Understanding Logarithms

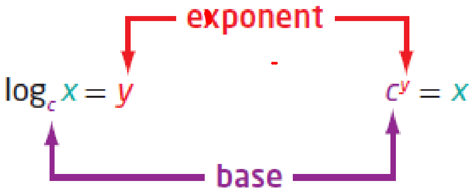
Focus on...

- demonstrating that a logarithmic function is the inverse of an exponential function
- sketching the graph of $y = \log_c x$, $c > 0$, $c \neq 1$
- determining the characteristics of the graph of $y = \log_c x$, $c > 0$, $c \neq 1$
- explaining the relationship between logarithms and exponents
- expressing a logarithmic function as an exponential function and vice versa
- evaluating logarithms using a variety of methods

For the exponential function $y = c^x$, the inverse is $\overset{\text{exponential}}{\underline{x = c^y}}$. This inverse is also a function and is called a **logarithmic function**. It is written as $\underline{y = \log_c x}$, where c is a positive number other than 1.

logarithmic

Logarithmic Form **Exponential Form**



Since our number system is based on powers of 10, **logarithms** with base 10 are widely used and are called **common logarithms**. When you write a common logarithm, you do not need to write the base. For example, $\log 3$ means $\log_{10} 3$. or $\log_{10} 150 = \log 150$

logarithmic function

- a function of the form $y = \log_c x$, where $c > 0$ and $c \neq 1$, that is the inverse of the exponential function $y = c^x$

logarithm

- * an exponent
- in $x = c^y$, y is called the logarithm to base c of x

common logarithm

- a logarithm with base 10

Write each of the following in logarithmic form

ans exp

a) $32 = 2^5$

Base

$\log_2(32) = 5$

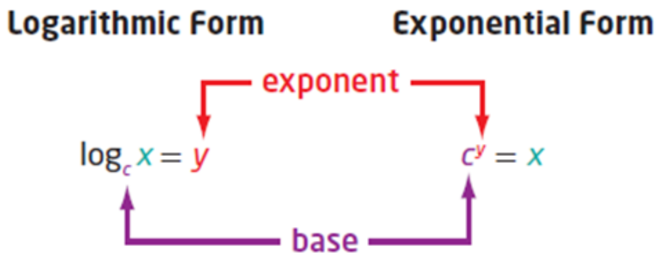
b) $2^{-5} = \frac{1}{32}$

$\log_2\left(\frac{1}{32}\right) = -5$

c) $x = 10^y$

$\log_{10}(x) = y$

$\log x = y$



Write each of the following in exponential form

a) $\log_4 16 = 2$

ans

Base exp

$4^2 = 16$

b) $\log_2\left(\frac{1}{32}\right) = -5$

$2^{-5} = \frac{1}{32}$

c) $\log 65 = 1.8129$

$10^{1.8129} = 65$

Example 1

Evaluating a Logarithm

Evaluate.

a) $\log_7 49 = 2$ **b)** $\log_6 1 = 0$ **c)** $\log 0.001 = -3$ **d)** $\log_2 \sqrt{8} = 1.5$

$$\frac{\log 49}{\log 7} = 2$$

$$x = \log_7 49$$

$$7^x = \underline{49}$$

$$\cancel{7}^x = (\cancel{7})^2$$

$$x = 2$$

$$\boxed{\log_7 49 = 2}$$

$$\frac{\log 1}{\log 6} = 0$$

$$x = \log_6 1$$

$$6^x = 1$$

$$\cancel{6}^x = (\cancel{6})^0$$

$$x = 0$$

$$\boxed{\log_6 1 = 0}$$

$$\frac{\log 0.001}{\log 10} = -3$$

$$x = \log 0.001$$

$$10^x = 0.001$$

$$\cancel{10}^x = (\cancel{10})^{-3}$$

$$x = -3$$

$$\boxed{\log 0.001 = -3}$$

$$\frac{\log \sqrt{8}}{\log 2} = 1.5$$

$$x = \log_2 \sqrt{8}$$

$$2^x = \sqrt{8}$$

$$2^x = (8)^{1/2}$$

$$2^x = (2^3)^{1/2}$$

$$\cancel{2}^x = \cancel{2}^{3/2}$$

$$x = \frac{3}{2}$$

$$\boxed{\log_2 \sqrt{8} = \frac{3}{2}}$$

Example 2

Determine an Unknown in an Expression in Logarithmic Form

Determine the value of x. (Convert to exponential form)

a) $\log_5 x = -3$

b) $\log_x 36 = 2$

c) $\log_{64} x = \frac{2}{3}$

a) $\log_5 x = -3$ (log. form)

$5^{-3} = x$ (exp. form)

$\left(\frac{1}{5}\right)^3 = x$

$\boxed{\frac{1}{125} = x}$

b) $\log_x 36 = 2$ (log. form)

