

Exercise 2.7.4 Show that $g^{\mu\nu} \approx \eta^{\mu\nu} - h^{\mu\nu}$

Since $g_{\mu\nu} = \eta_{\mu\nu} + h_{\mu\nu}$ where $h_{\mu\nu}$ is small, we assume there is a small $f^{\mu\nu}$ such that

$$g^{\mu\nu} = \eta^{\mu\nu} + f^{\mu\nu}.$$

Observe that

$$\begin{aligned}\delta^\mu_\nu &= g^{\mu\sigma} g_{\sigma\nu} = (\eta^{\mu\sigma} + f^{\mu\sigma}) (\eta_{\sigma\nu} + h_{\sigma\nu}) \\ &= \eta^{\mu\sigma} \eta_{\sigma\nu} + \eta^{\mu\sigma} h_{\sigma\nu} + f^{\mu\sigma} \eta_{\sigma\nu} + f^{\mu\sigma} h_{\sigma\nu} \\ &\approx \delta^\mu_\nu + \eta^{\mu\sigma} h_{\sigma\nu} + f^{\mu\sigma} \eta_{\sigma\nu} \text{ since } f^{\mu\sigma} h_{\sigma\nu} \text{ is 2nd order.}\end{aligned}$$

This implies that

$$f^{\mu\sigma} \eta_{\sigma\nu} \approx - \eta^{\mu\sigma} h_{\sigma\nu}.$$

Changing dummy variable ν to ρ , we get

$$f^{\mu\sigma} \eta_{\mu\rho} \approx - \eta^{\mu\sigma} h_{\sigma\rho}.$$

So,

$$f^{\mu\nu} = f^{\mu\sigma} \delta^\nu_\sigma \approx f^{\mu\sigma} \eta_{\sigma\rho} \eta^{\nu\rho} \approx - \eta^{\mu\sigma} h_{\sigma\rho} \eta^{\nu\rho} \approx - h^{\mu\nu}$$

which gives

$$g^{\mu\nu} = \eta^{\mu\nu} + f^{\mu\nu} \approx \eta^{\mu\nu} - h^{\mu\nu}. \quad \blacksquare$$