PARTIAL DERIVATIVES

Functions of Several Variables

Many functions depend on more than one independent variable. The function $V = \pi r^2 h$ calculates the volume of a right circular cylinder from its radius and height. The function $f(x, y) = x^2 + y^2$ calculates the height of the paraboloid $z = x^2 + y^2$ above the point $P(x, y)$ from the two coordinates of P. The temperature T of a point on Earth's surface depends on its latitude x and longitude y, expressed by writing $T = f(x, y)$. In this section, we define functions of more than one independent variable and discuss ways to graph them.

Real-valued functions of several independent real variables are defined much the way you would imagine from the single-variable case. The domains are sets of ordered pairs (triples, quadruples, n-tuples) of real numbers, and the ranges are sets of real numbers of the kind we have worked with all along.

DEFINITION Partial Derivative with Respect to x

The **partial derivative of $f(x, y)$ with respect to x** at the point (x_0, y_0) is

$$\left.\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\right|_{(x_0, y_0)} = \lim_{h \to 0} \frac{f(x_0 + h, y_0) - f(x_0, y_0)}{h},$$

provided the limit exists.

An equivalent expression for the partial derivative is

$$\left.\frac{d}{dx} f(x, y_0)\right|_{x = x_0}.$$

The slope of the curve $z = f(x, y_0)$ at the point $P(x_0, y_0, f(x_0, y_0))$ in the plane $y = y_0$ is the value of the partial derivative of f with respect to x at (x_0, y_0). The tangent line to the curve at P is the line in the plane $y = y_0$ that passes through P with this slope. The partial derivative $\partial f/\partial x$ at (x_0, y_0) gives the rate of change of f with respect to x when y is held fixed at the value y_0. This is the rate of change of f in the direction of $\mathbf{i}$ at (x_0, y_0).

The notation for a partial derivative depends on what we want to emphasize:

$\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}(x_0, y_0)$ or $f_x(x_0, y_0)$	"Partial derivative of f with respect to x at (x_0, y_0)" or "f sub x at (x_0, y_0)." Convenient for stressing the point (x_0, y_0).
$\left.\frac{\partial z}{\partial x}\right\|_{(x_0, y_0)}$	"Partial derivative of z with respect to x at (x_0, y_0)." Common in science and engineering when you are dealing with variables and do not mention the function explicitly.
f_x, $\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}$, z_x, or $\frac{\partial z}{\partial x}$	"Partial derivative of f (or z) with respect to x." Convenient when you regard the partial derivative as a function in its own right.

The definition of the partial derivative of $f(x, y)$ with respect to y at a point (x_0, y_0) is similar to the definition of the partial derivative of f with respect to x. We hold x fixed at the value x_0 and take the ordinary derivative of $f(x_0, y)$ with respect to y at y_0.

DEFINITION **Partial Derivative with Respect to y**

The **partial derivative of $f(x, y)$ with respect to y** at the point (x_0, y_0) is

$$\left.\frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\right|_{(x_0, y_0)} = \left.\frac{d}{dy} f(x_0, y)\right|_{y=y_0} = \lim_{h \to 0} \frac{f(x_0, y_0 + h) - f(x_0, y_0)}{h},$$

provided the limit exists.

The slope of the curve $z = f(x_0, y)$ at the point $P(x_0, y_0, f(x_0, y_0))$ in the vertical plane $x = x_0$ (Figure 14.14) is the partial derivative of f with respect to y at (x_0, y_0). The tangent line to the curve at P is the line in the plane $x = x_0$ that passes through P with this slope. The partial derivative gives the rate of change of f with respect to y at (x_0, y_0) when x is held fixed at the value x_0. This is the rate of change of f in the direction of $\mathbf{j}$ at (x_0, y_0).

The partial derivative with respect to y is denoted the same way as the partial derivative with respect to x:

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial y}(x_0, y_0), \qquad f_y(x_0, y_0), \qquad \frac{\partial f}{\partial y}, \qquad f_y.$$

Notice that we now have two tangent lines associated with the surface $z = f(x, y)$ at the point $P(x_0, y_0, f(x_0, y_0))$ (Figure 14.15). Is the plane they determine tangent to the surface at P? We will see that it is, but we have to learn more about partial derivatives before we can find out why.

