

1. If $y = -Ax^{\frac{3}{5}}$. Find $\frac{dy}{dx}$, where A is a constant

2. If $y = \frac{1}{x}$, find $\frac{dy}{dx}$ using first principle.

Solution:

Using that derivatives of powers: if $f(x) = x^n$, where n is any real number, then $f'(x) = nx^{n-1}$

So

If $y = -Ax^{\frac{3}{5}}$, and A is a constant

$$y' = \left(-Ax^{\frac{3}{5}}\right)' = -A \left(x^{\frac{3}{5}}\right)' = -A * \frac{3}{5} * x^{\frac{3}{5}-1} = -\frac{3A}{5} x^{-\frac{2}{5}}$$

Answer 1: $y' = -\frac{3A}{5} x^{-\frac{2}{5}}$

From the definition of the derivative $\frac{dy}{dx} = \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{y(x+\Delta x) - y(x)}{\Delta x}$

If $y = \frac{1}{x}$ we have:

$$\begin{aligned} y'(x) &= \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{y(x + \Delta x) - y(x)}{\Delta x} = \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{\frac{1}{x + \Delta x} - \frac{1}{x}}{\Delta x} = \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{\frac{x - x - \Delta x}{(x + \Delta x) * x}}{\Delta x} = \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{-\Delta x}{\Delta x * (x + \Delta x) * x} \\ &= \lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0} \frac{-1}{(x + \Delta x) * x} = -\frac{1}{x^2} \end{aligned}$$

Answer 2: $y' = -\frac{1}{x^2}$