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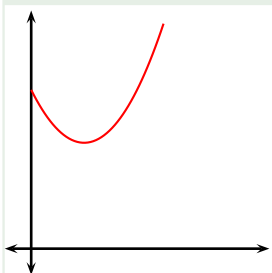
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Find the x -intercepts of $x^2 - 2x + 3$.

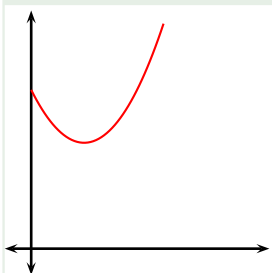
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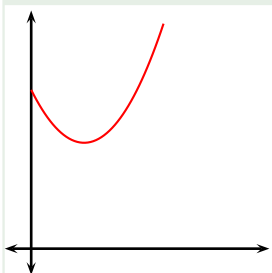
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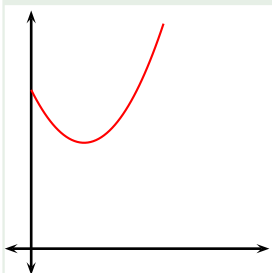
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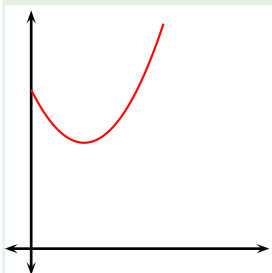
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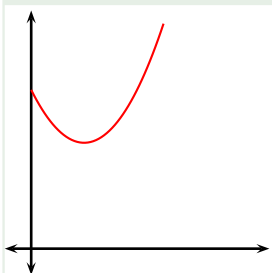
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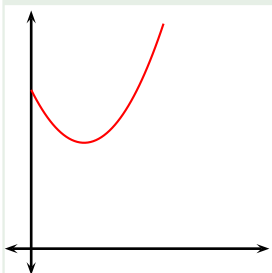
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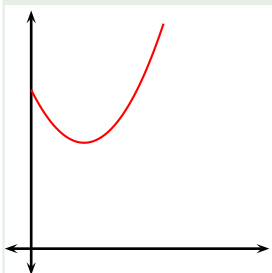
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Proposition

Let $ax^2 + bx + c$, $a \neq 0$ be a quadratic with discriminant $D = b^2 - 4ac$ and roots x_1 and x_2 . Then $D = a^2 (x_1 - x_2)^2$.

Proof.



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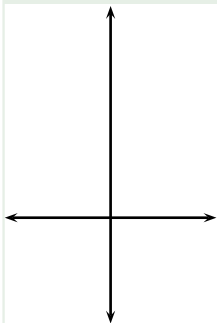
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- Discriminant is zero \Leftrightarrow the quadratic has non-distinct roots, hence the discriminant discriminates between the two roots.

Example

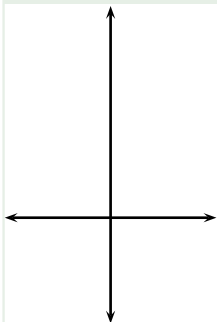
Find the values of the parameter k for which the equation $3x^2 - kx + 1$ has two real distinct roots.



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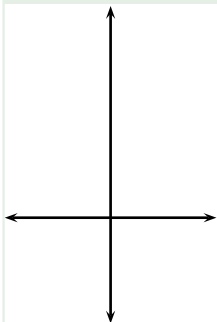
- Quadratic roots: $x_1, x_2 = ?$.



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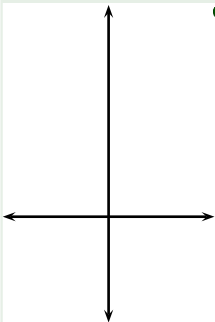


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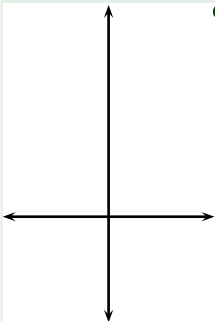


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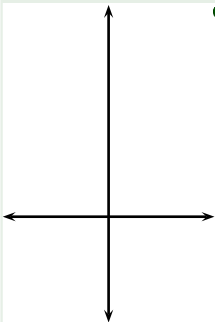


