



Pdf SMA 104 Lecture 2(Limits AND Continuity)

Project Management (University of Nairobi)

Limits

The concept of limits of a function is one of the fundamental ideas that distinguishes Calculus from other areas of mathematics e.g. Algebra or Geometry.

If $f(x)$ becomes arbitrarily close to a single number L as x approaches a from either side, then the

limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches a is L written as $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x) = L$.

Consider a function $y=f(x)$

$\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x) = L$ means the limit of $f(x)$ as x approaches a is equal to a number L i.e. as x gets closer and closer to a ($x \neq a$), $f(x)$ gets closer and closer to L .

Example 21: Let $f(x) = x^2$. Find $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x)$

Solution:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} x^2 = 2^2 = 4$$

Example 22: Let $f(x) = 5x - 3$. Find $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} 5x - 3$

Solution:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} 5x - 3 = (5 \times 2 - 3) = 7$$

Example 23: Let

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$$

Find

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{x}$$

Solution:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{1}{x} = \infty \text{ (undefined)}$$

Properties of limits

- $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} k = k$
- $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} [f(x) + g(x)] = \lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x) + \lim_{x \rightarrow a} g(x)$
- $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x) \times g(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x) \times \lim_{x \rightarrow a} g(x)$

$$4. \lim_{x \rightarrow a} \frac{f(x)}{g(x)} = \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x)}{\lim_{x \rightarrow a} g(x)} \quad \text{provided that } \lim_{x \rightarrow a} g(x) \neq 0$$

$$5. \lim_{x \rightarrow a} \sqrt[n]{f(x)} = \sqrt[n]{\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x)}$$

$$e.g. \lim_{x \rightarrow a} x^{\frac{1}{2}} = \left(\lim_{x \rightarrow a} x \right)^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

Example 24:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 5} x^2 - 4x + 3 = \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} x^2 - \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} 4x + \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} 3$$

$$\begin{aligned} &= 5^2 - 4 \times 5 + 3 \\ &= 25 - 20 + 3 \\ &= 8 \end{aligned}$$

Example 25:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{3x + 5}{5x + 7} = \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} 3x + 5}{\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} 5x + 7} = \frac{3 \times 2 + 5}{5 \times 2 + 7} = \frac{11}{17}$$

Example 26:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{x^2 - 4}{x - 2} \neq \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} x^2 - 4}{\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} x - 2} \quad \text{since } \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} x - 2 = 0$$

$$\text{Hence } \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{x^2 - 4}{x - 2} = \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{(x + 2)(x - 2)}{(x - 2)} = \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} (x + 2) = 4$$

Example 27:

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{x \rightarrow 8} \frac{x^{\frac{2}{3}} + 3\sqrt{x}}{4 - \frac{16}{x}} &= \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow 8} x^{\frac{2}{3}} + \lim_{x \rightarrow 8} 3\sqrt{x}}{\lim_{x \rightarrow 8} 4 - \lim_{x \rightarrow 8} \frac{16}{x}} \\ &= \frac{8^{\frac{2}{3}} + 3\sqrt{8}}{4 - \frac{16}{8}} \\ &= \frac{4 + 6\sqrt{2}}{2} \\ &= 2 + 3\sqrt{2} \end{aligned}$$

Example 28:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{3x + 5}{6x - 8} = \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\frac{3x}{x} + \frac{5}{x}}{6 - \frac{8}{x}} = \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{3 + \frac{5}{x}}{6 - \frac{8}{x}}$$

$$\frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} 3 + \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{5}{x}}{\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} 6 - \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{8}{x}} = \frac{3 + 0}{6 - 0} = \frac{1}{2}$$

Example 29: $\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{4x^2 - x}{2x^3 - 5}$ Divide by the highest power of x .

