

SECTION 4.2: THE MEAN VALUE THEOREM

1. Consider the function $f(x) = x^2$ on the interval $[-1, 3]$

(a) Find the slope of the secant line of the graph of $f(x)$ from $x = -1$ to $x = 3$.

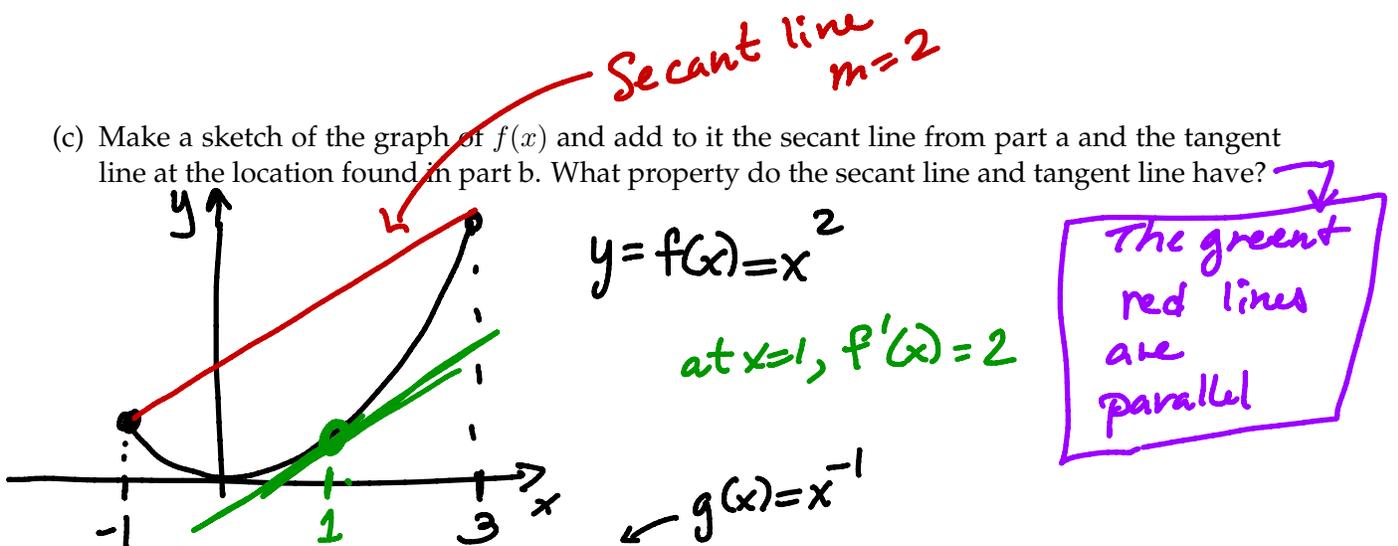
$$m_{\text{sec}} = \frac{f(3) - f(-1)}{3 - (-1)} = \frac{9 - 1}{3 + 1} = \frac{8}{4} = 2$$

(b) Find a value of x in $[-1, 3]$ where $f'(x)$ equals the value in part a.

$$f'(x) = 2x = 2$$

$$\text{So } x = 1$$

(c) Make a sketch of the graph of $f(x)$ and add to it the secant line from part a and the tangent line at the location found in part b. What property do the secant line and tangent line have?



2. Repeat Problem 1 with the function $g(x) = 1/x$ on $[1, 5]$.

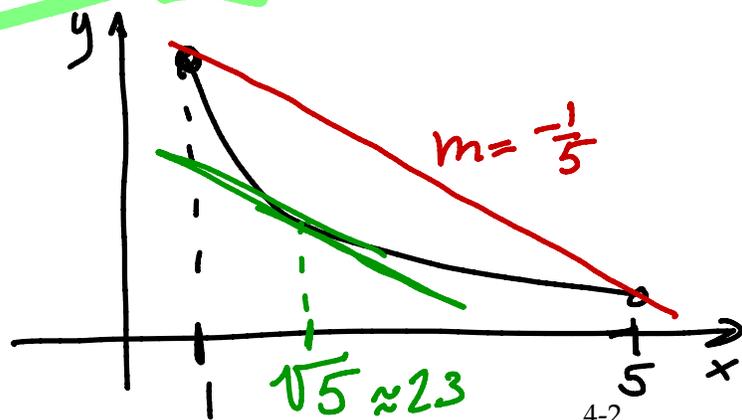
$$m_{\text{sec}} = \frac{g(5) - g(1)}{5 - 1} = \frac{\frac{1}{5} - 1}{4} = \frac{-\frac{4}{5}}{4} = -\frac{1}{5} = -0.20$$

$$g'(x) = -1x^{-2} = -\frac{1}{x^2}$$

$$\text{So } -\frac{1}{x^2} = -\frac{1}{5}$$

$$\text{So } x = \pm\sqrt{5}$$

Only $x = \sqrt{5}$ in domain.

