

(Instructor: Chien-I Chiang)

Physics 105: Analytical Mechanics notes

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These are some very terse notes taken from UC Berkeley's Physics 105 during the Summer '24 session, taught by Chien-I Chiang.

This template is based heavily off of the one produced by [Kevin Zhou](#).

Contents

1	First topic	2
2	July 3, 2024:	3
2.1	Finishing up discussion from last lecture	3
2.2	The Method of Lagrange Multipliers	5
3	July 8, 2024:	8
3.1	More about Lagrange Multipliers	8
3.2	Example: Tree log rolling down a ramp	9
3.3	Example: A bead on a wire	10
4	July 9, 2024: Symmetries and Lagrangians	12
4.1	Note about the discussion from last time	12
4.2	Symmetries	12
4.3	Continuous Transformations	12
4.4	Example: Spacial Translation	15
4.5	Example: Time Translation	15
4.6	Example: Isotropic Harmonic Oscillator under rotation	16
5	July 15: Obtaining Lagrangians from Symmetries	18
5.1	Central Force Problem	20

1 First topic

text

2 July 3, 2024:

2.1 Finishing up discussion from last lecture

- Finish this from lecture recording

Continuing on with out discussion of when $H \neq E$, we can parametrize the position of a particle as $\vec{r} = \vec{r}(q_k, t)$

We have

$$\frac{\partial K}{\partial \dot{q}_k} = \frac{1}{2}m \left[2 \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_k} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_m} \dot{q}_m + \dots \right]$$

Then,

$$\begin{cases} \frac{\partial K}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \dot{q}_k = m \left[\left(\frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_k} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_m} \dot{q}_k \dot{q}_m \right) + \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_k} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} \dot{q}_k \right] \\ 2K = m \left[\left(\frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_k} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_m} \dot{q}_k \dot{q}_m \right) + 2 \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_k} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} \dot{q}_k + \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} \right] \end{cases}$$

(The expression for $2K$ is obtained by expanding out

$$K = \frac{1}{2}m \frac{d\vec{r}}{dt} \cdot \frac{d\vec{r}}{dt}$$

in terms of indices – write this out explicitly later)

Which gives us the relation

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial K}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \dot{q}_k &= 2K - m \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_k} \dot{q}_k + \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} \right)}_{= \frac{d\vec{r}}{dt}} \\ &= 2K - \vec{p} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} \end{aligned}$$

The question we were originally considering is **When is $H = E$?**

Now,

$$\begin{aligned} H &= \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \dot{q}_k - L \\ &= \frac{\partial K}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \dot{q}_k = (K - V) \\ &= 2K - \vec{p} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} - K + V \\ &= K + V - \vec{p} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} \end{aligned}$$

So we see that $H = E = K + V$ only when

$$\frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} = 0$$

i.e. when $\vec{r} = \vec{r}(q_k, t)$ has no time dependence i.e. $\vec{r} = \vec{r}(q_k)$

Earlier, we considered the following setup:

and we showed that

$$H = E - m\omega^2 \rho^2$$

So, let's check that

$$m\omega^2 \rho^2 = \vec{p} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \vec{p} \cdot \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} &= \vec{p} \cdot (-\rho\omega \sin(\omega t)\hat{x} + \rho\omega \sin(\omega t)\hat{y}) \\ &= \vec{p} \cdot [\rho\omega \hat{\phi}] \\ &= mv_\phi \rho\omega \\ &= m\rho^2 \omega^2 \end{aligned}$$

where $v_\phi = \rho\omega$

Since the hamiltonian itself has no time dependence, **H is conserved**. However, **E is not**. We can check that

$$dH = dE = d(m\omega^2 \rho^2)$$

is indeed zero.

[Include figure]

If we break the force on the bead into a normal force (denoted N) and a centripetal(?) force, then

$$\begin{aligned} dW &= \overbrace{N\rho}^{\text{torque about z-axis}} d\phi \\ &= \frac{dl_z}{dt} d\phi \\ &= d(\rho m \rho \omega) \omega \\ &= d(m\rho^2 \omega^2) \end{aligned}$$

This is the energy that goes into the system.

By energy conservation, $dW = dE$.

$$\implies 0 = dE - dW = dE - d(m\rho^2 \omega^2)$$

i.e. $E - m\rho^2 \omega^2 = H$ is a conserved quantity.

So, the **Hamiltonian being conserved** and the **Hamiltonian being equal to Energy** are two different scenarios with two different conditions.

