

# An Introduction to wxMaxima

(work in progress)

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# Introduction

wxMaxima (wxM) is a front end for Maxima, a Computer Algebra System.

Other CASs are Mathematica, Maple, Matlab and Mathcad.

wxMaxima is an open source project that is free to use and works on MS Windows, Linux and Mac.

You can download a copy from

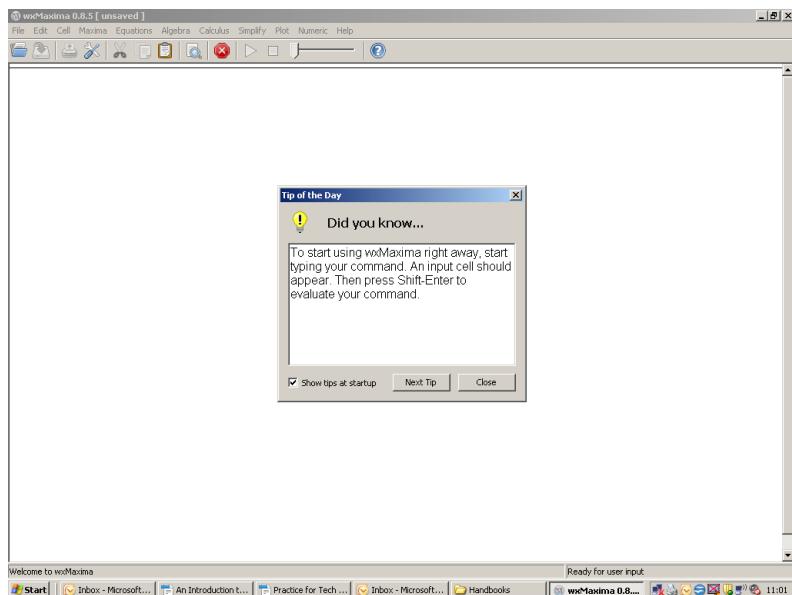
<https://maxima.sourceforge.io/download.html>

**Windows:** download maxima 5.48.1 (or later version)

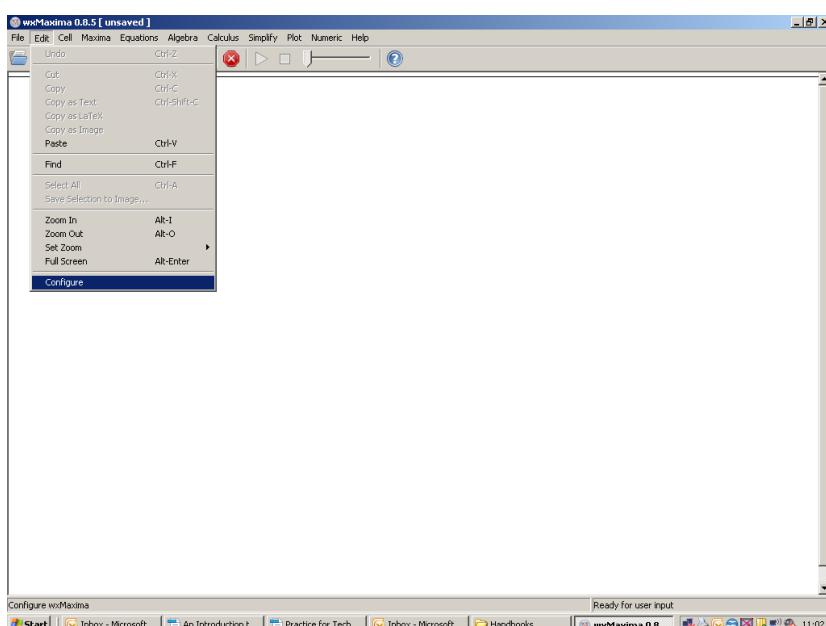
or <https://portableapps.com/node/23391> (portable application)

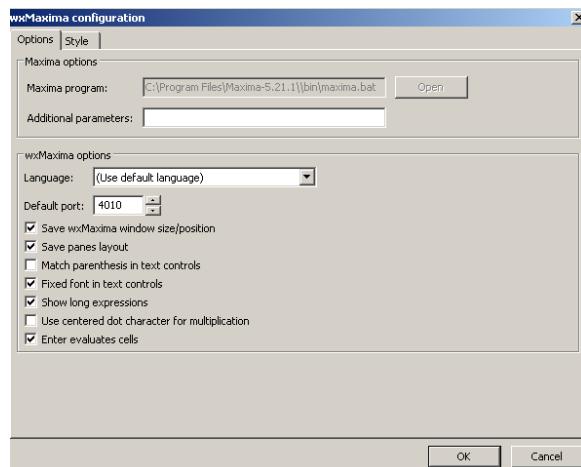
(the portable apps version will work on any computer running MS Windows but tends to be an older version).

When you open wxMaxima this is what you will see.



Close the message and open Edit Configure.





In MS Windows you should find that the box titled Maxima program is already completed but in Linux it won't be. (You will have to find the correct program (Maxima)).

You will find the program easier to use if you

- (a) **untick** the box titled **Match parenthesis in text controls** and
- (b) **tick** the box titled **Enter evaluates cells**.

Useful shortcuts

Zoom in **Alt-I**      Text box **CTRL-1** or **F6**

Zoom out **Alt-O**

## Using wxMaxima

wxMaxima can do all the maths that you can do on paper. It is almost always correct<sup>1</sup> but will only give you the correct answer if it is given the correct question. This is what you have to learn to do. The main problem that you will have is to read the algebra correctly and then type it in so that the program reads what you want it to read.

The first input will be titled on the left by **%i1** where the **%** sign qualifies the **i** making it read as input **1**<sup>2</sup>. On pressing Enter<sup>3</sup> a result will be displayed as **%o1** - output **1**. This means that Maxima has read the input and understood it. If the input has not been understood you will receive an error message (which may be almost impossible to understand). What you see on the output line should look very similar to what you would see printed or written - that is it should look correct.

For the documentation, please look at

<https://maxima.sourceforge.io/documentation.html>

The most comprehensive publication is the excellent **Maxima by Example** by Edwin L. (Ted) Woollett - see

<http://www.csulb.edu/~woollett/>

Download the pdf versions.

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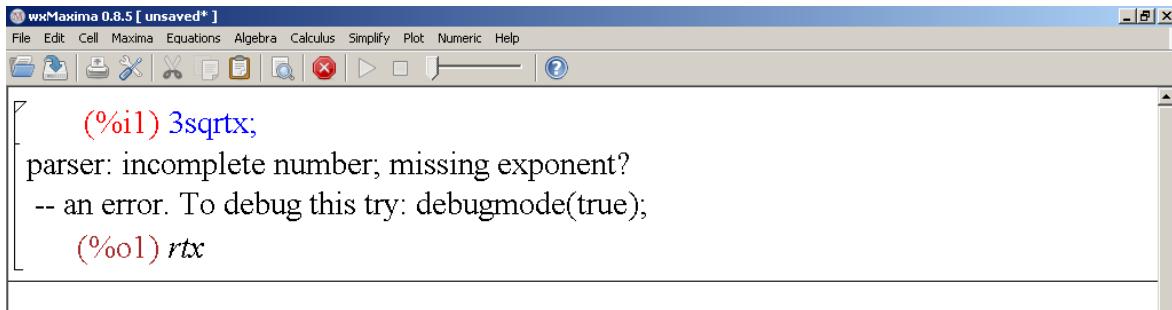
<sup>1</sup>Computer algebra systems are only as good as the people who wrote the program. Also they are prone to bugs - inadvertent errors usually resulting from changes made to improve the system.

<sup>2</sup>Note that **%i1** is an input line but **%i** is  $\sqrt{-1}$ . **%i1** is read as a single character

<sup>3</sup>or Shift-Enter if you haven't followed the instruction (b) above.

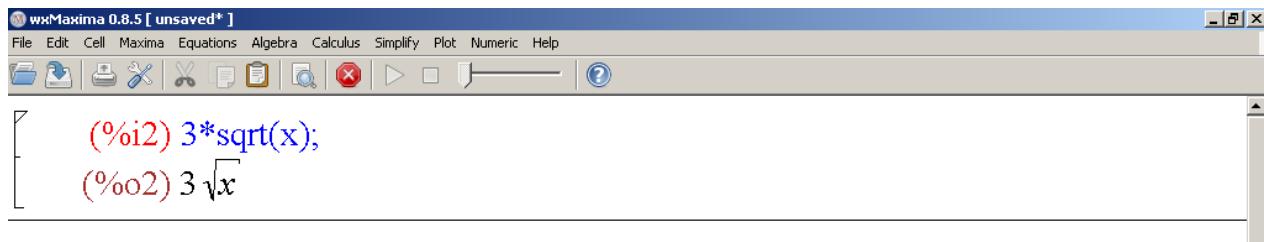
Let's try some simple maths.

We wish to calculate the value of  $y = 3\sqrt{x}$  when  $x = 7$ . This can be done easily on a calculator but may take longer with wxM.



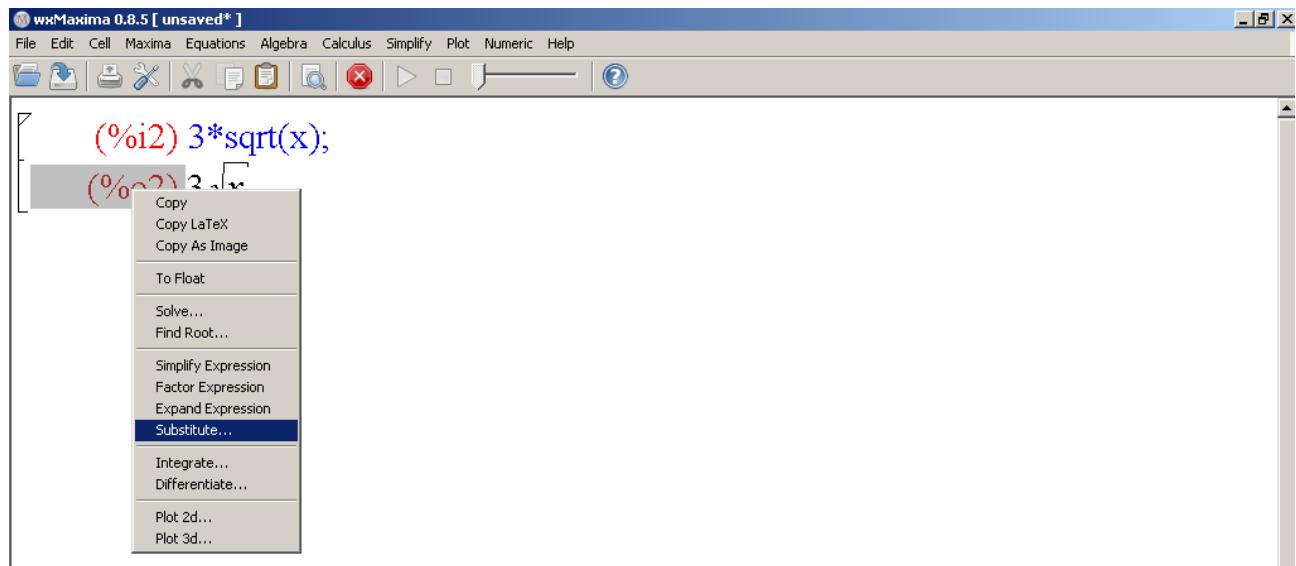
wxMaxima 0.8.5 [ unsaved\* ]  
File Edit Cell Maxima Equations Algebra Calculus Simplify Plot Numeric Help  
[File, Edit, Cell, Maxima, Equations, Algebra, Calculus, Simplify, Plot, Numeric, Help, ?]  
[(%i1) 3sqrtx;  
parser: incomplete number; missing exponent?  
-- an error. To debug this try: debugmode(true);  
(%o1) rtx

Well, this hasn't worked. You will have to use the same syntax as you would in a spreadsheet program.

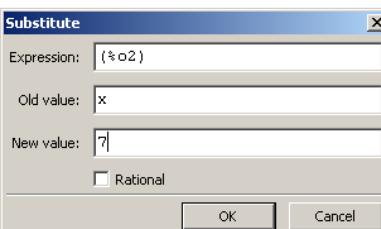


wxMaxima 0.8.5 [ unsaved\* ]  
File Edit Cell Maxima Equations Algebra Calculus Simplify Plot Numeric Help  
[File, Edit, Cell, Maxima, Equations, Algebra, Calculus, Simplify, Plot, Numeric, Help, ?]  
[(%i2) 3\*sqrt(x);  
(%o2)  $3\sqrt{x}$

All multiplication signs have to be typed in and every function name must be followed by brackets.



