

Transformations of Functions

An alternative way to graphing a function by plotting individual points is to perform **transformations** to the graph of a function you already know.

Library Functions:

In previous sections, we learned the graphs of some basic functions. Collectively, these are known as the [library functions](#).

These are the graphs of the functions we will begin to perform transformations on to find the graphs of other functions.

We will discuss three types of transformations: shifting, reflecting, and stretching/shrinking.

Vertical Shifting:

Adding a constant to a function will shift its graph vertically (i.e. $y = f(x) + c$). Adding a positive constant c will shift the graph upward c units, while adding a negative constant c will shift it downward c units.

Vertical Shifts of Graphs

Equation

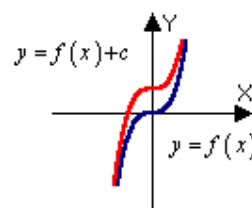
$$y = f(x) + c$$

$(c > 0)$

How to Obtain the Graph

Shift the graph of $y = f(x)$
upward c units.

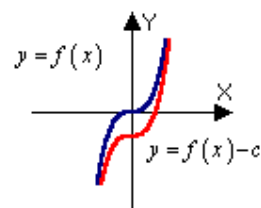
What the Graph Looks Like



$$y = f(x) - c$$

$(c > 0)$

Shift the graph of $y = f(x)$
downward c units.



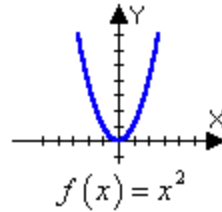
Example 1: Sketch the graph of each function.

(a) $h(x) = x^2 + 2$

(b) $g(x) = |x| - 3$

Solution (a):

Step 1: First, we determine which library function best matches our given function. Since our function has an x^2 in it, we will use the library function $f(x) = x^2$.



Step 2: Now that we know the library function we will be using, we need a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = x^2$ to work with. We can choose any points from the graph, but let's choose some easy ones.

(x,y)

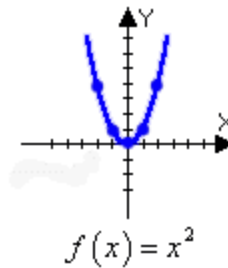
(-2,4)

(-1,1)

(0,0)

(1,1)

(2,4)



Step 3: The function $h(x) = x^2 + 2$ is of the form $y = f(x) + c$, so we know the graph of $h(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but shifted upward 2 units. Thus, we can obtain points on the graph of $h(x)$ by taking our points from the graph of $f(x) = x^2$ and adding 2 to each of the y-values.

$f(x)$

(-2,4)

(-1,1)

(0,0)

(1,1)

(2,4)

$h(x)$

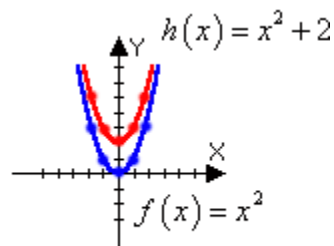
(-2,6)

(-1,3)

(0,2)

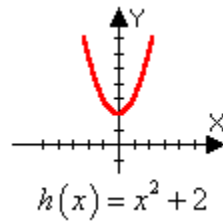
(1,3)

(2,6)



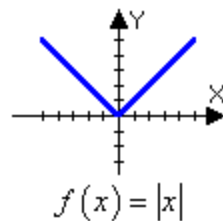
Example 1 (Continued):

Step 4: Thus we have obtained the graph of $h(x) = x^2 + 2$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = x^2$.



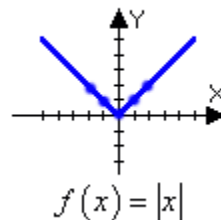
Solution (b):

Step 1: First, we determine which library function best matches our given function. Since our function has an $|x|$ in it, we will use the library function $f(x) = |x|$.



Step 2: Now we choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = |x|$ to work with.

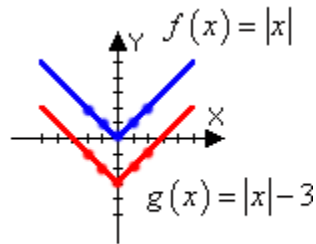
- (x, y)
- $(-2, 2)$
- $(-1, 1)$
- $(0, 0)$
- $(1, 1)$
- $(2, 2)$



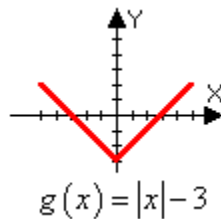
Example 1 (Continued):

Step 3: The function $g(x) = |x| - 3$ is of the form $y = f(x) - c$, so we know the graph of $g(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but shifted downward 3 units. Thus, we can obtain points on the graph of $g(x)$ by taking our points from the graph of $f(x) = |x|$ and subtracting 3 from each of the y -values.

