
MEEN 432 –Automotive Engineering

Fall 2026

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Acknowledgement: Most of the material for this class was developed by Dr. Swami Gopalswamy

Lecture 4: Vehicle Kinematic Model

- Kinematics

Vector Transformation under Frame Rotation

- Consider frames $F_0 = (O, (\hat{i}_0, \hat{j}_0))$ and $F_1 = (O, (\hat{i}_1, \hat{j}_1))$, with F_1 obtained by rotating F_0 by ψ about the z axis

- Consider a vector $\overrightarrow{OA} = x_0 \hat{i}_0 + y_0 \hat{j}_0 = x_1 \hat{i}_1 + y_1 \hat{j}_1$

- Placing the unit vectors at the origin:

- $\hat{i}_1 = \cos \psi \hat{i}_0 + \sin \psi \hat{j}_0$
- $\hat{j}_1 = -\sin \psi \hat{i}_0 + \cos \psi \hat{j}_0$

- This yields:

- $x_0 \hat{i}_0 + y_0 \hat{j}_0 = x_1(\cos \psi \hat{i}_0 + \sin \psi \hat{j}_0) + y_1(-\sin \psi \hat{i}_0 + \cos \psi \hat{j}_0)$

- Separating the individual dimensions, we get:

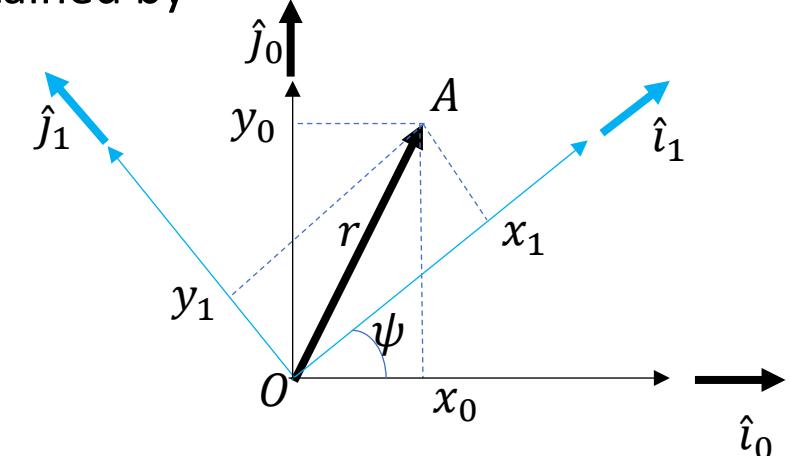
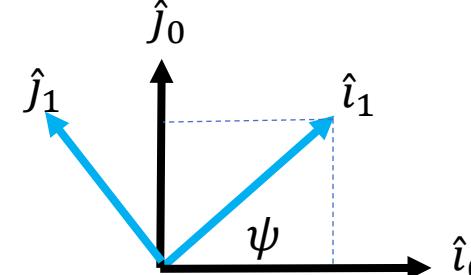
- $x_1 \cos \psi - y_1 \sin \psi = x_0; x_1 \sin \psi + y_1 \cos \psi = y_0$

- With some algebra and trigonometry,

- $x_1 = x_0 \cos \psi + y_0 \sin \psi; y_1 = -x_0 \sin \psi + y_0 \cos \psi$

- Writing in vector form:

- $\begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ y_1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \cos \psi & \sin \psi \\ -\sin \psi & \cos \psi \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_0 \\ y_0 \end{bmatrix} := \mathcal{R}(\psi) \begin{bmatrix} x_0 \\ y_0 \end{bmatrix}; \text{ and } \begin{bmatrix} x_0 \\ y_0 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \cos \psi & -\sin \psi \\ \sin \psi & \cos \psi \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ y_1 \end{bmatrix} := \mathcal{R}(-\psi) \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ y_1 \end{bmatrix}$



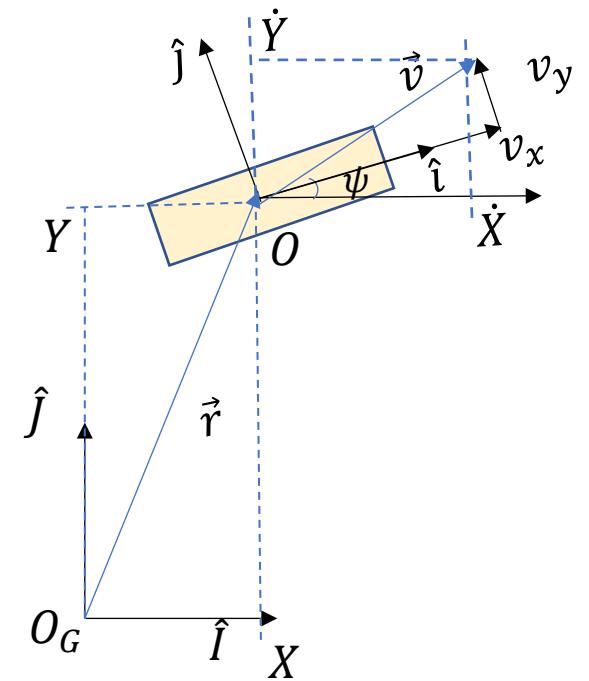
Rotation Matrix

Body Fixed Frame

- Assume 2D
- Consider:
 - A global (inertial) frame $F_G := (O_G, \hat{I}, \hat{J})$
 - A vehicle defined as a rectangle (top view)
 - With a “Body Fixed Frame” $F_B := (O, \hat{i}, \hat{j})$.
 - Vehicle Heading ψ
- Location of vehicle is \vec{r} and is often represented in Global Frame:
 - $\vec{r} = X \hat{I} + Y \hat{J}$
- Velocity of vehicle (always w.r.t. F_G) \vec{v} is the derivative of vehicle position relative to inertial frame:
 - $\vec{v} = \frac{d}{dt} \vec{r} = \dot{X} \hat{I} + \dot{Y} \hat{J}$
- However, it is usually represented in Body Fixed Frame:
 - $\vec{v} = v_x \hat{i} + v_y \hat{j}$

- In vector notation

$$\begin{bmatrix} \dot{X} \\ \dot{Y} \end{bmatrix} = \mathcal{R}(-\psi) \begin{bmatrix} v_x \\ v_y \end{bmatrix}$$



The “Kinematic” Vehicle Model

- Assume that:

- You could control the vehicle forward (Longitudinal) velocity, i.e. v_x to some desired velocity v_d
- There is no side-slip, the vehicle moves only in the direction it is pointing, i.e. $v_y = 0$
 - This also implies that the overall vehicle velocity $\vec{v} := v_x \hat{i} + v_y \hat{j} = v_x \hat{i}$
- You have the ability to the “steer” the vehicle, such that you can control the “yaw rate” $\dot{\psi}$ to some desired value $\dot{\psi}_d$

- Equations of motion for the vehicle:

$$\begin{bmatrix} \dot{X} \\ \dot{Y} \\ \dot{\psi} \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathcal{R}(-\psi) & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} v_d \\ \dot{\psi}_d \end{bmatrix}$$

