

Exercise 4

Explain what a negative exponent does.

Solution

A negative exponent inverts a number. Four examples are

$$2^{-10} = \frac{1}{2^{10}} \quad \text{and} \quad 4^{-2} = \frac{1}{4^2} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{1}{3^{-5}} = 3^5 \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{1}{5^{-7}} = 5^7.$$