Curves and Surfaces

Ed Angel
Professor Emeritus of Computer Science
University of New Mexico

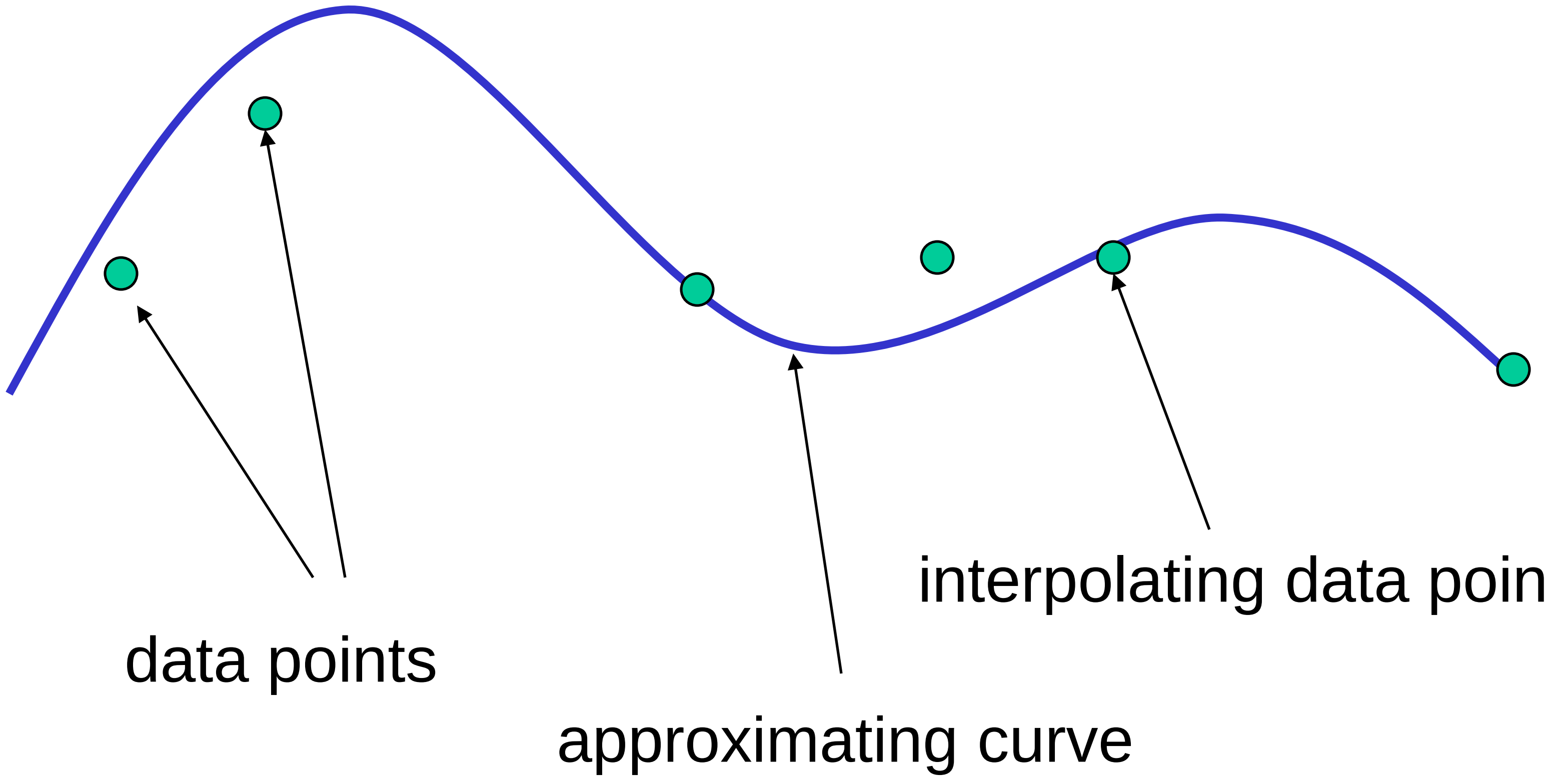
Objectives

- Introduce types of curves and surfaces
  - Explicit
  - Implicit
  - Parametric
  - Strengths and weaknesses
- Discuss Modeling and Approximations
  - Conditions
  - Stability