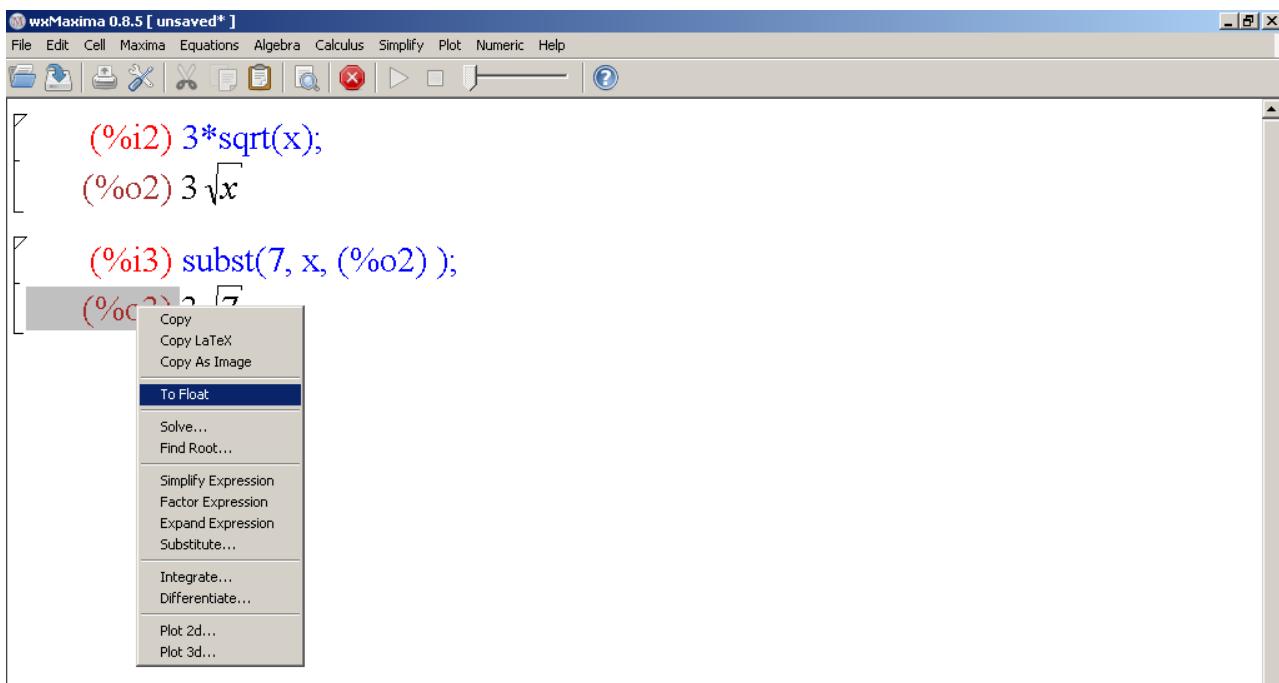
wxMaxima 0.8.5 [ unsaved\* ]  
File Edit Cell Maxima Equations Algebra Calculus Simplify Plot Numeric Help  
[File, Edit, Cell, Maxima, Equations, Algebra, Calculus, Simplify, Plot, Numeric, Help, ?]  
[(%i2) 3\*sqrt(x);  
(%o2)  $3\sqrt{x}$ ]  
Right click on the expression  $3\sqrt{x}$  and select Substitute...  
Substitute...  
Copy  
Copy LaTeX  
Copy As Image  
To Float  
Solve...  
Find Root...  
Simplify Expression  
Factor Expression  
Expand Expression  
Substitute...  
Integrate...  
Differentiate...  
Plot 2d...  
Plot 3d...



Substitute  
Expression:  $(%o2)$   
Old value:  $x$   
New value:  $7$   
Rational  
OK Cancel

The output will be  $3\sqrt{7}$ .

WxM will always attempt to give an exact answer, which this is. If you wish a decimal approximation you will need to do the following - right click **To Float**



```
(%i2) 3*sqrt(x);
(%o2) 3 √x
```

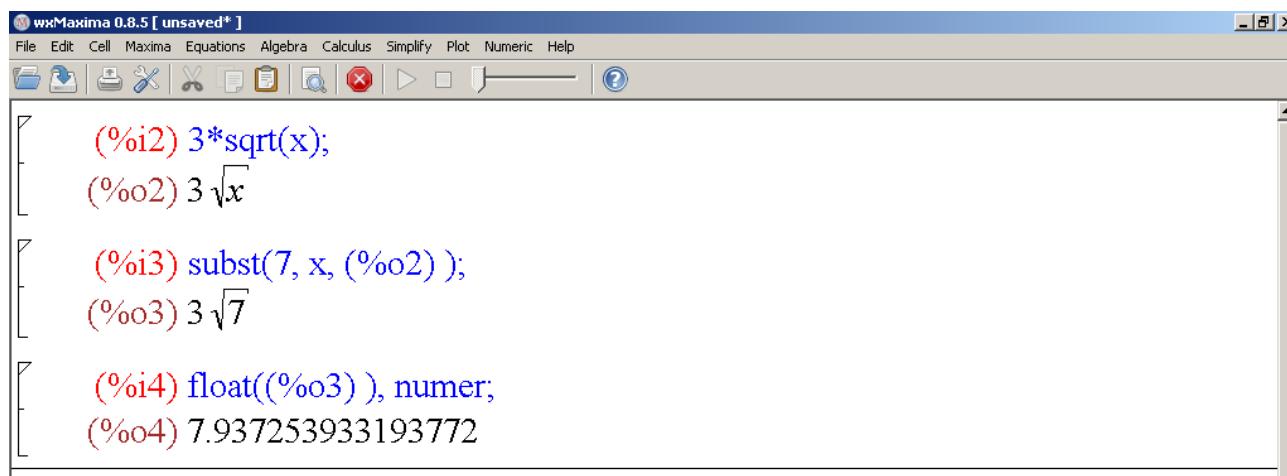
(%i3) subst(7, x, (%o2));

(%o3)  $3\sqrt{7}$

Context menu for (%o3):

- Copy
- Copy LaTeX
- Copy As Image
- To Float**
- Solve...
- Find Root...
- Simplify Expression
- Factor Expression
- Expand Expression
- Substitute...
- Integrate...
- Differentiate...
- Plot 2d...
- Plot 3d...

The result will generally be rather a long number but watch out for exponentials<sup>4</sup>.



```
(%i2) 3*sqrt(x);
(%o2) 3 √x
```

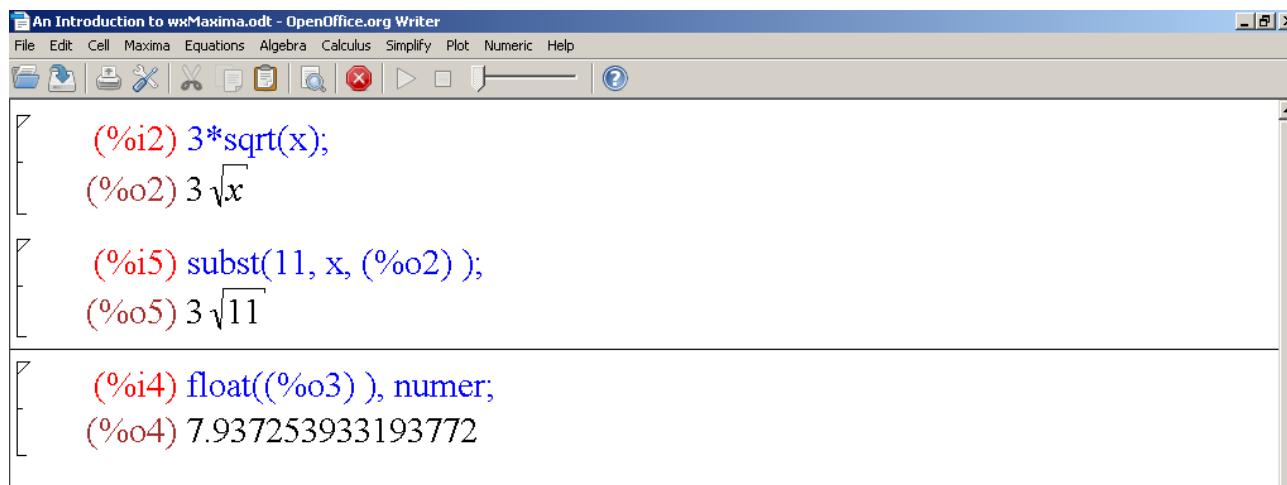
(%i3) subst(7, x, (%o2));

(%o3)  $3\sqrt{7}$

(%i4) float((%o3)), numer;

(%o4) 7.937253933193772

You can go back and edit lines but the line number will then change as shown below



```
(%i2) 3*sqrt(x);
(%o2) 3 √x
```

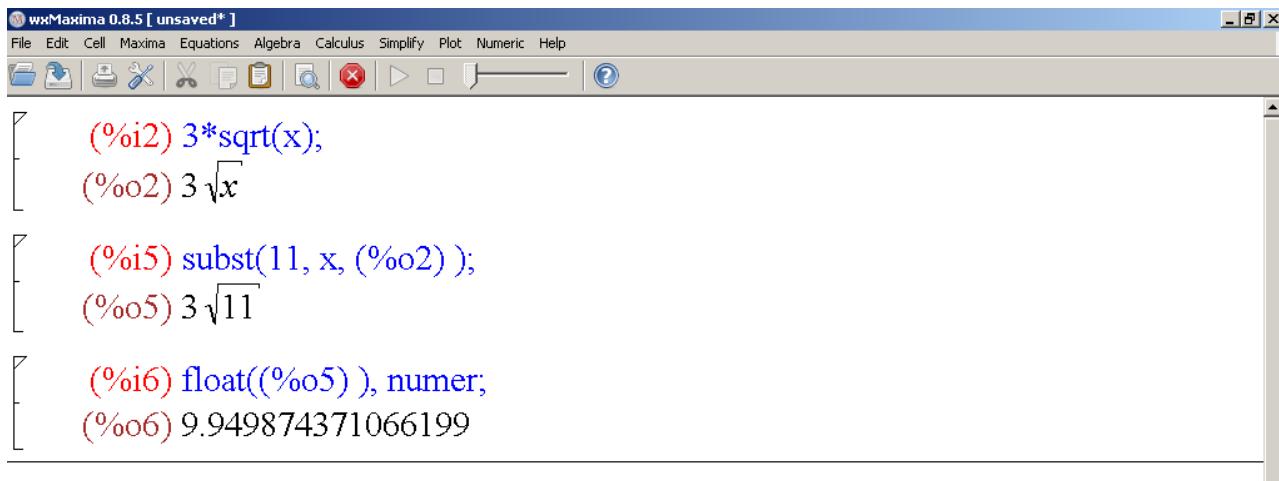
(%i5) subst(11, x, (%o2));

(%o5)  $3\sqrt{11}$

(%i4) float((%o3)), numer;

(%o4) 7.937253933193772

<sup>4</sup>for example: (%o13)  $2.6602412030089932 \cdot 10^{12} \approx 2.660 \times 10^{12}$



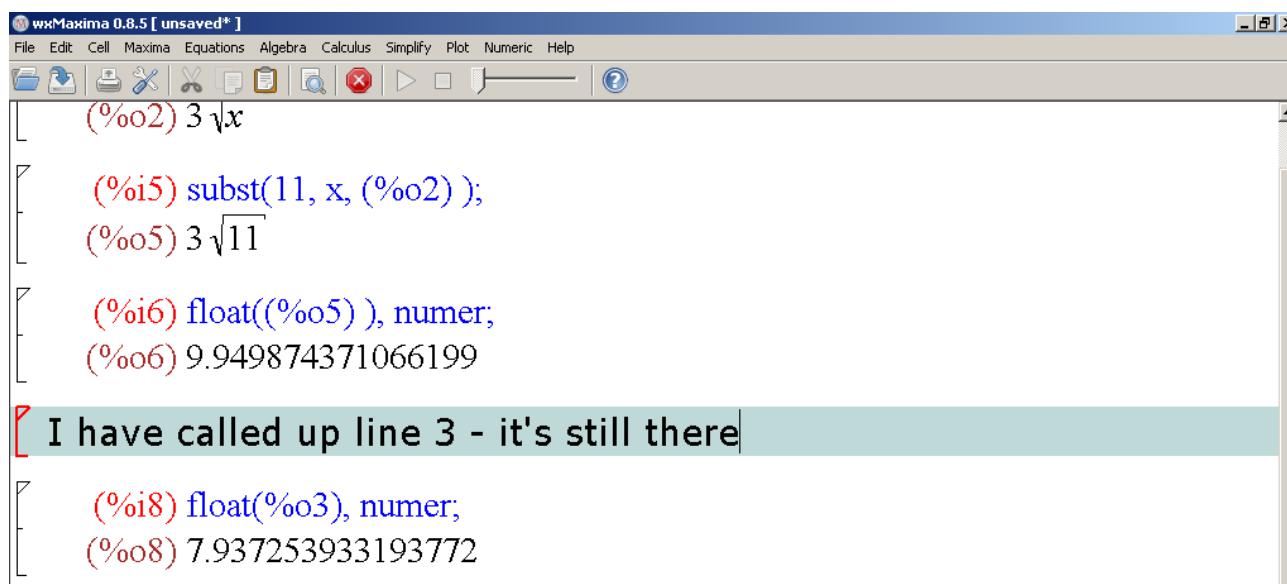
```
(%i2) 3*sqrt(x);
(%o2) 3  $\sqrt{x}$ 

(%i5) subst(11, x, (%o2));
(%o5) 3  $\sqrt{11}$ 

(%i6) float((%o5)), numer;
(%o6) 9.949874371066199
```

Notice that line 3 has disappeared from the display. (Unfortunately) it's still there.