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{\frac{4}{x} - \frac{1}{x^2}}{2 - \frac{5}{x^3}} \right) = \frac{0 - 0}{2 - 0} = \frac{0}{2} = 0$$

Example 30:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\sqrt{x^2 + 2}}{3x - 6} = \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \sqrt{x^2 \left(1 + \frac{2}{x^2} \right)}}{3x - 6}$$

$$= \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} x \left(1 + \frac{2}{x^2} \right)^{\frac{1}{2}}}{3x - 6}$$

$$= \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{x \sqrt{\left(1 + \frac{2}{x^2} \right)}}{x \left(3 - \frac{6}{x} \right)}$$

$$= \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \sqrt{1 + \frac{2}{x^2}}}{\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \left(3 - \frac{6}{x} \right)}$$

$$= \frac{1}{3}$$

Example 31:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{x^3 - 1}{x - 1} = 3$$

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{(x^2 + x + 1)(x - 1)}{(x - 1)} &= \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} x^2 + x + 1 \\ &= 1 + 1 + 1 \\ &= 3 \end{aligned}$$

Example 32:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \left(\frac{x^3 - 8}{x - 2} \right) = \frac{0}{0}$$

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{(x - 2)(x^2 + 2x + 4)}{x - 2}$$

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} x^2 + 2x + 4 = 4 + 4 + 4 = 12$$

Exercise 3

1. $\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{5x + 1}{10 + 2x}$

2. $\lim_{x \rightarrow 5} \frac{x^2 - 4x - 5}{x - 5}$

3. $\lim_{x \rightarrow 5} \frac{x^2 - 25}{x - 5}$

4. $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sqrt{2 + x} - \sqrt{2}}{x}$

5. The domain of the functions $f(x) = \frac{x}{5}$ and $g(x) = 7 - x$ is \mathbb{R} . Write down as simply as possible.

a. $f^{-1}(x)$ b. $g^{-1}(x)$ c. $fg(x)$ d. $(fg)^{-1}(x)$

Solutions to Exercise 3

1. $\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{5x + 1}{10 + 2x} = \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{5 + \frac{1}{x}}{\frac{10}{x} + 2} = 2 \frac{1}{2}$

$$2. \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} \frac{x^2 - 4x - 5}{x - 5} = \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} \frac{(x-5)(x+1)}{(x-5)}$$

$$= \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} x + 1 = 6$$

$$\text{Or } \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} \frac{2x - 4}{1} = 2(5) - 4 = 6$$

$$3. \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} \frac{x^2 - 25}{x - 5} = \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} \frac{(x+5)(x-5)}{(x-5)} = 10$$

$$\text{Or } \lim_{x \rightarrow 5} \frac{2x}{1} = 2(5) = 10$$

$$4. \lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sqrt{2-x} - \sqrt{2}}{x} \times \frac{\sqrt{2-x} + \sqrt{2}}{\sqrt{2-x} + \sqrt{2}}$$

$$= \frac{2 - x - 2}{x(\sqrt{2} + \sqrt{2-x})}$$

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

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{-1}{\sqrt{2} + \sqrt{2-x}} = \frac{-1}{\sqrt{2} + \sqrt{2}} = \frac{-1}{2\sqrt{2}} \times \frac{2\sqrt{2}}{2\sqrt{2}} = \frac{2\sqrt{2}}{4 \times 2} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{4}$$

L' Hospital Rule

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow a} \frac{f(x)}{g(x)} = \frac{0}{0} \text{ or } \frac{\infty}{\infty}$$

$$\text{Then } \lim_{x \rightarrow a} \frac{f(x)}{g(x)} = \lim_{x \rightarrow a} \frac{f'(x)}{g'(x)}$$

e.g

$$1. \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{x^3 - 1}{x - 1} = \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{3x^2}{1}$$

$$= 3 \times 1$$

$$= 3$$

$$2. \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{x^3 - 8}{x - 2} = \frac{0}{0} \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{3x^2}{1} = 12$$

$$3. \lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{\cos x - 2x - 1}{3x} = \lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{-\sin x}{3} = \frac{-2}{3}$$

Continuity

Continuity at a point.

A function is considered continuous if the following conditions are met.

1. $f(a)$ is defined.
2. $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x)$ exists.
3. $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x) = f(a)$

Otherwise it is discontinuous.

Example 33: Show that $f(x) = \frac{x^2 - 4}{x - 2}$ is not continuous at $x=2$

Solution:

Condition 1: $f(2) = \frac{4-4}{2-2} = \frac{0}{0}$, which is undefined

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Condition 2: } \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) &= \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{x^2 - 4}{x - 2} \\ &= \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{(x+2)(x-2)}{x-2} \\ &= \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} (x+2) = 4\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x)$ exists.

