

COLLEGE ALGEBRA

9e



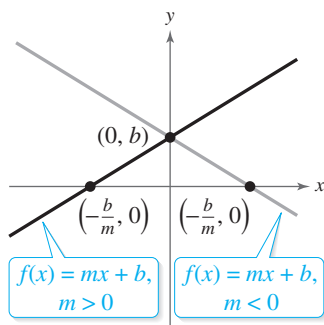
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Ron Larson

GRAPHS OF PARENT FUNCTIONS

Linear Function

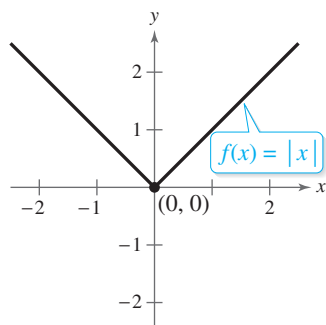
$$f(x) = mx + b$$



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Range: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 x-intercept: $(-b/m, 0)$
 y-intercept: $(0, b)$
 Increasing when $m > 0$
 Decreasing when $m < 0$

Absolute Value Function

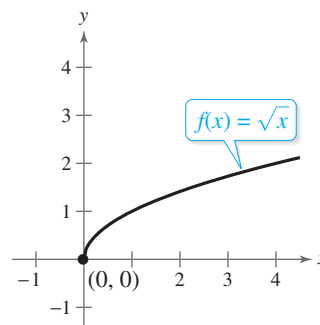
$$f(x) = |x| = \begin{cases} x, & x \geq 0 \\ -x, & x < 0 \end{cases}$$



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Range: $[0, \infty)$
 Intercept: $(0, 0)$
 Decreasing on $(-\infty, 0)$
 Increasing on $(0, \infty)$
 Even function
 y-axis symmetry

Square Root Function

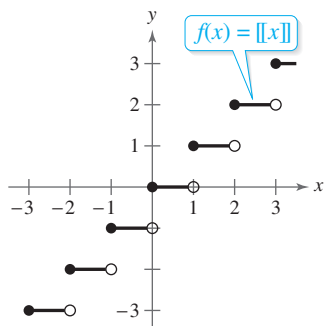
$$f(x) = \sqrt{x}$$



Domain: $[0, \infty)$
 Range: $[0, \infty)$
 Intercept: $(0, 0)$
 Increasing on $(0, \infty)$

Greatest Integer Function

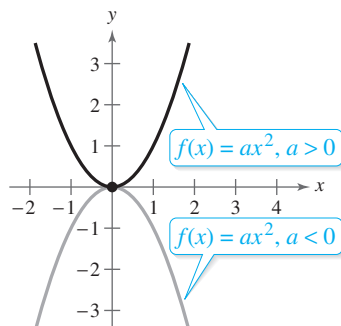
$$f(x) = \llbracket x \rrbracket$$



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Range: the set of integers
 x-intercepts: in the interval $[0, 1)$
 y-intercept: $(0, 0)$
 Constant between each pair of consecutive integers
 Jumps vertically one unit at each integer value

Quadratic (Squaring) Function

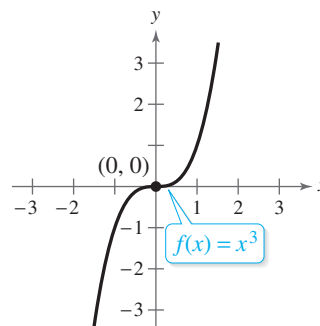
$$f(x) = ax^2$$



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Range ($a > 0$): $[0, \infty)$
 Range ($a < 0$): $(-\infty, 0]$
 Intercept: $(0, 0)$
 Decreasing on $(-\infty, 0)$ for $a > 0$
 Increasing on $(0, \infty)$ for $a > 0$
 Increasing on $(-\infty, 0)$ for $a < 0$
 Decreasing on $(0, \infty)$ for $a < 0$
 Even function
 y-axis symmetry
 Relative minimum ($a > 0$),
 relative maximum ($a < 0$),
 or vertex: $(0, 0)$

Cubic Function

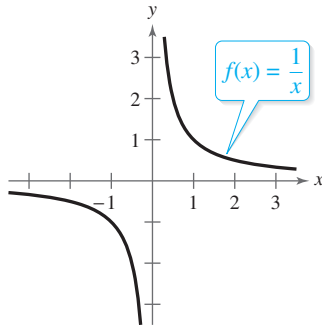
$$f(x) = x^3$$



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Range: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Intercept: $(0, 0)$
 Increasing on $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Odd function
 Origin symmetry

Rational (Reciprocal) Function

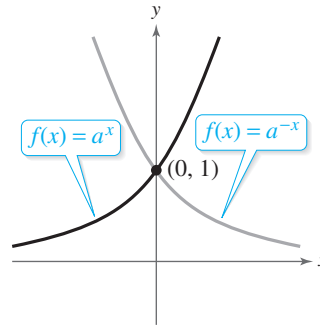
$$f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$$



Domain: $(-\infty, 0) \cup (0, \infty)$
 Range: $(-\infty, 0) \cup (0, \infty)$
 No intercepts
 Decreasing on $(-\infty, 0)$ and $(0, \infty)$
 Odd function
 Origin symmetry
 Vertical asymptote: y -axis
 Horizontal asymptote: x -axis