$f(x)$	$g(x)$
$(-2, 2)$	$(-2, -1)$
$(-1, 1)$	$(-1, -2)$
$(0, 0)$	$(0, -3)$
$(1, 1)$	$(1, -2)$
$(2, 2)$	$(2, -1)$



Step 4: Thus we have obtained the graph of $g(x) = |x| - 3$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = |x|$.



Horizontal Shifting:

A horizontal shift is represented in either the form $y = f(x - c)$ or $y = f(x + c)$. Suppose we know the graph of $y = f(x)$. The value of $f(x - c)$ at x is the same as the value of $f(x)$ at $x - c$. Since $x - c$ is c units to the left of x , it follows that the graph of $y = f(x - c)$ is just the graph of $y = f(x)$ shifted to the right c units. Likewise, the graph of $y = f(x + c)$ is the graph of $y = f(x)$ shifted to the left c units.

Horizontal Shifts of Graphs

Equation

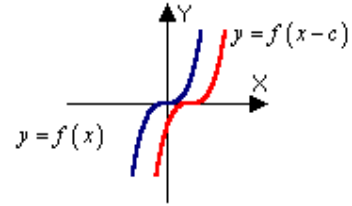
$$y = f(x - c)$$

$(c > 0)$

How to Obtain the Graph

Shift the graph of $y = f(x)$
to the right c units.

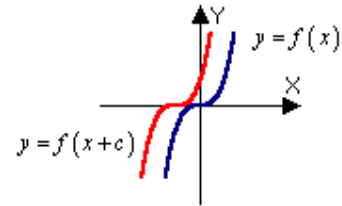
What the Graph Looks Like



$$y = f(x + c)$$

$(c > 0)$

Shift the graph of $y = f(x)$
to the left c units.



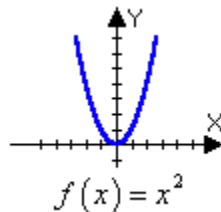
Example 2: Sketch the graph of each function.

(a) $h(x) = (x + 3)^2$

(b) $g(x) = \sqrt{x - 4}$

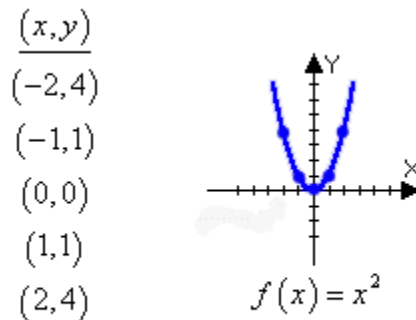
Solution (a):

Step 1: First, we determine which library function best matches our given function. Since our function has an $(x + 3)^2$ in it, we will use the library function $f(x) = x^2$.

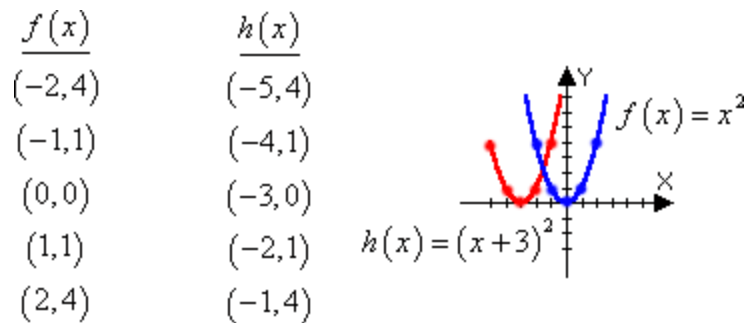


Example 2 (Continued):

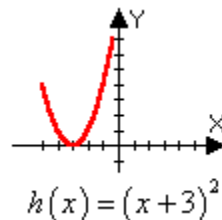
Step 2: Now we choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = x^2$ to work with.



Step 3: The function $h(x) = (x + 3)^2$ is of the form $y = f(x + c)$, so we know the graph of $h(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but shifted left 3 units. Thus, we can obtain points on the graph of $h(x)$ by taking our points from the graph of $f(x) = x^2$ and subtracting 3 from each of the x -values.



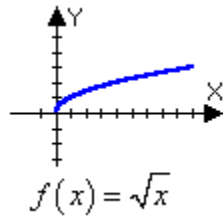
Step 4: Thus we have obtained the graph of $h(x) = (x + 3)^2$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = x^2$.



Example 2 (Continued):

Solution (b):

Step 1: First, we determine which library function best matches our given function. Since our function has an $\sqrt{x-4}$ in it, we will use the library function $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$.