Condition 3: $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) = 4$, but $f(2)$ is undefined

$$\therefore \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) \neq f(2)$$

Therefore $f(x)$ is not continuous at $x=2$

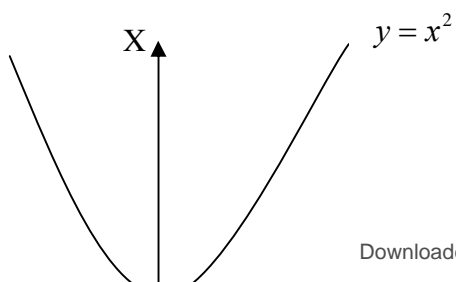
Note: It is possible to redefine $f(x)$ to make it continuous at $x=2$, as follows:

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{x^2 - 4}{x - 2}, & x \neq 2 \\ 4, & x = 2 \end{cases}$$

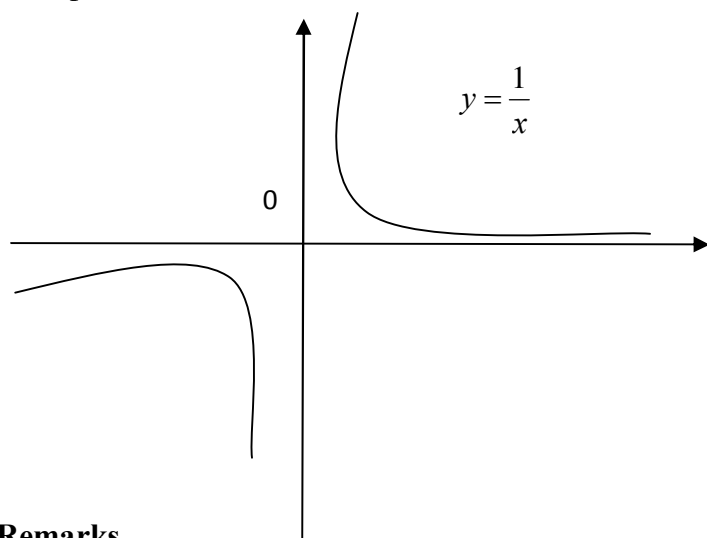
$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) = 4$, i.e. $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2}$ exists, we redefine $f(x)$ so that

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) = f(2) = 4$$

Example of a continuous function.



Example of a discontinuous function.



Remarks

1. Polynomials are always continuous functions.

e.g $f(x) = x^2 - 2x + 1$ at c since

Condition 1: $f(c)$ is defined i.e. $f(c) = c^2 - 2c + 1$

Condition 2: $\lim_{x \rightarrow c} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow c} x^2 - 2x + 1 = c^2 - 2c + 1$ exists.

Condition 3: $\lim_{x \rightarrow c} f(x) = c^2 - 2c + 1 = f(c)$

2. Discontinuity means a function breaks at a particular point.

Example 34: Discuss the continuity of $f(x)$ if

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{x^3 + 27}{x + 3}; & x \neq -3 \\ 27; & x = -3 \end{cases}$$

Solution: Condition 1: $f(-3) = 27$, therefore $f(x)$ is defined at $x = -3$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Condition 2: } \lim_{x \rightarrow -3} \frac{x^3 + 27}{x + 3} &= \lim_{x \rightarrow -3} \frac{(x + 3)(x^2 - 3x + 9)}{(x + 3)} \\ &= \lim_{x \rightarrow -3} x^2 - 3x + 9 \\ &= 9 + 9 + 9 \\ &= 27 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Condition 3: } \lim_{x \rightarrow -3} f(x) = f(-3) = 27$$

$\therefore f(x)$ is continuous.

Example 35: Determine whether or not the function below is continuous at $x = 1$

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1} & \text{if } x \neq 1 \\ 2 & \text{if } x = 1 \end{cases}$$

Solution:

Condition 1: $f(1) = 2$ hence $f(1)$ is defined.

Condition 2: $\lim_{x \rightarrow 1} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1} = \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{(x+1)(x-1)}{(x-1)} = 2$ Therefore $\lim_{x \rightarrow 1} f(x)$ exists.