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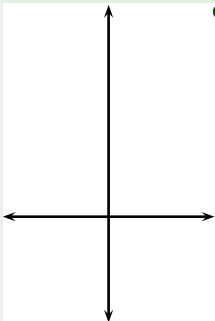


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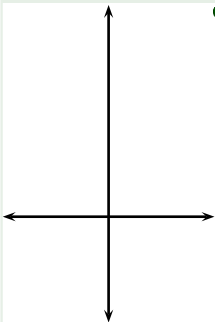


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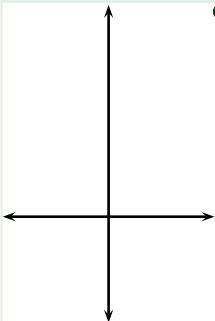
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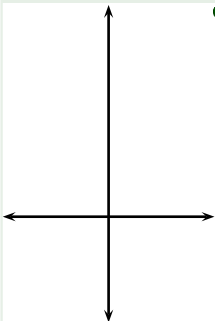
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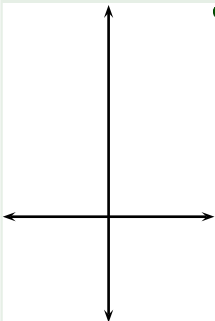
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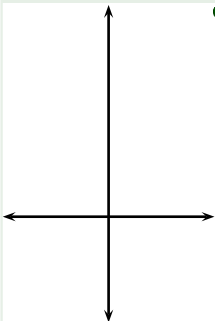
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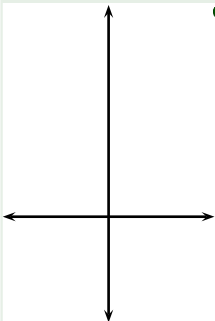
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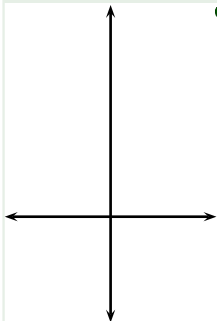
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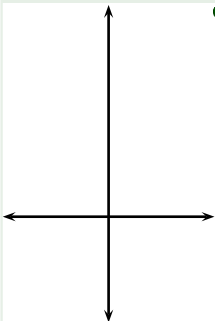
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Find the values of the parameter k for which the equation $3x^2 - kx + 1$ has two real distinct roots.