- The Lagrangian is time-independent i.e. $\frac{\partial L}{\partial t} = 0 \implies H$ is conserved.
- The position vector centered in an inertial frame $\vec{r} = \vec{r}(q_k, t)$ is time independent i.e. $\frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial t} = 0 \implies H = E$

Now we move on to a powerful technique.

2.2 The Method of Lagrange Multipliers

We have a block constrained to move on the xy -plane, and we have gravity. Previously, we would say

$$L = \frac{1}{2}m(\dot{x}^2 + \dot{y}^2 + \dot{z}^2) - mgz$$

i.e we would start with an unconstrained lagrangian, and then plug in the constraints $z = 0, \dot{z} = 0$

$$\begin{aligned} L &= \frac{1}{2}m(\dot{x}^2 + \dot{y}^2) \\ \implies \begin{cases} m\ddot{x} = 0 \\ m\ddot{y} = 0 \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

Alternatively, we can implement the constraint $\ddot{z} = 0$ in the following way: We have the original lagrangian

$$L' = \frac{1}{2}m(\dot{x}^2 + \dot{y}^2 + \dot{z}^2) - mgz + \lambda z$$

where λ is the Lagrange multiplier and we can think of z as being the constraint function $f(z)$ and our constraint is $f(z) = 0$.

If we treat λ as an independent degree of freedom, we can write the Euler-Lagrange equation for λ as

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial \lambda} - \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{\lambda}} \right) = 0 \implies z = 0 \text{ (constraint)}$$

On the other hand, if we look at the equation of motion for z , we get

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial z} - \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{z}} \right) = 0 \implies \lambda - mg - m\ddot{z} = 0 \implies m\ddot{z} = \lambda - mg$$

and using the constraint $z = 0 \implies \ddot{z} = 0$ we get $-mg + \lambda = 0 \implies \lambda = mg$. Okay, but what physical meaning does λ have? It has to do with the **Normal force**. i.e. λ is encoding the **constraint** that the block can only move on the xy -plane due to the Normal force.

So, in general, for N constraints we have Lagrange Multipliers $\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_N$.

Why do we call λ a Lagrange Multiplier?

Recall from Calc 3 that if we have contours of a function $f(x, y)$ on the xy -plane and we are constrained to move along some other curve $g(x, y) = c$ on the plane, if we ask "What is the extremum of $f(x, y)$ as we move along the curve $g(x, y) = c$?" then visually we can tell that the extremum corresponds to the point where $g(x, y)$ intersects the contour of $f(x, y)$ only once. This is because at such a point, the gradients of the two functions are parallel:

$$\nabla g = \lambda \nabla f$$

This constant multiplier is the **Lagrange Multiplier**

So, in general, if we have a Lagrangian

$$L = \frac{1}{2}m(\dot{x}^2 + \dot{y}^2 + \dot{z}^2) - V(x, y, z)$$

we know that $\delta L = 0$ gives the Equations of Motion. But if we want to do this variation δL under some constraint $C(x, y, z) = 0$ then we need to consider

$$\delta L = \lambda \delta C \implies L' = L - \lambda C$$

Generally, if we have P constraints, $C_l(q_1, \dots, t) = 0$, $l = 1, \dots, P$ on the lagrangian L , we can write a new lagrangian

$$L' = L + \sum_{l=1}^P \lambda_l C_l$$

The Euler-Lagrange equation for λ_l leads to $C_l = 0$ and the Euler-Lagrange equation for the generalized coordinate q_k is

$$\begin{aligned} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial q_k} - \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \right) - \sum_{l=1}^P \lambda_l \frac{C_l}{q_k} \right) &= 0 \\ \Rightarrow \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \right) &= \frac{\partial L}{\partial q_k} + \underbrace{\sum_{l=1}^P \lambda_l \frac{C_l}{q_k}}_{\text{generalized force}} \end{aligned}$$

On the physical point of view, consider the following system:

[include picture of block and sledge which can both move]

If we consider the system as a whole, the normal forces due to the block and the sledge are equal and opposite, so they cancel each other out - and so does the work that they do(?).

