SOME BASIC DIFFERENTIATION RULES

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You can find the proofs of these rules in the online textbook as a separate document.

Constant Rule:

If
$$f(x) = b$$
, then $f'(x) = 0$. Note that **b** is any real number!

Examples:

1. If
$$f(x) = 5$$
, then $f'(x) = 0$

2. If
$$f(x) = -2$$
, then $f'(x) = 0$

3. If
$$f(x) = 0$$
, then $f'(x) = 0$

Simple Power Rule:

If
$$f(x) = x^n$$
, then $f'(x) = nx^{n-1}$, where n is any real number.

Examples:

1. If
$$f(x) = x^5$$
, then $f'(x) = 5x^{5-1} = 5x^4$

2. If
$$f(x) = x$$
, then $f'(x) = x^{1-1} = x^0 = 1$

3. If
$$f(x) = x^{\frac{1}{3}}$$
, then $f'(x) = \frac{1}{3}x^{\frac{1}{3}-1} = \frac{1}{3}x^{-\frac{2}{3}}$

and
$$f'(x) = \frac{1}{3x^{2/3}}$$

4. If
$$f(x) = \sqrt{x}$$
 and $\sqrt{x} = x^{1/2}$,

then
$$f'(x) = \frac{1}{2} x^{\frac{1}{2} - 1} = \frac{1}{2} x^{-\frac{1}{2}}$$

and
$$f'(x) = \frac{1}{2x^{1/2}} = \frac{1}{2\sqrt{x}}$$

5. If
$$f(x) = x^{-4}$$
,
then $f'(x) = -4x^{-4-1} = -4x^{-5}$
and $f'(x) = \frac{-4}{x^5}$

Constant Multiple Rule:

Let \boldsymbol{k} be a constant and \boldsymbol{u} a function of \boldsymbol{x} .

If
$$f(x) = ku_{, then} f'(x) = k \cdot u'_{, then}$$

Examples:

1. If
$$f(x) = 2x^{5}$$
, where $k = 2$, $u = x^{5}$, and $u' = 5x^{4}$

then $f'(x) = 2(5x^{4}) = 10x^{4}$

2. If $f(x) = -\frac{5}{7}x^{\frac{2}{3}}$, where $k = -\frac{5}{7}$, $u = x^{\frac{2}{3}}$, and $u' = \frac{2}{3}x^{-\frac{1}{3}}$

then $f'(x) = -\frac{5}{7}(\frac{2}{3}x^{-\frac{1}{3}}) = -\frac{10}{21}x^{-\frac{1}{3}}$

and $f'(x) = \frac{-10}{21x^{\frac{1}{3}}}$

Sum/Difference Rule:

Let **u** and **v** be a function of **x**.

If
$$f(x) = u \pm v$$
, then $f'(x) = u' \pm v'$

Examples:

1. If
$$f(x) = 2x^5 - 4x^6$$
, where $u = 2x^5$
and $v = -4x^6$, then $f'(x) = 10x^4 - 24x^5$

2. If
$$f(x) = x^{3/2} - 3x^{5/4} + 2x - 1$$

then by extending the Sum/Difference Rule we get

$$f'(x) = \frac{3}{2}x^{\frac{1}{2}} - \frac{15}{4}x^{\frac{1}{4}} + 2$$

Higher Order Derivatives

First Derivative:

$$f'(x)$$
 or $\frac{dy}{dx}$

Second Derivative:

or
$$\frac{d^2y}{dx^2}$$
 pronounced the second derivative of y with respect to x

Third Derivative:

or
$$\frac{\mathbf{d}^{3}\mathbf{y}}{\mathbf{d}\mathbf{x}^{3}}$$
 pronounced the third derivative of \mathbf{y} with respect to \mathbf{x}

Fourth Derivative:

$$f^{(4)}(x)$$
 pronounced the fourth derivative of f with respect to x

or
$$\frac{d^4y}{dx^4}$$
 pronounced the fourth derivative of y with respect to x 99th Derivative:

$$f^{(99)}(x)$$
 pronounced the 99th derivative of f with respect to x

or
$$\frac{d^{99}y}{dx^{99}}$$
 pronounced the 99th derivative of y with respect to x

nth Derivative:

$$f^{(n)}(x)$$
 pronounced the *nth derivative* of f with respect to x

or
$$\frac{d^n y}{dx^n}$$
 pronounced the *nth derivative* of **y** with respect to **x**

Problem 1:

Find the derivative for the following functions.

a.
$$f(x) = -4x^{5/4}$$

$$f'(x) = -4\left(\frac{5}{4}x^{\frac{5}{4}-1}\right)$$

and
$$f'(x) = -5x^{\frac{1}{4}}$$

NOTE: Whenever possible you should ALWAYS combine like terms in your solutions.