Step 2: Now we choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$ to work with.

(x, y)

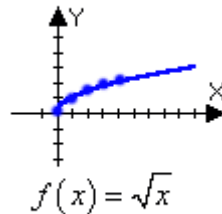
(0, 0)

(1, 1)

(2, $\sqrt{2}$)

(3, $\sqrt{3}$)

(4, 2)



Step 3: The function $g(x) = \sqrt{x-4}$ is of the form $y = f(x-c)$, so we know the graph of $g(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but shifted right 4 units. Thus, we can obtain points on the graph of $g(x)$ by taking our points from the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$ and adding 4 to each of the x -values.

f(x)

(0, 0)

(1, 1)

(2, $\sqrt{2}$)

(3, $\sqrt{3}$)

(4, 2)

g(x)

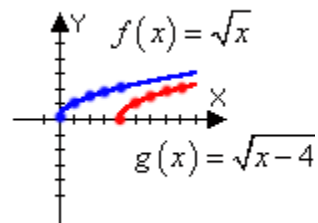
(0, 4)

(1, 5)

(2, $\sqrt{2} + 4$)

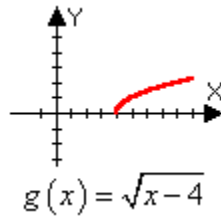
(3, $\sqrt{3} + 4$)

(4, 6)



Example 2 (Continued):

Step 4: Thus we have obtained the graph of $g(x) = \sqrt{x-4}$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$.



Reflecting Graphs:

If we know the graph of $y = f(x)$, we can obtain the graph of its reflection in the x -axis by multiplying the y -coordinate of each point on the graph of $y = f(x)$ by -1 . This would give the graph of $y = -f(x)$. Similarly, the value of $y = f(-x)$ at x is the same as the value of $y = f(x)$ at $-x$, and so the graph of $y = f(-x)$ is the reflection of the graph of $y = f(x)$ in the y -axis.

Reflecting Graphs

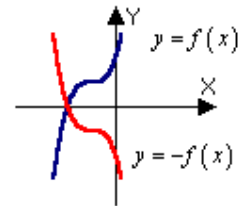
Equation

$$y = -f(x)$$

How to Obtain the Graph

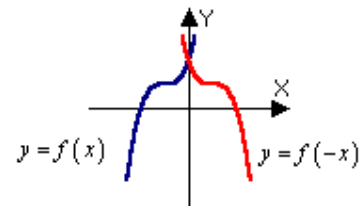
Reflect the graph of $y = f(x)$ in the x -axis.

What the Graph Looks Like



$$y = f(-x)$$

Reflect the graph of $y = f(x)$ in the y -axis.



Example 3: Sketch the graph of each function.

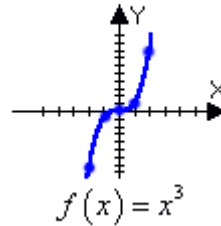
(a) $h(x) = -x^3$

(b) $g(x) = \sqrt[3]{-x}$

Solution (a):

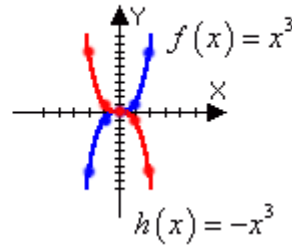
Step 1: Since our function has an x^3 in it, we will start with the library function $f(x) = x^3$. Choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = x^3$ to work with.

(x,y)
$(-2,-8)$
$(-1,-1)$
$(0,0)$
$(1,1)$
$(2,8)$

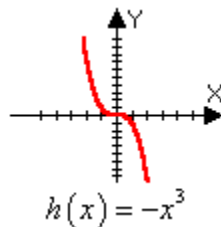


Step 2: The function $h(x) = -x^3$ is of the form $y = -f(x)$, so we know the graph of $h(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but reflected in the x -axis. Thus, we can obtain points on the graph of $h(x)$ by multiplying the y -coordinate of each point from the graph of $f(x)$ by -1 .

$f(x)$	$h(x)$
$(-2,-8)$	$(-2,8)$
$(-1,-1)$	$(-1,1)$
$(0,0)$	$(0,0)$
$(1,1)$	$(1,-1)$
$(2,8)$	$(2,-8)$



Step 3: Thus we have obtained the graph of $h(x) = -x^3$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = x^3$.

