If $a = b$, then $\Delta x = 0$ and so

$$\int_{a}^{a} f(x)dx = 0$$

We now develop some basic properties of integrals that will help us to evaluate integrals in a simple manner. We assume that f and g are continuous functions.

Properties of the Integral

1. $\int_a^b c\,dx = c(b-a)$, where c is any constant

2. $\int_a^b [f(x) + g(x)]\,dx = \int_a^b f(x)\,dx + \int_a^b g(x)\,dx$

3. $\int_a^b cf(x)\,dx = c\int_a^b f(x)\,dx$, where c is any constant

4. $\int_a^b [f(x) - g(x)]\,dx = \int_a^b f(x)\,dx - \int_a^b g(x)\,dx$

Example-6

Use the properties of integrals to evaluate

$$\int_0^1 (4 + 3x^2)\,dx.$$

The next property tells us how to combine integrals of the same function over adjacent intervals:

5. $$\int_a^c f(x)\,dx + \int_c^b f(x)\,dx = \int_a^b f(x)\,dx$$

This is not easy to prove in general, but for the case where $f(x) \geqslant 0$ and $a < c < b$ Property 5 can be seen from the geometric interpretation in Figure 15: The area under $y = f(x)$ from a to c plus the area from c to b is equal to the total area from a to b.

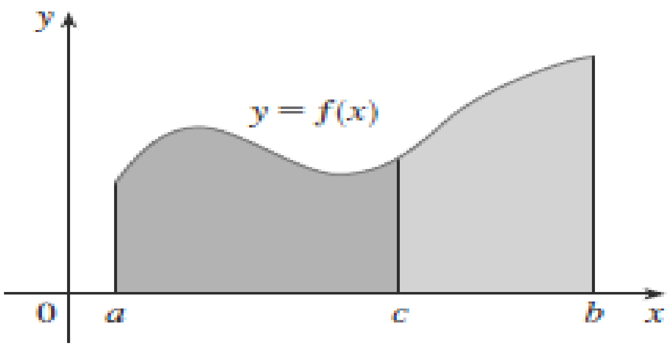

FIGURE 15

Example-7

If it is known that $\int_0^{10} f(x)dx = 17$ and $\int_0^{8} f(x)dx = 12$, find $\int_8^{10} f(x)dx$.

Notice that Properties 1–5 are true whether $a < b$, $a = b$, or $a > b$. The following properties, in which we compare sizes of functions and sizes of integrals, are true only if $a \leqslant b$.

Comparison Properties of the Integral

6. If $f(x) \geqslant 0$ for $a \leqslant x \leqslant b$, then $\int_a^b f(x)\,dx \geqslant 0$.

7. If $f(x) \geqslant g(x)$ for $a \leqslant x \leqslant b$, then $\int_a^b f(x)\,dx \geqslant \int_a^b g(x)\,dx$.

8. If $m \leqslant f(x) \leqslant M$ for $a \leqslant x \leqslant b$, then

$$m(b-a) \leqslant \int_a^b f(x)\,dx \leqslant M(b-a)$$

For Property 8, note that if f is continuous we could take m and M to be the absolute minimum and maximum values of f on the inteval $[a, b]$.

Example-8

Use Property 8 to estimate $\int_0^1 e^{-x^2}\,dx$.

Solution

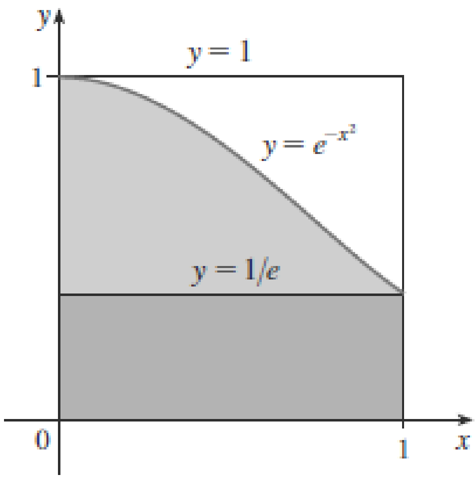

FIGURE 17

The result of Example 8 is illustrated in Figure 17. The integral is greater than the area of the lower rectangle and less than the area of the square.