Chapter 1

Functions and Limits

1.6 Calculating Limits Using the Limit Laws

EXAMPLE 1 Use the graphs of f and g in Figure 1 to evaluate the following limits, if they exist.

(a) $\lim_{x \to -2} [f(x) + 5g(x)]$ (b) $\lim_{x \to 2} [f(x)g(x)]$ (c) $\lim_{x \to -2} \dfrac{f(x)}{g(x)}$

(d) $\lim_{x \to -2} [2f(x)]$ (e) $\lim_{x \to -2} [f(x) - g(x)]$

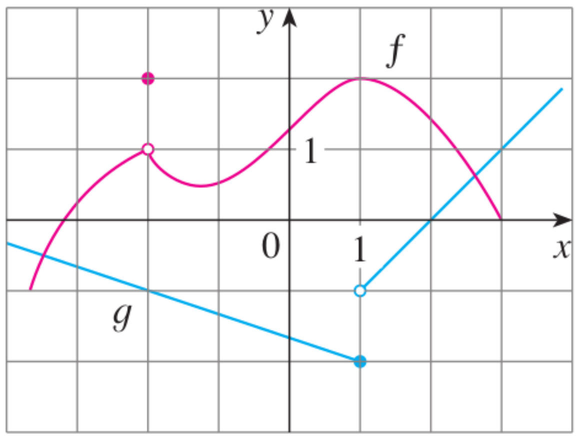

FIGURE 1

Use Desmos
https://www.desmos.com/calculator/7fy0x0ghia

Limit Laws Suppose that c is a constant and the limits

$$\lim_{x \to a} f(x) \qquad \text{and} \qquad \lim_{x \to a} g(x)$$

exist. Then

1. $\lim_{x \to a} [f(x) + g(x)] =$

2. $\lim_{x \to a} [f(x) - g(x)] =$

3. $\lim_{x \to a} [cf(x)] =$

4. $\lim_{x \to a} [f(x)\,g(x)] =$

5. $\lim_{x \to a} \dfrac{f(x)}{g(x)} =$ if $\lim_{x \to a} g(x) \neq 0$

Power Law

EXAMPLE. Think of two ways of computing the following limit:

$$\lim_{x \to 2} (1+x)^3$$

EXAMPLE. Think of two ways of computing the following limit:

$$\lim_{x \to \pi/4} \cos^2(x)$$

General Formula:

6. $\lim_{x \to a} [f(x)]^n = \left[\lim_{x \to a} f(x)\right]^n$ where n is a positive integer

EXAMPLE 2 Evaluate the following limits and justify each step.

(a) $\lim_{x \to 5} (2x^2 - 3x + 4)$ (b) $\lim_{x \to -2} \dfrac{x^3 + 2x^2 - 1}{5 - 3x}$

Remark:

Direct Substitution Property If f is a polynomial or a rational function and a is in the domain of f, then

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

Root Law.

11. $\lim_{x \to a} \sqrt[n]{f(x)} = \sqrt[n]{\lim_{x \to a} f(x)}$ where n is a positive integer

[If n is even, we assume that $\lim_{x \to a} f(x) > 0$.]

Example. Compute $\lim_{u \to -2} \sqrt{u^4 + 3u + 6}$.

EXAMPLE 3 Find $\lim_{x\to 1} \dfrac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1}$.

We have to use the following new substitution rule:

If $f(x) = g(x)$ when $x \neq a$, then $\lim_{x\to a} f(x) = \lim_{x\to a} g(x)$, provided the limits exist.

EXAMPLE 5 Evaluate $\lim_{h \to 0} \frac{(3+h)^2 - 9}{h}$.

EXAMPLE 6 Find $\lim_{t \to 0} \frac{\sqrt{t^2 + 9} - 3}{t^2}$.

EXAMPLE 8 Prove that $\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{|x|}{x}$ does not exist.

EXAMPLE 9 If

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \sqrt{x - 4} & \text{if } x > 4 \\ 8 - 2x & \text{if } x < 4 \end{cases}$$

determine whether $\lim_{x \to 4} f(x)$ exists.

EXAMPLE 11 Show that $\lim_{x \to 0} x^2 \sin \frac{1}{x} = 0$.

$\boxed{3}$ The Squeeze Theorem If $f(x) \leqslant g(x) \leqslant h(x)$ when x is near a (except possibly at a) and

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

then
$$\lim_{x \to a} g(x) = L$$