

# TRIGONOMETRIC INTEGRALS

NATHAN REFF

## 1. TRIGONOMETRIC INTEGRALS

**Example 1.1.**

$$\begin{aligned}\int \cos^5(x) dx \\ \int \cos^5(x) dx &= \int \cos(x) \cos^2(x) \cos^2(x) dx \\ &= \int \cos(x)(1 - \sin^2(x))(1 - \sin^2(x)) dx \\ &= \int \cos(x)(1 - \sin^2(x))^2 dx.\end{aligned}$$

$$\text{let } u = \sin(x) \implies \frac{du}{dx} = \cos(x) \implies dx = \frac{du}{\cos(x)}.$$

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned}\int \cos(x)(1 - \sin^2(x))^2 dx &= \int \cancel{\cos(x)}(1 - u^2)^2 \frac{du}{\cancel{\cos(x)}} \\ &= \int (1 - u^2)^2 du \\ &= \int (1 - 2u^2 + u^4) du \\ &= u - \frac{2u^3}{3} + \frac{u^5}{5} + C \\ &= \sin(x) - \frac{2\sin^3(x)}{3} + \frac{\sin^5(x)}{5} + C.\end{aligned}$$

---

**Example 1.2.**

$$\begin{aligned}\int \sin^3(x) \cos^2(x) dx \\ \int \sin^3(x) \cos^2(x) dx &= \int \sin(x) \sin^2(x) \cos^2(x) dx \\ &= \int \sin(x)(1 - \cos^2(x)) \cos^2(x) dx\end{aligned}$$

$$\text{let } u = \cos(x) \implies \frac{du}{dx} = -\sin(x) \implies dx = \frac{du}{-\sin(x)}.$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\int \sin(x)(1 - \cos(x)^2) \cos^2(x) dx &= \int \sin(x)(1 - u^2)u^2 \frac{du}{-\sin(x)} \\
&= \int -(1 - u^2)u^2 du \\
&= -\int (u^2 - u^4) du \\
&= -\frac{u^3}{3} + \frac{u^5}{5} + C \\
&= -\frac{\cos^3(x)}{3} + \frac{\cos^5(x)}{5} + C.
\end{aligned}$$


---

$$\int \sin^2(x) dx \text{ and } \int \cos^2(x) dx$$

are very common integrals that show in physics and engineering. To solve these we use the **half angle identities**:

$$\sin^2(x) = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \cos(2x)) = \frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}\cos(2x).$$

$$\cos^2(x) = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \cos(2x)) = \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2}\cos(2x).$$

Alternatively, you could also derive them from the identities:

$$\begin{aligned}
\sin(\alpha \pm \beta) &= \sin(\alpha) \cos(\beta) \pm \cos(\alpha) \sin(\beta) \\
\cos(\alpha \pm \beta) &= \cos(\alpha) \cos(\beta) \mp \sin(\alpha) \sin(\beta)
\end{aligned}$$

**Example 1.3.**

$$\begin{aligned}
&\int_0^{\pi/4} \cos^2(x) dx \\
\int_0^{\pi/4} \cos^2(x) dx &= \int_0^{\pi/4} \frac{1}{2}(1 + \cos(2x)) dx \\
&= \frac{1}{2} \left[ x + \frac{1}{2} \sin(2x) \right]_0^{\pi/4} \\
&= \frac{1}{2} \left[ \left( \frac{\pi}{4} + \frac{1}{2} \cdot 1 \right) - (0 + 0) \right] \\
&= \frac{\pi + 2}{8}.
\end{aligned}$$


---

**STRATEGY for evaluating  $\int \sin^m(x) \cos^n(x) dx$ .**

- (1) If the power of COSINE is ODD ( $n=2k+1$ ), save one cosine factor and use  $\cos^2(x) = 1 - \sin^2(x)$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \int \sin^m(x) \cos^{2k+1}(x) dx &= \int \sin^m(x) (\cos^2(x))^k \cos(x) dx \\ &= \int \sin^m(x) (1 - \sin^2(x))^k \cos(x) dx \end{aligned}$$

Then substitute  $u = \sin(x)$ .

- (2) If the power of SINE is ODD ( $m=2k+1$ ), save one sine factor and use  $\sin^2(x) = 1 - \cos^2(x)$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \int \sin^{2k+1}(x) \cos^n(x) dx &= \int (\sin^2(x))^k \sin(x) \cos^n(x) dx \\ &= \int (1 - \cos^2(x))^k \sin(x) \cos^n(x) dx \end{aligned}$$

Then substitute  $u = \cos(x)$ . [NOTE: if the powers of both sine and cosine are odd, either (1) or (2) can be used.]