Escaping Flatland

- Until now we have worked with flat entities such as lines and flat polygons
  - Fit well with graphics hardware
  - Mathematically simple
- But the world is not composed of flat entities
  - Need curves and curved surfaces
  - May only have need at the application level
  - Implementation can render them approximately with flat primitives

Modeling with Curves



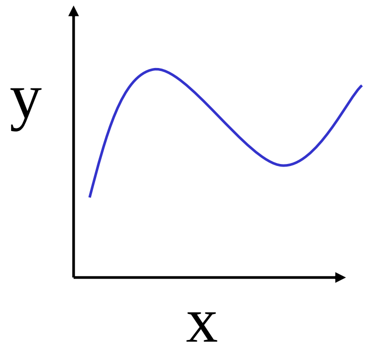
What Makes a Good Representation?

- There are many ways to represent curves and surfaces
- Want a representation that is
  - Stable
  - Smooth
  - Easy to evaluate
  - Must we interpolate or can we just come close to data?
  - Do we need derivatives?

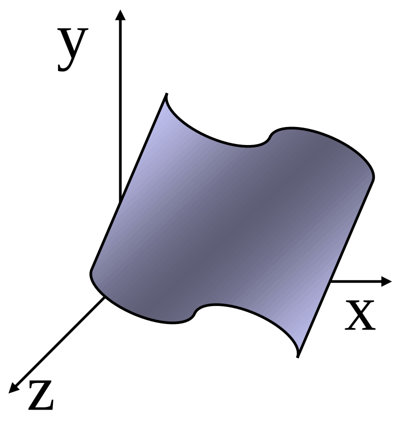
Explicit Representation

- Most familiar form of curve in 2D

$$y=f(x)$$



- Cannot represent all curves
  - Vertical lines
  - Circles
- Extension to 3D
  - $y=f(x)$, $z=g(x)$
  - The form $z = f(x,y)$ defines a surface



Implicit Representation

- Two dimensional curve(s)

  $$g(x,y)=0$$

- Much more robust
  - All lines $ax+by+c=0$
  - Circles $x^2+y^2-r^2=0$
- Three dimensions $g(x,y,z)=0$ defines a surface
  - Intersect two surface to get a curve
- In general, we cannot solve for points that satisfy

Algebraic Surface

$$\sum_i \sum_j \sum_k x^i y^j z^k = 0$$

- Quadric surface $2 \geq i, j, k$

- At most 10 terms

- Can solve intersection with a ray by reducing problem to solving quadratic equation

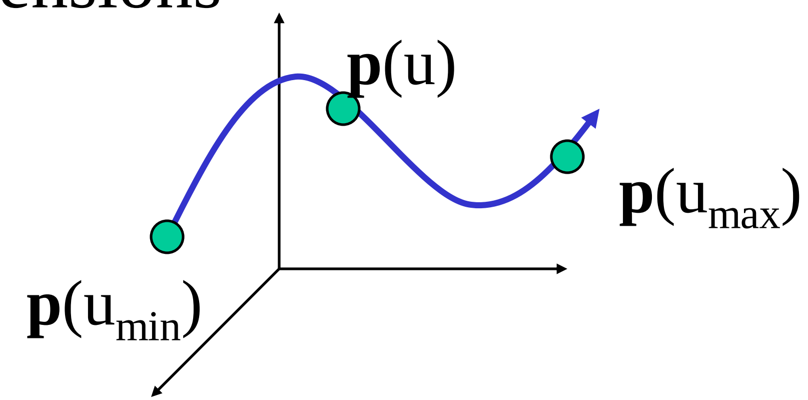
Parametric Curves

- Separate equation for each spatial variable

$$x=x(u)$$
$$y=y(u)$$
$$z=z(u)$$

$$\mathbf{p}(u)=[x(u), y(u), z(u)]^T$$

- For $u_{max} \geq u \geq u_{min}$ we trace out a curve in two or three dimensions