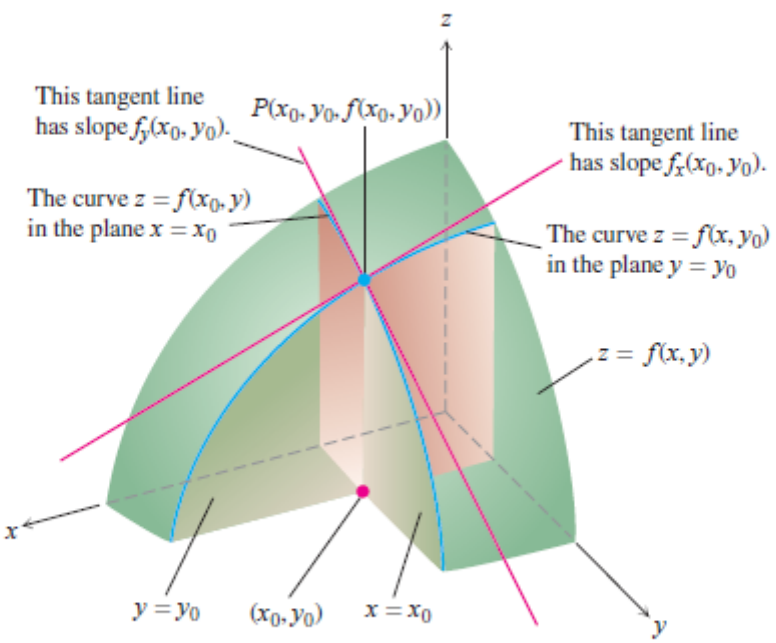


FIGURE 14.15 Figures 14.13 and 14.14 combined. The tangent lines at the point $(x_0, y_0, f(x_0, y_0))$ determine a plane that, in this picture at least, appears to be tangent to the surface.

EXAMPLE 1 Finding Partial Derivatives at a Point

Find the values of $\partial f/\partial x$ and $\partial f/\partial y$ at the point $(4, -5)$ if

$$f(x, y) = x^2 + 3xy + y - 1.$$

Solution To find $\partial f/\partial x$, we treat y as a constant and differentiate with respect to x:

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial x} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x}(x^2 + 3xy + y - 1) = 2x + 3 \cdot 1 \cdot y + 0 - 0 = 2x + 3y.$$

The value of $\partial f/\partial x$ at $(4, -5)$ is $2(4) + 3(-5) = -7$.

To find $\partial f/\partial y$, we treat x as a constant and differentiate with respect to y:

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial y} = \frac{\partial}{\partial y}(x^2 + 3xy + y - 1) = 0 + 3 \cdot x \cdot 1 + 1 - 0 = 3x + 1.$$

The value of $\partial f/\partial y$ at $(4, -5)$ is $3(4) + 1 = 13$.

EXAMPLE 2 Finding a Partial Derivative as a Function

Find $\partial f/\partial y$ if $f(x, y) = y \sin xy$.

Solution We treat x as a constant and f as a product of y and $\sin xy$:

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial y} = \frac{\partial}{\partial y}(y \sin xy) = y\frac{\partial}{\partial y}\sin xy + (\sin xy)\frac{\partial}{\partial y}(y)$$

$$= (y \cos xy)\frac{\partial}{\partial y}(xy) + \sin xy = xy \cos xy + \sin xy.$$

Second-Order Partial Derivatives

When we differentiate a function $f(x, y)$ twice, we produce its second-order derivatives. These derivatives are usually denoted by

$\dfrac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x^2}$	"d squared $f dx$ squared"	or	f_{xx}	"f sub xx"
$\dfrac{\partial^2 f}{\partial y^2}$	"d squared $f dy$ squared"	or	f_{yy}	"f sub yy"
$\dfrac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x \partial y}$	"d squared $f dx\, dy$"	or	f_{yx}	"f sub yx"
$\dfrac{\partial^2 f}{\partial y \partial x}$	"d squared $f dy\, dx$"	or	f_{xy}	"f sub xy"

The defining equations are

$$\frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x^2} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x}\left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\right), \qquad \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x \partial y} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x}\left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\right),$$

and so on. Notice the order in which the derivatives are taken:

$\dfrac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x \partial y}$ Differentiate first with respect to y, then with respect to x.

$f_{yx} = (f_y)_x$ Means the same thing.

EXAMPLE 9 Finding Second-Order Partial Derivatives

If $f(x, y) = x \cos y + ye^x$, find

$$\frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x^2}, \quad \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial y \partial x}, \quad \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial y^2}, \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x \partial y}.$$

Solution

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial x} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x}(x \cos y + ye^x) = \cos y + ye^x$$

So

$$\frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial y \partial x} = \frac{\partial}{\partial y}\left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\right) = -\sin y + e^x$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x^2} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x}\left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\right) = ye^x.$$

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial y} = \frac{\partial}{\partial y}(x \cos y + ye^x) = -x \sin y + e^x$$

So

$$\frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial x \partial y} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x}\left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\right) = -\sin y + e^x$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial y^2} = \frac{\partial}{\partial y}\left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\right) = -x \cos y.$$

Partial Derivatives of Still Higher Order

Although we will deal mostly with first- and second-order partial derivatives, because these appear the most frequently in applications, there is no theoretical limit to how many times we can differentiate a function as long as the derivatives involved exist. Thus, we get third- and fourth-order derivatives denoted by symbols like

$$\frac{\partial^3 f}{\partial x \partial y^2} = f_{yyx}$$

$$\frac{\partial^4 f}{\partial x^2 \partial y^2} = f_{yyxx},$$

and so on. As with second-order derivatives, the order of differentiation is immaterial as long as all the derivatives through the order in question are continuous.

