

SECTION 3.7: IMPROPER INTEGRALS

1. What is an improper integral and how do we handle them?

$$\int_a^{\infty} f(x) dx = \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} \int_a^b f(x) dx$$

$$\int_{-\infty}^b f(x) dx = \lim_{a \rightarrow -\infty} \int_a^b f(x) dx$$

$$\int_a^b f(x) dx = \lim_{t \rightarrow a^+} \int_t^b f(x) dx$$

$$\int_a^b g(x) dx = \lim_{t \rightarrow b^-} \int_a^t g(x) dx$$

$f(x)$ not defined at $x=a$
 $g(x)$ not defined at $x=b$

2. Evaluate the improper integrals below:

$$(a) \int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{x} dx = \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} \int_1^b \frac{1}{x} dx = \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} \ln(x) \Big|_1^b = \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} (\ln(b) - \ln(1))$$

$$= \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} \ln(b) = +\infty. \text{ The integral diverges.}$$

$$(b) \int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{x^2} dx = \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} \left(\int_1^b x^{-2} dx \right) = \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} \left(-x^{-1} \Big|_1^b \right) = \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} \left[-b^{-1} - (-1^{-1}) \right]$$

$$= \lim_{b \rightarrow \infty} -\frac{1}{b} + 1 = 1. \text{ So, the integral converges to 1.}$$

* Interpret (a) and (b) geometrically.

3. Use the integrals above to decide if the integrals below converge or diverge. Write a complete sentence explaining your reasoning.

$$(a) \int_1^{\infty} \frac{10}{\sqrt{x}} dx. \text{ Thinking: on } [1, \infty], \sqrt{x} \leq x. \text{ So } \frac{1}{\sqrt{x}} \geq \frac{1}{x}$$

This integral diverges because $\frac{10}{\sqrt{x}} > \frac{1}{x}$ on $[1, \infty)$ and $\int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{x} dx$ diverges.

$$(b) \int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{x^2 + 20x} dx. \text{ Thinking } \frac{1}{x^2 + 20x} < \frac{1}{x^2} \text{ on } [1, \infty).$$

This integral converges because $\frac{1}{x^2 + 20x} < \frac{1}{x^2}$ on $[1, \infty)$ and $\int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{x^2} dx$ converges.

4. Evaluate the improper integrals below:

$$(a) \int_3^9 \frac{dx}{(3-x)^2} = \lim_{t \rightarrow 3^+} \left(\int_t^9 (3-x)^{-2} dx \right) = \lim_{t \rightarrow 3^+} \left((3-x)^{-1} \Big|_t^9 \right)$$

$$= \lim_{t \rightarrow 3^+} \left(\frac{1}{3-9} - \frac{1}{3-t} \right) = \lim_{t \rightarrow 3^+} \left(-\frac{1}{3} - \frac{1}{3-t} \right) = +\infty$$

as $t \rightarrow 3^+$

$3-t \rightarrow 0^-$

So $\frac{1}{3-t} \rightarrow -\infty$, So $-\left(\frac{1}{3-t}\right) \rightarrow +\infty$

So the integral diverges.

$$(b) \int_0^6 \frac{1}{\sqrt{6-x}} dx = \lim_{t \rightarrow 6^-} \left(\int_0^t (6-x)^{-\frac{1}{2}} dx \right)$$

$$= \lim_{t \rightarrow 6^-} \left(-2(6-x)^{\frac{1}{2}} \Big|_0^t \right) = \lim_{t \rightarrow 6^-} \left(-2\sqrt{6-t} + 2\sqrt{6} \right)$$

$$= -2 \cdot 0 + 2\sqrt{6} = 2\sqrt{6}.$$

So the integral converges to $2\sqrt{6}$.