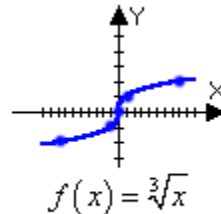


Example 3 (Continued):

Solution (b):

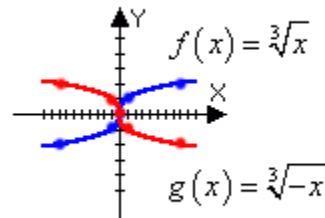
Step 1: Since our function has an $\sqrt[3]{-x}$ in it, we will start with the library function $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$. Choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$ to work with.

<u>(x,y)</u>
$(-8,-2)$
$(-1,-1)$
$(0,0)$
$(1,1)$
$(8,2)$



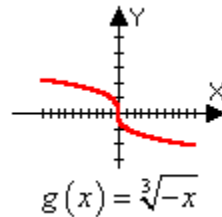
Step 2: The function $g(x) = \sqrt[3]{-x}$ is of the form $y = f(-x)$, so we know the graph of $g(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but reflected in the y-axis. Thus, we can obtain points on the graph of $g(x)$ by taking our points from the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$ and multiplying each of the x-values by -1.

<u>$f(x)$</u>	<u>$g(x)$</u>
$(-8,-2)$	$(8,-2)$
$(-1,-1)$	$(1,-1)$
$(0,0)$	$(0,0)$
$(1,1)$	$(-1,1)$
$(8,2)$	$(-8,2)$



Example 3 (Continued):

Step 3: Thus we have obtained the graph of $g(x) = \sqrt[3]{-x}$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt[3]{x}$.



Vertical Stretching and Shrinking:

If we multiply a function by a constant a (i.e. $y = af(x)$), the graph of the function is either vertically stretched if $a > 1$, or vertically shrunk if $0 < a < 1$. The y -coordinate of $y = af(x)$ at x is the same as the y -coordinate of $y = f(x)$ multiplied by a .

Vertical Stretching and Shrinking of Graphs

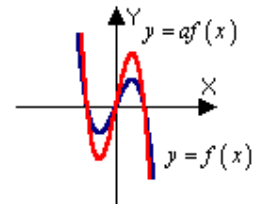
Equation

$$y = af(x) \\ (a > 1)$$

How to Obtain the Graph

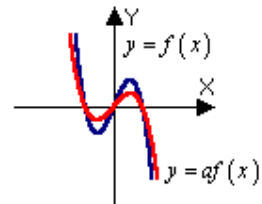
Stretch the graph of $y = f(x)$ vertically by a factor of a .

What the Graph Looks Like



$$y = af(x) \\ (0 < a < 1)$$

Shrink the graph of $y = f(x)$ vertically by a factor of a .



Example 4: Sketch the graph of each function.

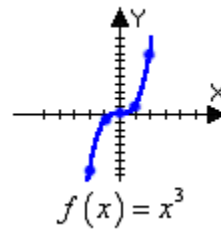
(a) $h(x) = \frac{1}{4}x^3$

(b) $g(x) = 3|x|$

Solution (a):

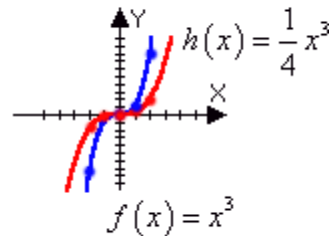
Step 1: Since our function has an x^3 in it, we will use the library function $f(x) = x^3$. Choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = x^3$ to work with.

(x, y)
$(-2, -8)$
$(-1, -1)$
$(0, 0)$
$(1, 1)$
$(2, 8)$



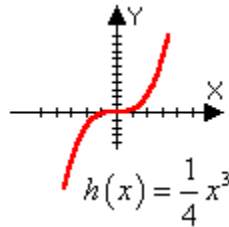
Step 2: The function $h(x) = \frac{1}{4}x^3$ is of the form $y = af(x)$ with $0 < a < 1$, so we know the graph of $h(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but shrunken by a factor of $\frac{1}{4}$. Thus, we can obtain points on the graph of $h(x)$ by multiplying the y-coordinate of each point from the graph of $f(x)$ by $\frac{1}{4}$.

$f(x)$	$h(x)$
$(-2, -8)$	$(-2, -2)$
$(-1, -1)$	$(-1, -\frac{1}{4})$
$(0, 0)$	$(0, 0)$
$(1, 1)$	$(1, \frac{1}{4})$
$(2, 8)$	$(2, 2)$



Example 4 (Continued):

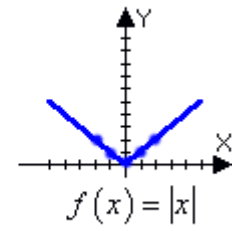
Step 3: Thus we have obtained the graph of $h(x) = \frac{1}{4}x^3$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = x^3$.



