

The Chain Rule

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Primarily, the Chain Rule allows us to compute derivatives of functions that implicitly depend upon a variable t — often time. Essentially, if $x = f(t)$ is a differentiable function of time, then $g(x) = g(f(t))$ is a differentiable function of time such that

$$\frac{d}{dt}g(x) = \frac{d}{dt}g(f(t)) = g'(f(t)) \cdot f'(t) = g'(x) \cdot f'(t) = \frac{dg}{dx} \frac{dx}{dt}.$$

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$$\frac{\partial z}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial z}{\partial x} \frac{dx}{dt} + \frac{\partial z}{\partial y} \frac{dy}{dt}.$$

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$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial t_j} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_i} \frac{\partial x_i}{\partial t_j} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_1} \frac{\partial x_1}{\partial t_j} + \cdots + \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_n} \frac{\partial x_n}{\partial t_j}.$$

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$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial r} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} \frac{\partial x}{\partial r} + \frac{\partial f}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial r} = f_x \cos \theta + f_y \sin \theta = \frac{xf_x + yf_y}{\sqrt{x^2 + y^2}} \quad \text{and}$$

$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial \theta} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} \frac{\partial x}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial f}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial \theta} = -r \sin \theta f_x + r \cos \theta f_y = -yf_x + xf_y.$$

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 - 3 By the Chain Rule, we have that
$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial s} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} \frac{\partial x}{\partial s} + \frac{\partial f}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial s}.$$

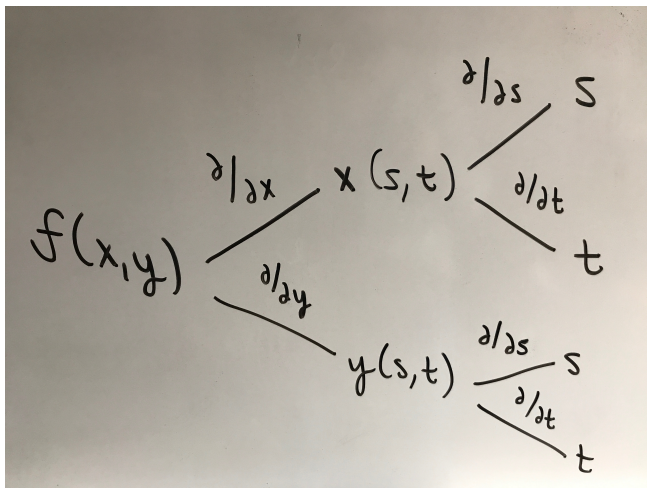
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- Given that $x(s, t) = t^2$, $y(s, t) = st$, and $z(s, t) = t - s$, let us use the Chain Rule to compute $\frac{\partial f}{\partial t}$ of $f(x, y, z) = e^{xyz}$.

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- 1 Compute the partials of f with respect to x , y , and z .

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$$\frac{\partial f}{\partial t} = e^{t^3s(t-s)} [(st)(t-s)(2t) + (t^2)(t-s)(s) + (t^2)(st)(1)]$$

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- Given differentiable functions $x = h(s, t)$, $y = k(s, t)$, $w = f(x, y)$, and $z = g(x, y)$, use the table to compute the given derivatives.

$$\frac{\partial w}{\partial x} = 2$$

$$\frac{\partial z}{\partial x} = 3$$

$$\frac{\partial x}{\partial s} = -1$$

$$\frac{\partial x}{\partial t} = 1$$

$$\frac{\partial w}{\partial y} = -3$$

$$\frac{\partial z}{\partial y} = 2$$

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$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = -1$$

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- 1 Compute the value of $\frac{\partial}{\partial s}(w - z)$ whenever $w = 10$ and $z = -7$.

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial}{\partial s}(w - z) &= \frac{\partial w}{\partial s} - \frac{\partial z}{\partial s} \\ &= \frac{\partial w}{\partial x} \frac{\partial x}{\partial s} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial s} - \frac{\partial z}{\partial x} \frac{\partial x}{\partial s} - \frac{\partial z}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial s} \\ &= (2)(-1) + (-3)(-2) - (3)(-1) - (2)(-2) \\ &= -2 + 6 + 3 + 4 = 11\end{aligned}$$

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- 2 Compute the value of $\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \left(\frac{\tan z}{w} \right)$ whenever $w = 1$ and $z = \frac{\pi}{3}$.

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \left(\frac{\tan z}{w} \right) &= \frac{w \cdot \sec^2 z \cdot \frac{\partial z}{\partial t} - \tan z \cdot \frac{\partial w}{\partial t}}{w^2} \\ &= (2)^2 \left(\frac{\partial z}{\partial x} \frac{\partial x}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial z}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial t} \right) - \sqrt{3} \left(\frac{\partial w}{\partial x} \frac{\partial x}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial y} \frac{\partial y}{\partial t} \right) \\ &= 4[(3)(1) + (2)(-1)] - \sqrt{3}[(2)(1) + (-3)(-1)] = 4 - 5\sqrt{3} \end{aligned}$$