EXAMPLE 11 Calculating a Partial Derivative of Fourth-Order

Find f_{yxyz} if $f(x, y, z) = 1 - 2xy^2z + x^2y$.

Solution We first differentiate with respect to the variable y, then x, then y again, and finally with respect to z:

$$f_y = -4xyz + x^2$$

$$f_{yx} = -4yz + 2x$$

$$f_{yxy} = -4z$$

$$f_{yxyz} = -4$$

■

The Chain Rule

The Chain Rule for functions of a single variable studied in Section 3.5 said that when $w = f(x)$ was a differentiable function of x and $x = g(t)$ was a differentiable function of t, w became a differentiable function of t and dw/dt could be calculated with the formula

$$\frac{dw}{dt} = \frac{dw}{dx}\frac{dx}{dt}.$$

Functions of Two Variables

The Chain Rule formula for a function $w = f(x, y)$ when $x = x(t)$ and $y = y(t)$ are both differentiable functions of t is given in the following theorem.

THEOREM 5 Chain Rule for Functions of Two Independent Variables

If $w = f(x, y)$ has continuous partial derivatives f_x and f_y and if $x = x(t)$, $y = y(t)$ are differentiable functions of t, then the composite $w = f(x(t), y(t))$ is a differentiable function of t and

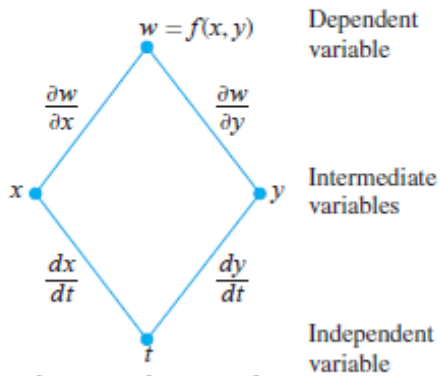
$$\frac{df}{dt} = f_x(x(t), y(t)) \cdot x'(t) + f_y(x(t), y(t)) \cdot y'(t),$$

or

$$\frac{dw}{dt} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\frac{dx}{dt} + \frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\frac{dy}{dt}.$$

To remember the Chain Rule picture the diagram below. To find dw/dt, start at w and read down each route to t, multiplying derivatives along the way. Then add the products.

Chain Rule



$$\frac{dw}{dt} = \frac{\partial w}{\partial x}\frac{dx}{dt} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y}\frac{dy}{dt}$$

EXAMPLE 1 Applying the Chain Rule

Use the Chain Rule to find the derivative of

$$w = xy$$

with respect to t along the path $x = \cos t, y = \sin t$. What is the derivative's value at $t = \pi/2$?

Solution We apply the Chain Rule to find dw/dt as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{dw}{dt} &= \frac{\partial w}{\partial x}\frac{dx}{dt} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y}\frac{dy}{dt} \\
&= \frac{\partial(xy)}{\partial x} \cdot \frac{d}{dt}(\cos t) + \frac{\partial(xy)}{\partial y} \cdot \frac{d}{dt}(\sin t) \\
&= (y)(-\sin t) + (x)(\cos t) \\
&= (\sin t)(-\sin t) + (\cos t)(\cos t) \\
&= -\sin^2 t + \cos^2 t \\
&= \cos 2t.
\end{aligned}$$

In this example, we can check the result with a more direct calculation. As a function of t,

$$w = xy = \cos t \sin t = \frac{1}{2}\sin 2t,$$

so

$$\frac{dw}{dt} = \frac{d}{dt}\left(\frac{1}{2}\sin 2t\right) = \frac{1}{2} \cdot 2\cos 2t = \cos 2t.$$

THEOREM 6 Chain Rule for Functions of Three Independent Variables

If $w = f(x, y, z)$ is differentiable and x, y, and z are differentiable functions of t, then w is a differentiable function of t and

$$\frac{dw}{dt} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\frac{dx}{dt} + \frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\frac{dy}{dt} + \frac{\partial f}{\partial z}\frac{dz}{dt}.$$

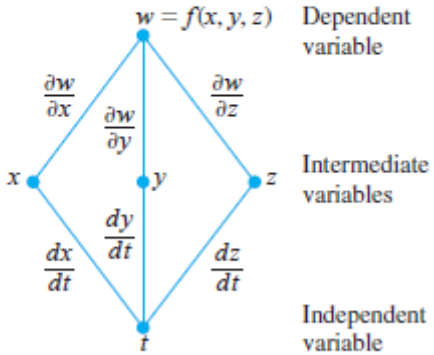
EXAMPLE 2 Changes in a Function's Values Along a Helix

Find dw/dt if

$$w = xy + z, \qquad x = \cos t, \qquad y = \sin t, \qquad z = t.$$

Here we have three routes from w to t instead of two, but finding dw/dt is still the same. Read down each route, multiplying derivatives along the way; then add.

