

Chapter-9

Differential Equations

An equation involving derivatives of the dependent variable with respect to independent variable (variables) is known as a differential equation.

- Order of a differential equation is the order of the highest order derivative occurring in the differential equation.
- Degree of a differential equation is defined if it is a polynomial equation in its derivatives.
- Degree (when defined) of a differential equation is the highest power (positive integer only) of the highest order derivative in it.
- A function which satisfies the given differential equation is called its solution. The solution which contains as many arbitrary constants as the order of the differential equation is called a general solution and the solution free from arbitrary constants is called particular solution.
- To form a differential equation from a given function we differentiate the function successively as many times as the number of arbitrary constants in the given function and then eliminate the arbitrary constants.
- Variable separable method is used to solve such an equation in which variables can be separated completely i.e. terms containing y should remain with dy and terms containing x should remain with dx .
- A differential equation which can be expressed in the form $\frac{dy}{dx} f(x, y)$ or $\frac{dx}{dy} g(x, y)$ where, $f(x, y)$ and $g(x, y)$ are homogenous functions of degree zero is called a homogeneous differential equation.
- A differential equation of the form $\frac{dy}{dx} + P y = Q$, where P and Q are constants or functions of x only is called a first order linear differential equation.