

§3.7 Implicit Differentiation -- Student Notes

Up to now, we have worked explicitly, solving an equation for one variable in terms of another. For example, if you were asked to find $\frac{dy}{dx}$ for $2x^2 + y^2 = 4$, you would solve for y and get $y = \pm\sqrt{4-2x^2}$ and then take the derivative. Sometimes it is inconvenient or difficult to solve for y . In this case, we use implicit differentiation. You assume y could be solved in terms of x and treat it as a function in terms of x . Thus, you must apply the chain rule because you are assuming y is defined in terms of x .

Differentiating with respect to x :

$$\frac{d}{dx}[x^3] = 3x^2$$

variables agree

Variables agree \Rightarrow use power rule

$$\frac{d}{dx}[y^3] = 3y^2 \frac{dy}{dx}$$

variables disagree

Variables disagree \Rightarrow use power rule and chain rule

$$\frac{d}{dx}[x + 3y] = 1 + 3 \frac{dy}{dx}$$

variables agree

variables disagree

$$\frac{d}{dx}[xy^2] = 1(y^2) + x\left(2y \frac{dy}{dx}\right) = y^2 + 2xy \frac{dy}{dx}$$

variables disagree

use product and chain rules

Consider the problem, find $\frac{dy}{dx}$ for $y^2 - 2y + 3x = x^2$. Treat y as a quantity in terms of x so

$$\frac{d}{dx}(y^2) - \frac{d}{dx}(2y) + \frac{d}{dx}(3x) = \frac{d}{dx}(x^2)$$

Different

Same

$$2y \frac{dy}{dx}$$

$$-2 \frac{dy}{dx}$$

$$+3 = 2x$$

Now solve for $\frac{dy}{dx}$.

$$2y \frac{dy}{dx} - 2 \frac{dy}{dx} = 2x - 3 \Rightarrow \frac{dy}{dx}(2y - 2) = 2x - 3 \Rightarrow \frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{2x - 3}{2y - 2}$$

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Guidelines for Implicit Differentiation:

1. Differentiate both sides of the equation with respect to x .
2. Collect all terms involving $\frac{dy}{dx}$ on one side of the equation and move all other terms to the other side.
3. Factor $\frac{dy}{dx}$ out of the terms on the one side.
4. Solve for $\frac{dy}{dx}$ by dividing both sides of the equation by the factored term.

Practice:

Find $\frac{dy}{dx}$:

1. $y^3 + 7\cos(y) = x^3$

$$3y^2 \frac{dy}{dx} - 7\sin(y) \frac{dy}{dx} = 3x^2$$

$$\frac{dy}{dx} [3y^2 - 7\sin(y)] = 3x^2$$

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{3x^2}{[3y^2 - 7\sin(y)]}$$

product rule \rightarrow

$$d[x^2y] = 2xy + x^2 \frac{dy}{dx}$$

2. $4x^2y - 3y = x^3 - 1$

$$4[2xy + x^2 \frac{dy}{dx}] - 3 \frac{dy}{dx} = 3x^2$$

$$(4x^2 - 3) \frac{dy}{dx} = 3x^2 - 8xy \rightarrow \frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{3x^2 - 8xy}{(4x^2 - 3)}$$

3. $x^2 + 5y^3 = xy + 9$

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

$$(15y^2 - x) \frac{dy}{dx} = y - 2x \rightarrow \frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{(y - 2x)}{(15y^2 - x)}$$

4. Find $\frac{dy}{dt}$ if $t^3 + t^2y - 10y^4 = 0$

$$3t^2 + 2ty + t^2 \frac{dy}{dt} - 40y^3 \frac{dy}{dt} = 0$$

$$(t^2 - 40y^3) \frac{dy}{dt} = -(3t^2 + 2ty)$$

$$\frac{dy}{dt} = \frac{3t^2 + 2ty}{40y^3 - t^2}$$

slopes of \perp lines $m \cdot \frac{-1}{m}$

5. Find the equation of the normal line (the line perpendicular to the tangent line) to the curve

$8(x^2 + y^2)^2 = 100(x^2 - y^2)$ at the point $(3, 1)$.

tangent line $y = -\frac{13}{9}(x-3) + 1$ \Rightarrow $y = \frac{9}{13}(x-3) + 1$ NORMAL LINE

$$\frac{d}{dx} [2(x^2 + y^2)^2 = 25(x^2 - y^2)]$$

$$4(x^2 + y^2) \cdot (2x + 2y \frac{dy}{dx}) = 25(2x - 2y \frac{dy}{dx})$$

$$4(x^2 + y^2)(2x) - 25(2x) = [25(-2y) - 4(x^2 + y^2)(2y)] \frac{dy}{dx}$$

$$(2x)(4(x^2 + y^2) - 25) = [(-2y)(25 + 4(x^2 + y^2))] \frac{dy}{dx}$$

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{(-2y)[4(x^2 + y^2) + 25]}{(2x)[4(x^2 + y^2) - 25]} \Big|_{(3,1)} = \frac{(-1)[40 + 25]}{3[40 - 25]} = \frac{-1[8+5]}{3[8-5]} = \frac{-13}{9} = \frac{dy}{dx} \Big|_{(3,1)}$$