Condition 3: $\lim_{x \rightarrow 1} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{x^2 - 1}{x - 1} = f(1)$, hence $f(x)$ is continuous at $x=1$

Example 36: Discuss the continuity of $f(x)$ if

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{x^2 - 4}{x - 2}, & x \neq 2 \\ 3 & x = 2 \end{cases}$$

Solution:

Condition 1: $f(2) = 3$, so $f(x)$ is defined at $x=2$

Condition 2:

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) &= \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{x^2 - 4}{x - 2} \\ &= \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} \frac{(x+2)(x-2)}{(x-2)} \quad \text{hence } \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) \text{ exists.} \\ &= 2 \end{aligned}$$

$\therefore f(x)$ Condition 3: $f(2) = 3$ but $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) = 2 \therefore \lim_{x \rightarrow 2} f(x) \neq f(2)$ Thus $f(x)$ is discontinuous

at $x = 2$

Exercise

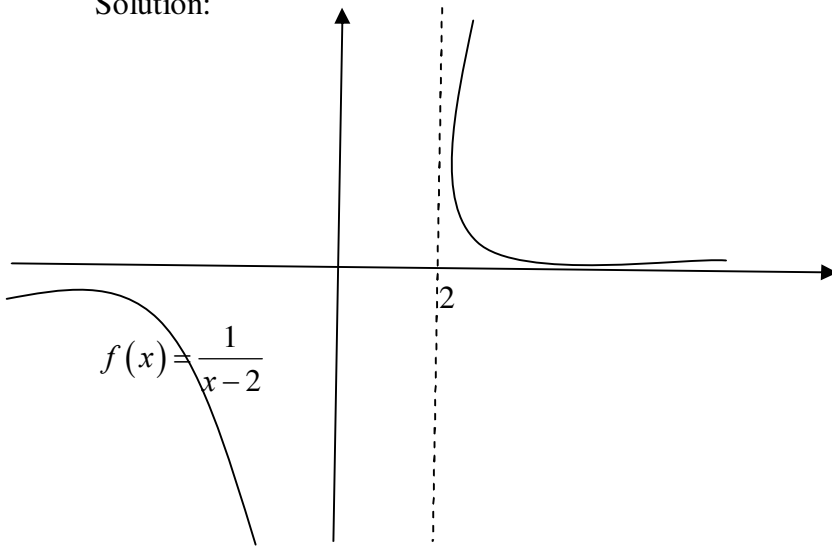
Define the continuity of a real valued function $f(x)$ at a point $x=a$. Hence determine if the following function is

continuous at $x=1$.

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{x^3 - 1}{x - 1}, & x \neq 1 \\ 3, & x = 1 \end{cases}$$

Example 37: Show that $f(x) = \frac{1}{x-2}$ for $x \neq 2$ is not continuous at $x = 2$.

Solution:



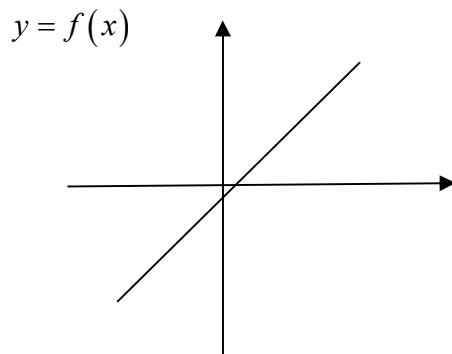
Because f is not defined at the point $x = 2$ it is not continuous there. Moreover f has what might be called an infinite discontinuity at $x = 2$.

Combinations of continuous Functions.

Any sum or product of continuous functions is continuous. That is, if the functions f and g are continuous at $x = a$, then so are $f + g$ and $f \cdot g$. e.g. if f and g are continuous at $x = a$, then

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow a} [f(x) + g(x)] = \lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x) + \lim_{x \rightarrow a} g(x) = f(a) + g(a)$$

Example 38: $f(x) = x$ is continuous everywhere, i.e.



It follows that the cubic polynomial function $f(x) = x^3 - 3x^2 + 1$ is continuous everywhere. More generally every polynomial function $p(x) = b_n x^n + b_{n-1} x^{n-1} + \dots + b_1 x + b_0$ is continuous at each point of the real line.

