

4.5 Let \vec{n} be any unit 3-vector and $H = \frac{\hbar\omega}{2} \vec{\sigma} \cdot \vec{n}$. Find the energy eigenvalues and eigenvectors: $E_1, E_2, |E_1\rangle$, and $|E_2\rangle$.

Solution. In spherical coordinates, $\vec{n} = \begin{bmatrix} n_x \\ n_y \\ n_z \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \sin\theta \cos\phi \\ \sin\theta \sin\phi \\ \cos\theta \end{bmatrix}$

By problem 3.4, $\lambda = \pm 1$ and $|\lambda_1\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} \cos\frac{\theta}{2} \\ \sin\frac{\theta}{2} e^{i\phi} \end{bmatrix}$ and $|\lambda_2\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} -\sin\frac{\theta}{2} \\ \cos\frac{\theta}{2} e^{i\phi} \end{bmatrix}$.

$$\therefore \boxed{E_1 = \frac{\hbar\omega}{2} \lambda_1 = \frac{\hbar\omega}{2}}, \quad \boxed{E_2 = \frac{\hbar\omega}{2} \lambda_2 = -\frac{\hbar\omega}{2}},$$

$$\boxed{|E_1\rangle = \frac{\hbar\omega}{2} |\lambda_1\rangle = \frac{\hbar\omega}{2} \begin{bmatrix} \cos\frac{\theta}{2} \\ \sin\frac{\theta}{2} e^{i\phi} \end{bmatrix}}$$

$$\text{and } \boxed{|E_2\rangle = \frac{\hbar\omega}{2} \begin{bmatrix} -\sin\frac{\theta}{2} \\ \cos\frac{\theta}{2} e^{i\phi} \end{bmatrix}}$$