Exponential Function

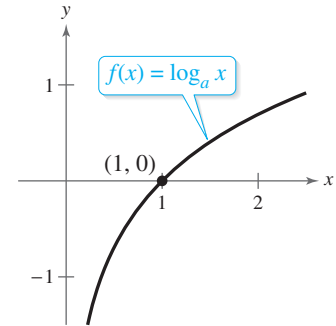
$$f(x) = a^x, a > 1$$



Domain: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Range: $(0, \infty)$
 Intercept: $(0, 1)$
 Increasing on $(-\infty, \infty)$
 for $f(x) = a^x$
 Decreasing on $(-\infty, \infty)$
 for $f(x) = a^{-x}$
 Horizontal asymptote: x -axis
 Continuous

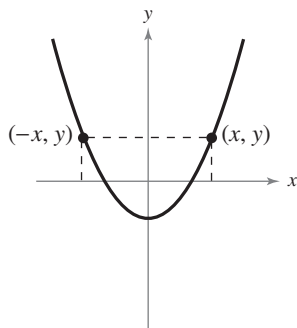
Logarithmic Function

$$f(x) = \log_a x, a > 1$$

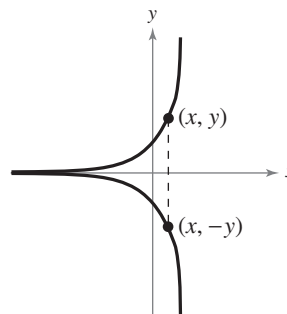


Domain: $(0, \infty)$
 Range: $(-\infty, \infty)$
 Intercept: $(1, 0)$
 Increasing on $(0, \infty)$
 Vertical asymptote: y -axis
 Continuous
 Reflection of graph of $f(x) = a^x$
 in the line $y = x$

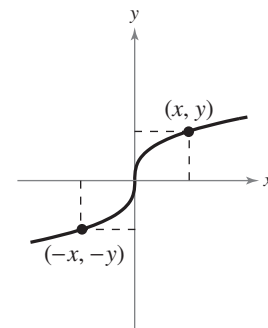
SYMMETRY



y-Axis Symmetry



x-Axis Symmetry



Origin Symmetry

College Algebra

Ninth Edition

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College Algebra

Ninth Edition

Ron Larson

The Pennsylvania State University
The Behrend College

With the assistance of David C. Falvo

The Pennsylvania State University
The Behrend College



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College Algebra
Ninth Edition**Ron Larson**

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B.2 Analyzing Data

B.3 Modeling Data

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P.2 Properties of Real Numbers

P.3 Algebraic Expressions

P.4 Operations with Polynomials

P.5 Factoring Polynomials

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Answers to Odd-Numbered Exercises and Tests A9

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Index of Applications (web)*

*Available at the text-specific website www.cengagebrain.com

Preface

Welcome to *College Algebra*, Ninth Edition. I am proud to present to you this new edition. As with all editions, I have been able to incorporate many useful comments from you, our user. And while much has changed in this revision, you will still find what you expect—a pedagogically sound, mathematically precise, and comprehensive textbook. Additionally, I am pleased and excited to offer you something brand new—a companion website at **LarsonPrecalculus.com**.

My goal for every edition of this textbook is to provide students with the tools that they need to master algebra. I hope you find that the changes in this edition, together with **LarsonPrecalculus.com**, will help accomplish just that.

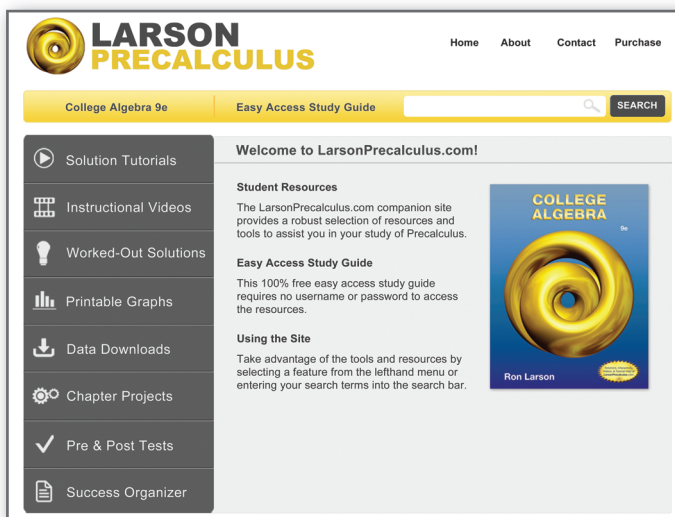
New To This Edition

NEW LarsonPrecalculus.com

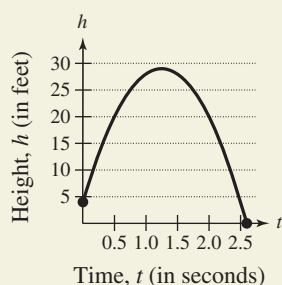
This companion website offers multiple tools and resources to supplement your learning. Access to these features is free. View and listen to worked-out solutions of Checkpoint problems in English or Spanish, download data sets, work on chapter projects, watch lesson videos, and much more.