If $p(x)$ and $q(x)$ are polynomials, then the quotient law for limits and the continuity of polynomials imply that

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow a} \frac{p(x)}{q(x)} = \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow a} p(x)}{\lim_{x \rightarrow a} q(x)} = \frac{p(a)}{q(a)} \quad \text{provided } q(a) \neq 0.$$

Thus every rational function $f(x) = \frac{p(x)}{q(x)}$ is continuous wherever it is defined.

The point $x = a$ where the function f is discontinuous is called a removable discontinuity of f provided that there exists a function F such that $F(x) = f(x)$ for all $x \neq a$ in the domain of f , and this new function F is continuous at $x = a$.

Example 39: Suppose that $f(x) = \frac{x-2}{x^2-3x+2}$

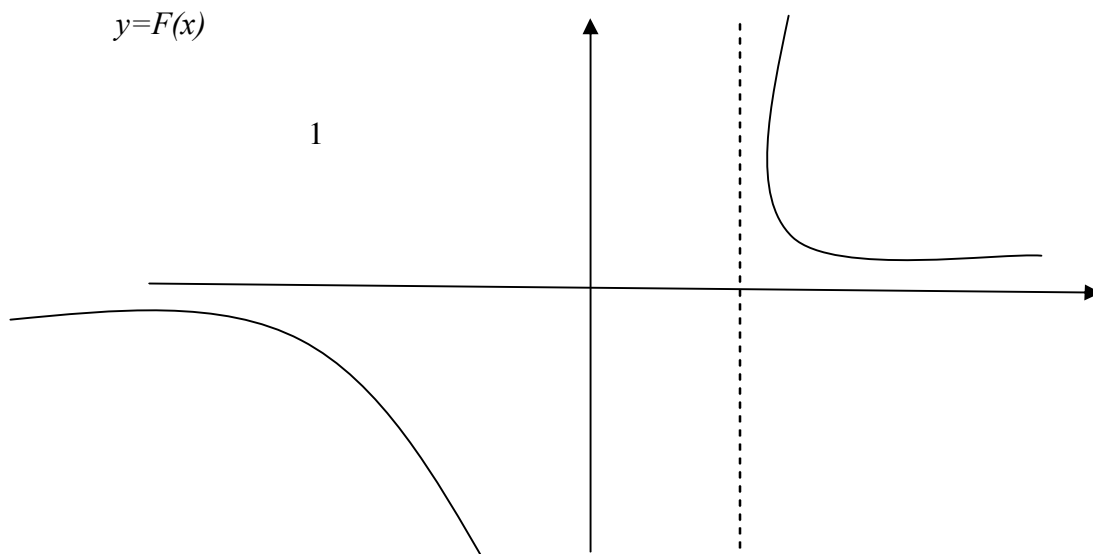
$$x^2 - 3x + 2 = (x-1)(x-2)$$

$$\therefore f(x) = \frac{x-2}{(x-1)(x-2)}$$

This shows that f is not defined at $x = 1$ and $x = 2 \Rightarrow f(x)$ is continuous except at these points.

But $f(x) = \frac{x-2}{(x-1)(x-2)} = \frac{1}{x-1}$. The new function $F(x) = \frac{1}{x-1}$ is continuous at $x = 2$, where

$F(2) = 1$. Therefore f has a removable discontinuity at $x = 2$; the discontinuity at $x = 1$ is not removable.



Composition of Continuous Functions

Let $h(x) = f(g(x))$ where f and g are continuous functions. The composition of two continuous functions is continuous or more precisely, if g is continuous at a and f is continuous at $g(a)$, then $f \circ g$ is continuous at a where $f \circ g = f(g(x))$.

Proof: The continuity of g at a means that $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} g(x) = g(a)$, and the continuity of f at $g(a)$

implies that $\lim_{g(x) \rightarrow g(a)} f(g(x)) = f(g(a))$

$$\text{i.e. } \lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(g(x)) = f\left(\lim_{x \rightarrow a} g(x)\right) = f(g(a))$$

Example 40: Show that the function $f(x) = \left(\frac{x-7}{x^2+2x+2}\right)^{\frac{2}{3}}$ is continuous on the whole real line.

