

We derive the n^{th} derivative of the delta function from the sifting property

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(x)\delta(x-a)dx = f(a) \quad (1)$$

with $a = 0$, we integrate by parts the LHS to get

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(x)\delta(x)dx = [f(x)H(x)]_{-\infty}^{\infty} - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f'(x)H(x)dx \quad (2)$$

It is assumed $f(x)$ vanishes at infinity and therefore becomes

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(x)\delta(x)dx = - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f'(x) \left(\int_{-\infty}^x \delta(y) dy \right) dx \quad (3)$$

For the integral of the n^{th} derivative of the delta function we can write

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(x)\delta^{(n)}(x)dx = - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{df}{dx} \delta^{(n-1)}(x)dx \quad (4)$$

Using this we let $f(x) = xg(x)$. Inserting this into the above equation for the first derivative we find

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} xg(x)\delta'(x)dx = - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left(\frac{d}{dx} xg(x) \right) \delta(x)dx \quad (5)$$

$$= - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} (g(x) + xg'(x)) \delta(x)dx \quad (6)$$

$$= - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} g(x)\delta(x)dx \quad (7)$$

This equation implies

$$x\delta'(x) = -\delta(x) \quad (8)$$

Repeating this for the n^{th} derivative, in general we can write

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} x^n g(x)\delta^{(n)}(x)dx = - \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{d^n}{dx^n} [x^n g(x)] \delta^{(n-1)}(x)dx \quad (9)$$

$$= (-1)^n n! \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} g(x)\delta(x)dx \quad (10)$$

This gives the relation

$$x^n \delta^{(n)}(x) = (-1)^n n! \delta(x) \quad (11)$$