

# Fourier Series

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Periodic Functions

### Definition 1.1.1: Periodic Functions

A function  $f(x)$  is said to be have a *period*  $P$  or to be *periodic* with period  $P$  if for all  $x$ ,  $f(x + P) = f(x)$  where  $P$  is a positive constant. The least value of  $P > 0$  is called the *least period* or simply the *period* of  $f(x)$ .

### Example 1.1: Some examples of periodic functions

1.  $\sin x$  has periods  $2\pi, 4\pi, 6\pi, \dots$  and  $-\pi, -3\pi, -5\pi, \dots$  and hence the least period is  $2\pi$ .
2.  $\cos x$  has the least period  $2\pi$ .
3.  $\tan x$  has the least period  $\pi$ .

Some other examples:

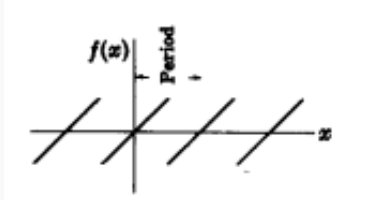


Figure 1.1.1

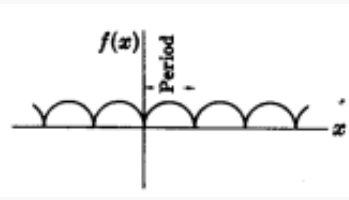


Figure 1.1.2

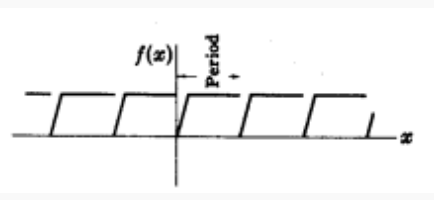


Figure 1.1.3

## 1.2 Piecewise Continuous Functions

### Definition 1.2.1: Piecewise Continuous Functions

A function  $f(x)$  is said to be *piecewise continuous* in the interval  $[a, b]$  if  $f(x)$  is continuous in the interval  $(a, b)$  and has a finite number of finite discontinuities in the interval  $[a, b]$ .

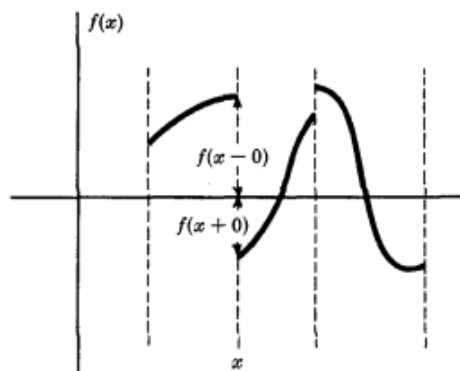


Figure 1.2.1

The right-hand limit of  $f(x)$  is often denoted by  $\lim_{\epsilon \rightarrow 0} f(x + \epsilon) = f(x + 0)$ , where  $\epsilon > 0$ .

Similarly, the left-hand limit of  $f(x)$  is denoted by  $\lim_{\epsilon \rightarrow 0} f(x - \epsilon) = f(x - 0)$ , where  $\epsilon > 0$ . The values of  $f(x + 0)$  and  $f(x - 0)$  at the point  $x$  in (1.2.1) are as indicated.

## 2 Fourier Expansion

### 2.1 Definition and Derivation

#### 2.1.1 Definition

##### Definition 2.1.1: Fourier Expansion

Let  $f(x)$  be defined in the interval  $(-L, L)$  and determined outside of this interval by  $f(x+2L) = f(x)$ , i.e. assume that  $f(x)$  has the period  $2L$ . The *Fourier series* or *Fourier expansion* corresponding to  $f(x)$  is defined to be

$$f(x) = \frac{a_0}{2} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left[ a_n \cos \left( \frac{n\pi x}{L} \right) + b_n \sin \left( \frac{n\pi x}{L} \right) \right] \quad (1)$$

where the *Fourier coefficients*  $a_n$  and  $b_n$  are given by

$$\begin{cases} a_0 = \frac{1}{L} \int_{-L}^L f(x) dx \\ a_n = \frac{1}{L} \int_{-L}^L f(x) \cos \left( \frac{n\pi x}{L} \right) dx \\ b_n = \frac{1}{L} \int_{-L}^L f(x) \sin \left( \frac{n\pi x}{L} \right) dx \end{cases} \quad n = 0, 1, 2, \dots \quad (2)$$

