Vector Identities

$$\nabla \cdot (\phi \, \mathbf{q}) = (\nabla \phi) \cdot \mathbf{q} + \phi \nabla \cdot \mathbf{q} \qquad \qquad \nabla \times (\phi \, \mathbf{q}) = (\nabla \phi) \times \mathbf{q} + \phi \nabla \times \mathbf{q}$$

$$\nabla \cdot (\nabla \times \mathbf{q}) = 0 \qquad \nabla \times (\nabla \phi) = \mathbf{0} \qquad \qquad \nabla \times (\nabla \times \mathbf{q}) = \nabla(\nabla \cdot \mathbf{q}) - \nabla^2 \mathbf{q}$$

$$\nabla \times (\mathbf{p} \times \mathbf{q}) = \mathbf{p}(\nabla \cdot \mathbf{q}) - \mathbf{q}(\nabla \cdot \mathbf{p}) + (\mathbf{q} \cdot \nabla)\mathbf{p} - (\mathbf{p} \cdot \nabla)\mathbf{q}$$

$$\nabla(\mathbf{p} \cdot \mathbf{q}) = (\mathbf{p} \cdot \nabla)\mathbf{q} + (\mathbf{q} \cdot \nabla)\mathbf{p} + \mathbf{p} \times (\nabla \times \mathbf{q}) + \mathbf{q} \times (\nabla \times \mathbf{p})$$

Polar Coordinates

For cylindrical polar coordinates  $\sigma$ ,  $\varphi$ , z, with z measured along the axis of the cylinder,  $\sigma$  the distance from the axis of the cylinder, and  $\varphi$  the azimuthal angle:

$$\nabla f = \hat{\boldsymbol{\sigma}} \frac{\partial f}{\partial \sigma} + \hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}} \frac{1}{\sigma} \frac{\partial f}{\partial \varphi} + \hat{\mathbf{z}} \frac{\partial f}{\partial z} \qquad \nabla \cdot (u \hat{\boldsymbol{\sigma}} + v \hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}} + w \hat{\mathbf{z}}) = \frac{1}{\sigma} \frac{\partial}{\partial \sigma} (\sigma u) + \frac{1}{\sigma} \frac{\partial v}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{\partial w}{\partial z}$$

$$\nabla \times (u \hat{\boldsymbol{\sigma}} + v \hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}} + w \hat{\mathbf{z}}) = \left\{ \frac{1}{\sigma} \frac{\partial w}{\partial \varphi} - \frac{\partial v}{\partial z} \right\} \hat{\boldsymbol{\sigma}} + \left\{ \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial w}{\partial \sigma} \right\} \hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}} + \left\{ \frac{1}{\sigma} \frac{\partial}{\partial \sigma} (\sigma v) - \frac{1}{\sigma} \frac{\partial u}{\partial \varphi} \right\} \hat{\mathbf{z}}$$

$$\nabla^2 f = \nabla \cdot \nabla f = \frac{1}{\sigma} \frac{\partial}{\partial \sigma} \left( \sigma \frac{\partial f}{\partial \sigma} \right) + \frac{1}{\sigma^2} \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial \varphi^2} + \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial z^2}$$

For spherical polar coordinates r,  $\theta$ ,  $\varphi$ , with r the distance from the origin,  $\theta$  the colatitudinal angle and  $\varphi$  the azimuthal angle:

$$\nabla f = \hat{\mathbf{r}} \frac{\partial f}{\partial r} + \hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}} \frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial f}{\partial \theta} + \hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}} \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial f}{\partial \varphi}$$

$$\nabla \cdot (u \hat{\mathbf{r}} + v \hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}} + w \hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}}) = \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} (r^2 u) + \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} (\sin \theta v) + \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial w}{\partial \varphi}$$

$$\nabla \times (u \hat{\mathbf{r}} + v \hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}} + w \hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}}) = \left\{ \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} (w \sin \theta) - \frac{\partial v}{\partial \varphi} \right\} \frac{\hat{\mathbf{r}}}{r \sin \theta} + \left\{ \frac{1}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial u}{\partial \varphi} - \frac{\partial}{\partial r} (r w) \right\} \frac{\hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}}}{r} + \left\{ \frac{\partial}{\partial r} (r v) - \frac{\partial u}{\partial \theta} \right\} \frac{\hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}}}{r}$$

$$\nabla^2 f = \nabla \cdot \nabla f = \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left( r^2 \frac{\partial f}{\partial r} \right) + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left( \sin \theta \frac{\partial f}{\partial \theta} \right) + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial^2 f}{\partial \varphi^2}$$

Stream Functions and Potentials

If  $\nabla \times \mathbf{q} = \mathbf{0}$  in a simply-connected domain, then  $\mathbf{q} = \nabla \phi$ .