Solution: Consider the denominator

$x^2 + 2x + 2 = (x+1)^2 + 1 > 0$ for all value of x . Hence the rational function

$r(x) = \frac{x-7}{x^2 + 2x + 2}$ is defined and continuous everywhere. Thus $f(x) = \left([r(x)]^2\right)^{\frac{1}{3}}$ is

continuous everywhere.

One-sided limits

Let $S \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ and $f : S \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a function. If for every $x \in S$, $f(x) \rightarrow L$ as $x \rightarrow a$ and

$x > a$ always, then we say that $x \rightarrow a$ from the right and write $x \rightarrow a^+$ or we say $\lim_{x \rightarrow a^+} f(x) = L$.

Similarly, if $f(x) \rightarrow L$ as $x \rightarrow a$ and $x < a$ always, we say that $x \rightarrow a$ from the left and write

$x \rightarrow a^-$ or we say $\lim_{x \rightarrow a^-} f(x) = L$.

The limits $\lim_{x \rightarrow a^+} f(x)$ and $\lim_{x \rightarrow a^-} f(x)$ are called one-sided limits of f and a

Remarks

1. $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x) = L$ iff $\lim_{x \rightarrow a^+} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow a^-} f(x) = L$

i.e the limit of a function $f(x)$ exists if the right hand side limit = left-hand side limit.

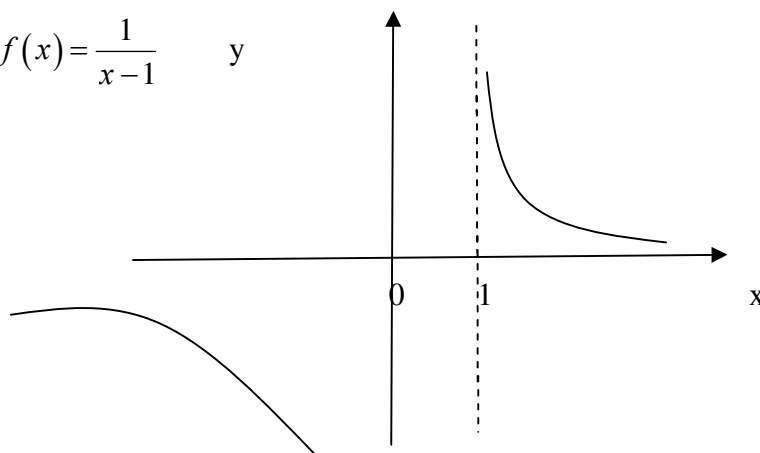
2. If $\lim_{x \rightarrow a^+} f(x) \neq \lim_{x \rightarrow a^-} f(x)$, then $\lim_{x \rightarrow a} f(x)$ does not exist.

Example 41: Given $f(x) = \frac{x}{x-1}$, Find $\lim_{x \rightarrow 1^+} f(x)$ and $\lim_{x \rightarrow 1^-} f(x)$

Solution:

| | | | | |
|---|---------------|----------|----------------|---|
| 0 | $\frac{1}{2}$ | 1 | $1\frac{1}{2}$ | 2 |
| 0 | -1 | ∞ | 3 | 2 |

Also consider the graph of $f(x) = \frac{1}{x-1}$



$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 1^-} f(x) = -\infty \text{ if } x < 1$$

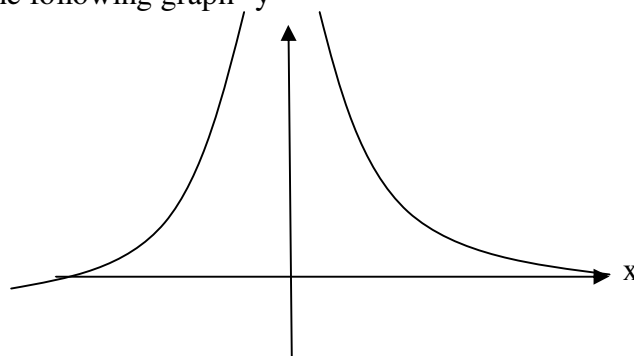
$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 1^+} f(x) = \infty \text{ if } x > 1$$

$\therefore \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} f(x) = \infty \Rightarrow \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} f(x)$ does not exist.