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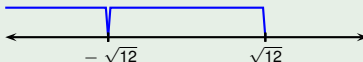
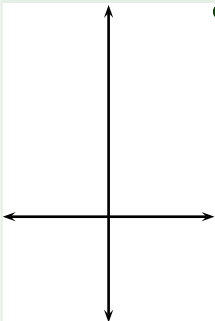
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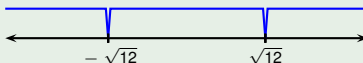
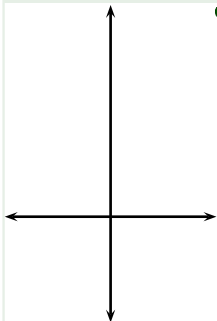
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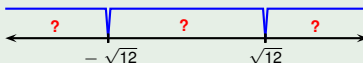
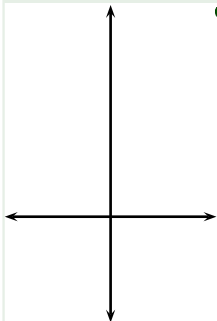
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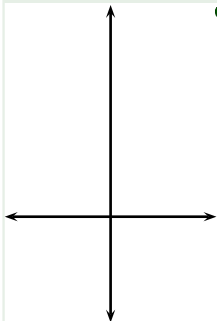
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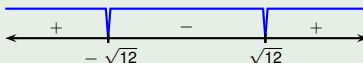
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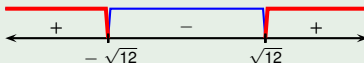
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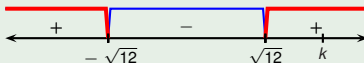
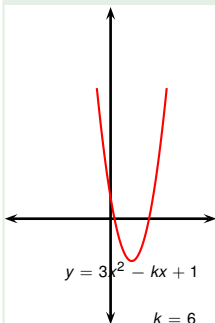
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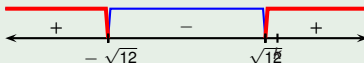
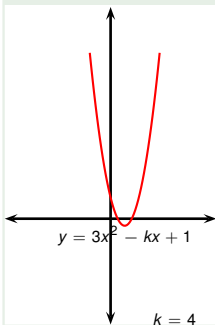
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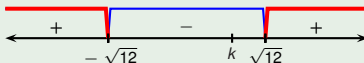
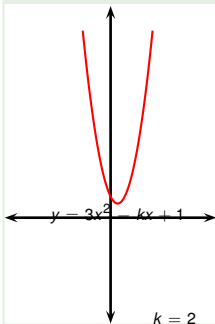
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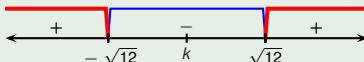
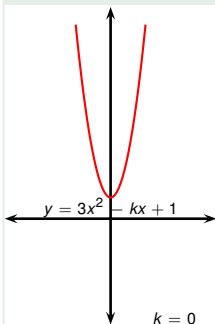
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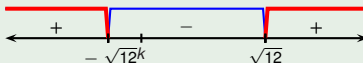
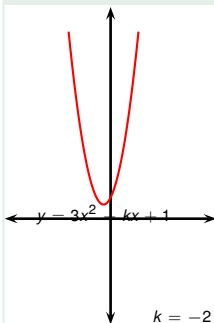
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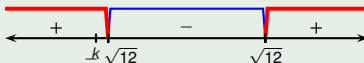
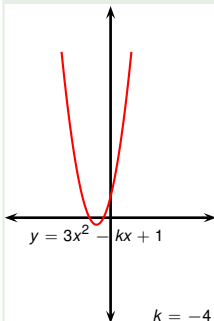
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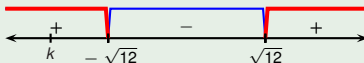
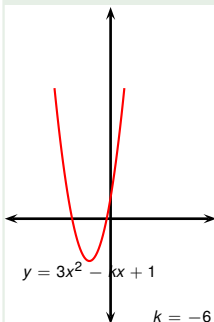
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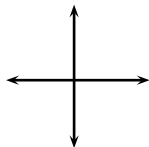
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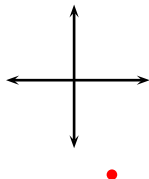


To plot a parabola by hand roughly, we need to do the following.



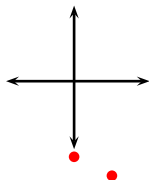
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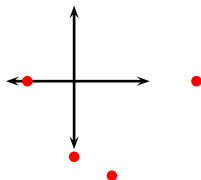
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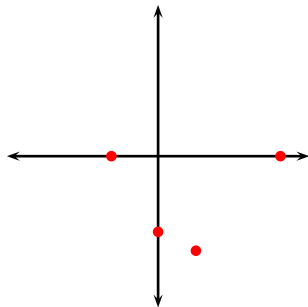
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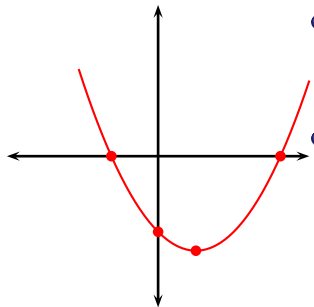
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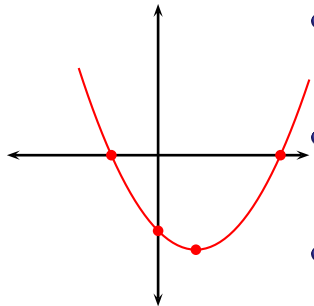
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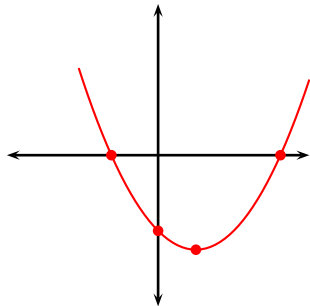
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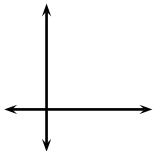
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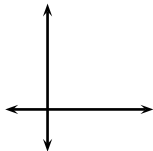