Solution (b):

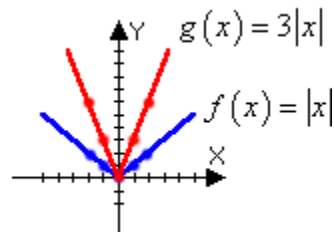
Step 1: Since our function has an $|x|$ in it, we will use the library function $f(x) = |x|$. Choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = |x|$ to work with.

(x, y)
(-2, 2)
(-1, 1)
(0, 0)
(1, 1)
(2, 2)



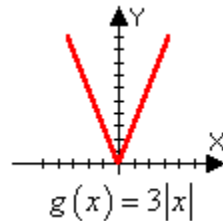
Step 2: The function $g(x) = 3|x|$ is of the form $y = af(x)$ with $a > 1$, so we know the graph of $g(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, stretched by a factor of 3. Thus, we can obtain points on the graph of $g(x)$ by taking our points from the graph of $f(x) = |x|$ and multiplying each of the y -values by 3.

<u>$f(x)$</u>	<u>$g(x)$</u>
(-2, 2)	(-2, 6)
(-1, 1)	(-1, 3)
(0, 0)	(0, 0)
(1, 1)	(1, 3)
(2, 2)	(2, 6)



Example 4 (Continued):

Step 3: Thus we have obtained the graph of $g(x) = 3|x|$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = |x|$.



Horizontal Stretching and Shrinking:

A horizontal stretching or shrinking is represented in the form $y = f(ax)$. Suppose we know the graph of $y = f(x)$. The value of $f(ax)$ at x is the same as the value of $f(x)$ at ax . Since x is $\frac{1}{a} \cdot ax$, it follows that the graph of $y = f(ax)$ is just the graph of $y = f(x)$

horizontally stretched (or horizontally shrunken) by a factor of $\frac{1}{a}$ if $0 < a < 1$ (if $a > 1$).

Horizontal Stretching and Shrinking of Graphs

<u>Equation</u>	<u>How to Obtain the Graph</u>	<u>What the Graph Looks Like</u>
$y = f(ax)$ ($a > 1$)	Shrink the graph of $y = f(x)$ horizontally by a factor of $\frac{1}{a}$.	<p>A coordinate plane with x and y axes. Two graphs are shown: a blue curve labeled $y = f(x)$ and a red curve labeled $y = f(ax)$. The red curve is a horizontal shrink of the blue curve, appearing narrower.</p>
$y = f(ax)$ ($0 < a < 1$)	Stretch the graph of $y = f(x)$ horizontally by a factor of $\frac{1}{a}$.	<p>A coordinate plane with x and y axes. Two graphs are shown: a blue curve labeled $y = f(x)$ and a red curve labeled $y = f(ax)$. The red curve is a horizontal stretch of the blue curve, appearing wider.</p>

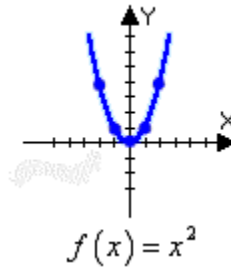
Example 5: Sketch the graph of each function.

(a) $g(x) = \left(\frac{1}{2}x\right)^2$ (b) $h(x) = \sqrt{3x}$

Solution (a):

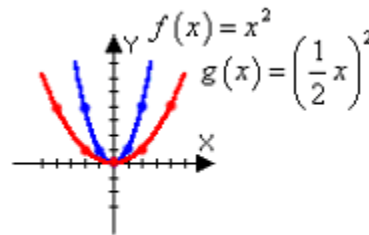
Step 1: Since our function has a $\left(\frac{1}{2}x\right)^2$ in it we will use the library function $f(x) = x^2$. Choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = x^2$ to work with.

(x, y)
$(-2, 4)$
$(-1, 1)$
$(0, 0)$
$(1, 1)$
$(2, 4)$



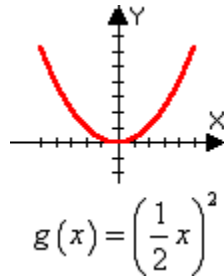
Step 2: The function $g(x) = \left(\frac{1}{2}x\right)^2$ is of the form $y = f(ax)$ with $0 < a < 1$, so we know the graph of $g(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but stretched horizontally by a factor of $\frac{1}{a}$, or 2. Thus we can obtain points on the graph of $g(x)$ by multiplying the x -coordinate of each point from the graph of $f(x)$ by 2.