NEW Chapter Opener

Each Chapter Opener highlights real-life applications used in the examples and exercises.



96. HOW DO YOU SEE IT? The graph represents the height h of a projectile after t seconds.



- Explain why h is a function of t .
- Approximate the height of the projectile after 0.5 second and after 1.25 seconds.
- Approximate the domain of h .
- Is t a function of h ? Explain.

NEW Summarize

The Summarize feature at the end of each section helps you organize the lesson's key concepts into a concise summary, providing you with a valuable study tool.

NEW How Do You See It?

The How Do You See It? feature in each section presents a real-life exercise that you will solve by visual inspection using the concepts learned in the lesson. This exercise is excellent for classroom discussion or test preparation.

NEW Checkpoints

Accompanying every example, the Checkpoint problems encourage immediate practice and check your understanding of the concepts presented in the example. View and listen to worked-out solutions of the Checkpoint problems in English or Spanish at **LarsonPrecalculus.com**.

NEW Data Spreadsheets

Download these editable spreadsheets from LarsonPrecalculus.com, and use the data to solve exercises.

REVISED Exercise Sets

The exercise sets have been carefully and extensively examined to ensure they are rigorous and relevant and to include all topics our users have suggested. The exercises have been **reorganized and titled** so you can better see the connections between examples and exercises. Multi-step, real-life exercises reinforce problem-solving skills and mastery of concepts by giving you the opportunity to apply the concepts in real-life situations.

REVISED Section Objectives

A bulleted list of learning objectives provides you the opportunity to preview what will be presented in the upcoming section.

REVISED Remark

These hints and tips reinforce or expand upon concepts, help you learn how to study mathematics, caution you about common errors, address special cases, or show alternative or additional steps to a solution of an example.

Calc Chat

For the past several years, an independent website—CalcChat.com—has provided free solutions to all odd-numbered problems in the text. Thousands of students have visited the site for practice and help with their homework. For this edition, I used information from CalcChat.com, including which solutions students accessed most often, to help guide the revision of the exercises.

| Year | Number of Tax Returns Made Through E-File |
|------|---|
| 2003 | 52.9 |
| 2004 | 61.5 |
| 2005 | 68.5 |
| 2006 | 73.3 |
| 2007 | 80.0 |
| 2008 | 89.9 |
| 2009 | 95.0 |
| 2010 | 98.7 |

DATA

Spreadsheet at LarsonPrecalculus.com

Trusted Features

Side-By-Side Examples

Throughout the text, we present solutions to many examples from multiple perspectives—algebraically, graphically, and numerically. The side-by-side format of this pedagogical feature helps you to see that a problem can be solved in more than one way and to see that different methods yield the same result. The side-by-side format also addresses many different learning styles.

Algebra Help

Algebra Help directs you to sections of the textbook where you can review algebra skills needed to master the current topic.

Technology

The technology feature gives suggestions for effectively using tools such as calculators, graphing calculators, and spreadsheet programs to help deepen your understanding of concepts, ease lengthy calculations, and provide alternate solution methods for verifying answers obtained by hand.

Historical Notes

These notes provide helpful information regarding famous mathematicians and their work.

Algebra of Calculus

Throughout the text, special emphasis is given to the algebraic techniques used in calculus. Algebra of Calculus examples and exercises are integrated throughout the text and are identified by the symbol **f**.

Vocabulary Exercises

The vocabulary exercises appear at the beginning of the exercise set for each section. These problems help you review previously learned vocabulary terms that you will use in solving the section exercises.

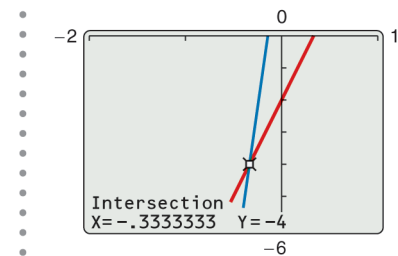
TECHNOLOGY

You can use a graphing utility to check that a solution is reasonable. One way to do this is to graph the left side of the equation, then graph the right side of the equation, and determine the point of intersection. For instance, in Example 2, if you graph the equations

$$y_1 = 6(x - 1) + 4 \quad \text{The left side}$$

$$y_2 = 3(7x + 1) \quad \text{The right side}$$

in the same viewing window, they should intersect at $x = -\frac{1}{3}$, as shown in the graph below.



Project: Department of Defense The table shows the total numbers of military personnel P (in thousands) on active duty from 1980 through 2010. (Source: U.S. Department of Defense)

| Year | Personnel, P | Year | Personnel, P |
|------|----------------|------|----------------|
| 1980 | 2051 | 1995 | 1518 |
| 1981 | 2083 | 1996 | 1472 |
| 1982 | 2109 | 1997 | 1439 |
| 1983 | 2123 | 1998 | 1407 |
| 1984 | 2138 | 1999 | 1386 |
| 1985 | 2151 | 2000 | 1384 |
| 1986 | 2169 | 2001 | 1385 |
| 1987 | 2174 | 2002 | 1414 |
| 1988 | 2138 | 2003 | 1434 |
| 1989 | 2130 | 2004 | 1427 |
| 1990 | 2044 | 2005 | 1389 |
| 1991 | 1986 | 2006 | 1385 |
| 1992 | 1807 | 2007 | 1380 |
| 1993 | 1705 | 2008 | 1402 |
| 1994 | 1610 | 2009 | 1419 |
| | | 2010 | 1431 |

- (a) Use a graphing utility to plot the data. Let t represent the year, with $t = 0$ corresponding to 1980.
- (b) A model that approximates the data is given by

$$P = \frac{9.6518t^2 - 244.743t + 2044.77}{0.0059t^2 - 0.131t + 1}$$

where P is the total number of personnel (in thousands) and t is the year, with $t = 0$ corresponding to 1980. Construct a table showing the actual values of P and the values of P obtained using the model.