Example

Plot roughly by hand the graph of
$$f(x) = -\frac{2}{3}x^2 + 7x + 3.$$



Example



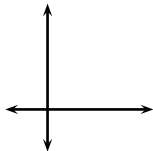
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- The vertex of the parabola is given by:

$$x = ?$$

$$y = ?$$

Example



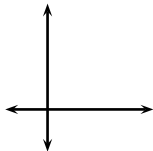
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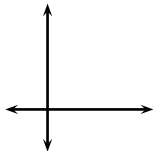
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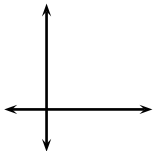
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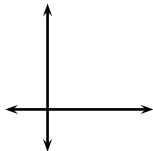
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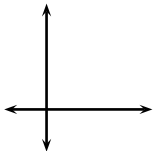
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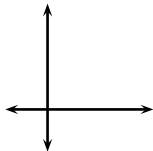
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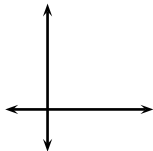
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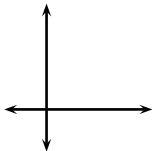
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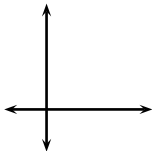
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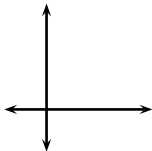
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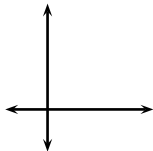
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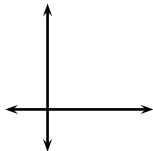
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Example



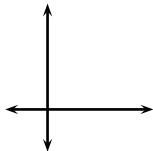
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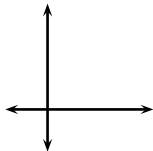
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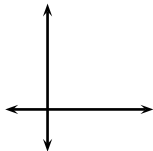
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Example



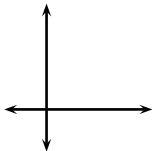
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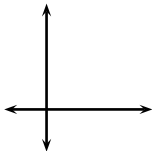
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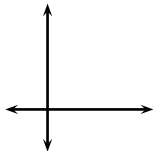
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Example



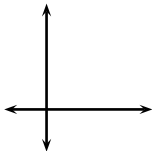
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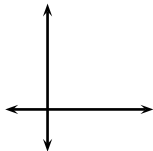
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Example

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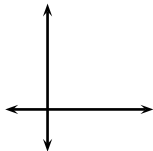
Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$

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Example



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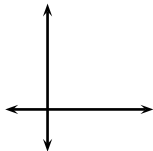
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- The y-intercept is $f(0) = ?$.

Example



Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$
 y -intercept at $y = 3$

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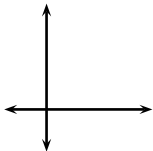
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- The y -intercept is $f(0) = 3$.

Example

Plot roughly by hand the graph of
 $f(x) = -\frac{2}{3}x^2 + 7x + 3$.

- The x intercepts are given by the solutions of
$$-\frac{2}{3}x^2 + 7x + 3 = 0$$



Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$
 y -intercept at $y = 3$

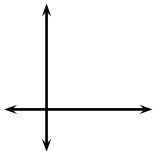
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$$-2x^2 + 21x + 9 = 0$$



Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$
 y -intercept at $y = 3$

Example

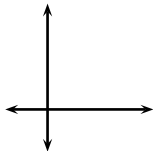
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Example

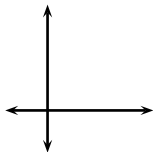
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$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$



Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$
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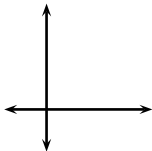
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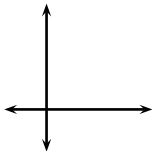
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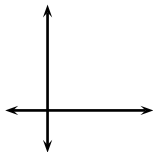
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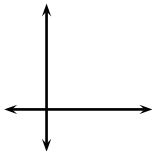
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Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$
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Example