#### 2.1.2 Some pre-derivations

$$\begin{aligned} I &= \int_{-L}^L \sin^2 \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx \\ &= \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} \cdot \frac{L}{n\pi} (\cos n\pi - \cos n\pi) + \frac{n\pi}{L} \cdot \frac{L}{n\pi} \int_{-L}^L \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx \\ &= \int_{-L}^L \cos^2 \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \int_{-L}^L \left( \cos \frac{2n\pi x}{L} + 1 \right) dx \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \int_{-L}^L \cos \frac{2n\pi x}{L} dx + \frac{1}{2} \int_{-L}^L dx \\ &= 0 + \frac{1}{2} \cdot 2L \\ &= L \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
I_1 &= \int_{-L}^L \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx \quad [m \neq 0] \\
&= \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} \int_{-L}^L \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx + \frac{m}{n} \int_{-L}^L \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx \\
&= \frac{L}{n\pi} \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} (\sin n\pi + \sin n\pi) + \frac{m}{n} I_2 \\
&= 0 + \frac{m}{n} \left[ \int_{-L}^L \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx \right] \\
&= \frac{m}{n} \left[ \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} \int_{-L}^L \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx + \frac{m}{n} \int_{-L}^L \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx \right] \\
&= \frac{m}{n} \left[ \frac{L}{n\pi} \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} (-\cos n\pi + \cos n\pi) + \frac{m}{n} \right] \\
&= 0 + \frac{m^2}{n^2} I_1 \\
I_1 &= 0 = I_2
\end{aligned}$$

To summarize, we have

$$\int_{-L}^L \sin^2 \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx = \int_{-L}^L \cos^2 \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx = L \quad (3)$$

$$\int_{-L}^L \cos mx dx = \int_{-L}^L \sin mx dx = 0 \quad (4)$$

$$\int_{-L}^L \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} dx = 0 \quad (5)$$

$$\int_{-L}^L \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx = \int_{-L}^L \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx = 0 \quad [m \neq n] \quad (6)$$

### 2.1.3 Derivation of $a_0$

Taking integral on both sides of (1) from  $-L$  to  $L$ , we get

$$\begin{aligned}
\int_{-L}^L f(x) dx &= \frac{a_0}{2} \int_{-L}^L dx + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \int_{-L}^L \left[ a_n \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} + b_n \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} \right] dx \\
&= \frac{a_0}{2} \cdot 2L \quad [\text{All the other terms are 0 according to equation (4)}]
\end{aligned}$$

$$\boxed{a_0 = \frac{1}{L} \int_{-L}^L f(x) dx}$$

### 2.1.4 Derivation of $a_n$

Multiplying both sides of (1) by  $\cos \frac{m\pi x}{L}$  and integrating from  $-L$  to  $L$ , we get

$$\begin{aligned}
\int_{-L}^L f(x) \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx &= \frac{a_0}{2} \int_{-L}^L \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx \\
&\quad + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \int_{-L}^L \left[ a_n \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} + b_n \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} \right] dx \\
&= a_n \int_{-L}^L \cos^2 \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx \\
&= a_n \cdot L \quad [\text{All the other terms are 0 according to equation (2)}]
\end{aligned}$$

$$a_n = \frac{1}{L} \int_{-L}^L f(x) \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx$$

### 2.1.5 Derivation of $b_n$

Multiplying both sides of (1) by  $\sin \frac{m\pi x}{L}$  and integrating from  $-L$  to  $L$ , we get

$$\begin{aligned}
\int_{-L}^L f(x) \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx &= \frac{a_0}{2} \int_{-L}^L \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx \\
&\quad + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \int_{-L}^L \left[ a_n \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} + b_n \sin \frac{n\pi x}{L} \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} \right] dx \\
&= a_n \int_{-L}^L \sin^2 \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx \\
&= a_n \cdot L \quad [\text{All the other terms are 0 according to equation (2)}]
\end{aligned}$$

$$b_n = \frac{1}{L} \int_{-L}^L f(x) \sin \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx$$

**Example 2.1:** Obtain the F.S for  $f(x) = x - x^2$  in the interval  $(-\pi, \pi)$  and hence evaluate

$$\frac{1}{1^2} - \frac{1}{2^2} + \frac{1}{3^2} - \frac{1}{4^2} + \cdots$$

$$f(x) = \frac{a_0}{2} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} (a_n \cos nx + b_n \sin nx)$$

