

Definition of a Polynomial Function

Let n be a nonnegative integer and let $a_n, a_{n-1}, \dots, a_2, a_1, a_0$ be real numbers, with $a_n \neq 0$. The function defined by

$$f(x) = a_n x^n + a_{n-1} x^{n-1} + \dots + a_2 x^2 + a_1 x + a_0$$

is called a polynomial function of degree n . The number a_n , the coefficient of the variable to the highest power, is called the leading coefficient.

Example 1 Determine whether each of the following is a polynomial function.

a) $f(x) = 5x^{-1}$
No

b) $g(x) = 4x^2 + ex - 10$
yes

c) $h(x) = -3x^\pi + 4x^3 + 11x$
No

d) $j(x) = 2x^{\frac{1}{2}} + 10x + 6$ No e) $k(x) = \frac{1}{4}x^4 - 9x^3 + 7$ Yes f)

$f(x) = -x^4 + 5x^3 - 8ix^2 + 7$
No

Classifying Polynomials by Degree		
Name	Degree	Example
Constant	0	-9
Linear	1	$x - 4$
Quadratic	2	$x^2 + 3x - 1$
Cubic	3	$x^3 + 2x^2 + x + 1$
Quartic	4	$2x^4 + x^3 + 3x^2 + 4x - 1$
Quintic	5	$7x^5 + x^4 - x^3 + 3x^2 + 2x - 1$

****There are 2 polynomial functions you should be very familiar with... Linear & Quadratic****

LINEAR

Slope-Intercept Form: $y = mx + b$

Point-Slope Form: $y - y_1 = m(x - x_1)$

Standard Form: $ax + by = c$

Slope formula: $m = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1}$

QUADRATIC

Vertex Form: $y = a(x - h)^2 + k$

Standard Form: $y = ax^2 + bx + c$

Finding the Vertex: complete the square or $x = -\frac{b}{2a}$

Completing the Square:

Ways to solve quadratics: factor, complete the square, graph, quadratic formula

Example 2

Write a linear function that satisfies all of the following conditions:

a) passes through the points (0, 3) and (-4, -1)

$$m = \frac{y_2 - y_1}{x_2 - x_1} = \frac{-1 - 3}{-4 - 0} = \frac{-4}{-4} = 1$$

$$y - 3 = 1(x - 0)$$

$$y = x + 3$$

b) $f(4) = -2$ and $f(-4) = -4$

$$m = \frac{-4 - (-2)}{-4 - 4} = \frac{-2}{-8} = \frac{1}{4}$$

$$y - (-2) = \frac{1}{4}(x - 4)$$

$$y + 2 = \frac{1}{4}x - 1$$

$$y = \frac{1}{4}x - 3$$

Example 3

$$y = a(x - h)^2 + k$$

Write an equation for the quadratic function with the given vertex and point:

a) vertex (2, 0) passing through (1, 3)

$$3 = a(1 - 2)^2 + 0$$

$$a = 3$$

$$y = 3(x - 2)^2$$

b) vertex (-3, 4) passing through (0, 0)

$$0 = a(0 - (-3))^2 + 4$$

$$-4 = 9a$$

$$a = -\frac{4}{9}$$

$$y = -\frac{4}{9}(x + 3)^2 + 4$$

To convert a quadratic from standard form to vertex form:

Step 1: Check the coefficient of the x^2 term. If 1 goto step 2
If not 1, factor out the coefficient from x^2 and x terms.

Step 2: Calculate the value of $:(b/2)^2$

Step 3: Group the x^2 and x term together, then add $(b/2)^2$ and subtract $(b/2)^2$

Step 4: Factor & Simplify

Example 4

Use completing the square to write the following equations in vertex form:

a) $y = x^2 + 6x - 11$

$$y + 11 + 9 = x^2 + 6x + 9$$

$$y + 20 = (x + 3)^2$$

$$y = (x + 3)^2 - 20$$

$$v: (-3, -20)$$

c) $y = -x^2 - 3x - 5$

$$\textcircled{1} \frac{y + 5}{-1} + \frac{9}{4} = x^2 + 3x + \frac{9}{4}$$

$$\textcircled{2} -1 \left[\frac{y + 5}{-1} + \frac{9}{4} \right] = (x + \frac{3}{2})^2 - \frac{9}{4}$$

$$\textcircled{3} \frac{y + 5}{-5} = -1(x + \frac{3}{2})^2 + \frac{9}{4}$$

$$\textcircled{4} y = -(x + \frac{3}{2})^2 - \frac{11}{4}$$

b) $y = 2x^2 - 12x + 1$

$$\textcircled{1} \frac{y - 1}{2} + 9 = x^2 - 6x + 9$$

$$\textcircled{2} \frac{y - 1}{2} - 9 = (x - 3)^2 - 9$$

$$\textcircled{3} \frac{y - 1}{2} = (x - 3)^2 - 9$$

d) $y = \frac{1}{3}x^2 - 4x - 1$

$$\textcircled{1} 3y = x^2 - 12x - 3$$

$$\textcircled{2} 3y + 3 + 36 = x^2 - 12x + 36$$

$$\textcircled{3} 3y + 39 = (x - 6)^2$$

$$\textcircled{4} \frac{3y}{3} = \frac{(x - 6)^2 - 39}{3}$$

$$\textcircled{5} y = \frac{1}{3}(x - 6)^2 - 13$$

Determine which are polynomial functions. For those that are, state the degree and leading coefficient. For those that are not, explain why not.

1. $f(x) = 3x^{-5} + 17$

No

2. $f(x) = -9 + 2x$

yes
d: 1
LC: 2

3. $f(x) = 2x^5 - \frac{1}{2}x + 9$

yes
d: 5
LC: 2

4. $f(x) = 13$

yes
d: 0
LC: 0

5. $h(x) = \sqrt[3]{27x^3 + 8x^6}$

No

6. $y(x) = 4x - 5x^2$

yes
d: 2
LC: -5

Write an equation for the linear function f satisfying the given conditions.

7. $f(-5) = -1$ and $f(2) = 4$
 $m = \frac{4 - (-1)}{2 - (-5)} = \frac{5}{7}$
 $y - 4 = \frac{5}{7}(x - 2)$
 $y + 1 = \frac{5}{7}(x + 5)$
 $y = \frac{5}{7}x + \frac{18}{7}$

8. $f(-4) = 6$ and $f(-1) = 2$
 $m = \frac{6 - 2}{-4 - (-1)} = \frac{4}{-3}$

$y - 2 = \frac{4}{-3}(x + 1)$
 $y - 6 = -\frac{4}{3}(x + 4)$
 $y = -\frac{4}{3}x + \frac{2}{3}$

9. $f(0) = 3$ and $f(3) = 0$
 $m = \frac{0 - 3}{3 - 0} = \frac{-3}{3} = -1$

$y = -x + 3$

Describe how to transform the graph of $f(x) = x^2$ into the graph of the given functions. Sketch each graph by hand.

10. $g(x) = (x - 3)^2 - 2$
 $\rightarrow 3$ $\downarrow 2$



11. $h(x) = -3x^2 + 2$
 reflect over x-axis
 vert stretch by 3
 $\uparrow 2$