Chain Rule



$$\frac{dw}{dt} = \frac{\partial w}{\partial x}\frac{dx}{dt} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y}\frac{dy}{dt} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\frac{dz}{dt}$$

Solution

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{dw}{dt} &= \frac{\partial w}{\partial x}\frac{dx}{dt} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y}\frac{dy}{dt} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\frac{dz}{dt} \\
&= (y)(-\sin t) + (x)(\cos t) + (1)(1) \\
&= (\sin t)(-\sin t) + (\cos t)(\cos t) + 1 \\
&= -\sin^2 t + \cos^2 t + 1 = 1 + \cos 2t.
\end{aligned}$$

$$\left(\frac{dw}{dt}\right)_{t=0} = 1 + \cos(0) = 2.$$

THEOREM 7 Chain Rule for Two Independent Variables and Three Intermediate Variables

Suppose that $w = f(x, y, z)$, $x = g(r, s)$, $y = h(r, s)$, and $z = k(r, s)$. If all four functions are differentiable, then w has partial derivatives with respect to r and s, given by the formulas

$$\frac{\partial w}{\partial r} = \frac{\partial w}{\partial x}\frac{\partial x}{\partial r} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y}\frac{\partial y}{\partial r} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\frac{\partial z}{\partial r}$$

$$\frac{\partial w}{\partial s} = \frac{\partial w}{\partial x}\frac{\partial x}{\partial s} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y}\frac{\partial y}{\partial s} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\frac{\partial z}{\partial s}.$$

The first of these equations can be derived from the Chain Rule in Theorem 6 by holding s fixed and treating r as t. The second can be derived in the same way, holding r fixed and treating s as t. The tree diagrams for both equations are shown in Figure 14.19.

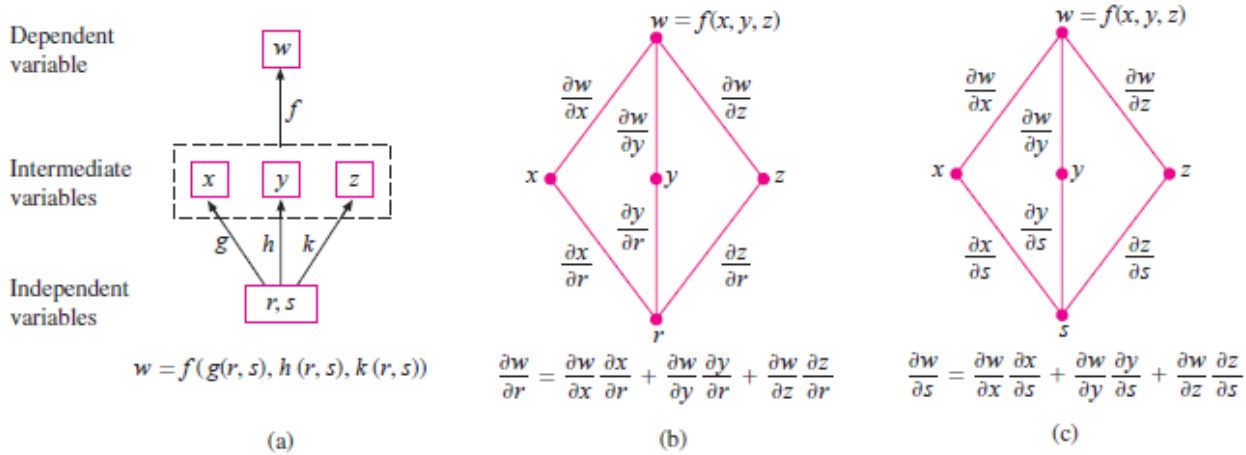


FIGURE 14.19 Composite function and tree diagrams for Theorem 7.

