Math 123: Polar Coordinates

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Thursday April 28, 2016

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Polar Coordinates

Standard (x, y) coordinates use distance right (x) and distance up (y) to plot points.

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 and $y = r \cdot sin(\theta)$

$$r^2=x^2+y^2$$
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Example: Derive these conversion rules. **Example:** Sketch the graph of $r = cos(2\theta)$.

If y is a differentiable function of x and t and x is a differentiable function of t then

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{\frac{dy}{dt}}{\frac{dx}{dt}}$$

when $\frac{dx}{dt} \neq 0$.

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So, if $r = f(\theta)$ is a curve in polar coordinates, then

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{\frac{dy}{d\theta}}{\frac{dx}{d\theta}} = \frac{\frac{dr}{d\theta}sin(\theta) + rcos(\theta)}{\frac{dr}{d\theta}cos(\theta) - rsin(\theta)}$$

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Example: Find the slope of the curve $r = cos(2\theta)$ at $\theta = \frac{\pi}{4}$.

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Example: Find the slope of the curve $r = cos(2\theta)$ at $\theta = \frac{\pi}{4}$. **Example:** Find the points on the curve $r = e^{\theta}$ where the tangent line is horizontal or vertical.

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Area in Polar Coordinates

The area of a **sector** is given by

$$A=\frac{1}{2}r^2\theta$$

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Area in Polar Coordinates

The area of a **sector** is given by

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For a polar curve $r = f(\theta)$ from $\theta = a$ to $\theta = b$ the area between the origin and the curve is given by

$$A = \int_a^b \frac{1}{2} [f(\theta)]^2 d\theta$$

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Example: Find the area enclosed by one leaf of $r = cos(2\theta)$.

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