However if we consider the block only - we do have a normal force. The block is constrained to only move on the surface of the slope, so we can write

$$L' = K - V + \int^{\vec{r}} \vec{F}_C(\vec{r}) \cdot d\vec{r}'$$

(This is a bit handwavy - watch the lecture recording and think about this)

Then, if we compare this with

$$L' = L - V + \sum_l \lambda_l C_l$$

we have

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_l \lambda_l C_l &= \int^{\vec{r}} \vec{F}_C \cdot d\vec{r}' = \int^{\vec{r}} \vec{F} \cdot \left(\frac{\partial \vec{r}'}{\partial q_k} \cdot dq_k \right) \\ \Rightarrow \frac{\partial}{\partial q_k} \left(\sum_l \lambda_l C_l \right) &= \vec{F} \cdot \left(\frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_k} \right) \equiv \mathcal{F}_k \text{ (generalized force)} \end{aligned}$$

3 July 8, 2024:

3.1 More about Lagrange Multipliers

Last time, we saw that if we have constraints $C_l \left(\underbrace{q_1, \dots, q_k}_N, t \right) = 0$ then we can write a constrained Lagrangian

$$L' = K - V + \sum_l \lambda_l C_l$$

These kinds of constraints, which are only constraints of the generalized coordinates are called **Holonomic constraints**. But these are not the most general constraints; we can have constraints which also depend on the derivatives \dot{q}_k . Those types of constraints are called **Non-holonomic constraints**.

Then, the principle of stationary action gives us

$$0 = \delta S \implies \begin{cases} \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \right) = \frac{\partial L}{\partial q_k} + \sum_l \underbrace{\lambda_l C_l}_{\bar{F}^C \frac{\partial \vec{r}}{\partial q_k}} \\ C_l = 0 \end{cases}$$

Note that there are multiple ways to write the same constraint. And writing a constraint in a different manner changes the C_l , which further changes the λ_l . As such, the λ_l is not always a generalized force; it can also be a torque etc.

In total we have $N + P$ variables and $N + P$ equations, so we are able to solve the system if we know the initial conditions.

We got the above equation by varying the action, and in particular, by varying L with respect to q_k . But we can extend this a bit further...

$$\begin{cases} \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \right) = \frac{\partial L}{\partial q_k} + \sum_l a_{lk} \lambda_l \\ a_{lk} \delta q_k + a_{lt} \delta t = 0 \end{cases}$$

(Here, the l index labels the **constraint** and the k labels the coordinate.)

In the case of Holonomic constraint,

$$\begin{aligned} a_{lk} &= \frac{\partial C_l}{\partial q_k} \\ a_{lt} &= \frac{\partial C_l}{\partial t} \end{aligned}$$

For Holonomic constraint, we will have

$$\frac{\partial q_{lk}}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial q_{lt}}{\partial q_k}$$

3.2 Example: Tree log rolling down a ramp

Consider a tree log rolling down a (fixed) ramp without sliding.

[Include Figure]

To describe the motion of the log, generically, we need two degrees of freedom: X and θ .

But we also know the log is rolling **without sliding**. So if the tree moves a distance dx during rotation $d\phi$, then we know $Rd\phi = dx$ where R is the radius of the log. Or in other words,

$$Rd\phi - dx = 0$$

This constraint is of the general form we saw above: $a_{lk}\delta q_k + a_{lt}\delta t = 0$ with $a_{1,\theta} = R, a_{1,x} = -1$ and all the time components $a_{lt} = 0$.

Now, we can write the Lagrangian of this system:

$$L = \frac{1}{2}M(\dot{X}^2) + \frac{1}{2}I\dot{\theta}^2 + mgX \sin(\alpha)$$

Note that we're actually kind of mixing approaches here. Technically there should be *three* degrees of freedom because the log can move in (x, y) space and rotate, but we know that the log is constrained by the Normal force and we don't need both of x, y ; just one will suffice.

Wait... so, why do we even bother using the Lagrange Multiplier stuff if we're gonna use the old method too?

The Lagrange multiplier method allows us to retain info about the contact forces so if we, say, want to find the magnitude of the tension in a string, we can still do so using the Lagrange Multiplier method. Whereas in the old method, contact forces are used to enforce constraints but we lose all information about them.

Anyway, after writing down the lagrangian, we can obtain the Equations of Motion (with the constraints):

$$\begin{cases} \frac{d}{dt} \left(m\dot{X} \right) = +mg \sin(\alpha) - \lambda_1 \\ \frac{d}{dt} \left(I\dot{\theta} \right) = \lambda_1 R \end{cases}$$

So, what exactly is λ_1 ?