EXAMPLE 3 Partial Derivatives Using Theorem 7

Express $\partial w/\partial r$ and $\partial w/\partial s$ in terms of r and s if

$$w = x + 2y + z^2, \qquad x = \frac{r}{s}, \qquad y = r^2 + \ln s, \qquad z = 2r.$$

Solution

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{\partial w}{\partial r} &= \frac{\partial w}{\partial x}\frac{\partial x}{\partial r} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y}\frac{\partial y}{\partial r} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\frac{\partial z}{\partial r} \\
&= (1)\left(\frac{1}{s}\right) + (2)(2r) + (2z)(2) \\
&= \frac{1}{s} + 4r + (4r)(2) = \frac{1}{s} + 12r \qquad \text{Substitute for intermediate variable } z.
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{\partial w}{\partial s} &= \frac{\partial w}{\partial x}\frac{\partial x}{\partial s} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y}\frac{\partial y}{\partial s} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z}\frac{\partial z}{\partial s} \\
&= (1)\left(-\frac{r}{s^2}\right) + (2)\left(\frac{1}{s}\right) + (2z)(0) = \frac{2}{s} - \frac{r}{s^2}
\end{aligned}$$

Directional Derivatives and Gradient Vectors

Here's a physical interpretation of the directional derivative. Suppose that $T = f(x, y)$ is the temperature at each point (x, y) over a region in the plane. Then $f(x_0, y_0)$ is the temperature at the point $P_0(x_0, y_0)$ and $(D_{\mathbf{u}} f)_{P_0}$ is the instantaneous rate of change of the temperature at P_0 stepping off in the direction $\mathbf{u}$.

DEFINITION **Gradient Vector**

The **gradient vector (gradient)** of $f(x, y)$ at a point $P_0(x_0, y_0)$ is the vector

$$\nabla f = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\mathbf{i} + \frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\mathbf{j}$$

obtained by evaluating the partial derivatives of f at P_0.

The notation ∇f is read "grad f" as well as "gradient of f" and "del f." The symbol ∇ by itself is read "del." Another notation for the gradient is grad f, read the way it is written.

Equation (3) says that the derivative of a differentiable function f in the direction of $\mathbf{u}$ at P_0 is the dot product of $\mathbf{u}$ with the gradient of f at P_0.

EXAMPLE 2 Finding the Directional Derivative Using the Gradient

Find the derivative of $f(x, y) = xe^y + \cos(xy)$ at the point $(2, 0)$ in the direction of $\mathbf{v} = 3\mathbf{i} - 4\mathbf{j}$.

Solution The direction of $\mathbf{v}$ is the unit vector obtained by dividing $\mathbf{v}$ by its length:

$$\mathbf{u} = \frac{\mathbf{v}}{|\mathbf{v}|} = \frac{\mathbf{v}}{5} = \frac{3}{5}\mathbf{i} - \frac{4}{5}\mathbf{j}.$$

The partial derivatives of f are everywhere continuous and at $(2, 0)$ are given by

$$f_x(2, 0) = (e^y - y\sin(xy))_{(2,0)} = e^0 - 0 = 1$$
$$f_y(2, 0) = (xe^y - x\sin(xy))_{(2,0)} = 2e^0 - 2\cdot 0 = 2.$$

The gradient of f at $(2, 0)$ is

$$\nabla f|_{(2,0)} = f_x(2, 0)\mathbf{i} + f_y(2, 0)\mathbf{j} = \mathbf{i} + 2\mathbf{j}$$

(Figure 14.26). The derivative of f at $(2, 0)$ in the direction of $\mathbf{v}$ is therefore

$$(D_{\mathbf{u}}f)|_{(2,0)} = \nabla f|_{(2,0)} \cdot \mathbf{u} \qquad \text{Equation (4)}$$
$$= (\mathbf{i} + 2\mathbf{j}) \cdot \left(\frac{3}{5}\mathbf{i} - \frac{4}{5}\mathbf{j}\right) = \frac{3}{5} - \frac{8}{5} = -1.$$

■

Evaluating the dot product in the formula

$$D_{\mathbf{u}}f = \nabla f \cdot \mathbf{u} = |\nabla f||\mathbf{u}|\cos\theta = |\nabla f|\cos\theta,$$

where θ is the angle between the vectors $\mathbf{u}$ and ∇f, reveals the following properties.

Properties of the Directional Derivative $D_{\mathbf{u}}f = \nabla f \cdot \mathbf{u} = |\nabla f| \cos\theta$

1. The function f increases most rapidly when $\cos\theta = 1$ or when $\mathbf{u}$ is the direction of ∇f. That is, at each point P in its domain, f increases most rapidly in the direction of the gradient vector ∇f at P. The derivative in this direction is
$$D_{\mathbf{u}}f = |\nabla f| \cos(0) = |\nabla f|.$$
2. Similarly, f decreases most rapidly in the direction of $-\nabla f$. The derivative in this direction is $D_{\mathbf{u}}f = |\nabla f| \cos(\pi) = -|\nabla f|$.
3. Any direction $\mathbf{u}$ orthogonal to a gradient $\nabla f \neq 0$ is a direction of zero change in f because θ then equals $\pi/2$ and
$$D_{\mathbf{u}}f = |\nabla f| \cos(\pi/2) = |\nabla f| \cdot 0 = 0.$$

EXAMPLE 3 Finding Directions of Maximal, Minimal, and Zero Change

Find the directions in which $f(x, y) = (x^2/2) + (y^2/2)$

(a) Increases most rapidly at the point (1, 1)

(b) Decreases most rapidly at (1, 1).