Selecting Functions

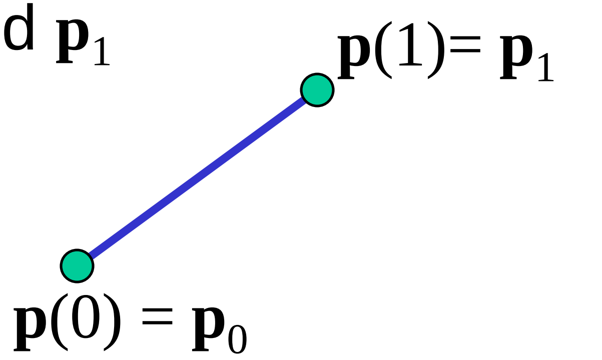
- Usually we can select "good" functions
  - not unique for a given spatial curve
  - Approximate or interpolate known data
  - Want functions which are easy to evaluate
  - Want functions which are easy to differentiate
    - Computation of normals
    - Connecting pieces (segments)
  - Want functions which are smooth

Parametric Lines

We can normalize u to be over the interval (0,1)

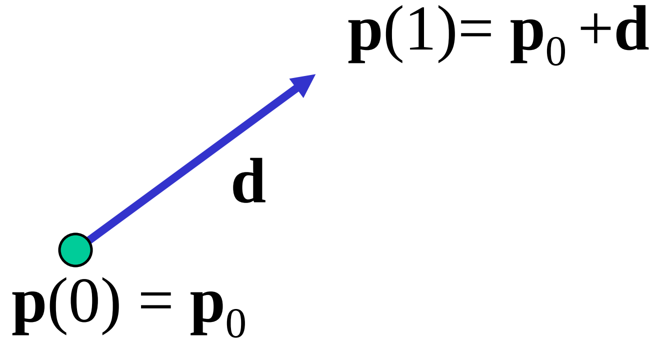
Line connecting two points $\mathbf{p}_0$ and $\mathbf{p}_1$

$$\mathbf{p}(u)=(1-u)\mathbf{p}_0+u\mathbf{p}_1$$



Ray from $\mathbf{p}_0$ in the direction $\mathbf{d}$

$$\mathbf{p}(u)=\mathbf{p}_0+u\mathbf{d}$$

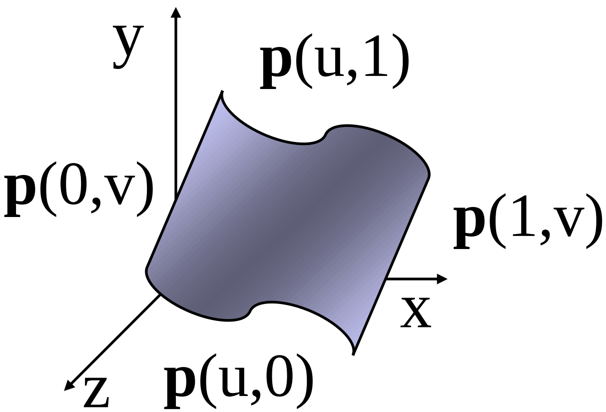


Parametric Surfaces

- Surfaces require 2 parameters

$$x=x(u,v)$$
$$y=y(u,v)$$
$$z=z(u,v)$$

$$\mathbf{p}(u,v) = [x(u,v),\ y(u,v),\ z(u,v)]^T$$



- Want same properties as curves:
  - Smoothness
  - Differentiability
  - Ease of evaluation

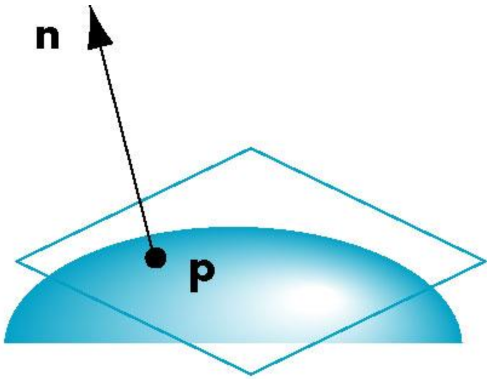
Normals

We can differentiate with respect to u and v to obtain the normal at any point **p**

$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{p}(u,v)}{\partial u} = \begin{bmatrix} \partial x(u,v)/\partial u \\ \partial y(u,v)/\partial u \\ \partial z(u,v)/\partial u \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{p}(u,v)}{\partial v} = \begin{bmatrix} \partial x(u,v)/\partial v \\ \partial y(u,v)/\partial v \\ \partial z(u,v)/\partial v \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\mathbf{n} = \frac{\partial \mathbf{p}(u,v)}{\partial u} \times \frac{\partial \mathbf{p}(u,v)}{\partial v}$$



