

Let $A^{i_{n+1}i_{n+2}\dots i_{2n}}$ be an antisymmetric tensor with rank- n , and let

$$B^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} = \frac{1}{n!} \epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} A^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} \quad (1)$$

It's easy to see that B is also antisymmetric.

Now we shall show that

$$A^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} = \frac{1}{n!} \epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} B^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} \quad (2)$$

Plugging (1) into (2), we want to show

$$\begin{aligned} A^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} &= \frac{1}{n!} \epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} B^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} \\ &= \frac{1}{n!} \frac{1}{n!} \epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} \left(\epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} A^{j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} \right) \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

On the RHS, the sum is over the indices $i_1, i_2, \dots, i_n, j_1, j_2, \dots, j_n$. Let the "outer" sum be over i_{1-n} 's, and let the "inner" sum be over j_{1-n} 's.

Given any combination of distinct $i_{n+1}, i_{n+2}, \dots, i_{2n}$ chosen from the $2n$ values, there are $n!$ ways to choose i_1, i_2, \dots, i_n so the first ϵ on RHS is non-zero. For each such choice of i_{1-n} , there are $n!$ choices for j_{1-n} in the inner sum to make the second ϵ non-zero. We know that all these j_{1-n} values must be a permutation of i_{n+1}, \dots, i_{2n} . Since A is antisymmetric, $A^{j_1 j_2 \dots j_n}$ is just $A^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}}$ with a sign determined by whether the aforementioned permutation is even or odd. But multiplying $A^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}}$ with $\epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n j_1 j_2 \dots j_n}$ will exactly cancel this sign for all permutations. This means the inner sum can be determined to be

$$\epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} A^{j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} = n! \cdot \epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} A^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}}$$

Now plugging this into the outer sum and use $\epsilon\epsilon = 1$ (for non-zero ϵ 's), we obtain (3).

Now notice that in (1), A 's indices are contracting with the second half of ϵ 's indices, while in (2), B 's indices are contracting with the first half of ϵ 's indices. If we define "dual" as either (1) or (2), it's not going to be well defined since the two definitions differed by a sign when n is odd.

But we do want to maintain the invariance that "the dual of the dual is identity". This can be fixed by defining "dual" as (1) with an extra constant c (to be determined).

Plugging c into the "dual-of-dual", we have

$$\begin{aligned} D^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} &= \text{dual-of}(A^{j_1 j_2 \dots j_n}) = c \cdot \frac{1}{n!} \epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} A^{j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} \\ E^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} &= \text{dual-of}(D^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n}) = c \cdot \frac{1}{n!} \epsilon^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n} i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} D^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} \\ &= \left(c \cdot \frac{1}{n!} \right)^2 \epsilon^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n} i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} \left(\epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} A^{j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} \right) \\ &= \left(c \cdot \frac{1}{n!} \right)^2 (-1)^n \epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} \left(\epsilon^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} A^{j_1 j_2 \dots j_n} \right) \quad (\text{by (3)}) \\ &= c^2 (-1)^n A^{i_{n+1} i_{n+2} \dots i_{2n}} \end{aligned}$$

So if we want "dual-of-dual" to be identity, we must have $c^2 = (-1)^n$, which can be satisfied by setting $c = i^n$. Then it's straightforward to see that

$$\begin{aligned} T_+^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} &= (A^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} + \text{dual-of}(A^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n})) \\ T_-^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} &= (A^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n} - \text{dual-of}(A^{i_1 i_2 \dots i_n})) \end{aligned}$$

are self-dual and anti-self-dual respectively.