(c) What are the directions of zero change in f at (1, 1)?

Solution

(a) The function increases most rapidly in the direction of ∇f at (1, 1). The gradient th is

$$(\nabla f)_{(1,1)} = (x\mathbf{i} + y\mathbf{j})_{(1,1)} = \mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j}.$$

Its direction is

$$\mathbf{u} = \frac{\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j}}{|\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j}|} = \frac{\mathbf{i} + \mathbf{j}}{\sqrt{(1)^2 + (1)^2}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{i} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{j}.$$

(b) The function decreases most rapidly in the direction of $-\nabla f$ at (1, 1), which is

$$-\mathbf{u} = -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{i} - \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{j}.$$

(c) The directions of zero change at (1, 1) are the directions orthogonal to ∇f:

$$\mathbf{n} = -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{i} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{j} \quad \text{and} \quad -\mathbf{n} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{i} - \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\mathbf{j}.$$

DEFINITION Total Differential

If we move from (x_0, y_0) to a point $(x_0 + dx, y_0 + dy)$ nearby, the resulting change

$$df = f_x(x_0, y_0)\,dx + f_y(x_0, y_0)\,dy$$

in the linearization of f is called the **total differential of f**.

EXAMPLE 7 Estimating Change in Volume

Suppose that a cylindrical can is designed to have a radius of 1 in. and a height of 5 in., b that the radius and height are off by the amounts $dr = +0.03$ and $dh = -0.1$. Estima the resulting absolute change in the volume of the can.

Solution To estimate the absolute change in $V = \pi r^2 h$, we use

$$\Delta V \approx dV = V_r(r_0, h_0)\,dr + V_h(r_0, h_0)\,dh.$$

With $V_r = 2\pi rh$ and $V_h = \pi r^2$, we get

$$\begin{aligned} dV &= 2\pi r_0 h_0\,dr + \pi r_0^2\,dh = 2\pi(1)(5)(0.03) + \pi(1)^2(-0.1) \\ &= 0.3\pi - 0.1\pi = 0.2\pi \approx 0.63 \text{ in.}^3 \end{aligned}$$

Extreme Values and Saddle Points

THEOREM 11 Second Derivative Test for Local Extreme Values

Suppose that $f(x, y)$ and its first and second partial derivatives are continuous throughout a disk centered at (a, b) and that $f_x(a, b) = f_y(a, b) = 0$. Then

i. f has a **local maximum** at (a, b) if $f_{xx} < 0$ and $f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2 > 0$ at (a, b).

ii. f has a **local minimum** at (a, b) if $f_{xx} > 0$ and $f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2 > 0$ at (a, b).

iii. f has a **saddle point** at (a, b) if $f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2 < 0$ at (a, b).

iv. **The test is inconclusive** at (a, b) if $f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2 = 0$ at (a, b). In this case, we must find some other way to determine the behavior of f at (a, b).

The expression $f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2$ is called the **discriminant** or **Hessian** of f. It is sometimes easier to remember it in determinant form,

$$f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2 = \begin{vmatrix} f_{xx} & f_{xy} \\ f_{xy} & f_{yy} \end{vmatrix}.$$

EXAMPLE 3 Finding Local Extreme Values

Find the local extreme values of the function

$$f(x, y) = xy - x^2 - y^2 - 2x - 2y + 4.$$

Solution The function is defined and differentiable for all x and y and its domain has no boundary points. The function therefore has extreme values only at the points where f_x and f_y are simultaneously zero. This leads to

$$f_x = y - 2x - 2 = 0, \qquad f_y = x - 2y - 2 = 0,$$

or

$$x = y = -2.$$

Therefore, the point $(-2, -2)$ is the only point where f may take on an extreme value. To see if it does so, we calculate

$$f_{xx} = -2, \qquad f_{yy} = -2, \qquad f_{xy} = 1.$$

The discriminant of f at $(a, b) = (-2, -2)$ is

$$f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2 = (-2)(-2) - (1)^2 = 4 - 1 = 3.$$

The combination

$$f_{xx} < 0 \qquad \text{and} \qquad f_{xx}f_{yy} - f_{xy}^2 > 0$$

tells us that f has a local maximum at $(-2, -2)$. The value of f at this point is $f(-2, -2) = 8$. ■

Absolute Maxima and Minima on Closed Bounded Regions

We organize the search for the absolute extrema of a continuous function $f(x, y)$ on a closed and bounded region R into three steps.

1. *List the interior points of R* where f may have local maxima and minima and evaluate f at these points. These are the critical points of f.
2. *List the boundary points of R* where f has local maxima and minima and evaluate f at these points. We show how to do this shortly.
3. *Look through the lists* for the maximum and minimum values of f. These will be the absolute maximum and minimum values of f on R. Since absolute maxima and minima are also local maxima and minima, the absolute maximum and minimum values of f appear somewhere in the lists made in Steps 1 and 2.