In the X equation of motion, we have $+mg \sin(\alpha)$ which is the component of gravity along the ramp. So, λ_1 has the same units as force. We can interpret λ_1 as the **frictional force!**

Then, in the θ equation of motion, we can interpret $\lambda_1 R$ as the **torque due to friction!**

Solving these further we have

$$\begin{cases} m\ddot{X} = mg \sin(\alpha) - \lambda_1 & (1) \\ I\ddot{\theta} = \lambda_1 R & (2) \\ R\dot{\theta} = \dot{X} \text{ (from the no-sliding condition)} \implies R\ddot{\theta} = \ddot{X} & (3) \end{cases}$$

Substituting (3) into (1) gives

$$\begin{aligned} & \begin{cases} mR\ddot{\theta} = mg \sin(\alpha) - \lambda_1 \\ \frac{I}{R}\ddot{\theta} = \lambda_1 \end{cases} \\ & \implies mR \left(\lambda_1 \frac{R}{I} \right) = mg \sin(\alpha) - \lambda_1 \\ & \implies \left(1 + \frac{mR^2}{I} \right) \lambda_1 = mg \sin(\alpha) \\ & \implies \boxed{\lambda = \frac{mg \sin(\alpha)}{\left(1 + \frac{mR^2}{I} \right)}} \text{ This is the magnitude of friction!} \end{aligned}$$

3.3 Example: A bead on a wire

We've seen this example before, but this time we want to calculate the normal force on the bead.

[Include Figure]

Using the Lagrange Multiplier method, we can write down the constrained Lagrangian as

$$L' = \frac{1}{2}m \left[\dot{\rho}^2 + \rho^2 \dot{\phi}^2 + \dot{z}^2 \right] - mgz - \lambda_1 (\phi - \omega t) - \lambda_2 (z - \alpha \rho^2)$$

So, the EL Equations look like

$$\begin{cases} m\ddot{\rho} = n\rho\dot{\phi}^2 - 2\lambda_2\alpha\rho \\ \frac{d}{dt} (m\rho^2\dot{\phi}) = \lambda_1 \\ m\ddot{z} = -mg + \lambda_2 \end{cases}$$

From the z EoM, we can tell that λ_1 is a force since it's being added with $-mg$. We can interpret it as the z -**component** of the **Normal Force**.

Similarly, in the ϕ EoM we see that λ_1 is the derivative of the Angular Momentum, so λ_1 is the **torque**.

[Include figure]

Now, in the ρ equation, we know that $m\ddot{\rho}$ is also a force since ρ has units of length. So, $-2\lambda_2\alpha\rho$ must also be a force. Exactly which force is it? It's the **radial component** of the **Normal Force** (See the figure above.)

When it comes to actually solving for λ_1 and λ_2 , we can solve for them after we solve for $\rho(t)$ using $z = \alpha\rho^2$ and other constraints.

[Add last bit from lecture recording - lots of figures]

4 July 9, 2024: Symmetries and Lagrangians

4.1 Note about the discussion from last time

[Write about clever method to find rolling constraint that Chien-I spoke about at the beginning of lecture]

4.2 Symmetries

Previously we discussed **Cyclic Coordinates**:

A coordinate q_k is cyclic if

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial q_k} = 0$$

As a result, the EL equation gives us the result that

$$p_k \equiv \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \text{ is conserved}$$

This is a **symmetry** in the sense that when we change q_k , the Lagrangian does not change.

What exactly is a Symmetry? We define a symmetry of a system to be a **transformation** of the system such that the system behaves the same after transformation. For example, rotating a triangle by 120 degrees is a symmetry transformation of the triangle.

The study of symmetries falls under **Group Theory**, but in physics we're usually concerned specifically **continuous transformations**. Continuous symmetries often give rise to **conserved quantities**.

Example: θ independent lagrangian

We'll see this in more detail when we study Noether's Theorem.

4.3 Continuous Transformations

Usually, we have $L = L(q_k, \dot{q}_k, t)$. We can apply transformations on the q_k and t variables

$$\begin{aligned} q_k &\rightarrow q'_k(q_k, t) \\ t &\rightarrow t'(t) \end{aligned}$$

which in turn transform the lagrangian L

When we say a transformation is continuous, we mean that we can make a transformation parametrized by some small parameter ϵ such that when $\epsilon \rightarrow 0$, the transformation is just the identity transformation.