Parametric Planes

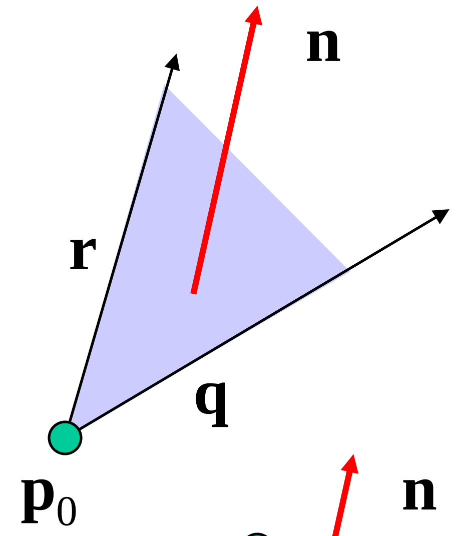
point-vector form

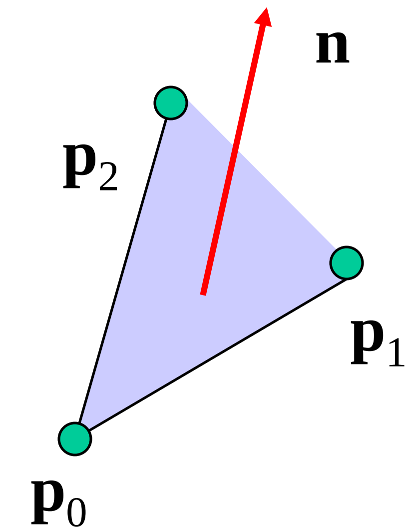
$$\mathbf{p}(u,v)=\mathbf{p}_0+u\mathbf{q}+v\mathbf{r}$$

$$\mathbf{n} = \mathbf{q} \times \mathbf{r}$$

three-point form

$$\mathbf{q} = \mathbf{p}_1 - \mathbf{p}_0$$
$$\mathbf{r} = \mathbf{p}_2 - \mathbf{p}_0$$

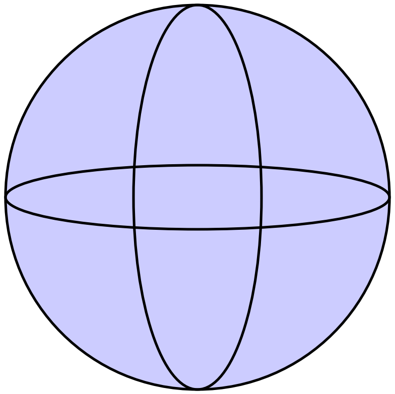




Parametric Sphere

$x(u,v) = r \cos \theta \sin \phi$
$y(u,v) = r \sin \theta \sin \phi$
$z(u,v) = r \cos \phi$

$360 \geq \theta \geq 0$
$180 \geq \phi \geq 0$



θ constant: circles of constant longitude
ϕ constant: circles of constant latitude