First-Order Differential Equations

First-Order Linear Equations

A first-order **linear** differential equation is one that can be written in the form

$$\frac{dy}{dx} + P(x)y = Q(x), \tag{1}$$

where P and Q are continuous functions of x. Equation (1) is the linear equation's **standard form**. Since the exponential growth/decay equation $dy/dx = ky$ (Section 6.5) can be put in the standard form

$$\frac{dy}{dx} - ky = 0,$$

we see it is a linear equation with $P(x) = -k$ and $Q(x) = 0$. Equation (1) is *linear* (in y) because y and its derivative dy/dx occur only to the first power, are not multiplied together, nor do they appear as the argument of a function $\left(\text{such as } \sin y,\ e^y, \text{ or } \sqrt{dy/dx}\right)$.

EXAMPLE 2 Solve the equation

$$x\frac{dy}{dx} = x^2 + 3y, \qquad x > 0.$$

Solution First we put the equation in standard form (Example 1):

$$\frac{dy}{dx} - \frac{3}{x}y = x,$$

so $P(x) = -3/x$ is identified.

The integrating factor is

$$\begin{aligned} v(x) = e^{\int P(x)\,dx} &= e^{\int(-3/x)\,dx} \\ &= e^{-3\ln|x|} && \text{Constant of integration is 0, so } v \text{ is as simple as possible.} \\ &= e^{-3\ln x} && x > 0 \\ &= e^{\ln x^{-3}} = \frac{1}{x^3}. \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{1}{x^3}y = \int \frac{1}{x^2}\,dx \qquad \text{Integrate both sides.}$$

$$\frac{1}{x^3}y = -\frac{1}{x} + C.$$

Exact ODEs.

$$M(x, y)\, dx + N(x, y)\, dy = 0$$

is called an **exact differential equation** if the **differential form** $M(x, y)\, dx + N(x, y)\, dy$ is **exact,** that is, this form is the differential

(a) $\dfrac{\partial u}{\partial x} = M,$ (b) $\dfrac{\partial u}{\partial y} = N.$

$$\frac{\partial M}{\partial y} = \frac{\partial N}{\partial x}.$$

$$u = \int M\, dx + k(y); \qquad u = \int N\, dy + l(x).$$

Solve

(7) $$\cos(x + y)\, dx + (3y^2 + 2y + \cos(x + y))\, dy = 0.$$

Solution. ***Step 1. Test for exactness.*** Our equation is of the form (1) with

$$M = \cos(x + y),$$

$$N = 3y^2 + 2y + \cos(x + y).$$

Thus

$$\frac{\partial M}{\partial y} = -\sin(x + y),$$

$$\frac{\partial N}{\partial x} = -\sin(x + y).$$

From this and (5) we see that (7) is exact.

Step 2. Implicit general solution. From (6) we obtain by integration

(8) $$u = \int M\, dx + k(y) = \int \cos(x + y)\, dx + k(y) = \sin(x + y) + k(y).$$

To find $k(y)$, we differentiate this formula with respect to y and use formula (4b), obtaining

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial y} = \cos(x + y) + \frac{dk}{dy} = N = 3y^2 + 2y + \cos(x + y).$$

Hence $dk/dy = 3y^2 + 2y$. By integration, $k = y^3 + y^2 + c^*$. Inserting this result into (8) and observing (3), we obtain the *answer*

$$u(x, y) = \sin(x + y) + y^3 + y^2 = c.$$

Second-Order Differential Equations

Constant-Coefficient Homogeneous Equations

Suppose we wish to solve the second-order homogeneous differential equation

$$ay'' + by' + cy = 0,$$

THEOREM 3 If r_1 and r_2 are two real and unequal roots to the auxiliary equation $ar^2 + br + c = 0$, then

$$y = c_1e^{r_1x} + c_2e^{r_2x}$$

is the general solution to $ay'' + by' + cy = 0$.

EXAMPLE 1 Find the general solution of the differential equation

$$y'' - y' - 6y = 0.$$

Solution Substitution of $y = e^{rx}$ into the differential equation yields the auxiliary equation

$$r^2 - r - 6 = 0,$$

which factors as

$$(r - 3)(r + 2) = 0.$$

The roots are $r_1 = 3$ and $r_2 = -2$. Thus, the general solution is

$$y = c_1e^{3x} + c_2e^{-2x}.$$

■

THEOREM 4 If r is the only (repeated) real root to the auxiliary equation $ar^2 + br + c = 0$, then

$$y = c_1e^{rx} + c_2xe^{rx}$$

is the general solution to $ay'' + by' + cy = 0$.

