

SECTION 3-7: DERIVATIVES OF INVERSE FUNCTIONS

1. Goal: Understand and use the rule below:

If $f^{-1}(x)$ is the inverse of $f(x)$, then

$$(f^{-1})'(x) = \frac{1}{f'(f^{-1}(x))}$$

Another way to express this is:
 If you want to know the derivative of the inverse $(f^{-1})'$ at x , you could
 i) find $f^{-1}(x) = y$ (the output of x)
 ii) find $f'(y)$ (the derivative of f at the output value y)
 iii) take the reciprocal: $\frac{1}{f'(y)}$. ← that's what you were looking for...

2. Fill out the rows of the chart below. Start with asterisked rows.

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

| $f(x)$ | $f'(x)$ | a-value | $b = f(a)$ | $f'(a)$ | point: (a, b) | slope at (a, b) |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| * $f(x) = x^3$ | $f'(x) = 3x^2$ | 2 | $2^3 = 8$ | $3 \cdot 2^2 = 12$ | $(2, 8)$ | 12 |
| $f^{-1}(x)$ | $(f')^{-1}(x)$ | b-value | $a = f(b)$ | $f'(b)$ | point: (b, a) | slope at (b, a) |
| $f^{-1}(x) = x^{1/3}$ | $\frac{1}{3} x^{-2/3}$ | 8 | $f^{-1}(8) = 2$ | $\frac{1}{12}$ | $(8, 2)$ | $\frac{1}{12}$ |

(b) $f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2}$

| $f(x)$ | $f'(x)$ | a-value | $b = f(a)$ | $f'(a)$ | point: (a, b) | slope at (a, b) |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| * $f(x) = \frac{1}{x^2} = x^{-2}$ | $f'(x) = -2x^{-3}$ | 3 | $\frac{1}{3^2} = \frac{1}{9}$ | $f'(3) = -\frac{2 \cdot 2}{3^3} = -\frac{2}{27}$ | $(3, \frac{1}{9})$ | $-\frac{2}{27}$ |
| $f^{-1}(x)$ | $(f')^{-1}(x)$ | b-value | $a = f(b)$ | $f'(b)$ | point: (b, a) | slope at (b, a) |
| $f^{-1}(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{x}} = x^{-1/2}$ | $-\frac{1}{2} x^{-3/2}$ | $\frac{1}{9}$ | $f^{-1}(\frac{1}{9}) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1/9}} = 3$ | $-\frac{1}{2} (\frac{1}{9})^{-3/2} = -\frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{27}{1} = -\frac{27}{2}$ | $(\frac{1}{9}, 3)$ | $-\frac{27}{2}$ |

(c) $f(x) = \sin(x)$

| $f(x)$ | $f'(x)$ | a-value | $b = f(a)$ | $f'(a)$ | point: (a, b) | slope at (a, b) |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| * $f(x) = \sin(x)$ | $f'(x) = \cos(x)$ | $\frac{\pi}{3}$ | $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$ | $f'(\frac{\pi}{3}) = \frac{1}{2}$ | $(\frac{\pi}{3}, \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2})$ | $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| $f^{-1}(x)$ | $(f')^{-1}(x)$ | b-value | $a = f(b)$ | $f'(b)$ | point: (b, a) | slope at (b, a) |
| $f^{-1}(x) = \arcsin(x) = \sin^{-1}(x)$ | | $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$ | $\arcsin(\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}) = \frac{\pi}{3}$ | | $(\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}, \frac{\pi}{3})$ | 2 |

you can get here without knowing

Where does the formula

$$\frac{d}{dx} [f^{-1}(x)] = \frac{1}{f'(f^{-1}(x))}$$

come from?

