9.8 chapter intro

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9.8 Power Series

- Understand the definition of a power series.
- Find the radius and interval of convergence of a power series.
- Determine the endpoint convergence of a power series.
- Differentiate and integrate a power series.

Power Series

In Section 9.7, you were introduced to the concept of approximating functions by Taylor polynomials. For instance, the function $f(x) = e^x$ can be *approximated* by its third-degree Maclaurin polynomial

$$e^x \approx 1 + x + \frac{x^2}{2!} + \frac{x^3}{3!}.$$

In that section, you saw that the higher the degree of the approximating polynomial, the better the approximation becomes.

In this and the next two sections, you will see that several important types of functions, including $f(x) = e^x$, can be represented *exactly* by an infinite series called a **power series.** For example, the power series representation for e^x is

$$e^x = 1 + x + \frac{x^2}{2!} + \frac{x^3}{3!} + \cdot \cdot \cdot + \frac{x^n}{n!} + \cdot \cdot \cdot .$$

For each real number x, it can be shown that the infinite series on the right converges to the number e^x. Before doing this, however, some preliminary results dealing with power series will be discussed—beginning with the next definition.

Exploration

Graphical Reasoning
Use a graphing utility to approximate the graph of each power series near $x = 0$. (Use the first several terms of each series.) Each series represents a well-known function. What is the function?

a. $\displaystyle\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n x^n}{n!}$

b. $\displaystyle\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n x^{2n}}{(2n)!}$

c. $\displaystyle\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n x^{2n+1}}{(2n+1)!}$

d. $\displaystyle\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n x^{2n+1}}{2n+1}$

e. $\displaystyle\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{2^n x^n}{n!}$

Definition of Power Series

If x is a variable, then an infinite series of the form

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a_n x^n = a_0 + a_1 x + a_2 x^2 + a_3 x^3 + \cdot \cdot \cdot + a_n x^n + \cdot \cdot \cdot$$

is called a **power series.** More generally, an infinite series of the form

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a_n (x - c)^n = a_0 + a_1(x - c) + a_2(x - c)^2 + \cdot \cdot \cdot + a_n(x - c)^n + \cdot \cdot \cdot$$

is called a **power series centered at *c*,** where c is a constant.

REMARK To simplify the notation for power series, assume that $(x - c)^0 = 1$, even when $x = c$.

EXAMPLE 1 Power Series

a. The following power series is centered at 0.

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{x^n}{n!} = 1 + x + \frac{x^2}{2} + \frac{x^3}{3!} + \cdot \cdot \cdot$$

b. The following power series is centered at -1.

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} (-1)^n (x + 1)^n = 1 - (x + 1) + (x + 1)^2 - (x + 1)^3 + \cdot \cdot \cdot$$

c. The following power series is centered at 1.

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n}(x - 1)^n = (x - 1) + \frac{1}{2}(x - 1)^2 + \frac{1}{3}(x - 1)^3 + \cdot \cdot \cdot$$