



Approximation Theory and Methods

By M. J. D. Powell

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Most functions that occur in mathematics cannot be used directly in computer calculations. Instead they are approximated by manageable functions such as polynomials and piecewise polynomials. The general theory of the subject and its application to polynomial approximation are classical, but piecewise polynomials have become far more useful during the last twenty years. Thus many important theoretical properties have been found recently and many new techniques for the automatic calculation of approximations to prescribed accuracy have been developed. This book gives a thorough and coherent introduction to the theory that is the basis of current approximation methods. Professor Powell describes and analyses the main techniques of calculation supplying sufficient motivation throughout the book to make it accessible to scientists and engineers who require approximation methods for practical needs. Because the book is based on a course of lectures to third-year undergraduates in mathematics at Cambridge University, sufficient attention is given to theory to make it highly suitable as a mathematical textbook at undergraduate or postgraduate level.

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