Answer: $f(f^{-1}(x)) = x$

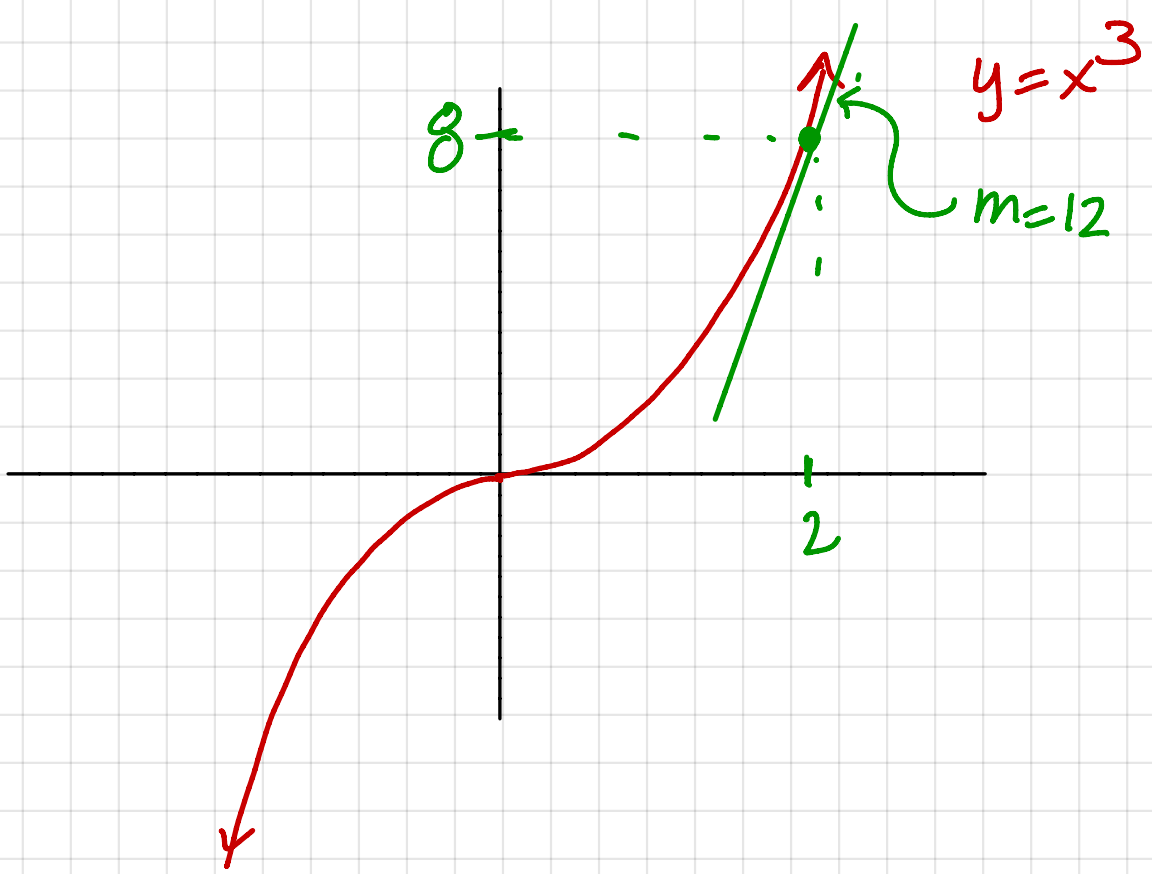
property of
inverses

So $\underline{f'(f^{-1}(x)) \cdot (f^{-1})'(x) = 1}$

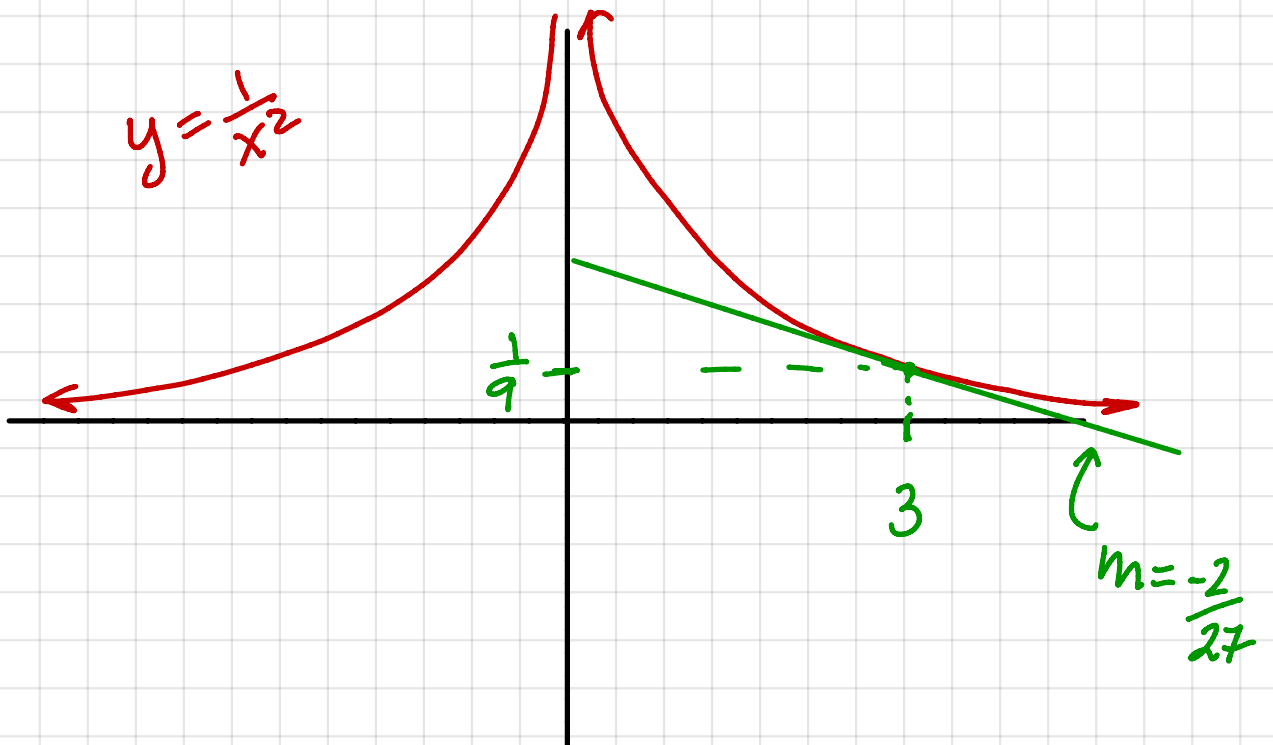
an application of the
chain rule

Solve: $(f^{-1})'(x) = \frac{1}{f'(f^{-1}(x))}$

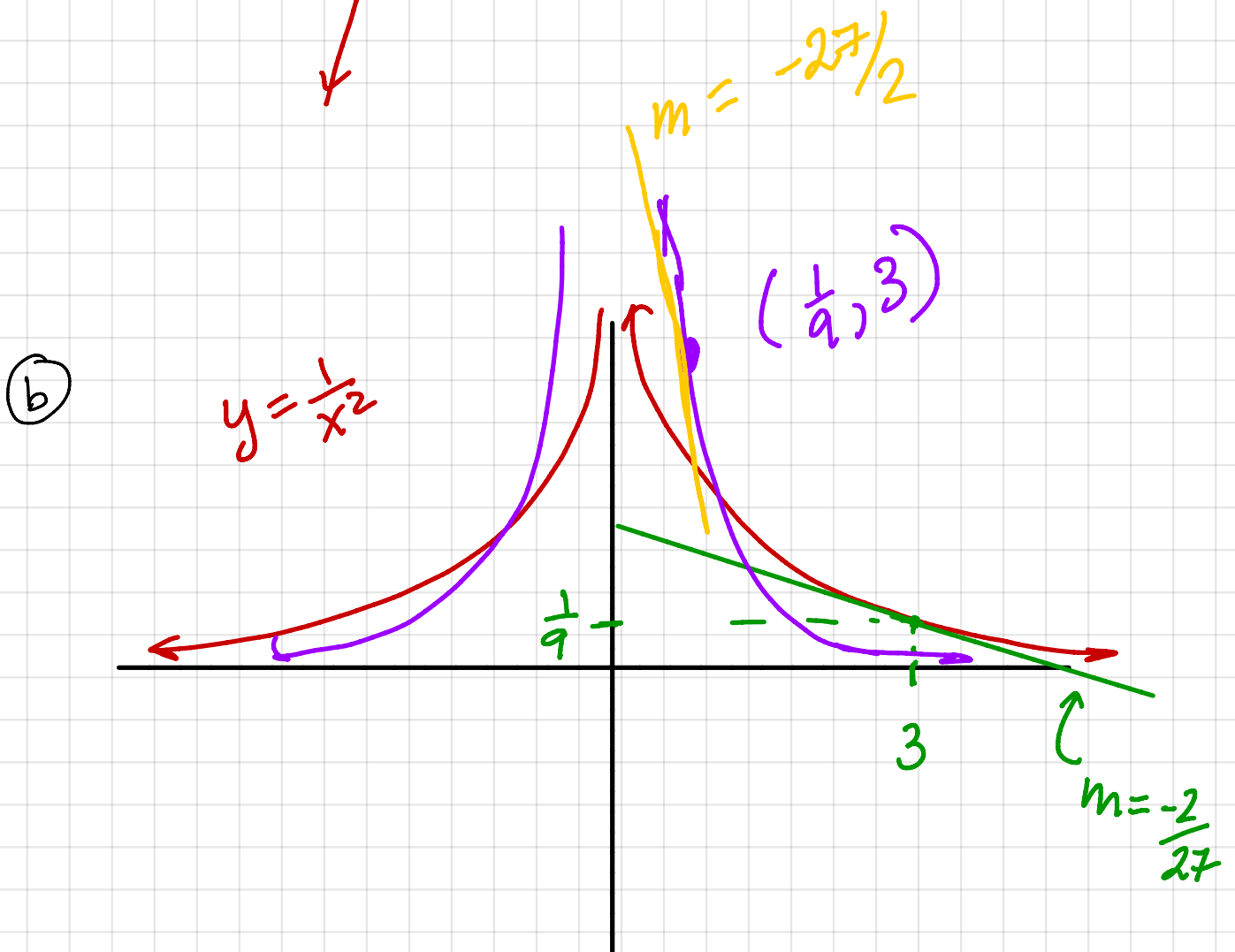
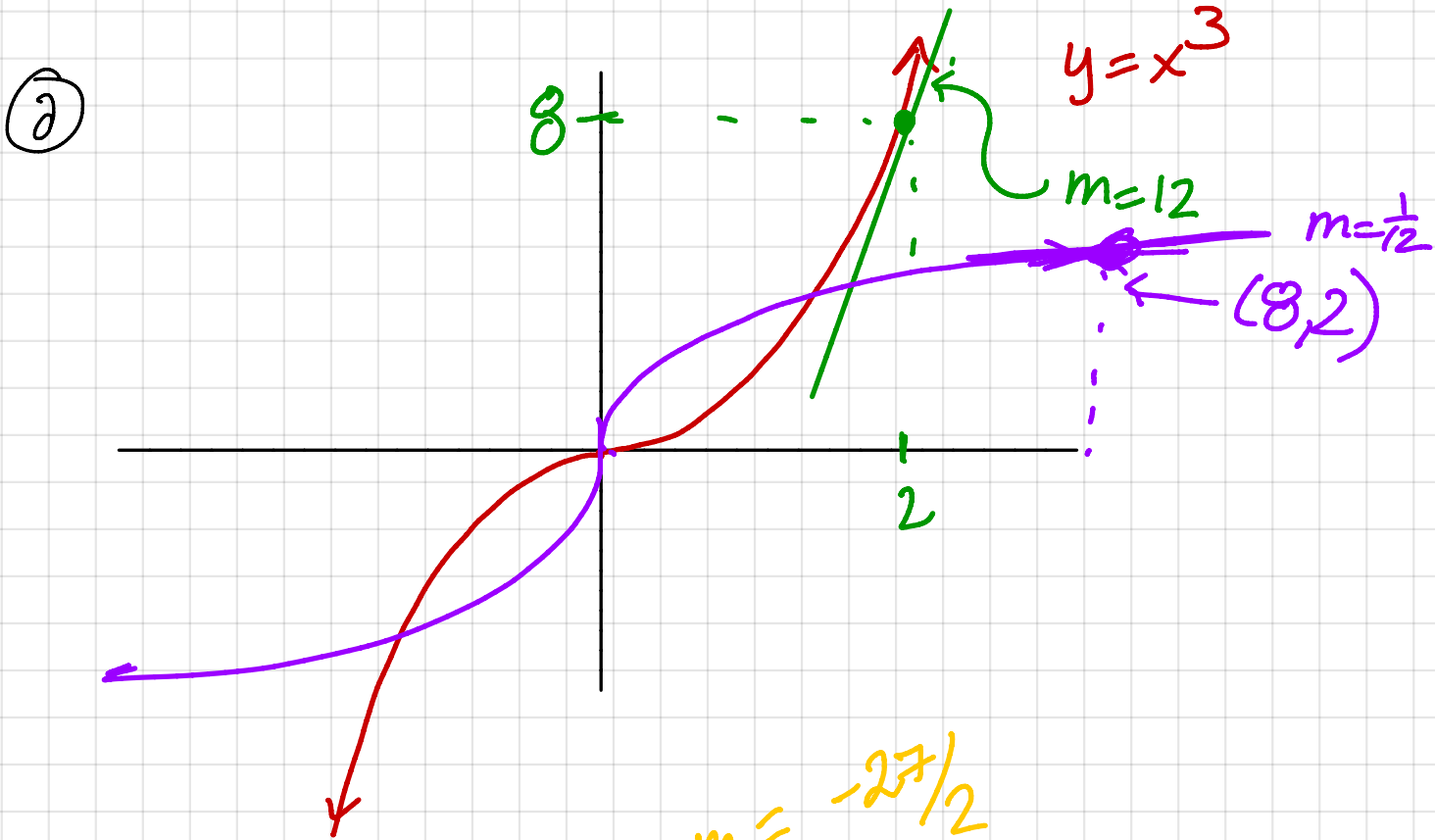
(a)



