

6.14 Selecting Techniques for Antidifferentiation

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 10 marks

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **selecting antidifferentiation techniques**—choosing the right method quickly.

You must be able to:

- recognise when a **basic rule**, a **substitution**, **long division**, or **completing the square** applies
- match an integrand's shape to the fastest method
- carry the chosen method through to a correct antiderivative

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a question type used later—follow the steps and you can do the Practice and Exam-style questions yourself.

■ The decision guide

- **Basic rule**—a power, e^x , $\sin$ / $\cos$, or $\frac{1}{x}$ on its own.
- **Substitution**—an inside function whose derivative also appears (e.g. $2x$ beside $x^2 + 1$).
- **Long division**—a rational function with numerator degree $\geq$ denominator degree.
- **Completing the square**—an irreducible quadratic $x^2 + bx + c$ in a denominator (arctangent).

■ Spotting a substitution

$\int x^2 e^{x^3} dx$: the x^2 is (up to a constant) the derivative of x^3 —**substitute** $u = x^3$.
Answer $\frac{1}{3}e^{x^3} + C$.

■ Spotting a division

$\int \frac{x^3}{x^2 + 1} dx$: top-heavy, so **divide** first: $x - \frac{x}{x^2 + 1}$, then integrate (the second piece needs $u = x^2 + 1$).

■

$\int (2x + \cos x) dx$ needs no tricks —just the **basic rules**: $x^2 + \sin x + C$.

2 Practice

Now apply the methods above. For each, name the best method (basic / substitution / division / complete-the-square).

2.1 $\int \frac{1}{x^2 + 4} dx$ [1]

2.2 $\int 5x^4(x^5 + 2)^7 dx$ [1]

2.3 $\int \frac{x^2 + 1}{x} dx$ [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Which integral is best done by **substitution**? [1]

- A $\int (x^3 - 2) dx$
 - B $\int \frac{1}{x^2 + 9} dx$
 - C $\int \cos(x^2) \cdot 2x dx$
 - D $\int \frac{x^2}{x + 1} dx$
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3.2 Find $\int \frac{x^2 + 3}{x} dx$ (rewrite the fraction first). [3]

3.3 Find $\int \frac{6x}{x^2 + 1} dx$. [3]

4 Go further

You are now ready for the real exam questions on this subtopic:

- work through the **6.14 Selecting Techniques for Antidifferentiation** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Selecting Techniques for Antidifferentiation** section of the AP Calculus BC handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 Complete-the-square / arctangent form (basic arctangent rule).

2.2 Substitution, $u = x^5 + 2$.

2.3 Basic —split into $x + \frac{1}{x}$ first.

3.1 C $-2x$ is the derivative of x^2 , so substitute $u = x^2$.

3.2 $\frac{x^2 + 3}{x} = x + \frac{3}{x}$; $\int (x + \frac{3}{x}) dx = \frac{x^2}{2} + 3 \ln |x| + C$.

3.3 $u = x^2 + 1$, $du = 2x dx$, so $6x dx = 3 du$; $\int \frac{3}{u} du = 3 \ln |u| = 3 \ln(x^2 + 1) + C$.