

(2) Determine the length of the curve $y = \ln(1 - x^2)$, $0 \leq x \leq \frac{1}{2}$.

$$y' = \frac{-2x}{1-x^2}$$

$$L = \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} \sqrt{1 + (y')^2} dx$$

$$= \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} \sqrt{1 + \left(\frac{-2x}{1-x^2}\right)^2} dx$$

$$= \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} \sqrt{1 + \frac{4x^2}{(1-x^2)^2}} dx$$

$$= \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} \sqrt{\frac{(1-x^2)^2 + 4x^2}{(1-x^2)^2}} dx$$

$$= \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} \sqrt{\frac{x^4 + 2x^2 + 1}{(1-x^2)^2}} dx$$

$$= \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} \sqrt{\frac{(x^2+1)^2}{(1-x^2)^2}} dx$$

$$= \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} \left(\frac{x^2+1}{1-x^2}\right) dx$$

$$\frac{-x^2+1}{2} \sqrt{\frac{x^2+1}{x^2-1}}$$

$$\therefore L = \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} -1 + \frac{2}{1-x^2} dx$$

$$= \int_0^{\frac{1}{2}} -1 + \frac{1}{1-x} + \frac{1}{1+x} dx$$

$$= \left[-x\right]_0^{\frac{1}{2}} - \left[\ln|1-x|\right]_0^{\frac{1}{2}} + \left[\ln|1+x|\right]_0^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

$$= -\frac{1}{2} - \ln\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) + \ln(1) + \ln\left(\frac{3}{2}\right) - \ln(1)$$

$$= \ln\left(\frac{3/2}{1/2}\right) - \frac{1}{2}$$

$$= \boxed{\ln(3) - \frac{1}{2}}$$