

Example 5 Find the coefficient of x^{11} in the expansion of $\left(x^3 - \frac{2}{x^2}\right)^{12}$

Solution Let the general term, i.e., $(r + 1)^{\text{th}}$ contain x^{11} .

We have

$$\begin{aligned} T_{r+1} &= {}^{12}C_r (x^3)^{12-r} \left(-\frac{2}{x^2}\right)^r \\ &= {}^{12}C_r x^{36-3r-2r} (-1)^r 2^r \\ &= {}^{12}C_r (-1)^r 2^r x^{36-5r} \end{aligned}$$

Now for this to contain x^{11} , we observe that

$$36 - 5r = 11, \text{ i.e., } r = 5$$

Thus, the coefficient of x^{11} is

$${}^{12}C_5 (-1)^5 2^5 = -\frac{12 \times 11 \times 10 \times 9 \times 8}{5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2} \times 32 = -25344$$

