

Precalculus

Trickier logarithmic equations involving quadratics

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2019

Example

Solve the equation.

$$\lg(x+2) + \lg(x-1) = 1$$

Domain: $x > 1$

$$\lg((x+2)(x-1)) = 1$$

Exp. base 10

$$(x+2)(x-1) = 10^1$$

$$x^2 + x - 2 = 10$$

$$x^2 + x - 12 = 0$$

$$(x-3)(x+4) = 0$$

$$x = 3 \quad \text{or} \quad \cancel{x = -4} \quad \text{not in domain}$$

- Recall $\lg = \log_{10}$.
- $\log_a(st) = \log_a(s) + \log_a(t)$, rule does not hold for negative s, t .
- Check whether answers are in domain of original expression:
 $\lg(t)$ is not a real number for $t < 0$.