Notice the use of a text box.



```
(%o2) 3  $\sqrt{x}$ 

(%i5) subst(11, x, (%o2));
(%o5) 3  $\sqrt{11}$ 

(%i6) float((%o5)), numer;
(%o6) 9.949874371066199
```

I have called up line 3 - it's still there

```
(%i8) float(%o3), numer;
(%o8) 7.937253933193772
```

A point worth remembering about.

## Variables and Constants

As you will discover wxM can work with any variable but will default to  $x$  so be careful when calling up differentiation or integration. Also, in common with other CAS and usual practice,  $T \neq t$ .

```
(%o8) %e^(x*z)+1;
(%o8) %ex z + 1
(%o9) subst(%o1, x, (%o8));
(%o9) %e%i z + 1
(%o10) subst(%pi, z, (%o9));
(%o10) 0
```

Constants  $\pi$  ( $\approx 3.1459\dots$ ) and  $e$  ( $\approx 2.71828\dots$ ) will both be read as variables unless we tell wxM that they are constants. Hence, to input  $\pi$  type `%pi` and to input  $3e^x$  input `3*%e^(x)`<sup>5</sup>. Also,  $j$  ( $= \sqrt{-1}$ ) is typed as `%i`.

The interesting result  $e^{i\pi} + 1 = 0$  (Euler's Identity)

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<sup>5</sup>It is worth noting that in newer versions of wxM you will still have to type `%e` but it is possible to turn off the `%` sign in the output. This is maybe a bad idea.

## Functions and Function Names

Most are obvious as they are exactly what you would use on a calculator, except that you have to type them in. Some are worthy of note though.

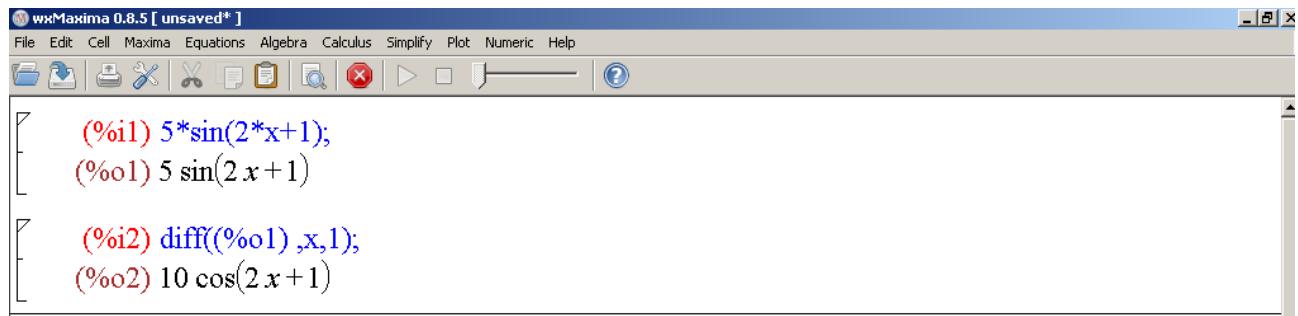
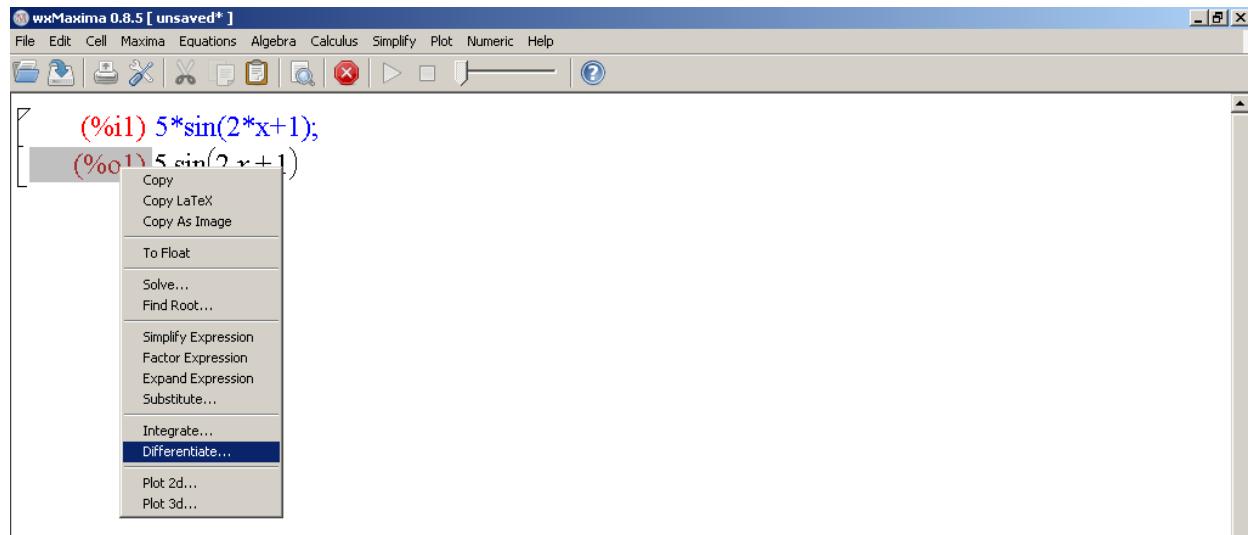
$\sin^{-1}$  on the calculator is typed as  $a \sin$  - short for arcsine.

$\ln$  on the calculator is typed as  $\log$ . This ( $\log_e(x)$  or  $\ln(x)$ ) is the only built in logarithmic function.

$$\log_{10}(x) = \frac{\log(x)}{\log(10)}.$$

Please pay particular attention to the next part - function names are never followed by multiplication.

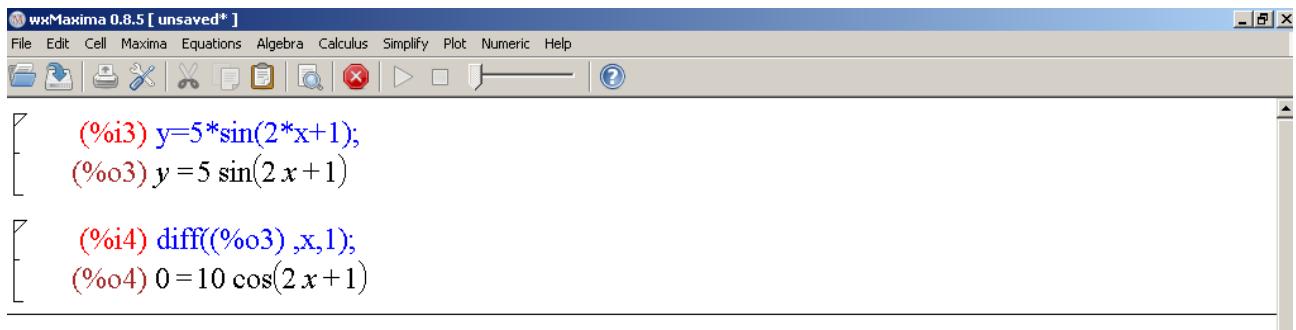
When inputting functions it must be remembered that function names are never followed by multiplication. Hence, If we want to differentiate  $y = 5 \sin(2x + 1)$  we have to type as below



A correct result. Notice that this is the result  $\frac{dy}{dx} = 10 \cos(2x + 1)$ . There is no need for the left side of the equation.

If you do include the  $y$  it is, quite correctly<sup>6</sup> differentiated to 0. Unfortunately it doesn't make sense. Not a bug, but not very helpful.

<sup>6</sup>All CASs can do is partial differentiation



```
(%i3) y=5*sin(2*x+1);
(%o3) y = 5 sin(2 x + 1)

(%i4) diff((%o3),x,1);
(%o4) 0=10 cos(2 x + 1)
```

If your algebra is wrong this is the result you will get

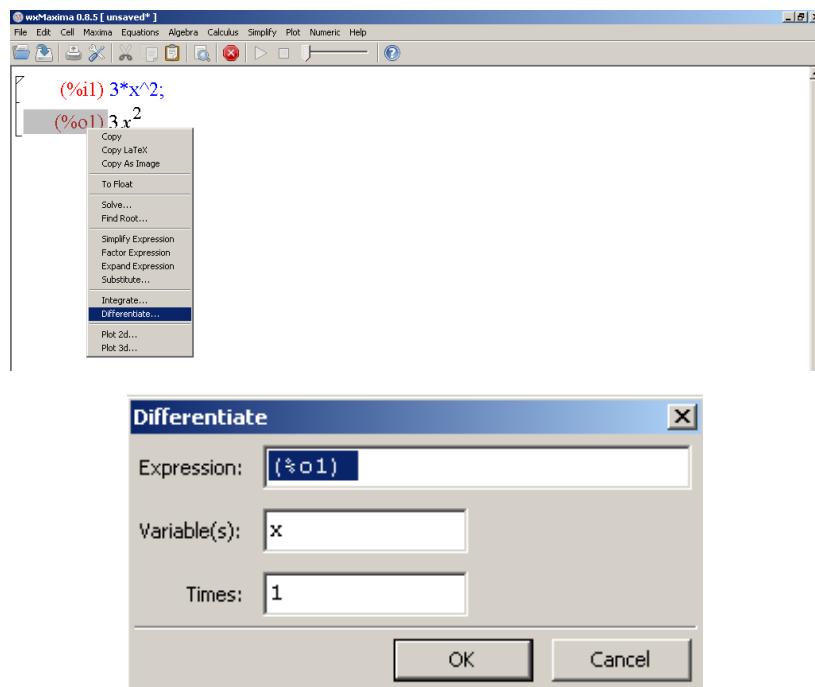
```
(%i1) 5*sin*(2*x+1);
(%o1) 5 (2 x + 1) sin
(%i2) diff((%o1),x,1);
(%o2) 10 sin
```

Obviously %o1 is wrong, it doesn't look correct and you should know this.

## Calculus

### Differentiation

Very straightforward. Although it might seem best to select **Differentiate** from the menu, complete all the boxes and hit enter but it is not a good idea. If you have a syntax error you may not be alerted to this. Type in the function (RHS) and let wxM read the input first. If it is correct it will usually look correct. Check through the example above. Make sure that you are using the correct variable. Calculate the gradient of  $y = 3x^2$  at  $x = 7$

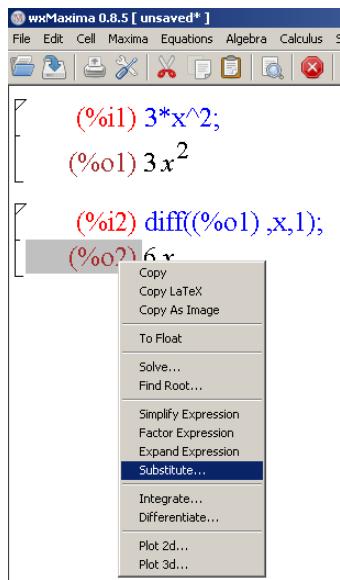


Input checked, Right click on  $\%o1$ , select **Differentiate**. The variable is  $x$  and you want to differentiate once.