Since the mapping is continuous, we can expand the transformation as

$$\begin{aligned} q_k(t) &\rightarrow q'_k(t') = q_k(t) + \delta q_k \\ t &\rightarrow t(t) = t + \delta t \end{aligned}$$

Example: Continuous Rotation In the plane \mathbb{R}^2 , we can rotate a vector $V = V_x \hat{x} + V_y \hat{y}$ using a standard rotation matrix:

$$\vec{V} \rightarrow \vec{V}' = \begin{pmatrix} \cos(\theta) & -\sin(\theta) \\ \sin(\theta) & \cos(\theta) \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} V_x \\ V_y \end{pmatrix}$$

where θ is a continuous parameter that represents the angle of rotation.

Examples: Non-continuous transformation

1. Discrete rotation: Rotations where θ is only allowed to have specific values, for example $\theta = n\frac{\pi}{6}$
2. Parity: $(x, y, z) \rightarrow (-x, -y, -z)$

There are two ways to generate transformations in q_k .

1. With a fixed time, we can "mix" the coordinates:

$$q_k(t) \rightarrow q'_k(t) = q_k(t) + \underbrace{\Delta q_k(t)}_{\text{small transformation}}$$

For example, we can rotate a vector without messing with the time coordinate:

$$\begin{pmatrix} x'(t) \\ y'(t) \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -\theta \\ \theta & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x(t) \\ y(t) \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} x(t) - \theta y(t) \\ y(t) + \theta x(t) \end{pmatrix}$$

We can represent this transformation concisely using the **levi-civita symbol**, ϵ_{ij}

$$\boxed{x'_i = x_i - \theta \epsilon_{ij} x_j}$$

2. We can generate a change in q_k by shifting the time: $t \rightarrow t + \delta t(t)$

$$q_k(t) \rightarrow q_k(t') = q_k(t + \delta t) = q_k(t) + \dot{q}_k \delta t$$

We can define the total (infinitesimal) transformation of q_k as

$$\begin{aligned} \delta q_k &\equiv q'_k(t') - q_k(t) = q'_k(t + \delta t) - q_k(t) \\ &\approx q'_k(t) + \dot{q}_k \delta t = q_k(t) \\ \text{to first order} &\rightarrow \approx q_k(t) + \Delta q_k(t) \dot{q}_k(t) \delta - q_k(t) \end{aligned}$$

where we used

$$\dot{q}'_k(t) = \frac{d}{dt}(q_k + \Delta q_k) = \dot{q}_k(t) + \frac{d}{dt}(\Delta q_k)$$

Thus, to first order, we have

$$\delta q_k(t) = \Delta q_k(t) + \dot{q}_k \delta t$$

We say such a transformation by δq_k and/or δt is a symmetry if we have the same dynamics i.e. under the transformation, the **action**, $\delta S = 0$ does not change. (δS is the change in S when we perform a particular transformation in terms of Δq_k and/or δt)

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= \delta \left(\int dt L(q_k, \dot{q}_k, t) \right) \\ &= \int \delta(dt) L + \int dt \delta L \\ &= \int dt \frac{d(\delta t)}{dt} L + \int dt \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial q_k} \delta q_k + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \frac{d}{dt}(\Delta q_k) + \frac{dL}{dt} \delta t \right) \end{aligned}$$

where we should note that dL/dt is the **total** derivative

$$\frac{dL}{dt} = \frac{\partial L}{\partial q_k} \dot{q}_k + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \ddot{q}_k + \frac{\partial L}{\partial t}$$

Continuing on and applying "Integration by Parts",

$$0 = \int dt \left[\left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial q_k} - \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \right) \right) \Delta q_k + \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \Delta q_k \right) + \frac{d}{dt} (L \delta t) \right]$$

If q_k satisfies the EoM,

$$0 = \int_{t_i}^{t_f} dt \left[\frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \Delta q_k + L \delta t \right) \right] = \left[\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \Delta q_k + L \delta t \right]_{t_i}^{t_f}$$

Therefore the quantity

$$Q \equiv \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \Delta q_k + L \delta t$$

is conserved! What we've shown is Noether's Theorem.

Noether's Theorem: If we have a continuous symmetry and the evolution of the system satisfies the EoM, then there is an associated conserved quantity given by

$$Q \equiv \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \Delta q_k + L \delta t$$

which is called the **Noether Charge**.

In fact, we can extend this a little bit. The action can change, as long as it's of the form:

$$\delta S = \int dt \left(\frac{dK}{dt} \right)$$

because such a change just adds constant boundary terms $K(t_f) - K(t_i)$ which do not change the dynamics. So,

$$\frac{d}{dt} (Q - K) = 0$$

This $Q - K$ is a more general conserved charge.