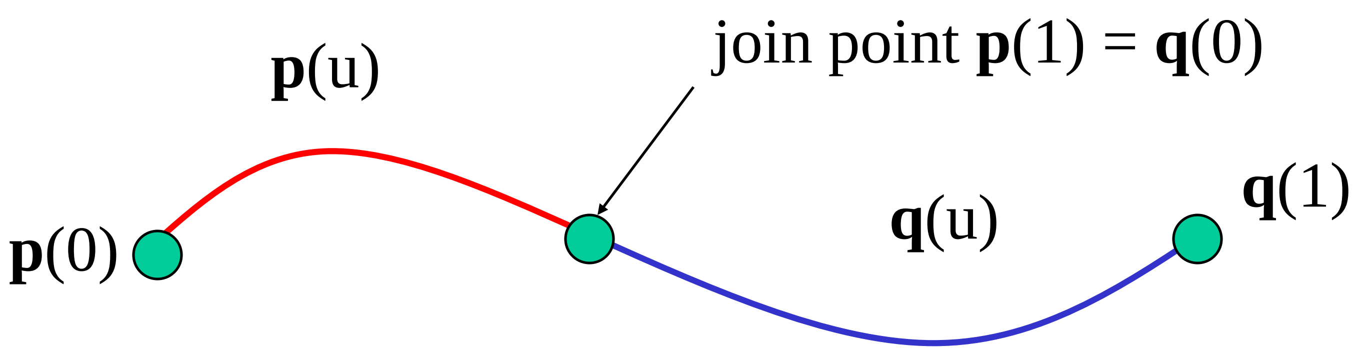
differentiate to show **n** = **p**

Curve Segments

- After normalizing u, each curve is written

  $\mathbf{p}(u)=[x(u), y(u), z(u)]^T, \quad 1 \geq u \geq 0$

- In classical numerical methods, we design a single global curve
- In computer graphics and CAD, it is better to design small connected curve *segments*



The University of New Mexico

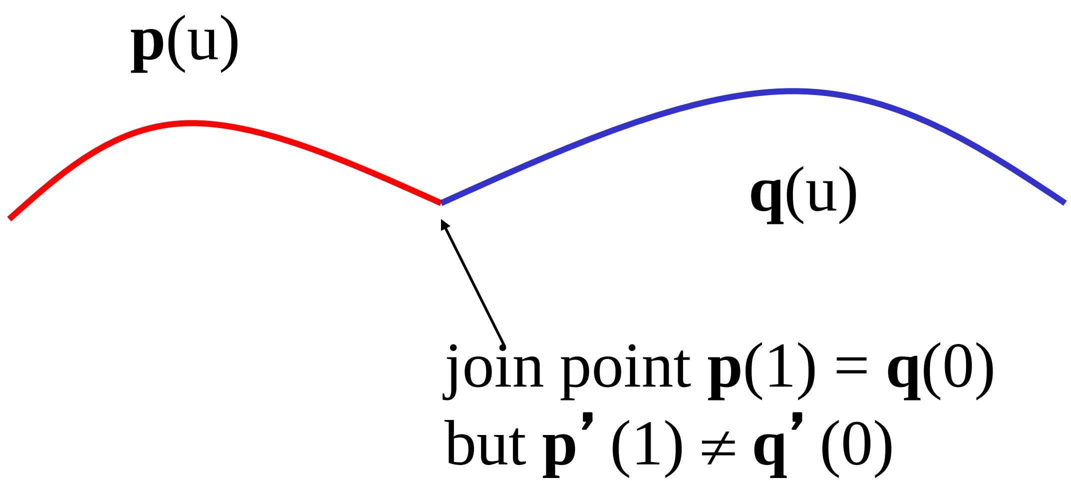
Parametric Polynomial Curves

$$x(u) = \sum_{i=0}^{N} c_{xi} u^i \quad y(u) = \sum_{j=0}^{M} c_{yj} u^j \quad z(u) = \sum_{k=0}^{L} c_{zk} u^k$$

- If N=M=L, we need to determine 3(N+1) coefficients
- Equivalently we need 3(N+1) independent conditions
- Noting that the curves for x, y and z are independent, we can define each independently in an identical manner
- We will use the form $\mathrm{p}(u) = \sum_{k=0}^{L} c_k u^k$ where p can be any of x, y, z

Why Polynomials

- Easy to evaluate
- Continuous and differentiable everywhere
  - Must worry about continuity at join points including continuity of derivatives



Cubic Parametric Polynomials

- N=M=L=3, gives balance between ease of evaluation and flexibility in design

$$p(u) = \sum_{k=0}^{3} c_k u^k$$

- Four coefficients to determine for each of x, y and z
- Seek four independent conditions for various values of u resulting in 4 equations in 4 unknowns for each of x, y and z
  - Conditions are a mixture of continuity requirements at the join points and conditions for fitting the data

The University of New Mexico

Cubic Polynomial Surfaces

$$\mathbf{p}(u,v)=[x(u,v), y(u,v), z(u,v)]^T$$

where

$$p(u,v)=\sum_{i=0}^{3}\sum_{j=0}^{3} c_{ij} u^i v^j$$

p is any of x, y or z

Need 48 coefficients (3 independent sets of 16) to determine a surface patch