Example 42: Consider the following graph y

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

$$y = \frac{1}{x^2}$$

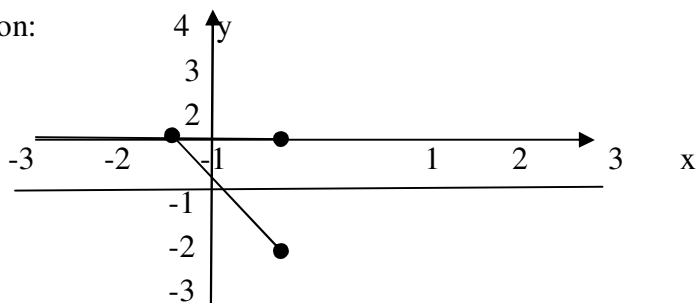


$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 0^+} f(x) = \infty \quad \lim_{x \rightarrow 0^-} f(x) = \infty$$

Example 43: Draw the graph of

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } x = 1 \\ -x, & \text{if } -1 < x < 1 \\ -1, & \text{if } x > 1 \end{cases}$$

Solution:



Example 44: Evaluate $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2^+} (1 + \sqrt{x-2})$ and $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2^-} (1 + \sqrt{x-2})$

Solution:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2^+} (1 + \sqrt{x-2})$$

$$= \lim_{x \rightarrow 2^+} 1 + \lim_{x \rightarrow 2^+} \sqrt{x-2}$$

$$= 1 + 0 = 1$$

On the other hand, $\lim_{x \rightarrow 2^-} (1 + \sqrt{x-2})$ does not exist (is not real).

Definition: A function f is said to be continuous from the right at $x = p$ if $\lim_{x \rightarrow p^+} f(x) = f(p)$.

We say that f is continuous from the left at q if $\lim_{x \rightarrow p^-} f(x) = f(q)$

A function is said to be continuous if its continuous from the right and from the left i.e

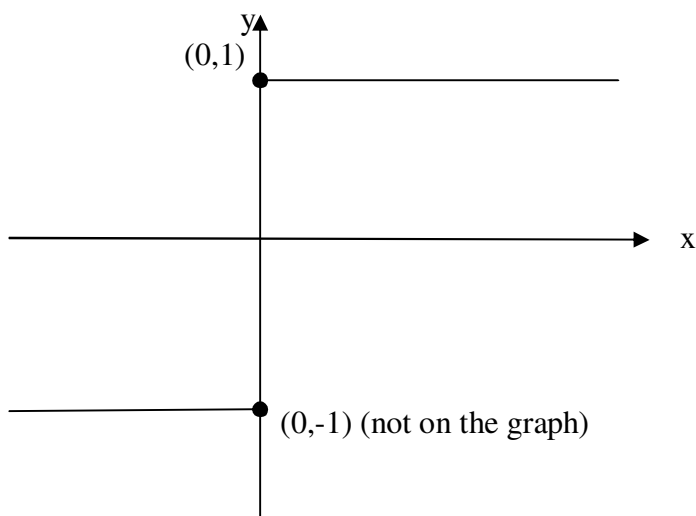
$$\lim_{x \rightarrow p^+} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow p^-} f(x) = f(p)$$

Example 45: Discuss the continuity of $g(x) = \sin x = \begin{cases} +1 & \text{if } x \geq 0 \\ -1 & \text{if } x < 0 \end{cases}$

Solution:

$\lim_{x \rightarrow 0^-} g(x) = -1$ and $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0^+} g(x) = +1$. Therefore Its left-hand and right-hand limits at $x = 0$ are unequal

Thus $g(x)$ has no limit as $x \rightarrow 0$. Hence the function g is not continuous at $x = 0$, it has what might be called a finite jump discontinuity there. (see the graph below)



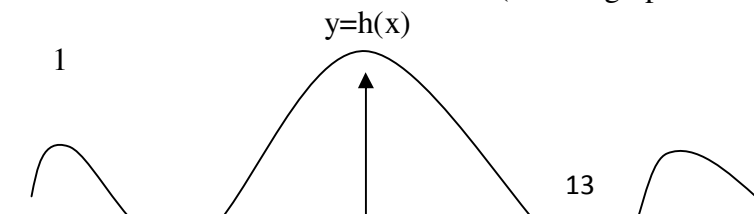
Example 46: Discuss the continuity of $h(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{\sin x}{x} & \text{if } x \neq 0 \\ 0 & \text{if } x = 0 \end{cases}$

Solution:

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} h(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow 0} \frac{\sin x}{x} = 1 \text{ whereas } h(0) = 0$$

\Rightarrow the limit and the value of h at $x = 0$ are not equal.