4.4 Example: Spacial Translation

$$L = \frac{1}{2} m \dot{x}^i \dot{x}_i$$

This Lagrangian is invariant under the shift $\begin{cases} x_i \rightarrow x_i + \epsilon_i \text{ spatial translation} \\ t \rightarrow t \text{ no time translation} \end{cases}$.

So, $\delta x_i = \Delta x_i + \underbrace{\dot{x}_i \delta t}_{=0}$. As a result,

$$Q \equiv \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}_i} \Delta x_i = m \dot{x}_i \epsilon_i \implies m \dot{x}_i \text{ is conserved.}$$

4.5 Example: Time Translation

Consider the time translation

$$\begin{cases} x_i \rightarrow x_i \\ t \rightarrow t + \delta t \end{cases}$$

i.e. $\delta x_i = 0 = \Delta x_i + \dot{x}_i \delta t$ which implies

$$\Delta x_i = -\dot{x}_i \delta t$$

Consider the following Lagrangian under time translation

$$L = \frac{1}{2} m \dot{x}^i \dot{x}_i - V(x)$$

Since $L = L(x_i, \dot{x}_i, t)$, if the x_i 's don't change then the change in L is just

$$\begin{aligned} \delta L &= \frac{\partial L}{\partial x_i} \underbrace{\delta x_i}_{=0} + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}_i} \underbrace{\delta \dot{x}_i}_{=0} + \frac{\partial L}{\partial t} \delta t \\ &= \frac{\partial L}{\partial t} \delta t \end{aligned}$$

And, when $\frac{\partial L}{\partial t} \delta t = 0$, we have time translation symmetry, giving us the conserved current

$$\begin{aligned}
Q &\equiv \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}_i} \delta x_i + L \delta t \\
&= -\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}_i} \dot{x}_i \delta t + L \delta t \\
&= \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}_i} \dot{x}_i - L \right) (-\delta t)
\end{aligned}$$

So when we have time translation symmetry, the **Hamiltonian**

$$H = \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}_i} \dot{x}_i - L$$

is conserved.

4.6 Example: Isotropic Harmonic Oscillator under rotation

Consider

$$L = \frac{1}{2} m \dot{x}^i \dot{x}_i - \frac{1}{2} k x^i x_i$$

under rotation

$$\begin{aligned}
x_i &\rightarrow x_i - \theta \epsilon_{ij} x_j \\
t &\rightarrow t
\end{aligned}$$

Then, the Lagrangian transforms into

$$\begin{aligned}
L &\rightarrow \frac{1}{2} m \dot{x}^i \dot{x}_i - \frac{1}{2} k x^i x_i + m \dot{x}_i (-\theta \epsilon_{ij} \dot{x}_j) - k x_i (-\theta \epsilon_{ij} x_j) + \mathcal{O}(\epsilon^2) \\
&= L - \theta m \epsilon_{ij} \dot{x}_i \dot{x}_j + k \epsilon_{ij} x_i x_j \\
&= L
\end{aligned}$$

where we used the fact that ϵ_{ij} is antisymmetric while $\dot{x}_i \dot{x}_j$, $x_i x_j$ are antisymmetric. Thus, the two terms other than L vanish.

In general if we have 2-d tensors $S_{ij} = S_{ji}$ (symmetric) and $A_{ij} = -A_{ji}$ (antisymmetric) then

$$\begin{aligned}
S_{ij} A_{ij} &= -S_{ij} A_{ji} \\
&= -S_{ji} A_{ji} \\
&= -S_{ij} A_{ij} \text{ Since } S_{ij} A_{ij} \text{ is itself symmetric as a whole} \\
\implies S_{ij} A_{ij} &= 0
\end{aligned}$$

Here, the conserved current is

$$\begin{aligned} Q &\equiv \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}_i} \Delta x_i \\ &= m \dot{x}_i (-\theta \epsilon_{ij} x_j) \\ &= -\theta \epsilon_{ij} x_j m \dot{x}_i \\ &= -\theta \epsilon_{12} x_2 m \dot{x}_1 - \theta \epsilon_{21} x_1 m \dot{x}_2 \quad (\text{The terms with } i = j \text{ vanish because } e_{ii} = 0) \\ &= -\theta (y m \dot{x} - x m \dot{y}) \end{aligned}$$

which implies that **Angular momentum is conserved.** This marks the end of today's lecture.

. (No lectures on July 10, 11 because of the midterm.)

