



Math 1050 ~ College Algebra

4 Combinations of Functions

$$\begin{aligned} -3x + 4y &= 5 \\ 2x - y &= -10 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} -3 & 4 \\ 2 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ -10 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\sum_{k=1}^m k = \frac{m(m+1)}{2}$$

$$\sum_{k=0}^n z^k = \frac{1-z^{n+1}}{1-z}$$

Learning Objectives

- Find and simplify functions involving arithmetic expressions.
- Combine functions through addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- Determine the domain of a function resulting from an arithmetic operation.
- Find the difference quotient of a function.
- Create a new function through composition of functions.
- Find the domain of a composite function.
- Find values of composite functions.
- Decompose a composite function into its component functions.

$$(x-2)^2 = (x-2)(x-2) = x^2 - 2x - 2x + 4 = x^2 - 4x + 4$$

Ex 1: Evaluate this function at the given expressions, simplifying your answer.

$$f(x) = x^2 - 4x + 3 \quad f(\heartsuit) = \heartsuit^2 - 4\heartsuit + 3$$

a) $f(-3)$

$$f(-3) = (-3)^2 - 4(-3) + 3 = 9 + 12 + 3 = 24$$

b) $f(x-2)$ $\heartsuit = x-2$

$$f(x-2) = (x-2)^2 - 4(x-2) + 3 = x^2 - 4x + 4 - 4x + 8 + 3 = x^2 - 8x + 15$$

c) $f(x^2)$ $\heartsuit = x^2$

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

d) $f(x^2+1)$ $\heartsuit = x^2+1$

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

It is also possible to perform arithmetic operations on functions.

Sum $f(x) + g(x) = (f+g)(x)$

(read this as "f plus g of x")

Difference $(f-g)(x) = f(x) - g(x)$

Product $(fg)(x) = f(x)g(x)$

Quotient $\left(\frac{f}{g}\right)(x) = \frac{f(x)}{g(x)}$

Composition $(f \circ g)(x) = f(g(x))$

↑
big open circle, NOT a multiplication sign

(read "f composed w/ g of x is f of g of x")

Ex 2: For $f(x) = \sqrt{x-1}$, and $g(x) = \frac{x}{x^2-4}$, simplify the resulting function and determine the domain if appropriate.

<p>a) $(f+g)(x)$</p> $= f(x) + g(x)$ $= \sqrt{x-1} + \frac{x}{x^2-4}$ <p>① domain: $[1, 2) \cup (2, \infty)$ need $x-1 \geq 0$ and ② $\Rightarrow x \geq 1$ need $x^2-4 \neq 0$ $x^2 \neq 4$ $x \neq \pm 2$</p>	<p>b) $(f-g)(5)$</p> $= f(5) - g(5)$ $= \sqrt{5-1} - \frac{5}{5^2-4}$ $= 2 - \frac{5}{21} = \frac{42}{21} - \frac{5}{21}$ $= \frac{37}{21}$	<p>c) $\left(\frac{f}{g}\right)(x) = \frac{f(x)}{g(x)}$</p> $= \frac{\sqrt{x-1}}{\frac{x}{x^2-4}}$ $= \sqrt{x-1} \div \frac{x}{x^2-4}$ $= \frac{\sqrt{x-1}(x^2-4)}{x}$ <p>domain: $[1, 2) \cup (2, \infty)$ and ① $x \neq 0$ and ② $x \neq \pm 2$ and ③ $x \geq 1$</p>
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Ex 3: For the two functions $f(x) = \sqrt{x-1}$ and $g(x) = \frac{x}{x^2-4}$, find the following.

<p>a) $f(g(x)) = f\left(\frac{x}{x^2-4}\right)$</p> <p>work from "inside out"</p> $= \sqrt{\left(\frac{x}{x^2-4}\right) - 1}$	<p>b) $g(f(x)) = g\left(\frac{f(x)}{f(x)^2-4}\right)$</p> $= \frac{f(x)}{(\sqrt{x-1})^2-4}$	<p>work from "outside in"</p>
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moral of story: in general $f(g(x)) \neq g(f(x))$.

Ex 4: For $f(x) = 3x + 5$, find $(f \circ f)(x)$ and its domain.

$$\begin{aligned}(f \circ f)(x) &= f(f(x)) = f(3x+5) \\ &= 3(3x+5) + 5 = 9x + 15 + 5 = 9x + 20 \\ \text{domain: } &(-\infty, \infty)\end{aligned}$$

In calculus, one frequently is required to find a difference quotient, which is defined by

$$\frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h}$$

Warning: $f(x+h) \neq f(x) + h$
order matters!

Ex 5: Find the difference quotient for each of these.

a) $f(x) = 3x + 5$

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h} &= \frac{3(x+h) + 5 - (3x+5)}{h} \\ &= \frac{\cancel{3x} + 3h + \cancel{5} - \cancel{3x} - \cancel{5}}{h} \\ &= \frac{3h}{h} = \boxed{3}\end{aligned}$$

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

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h} &= \frac{(x+h)^2 - 3(x+h) + 1 - (x^2 - 3x + 1)}{h} \\ &= \frac{\cancel{x^2} + 2xh + \cancel{h^2} - \cancel{3x} - 3h + \cancel{1} - \cancel{x^2} + \cancel{3x} - \cancel{1}}{h} \\ &= \frac{2xh + h^2 - 3h}{h} \\ &= \frac{h(2x+h-3)}{h} = \boxed{2x+h-3}\end{aligned}$$

Decomposing Functions

Ex 6: Find two functions f and g such that $f(g(x)) = h(x)$ where

$$h(x) = \frac{3}{(5x+1)^2}.$$

①

$$f(x) = \frac{3}{x} \quad g(x) = (5x+1)^2$$

$$\Rightarrow f(g(x)) = f((5x+1)^2) = \frac{3}{(5x+1)^2}$$

② $f(x) = \frac{3}{x^2} \quad g(x) = 5x+1$

check $\Rightarrow f(g(x)) = \frac{3}{(g(x))^2} = \frac{3}{(5x+1)^2}$