

Distributivity and NON-Distributivity in Algebra

GOOD: $\left\{ \begin{array}{lll} 2(x+3y) = 2x+6y & \text{multiplication} & \text{addition} \\ 4(w-3z) = 4w-12z & \text{or} & \text{or} \\ \frac{1}{3}(6a+b) = 2a+\frac{b}{3} & \text{division} & \text{subtraction} \\ (2x^2y^4)^3 = 8x^6y^{12} & \text{exponentiation} & \text{multiplication} \end{array} \right.$ **O
V
E
R**

WRONG: $(x+z)^2 = ?$ **NO:** $x^2 + z^2$ is **NOT OK**

Operation	Distributivity of Exponentiation	Distributivity of Square Root
Multiplication	$(3 \bullet 5)^2 = 225 = 3^2 \bullet 5^2$	$\sqrt{4 \bullet 9} = \sqrt{4} \bullet \sqrt{9}$
Division	$\left(\frac{3}{5}\right)^2 = \frac{3}{5} \bullet \frac{3}{5} = \frac{3^2}{5^2}$	$\sqrt{36 \div 9} = \sqrt{36} \div \sqrt{9}$

Operation	<u>NON</u> -Distributivity of Exponentiation	<u>NON</u> -Distributivity of Square Root
Addition	$(x+y)^2 = x^2 + 2xy + y^2$ $\neq x^2 + y^2$	$\sqrt{4} + \sqrt{9} \neq \sqrt{4+9}$
Subtraction	$(x-y)^2 = x^2 - 2xy + y^2$ $\neq x^2 - y^2$	$\sqrt{36} - \sqrt{9} \neq \sqrt{36-9}$

Addition with equal addends is multiplication, and
multiplication distributes over addition.

Multiplication with equal factors is exponentiation, and
exponentiation distributes over multiplication.

“Addition” above may be replaced with “subtraction.”

“Multiplication” above may be replaced with “division.”

“Exponentiation” above extends to real-number exponents.

So square roots, cube roots, etc.. distribute over multiplication and division, but not over addition and subtraction.

Main Idea:

Distributivity is not permitted whenever the notion just occurs to the human mind.

Next Main Idea:

Distributivity sometimes makes interesting (unexpected) changes when it **is** permitted...

EXOTIC (Unexpected) DISTRIBUTIVITY**DeMorgan's Laws for Sets and Logic**

"The complement $\sim$ of the union $\cup$ of sets A and B equals the **intersection** $\cap$ of the *separate* complements $\sim A$ and $\sim B$ "

$$\text{In Symbols: } \sim(A \cup B) = (\sim A) \cap (\sim B)$$

Also,
$$\sim(A \cap B) = (\sim A) \cup (\sim B)$$

UNEXPECTED! UNEXPECTED! UNEXPECTED!

The distributivity switches the binary operations union and intersection.

The same laws apply in logic, where

- instead of complement, negation is the unary operation,
- instead of sets, statements are the elements
- instead of "union" and "intersection", "or" and "and" are the binary operations.

DeMoivre's Theorem

With a complex number written in polar form, $r \text{ cis } \theta$,

$$(r \text{ cis } \theta)^n = r^n \text{ cis } (n\theta)$$

Note that the exponent n distributes to r as an exponent, but to θ as a coefficient.

UNEXPECTED! UNEXPECTED! UNEXPECTED!