Note that Expression is given as the reference  $\%o1$  the output that you wish to differentiate.

```
(%o1) 3*x^2;
(%o1) 3 x^2
(%o2) diff(%o1),x,1);
(%o2) 6 x
```

Now, we wish to know the gradient at  $x = 7$  - easy enough but can we get wxM to do it?



```
(%i1) 3*x^2;
(%o1) 3 x2
(%i2) diff(%o1,x,1);
(%o2) 6 x
(%i3) subst(7, x, (%o2));
(%o3) 42
```

Old value is  $x$  and new value is 7. The answer is 42.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>This value for  $x$  is only true locally, that is, it won't affect the use of  $x$  in lines below

## Integration

### Indefinite Integration

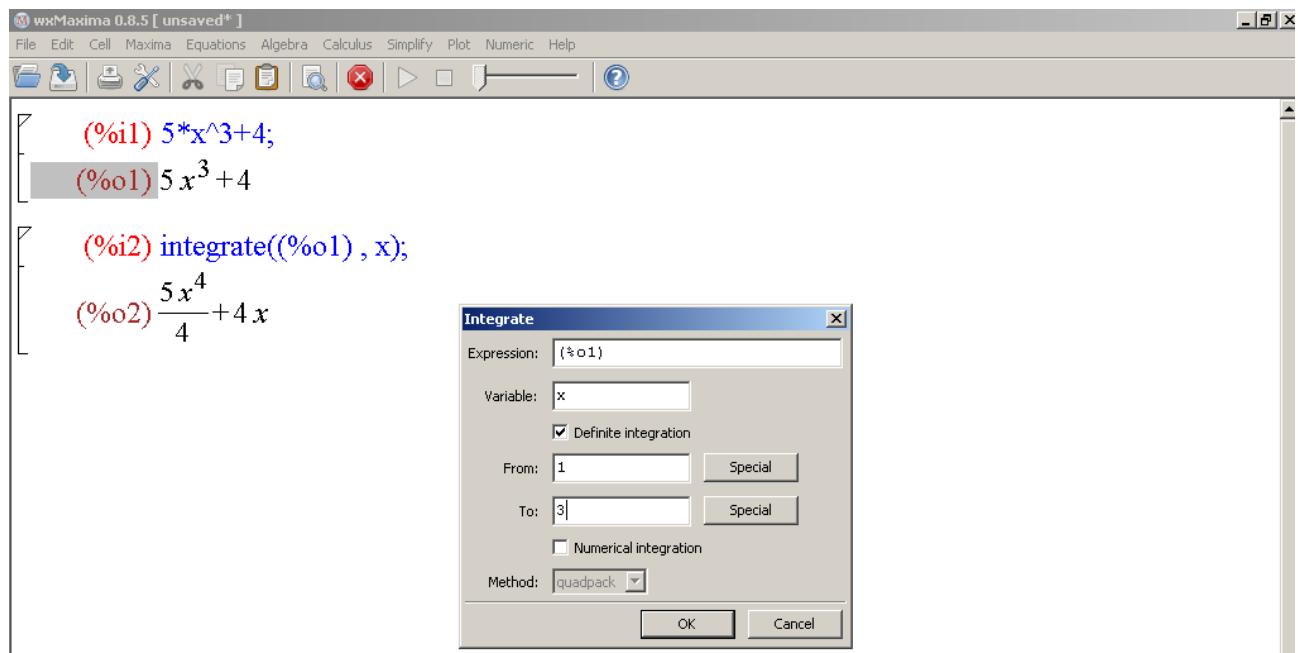
The screenshot shows the wxMaxima interface. In the top-left, the input line contains the expression  $5x^3 + 4$ . A context menu is open over this expression, with the 'Integrate...' option highlighted. Below the menu, the 'Integrate' dialog box is open, showing the expression  $5x^3 + 4$  in the 'Expression:' field and 'x' in the 'Variable:' field. The 'From:' field is set to 0 and the 'To:' field is set to 1. The 'Method:' dropdown is set to 'quadpack'. At the bottom of the dialog are 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons. The bottom half of the screenshot shows the wxMaxima command history with the following entries:

```
(%i1) 5*x^3+4;
(%o1) 5 x^3 + 4
(%i6) integrate(%o1, x)+c;
(%o6)  $\frac{5 x^4}{4} + 4 x + c$ 
(%i1) 5*x^3+4;
(%o1) 5 x^3 + 4
(%i2) integrate(%o1, x);
(%o2)  $\frac{5 x^4}{4} + 4 x$ 
```

Notice that a constant of integration is not given. You will have to add it in by hand or go back and edit the input line (%o6 in this case)

## Definite Integration

The procedure you adopt should add onto what you did above because the indefinite integral will be required for any handwritten work. Therefore if the question was  $\int_1^3 5x^3 + 4 dx$  it would be best to start with what we have above, to begin with, at least.



**Notice:** The Definite integration box is ticked.

The limits seem to be upside down but if you are reading the problem correctly then it works **from** left **to** right.

The Numerical integration box is not ticked  
(similar to Simpson's Rule but more powerful).

```
(%i1) 5*x^3+4;
(%o1) 5 x3 + 4
(%i2) integrate((%o1), x);
(%o2) 
$$\frac{5 x^4}{4} + 4 x$$

(%i1) 5*x^3+4;
(%o1) 5 x3 + 4
(%i3) integrate((%o1), x, 1, 3);
(%o3) 108
(%i2) integrate((%o1), x, 1, 3);
(%o2) 108
```

I have integrated %o1 from  $x = 1$  to  $x = 3$ . The total area is 108.

I could have gone straight from %o1 as on the right but I would have missed the integral which I might have needed to help with written work.

## Differential Equations

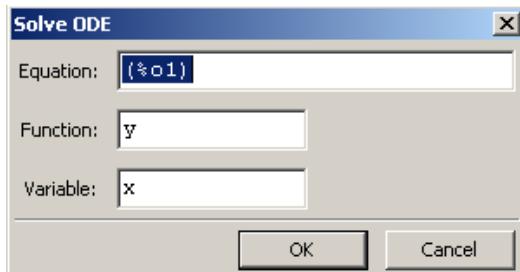
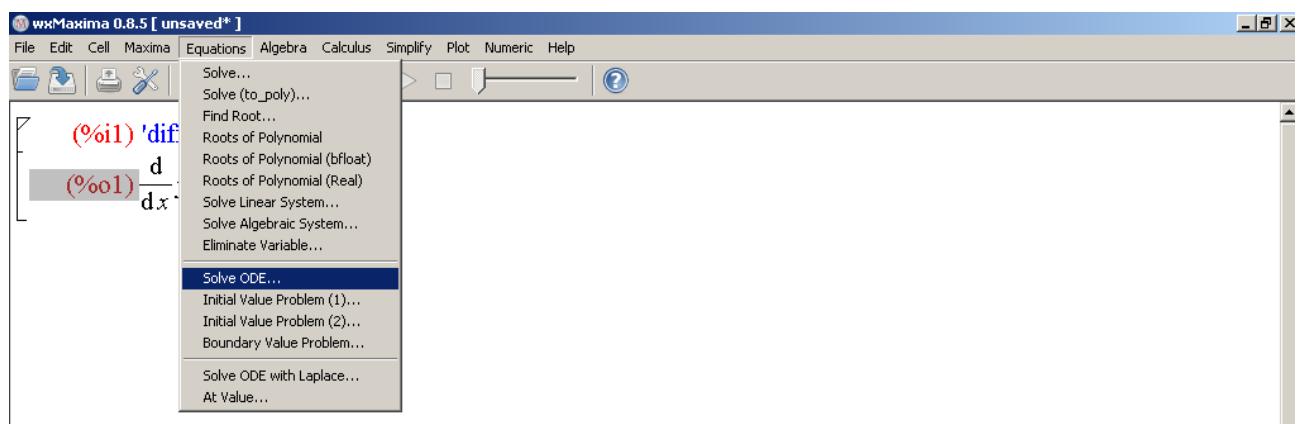
The last question could have been phrased in a different way

Find  $y$  if  $\frac{dy}{dx} = 5x^3 + 4$

$$(\%i1) \text{'diff}(y,x)=5*x^3+4;$$
$$(\%o1) \frac{d}{dx}y = 5 x^3 + 4$$

Notice: the apostrophe ' and it is the differential of  $y$  w.r.t.  $x$ .

Now, to solve it.



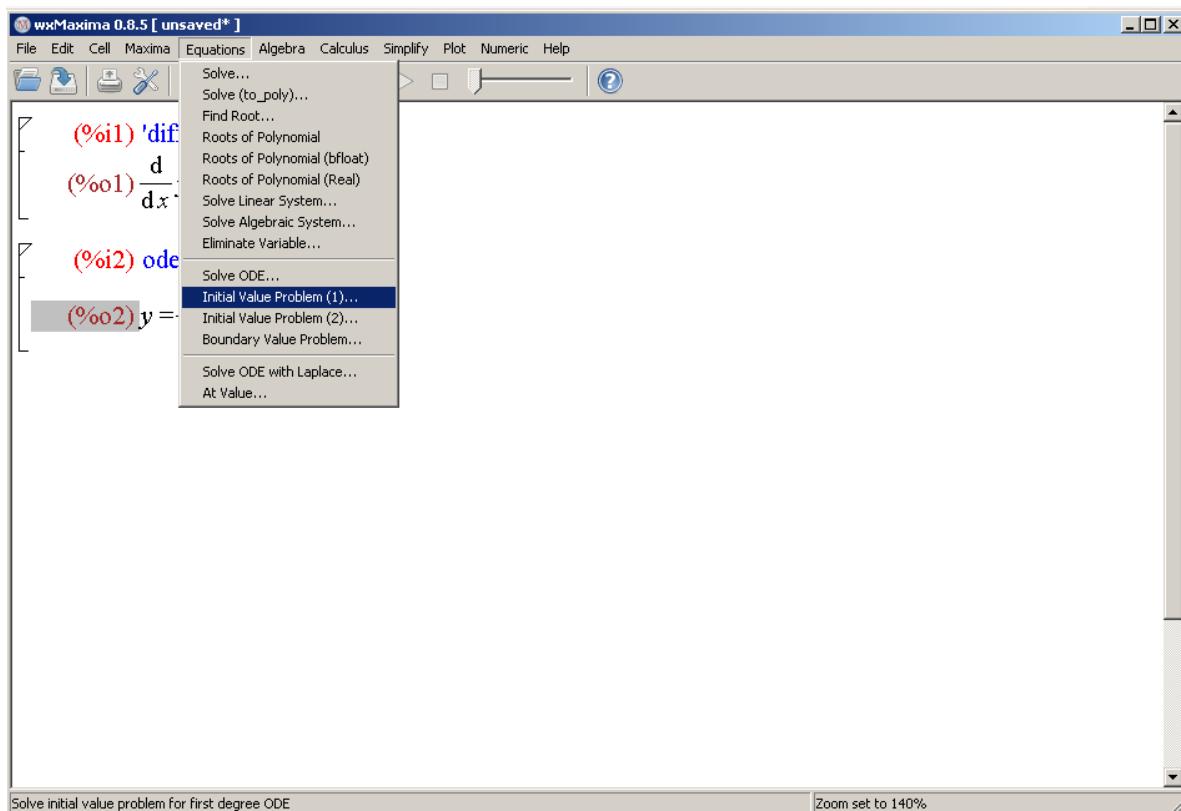
Careful here - the function is  $y$  and the variable is  $x$ .

$$(\%i1) \text{'diff}(y,x)=5*x^3+4;$$
$$(\%o1) \frac{d}{dx}y = 5 x^3 + 4$$
$$(\%i2) \text{ode2}((\%o1), y, x);$$
$$(\%o2) y = \frac{5 x^4}{4} + 4 x + \%c$$

This time you have an additional term  $\%c$  - a constant of integration.

If you have boundary conditions<sup>8</sup> you can proceed to obtain the particular equation.