where

$$a_0 = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x) dx = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} (x - x^2) dx = \frac{1}{\pi} \left[ \frac{x^2}{2} - \frac{x^3}{3} \right]_{-\pi}^{\pi} = -\frac{2\pi^2}{3}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
a_n &= \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x) \cos nx dx = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} (x - x^2) \cos nx dx \\
&= \frac{1}{\pi} \left[ \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} x \cos nx dx - \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} x^2 \cos nx dx \right] \\
&= -\frac{2}{\pi} \int_0^{\pi} x^2 \cos nx dx \\
&= -\frac{2}{\pi} \left[ \frac{x^2}{n} \sin nx - \frac{2}{n} \int x \sin nx dx \right]_0^{\pi} \\
&= \frac{4}{n\pi} \left[ -\frac{x}{n} \cos nx + \frac{1}{n^2} \sin nx \right]_0^{\pi} \\
&= -\frac{4}{n^2} (-1)^n
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
b_n &= \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x) \sin nx dx \\
&= \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} (x - x^2) \sin nx dx \\
&= \frac{1}{\pi} \left[ \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} x \sin nx dx - \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} x^2 \sin nx dx \right] \\
&= \frac{2}{\pi} \int_0^{\pi} x \sin nx dx \\
&= \frac{2}{\pi} \left[ -\frac{x}{n} \cos nx + \frac{1}{n^2} \sin nx \right]_0^{\pi} \\
&= -\frac{2}{n} (-1)^n
\end{aligned}$$

$$\therefore f(x) = -\frac{\pi^2}{3} - \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left( \frac{4}{n^2} (-1)^n \cos nx + \frac{2}{n} (-1)^n \sin nx \right)$$

For  $x = 0$ , we get

$$0 = -\frac{\pi^2}{3} - \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{4}{n^2} (-1)^n$$

$$\frac{\pi^2}{12} = -\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} (-1)^n \frac{1}{n^2}$$

$$\boxed{\therefore 1 - \frac{1}{2^2} + \frac{1}{3^2} - \frac{1}{4^2} + \cdots = \frac{\pi^2}{12}}$$

**Example 2.2:** Find a fourier series to represent the function  $f(x) = e^x$  for  $-\pi < x < \pi$  and hence derive a series for  $\frac{\pi}{\sinh \pi}$

$$f(x) = \frac{a_0}{2} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} (a_n \cos nx + b_n \sin nx)$$

where

$$a_0 = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x) dx = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} e^x dx = \frac{1}{\pi} e^x \Big|_{-\pi}^{\pi} = \frac{e^{\pi} - e^{-\pi}}{\pi} = \frac{2 \sinh x}{\pi}$$

$$\begin{aligned} a_n &= \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} e^x \cos nx \, dx \\ &= \frac{1}{\pi} \left[ e^x \frac{\sin nx}{n} - \frac{1}{n} \int e^x \sin nx \, dx \right]_{-\pi}^{\pi} \\ &= -\frac{1}{n\pi} \left[ -e^x \frac{\cos nx}{n} + \frac{1}{n} \int e^x \cos nx \, dx \right]_{-\pi}^{\pi} \end{aligned}$$

$$a_n \left( 1 + \frac{1}{n^2} \right) = \frac{(-1)^n}{n^2 \pi} (e^{\pi} - e^{-\pi})$$

$$a_n = \frac{(-1)^n}{n^2 \pi} (e^{\pi} - e^{-\pi}) \left( 1 + \frac{1}{n^2} \right)^{-1}$$

$$a_n = 2 \frac{(-1)^n}{n^2 \pi} \sinh x \left( 1 + \frac{1}{n^2} \right)^{-1}$$

$$\begin{aligned} b_n &= \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} e^x \sin nx \, dx \\ &= \frac{1}{\pi} \left[ -e^x \frac{\cos nx}{n} + \frac{1}{n} \int e^x \cos nx \, dx \right]_{-\pi}^{\pi} \\ &= \frac{1}{\pi} \left[ -e^x \frac{\cos nx}{n} + \frac{1}{n} \left\{ e^x \frac{\sin nx}{n} - \frac{1}{n} \int e^x \sin nx \, dx \right\} \right]_{-\pi}^{\pi} \\ &= \frac{1}{\pi} \left[ -e^x \frac{\cos nx}{n} - \frac{1}{n^2} \int e^x \sin nx \, dx \right] \end{aligned}$$

$$b_n = -\frac{(-1)^n}{n\pi} (e^{\pi} - e^{-\pi}) \left( 1 + \frac{1}{n^2} \right)^{-1}$$

$$b_n = -2 \frac{(-1)^n}{n\pi} \sinh x \left( 1 + \frac{1}{n^2} \right)^{-1}$$

$$\boxed{f(x) = e^x = 2 \frac{\sinh x}{\pi} \left[ \frac{1}{2} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left( 1 + \frac{1}{n^2} \right)^{-1} \frac{(-1)^n}{n} \left( \frac{1}{n} \cos nx - \sin nx \right) \right]}$$

For  $x = 0$ , we get

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\pi}{\sinh x} &= 1 + 2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \left( 1 + \frac{1}{n^2} \right)^{-1} \frac{(-1)^n}{n^2} \\ &= 1 + 2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n}{n^2 + 1} \end{aligned}$$

$$\boxed{\frac{\pi}{\sinh x} = 1 + 2 \left( -\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{5} - \frac{1}{10} + \cdots \right)}$$

change2