b.
$$f(x) = 6 - x + 2x^3 - 4x^6$$

$$f'(x) = 0 - x^{1-1} + 2(3x^{3-1}) - 4(6x^{6-1})$$

and
$$f'(x) = -1 + 6x^2 - 24x^5$$

$$f(x) = -2x^3 - \sqrt[3]{x^5}$$

$$f(x) = -2x^3 - \sqrt[3]{x^5} = -2x^3 - x^{5/3}$$

$$f'(x) = -2(3x^{3-1}) - \frac{5}{3}x^{\frac{5}{3}-1}$$

and
$$f'(x) = -6x^2 - \frac{5}{3}x^{\frac{2}{3}}$$

d.
$$f(x) = x^{4/3}(x^2 + 3x^{2/3} - 6)$$

$$f(x) = x^{4/3}(x^2 + 3x^{2/3} - 6) = x^{10/3} + 3x^2 - 6x^{4/3}$$

$$f'(x) = \frac{10}{3}x^{7/3} + 6x - 8x^{1/3}$$

e.
$$f(x) = (2x - 3)^2$$

$$f(x) = (2x-3)^2 = 4x^2 - 12x + 9$$

$$f'(x) = 8x - 12$$

$$f(x) = (x^3 - 2)(2x + 1)$$

$$f(x) = (x^3 - 2)(2x + 1) = 2x^4 + x^3 - 4x - 2$$

$$f'(x) = 8x^3 + 3x^2 - 4$$

Problem 2:

Differentiate the following functions. Write any negative exponents in your answer as fractions and then write as a SINGLE fraction, if necessary.

$$f(x) = x^3 + \frac{1}{x}$$

$$f(X) = X^3 + \frac{1}{x} = X^3 + X^{-1}$$

$$f'(x) = 3x^2 + (-x^{-2}) = 3x^2 - \frac{1}{x^2}$$

and
$$f'(x) = \frac{3x^4 - 1}{x^2}$$

$$f(x) = (4x)^{-2}$$

$$f(x) = (4x)^{-2} = 4^{-2}x^{-2} = \frac{1}{16}x^{-2}$$

$$f'(x) = -\frac{t}{8}x^{-3}$$

and
$$f'(x) = \frac{-1}{8x^3}$$

c.
$$f(x) = \frac{3x^2 - 7x + 2}{x}$$

$$f(x) = \frac{3x^2 - 7x + 2}{x} = 3x - 7 + 2x^{-1}$$

$$f'(x) = 3 - 2x^{-2} = 3 - \frac{2}{x^2}$$

and
$$f'(x) = \frac{3x^2 - 2}{x^2}$$

$$f(x) = \frac{4x^3 + 5x - 9}{2}$$

$$f(x) = \frac{4x^3 + 5x - 9}{2} = 2x^3 + \frac{5}{2}x - \frac{9}{2}$$

$$f'(x) = 6x^2 + \frac{5}{2}$$

and
$$f'(x) = \frac{12x^2 + 5}{2}$$

$$e. \quad f(x) = \frac{3\sqrt{x}}{x}$$

$$f(x) = \frac{3\sqrt{x}}{x} = 3x^{-1/2}$$

$$f'(x) = -\frac{3}{2}x^{-3/2}$$

and
$$f'(x) = \frac{-3}{2x^{3/2}}$$

$$y = \frac{4x^2 - 5}{x^3}$$

$$y = \frac{4x^2 - 5}{x^3} = 4x^{-1} - 5x^{-3}$$

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = -4x^{-2} + 15x^{-4} = \frac{-4}{x^2} + \frac{15}{x^4}$$

and
$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{-4x^2 + 15}{x^4}$$

Problem 3:

Find the slope-intercept equation of the line tangent to the graph of $f(x) = 2x - 3x^{1/2}$ at the point (9,9).

Use the point-slope form $y - y_1 = m(x - x_1)_{\text{with}} m = f'(9)$.

Since
$$f'(x) = 2 - \frac{3}{2}x^{-\frac{1}{2}} = 2 - \frac{3}{2\sqrt{x}}$$
 and $f'(9) = 2 - \frac{3}{2\sqrt{9}} = \frac{3}{2}$,

then
$$\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{9} = \frac{3}{2} (\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{9}) = \frac{3}{2} \mathbf{x} - \frac{27}{2} + \mathbf{9} = \frac{3}{2} \mathbf{x} - \frac{9}{2}$$

and
$$y = \frac{3}{2}x - \frac{9}{2}$$

Thus, slope-intercept equation of the line tangent to the graph of $f(x) = 2x - 3x^{\frac{1}{2}}$ at the point $(9,9)_{is}$ $y = \frac{3}{2}x - \frac{9}{2}$.

Problem 4:

Find the first, second derivative, and third derivatives of the following functions:

a. Given
$$f(x) = -2x^{6/5}$$

$$f'(x) = -\frac{12}{5}x^{\frac{1}{5}}$$

$$f''(x) = -\frac{12}{25}x^{-\frac{4}{5}}$$

$$f'''(x) = \frac{48}{125} x^{-9/5}$$

b. Given y = 3x - 1

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = 3$$

$$\frac{d^2y}{dx^2}=0$$

$$\frac{d^3y}{dx^3}=0$$