5 July 15: Obtaining Lagrangians from Symmetries

Today, we wrap up our discussion of Lagrangians. The goal today is to find the most general Lagrangian $L(x, \dot{x}, t)$ describing a 1D system which is **time-translation invariant** and **Galilean invariant**.

The framework we'll develop is what's done a lot in research (eg. in Effective Field Theory research), where we consider the symmetries we must enforce and then find the most general possible Lagrangian.

Also recall that a Lagrangian is called time-translation invariance if it has no explicit time dependence.

Step 1: Consider the action

$$S = \int dt L(x, \dot{x}, t)$$

and the Galilean transformation $x \rightarrow x + \Delta x = x - Vt$ (V is a constant) which causes the variation

$$\begin{aligned} \delta S &= \int dt \left[\frac{\partial L}{\partial x}(-Vt) + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}}(-V) \right] \\ &= \int dt \left[(-V) \frac{d\tilde{K}}{dt} \right] \quad (\text{for some function } \tilde{K}) \end{aligned}$$

(as long as the change in action is of the form above, there is no change in dynamics.)

$$\implies \frac{\partial L}{\partial x}t + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}} = \frac{d\tilde{K}}{dt} = \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial x}\dot{x} + \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial \dot{x}}\ddot{x} + \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial \ddot{x}}\dddot{x} + \cdots + \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial t}$$

But the LHS has derivatives up to \dot{x} at most since we restrict our lagrangians. So, we must have $\tilde{K} = \tilde{K}(x, t)$ and

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial x}t + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}} = \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial x}\dot{x} + \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial t} \quad (\star)$$

Step 2: Notice is that $\tilde{K} = \tilde{K}(x, t)$ means that the only place in equation (\star) that we have \dot{x} -dependence is $\frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial x}\dot{x} + \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial t}$ i.e. it is linear in \dot{x} .

\implies at most, L can only be second order in \dot{x} , namely

$$L = f_2(x, t)\dot{x}^2 + f_1(x, t)\dot{x} + f_0(x, t)$$

Step 3: Finally, if we enforce time-translation symmetry then we have

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial t} = 0$$

which tells us $f_i(x, t) = f_i(x)$ and so,

$$\implies L = f_2(x)\dot{x}^2 + f_1(x)\dot{x} + f_0(x) \quad (\Delta)$$

Step 4: Let's look at equation (\star) again, which we obtained from enforcing Galilean invariance. With (Δ) we know

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial x} \supseteq \frac{\partial f_2}{\partial x} \dot{x}^2$$

(sidenote: this is an abuse of notation that I love; it literally just means that $\frac{\partial L}{\partial x}$ includes a term $\frac{\partial f_2}{\partial x} \dot{x}^2$ it's so goofy fr)

But the RHS of equations (\star) has no \dot{x}^2 terms. Thus,

$$\frac{\partial f_2}{\partial x} = 0$$

i.e. f_2 is a constant.

Step 5: For the $f_1(x)\dot{x}$ term in the Lagrangian, we can say

$$S \supseteq \int_i^f f_1(x)\dot{x}dt = \int_i^f f_1(x)dx = F(x_f) - F(x_i) \text{ (constant)}$$

so this does not affect the dynamics and so we can safely throw it out of the Lagrangian and shove it to the curb.

Step 6: The only thing left is

$$L = f_2\dot{x}^2 + f_0(x)$$

Plugging this back into equation (\star) , we get

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial L}{\partial x}t + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{x}} &= \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial x} \dot{x} \\ \implies \frac{\partial f_0}{\partial x}t + 2\dot{x}f_2 &= \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial x} \dot{x} \quad (\square) \end{aligned}$$

Matching the terms with and without \dot{x} dependence, we get

$$\frac{\partial \tilde{K}}{\partial x} = 2f_2 = \text{constant} \implies \tilde{K} = 2f_2x + g(t)$$

Step 7: Plugging the expression for \tilde{K} into equation (\square) we get

$$\frac{\partial f_0}{\partial x}t + 2\dot{x}f_2 = \frac{\partial g}{\partial t} + 2f_2x = \frac{\partial g}{\partial t} + 2f_2\dot{x}$$

but $g(t)$ has no x -dependence $\implies \frac{\partial f_0}{\partial x}$ cannot have x -dependence

$$\implies f_0 = c_1x + c_0$$

In summary, the most general Lagrangian for a 1D particle that is time-translation invariant and Galilean invariant is of the form

$$L = c_2 \dot{x} + c_1 x + c_0$$

(where instead of writing f_2 we just wrote c_2). But also, constants don't affect the dynamics. Therefore, the most general Lagrangian we need is

$$L = c_2 \dot{x}^2 + c_1 x$$

What kind of physics does this lagrangian describe?