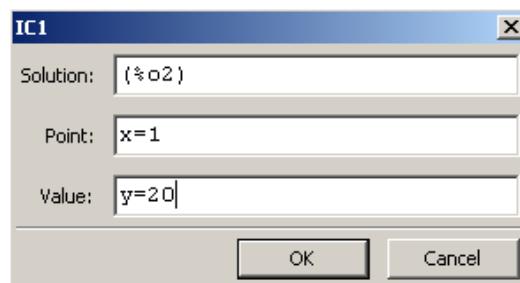
<sup>8</sup>or observations



If  $y = 20$  when  $x = 1$  then

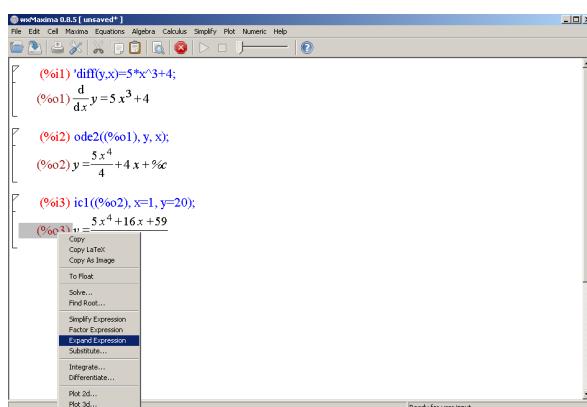
Notice that it states at the bottom of the screen

### Solve initial value problem for first degree ODE



```
(%o1) 'diff(y,x)=5*x^3+4;
(%o1)  $\frac{d}{dx}y = 5x^3 + 4$ 
(%o2) ode2(%o1, y, x);
(%o2)  $y = \frac{5x^4}{4} + 4x + \%c$ 
(%o3) ic1(%o2, x=1, y=20);
(%o3)  $y = \frac{5x^4 + 16x + 59}{4}$ 
```

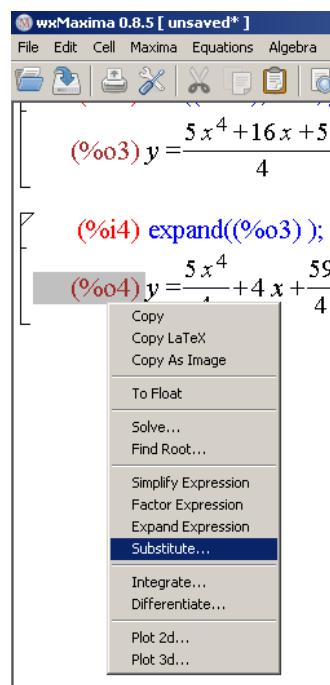
We now have an equation for  $y$ . It might require simplification if you are trying to write the steps down.



```
(%o3) ic1(%o2, x=1, y=20);
(%o3)  $y = \frac{5x^4 + 16x + 59}{4}$ 
(%o4) expand(%o3);
(%o4)  $y = \frac{5x^4}{4} + 4x + \frac{59}{4}$ 
```

It is now possible to calculate the value for  $y$  from any value for  $x$ .

If  $x = 3$  then (old value  $x$ , new value 3)



The screenshot shows the wxMaxima 0.8.5 interface. A context menu is open over the expression  $y = \frac{5x^4 + 16x + 59}{4}$ . The menu options include:

- Copy
- Copy LaTeX
- Copy As Image
- To Float
- Solve...
- Find Root...
- Simplify Expression
- Factor Expression
- Expand Expression
- Substitute...** (selected)
- Integrate...
- Differentiate...
- Plot 2d...
- Plot 3d...

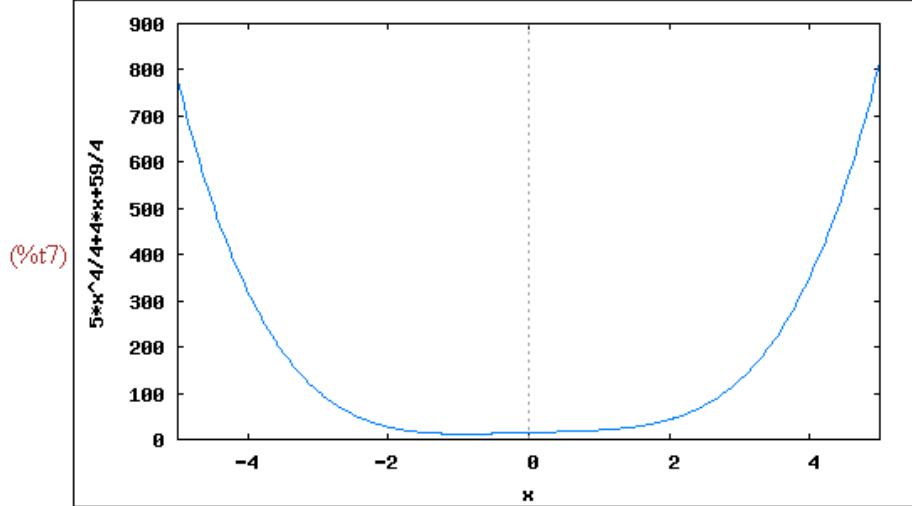
On the right, the wxMaxima command history is visible:

```
(%o1) 'diff(y,x)=5*x^3+4;
(%o1)  $\frac{dy}{dx} = 5x^3 + 4$ 
(%o2)  $y = \frac{5x^4}{4} + 4x + \%c$ 
(%o3)  $y = \frac{5x^4 + 16x + 59}{4}$ 
(%o4)  $y = \frac{5x^4}{4} + 4x + \frac{59}{4}$ 
(%o5)  $y = 128$ 
```

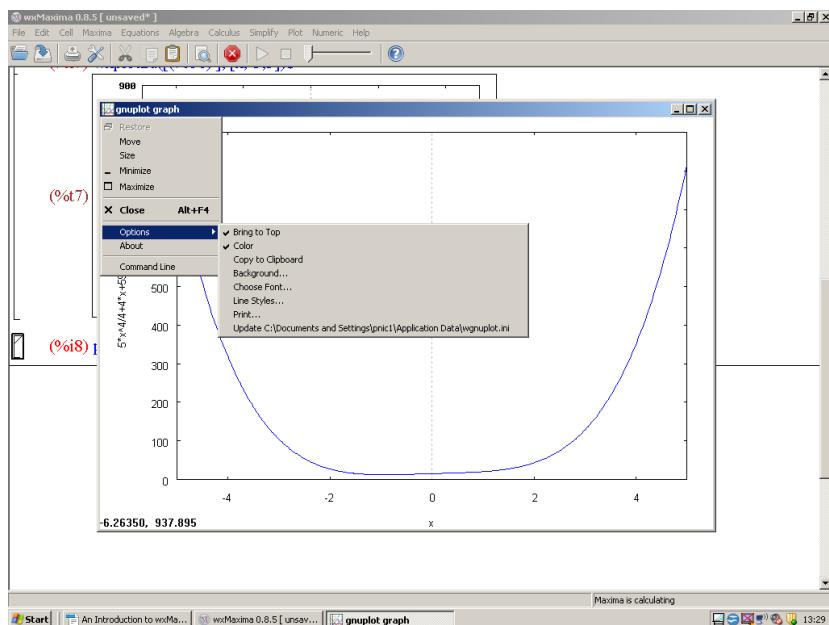
## Plot Graph

You can only plot in 2D with 1 variable so copy and paste RHS<sup>9</sup>

```
(%i6) (5*x^4)/4+4*x+59/4;
(%o6)  $\frac{5x^4}{4} + 4x + \frac{59}{4}$ 
(%i7) wxplot2d([(%o6)], [x,-5,5])$
```



I have plotted an inline graph - easy to do but it is an image only. If you wish something (slightly) more useful then take off the wx.



A gnuplot has more options as shown but you will have to delete it before wxM will do any more work - it is recalculating every time the mouse is moved.

There will be more practice in this later.

---

<sup>9</sup>Right Hand Side of equals sign

## Exercise 1

Use wxMaxima to...

1. Calculate the gradient of  $y = 5e^{-0.2t}$  when  $t = 3$ .
2. Simplify

$$\frac{5x}{3y} + \frac{3}{2x}$$

to a single fraction and then expand - you should get back what you started with.

3. Plot, using wxplot2d, the function  $y = 3 \sin(2t)$  from  $t = 0$  to  $t = 1.5$ . Calculate the area under  $y = 3 \sin(2t)$  between  $t = 0$  to  $t = 1.5$ .
4. Solve the ODE

$$\frac{dy}{dt} = y \sin(2t)$$

with boundary conditions  $t = 0$  when  $y = 4$ . Calculate the value of  $y$  when  $t = 1.3$ .

[To solutions](#)

## Root finding

If you suspect that there may be positive and negative areas between the limits of a definite integration question you will want to check for roots

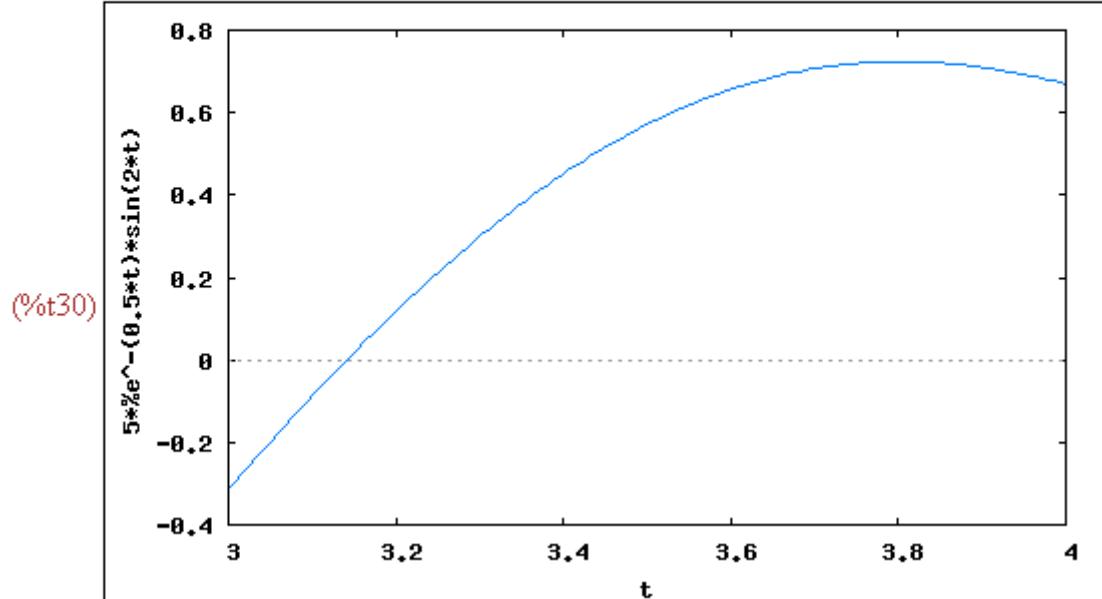
**BUT first**

plot the function between the roots to check if there are any roots (there may be more than one).

**Example:**

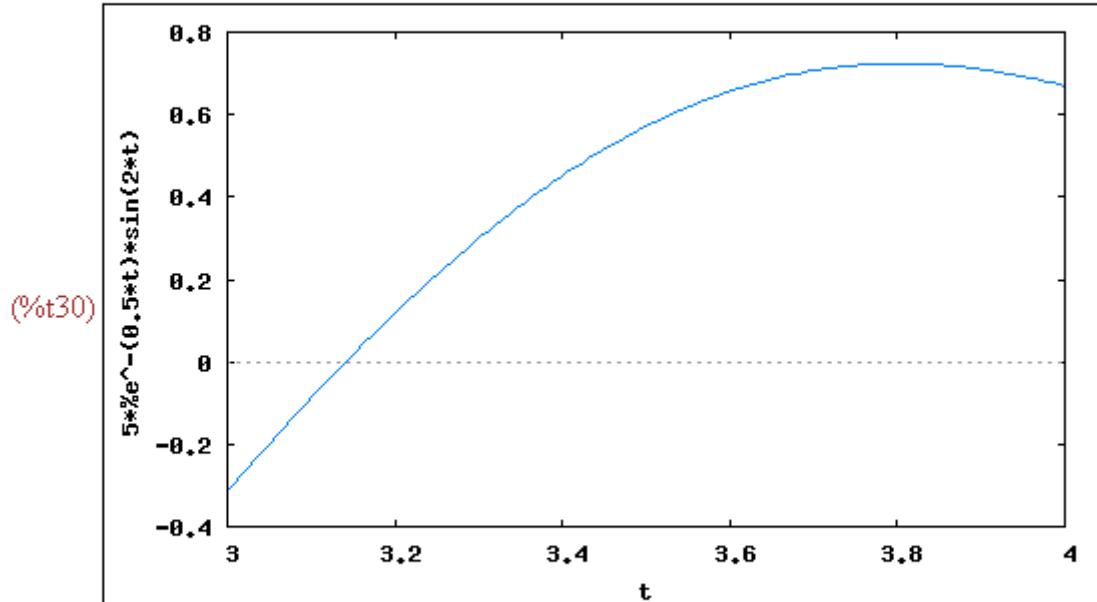
Calculate the area between the function  $y = 5e^{(-0.5t)} \sin(2t)$  between  $t = 3$  and  $t = 4$ .

```
(%i28) 5*%e^(-0.5*t)*sin(2*t);  
(%o28) 5 %e-0.5 t sin(2 t)  
(%i30) wxplot2d([(%o28)], [t,3,4])$
```



Although there is a Newton-Raphson procedure available it is usually quicker, and easier to get good solutions using the **Find Root** function (Right click and select from menu).

```
(%i28) 5*%e^(-0.5*t)*sin(2*t);
(%o28) 5 %e-0.5 t sin(2 t)
(%i30) wxplot2d([(%o28)], [t,3,4])$
```



root between  $t = 3$  and  $t = 4$

```
(%i31) find_root(%o28), t, 3, 4);
(%o31) 3.141592653589793
```

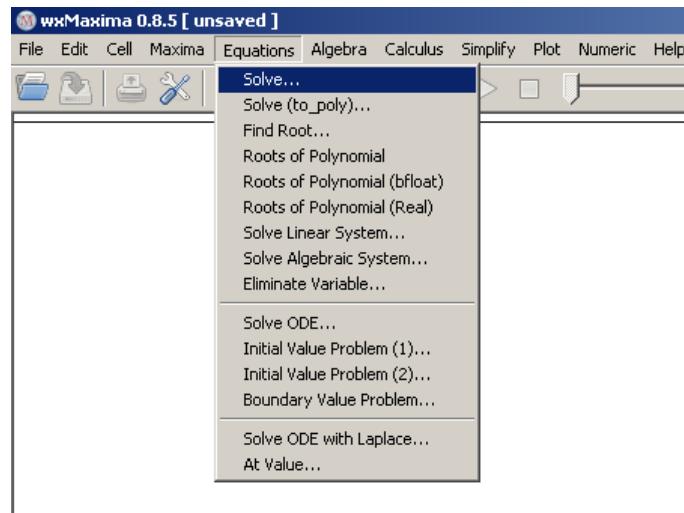
which is, of course, the correct answer

```
(%i32) %pi;
(%o32) π
(%i33) float(%o32), numer;
(%o33) 3.141592653589793
(%i35) newton(5*%e^(-0.5*t)*sin(2*t), t, 3, 0.0000000001);
(%o35) 3.141592653589793
```

*Commentary Note :* You must load the package newton1 before using the command newton. This is done with `load(newton1)`.

