

Lecture 21: Area computation

If $f(x) \geq 0$, then $\int_a^b f(x) dx$ is the **area under the graph** of $f(x)$ and above the interval $[a, b]$ on the x axes.

If the function is negative, then $\int_a^b f(x) dx$ is negative too and the integral is minus the area below the curve:

Therefore, $\int_a^b f(x) dx$ is the difference of the area above the graph minus the area below the graph.

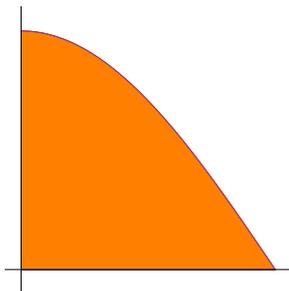
More generally we can also look at areas sandwiched between two graphs f and g .

The area of a region G enclosed by two graphs $f \leq g$ and bound by $a \leq x \leq b$ is

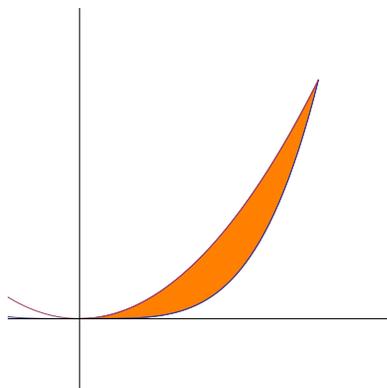
$$\int_a^b g(x) - f(x) dx$$

Make sure that if you have to compute such an integral that $g \geq f$ before giving it the interpretation of an area.

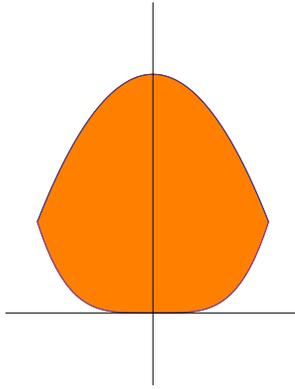
- 1 Find the area of the region enclosed by the x -axes, the y -axes and the graph of the cos function. **Solution:** $\int_0^{\pi/2} \cos(x) dx = 1$.



- 2 Find the area of the region enclosed by the graphs $f(x) = x^2$ and $f(x) = x^4$.



- 3 Find the area of the region enclosed by the graphs $f(x) = 1 - x^2$ and $g(x) = x^4$. **Solution:** The intersection points are $\pm(\sqrt{5} - 1)/2$ and called golden ratio. Now it is routine.

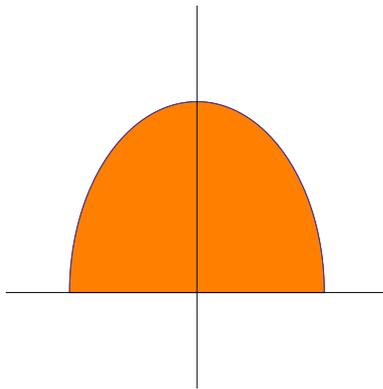


- 4 Find the area of the region enclosed by a half circle of radius 1. **Solution:** The half circle is the graph of the function $f(x) = \sqrt{1-x^2}$. The area under the graph is

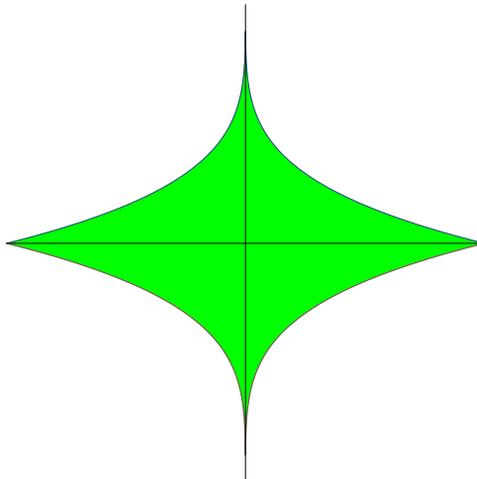
$$\int_{-1}^1 \sqrt{1-x^2} dx .$$

Finding the anti-derivative is not so easy. We will find techniques to do so, for now we just are told to look at the derivative of $x\sqrt{1-x^2} + \arcsin(x)$ and see what happens. With this “inspiration”, we find the anti derivative to be $(x\sqrt{1-x^2} + \arcsin(x))/2$. The area is therefore