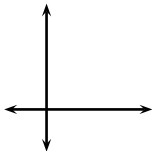
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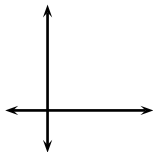
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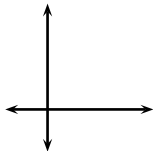
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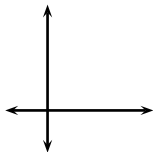
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Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$
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Example



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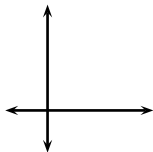
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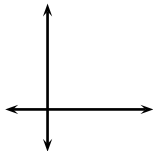
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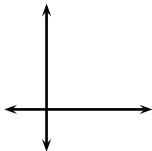
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Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$
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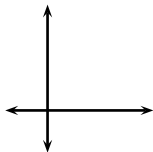
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Example



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- The x intercepts are given by the solutions of

$$\begin{aligned} -\frac{2}{3}x^2 + 7x + 3 &= 0 & | \cdot 3 \\ -2x^2 + 21x + 9 &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} x &= \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a} \\ &= \frac{-21 \pm \sqrt{21^2 - 4 \cdot (-2) \cdot 9}}{2 \cdot (-2)} \\ &= \frac{-21 \pm \sqrt{441 + 72}}{-4} \\ &= \frac{21 \pm \sqrt{513}}{4} \\ &= \frac{21 \pm \sqrt{9 \cdot 57}}{4} \\ &= \frac{21 \pm \sqrt{9} \sqrt{57}}{4} \\ &= \frac{21 \pm 3\sqrt{57}}{4} \end{aligned}$$

Vertex at: $(\frac{21}{4}, \frac{171}{8})$
 y -intercept at $y = 3$
 x -intercepts at

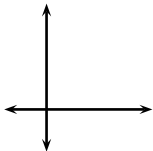
$$x = \frac{21 - 3\sqrt{57}}{4},$$

$$x = \frac{21 + 3\sqrt{57}}{4}.$$

Example

Plot roughly by hand the graph of
 $f(x) = -\frac{2}{3}x^2 + 7x + 3$.

- Select scale to fit the picture:
 - $\frac{21}{4}$ is close to $\frac{20}{4}$

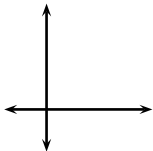


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Plot roughly by hand the graph of
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 - $\frac{21}{4}$ is close to $\frac{20}{4} = 5$.

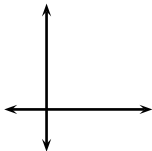


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Plot roughly by hand the graph of
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- Select scale to fit the picture:
 - $\frac{21}{4}$ is close to $\frac{20}{4} = 5$.
 - $\frac{171}{8}$ is between the integers ?

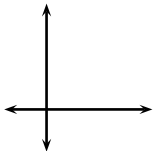


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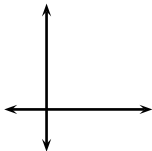
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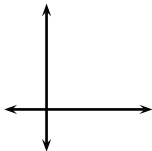


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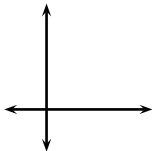


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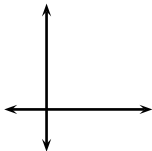


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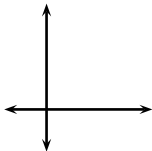
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- $\frac{21-3\sqrt{57}}{4}$ is close to $\frac{21-3\sqrt{64}}{4}$

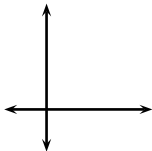
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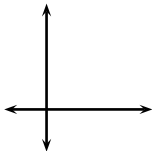
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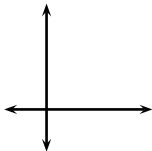
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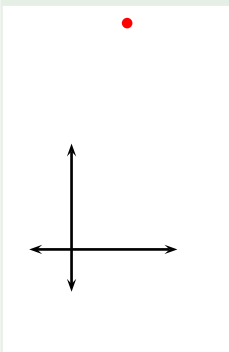
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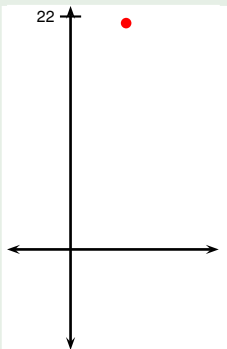
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Example

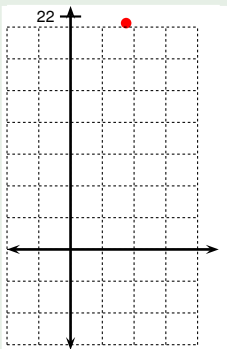


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 - Axes height of 22 units appears reasonable.