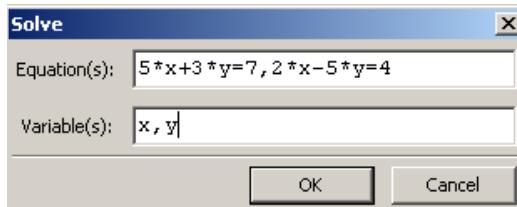
## Solving Systems of Equations

Whether they are simultaneous linear equations or a mixture of types they can be solved using the **Solve** function. This is one of the rare cases where you have to call up the function first before typing in the expressions



Solve 
$$\begin{cases} 5x + 3y = 7 \\ 2x - 5y = 4 \end{cases}$$

Notice the comma between the equations



Notice the comma between the variables.

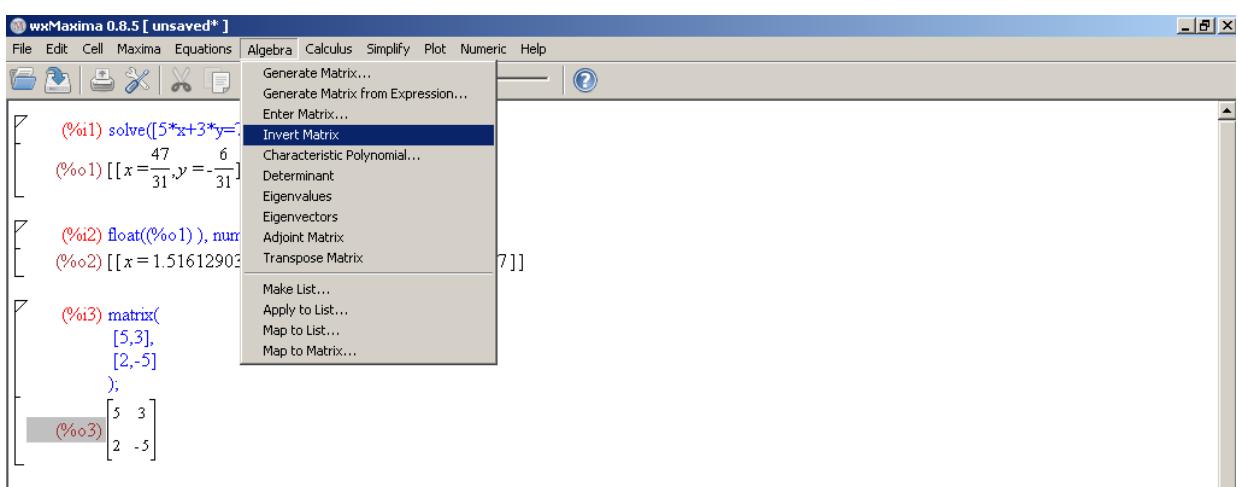
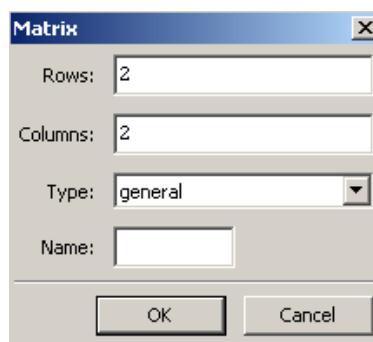
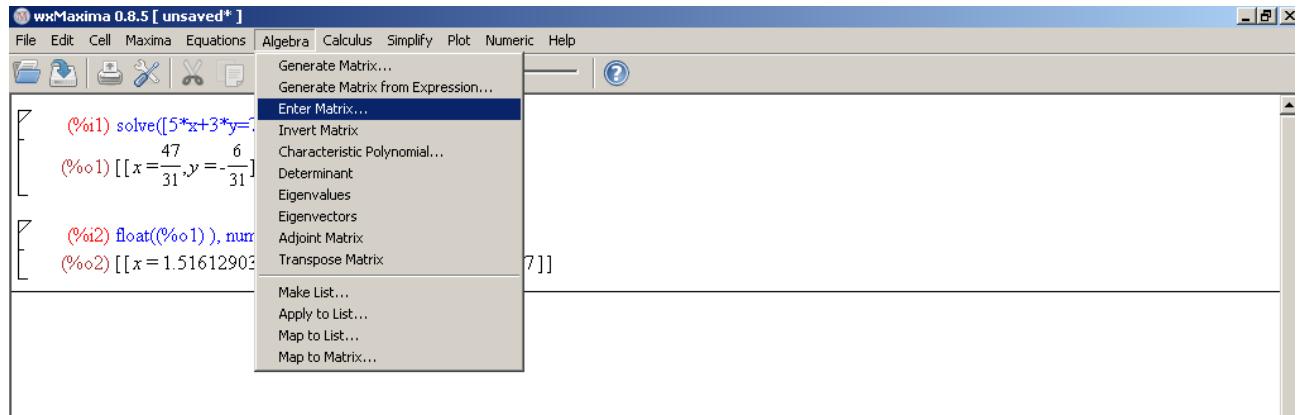
The result - (maybe float not required)

```
(%i1) solve([5*x+3*y=7,2*x-5*y=4], [x,y]);
(%o1) [[x =  $\frac{47}{31}$ , y =  $-\frac{6}{31}$ ]]
(%i2) float(%o1), numer;
(%o2) [[x = 1.516129032258065, y = -0.19354838709677]]
```

## Matrices

To solve the previous example using matrices

$$\begin{bmatrix} 5 & 3 \\ 2 & -5 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 7 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}$$



The complete solution

Algebra, enter matrix, 2 by 2

```
(%i3) matrix(  
    [5,3],  
    [2,-5]  
)
```

```
(%o3) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} 5 & 3 \\ 2 & -5 \end{bmatrix}$$

```

Algebra, invert matrix

```
(%i4) invert(%o3);
```

```
(%o4) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} \frac{5}{31} & \frac{3}{31} \\ \frac{2}{31} & \frac{5}{31} \end{bmatrix}$$

```

Algebra, enter 2 by 1 matrix

```
(%i5) matrix(  
    [7],  
    [4]  
)
```

```
(%o5) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} 7 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}$$

```

multiply inverse on left by RHS on right

Use . to multiply matrices, not \*

```
(%i6) %o4.%o5;
```

```
(%o6) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} \frac{47}{31} \\ \frac{6}{31} \end{bmatrix}$$

```

```
(%i7) float(%o6), numer;
```

```
(%o7) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} 1.516129032258065 \\ -0.19354838709677 \end{bmatrix}$$

```

$x = 1.516, y = -0.1935$  (4 sf)

Note the use of . to multiply matrices<sup>10</sup>!

You can easily achieve a spurious result!

---

<sup>10</sup>Matrix multiplication is non-commutative.

```
(%o14) matrix(
      [2,3],
      [4,5]
    );
(%o14) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 3 \\ 4 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$$

(%o15) invert(%o14));
(%o15) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} \frac{5}{2} & \frac{3}{2} \\ 2 & 2 \\ 2 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

(%o16) %o14*%o15;
(%o16) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} -5 & 9 \\ -5 & 2 \\ 8 & -5 \end{bmatrix}$$

```

Wrong answer but it has done what was asked and multiplied corresponding entries

```
(%o17) %o14.%o15;
```

```
(%o17) 
$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

```

correct answer, a matrix times its inverse = the identity matrix

## Exercise 2

1. Find the area between the  $r$  axis and the curve  $w = 3e^{(0.5r)} - 7$  between  $r = 0$  and  $r = 3$ .
2. Solve the system of equations

$$\begin{cases} 3x + 4y = 10 \\ x^2 - y = 3 \end{cases}$$

3. Solve for  $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$ , using matrices.

$$\begin{cases} 3x - 2y + 7z = 27 \\ 5x - y - 3z = -10 \\ -x + 3y - z = 2 \end{cases}$$

[To solutions](#)

## Ordinary Differential Equations

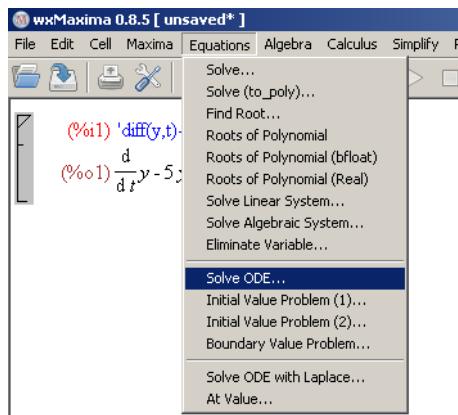
The ODE solver in wxMaxima is able to handle 1st and 2nd order ODEs with boundary conditions.

For instance  $\frac{dy}{dt} - 5y = 3$  boundary conditions  $t = 0, y = 7$

(%o1)  $'\text{diff}(y,t)-5*y=3;$

(%o1)  $\frac{d}{dt}y - 5y = 3$

Notice the apostrophe before diff, also  $y$  then  $t..$



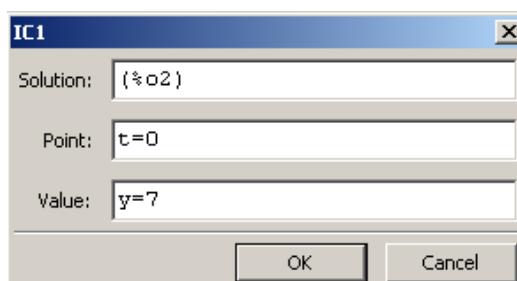
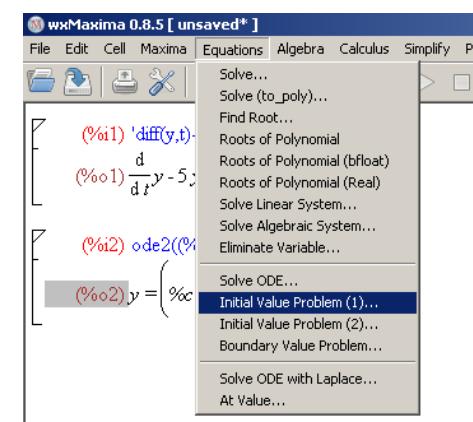
(%o1)  $'\text{diff}(y,t)-5*y=3;$

(%o1)  $\frac{d}{dt}y - 5y = 3$

(%o2)  $\text{ode2}(%o1), y, t;$

(%o2)  $y = \left( \frac{3\%e^{-5t}}{5} \right) \%e^{5t}$

We now have the general equation



The whole solution

```
(%i1) 'diff(y,t)-5*y=3;
(%o1)  $\frac{dy}{dt} - 5y = 3$ 
(%i2) ode2(%o1), y, t;
(%o2)  $y = \left( \frac{3e^{-5t}}{5} + C \right) e^{5t}$ 
(%i3) ic1(%o2), t=0, y=7;
(%o3)  $y = \frac{38e^{5t} - 3}{5}$ 
(%i4) expand(%o3);
(%o4)  $y = \frac{38e^{5t}}{5} - \frac{3}{5}$ 
```

There are, of course, other methods of solving this by hand which may be considered to be quicker and easier.

$$2 \frac{d^2y}{dt^2} - 3 \frac{dy}{dt} + 4y = 2 \sin(t) \text{ when } t = 0, y = 3 \text{ and } \frac{dy}{dt} = 5$$

Solve for  $y$  and calculate the value of  $y$  when  $t = 0.3$ .

