

AB Calculus
Linear Approximation

Use a tangent line

$$y - y_0 = m(x - x_0)$$

to approximate
a function value



1. The function f is twice differentiable with $f(2) = 1$, $f'(2) = 4$, and $f''(2) = 3$. What is the value of the approximation of $f(1.9)$ using the line tangent to the graph of f at $x = 2$? $(2, 1)$ slope = 4

$$y - 1 = 4(x - 2)$$

$$y = 4x - 7$$

$$f(1.9) \approx 0.6$$

$$\begin{aligned} y(1.9) &= 4(1.9) - 7 \\ &= 7.6 - 7 \\ &= 0.6 \end{aligned}$$

extension: $(1.9, 0.6)$ under or over estimate?

under b/c $f''(2) > 0$ so

2. For the function f , $f'(x) = 2x + 1$ and $f(1) = 4$. What is the approximation for $f(1.2)$ found by using the line tangent to the graph of f at $x = 1$? *concave up*

$$\begin{aligned} (1, 4) \quad f'(1) &= 2(1) + 1 = 3 \\ \text{slope} &= 3 \end{aligned}$$

$$f(1.2) \approx 4.6$$

$$y - 4 = 3(x - 1)$$

$$y = 3x + 1$$

$$\begin{aligned} y(1.2) &= 3(1.2) + 1 \\ &= 3.6 + 1 \\ &= 4.6 \end{aligned}$$

extension: under or over estimate?

under b/c $f''(x) = 2 > 0$ so f concave up @

3. Let f be the function given by $f(x) = 2 \cos x + 1$. What is the approximation for $f(1.5)$ found by using the line tangent to the graph of f at $x = \frac{\pi}{2}$?

$$(\pi/2, _) \quad \text{slope} = _$$

$$\begin{aligned} f(\pi/2) &= 2 \cos \pi/2 + 1 \\ &= 1 \end{aligned}$$

$$f'(x) = -2 \sin x$$

$$\begin{aligned} f'(\pi/2) &= -2 \sin \pi/2 \\ &= -2 \end{aligned}$$

$$f(1.5) \approx -2 + \pi$$

$$y - 1 = -2(x - \pi/2)$$

$$y = -2x + \pi + 1$$

$$\begin{aligned} y(1.5) &= -2(1.5) + \pi + 1 \\ &= -2 + \pi \end{aligned}$$

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4. Let f be the function defined by $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$. What is the approximation for $f(10)$ found by using the line tangent to the graph of f at the point $(8, 2)$?

$$(8, 2) \quad f'(x) = \frac{1}{3} x^{-2/3} = \frac{1}{3 \sqrt[3]{x^2}}$$

$$f'(8) = \frac{1}{3 \sqrt[3]{8^2}} = \frac{1}{3 \cdot 4} = \frac{1}{12}$$

$$y - 2 = \frac{1}{12}(x - 8)$$

$$y = \frac{1}{12}x + \frac{4}{3}$$

$$y(10) = \frac{1}{12}(10) + \frac{4}{3}$$

$$= \frac{13}{6}$$

$$f(10) \approx \frac{13}{6}$$

5. The twice-differentiable function W models the volume of water in a reservoir at time t , where $W(t)$ is measured in (GL) and t is measured in days. The table below gives values of $W(t)$ sampled at various times during the time interval $0 \leq t \leq 30$ days. At time $t = 30$, the reservoir contains 125 ggaliters of water.

Use the tangent line approximation to W at time $t = 30$ to predict the volume of water $W(t)$, in ggaliters, in the reservoir at time $t = 32$. Show the computations that lead to your answer.

$$(30, 125) \quad W'(30) = \frac{1}{2}$$

t (days)	0	10	22	30
$W'(t)$ (GL per day)	0.6	0.7	1.0	0.5

$$y - 125 = \frac{1}{2}(x - 30)$$

$$y = \frac{1}{2}x + 110$$

$$y(32) = \frac{1}{2}(32) + 110$$

$$= 16 + 110$$

$$= 126$$

$$W(32) = 126$$

6. Let h be a function defined for all $x \neq 0$ such that $h(4) = -3$ and the derivative of h is given by $h'(x) = \frac{x^2 - 2}{x}$ for all $x \neq 0$. Does the line tangent to the graph of h at $x = 4$ lie above or below the graph of h for $x > 4$? Why?

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

$$= \frac{2x^2 - x^2 + 2}{x^2}$$

$$= \frac{x^2 + 2}{x^2}$$

$$h''(4) = \frac{16 + 2}{16} > 0 \quad \text{concave up}$$

the line tangent to the graph of h @ $x = 4$ lies below b/c $f''(4) > 0$ so f is concave up