

Sigma notation

Things you need to learn to do

- Use of sigma notation to express sums of sequences.
- Convert between the sigma notation and explicitly written sum.

Sigma notation

Capital Greek letter sigma \sum is a shorthand for sum. The notation involves three components: the summand and the formula.

$$\sum_{n=1}^4 n^2$$

Here n is our counter, we could have used any letter. The counter starts at 1 and finishes at 4. The counter always increases by 1. We substitute the current value of the counter into the given formula, in our case it is n^2 and we add up the results. So we should get:

$$\sum_{n=1}^4 n^2 = 1^2 + 2^2 + 3^2 + 4^2 = 1 + 4 + 9 + 16 = 30$$

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Capital Greek letter sigma \sum is a shorthand for sum. The notation involves the starting point, the end point and the formula:

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The counter starts at the value of one and ends at four. We substitute the different values of the counter into the given formula, in our case it is n^2 and we add up the results. So we should get:

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So we calculate the values of the given formula, when $n = 1, 2, 3, 4$ and we add up the results. So we should get:

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So we evaluate the formula for each value of the counter, in this case 1, 2, 3, 4 and we add up the results. So we should get:

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Sigma notation

$$\sum_{i=2}^3 2i$$

Start: 2, end: 3, formula: $2i$. We get:

$$\sum_{i=2}^3 2i = 2 \times 2 + 2 \times 3 = 4 + 6 = 10$$

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Sigma notation

$$\sum_{k=0}^5 2^k$$

Start: 0, end: 5, formula 2^k , Value: 63

$$\sum_{k=0}^5 2^k = 2^0 + 2^1 + 2^2 + 2^3 + 2^4 + 2^5 = 1 + 2 + 4 + 8 + 16 + 32 = 63$$

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Sigma notation

$$\sum_{n=1}^3 \frac{1}{n}$$

Start 1, end 3, formula $\frac{1}{n}$. We get:

$$\sum_{n=1}^3 \frac{1}{n} = \frac{1}{1} + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} = \frac{11}{6}$$

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Sigma notation

$$\sum_{k=-2}^2 |k|$$

Start: -2, end: 2, formula: $|k|$. We get:

$$\sum_{k=-2}^2 |k| = |-2| + |-1| + |0| + |1| + |2| = 6$$

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Sigma notation

$$\sum_{m=2}^5 (m^2 - 5)$$

Start: 2, end: 5, formula $m^2 - 5$ we get:

$$\sum_{m=2}^5 (m^2 - 5) = (2^2 - 5) + (3^2 - 5) + (4^2 - 5) + (5^2 - 5) = -1 + 4 + 11 + 20 = 34$$

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If you have any questions or doubts email me at T.J.Lechowski@gmail.com