$f(x)$	$g(x)$
$(-2, 4)$	$(-4, 4)$
$(-1, 1)$	$(-2, 1)$
$(0, 0)$	$(0, 0)$
$(1, 1)$	$(2, 1)$
$(2, 4)$	$(4, 4)$



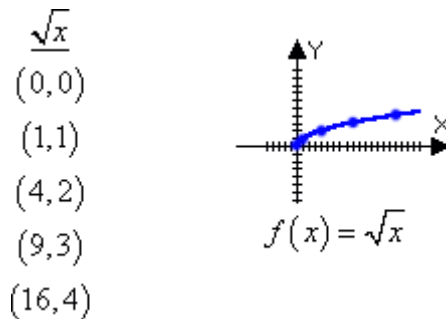
Example 5 (Continued):

Step 3: Thus we have obtained the graph of $g(x) = \left(\frac{1}{2}x\right)^2$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = x^2$.



Solution (b):

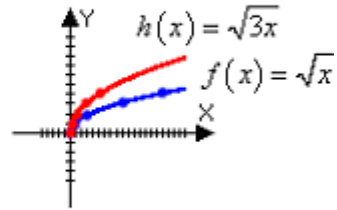
Step 1: Since our function has a $\sqrt{3x}$ in it we will use the library function $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$. Choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$ to work with.



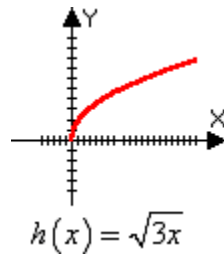
Step 2: The function $h(x) = \sqrt{3x}$ is of the form $y = f(ax)$ with $a > 1$, so we know the graph of $h(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$, but shrunken horizontally by a factor of $\frac{1}{a}$, or $\frac{1}{3}$. Thus we can obtain points on the graph of $h(x)$ by multiplying the x -coordinate of each point from the graph of $f(x)$ by $\frac{1}{3}$.

Example 5 (Continued):

$f(x)$	$h(x)$
$(0,0)$	$(0,0)$
$(1,1)$	$(\frac{1}{3},1)$
$(4,2)$	$(\frac{4}{3},2)$
$(9,3)$	$(3,3)$
$(16,4)$	$(\frac{16}{3},4)$



Step 3: Thus we have obtained the graph of $h(x) = \sqrt{3x}$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$.



Combining Shifting, Stretching, and Reflecting:

Transformations of functions can be combined to obtain the graphs of more complex functions. For instance, if we know the graph of $y = f(x)$, we can obtain the graph of $y = f(x + 2) - 3$ by shifting the graph of $y = f(x)$ down three units and left two units.

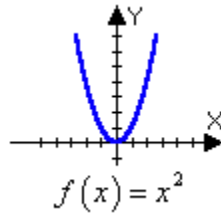
Example 6: Sketch the graph of each function.

(a) $g(x) = \frac{1}{2}x^2 - 3$

(b) $h(x) = -2\sqrt{x+2}$

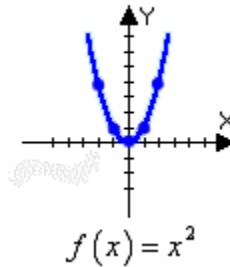
Solution (a):

Step 1: Just like in the previous examples, we start by determining which library function best matches our given function. Since our function has an x^2 in it, we will use the library function $f(x) = x^2$.



Step 2: Again we choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = x^2$ to work with.

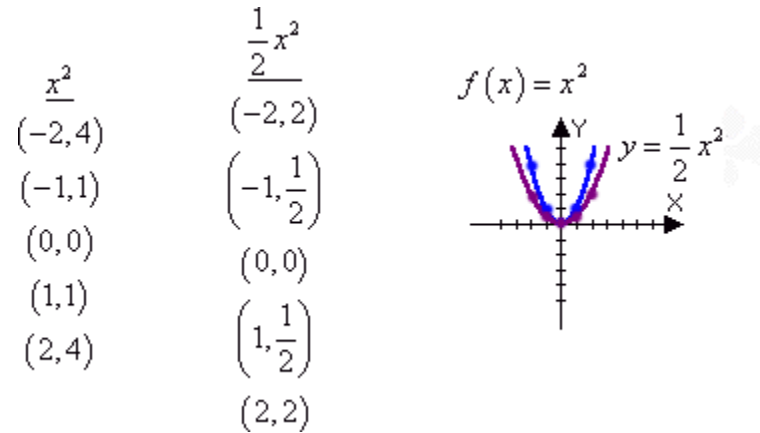
(x,y)
$(-2,4)$
$(-1,1)$
$(0,0)$
$(1,1)$
$(2,4)$



