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Summary of the Characteristics of Graphs of Rational Functions

Horizontal Asymptote

- If the degree of the numerator is greater than the degree of the denominator, then there is no horizontal
 asymptote
 - Check for an oblique/slant asymptote

$$f(x) = \frac{x^2 + 2x + 1}{x + 3}$$

If the degree of the numerator is less than the degree of the denominator, then the horizontal asymptote
is y = 0

$$f(x) = \frac{3x+1}{x^2 + 3x + 1}$$

If the degree of the numerator and denominator are the same, the horizontal asymptote will be y = the
coefficients of the highest power divided by each other

$$f(x) = \frac{5x^2 + 2x + 1}{2x^2 + 3}$$

Vertical Asymptote

- Set the denominator equal to 0
- Make sure the values you get are asymptotes and not holes
- Simplify the original function by factoring
 - Whatever does not cancel is a vertical asymptote

$$f(x) = \frac{x^2 + 4x + 3}{x + 5} = \frac{(x + 3)(x + 1)}{(x + 5)} =$$

Holes

- Set the denominator equal to zero
- Make sure the values you get are holes and not vertical asymptotes
- Simplify the original function by factoring
 - o Whatever cancels is a hole

$$f(x) = \frac{x^2 + 4x + 3}{x + 1} = \frac{(x + 3)(x + 1)}{(x + 1)} = (x + 3)$$

Oblique/Slant Asymptote

- If the degree of the numerator is greater than the degree of the denominator, use long division or synthetic division to find the asymptote (y =)
 - o Ignore the remainder
 - o If there is no remainder then there is not a slant asymptote

$$f(x) = \frac{x^2 + 2x + 1}{x + 3}$$

X-intercept

- Set the function = 0 (y = 0)
 - You only need to worry about the numerator in a rational function

Y-intercept

- Set the x = 0
 - o The values without x will give you your y-intercept