That of a non-relativistic particle subject to a constant force field. For example, if the field is that of uniform gravity, then

$$L = \frac{1}{2} m \dot{x}^2 - mgx$$

(When people do this in Effective Field Theory, there are much more complicated symmetries to enforce such as $U(1)$, $SU(2)$ etc. but the procedure is follows the same basic idea we've studied here.)

We were able to get a very specific form for our Lagrangian, but often symmetries are not strong enough to constrain our Lagrangian. In that case, we have to use other methods to determine the form of the Lagrangian for our system such as by experimental considerations.

Okay, now we go back to some more tradition stuff from classical mechanics.

5.1 Central Force Problem

A **Central Force** is one whose potential energy function has **Spherical symmetry** eg. Isotropic Harmonic Oscillators or a particle under uniform gravitational force.

Usually, we have a two-body problem with a Lagrangian of the form

$$L = \frac{1}{2} m_1 \dot{\vec{r}}_1^2 + \frac{1}{2} m_2 \dot{\vec{r}}_2^2 - U(r)$$

where $r = |\vec{r}_2 - \vec{r}_1|$. But, we can effectively change this into a one-body problem by using the **Center-of-Mass** coordinates.

$$\vec{r} \equiv \vec{r}_2 - \vec{r}_1, \quad \vec{R} \equiv \frac{m_1 \vec{r}_1 + m_2 \vec{r}_2}{m_1 + m_2}$$

Using these coordinates and $M \equiv m_1 + m_2$, $\mu = \frac{m_1 m_2}{m_1 + m_2}$ we can write the Lagrangian as

$$L = \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} M \dot{\vec{R}}^2}_{\text{free motion of C.M.}} + \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \mu \dot{\vec{r}}^2 - U(\vec{r})}_{\text{non-trivial dynamics}}$$

We've essentially decoupled the two bodies. Now, if $U(\vec{r})$ has spherical symmetry i.e. $U(\vec{r}) = U(r)$ then it is natural to work in spherical coordinates.

So, the non-trivial part of the Lagrangian will be

$$L = \frac{1}{2}\mu \left(\dot{r}^2 + r^2\dot{\theta}^2 + r^2 \sin^2(\theta)\dot{\phi}^2 \right) - U(r)$$

and ϕ is a cyclic coordinate of it. Thus,

$$p_\phi = \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{\phi}} = \mu r^2 \sin^2(\theta) \equiv l_z$$

is conserved. Then,

$$L = \frac{1}{2} \left(\dot{r}^2 + r^2\dot{\theta}^2 + \frac{l_z^2}{\mu^2 r^2 \sin^2(\theta)} \right) - U(r)$$

The fact that the angular momentum l_z (and in fact, the *total* angular momentum l) is conserved means that the particle is moving on a fixed plane.

Why is total angular momentum conserved? A central force cannot cause torque, therefore angular momentum is conserved.

WLOG, we set the z -axis to be perpendicular to the motion of the plane i.e. we set $\theta = \frac{\pi}{2} \implies \dot{\theta} = 0$ due to which $\sin(\theta) = 1$. So, our non-trivial Lagrangian is

$$L = \frac{1}{2}\mu\dot{r}^2 + \frac{l_z^2}{2\mu r^2} - U(r)$$

Before we put the constraint on ϕ , the Lagrangian is

$$L = \frac{1}{2}\mu\dot{r}^2 + \frac{1}{2}\mu r^2 \dot{\phi}^2 - U(r)$$

and the corresponding Hamiltonian is

$$\begin{aligned} H &= \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_k} \dot{q}_k - L \\ &= \frac{1}{2}\mu\dot{r}^2 + \frac{1}{2}\mu r^2 \dot{\phi}^2 + U(r) \\ &= \frac{1}{2}\mu\dot{r}^2 + \underbrace{\frac{l_z^2}{2\mu r^2}}_{\text{effective potential}} + U(r) \end{aligned}$$

Also, when we switch from Spherical Coordinates to Cartesian Coordinates we use

$$\begin{cases} x = r \sin \theta \cos \phi \\ y = r \sin \theta \sin \phi \\ z = r \cos \theta \end{cases}$$

which have no time dependence, and so $H = E$. Aaaaaand... we're out of time so we'll continue tomorrow.