Project

The projects at the end of selected sections involve in-depth applied exercises in which you will work with large, real-life data sets, often creating or analyzing models. These projects are offered online at LarsonPrecalculus.com.

Chapter Summaries

The Chapter Summary now includes explanations and examples of the objectives taught in each chapter.

ENHANCED WebAssign

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Instructor Resources

Print

Annotated Instructor's Edition

ISBN-13: 978-1-133-96118-5

This AIE is the complete student text plus point-of-use annotations for you, including extra projects, classroom activities, teaching strategies, and additional examples. Answers to even-numbered text exercises, Vocabulary Checks, and Explorations are also provided.

Complete Solutions Manual

ISBN-13: 978-1-133-96134-5

This manual contains solutions to all exercises from the text, including Chapter Review Exercises, and Chapter Tests.

Media

PowerLecture with ExamView™

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The DVD provides you with dynamic media tools for teaching Algebra while using an interactive white board. PowerPoint® lecture slides and art slides of the figures from the text, together with electronic files for the test bank and a link to the Solution Builder, are available. The algorithmic ExamView allows you to create, deliver, and customize tests (both print and online) in minutes with this easy-to-use assessment system. The DVD also provides you with a tutorial on integrating our instructor materials into your interactive whiteboard platform. Enhance how your students interact with you, your lecture, and each other.

Solution Builder

(www.cengage.com/solutionbuilder)

This online instructor database offers complete worked-out solutions to all exercises in the text, allowing you to create customized, secure solutions printouts (in PDF format) matched exactly to the problems you assign in class.



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Penn State University
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P Prerequisites

- P.1** Review of Real Numbers and Their Properties
- P.2** Exponents and Radicals
- P.3** Polynomials and Special Products
- P.4** Factoring Polynomials
- P.5** Rational Expressions
- P.6** The Rectangular Coordinate System and Graphs



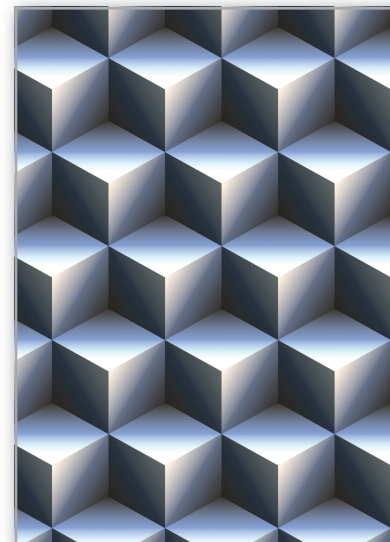
Autocatalytic Chemical Reaction (*Exercise 92, page 40*)



Steel Beam Loading (*Exercise 93, page 33*)



Change in Temperature (*page 7*)



Computer Graphics (*page 56*)



Gallons of Water on Earth (*page 17*)

P.1 Review of Real Numbers and Their Properties



Real numbers can represent many real-life quantities. For example, in Exercises 55–58 on page 13, you will use real numbers to represent the federal deficit.

- Represent and classify real numbers.
- Order real numbers and use inequalities.
- Find the absolute values of real numbers and find the distance between two real numbers.
- Evaluate algebraic expressions.
- Use the basic rules and properties of algebra.

Real Numbers

Real numbers can describe quantities in everyday life such as age, miles per gallon, and population. Symbols such as

$$-5, 9, 0, \frac{4}{3}, 0.666 \dots, 28.21, \sqrt{2}, \pi, \text{ and } \sqrt[3]{-32}$$

represent real numbers. Here are some important **subsets** (each member of a subset B is also a member of a set A) of the real numbers. The three dots, called *ellipsis points*, indicate that the pattern continues indefinitely.

$$\{1, 2, 3, 4, \dots\} \quad \text{Set of natural numbers}$$

$$\{0, 1, 2, 3, 4, \dots\} \quad \text{Set of whole numbers}$$

$$\{\dots, -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3, \dots\} \quad \text{Set of integers}$$