Example



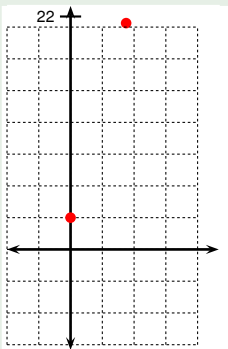
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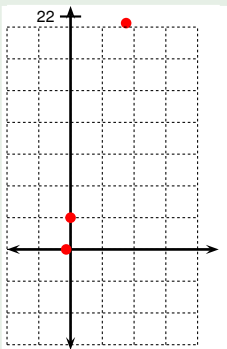
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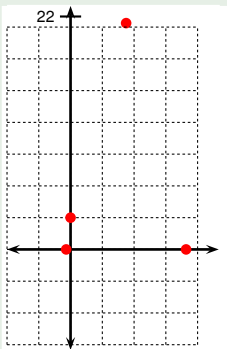
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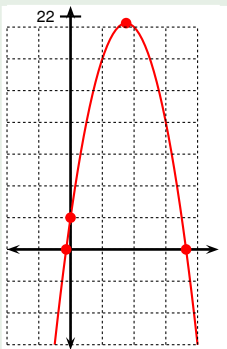
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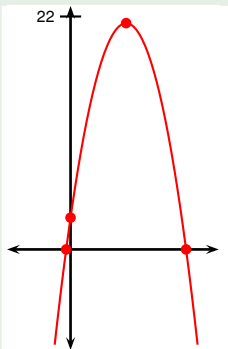


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Example



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Find the values of the parameter k for which $x^2 + (k + 1)x + 2k > 0$ holds for all real x .

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- In order for the quadratic to be positive, its graph must lie entirely above the x axis.

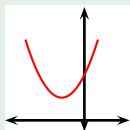
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- In order for the quadratic to be positive, its graph must lie entirely above the x axis.
- Leading coefficient is positive

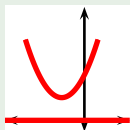
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Find the values of the parameter k for which $x^2 + (k + 1)x + 2k > 0$ holds for all real x .

- In order for the quadratic to be positive, its graph must lie entirely above the x axis.
- Leading coefficient is positive \Rightarrow graph opens up

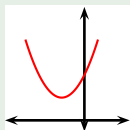
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- In order for the quadratic to be positive, its graph must lie entirely above the x axis.
- Leading coefficient is positive \Rightarrow graph opens up \Rightarrow is above x axis if it does not intersect it

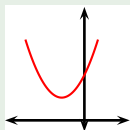
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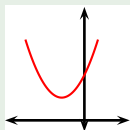
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- The roots of a quadratic are $x_1, x_2 = ?$

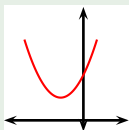
Example



Find the values of the parameter k for which $x^2 + (k + 1)x + 2k > 0$ holds for all real x .

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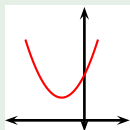