Thus the function h is not continuous there (see the graph below)



The point (0,0) is on the graph, the point (0,1) is not.

Remark:

Another way of finding out if functions are continuous at $x = a$ is by:

1. Checking if $f(a)$ is defined.
2. Checking if $\lim_{x \rightarrow a^+} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow a^-} f(x)$ and exist and are equal.
3. Ensuring that both are equal to $f(a)$.

Example 47: Find the value of c such that $f(x) = \begin{cases} x + c & \text{if } x < 0 \\ 4 - x^2 & \text{if } x \geq 0 \end{cases}$ is continuous at $x = 0$.

Solution:

Condition 1: Is $f(x)$ defined at $x = 0$?

Yes, $f(x) = 4 - x^2$
 $\therefore f(0) = 4 - 0^2 = 4$

Condition 2: Does $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} f(x)$ exist? In other words,

Does $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} f(x)$ exist?

Yes, $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0^-} f(x) = 0 + c = c$

Does $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0^+} f(x)$ exist?

Yes, $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0^+} f(x) = 4 - x^2 = 4 - 0^2 = 4$

(c) Is $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow 0^+} f(x)$.

For them to be equal, $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0^-} f(x) = \lim_{x \rightarrow 0^+} f(x) \Rightarrow c = 4$

Thus, $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} f(x)$ exists, i.e. $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} f(x) = 4$

Condition 3: Is $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} f(x) = f(0)$

Yes, $\lim_{x \rightarrow 0} f(x) = f(0) = 4$

Conclusion: for $f(x)$ to be continuous at $x = 0$, then $c = 4$.

Exercise: Evaluate

$$1. \lim_{x \rightarrow 3} \frac{x^2 - 2x}{x + 1} \quad 2. \lim_{x \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{x - 2}{x^2 + 2x + 1} \quad 3. \lim_{x \rightarrow 6} \frac{y + 6}{y^2 - 36} \quad 4. \lim_{x \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{2 - y}{\sqrt{7 + 6y^2}} \quad 5. \lim_{x \rightarrow 3^+} \frac{x}{x - 3} \quad 6.$$

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 2^-} \frac{x}{x^2 - 4}$$

$$7. \lim_{y \rightarrow 4} \frac{4-y}{2-\sqrt{y}} \quad 8. \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \sqrt{\frac{5x^2-2}{x+3}} \quad 9. \lim_{x \rightarrow \pi} \sin\left(\frac{x^2}{\pi+x}\right)$$

10. For the following problems find the points where given function is not defined and therefore not continuous. For each such point a , tell whether this discontinuity is removable.

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

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

c) $f(x) = \frac{1}{1-|x|}$

d) $f(x) = \frac{x-17}{|x-17|}$

e) $f(x) = \begin{cases} -x & \text{if } x < 0 \\ x^2 & \text{if } x > 0 \end{cases}$

f) $f(x) = \begin{cases} 1+x^2 & \text{if } x < 0 \\ \frac{\sin x}{x} & \text{if } x > 0 \end{cases}$

11. For the following problems find a value of the constant c so that the function $f(x)$ is continuous for all x .

a) $f(x) = \begin{cases} x+c & \text{if } x < 0 \\ 4-x^2 & \text{if } x \geq 0 \end{cases}$

Answer: $c=4$

b) $f(x) = \begin{cases} 2x+c & \text{if } x \leq 3 \\ 2c-x & \text{if } x > 3 \end{cases}$

Answer:

$c=9$

c) $f(x) = \begin{cases} c^2-x^2 & \text{if } x < 0 \\ 2(x-c)^2 & \text{if } x \geq 0 \end{cases}$

Answer: $c=0$

d) $f(x) = \begin{cases} c^3-x^3 & \text{if } x \leq \pi \\ c \sin x & \text{if } x > \pi \end{cases}$

Answer: $c = \pi$