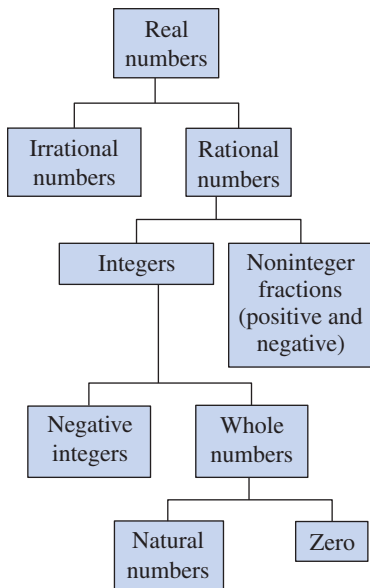
A real number is **rational** when it can be written as the ratio p/q of two integers, where $q \neq 0$. For instance, the numbers

$$\frac{1}{3} = 0.3333 \dots = 0.\overline{3}, \frac{1}{8} = 0.125, \text{ and } \frac{125}{111} = 1.126126 \dots = 1.\overline{126}$$

are rational. The decimal representation of a rational number either repeats (as in $\frac{173}{55} = 3.1\overline{45}$) or terminates (as in $\frac{1}{2} = 0.5$). A real number that cannot be written as the ratio of two integers is called **irrational**. Irrational numbers have infinite nonrepeating decimal representations. For instance, the numbers

$$\sqrt{2} = 1.4142135 \dots \approx 1.41 \quad \text{and} \quad \pi = 3.1415926 \dots \approx 3.14$$

are irrational. (The symbol \approx means “is approximately equal to.”) Figure P.1 shows subsets of real numbers and their relationships to each other.



Subsets of real numbers

Figure P.1

EXAMPLE 1 Classifying Real Numbers

Determine which numbers in the set $\{-13, -\sqrt{5}, -1, -\frac{1}{3}, 0, \frac{5}{8}, \sqrt{2}, \pi, 7\}$ are (a) natural numbers, (b) whole numbers, (c) integers, (d) rational numbers, and (e) irrational numbers.

Solution

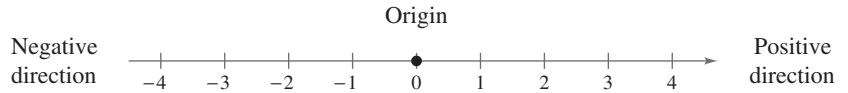
- a. Natural numbers: $\{7\}$
- b. Whole numbers: $\{0, 7\}$
- c. Integers: $\{-13, -1, 0, 7\}$
- d. Rational numbers: $\{-13, -1, -\frac{1}{3}, 0, \frac{5}{8}, 7\}$
- e. Irrational numbers: $\{-\sqrt{5}, \sqrt{2}, \pi\}$

✓ **Checkpoint** *Audio-video solution in English & Spanish at LarsonPrecalculus.com.*

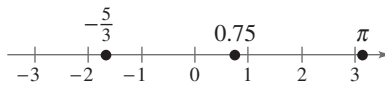
Repeat Example 1 for the set $\{-\pi, -\frac{1}{4}, \frac{6}{3}, \frac{1}{2}\sqrt{2}, -7.5, -1, 8, -22\}$.

Michael G Smith/Shutterstock.com

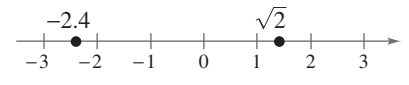
Real numbers are represented graphically on the **real number line**. When you draw a point on the real number line that corresponds to a real number, you are **plotting** the real number. The point 0 on the real number line is the **origin**. Numbers to the right of 0 are positive, and numbers to the left of 0 are negative, as shown below. The term **nonnegative** describes a number that is either positive or zero.



As illustrated below, there is a *one-to-one correspondence* between real numbers and points on the real number line.



Every real number corresponds to exactly one point on the real number line.



Every point on the real number line corresponds to exactly one real number.

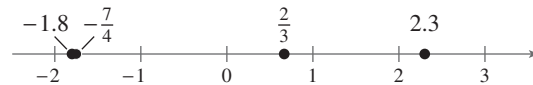
EXAMPLE 2

Plotting Points on the Real Number Line

Plot the real numbers on the real number line.

- $-\frac{7}{4}$
- 2.3
- $\frac{2}{3}$
- 1.8

Solution The following figure shows all four points.



- The point representing the real number $-\frac{7}{4} = -1.75$ lies between -2 and -1 , but closer to -2 , on the real number line.
- The point representing the real number 2.3 lies between 2 and 3 , but closer to 2 , on the real number line.
- The point representing the real number $\frac{2}{3} = 0.666 \dots$ lies between 0 and 1 , but closer to 1 , on the real number line.
- The point representing the real number -1.8 lies between -2 and -1 , but closer to -2 , on the real number line. Note that the point representing -1.8 lies slightly to the left of the point representing $-\frac{7}{4}$.

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Plot the real numbers on the real number line.

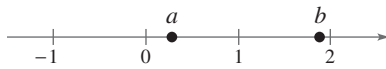
- $\frac{5}{2}$
- 1.6
- $-\frac{3}{4}$
- 0.7

Ordering Real Numbers

One important property of real numbers is that they are *ordered*.

Definition of Order on the Real Number Line

If a and b are real numbers, then a is less than b when $b - a$ is positive. The **inequality** $a < b$ denotes the **order** of a and b . This relationship can also be described by saying that b is *greater than* a and writing $b > a$. The inequality $a \leq b$ means that a is *less than or equal to* b , and the inequality $b \geq a$ means that b is *greater than or equal to* a . The symbols $<$, $>$, \leq , and \geq are **inequality symbols**.



$a < b$ if and only if a lies to the left of b .

Figure P.2

Geometrically, this definition implies that $a < b$ if and only if a lies to the *left* of b on the real number line, as shown in Figure P.2.