$$\frac{x\sqrt{1-x^2} + \arcsin(x)}{2} \Big|_{-1}^1 = \frac{\pi}{2} .$$

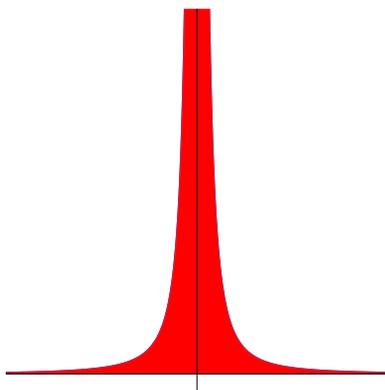


- 5 Find the area of the region between the graphs of $f(x) = 1-|x|^{1/4}$ and $g(x) = -1+|x|^{1/4}$.

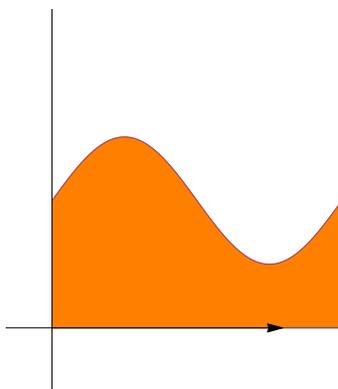


- 6 Find the area under the curve of $f(x) = 1/x^2$ between -6 and 6 . Solution. $\int_{-6}^6 x^{-2} dx = -x^{-1} \Big|_{-6}^6 = -1/6 - 1/6 = -1/3$. There is something fishy with this computation because

$f(x)$ is nonnegative so that the area should be positive. But we obtained a negative answer. What is going on?



- 7 Find the area between the curves $x = 0$ and $x = 2 + \sin(y)$, $y = 2\pi$ and $y = 0$. **Solution:** We turn the picture by 90 degrees so that we compute the area under the curve $y = 0$, $y = 2 + \sin(x)$ and $x = 2\pi$ and $x = 0$.

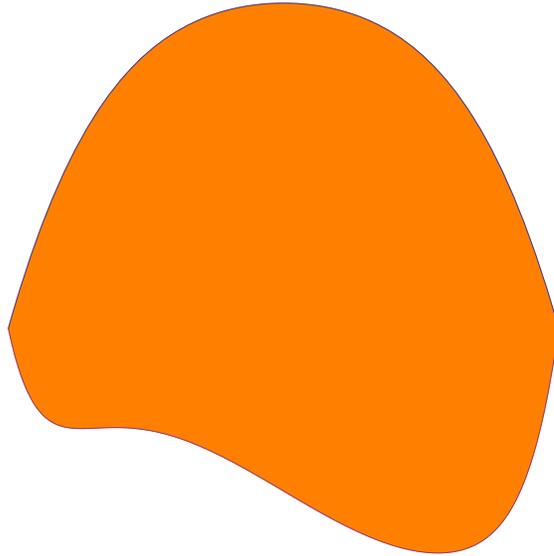


- 8 **The grass problem.** Find the area between the curves $|x|^{1/3}$ and $|x|^{1/2}$. **Solution.** This example illustrates how important it is to have a picture. This is good advice for any "word problem" in mathematics.

Use a picture of the situation while doing the computation.

Homework

- 1 Find the area of the bounded region enclosed by the graphs $f(x) = 2x^5 - 24x$ and $g(x) = 4x^2$.
- 2 Find the area of the region enclosed by the curves $x = 0$, $x = \pi/2$, $y = 4 + \sin(5x)$, $y = 2 + \sin^2(2x)$.
- 3 Find the area of the region enclosed by the graphs $1 - x^4 - x^2 + 1$ and $x^{10} - 1 + x^3 - x$.



- 4 Find the area of the region enclosed by the four lines $y = x$, $y = 3 - 2x$, $y = -2x$, $y = 3x - 1$.
- 5 Write down an integral which gives the area of the **area 51** region $x^2 + |y|^{51} \leq 1$ by writing the region as a sandwich between two graphs. Evaluate the integral numerically using Wolfram alpha, Mathematica or any other software.