EXAMPLE 2 Find the general solution to

$$y'' + 4y' + 4y = 0.$$

Solution The auxiliary equation is

$$r^2 + 4r + 4 = 0,$$

which factors into

$$(r + 2)^2 = 0.$$

Thus, $r = -2$ is a double root. Therefore, the general solution is

$$y = c_1 e^{-2x} + c_2 x e^{-2x}.$$

■

THEOREM 5 If $r_1 = \alpha + i\beta$ and $r_2 = \alpha - i\beta$ are two complex roots to the auxiliary equation $ar^2 + br + c = 0$, then

$$y = e^{\alpha x}(c_1 \cos \beta x + c_2 \sin \beta x)$$

is the general solution to $ay'' + by' + cy = 0$.

EXAMPLE 3 Find the general solution to the differential equation

$$y'' - 4y' + 5y = 0.$$

Solution The auxiliary equation is

$$r^2 - 4r + 5 = 0.$$

The roots are the complex pair $r = (4 \pm \sqrt{16 - 20})/2$ or $r_1 = 2 + i$ and $r_2 = 2 - i$. Thus, $\alpha = 2$ and $\beta = 1$ give the general solution

$$y = e^{2x}(c_1 \cos x + c_2 \sin x).$$

■

Nonhomogeneous Linear Equations

In this section we study two methods for solving second-order linear nonhomogeneous differential equations with constant coefficients. These are the methods of *undetermined coefficients* and *variation of parameters*. We begin by considering the form of the general solution.

Form of the General Solution

Suppose we wish to solve the nonhomogeneous equation

$$ay'' + by' + cy = G(x), \tag{1}$$

THEOREM 7 The general solution $y = y(x)$ to the nonhomogeneous differential equation (1) has the form

$$y = y_c + y_p,$$

where the **complementary solution** y_c is the general solution to the associated homogeneous equation (2) and y_p is any **particular solution** to the nonhomogeneous equation (1).

The Method of Undetermined Coefficients

EXAMPLE 1 Solve the nonhomogeneous equation $y'' - 2y' - 3y = 1 - x^2$.

Solution The auxiliary equation for the complementary equation $y'' - 2y' - 3y = 0$ is

$$r^2 - 2r - 3 = (r + 1)(r - 3) = 0.$$

It has the roots $r = -1$ and $r = 3$ giving the complementary solution

$$y_c = c_1 e^{-x} + c_2 e^{3x}.$$

Now $G(x) = 1 - x^2$ is a polynomial of degree 2. It would be reasonable to assume that a particular solution to the given nonhomogeneous equation is also a polynomial of degree 2 because if y is a polynomial of degree 2, then $y'' - 2y' - 3y$ is also a polynomial of degree 2. So we seek a particular solution of the form

$$y_p = Ax^2 + Bx + C.$$

We need to determine the unknown coefficients A, B, and C. When we substitute the polynomial y_p and its derivatives into the given nonhomogeneous equation, we obtain

$$2A - 2(2Ax + B) - 3(Ax^2 + Bx + C) = 1 - x^2$$

or, collecting terms with like powers of x,

$$-3Ax^2 + (-4A - 3B)x + (2A - 2B - 3C) = 1 - x^2.$$

This last equation holds for all values of x if its two sides are identical polynomials of degree 2. Thus, we equate corresponding powers of x to get

$$-3A = -1, \qquad -4A - 3B = 0, \qquad \text{and} \qquad 2A - 2B - 3C = 1.$$

These equations imply in turn that $A = 1/3$, $B = -4/9$, and $C = 5/27$. Substituting these values into the quadratic expression for our particular solution gives

$$y_p = \frac{1}{3}x^2 - \frac{4}{9}x + \frac{5}{27}.$$

By Theorem 7, the general solution to the nonhomogeneous equation is

$$y = y_c + y_p = c_1 e^{-x} + c_2 e^{3x} + \frac{1}{3}x^2 - \frac{4}{9}x + \frac{5}{27}.$$

■

The Method of Variation of Parameters

Variation of Parameters Procedure

To use the method of variation of parameters to find a particular solution to the nonhomogeneous equation

$$ay'' + by' + cy = G(x),$$

we can work directly with the Equations (4) and (5). It is not necessary to re-derive them. The steps are as follows.

1. Solve the associated homogeneous equation

$$ay'' + by' + cy = 0$$

to find the functions y_1 and y_2.

3. Integrate v_1' and v_2' to find the functions $v_1 = v_1(x)$ and $v_2 = v_2(x)$.
4. Write down the particular solution to nonhomogeneous equation (1) as

$$y_p = v_1 y_1 + v_2 y_2.$$

EXAMPLE 6 Find the general solution to the equation

$$y'' + y = \tan x.$$

The general solution is

$$y = c_1 \cos x + c_2 \sin x - (\cos x) \ln |\sec x + \tan x|.$$