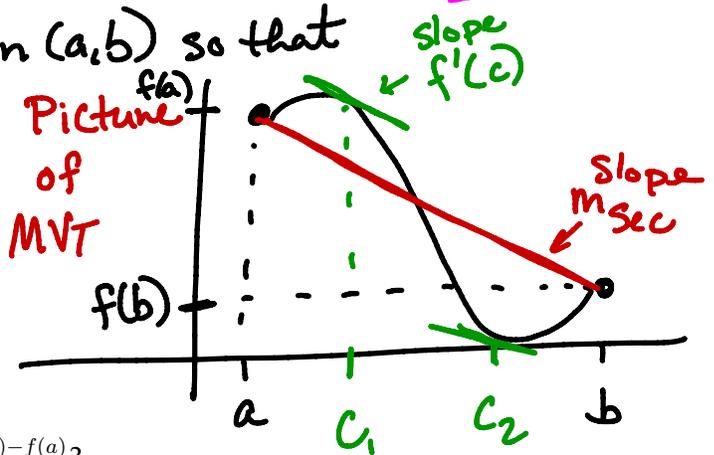


3. Mean Value Theorem IF f conts on $[a, b]$
 f differentiable on (a, b)

the graph of f is smooth + one piece.

THEN there is an x -value c in (a, b) so that

$$f'(c) = \frac{f(b) - f(a)}{b - a}$$



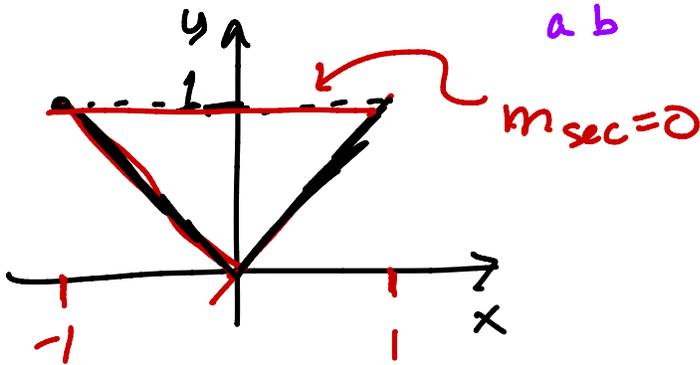
4. What is the geometric meaning of the value $\frac{f(b) - f(a)}{b - a}$?

It's the slope of secant.

5. Consider the function $f(x) = |x|$ on $[-1, 1]$.

- (a) What would MVT say about f on $[-1, 1]$?

$$\frac{f(b) - f(a)}{b - a} = \frac{f(-1) - f(1)}{-1 - 1} = 0$$



MVT says there should be a c in $(-1, 1)$ where $f'(c) = 0$.

- (b) Does MVT "work" in this case? Why or why not?

There is no c so that $f'(c) = 0$.

MVT does not apply! $f(x)$ is NOT differentiable!

6. Suppose f is a continuous function on $[a, b]$ and $f'(x) > 0$ for every x in (a, b) . How do $f(a)$ and $f(b)$ compare?

MVTm:

$$\frac{f(b) - f(a)}{b - a} = f'(c) > 0$$

Now $b - a > 0$ always.

So $f(b) - f(a) > 0$
 So $f(b) > f(a)$
 (The graph increases!)

7. Suppose f is a continuous function on $[a, b]$ and $f'(x) < 0$ for every x in (a, b) . How do $f(a)$ and $f(b)$ compare?

$$f(a) > f(b)$$

8. Compare carefully the following two questions, then answer them.

(a) Suppose $f(x) = C$ on $[a, b]$, where C is a fixed constant. What can you say about $f'(x)$?

$$f'(x) = 0. \quad \leftarrow \text{Just a derivative rule.}$$

(b) Suppose $f(x)$ is continuous on $[a, b]$ and $f'(x) = 0$ on (a, b) . What can you say about $f(x)$?

Part (a) tells us it could be a constant function but is it always?

$$\frac{f(b) - f(a)}{b - a} = f'(c) = 0$$

$$\text{So } f(b) - f(a) = 0 \text{ or } f(b) = f(a)$$

But this is true for all x in $[a, b]$.

That is: 

$$\frac{f(b) - f(x)}{b - x} = 0 \text{ so } f(x) = f(b)$$

$$\text{So } f(x) = f(b)$$

↪ some fixed constant. 4-2

9. Suppose a car is traveling down the road and in 30 minutes it travels 32.7 miles. What does the Mean Value Theorem have to say about this?

average velocity is $\frac{32.7 \text{ mi}}{30 \text{ min}} = \frac{32.7 \text{ mi}}{\frac{1}{2} \text{ hr}} = 65.4 \text{ mi/hr.}$

↑
the equiv. of
msec

MVT $\Rightarrow \exists$ some time in that 30 minutes in which the car's INSTANTANEOUS velocity is 65.4 mi/hr.

10. Suppose that $f(0) = -3$ and that $f'(x)$ exists and is less than or equal to 5 for all values of x . How large can $f(2)$ possibly be?

Know $f(0) = -3$ and $f'(x) \leq 5$.

$$\frac{f(2) - f(0)}{2 - 0} = f'(c) \leq 5$$

So $\frac{f(2) - (-3)}{2} \leq 5$

So $f(2) + 3 \leq 10$

\rightarrow So $f(2) \leq 7$

11. Corollary 7: If $f'(x) = g'(x)$ for all x in the interval (a, b) , then

$$f(x) = g(x) + C, \quad C \text{ fixed constant}$$

Why? MVT to $H(x) = f(x) - g(x)$.

$$H'(x) = f'(x) - g'(x) = 0$$

8b tells us $H(x) = f(x) - g(x) = C$ or $f(x) = g(x) + C$