EXAMPLE 3 Ordering Real Numbers

Place the appropriate inequality symbol ($<$ or $>$) between the pair of real numbers.

- a. $-3, 0$ b. $-2, -4$ c. $\frac{1}{4}, \frac{1}{3}$ d. $-\frac{1}{5}, -\frac{1}{2}$

Solution

- a. Because -3 lies to the left of 0 on the real number line, as shown in Figure P.3, you can say that -3 is *less than* 0 , and write $-3 < 0$.
- b. Because -2 lies to the right of -4 on the real number line, as shown in Figure P.4, you can say that -2 is *greater than* -4 , and write $-2 > -4$.
- c. Because $\frac{1}{4}$ lies to the left of $\frac{1}{3}$ on the real number line, as shown in Figure P.5, you can say that $\frac{1}{4}$ is *less than* $\frac{1}{3}$, and write $\frac{1}{4} < \frac{1}{3}$.
- d. Because $-\frac{1}{5}$ lies to the right of $-\frac{1}{2}$ on the real number line, as shown in Figure P.6, you can say that $-\frac{1}{5}$ is *greater than* $-\frac{1}{2}$, and write $-\frac{1}{5} > -\frac{1}{2}$.

✓ **Checkpoint**  [Audio-video solution in English & Spanish at LarsonPrecalculus.com.](#)

Place the appropriate inequality symbol ($<$ or $>$) between the pair of real numbers.

- a. $1, -5$ b. $\frac{3}{2}, 7$ c. $-\frac{2}{3}, -\frac{3}{4}$ d. $-3.5, 1$

EXAMPLE 4 Interpreting Inequalities

Describe the subset of real numbers that the inequality represents.

- a. $x \leq 2$ b. $-2 \leq x < 3$

Solution

- a. The inequality $x \leq 2$ denotes all real numbers less than or equal to 2 , as shown in Figure P.7.
- b. The inequality $-2 \leq x < 3$ means that $x \geq -2$ and $x < 3$. This “double inequality” denotes all real numbers between -2 and 3 , including -2 but not including 3 , as shown in Figure P.8.

✓ **Checkpoint**  [Audio-video solution in English & Spanish at LarsonPrecalculus.com.](#)

Describe the subset of real numbers that the inequality represents.

- a. $x > -3$ b. $0 < x \leq 4$

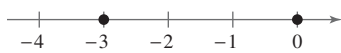


Figure P.3

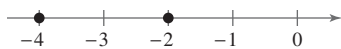


Figure P.4

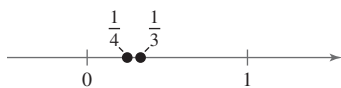


Figure P.5

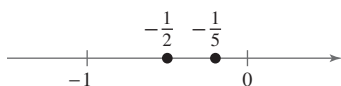


Figure P.6

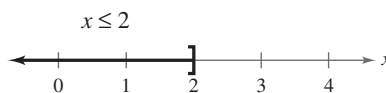


Figure P.7

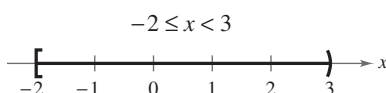
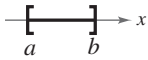
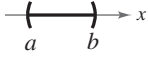
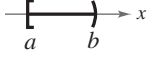
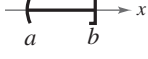


Figure P.8

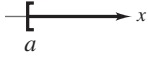

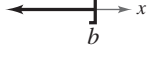
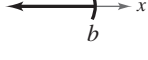

Inequalities can describe subsets of real numbers called **intervals**. In the bounded intervals below, the real numbers a and b are the **endpoints** of each interval. The endpoints of a closed interval are included in the interval, whereas the endpoints of an open interval are not included in the interval.

REMARK The reason that the four types of intervals at the right are called *bounded* is that each has a finite length. An interval that does not have a finite length is *unbounded* (see below).

| Bounded Intervals on the Real Number Line | | | |
|---|---------------|-------------------|---|
| Notation | Interval Type | Inequality | Graph |
| $[a, b]$ | Closed | $a \leq x \leq b$ |  |
| (a, b) | Open | $a < x < b$ |  |
| $[a, b)$ | | $a \leq x < b$ |  |
| $(a, b]$ | | $a < x \leq b$ |  |

REMARK Whenever you write an interval containing ∞ or $-\infty$, always use a parenthesis and never a bracket next to these symbols. This is because ∞ and $-\infty$ are never an endpoint of an interval and therefore are not included in the interval.

The symbols ∞ , **positive infinity**, and $-\infty$, **negative infinity**, do not represent real numbers. They are simply convenient symbols used to describe the unboundedness of an interval such as $(1, \infty)$ or $(-\infty, 3]$.

| Unbounded Intervals on the Real Number Line | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------------|---|
| Notation | Interval Type | Inequality | Graph |
| $[a, \infty)$ | | $x \geq a$ |  |
| (a, ∞) | Open | $x > a$ |  |
| $(-\infty, b]$ | | $x \leq b$ |  |
| $(-\infty, b)$ | Open | $x < b$ |  |
| $(-\infty, \infty)$ | Entire real line | $-\infty < x < \infty$ |  |

EXAMPLE 5 Interpreting Intervals

- a. The interval $(-1, 0)$ consists of all real numbers greater than -1 and less than 0 .
- b. The interval $[2, \infty)$ consists of all real numbers greater than or equal to 2 .

