

How to solve  $ay'' + by' + cy = 0$ ,  $y(0) = y_0$ ,  $y'(0) = v_0$ .

Here  $y = y(t)$  or  $y(x)$ , and  $a, b, c, y_0, v_0$  are constants. (numbers)

Step 1. Plug in  $y = e^{rt}$  ( $y' = r e^{rt}$ ,  $y'' = r^2 e^{rt}$ ) and get

the "characteristic equation."  $ar^2 + br + c = 0$ .

Step 2. Find the roots of the ch. eqn.,  $r_1$  and  $r_2$ .

$$r_{1,2} = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

If  $r_1$  and  $r_2$  are distinct, real roots then

the general solution to the ODE is

$$y = C_1 e^{r_1 t} + C_2 e^{r_2 t}$$

Step 3. Solve  $y(0) = C_1 + C_2 = y_0$   
 $y'(0) = r_1 C_1 + r_2 C_2 = v_0$  for  $C_1$  and  $C_2$ .

$$(y' = C_1 r_1 e^{r_1 t} + C_2 r_2 e^{r_2 t})$$

Plug these into the general solution to solve the IVP.