(b)

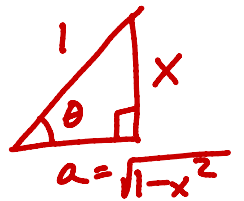


Now, add the inverse functions in purple.



$$x^2 + a^2 = 1^2$$

$$a = \sqrt{1-x^2}$$



3. Use the rule from (1) to find a formula for the derivative of $g(x) = \sin^{-1}(x)$.

$$f(x) = \sin(x) \quad , \quad f'(x) = \cos(x)$$

$$f^{-1}(x) = \sin^{-1}(x)$$

$$f'(f^{-1}(x)) = \cos(\sin^{-1}(x)) = \sqrt{1-x^2} \quad // \quad (f^{-1})'(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-x^2}}$$

4. Rules for the arccosine and arctangent functions.

$$\frac{d}{dx} [\sin^{-1}(x)] = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-x^2}}$$

$$\frac{d}{dx} [\tan^{-1}(x)] = \frac{1}{1+x^2}$$

$$\frac{d}{dx} [\cos^{-1}(x)] = \frac{-1}{\sqrt{1-x^2}}$$

* Check that this fits w/ page 1.

5. Find the derivatives for each function below.

(a) $f(x) = \cos^{-1}(\sqrt{x})$

$$f'(x) = \frac{-1}{\sqrt{1-x}} \cdot \frac{1}{2} x^{-1/2} = \frac{-1}{\sqrt{x} \sqrt{1-x}}$$

(b) $f(x) = (\tan^{-1}(x))^2$

$$f'(x) = 2 \tan^{-1}(x) \cdot \frac{1}{1+x^2} = \frac{2 \tan^{-1}(x)}{1+x^2}$$

(c) $f(x) = x \sin^{-1}(x)$

$$f'(x) = \sin^{-1}(x) + x \cdot \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-x^2}} = \sin^{-1}(x) + \frac{x}{\sqrt{1-x^2}}$$

(d) $f(x) = \tan^{-1}(\frac{1}{x})$

$$f'(x) = \frac{1}{1+(\frac{1}{x})^2} \cdot (-x^{-2}) = \frac{-1}{x^2(1+\frac{1}{x^2})}$$