$x^2 = 36$ (exp. form)

$x = \pm 6$

$\boxed{x = 6}$

c) $\log_{64} x = \frac{2}{3}$ (log. form)

$64^{2/3} = x$ (exp. form)

$\boxed{16 = x}$

$\leftarrow$(Inverse)$\rightarrow$

Exponential Function	Logarithmic Function
$y = c^x$, $c>0$, $c \neq 1$	$y = \log_c x$, $c>0$, $c \neq 1$
D: $\{x \mid x \in R\}$	D: $\{x \mid x>0, x \in R\}$
R: $\{y \mid y>0, y \in R\}$	R: $\{y \mid y \in R\}$
HA: $y=0$	VA: $x=0$
x int: none	x int: $(1,0)$
y int: $(0,1)$	y int: none

Example 3

Graph the Inverse of an Exponential Function

a) State the inverse of $f(x) = 3^x$.

b) Sketch the graph of the inverse. Identify the following characteristics of the inverse graph:

- the domain and range
- the x-intercept, if it exists
- the y-intercept, if it exists
- the equations of any asymptotes

Solution

a) The inverse of $y = f(x) = 3^x$ is or,

expressed in logarithmic form, Since the

inverse is a function, it can be written in function notation as

How do you know that $y = \log_3 x$ is a function?

b) Set up tables of values for both the exponential function, $f(x)$, and its inverse, $f^{-1}(x)$. Plot the points and join them with a smooth curve.

$f(x) = 3^x$	
x	y
-3	
-2	
-1	
0	
1	
2	
3	

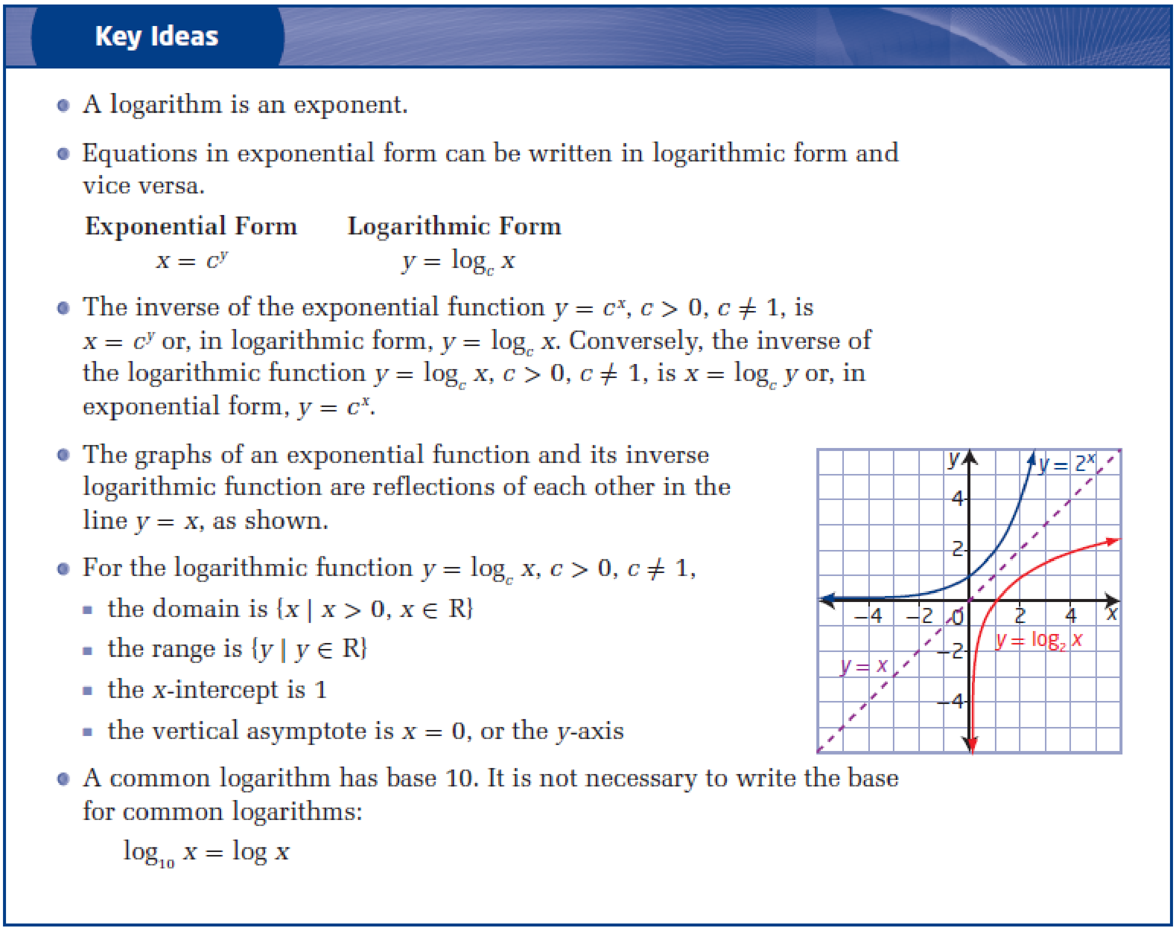
$f^{-1}(x) = \log_3 x$	
x	y

[redacted]

