

Consider each table and decide whether it could represent a linear function. Explain your reasoning.

1.

x	y
1	-3
2	0
3	5
4	12

2.

x	y
1	10
2	14
3	18
4	22

These examples show some common errors in working with rates of change. Each problem contains an incorrect conclusion. Explain why each conclusion is incorrect, and provide mathematical evidence to support your answer.

a.

x	y
-1	-5
2	-3
4	-2
5	-1

Since the rate of change is constant, the data is linear.

b.

x	y
0	1
1	5
2	25
3	125

$$5/1 = 5$$

$$25/5 = 5$$

$$125/25 = 5$$

Since the rate of change is constant, the data is linear.

c.

x	y
0	-3
2	1
5	7
6	9

Since the x 's do not increase by 1, the data cannot be linear.

d.

x	y
-2	1
0	2
3	3.5
9	6.5

$$\frac{2}{1} = \frac{3}{1.5} = \frac{6}{3} = 2$$

$$\frac{\text{change in } y}{\text{change in } x} = 2$$

Because the rate of change is 2, the data is linear.