

Spherical coordinates

$$\begin{aligned} x &= r \sin \theta \cos \varphi & y &= r \sin \theta \sin \varphi & z &= r \cos \theta \\ r &= (x^2 + y^2 + z^2)^{1/2} & \theta &= \cos^{-1}\left(\frac{z}{r}\right) & \varphi &= \tan^{-1}\left(\frac{y}{x}\right) \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x} = \frac{\partial r}{\partial x} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial x} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial x} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi}$$

$$\frac{\partial r}{\partial x} = \frac{x}{(x^2 + y^2 + z^2)^{1/2}} = \frac{x}{r}; \quad \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial x} = \frac{-1}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{z^2}{r^2}}} \cdot \frac{-xz}{r^3} = \frac{(-r) \cdot (-xz)}{\sqrt{x^2 + y^2} \cdot r^3} = \frac{\cos \theta \cos \varphi}{r}$$

$$\frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial x} = \frac{1}{1 + \frac{y^2}{x^2}} \cdot \left(\frac{y}{x}\right)' = \frac{-y^2}{x^2 + y^2} = \frac{-r \sin^2 \theta \sin \varphi}{r^2 \sin^2 \theta} = \frac{-\sin \varphi}{r \sin \theta}$$

$$\boxed{\frac{\partial}{\partial x} = (\sin \theta \cos \varphi) \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \left(\frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi\right) \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \left(-\frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta}\right) \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi}}$$

What is $\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2}$? \rightarrow think of operator... + product rule...

$$\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x} \right) = (\sin \theta \cos \varphi) \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial x} \right] + \left(\frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \right) \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial x} \right] + \left(-\frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \right) \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial x} \right]$$

$$= \sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left[\sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \left(-\frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \right) \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \right]$$

$$+ \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left[\sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \left(-\frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \right) \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \right]$$

$$- \frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \left[\sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \left(-\frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \right) \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \right]$$

Product rule

$$\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} = \sin \theta \cos \varphi \left[\sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} - \frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial \theta} \right] +$$

$$\frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \left[\cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} + \sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial r} + \left(-\frac{1}{r} \right) \sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} + \right.$$

$$\left. + \left(-\frac{1}{r} \right) \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial \varphi} \right] - \frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \left[-\sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial r} - \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial \theta} \right.$$

$$\left. - \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} - \frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \right] \cdot \boxed{\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2}} = \left[\sin^2 \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \right.$$

$$\left. \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \cos \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} - \frac{1}{r} \cos \varphi \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \varphi} \right] + \left[\frac{1}{r} \cos^2 \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \cos \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial r} \right.$$

$$\left. - \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \theta \cos \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos^2 \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\sin \varphi \cos \varphi \cos^2 \theta}{\sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial \varphi} \right] + \left[\frac{1}{r} \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \right.$$

$$\left. - \frac{1}{r} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial r} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \varphi \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\sin^2 \varphi}{\sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \right]$$

$$\frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial y} = \frac{1 \cdot \cos \varphi}{r \sin \theta}$$

$$\boxed{\frac{\partial}{\partial y} = \frac{\partial r}{\partial y} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial y} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial y} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi}} \quad \text{where } \frac{\partial r}{\partial y} = \frac{y}{r} = \sin \theta \sin \varphi; \quad \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial y} = \frac{1 \cos \theta \sin \varphi}{r}$$

$$\hookrightarrow \frac{\partial}{\partial y} = \sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi}$$

$$\hookrightarrow \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2} = \sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial y} \right] + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial y} \right] + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial y} \right]$$

$$= \sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left[\sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \right] + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left[\sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \right] + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \left[\sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \right]$$

Product rule

$$\frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2} = \sin \theta \sin \varphi \left[\sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} - \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \varphi} \right]$$

$$+ \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \left[\cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial \varphi} \right]$$

$$- \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi \cdot \cos \theta}{\sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \left] + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \left[\sin \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial \theta} \right]$$

$$- \frac{1}{r} \frac{\sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \left] \quad \boxed{L_0} \quad \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2} = \left[\sin^2 \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \right.$$

$$\left. \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} - \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{1}{r} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \varphi} \right] + \left[\frac{1}{r} \cos^2 \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} \right.$$

$$\left. + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos^2 \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \theta \cos \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\cos \theta \sin \theta \cos \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial \varphi} - \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\cos \varphi \sin \varphi \cos^2 \theta}{\sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} \right] +$$

$$\left[\frac{1}{r} \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial r} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\cos \theta \cos^2 \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\cos \varphi \cos \theta \sin \varphi}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\sin \varphi \cos \varphi}{\sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\cos^2 \varphi}{\sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \right]$$

$$\boxed{\frac{\partial}{\partial z} = \frac{\partial r}{\partial z} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial z} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial z} \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi}} \quad \text{where } \frac{\partial r}{\partial z} = \frac{z}{r} = \cos \theta, \quad \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial z} = \frac{-1}{r} \sin \theta, \quad \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial z} = 0$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial z} = \cos \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + 0 \quad \text{So } \frac{\partial^2}{\partial z^2} = \cos \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial z} \right] - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial z} \right] = \cos \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left[\cos \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \right]$$

$$- \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left[\cos \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \right] = \cos \theta \left[\cos \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} \right] - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \left[-\sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \right.$$

$$\left. \cos \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial r} - \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} \right] = \left[\cos^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} - \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} \right]$$

$$+ \left[\frac{1}{r} \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \cos \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial r} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \theta \cos \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} \right]$$

So the Laplacian $\nabla^2 f = \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2} + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial z^2} = \left[\sin^2 \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \right.$
 $\left. \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \theta \cos \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin^2 \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \varphi \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial \varphi} \right] + \left[\frac{1}{r} \cos^2 \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \cos \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial r} \right.$
 $\left. \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \theta \cos \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos^2 \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin^2 \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \right] - \left[\frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial \varphi} \right]$
 $+ \left[\frac{1}{r} \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial r} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin^2 \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \right]$
 $+ \left[\frac{1}{r^2} \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \right] + \left[\sin^2 \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} - \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \right]$
 $\frac{1}{r} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \varphi} + \left[\frac{1}{r} \cos^2 \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial r} - \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \theta \cos \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos^2 \theta \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} \right]$
 $- \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \varphi \sin \varphi \cos^2 \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \varphi} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial \varphi} + \left[\frac{1}{r} \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r} \sin \varphi \cos \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi \partial r} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos^2 \varphi \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \right.$
 $\left. \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \varphi \sin \theta \sin \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial \varphi} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin^2 \varphi \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} \right] + \left[\cos^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} + \frac{1}{r^2} \cos \theta \sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \right.$
 $\left. - \frac{1}{r} \cos \theta \sin \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r \partial \theta} \right] + \left[\frac{1}{r} \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial r} - \frac{1}{r} \sin \theta \cos \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta \partial r} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin \theta \cos \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} + \frac{1}{r^2} \sin^2 \theta \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} \right]$

Simplify $\rightarrow \nabla^2 = \frac{\partial^2}{\partial r^2} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta^2} + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin^2 \theta} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \varphi^2} + \frac{2}{r} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} + \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\cot \theta}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta}$

$$\nabla^2 = \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left[r^2 \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \right] + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin^2 \theta} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \left(\sin \theta \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} \right) \right] + \frac{1}{r^2 \sin^2 \theta} \left[\frac{\partial^2}{\partial \phi^2} \right]$$