The graph of the inverse, $f^{-1}(x) = \log_3 x$, is a reflection of the graph of $f(x) = 3^x$ about the line $y = x$. For $f^{-1}(x) = \log_3 x$,

- the domain is and the range is
- the x-intercept is
- there is no y-intercept
- the vertical asymptote, the axis, has equation there is no asymptote

How do the characteristics of $f^{-1}(x) = \log_3 x$ compare to the characteristics of $f(x) = 3^x$?



Key Ideas

- A logarithm is an exponent.
- Equations in exponential form can be written in logarithmic form and vice versa.

Exponential Form	Logarithmic Form
$x = c^y$	$y = \log_c x$

- The inverse of the exponential function $y = c^x$, $c > 0$, $c \neq 1$, is $x = c^y$ or, in logarithmic form, $y = \log_c x$. Conversely, the inverse of the logarithmic function $y = \log_c x$, $c > 0$, $c \neq 1$, is $x = \log_c y$ or, in exponential form, $y = c^x$.
- The graphs of an exponential function and its inverse logarithmic function are reflections of each other in the line $y = x$, as shown.
- For the logarithmic function $y = \log_c x$, $c > 0$, $c \neq 1$,
    - the domain is $\{x \mid x > 0, x \in \mathrm{R}\}$
    - the range is $\{y \mid y \in \mathrm{R}\}$
    - the x-intercept is 1
    - the vertical asymptote is $x = 0$, or the y-axis
- A common logarithm has base 10. It is not necessary to write the base for common logarithms:

$$\log_{10} x = \log x$$

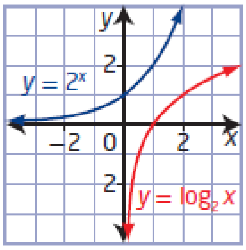
Homework

#1-5, 8, 10, 12, 13, 17 on page 380

$\boxed{2, 3, 4, 12}$

8.1 Understanding Logarithms, pages 380 to 382

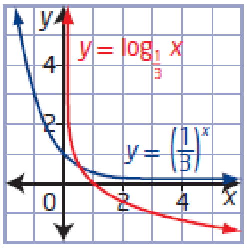
1. a) i)



ii) $y = \log_2 x$

iii) domain $\{x \mid x > 0, x \in \mathrm{R}\}$, range $\{y \mid y \in \mathrm{R}\}$, x-intercept 1, no y-intercept, vertical asymptote $x = 0$

b) i)



ii) $y = \log_{\frac{1}{3}} x$

iii) domain $\{x \mid x > 0, x \in \mathrm{R}\}$, range $\{y \mid y \in \mathrm{R}\}$, x-intercept 1, no y-intercept, vertical asymptote $x = 0$

2. a) $\log_{12} 144 = 2$ **b)** $\log_8 2 = \frac{1}{3}$

c) $\log_{10} 0.000\,01 = -5$ **d)** $\log_7 (y + 3) = 2x$

3. a) $5^2 = 25$ **b)** $8^{\frac{2}{3}} = 4$

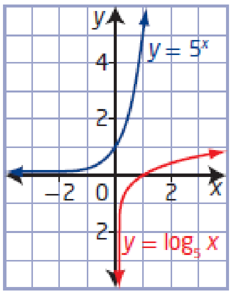
c) $10^6 = 1\,000\,000$ **d)** $11^y = x + 3$

4. a) 3 **b)** 0 **c)** $\frac{1}{3}$ **d)** −3

5. $a = 4$; $b = 5$

8. a) $y = \log_5 x$

b)



domain $\{x \mid x > 0, x \in \mathrm{R}\}$, range $\{y \mid y \in \mathrm{R}\}$, x-intercept 1, no y-intercept, vertical asymptote $x = 0$

10. They are reflections of each other in the line $y = x$.

11. a) They have the exact same shape.

b) One of them is increasing and the other is decreasing.

12. a) 216 **b)** 81 **c)** 64 **d)** 8

13. a) 7 **b)** 6

14. a) 0 **b)** 1

15. −1

16. 16

17. a) $t = \log_{1.1} N$ **b)** 145 days

18. The larger asteroid had a relative risk that was 1479 times as dangerous.

19. 1000 times as great

20. 5

21. $m = 14$, $n = 13$

22. $4n$

23. $y = 3^{2^x}$