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Give a verbal description of the interval $[-2, 5)$.

EXAMPLE 6 Using Inequalities to Represent Intervals

- a. The inequality $c \leq 2$ can represent the statement “ c is at most 2 .”
- b. The inequality $-3 < x \leq 5$ can represent “all x in the interval $(-3, 5]$.”

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Use inequality notation to represent the statement “ x is greater than -2 and at most 4 .”

Absolute Value and Distance

The **absolute value** of a real number is its *magnitude*, or the distance between the origin and the point representing the real number on the real number line.

Definition of Absolute Value

If a is a real number, then the absolute value of a is

$$|a| = \begin{cases} a, & \text{if } a \geq 0 \\ -a, & \text{if } a < 0 \end{cases}$$

Notice in this definition that the absolute value of a real number is never negative. For instance, if $a = -5$, then $|-5| = -(-5) = 5$. The absolute value of a real number is either positive or zero. Moreover, 0 is the only real number whose absolute value is 0. So, $|0| = 0$.

EXAMPLE 7 Finding Absolute Values

- a. $|-15| = 15$ b. $\left|\frac{2}{3}\right| = \frac{2}{3}$
 c. $|-4.3| = 4.3$ d. $-|-6| = -(6) = -6$

 **Checkpoint**  *Audio-video solution in English & Spanish at LarsonPrecalculus.com.*

Evaluate each expression.

- a. $|1|$ b. $-\left|\frac{3}{4}\right|$
 c. $\frac{2}{|-3|}$ d. $-|0.7|$

EXAMPLE 8 Evaluating the Absolute Value of a Number

Evaluate $\frac{|x|}{x}$ for (a) $x > 0$ and (b) $x < 0$.

Solution

- a. If $x > 0$, then $|x| = x$ and $\frac{|x|}{x} = \frac{x}{x} = 1$.
 b. If $x < 0$, then $|x| = -x$ and $\frac{|x|}{x} = \frac{-x}{x} = -1$.

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Evaluate $\frac{|x+3|}{x+3}$ for (a) $x > -3$ and (b) $x < -3$. ■

The **Law of Trichotomy** states that for any two real numbers a and b , *precisely* one of three relationships is possible:

$$a = b, \quad a < b, \quad \text{or} \quad a > b. \quad \text{Law of Trichotomy}$$

EXAMPLE 9 Comparing Real Numbers

Place the appropriate symbol (<, >, or =) between the pair of real numbers.

- a. $|-4|$ $|3|$ b. $|-10|$ $|10|$ c. $-|-7|$ $|-7|$

Solution

- a. $|-4| > |3|$ because $|-4| = 4$ and $|3| = 3$, and 4 is greater than 3.
 b. $|-10| = |10|$ because $|-10| = 10$ and $|10| = 10$.
 c. $-|-7| < |-7|$ because $-|-7| = -7$ and $|-7| = 7$, and -7 is less than 7.

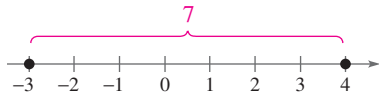
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Place the appropriate symbol (<, >, or =) between the pair of real numbers.

- a. $|-3|$ $|4|$ b. $-|-4|$ $-|4|$ c. $|-3|$ $-|-3|$

Properties of Absolute Values

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. $ a \geq 0$ | 2. $ -a = a $ |
| 3. $ ab = a b $ | 4. $\frac{ a }{ b } = \frac{ a }{ b }, \quad b \neq 0$ |



The distance between -3 and 4 is 7 .

Figure P.9

Absolute value can be used to define the distance between two points on the real number line. For instance, the distance between -3 and 4 is

$$\begin{aligned} |-3 - 4| &= |-7| \\ &= 7 \end{aligned}$$

as shown in Figure P.9.



One application of finding the distance between two points on the real number line is finding a change in temperature.

Distance Between Two Points on the Real Number Line

Let a and b be real numbers. The distance between a and b is

$$d(a, b) = |b - a| = |a - b|.$$

EXAMPLE 10 Finding a Distance

Find the distance between -25 and 13 .

Solution

The distance between -25 and 13 is

$$|-25 - 13| = |-38| = 38. \quad \text{Distance between } -25 \text{ and } 13$$

The distance can also be found as follows.

$$|13 - (-25)| = |38| = 38 \quad \text{Distance between } -25 \text{ and } 13$$

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- a. Find the distance between 35 and -23 .
 b. Find the distance between -35 and -23 .
 c. Find the distance between 35 and 23 .

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Algebraic Expressions

One characteristic of algebra is the use of letters to represent numbers. The letters are **variables**, and combinations of letters and numbers are **algebraic expressions**. Here are a few examples of algebraic expressions.

$$5x, \quad 2x - 3, \quad \frac{4}{x^2 + 2}, \quad 7x + y$$

Definition of an Algebraic Expression

An **algebraic expression** is a collection of letters (**variables**) and real numbers (**constants**) combined using the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and exponentiation.

