

Composite Functions

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- ▶ $f(u(x)) = (\sin(x))^2 = \sin^2(x)$

Recognizing composite functions

In $f(u(x))$, we often refer to f as the **outer function** and u as the **inner function**.

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the outer function is $f(x) = \ln(x)$
and the inner function is $u(x) = \sin(x)$.

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- ▶ Recall that $\cos^3(x)$ means $(\cos(x))^3$
- ▶ The outer function is $f(x) = x^3$
and the inner function is $u(x) = \cos(x)$

The Chain Rule

For the composite function $y = f(u(x))$, the derivative is
$$y' = f'(u(x)) \cdot u'(x)$$

Another way to write this is

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{dy}{du} \cdot \frac{du}{dx}$$

“The derivative of the outer times the derivative of the inner.”

Special case: the General Power Rule

For the function $y = (u(x))^n$, the derivative is

$$y' = n(u(x))^{n-1} \cdot u'(x)$$

Special case: Exponential Functions

For the function $y = e^{u(x)}$, the derivative is
 $y' = u'(x)e^{u(x)}$

Implicit Differentiation

This is used to find the derivative $\frac{dy}{dx}$ in case it is difficult or impossible to solve for y explicitly in terms of x .

In this case we will use the Chain Rule in the form

$$\frac{d}{dx}f(y(x)) = f'(y) \cdot \frac{dy}{dx}$$