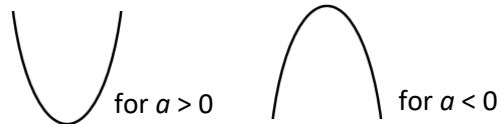![Pearson Edexcel logo]

Sketching quadratics

A LEVEL LINKS
Scheme of work: 1b. Quadratic functions – factorising, solving, graphs and the discriminants

Key points

- The graph of the quadratic function $y = ax^2 + bx + c$, where $a \neq 0$, is a curve called a parabola.
- Parabolas have a line of symmetry and a shape as shown.

 for $a > 0$ for $a < 0$

- To sketch the graph of a function, find the points where the graph intersects the axes.
- To find where the curve intersects the y-axis substitute $x = 0$ into the function.
- To find where the curve intersects the x-axis substitute $y = 0$ into the function.
- At the turning points of a graph the gradient of the curve is 0 and any tangents to the curve at these points are horizontal.
- To find the coordinates of the maximum or minimum point (turning points) of a quadratic curve (parabola) you can use the completed square form of the function.

Example 1   Sketch the graph of $y = x^2$.

	The graph of $y = x^2$ is a parabola. When $x = 0$, $y = 0$. $a = 1$ which is greater than zero, so the graph has the shape:

Example 2   Sketch the graph of $y = x^2 - x - 6$.

When $x = 0$, $y = 0^2 - 0 - 6 = -6$ So the graph intersects the y-axis at $(0, -6)$ When $y = 0$, $x^2 - x - 6 = 0$ $(x + 2)(x - 3) = 0$ $x = -2$ or $x = 3$ So, the graph intersects the x-axis at $(-2, 0)$ and $(3, 0)$	**1** Find where the graph intersects the y-axis by substituting $x = 0$. **2** Find where the graph intersects the x-axis by substituting $y = 0$. **3** Solve the equation by factorising. **4** Solve $(x + 2) = 0$ and $(x - 3) = 0$. **5** $a = 1$ which is greater than zero, so the graph has the shape: *(continued on next page)*

$$x^2 - x - 6 = \left(x - \frac{1}{2}\right)^2 - \frac{1}{4} - 6$$

$$= \left(x - \frac{1}{2}\right)^2 - \frac{25}{4}$$

When $\left(x - \frac{1}{2}\right)^2 = 0$, $x = \frac{1}{2}$ and $y = -\frac{25}{4}$, so the turning point is at the point $\left(\frac{1}{2}, -\frac{25}{4}\right)$
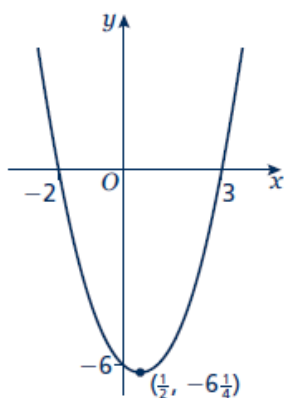

6 To find the turning point, complete the square.

7 The turning point is the minimum value for this expression and occurs when the term in the bracket is equal to zero.

Practice questions

1   Sketch the graph of $y = -x^2$

2   Sketch each graph, labelling where the curve crosses the axes.
    a $y = (x + 2)(x - 1)$ **b** $y = x(x - 3)$ **c** $y = (x + 1)(x + 5)$

3   Sketch each graph, labelling where the curve crosses the axes.
    a $y = x^2 - x - 6$ **b** $y = x^2 - 5x + 4$ **c** $y = x^2 - 4$
    d $y = x^2 + 4x$ **e** $y = 9 - x^2$ **f** $y = x^2 + 2x - 3$

4   Sketch the graph of $y = 2x^2 + 5x - 3$, labelling where the curve crosses the axes.

5   Sketch each graph. Label where the curve crosses the axes and write down the coordinates of the turning point.
    a $y = x^2 - 5x + 6$ **b** $y = -x^2 + 7x - 12$ **c** $y = -x^2 + 4x$

6   Sketch the graph of $y = x^2 + 2x + 1$. Label where the curve crosses the axes and write down the equation of the line of symmetry.
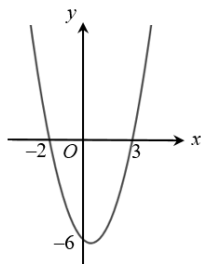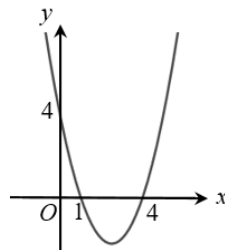
Answers

1
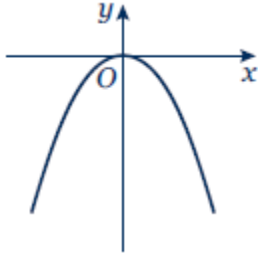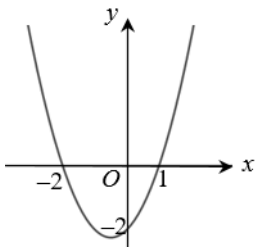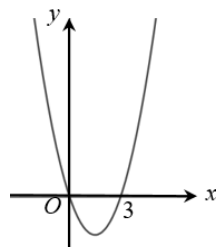
2 **a**   **b**   **c**
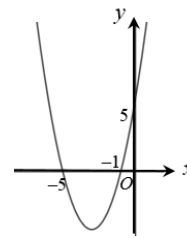
3 **a**   **b**   **c**
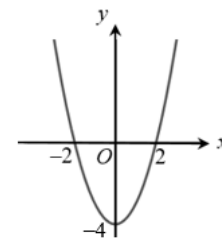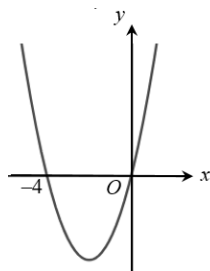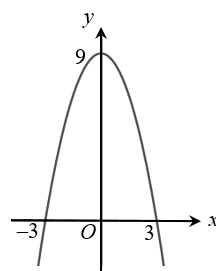
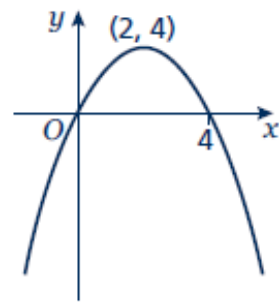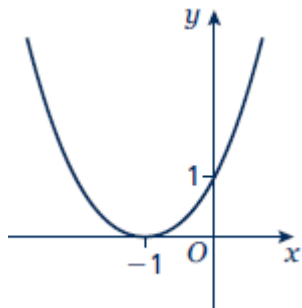   **d**   **e**   **f**
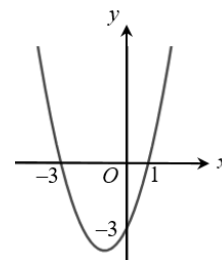
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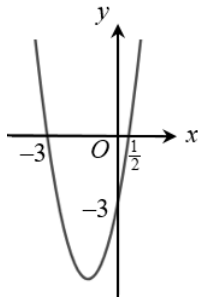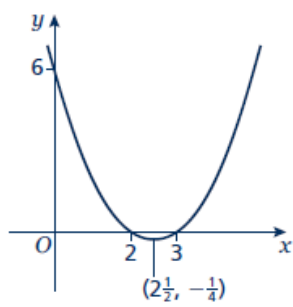
5 a   **b**   **c**

6

Line of symmetry at $x = -1$