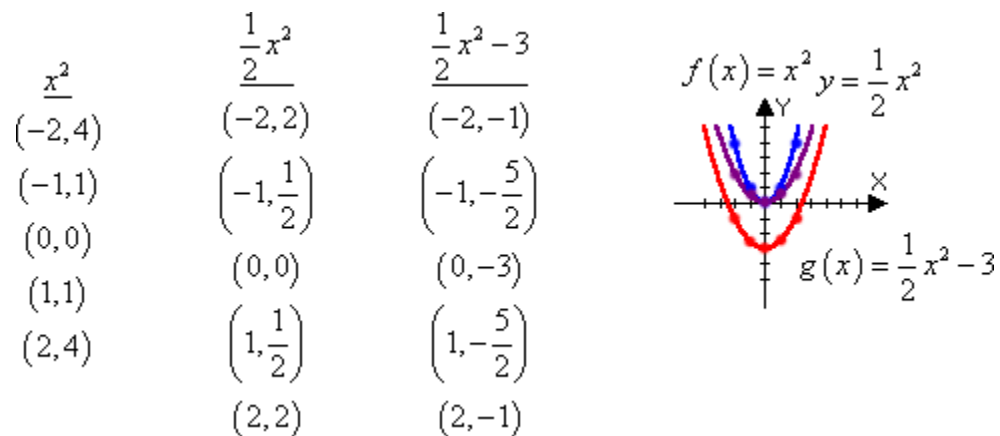
Step 3: Now we will perform the transformations one at a time. Our function $g(x) = \frac{1}{2}x^2 - 3$ has two transformations, a shrinking and a vertical shift. Hence, the graph of $g(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$ but shrunken by a factor of $\frac{1}{2}$, and shifted vertically down 3 units.

Example 6 (Continued):

Step 4: First we will perform the shrinking transformation. We want to find the graph of $y = \frac{1}{2}x^2$ using the graph of $f(x) = x^2$. We do this by taking the points from $f(x)$ and multiplying the y-values by $\frac{1}{2}$.

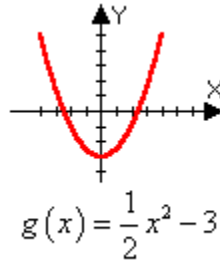


Step 5: Now we will perform the vertical shift transformation using the graph we just found. In other words, we want to find the graph of $g(x) = \frac{1}{2}x^2 - 3$ using the graph of $y = \frac{1}{2}x^2$. We do this by taking the points from the graph and subtracting 3 from each of the y-values.



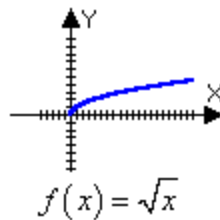
Example 6 (Continued):

Step 6: Thus we have obtained the graph of $g(x) = \frac{1}{2}x^2 - 3$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = x^2$.



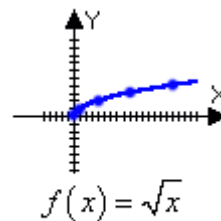
Solution (b):

Step 1: Again we start by determining which library function best matches our given function. Since our function has a $\sqrt{x+2}$ in it, we will use the library function $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$.



Step 2: Again we choose a set of points from the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$ to work with.

- \sqrt{x}
- (0,0)
- (1,1)
- (4,2)
- (9,3)
- (16,4)

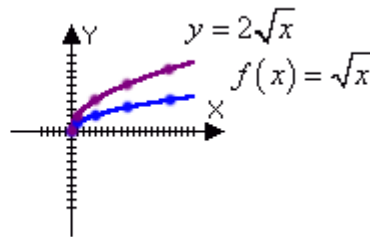


Example 6 (Continued):

Step 3: Now we will perform the transformations one at a time. This time our function $h(x) = -2\sqrt{x+2}$ has three transformations, a stretch, a reflection and a horizontal shift. Hence, the graph of $h(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$ but stretched by a factor of 2, reflected over the x -axis, and shifted horizontally to the left 2 units.

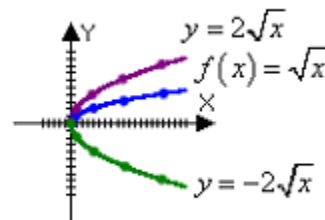
Step 4: First we will perform the stretching transformation. We want to find the graph of $y = 2\sqrt{x}$ using the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$. We do this by taking the points from $f(x)$ and multiplying the y -values by 2

\sqrt{x}	$2\sqrt{x}$
(0,0)	(0,0)
(1,1)	(1,2)
(4,2)	(4,4)
(9,3)	(9,6)
(16,4)	(16,8)



Step 5: Next we will perform the reflecting transformation. We will use the graph of $y = 2\sqrt{x}$ to find the graph of $y = -2\sqrt{x}$. To do this, we take each point on the graph of $y = 2\sqrt{x}$ and multiply its y -value by -1 .