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$$b^2 - 4ac < 0$$

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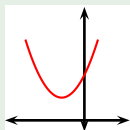
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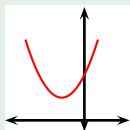
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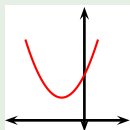
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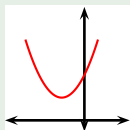
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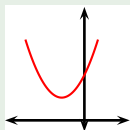
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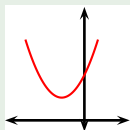
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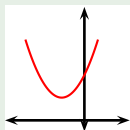
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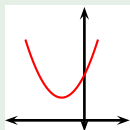
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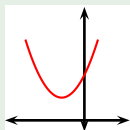
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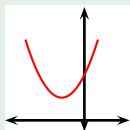
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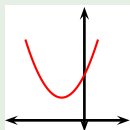
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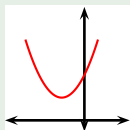
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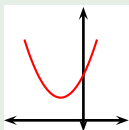
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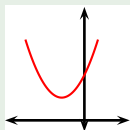
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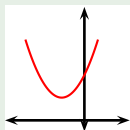
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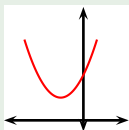
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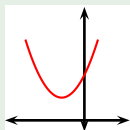
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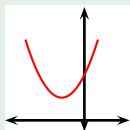
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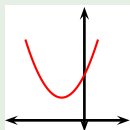
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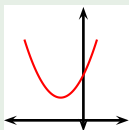
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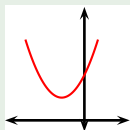
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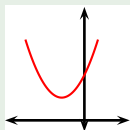
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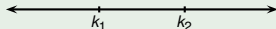
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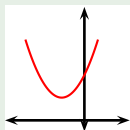
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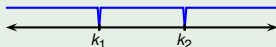
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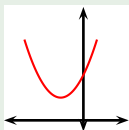
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Find the values of the parameter k for which $x^2 + (k + 1)x + 2k > 0$ holds for all real x .

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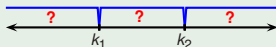
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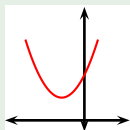
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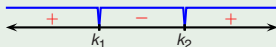
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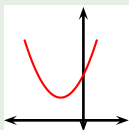
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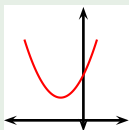
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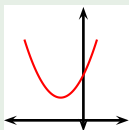
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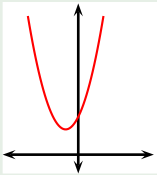
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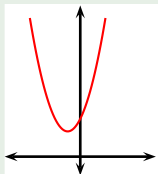


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Find the minimum point on the curve
 $y = 3x^2 + 2x + 1$ by completing the square.

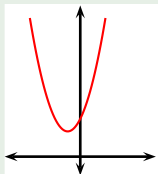
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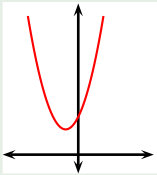
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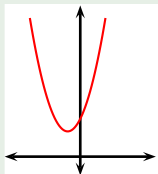
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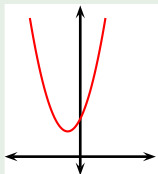
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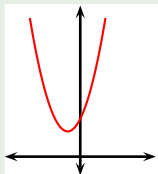
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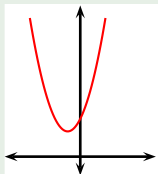
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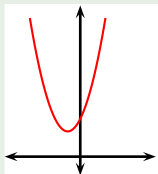
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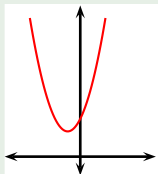
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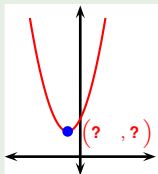
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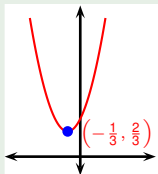


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- Let $f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$ - quadratic ($a \neq 0$).
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Let $f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$, $a \neq 0$ and let $D = b^2 - 4ac$.

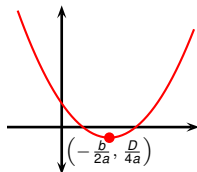
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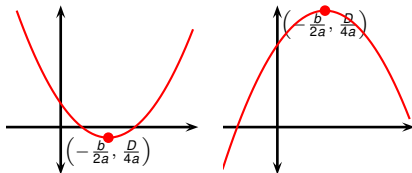


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Let x, z be two numbers that add to 12. Choose x and z so that the product $x \cdot z$ is maximal.



$$x + z = 12$$

$$z = 12 - x$$

Maximizing:

$$\begin{aligned} xz &= x(12 - x) \\ &= -x^2 + 12x \end{aligned}$$

Parabola opens down \Rightarrow has maximum, attained at:

$$\begin{aligned} x &= -\frac{b}{2a} \\ &= -\frac{12}{-2} = 6 \end{aligned}$$

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