- (3) If the powers of BOTH SINE AND COSINE are EVEN, use the half angle formulas.
- 

**STRATEGY for evaluating  $\int \tan^m(x) \sec^n(x) dx$ .**

- (1) If the power of SECANT is EVEN, save a factor of  $\sec^2(x)$  and use  $\sec^2(x) = 1 + \tan^2(x)$ .  
 (2) If the power of TAN is ODD, save a factor of  $\sec(x) \tan(x)$  and use  $\tan^2(x) = \sec^2(x) - 1$ .
- 

**Example 1.4.**

$$\int \sec^4(\theta) \tan^5(\theta) d\theta$$

**SOLUTION 1:**

$$\begin{aligned} \int \sec^4(\theta) \tan^5(\theta) d\theta &= \int \sec^2(\theta) \sec^2(\theta) \tan^5(\theta) d\theta \\ &= \int \sec^2(\theta) (1 + \tan^2(\theta)) \tan^5(\theta) d\theta \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{let } u = \tan(\theta) \implies \frac{du}{d\theta} = \sec^2(\theta) \implies d\theta = \frac{du}{\sec^2(\theta)}.$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\int \sec^2(\theta)(1 + \tan^2(\theta)) \tan^5(\theta) d\theta &= \int \cancel{\sec^2(\theta)}(1 + u^2)u^5 d\frac{du}{\cancel{\sec^2(\theta)}} \\
&= \int (u^5 + u^7) du \\
&= \frac{u^6}{6} + \frac{u^8}{8} + C \\
&= \frac{\tan^6(\theta)}{6} + \frac{\tan^8(\theta)}{8} + C
\end{aligned}$$

**SOLUTION 2:**

$$\begin{aligned}
\int \sec^4(\theta) \tan^5(\theta) d\theta &= \int \sec^3(\theta) \sec(\theta) \tan(\theta) \tan^4(\theta) d\theta \\
&= \int \sec^3(\theta) \sec(\theta) \tan(\theta) (\sec^2(\theta) - 1)^2 d\theta
\end{aligned}$$

$$\text{let } u = \sec(\theta) \implies \frac{du}{d\theta} = \sec(\theta) \tan(\theta) \implies d\theta = \frac{du}{\sec(\theta) \tan(\theta)}.$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\int \sec^3(\theta) \sec(\theta) \tan(\theta) (\sec^2(\theta) - 1)^2 d\theta &= \int u^3 \cancel{\sec(\theta) \tan(\theta)} (u^2 - 1)^2 \frac{du}{\cancel{\sec(\theta) \tan(\theta)}} \\
&= \int (u^3(1 - 2u^2 + u^4)) du \\
&= \int (u^3 - 2u^5 + u^7) du \\
&= \frac{u^4}{4} - 2\frac{u^6}{6} + \frac{u^8}{8} + C \\
&= \frac{\sec^4(\theta)}{4} - \frac{\sec^6(\theta)}{3} + \frac{\sec^8(\theta)}{8} + C
\end{aligned}$$

(Substitute  $\tan^2(x) = \sec^2(x) - 1$  into solution 1 to see that it matches solution 2.)

For other cases we do not always have such a clear guideline. Sometimes you will need to use integration by parts, identities, or something else altogether.

Recall,

$$\int \tan(x) dx = \ln |\sec(x)| + C.$$

We will also need

$$\int \sec(x) dx = \ln |\sec(x) + \tan(x)| + C.$$

To evaluate the integrals

- (1)  $\int \sin(mx) \cos(nx) dx.$
- (2)  $\int \sin(mx) \sin(nx) dx.$
- (3)  $\int \cos(mx) \cos(nx) dx.$

Use the corresponding identities:

- (1)  $\sin(A) \cos(B) = \frac{1}{2}[\sin(A - B) + \sin(A + B)]$ .
- (2)  $\sin(A) \sin(B) = \frac{1}{2}[\cos(A - B) - \cos(A + B)]$ .
- (3)  $\cos(A) \cos(B) = \frac{1}{2}[\cos(A - B) + \cos(A + B)]$ .

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS, ALFRED UNIVERSITY, ALFRED, NY 14802, U.S.A.

*E-mail address:* **reff@alfred.edu**