

23.1/23.2 Logarithms in Other Bases & Their Properties

Logarithms in Other Bases

$$\log_b x = y \iff b^y = x \quad \text{where } \begin{array}{l} x > 0 \\ b > 0 \\ b \neq 1 \end{array}$$

Note: The common log, written $\log x$, is actually $\log_{10} x$.

Ex #1 Evaluate

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| a) $\log_5 25$ | $5^? = 25$ | $\log_5 25 = 2$ |
| b) $\log_2 8$ | $2^? = 8$ | $\log_2 8 = 3$ |
| c) $\log_4 \left(\frac{1}{64}\right)$ | $4^? = \frac{1}{64}$ | $\log_4 \left(\frac{1}{64}\right) = -3$ |
| d) $\log_{\frac{1}{2}} \left(\frac{1}{16}\right)$ | $\left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^? = \frac{1}{16}$ | $\log_{\frac{1}{2}} \left(\frac{1}{16}\right) = 4$ |

Inverses

Logs and exponents are inverses, $f(x) = \log_b x$ has the inverse $g(x) = b^x$. When you compose them, they "undo" each other. In other words, $f(g(x)) = g(f(x)) = x$.

Ex #2 Write the inverse, $f^{-1}(x)$, for the following:

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| a) $f(x) = \log_4 x$ | $f^{-1}(x) = 4^x$ |
| b) $f(x) = 5^x$ | $f^{-1}(x) = \log_5 x$ |
| c) $f(x) = \log_e x = \ln x$ | $f^{-1}(x) = e^x$ |
| d) $f(x) = 3^x$ | $f^{-1}(x) = \log_3 x$ |

Note: The natural log, written $\ln x$, is actually $\log_e x$.

e) $f(x) = 3x - 8$

$$y = 3x - 8$$

$$x = 3y - 8$$

$$x + 8 = 3y$$

$$\frac{x+8}{3} = y$$

$$f^{-1}(x) = \frac{x+8}{3}$$

f) $f(x) = \frac{1}{2}x + 5$

$$y = \frac{1}{2}x + 5$$

$$x = \frac{1}{2}y + 5$$

$$x - 5 = \frac{1}{2}y$$

$$2x - 10 = y$$

$$f^{-1}(x) = 2x - 10$$

Inverse Properties of Logarithms

| Inverse Property | Explanation | Example |
|--------------------|---|--|
| $\log_b b^x = x$ | $b^x = b^x$ | $\log_3(3^x) = x$ $\log_{\frac{1}{2}}(\frac{1}{2}^x) = x$ $\log_{10} 10^x = x$ |
| $b^{\log_b x} = x$ | The log says "b to the what power gives me x" = "the power needed on b to get x," so $b^{\text{power needed on b to get } x} = x$ | $6^{\log_6 x} = x$ $7^{\log_7 x} = x$ $e^{\ln x} = x$ |

Ex #3 Simplify

a) ~~$\log_9 9^x = x$~~ x

b) ~~$15^{\log_{15} x} = x$~~ x

c) ~~$\ln e^x = x$~~ x

d) ~~$8^{\log_8 x} = x$~~ x

Log Properties

The product, quotient, & power properties still work for logs of different bases.

Ex #4 Expand

a) $\log_7 \left(\frac{x}{y^3} \right) = \log_7 x - \log_7 y^3 = \log_7 x - 3 \log_7 y$

b) $\log_4 x^2 y = \log_4 x^2 + \log_4 y = 2 \log_4 x + \log_4 y$

Ex #5 Condense

a) $\log_5 17 + 2 \log_5 3 = \log_5 17 + \log_5 3^2 = \log_5 (17 \cdot 3^2)$

b) $3 \ln x - \frac{1}{2} \ln y = \ln x^3 - \ln y^{1/2} = \ln \left(\frac{x^3}{y^{1/2}} \right)$