The **terms** of an algebraic expression are those parts that are separated by *addition*. For example, $x^2 - 5x + 8 = x^2 + (-5x) + 8$ has three terms: x^2 and $-5x$ are the **variable terms** and 8 is the **constant term**. The numerical factor of a term is called the **coefficient**. For instance, the coefficient of $-5x$ is -5 , and the coefficient of x^2 is 1.

EXAMPLE 11 Identifying Terms and Coefficients

| Algebraic Expression | Terms | Coefficients |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. $5x - \frac{1}{7}$ | $5x, -\frac{1}{7}$ | $5, -\frac{1}{7}$ |
| b. $2x^2 - 6x + 9$ | $2x^2, -6x, 9$ | $2, -6, 9$ |
| c. $\frac{3}{x} + \frac{1}{2}x^4 - y$ | $\frac{3}{x}, \frac{1}{2}x^4, -y$ | $3, \frac{1}{2}, -1$ |

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Identify the terms and coefficients of $-2x + 4$. 


To **evaluate** an algebraic expression, substitute numerical values for each of the variables in the expression, as shown in the next example.

EXAMPLE 12 Evaluating Algebraic Expressions

| Expression | Value of Variable | Substitute. | Value of Expression |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| a. $-3x + 5$ | $x = 3$ | $-3(3) + 5$ | $-9 + 5 = -4$ |
| b. $3x^2 + 2x - 1$ | $x = -1$ | $3(-1)^2 + 2(-1) - 1$ | $3 - 2 - 1 = 0$ |
| c. $\frac{2x}{x + 1}$ | $x = -3$ | $\frac{2(-3)}{-3 + 1}$ | $\frac{-6}{-2} = 3$ |

Note that you must substitute the value for *each* occurrence of the variable.

 **Checkpoint**  *Audio-video solution in English & Spanish at LarsonPrecalculus.com.*

Evaluate $4x - 5$ when $x = 0$. 

Use the **Substitution Principle** to evaluate algebraic expressions. It states that “If $a = b$, then b can replace a in any expression involving a .” In Example 12(a), for instance, 3 is *substituted* for x in the expression $-3x + 5$.

Basic Rules of Algebra

There are four arithmetic operations with real numbers: *addition*, *multiplication*, *subtraction*, and *division*, denoted by the symbols $+$, \times or \cdot , $-$, and \div or $/$, respectively. Of these, addition and multiplication are the two primary operations. Subtraction and division are the inverse operations of addition and multiplication, respectively.

Definitions of Subtraction and Division

Subtraction: Add the opposite.

Division: Multiply by the reciprocal.

$$a - b = a + (-b)$$

$$\text{If } b \neq 0, \text{ then } a/b = a\left(\frac{1}{b}\right) = \frac{a}{b}.$$

In these definitions, $-b$ is the **additive inverse** (or opposite) of b , and $1/b$ is the **multiplicative inverse** (or reciprocal) of b . In the fractional form a/b , a is the **numerator** of the fraction and b is the **denominator**.

Because the properties of real numbers below are true for variables and algebraic expressions as well as for real numbers, they are often called the **Basic Rules of Algebra**. Try to formulate a verbal description of each property. For instance, the first property states that *the order in which two real numbers are added does not affect their sum*.

Basic Rules of Algebra

Let a , b , and c be real numbers, variables, or algebraic expressions.

Property

Commutative Property of Addition: $a + b = b + a$

Commutative Property of Multiplication: $ab = ba$

Associative Property of Addition: $(a + b) + c = a + (b + c)$

Associative Property of Multiplication: $(ab)c = a(bc)$

Distributive Properties: $a(b + c) = ab + ac$

$$(a + b)c = ac + bc$$

Additive Identity Property: $a + 0 = a$

Multiplicative Identity Property: $a \cdot 1 = a$

Additive Inverse Property: $a + (-a) = 0$

Multiplicative Inverse Property: $a \cdot \frac{1}{a} = 1, \quad a \neq 0$

Example

$$4x + x^2 = x^2 + 4x$$

$$(4 - x)x^2 = x^2(4 - x)$$

$$(x + 5) + x^2 = x + (5 + x^2)$$

$$(2x \cdot 3y)(8) = (2x)(3y \cdot 8)$$

$$3x(5 + 2x) = 3x \cdot 5 + 3x \cdot 2x$$

$$(y + 8)y = y \cdot y + 8 \cdot y$$

$$5y^2 + 0 = 5y^2$$

$$(4x^2)(1) = 4x^2$$

$$5x^3 + (-5x^3) = 0$$

$$(x^2 + 4)\left(\frac{1}{x^2 + 4}\right) = 1$$

Because subtraction is defined as “adding the opposite,” the Distributive Properties are also true for subtraction. For instance, the “subtraction form” of $a(b + c) = ab + ac$ is $a(b - c) = ab - ac$. Note that the operations of subtraction and division are neither commutative nor associative. The examples

$$7 - 3 \neq 3 - 7 \quad \text{and} \quad 20 \div 4 \neq 4 \div 20$$

show that subtraction and division are not commutative. Similarly

$$5 - (3 - 2) \neq (5 - 3) - 2 \quad \text{and} \quad 16 \div (4 \div 2) \neq (16 \div 4) \div 2$$

demonstrate that subtraction and division are not associative.