

Dividing Polynomials: Part 2

$$\frac{16}{7} = 2, R2$$

$$2 \times 7 + 2 = 16$$

When polynomials are divided, the original dividend can be obtained by multiplying the quotient by the divisor then adding the remainder.

$$\frac{\text{dividend}}{\text{divisor}} = \text{quotient} + \frac{\text{remainder}}{\text{divisor}} \quad \text{or} \quad (\text{quotient} \times \text{divisor}) + \text{remainder} = \text{dividend}$$

$$\frac{\text{quot} \times \text{divisor}}{\text{quot}} = \frac{\text{dividend} - \text{remainder}}{\text{quot}}$$

$$\text{divisor} = \frac{\text{dividend} - \text{remainder}}{\text{quotient}}$$

Practice

Divide the following pairs of polynomials then verify your answer.

a) $\frac{x^3 + 4x^2 - 26x + 15}{x - 3}$

$$\begin{array}{r} x^2 + 7x - 5, R0 \\ x-3 \overline{) x^3 + 4x^2 - 26x + 15} \\ \underline{x^3 - 3x^2} \\ 7x^2 - 26x \\ \underline{7x^2 - 21x} \\ -5x + 15 \\ \underline{-5x + 15} \\ 0 \end{array}$$

Verify

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{quot.} \times \text{divisor} + \text{remainder} \\ &= (x^2 + 7x - 5)(x - 3) + 0 \\ &= x^3 - 3x^2 + 7x^2 - 21x - 5x + 15 + 0 \\ &= x^3 + 4x^2 - 26x + 15 \\ &= \text{dividend} \checkmark \end{aligned}$$

b) $\frac{2x^3 + 7x^2 + 4x + 5}{2x + 3}$

$$\begin{array}{r} x^2 + 2x - 1, R8 \\ 2x+3 \overline{) 2x^3 + 7x^2 + 4x + 5} \\ \underline{2x^3 + 3x^2} \\ 4x^2 + 4x \\ \underline{4x^2 + 6x} \\ -2x + 5 \\ \underline{-2x - 3} \\ 8 \end{array}$$

Verify

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{quot.} \times \text{divisor} + \text{remainder} \\ &= (x^2 + 2x - 1)(2x + 3) + 8 \\ &= 2x^3 + 3x^2 + 4x^2 + 6x - 2x - 3 + 8 \\ &= 2x^3 + 7x^2 + 4x + 5 \checkmark \\ &= \text{dividend} \end{aligned}$$

Synthetic Division

Synthetic division is a faster method for dividing polynomials by a binomial by using a series of additions and multiplications.

Example 1

Use synthetic division to simplify the following.

a) $\frac{x^3 + 4x^2 - 26x + 15}{x - 3}$

$$\begin{array}{r|rrrr} 3 & 1 & 4 & -26 & 15 \\ & \downarrow & & & \\ & 1 & 7 & -5 & 0 \end{array}$$

$= x^2 + 7x - 5, R0$

b) $\frac{5x^3 - 7x^2 - x + 3}{x - 1}$

$$\begin{array}{r|rrrr} 1 & 5 & -7 & -1 & 3 \\ & \downarrow & & & \\ & 5 & -2 & -3 & 0 \end{array}$$

$= 5x^2 - 2x - 3, R0$

divisor

Synthetic division is often performed only with binomials in the form "x - a"; if there is a coefficient other than 1 in front of the x then it needs to be factored out of both terms first.

Consider the following:

$$\frac{30}{15} \rightarrow \frac{30}{(5)(3)}$$

The factors of the divisor 15 are 3 and 5. So, another way to perform this calculation above would be to write:

$$30 \div 5 \div 3 = 2$$

A similar approach can be used to divide polynomials by a binomial of the form "bx - a". For these cases, we first factor out the constant b. Then we divide by the new binomial and finish by dividing this answer by the constant b.

Example 2

Use synthetic division to simplify the following.

a) $\frac{2x^4 - 20x^2 + 26x - 60}{2x - 6}$ *missing "x³" term*

$2(x-3)$

$$\begin{array}{r|rrrrr} 3 & 2 & 0 & -20 & 26 & -60 \\ & \downarrow & 6 & 18 & -6 & 60 \\ \hline & 2 & 6 & -2 & 20 & 0 \end{array}$$

$= \frac{2x^3 + 6x^2 - 2x + 20}{2}, R0$

$= x^3 + 3x^2 - x + 10, R0$

b) $\frac{2x^3 - x^2 + 4x + 15}{2x + 3}$

$2(x + \frac{3}{2})$

$-\frac{3}{2}$

$$\begin{array}{r|rrrr} -\frac{3}{2} & 2 & -1 & 4 & 15 \\ & \downarrow & -3 & 6 & -15 \\ \hline & 2 & -4 & 10 & 0 \end{array}$$

$= \frac{2x^2 - 4x + 10}{2}, R0$

$= x^2 - 2x + 5, R0$

c) $\frac{2x^3 - x^2 - 20}{2x - 5}$ *missing "x" term*

$2(x - \frac{5}{2})$

$$\begin{array}{r|rrrr} \frac{5}{2} & 2 & -1 & 0 & -20 \\ & \downarrow & 5 & 10 & 25 \\ \hline & 2 & -4 & 10 & 5 \end{array}$$

$= \frac{2x^2 + 4x + 10}{2}, R5$

$= x^2 + 2x + 5, R5$

* Note: Do not divide the remainder by 2.