Equations - Initial Value Problem (2) (not 1)

Notice the change from  $x$  to  $t$ .

(%i5)  $2 \cdot \text{diff}(y, t, 2) - 3 \cdot \text{diff}(y, t) + 4 \cdot y = 2 \cdot \sin(t);$

$$(\%o5) 2 \left( \frac{d^2}{dt^2} y \right) - 3 \left( \frac{d}{dt} y \right) + 4 y = 2 \sin(t)$$

(%i6)  $\text{ode2}(\%o5, y, t);$

$$(\%o6) y = \%e^{\frac{3t}{4}} \left( \%k1 \sin\left(\frac{\sqrt{23}t}{4}\right) + \%k2 \cos\left(\frac{\sqrt{23}t}{4}\right) \right) + \frac{4 \sin(t) + 6 \cos(t)}{13}$$

(%i7)  $\text{ic2}(\%o6, t=0, y=3, \text{diff}(y, t)=5);$

$$(\%o7) y = \%e^{\frac{3t}{4}} \left( \frac{145 \sin\left(\frac{\sqrt{23}t}{4}\right)}{13\sqrt{23}} + \frac{33 \cos\left(\frac{\sqrt{23}t}{4}\right)}{13} \right) + \frac{4 \sin(t) + 6 \cos(t)}{13}$$

(%i8)  $\text{subst}(0.3, t, (\%o7));$

$$(\%o8) y = 1.252322716191864 \left( \frac{145 \sin(0.075\sqrt{23})}{13\sqrt{23}} + \frac{33 \cos(0.075\sqrt{23})}{13} \right) + 0.53185382779992$$

(%i9)  $\text{float}(\%o8), \text{numer};$

$$(\%o9) y = 4.532567143338392$$

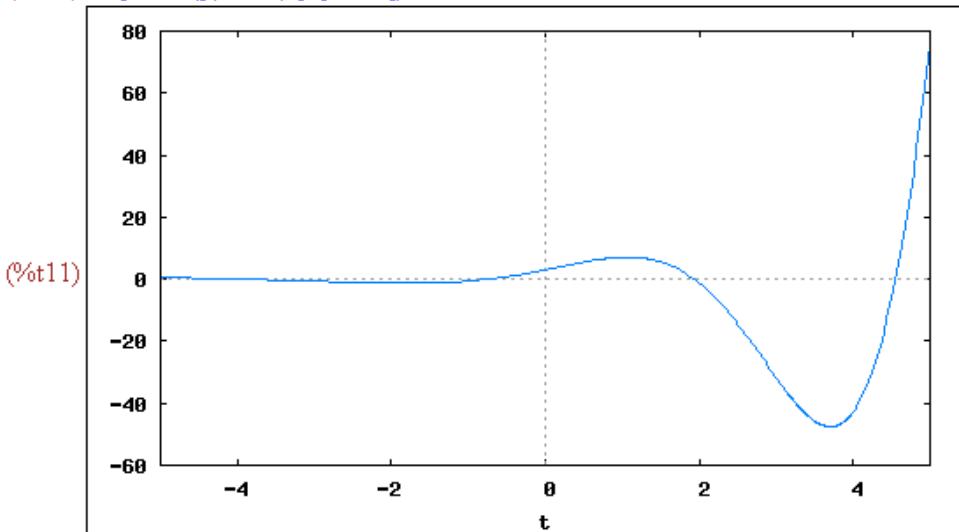
Sub in  $t = 0.3$  and float.

If you wish to produce a graph of the result you will only require the RHS.

(%i10)  $\%e^{(3t)/4} \cdot ((145 \sin(\sqrt{23}t)/4)/(13\sqrt{23}) + (33 \cos(\sqrt{23}t)/4)/13) + (4 \sin(t) + 6 \cos(t))/13;$

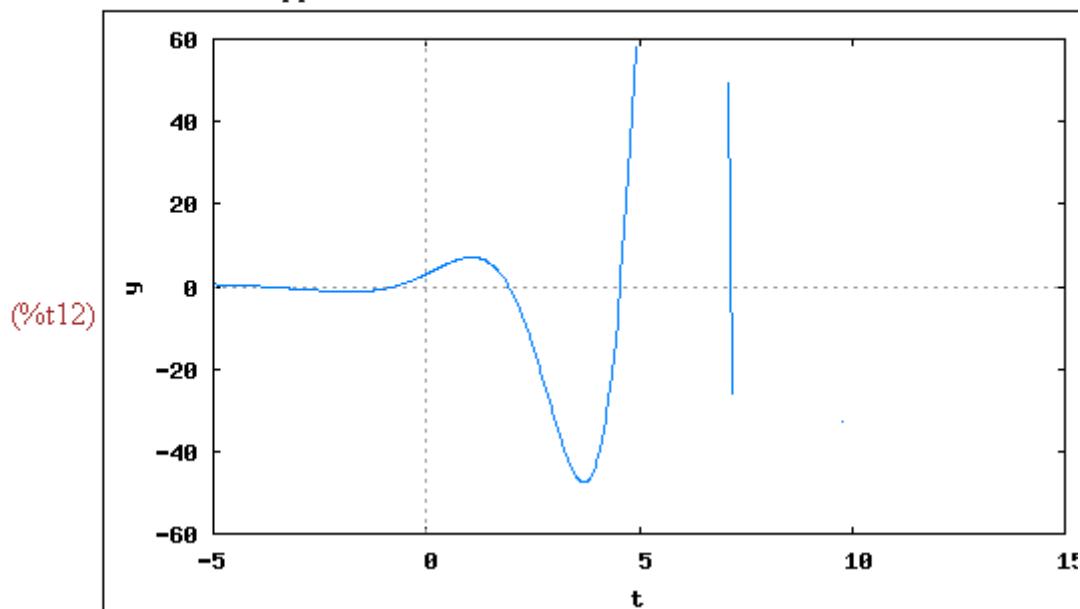
$$(\%o10) \%e^{\frac{3t}{4}} \left( \frac{145 \sin\left(\frac{\sqrt{23}t}{4}\right)}{13\sqrt{23}} + \frac{33 \cos\left(\frac{\sqrt{23}t}{4}\right)}{13} \right) + \frac{4 \sin(t) + 6 \cos(t)}{13}$$

(%i11)  $\text{wxplot2d}([\%o10], [t, -5, 5]);$



You can change the limits to see more or less. Below I have inserted values for  $y$  to clip the vertical range.

(%i12) `wxplot2d([(%o10)], [t,-5,15], [y,-60,60])$`  
plot2d: some values were clipped.



## Laplace Transforms

Having worked out, by hand,  $L[y]$ , wxM can then be used to find  $y$ .

Also it is easy to find  $L[y]$  as shown below.

Taking the result of the last example :

```
(%i20) %e^((3*t)/4)*((145*sin(sqrt(23)*t)/4)/(13*sqrt(23))+(33*cos(sqrt(23)*t)/4)/13)+(4*sin(t)+6*cos(t))/13;
(%o20) %e^(3 t/4) \left(\frac{145 \sin \left(\frac{\sqrt{23} t}{4}\right)}{13 \sqrt{23}}+\frac{33 \cos \left(\frac{\sqrt{23} t}{4}\right)}{13}\right)+\frac{4 \sin (t)+6 \cos (t)}{13}
(%i21) laplace(%o20), t, s);
(%o21) \frac{66 s+23}{26 s^2-39 s+52}+\frac{\frac{6}{s^2+1}+\frac{4}{s^2+1}}{13}
(%i22) ratsimp(%o21);
(%o22) \frac{6 s^3+s^2+6 s+3}{2 s^4-3 s^3+6 s^2-3 s+4}
(%i28) partfrac(%o21), s;
(%o28) \frac{66 s+23}{13 (2 s^2-3 s+4)}+\frac{6 s+4}{13 (s^2+1)}
```

Note, also, the use of partial fractions.

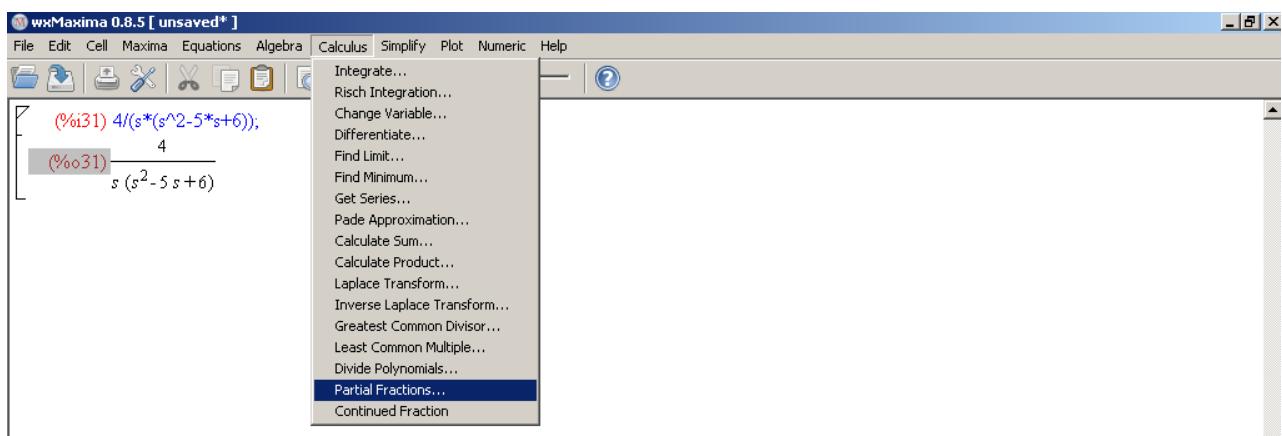
So, starting at the beginning

$$\text{Example : } \frac{d^2y}{dt^2} - 5 \frac{dy}{dt} + 6y = 4 \quad [t = 0, y = 0]$$

It should be relatively easy to obtain

$$L[y] = \frac{4}{s(s^2 - 5s + 6)}$$

and the next stage is no harder:



I have typed in the RHS of  $L[y]$  and the first thing to try is decomposing it with partial fractions as shown. Of course, it is easy to obtain  $y$  directly but if you wish to understand the structure of the solution you need to go further.

$$\begin{aligned}
 & (\%i31) \frac{4}{s(s^2-5s+6)}; \\
 & (\%o31) \frac{4}{s(s^2-5s+6)} \\
 & (\%i32) \operatorname{partfrac}((\%o31), s); \\
 & (\%o32) \frac{2}{3s} - \frac{2}{s-2} + \frac{4}{3(s-3)}
 \end{aligned}$$

Now, it would be easy to obtain  $y$  using the standard table of transforms but wxM can do it for us either as a solution or as a check on a handwritten solution.

The screenshot shows the wxMaxima interface. The menu bar is visible with 'File', 'Edit', 'Cell', 'Maxima', 'Equations', 'Algebra', 'Calculus', 'Simplify', 'Plot', 'Numeric', and 'Help'. A context menu is open over the expression  $\frac{4}{3s} - \frac{2}{s-2} + \frac{4}{3(s-3)}$  in the left pane. The menu items include 'Integrate...', 'Risch Integration...', 'Change Variable...', 'Differentiate...', 'Find Limit...', 'Find Minimum...', 'Get Series...', 'Pade Approximation...', 'Calculate Sum...', 'Calculate Product...', 'Laplace Transform...', 'Inverse Laplace Transform...', 'Greatest Common Divisor...', 'Least Common Multiple...', 'Divide Polynomials...', 'Partial Fractions...', and 'Continued Fraction'. The 'Inverse Laplace Transform...' option is highlighted. A sub-dialog titled 'Inverse Laplace' is open, showing the expression  $(\%o32)$  in the 'Expression:' field, 's' in the 'Old variable:' field, and 't' in the 'New variable:' field. The 'OK' button is highlighted. Below the dialog, the wxMaxima command line shows the input and output expressions, and the final result of the inverse Laplace transform is displayed.

$$\begin{aligned}
 & (\%i31) \frac{4}{s(s^2-5s+6)}; \\
 & (\%o31) \frac{4}{s(s^2-5s+6)} \\
 & (\%i32) \operatorname{partfrac}((\%o31), s); \\
 & (\%o32) \frac{2}{3s} - \frac{2}{s-2} + \frac{4}{3(s-3)} \\
 & (\%i33) \operatorname{ilt}((\%o32), s, t); \\
 & (\%o33) \frac{4\%e^{3t}}{3} - 2\%e^{2t} + \frac{2}{3}
 \end{aligned}$$

The complete solution is shown above.

