

Proof I will prove the rule in the case of $\frac{0}{0}$ indeterminate form. So this indeterminate form implies $f(c) = g(c) = 0$

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{x \rightarrow c} \frac{f(x)}{g(x)} &= \lim_{x \rightarrow c} \frac{\frac{f(x)}{x-c}}{\frac{g(x)}{x-c}} \\ &= \lim_{x \rightarrow c} \frac{\frac{f(x)-f(c)}{x-c}}{\frac{g(x)-g(c)}{x-c}} \\ &= \frac{\lim_{x \rightarrow c} \frac{f(x)-f(c)}{x-c}}{\lim_{x \rightarrow c} \frac{g(x)-g(c)}{x-c}} \\ &= \frac{f'(c)}{g'(c)} \text{ assuming } g'(c) \neq 0 \\ &= \lim_{x \rightarrow c} \frac{f'(x)}{g'(x)} \end{aligned}$$

Example Find $\lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{x^{15}-1}{x^3-1}$

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{x^{15}-1}{x^3-1} \stackrel{(\frac{0}{0})L'Hop}{=} \lim_{x \rightarrow 1} \frac{15x^{14}}{3x^2} = \frac{15}{3} = 5$$

Let's also compare this with the answer we would get if we used the linear approximations we have seen in Section 3.1 instead of the L'Hop.

$x^{15} - 1 \approx 15(x - 1)$ (Here $f(x) = x^{15} - 1$, $a = 1$, $f(a) = b = 0$, $m = f'(1) = 15$ and $f(x) \approx m(x - a) + b$).

Similarly $x^3 - 1 \approx 3(x - 1)$. Therefore,

$$\frac{x^{15}-1}{x^3-1} \approx \frac{15(x-1)}{3(x-1)} = 5$$

Example $\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\ln x}{x-1} \stackrel{(\frac{\infty}{\infty})L'Hop}{=} \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\frac{1}{x}}{1} = \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{x} = 0$