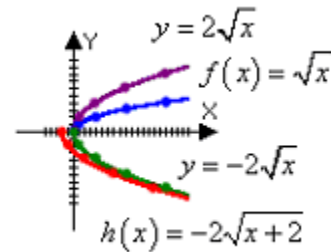
\sqrt{x}	$2\sqrt{x}$	$-2\sqrt{x}$
(0,0)	(0,0)	(0,0)
(1,1)	(1,2)	(1,-2)
(4,2)	(4,4)	(4,-4)
(9,3)	(9,6)	(9,-6)
(16,4)	(16,8)	(16,-8)



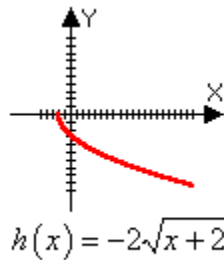
Example 6 (Continued):

Step 6: Finally we will perform the horizontal shift transformation, using the graph we just found. In other words, we want to find the graph of $h(x) = -2\sqrt{x+2}$ using the graph of $y = -2\sqrt{x}$. We do this by taking the points from the graph of $y = -2\sqrt{x}$ and subtracting 2 from each of the x -values.

\sqrt{x}	$2\sqrt{x}$	$-2\sqrt{x}$	$-2\sqrt{x+2}$
(0,0)	(0,0)	(0,0)	(-2,0)
(1,1)	(1,2)	(1,-2)	(-1,-2)
(4,2)	(4,4)	(4,-4)	(2,-4)
(9,3)	(9,6)	(9,-6)	(7,-6)
(16,4)	(16,8)	(16,-8)	(14,-8)

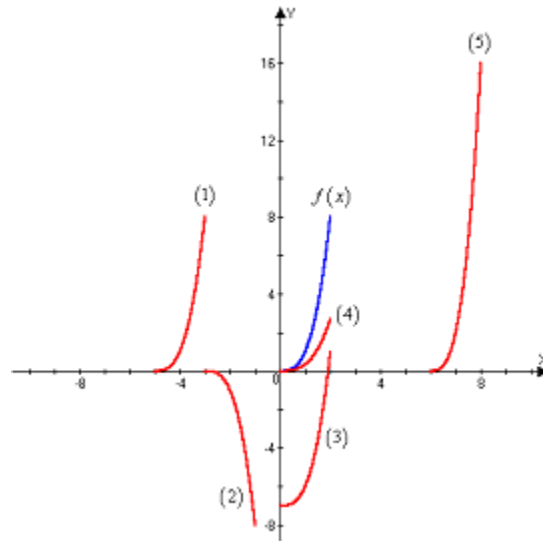


Step 7: Thus we have obtained the graph of $h(x) = -2\sqrt{x+2}$ by transforming the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$.



Example 7: The graph of $y = f(x)$ is given. Match each equation with its graph.

- (a) $y = \frac{1}{3}f(x)$ (b) $y = f(x + 5)$ (c) $y = f(x) - 7$
 (d) $y = 2f(x - 6)$ (e) $y = -f(x + 2)$



Solution (a): The graph of $f(x)$ is shown in blue in the above figure. The function $y = \frac{1}{3}f(x)$ is of the form $y = af(x)$ with $0 < a < 1$.

Therefore, the graph of $y = \frac{1}{3}f(x)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$ but shrunken vertically by a factor of $\frac{1}{3}$. Thus, the graph of $y = \frac{1}{3}f(x)$ is (4).

Solution (b): The function $y = f(x + 5)$ is of the form $y = f(x + c)$. Therefore, the graph of $y = f(x + 5)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$ but shifted to the left 5 units. Thus, the graph of $y = f(x + 5)$ is (1).

Solution (c): The function $y = f(x) - 7$ is of the form $y = f(x) - c$. Therefore, the graph of $y = f(x) - 7$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$ but shifted down 7 units. Thus, the graph of $y = f(x) - 7$ is (3).

Example 7 (Continued):

Solution (d): The function $y = 2f(x - 6)$ has two forms, $y = af(x)$ and $y = f(x - c)$. Therefore, the graph of $y = 2f(x - 6)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$ but stretched by a factor of 2 and then shifted to the right 6 units. Thus, the graph of $y = 2f(x - 6)$ is (5).

Solution (e): The function $y = -f(x + 2)$ also has two forms, $y = -f(x)$ and $y = f(x + c)$. Therefore, the graph of $y = -f(x + 2)$ will be the same as that of $f(x)$ but reflected in the x -axis and then shifted to the left 6 units. Thus, the graph of $y = -f(x + 2)$ is (2).