

# Income elasticity of demand

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## CALCULATION OF INCOME ELASTICITY OF DEMAND

$$\text{income elasticity of demand} = \frac{\% \text{ change in quantity demanded}}{\% \text{ change in income}} \quad (1)$$

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  - ▶ *normal good* (positive value): increase in income results in *increase* in demand
  - ▶ *inferior good* (negative): increase in income results in *decrease* in demand

Good	Income elasticity	Elastic or inelastic	Type of good	The effect of a 10% increase in income
Product W	0.6	Inelastic	Normal	Demand would increase by 6%
Product X	-2.4	Elastic	Inferior	Demand would fall by 24%
Product Y	1.9	Elastic	Normal	Demand would rise by 19%
Product Z	-0.8	Inelastic	Inferior	Demand would fall by 8%

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  - ▶ Relatively *expensive* products will be *income elastic*

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INCOME ELASTICITY OF DEMAND TO BUSINESS

Businesses may use income elasticity of demand in order to *predict* how changes in income (in the economy) will affect the demand for their products:

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  - ▶ in countries with *steady economic growth*, the demand for *inferior goods* and *normal necessities* tends to decline

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  - ▶ Cases:
    1. Products have *income elastic demand*: changes in income will affect goods. Expansion → ensure that there is enough capacity; Recession → cut output (e.g., car industry in 2008 crisis)
    2. Products that are *inferior goods* prepare production when recession is coming (demand for inferior goods *increase* when income goes down)

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- ▶ **Income elastic demand:** the percentage change in demand for a product is proportionately greater than the percentage change in income
- ▶ **Income elasticity of demand:** the responsiveness of demand to a change in income