It is easy to go backwards as well.

```
(%o33) ilt(%o32), s, t);
(%o33) 
$$\frac{4 \cdot e^{3t}}{3} - 2 \cdot e^{2t} + \frac{2}{3}$$

(%o34) laplace(%o33), t, s);
(%o34) 
$$\frac{2}{3s} - \frac{2}{s-2} + \frac{4}{3(s-3)}$$

(%o35) ratsimp(%o34);
(%o35) 
$$\frac{4}{s^3 - 5s^2 + 6s}$$

```

A useful way to check your work.

# Solutions

## Exercise 1

[Back to Exercise 1](#)

1. 
$$\begin{aligned} & (\%i1) \ 5\%e^{-0.2t}; \\ & (\%o1) 5\%e^{-0.2t} \\ & (\%i2) \ \text{diff}(\%o1, t, 1); \\ & (\%o2) -1.0\%e^{-0.2t} \\ & (\%i3) \ \text{subst}(3, t, (\%o2)); \\ & (\%o3) -0.54881163609403 \end{aligned}$$

Did you remember to place a % in front of e and swap x for t?

2. 
$$\begin{aligned} & (\%i4) \ 5*x/(3*y)+3/(2*x); \\ & (\%o4) \frac{5x}{3y} + \frac{3}{2x} \\ & (\%i5) \ \text{ratsimp}((\%o4)); \\ & (\%o5) \frac{9y+10x^2}{6xy} \\ & (\%i6) \ \text{expand}((\%o5)); \\ & (\%o6) \frac{5x}{3y} + \frac{3}{2x} \end{aligned}$$

I have typed this in with the minimum number of brackets.

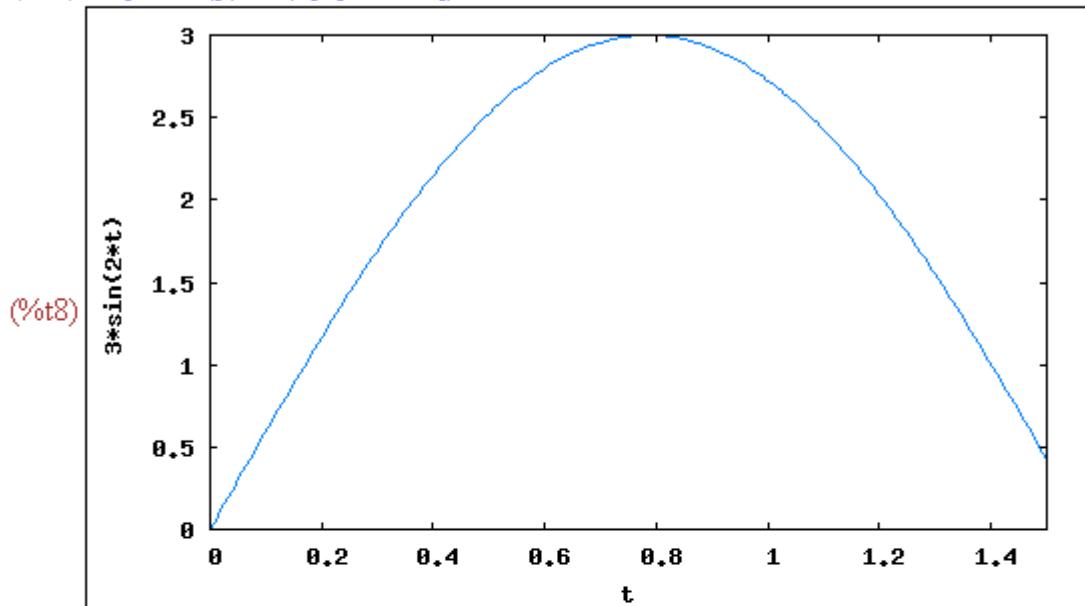
3.

```
(%i5) 3*sin(2*t);
```

```
(%o5) 3 sin(2 t)
```

Always plot between limits - check for roots - positive and negative areas  
Change variable to t.

```
(%i8) wxplot2d([(%o5)], [t,-0,1.5])$
```



no roots - one area - go ahead  
Change variable to t

```
(%i9) integrate(%o5), t, 0, 1.5;
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 1.5 by 3/2 = 1.5
```

```
rat: replaced 3.0 by 3/1 = 3.0
```

```
rat: replaced -3.0 by -3/1 = -3.0
```

```
rat: replaced 3.0 by 3/1 = 3.0
```

```
rat: replaced 0.49499624830022 by 3957/7994 = 0.49499624718539
```

```
(%o9) 
$$\frac{11931}{3997}$$

```

exact answer given - float

```
(%i10) float(%o9), numer;
```

```
(%o10) 2.984988741556167
```

4.

```

(%i11) 'diff(y,t)=y*sin(2*t);
(%o11)  $\frac{dy}{dt} = \sin(2t)y$ 
(%i12) ode2(%o11), y, t;
(%o12)  $y = \frac{\cos(2t)}{2} + %c e^{-2t}$ 
(%i13) ic1(%o12), t=0, y=4;
(%o13)  $y = 4 e^{-2t} + \frac{\cos(2t)}{2}$ 
(%i14) subst(1.3, t, (%o13));
(%o14)  $y = 10.12227800467399$ 

```

## Exercise 2

[Back to Exercise 2](#)

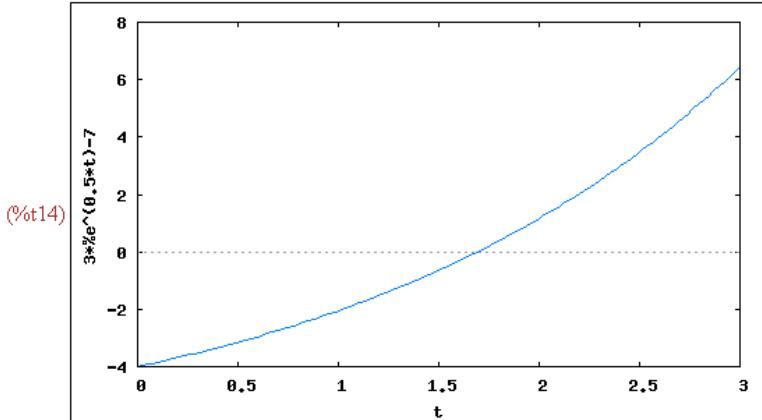
1.

(%i13)  $3*3^{\frac{1}{2}}e^{(0.5*t)} - 7;$

(%o13)  $3\sqrt{3}e^{0.5t} - 7$

Plot between limits, Roots?

(%i14) `wxplot2d([(%o13)], [t,0,3])$`



Find root

(%i15) `find_root(%o13, t, 0, 3);`

(%o15) 1.694595720774407

integrate between left limit and root

(%i16) `integrate(%o13, t, 0, 1.694595720774407);`

rat: replaced 1.694595720774407 by 4045/2387 = 1.694595726853792  
rat: replaced 1.694595720774407 by 4045/2387 = 1.694595726853792  
rat: replaced 1.694595720774407 by 4045/2387 = 1.694595726853792  
rat: replaced 0.5 by 1/2 = 0.5  
rat: replaced 0.5 by 1/2 = 0.5  
rat: replaced -0.5 by -1/2 = -0.5  
rat: replaced 0.5 by 1/2 = 0.5  
rat: replaced 6.0 by 6/1 = 6.0  
rat: replaced 2.13782995457915 by 729/341 = 2.13782991202346

(%o16)  $-\frac{1317}{341}$

integrate between root and right limit

(%i17) `integrate(%o13, t, 1.694595720774407, 3);`

rat: replaced 1.305404279225593 by 3116/2387 = 1.305404273146209  
rat: replaced 1.694595720774407 by 4045/2387 = 1.694595726853792  
rat: replaced 1.305404279225593 by 3116/2387 = 1.305404273146209  
rat: replaced 0.5 by 1/2 = 0.5  
rat: replaced 0.5 by 1/2 = 0.5  
rat: replaced -0.5 by -1/2 = -0.5  
rat: replaced 0.5 by 1/2 = 0.5  
rat: replaced 2.13782995457915 by 729/341 = 2.13782991202346  
rat: replaced 5.890134422028389 by 2627/446 = 5.890134529147982

(%o17)  $\frac{570673}{152086}$

Add moduli

(%i18) `%o17 - %o16;`

(%o18)  $\frac{1158055}{152086}$

(%i19) `float(%o18), numer;`

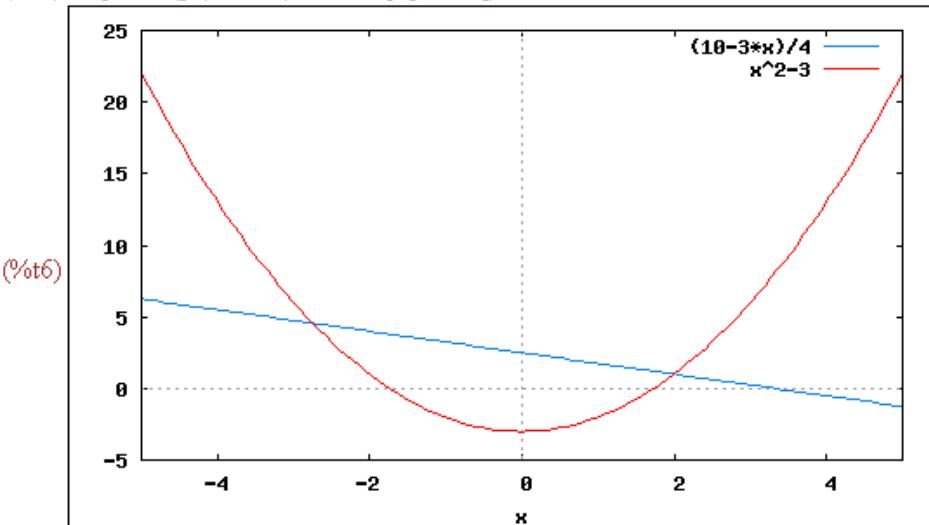
(%o19) 7.614474705101062

2.

```

(%i7) solve([3*x+4*y=10,x^2-y=3], [x,y]);
(%o7) [[x=2,y=1],[x=-11/4,y=73/16]]
(%i8) float(%o7), numer;
(%o8) [[x=2.0,y=1.0],[x=-2.75,y=4.5625]]

(%i2) 3*x+4*y=10;
(%o2) 4 y + 3 x = 10
(%i3) solve([(%o2)], [y]);
(%o3) [y = -3 x - 10/4]
(%i4) x^2-y=3;
(%o4) x^2 - y = 3
(%i5) solve([(%o4)], [y]);
(%o5) [y = x^2 - 3]
(%i6) wxplot2d([-3*x-10/4,x^2-3], [x,-5,5])$
```



3.

```

(%i8) matrix(
  [3,-2,7],
  [5,-1,-3],
  [-1,3,-1]
);

$$\begin{bmatrix} 3 & -2 & 7 \\ 5 & -1 & -3 \\ -1 & 3 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

(%o8)

(%i9) invert(%o8));

$$\begin{bmatrix} \frac{5}{56} & \frac{19}{112} & \frac{13}{112} \\ \frac{1}{14} & \frac{1}{28} & \frac{11}{28} \\ \frac{1}{8} & \frac{1}{16} & \frac{1}{16} \end{bmatrix}$$

(%i10) matrix(
  [27],
  [-10],
  [2]
);

$$\begin{bmatrix} 27 \\ -10 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

(%o10)

(%i11) %o9.%o10;

$$\begin{bmatrix} \frac{53}{56} \\ \frac{33}{14} \\ \frac{33}{8} \end{bmatrix}$$

(%o11)

(%i12) float(%o11), numer;

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0.94642857142857 \\ 2.357142857142857 \\ 4.125 \end{bmatrix}$$

(%o12)

x = 0.9464, y = 2.357, z = 2.125 (4sf) 3.

```

$$x = 0.9464, y = 2.357, z = 4.125$$

## Latest News for wxMaxima

The latest version of wxMaxima is the 25.04 (November 2025). This version is packaged with the latest version of Maxima (the 5.48.1). The site for wxMaxima :

<https://wxmaxima-developers.github.io/wxmaxima/index.html>

This version offers tool palettes, many new menu entries, the ability to insert images into the spreadsheet, as well as the capability to structure a document with headings, sections in addition to the text.

