

Math 3B: Lecture 21

Noah White

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Introduction

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- PS8, question 3

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- PS8, question 3
- PS9, question 7

Slope fields

We want to study differential equations of the form

$$\frac{dy}{dt} = f(t, y)$$

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Key tool

Slope fields. At every point on the yt -plane we draw a small line segment (a vector) with slope $f(y, t)$.

Examples

Note

If we want to draw a slope field, we cannot actually draw a line segment for **every** point. Instead we pick a grid of points in the plane.

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Examples

Lets use Geogebra! Here is the command we will use:

`SlopeField[f(x,y)]` will produce a slope field for the equation

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = f(x,y)$$

Sketching solutions

Using the slope field we can sketch rough pictures of the solution, given a starting point (an initial condition).

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Examples

Lets use Geogebra again.

Nullclines

Definition

The **nullcline** for $\frac{dy}{dt} = f(t, y)$ is the set of points (t, y) where $f(t, y) = 0$

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Examples

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Drawing slope fields by hand

Drawing slope fields by hand can be difficult! But we can use the nullclines to get an approximate picture

Examples

Lets draw some on the board.