If 
$$\nabla \cdot \mathbf{q} = 0$$
, then  $\mathbf{q} = \nabla \times \mathbf{A}$ .

In two-dimensional flow, if  $\nabla \cdot \mathbf{q} = 0$ , then  $\mathbf{q} = \nabla \times (\psi \,\hat{\mathbf{k}})$ , where  $\hat{\mathbf{k}}$  is the unit basis vector associated with the z direction, and  $\psi$  is independent of z.

In axisymmetric three-dimensional flow, if  $\nabla \cdot \mathbf{q} = 0$ , then with  $\Lambda$  and  $\chi$  independent of the azimuthal angle  $\varphi$ ,

$$\mathbf{q} = \nabla \times \left(\frac{\Lambda}{\sigma}\,\hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}}\right) + \chi\,\hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}} = \left\{\frac{1}{r^2\sin\theta}\,\frac{\partial\Lambda}{\partial\theta}\right\}\hat{\mathbf{r}} - \left\{\frac{1}{r\sin\theta}\,\frac{\partial\Lambda}{\partial r}\right\}\hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}} + \chi\,\hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}}.$$

The rate-of-strain tensor

The rate-of-strain tensor **e** is related to the velocity field **q** by the equation  $\mathbf{e} = \frac{1}{2} \{ \nabla \mathbf{q} + (\nabla \mathbf{q})^T \}$ , where  $\mathbf{A}^T$  denotes the transpose of the tensor  $\mathbf{A}$ .

For cylindrical polar coordinates  $\sigma$ ,  $\varphi$ , z, if  $\mathbf{q} = u\hat{\boldsymbol{\sigma}} + v\hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}} + w\hat{\mathbf{z}}$ , the components of  $\mathbf{e}$  are

$$e_{\sigma\sigma} = \frac{\partial u}{\partial \sigma}$$

$$e_{\varphi\varphi} = \frac{1}{\sigma} \frac{\partial v}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{u}{\sigma}$$

$$e_{zz} = \frac{\partial w}{\partial z}$$

$$e_{\sigma\varphi} = e_{\varphi\sigma} = \frac{\sigma}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial \sigma} \left(\frac{v}{\sigma}\right) + \frac{1}{2\sigma} \frac{\partial u}{\partial \varphi}$$

$$e_{\sigma z} = e_{z\sigma} = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} + \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial w}{\partial \sigma}$$

$$e_{z\varphi} = e_{\varphi z} = \frac{1}{2\sigma} \frac{\partial w}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial v}{\partial z}$$

For spherical polar coordinates r,  $\theta$ ,  $\varphi$ , if  $\mathbf{q} = u\hat{\mathbf{r}} + v\hat{\boldsymbol{\theta}} + w\hat{\boldsymbol{\varphi}}$ , the components of  $\mathbf{e}$  are

$$\begin{split} e_{rr} &= \frac{\partial u}{\partial r} \\ e_{\theta\theta} &= \frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial v}{\partial \theta} + \frac{u}{r} \\ e_{\varphi\varphi} &= \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial w}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{u}{r} + \frac{v \cot \theta}{r} \\ e_{r\theta} &= e_{\theta r} = \frac{r}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left(\frac{v}{r}\right) + \frac{1}{2r} \frac{\partial u}{\partial \theta} \\ e_{r\varphi} &= e_{\varphi r} = \frac{1}{2r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial u}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{r}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left(\frac{w}{r}\right) \\ e_{\theta\varphi} &= e_{\varphi\theta} = \frac{\sin \theta}{2r} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left(\frac{w}{\sin \theta}\right) + \frac{1}{2r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial v}{\partial \varphi} \end{split}$$

These formulae may also be used to deduce the polar coordinate representations of the linear strain tensor in the linear theory of elasticity.