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Parametric Equations § 10.1

The 1st half of the semester for Calc II focused on integration.

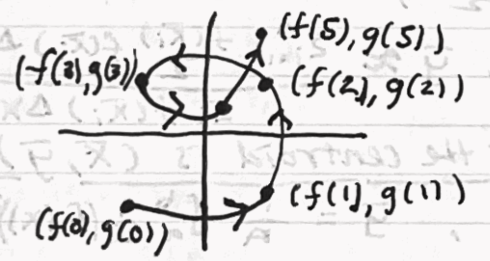
In 2nd half we explore other topics, starting with Chapter 10 on parametric equations & polar coordinates.

Up until now we have considered curves of the form $y = f(x)$ (or more rarely, $f(x,y)=0$).

A parametrized curve is defined by two equations:

$$x = f(t) \quad \text{and} \quad y = g(t)$$

where t is an auxilliary variable. Often we think of t as time, so the curve describes motion of a particle where at time t particle is at position $(f(t), g(t))$:



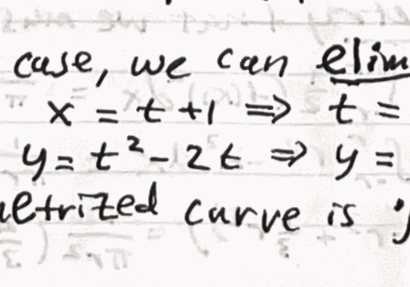
⇐ In this picture the arrows → show movement of particle over time

E.g. Consider parametrized curve $\boxed{x = t+1, \ y = t^2 - 2t}$

We can make a chart with various values of t:

t	x	y
-2	-1	8
-1	0	3
0	1	0
1	2	-1
2	3	0
3	4	3

⇒



⇐ plot of points $(f(t), g(t))$ for $t = -1, 0, 1, \ldots, 4$ looks like a parabola

In this case, we can eliminate the variable t:

$$x = t+1 \Rightarrow t = x-1$$

$$y = t^2 - 2t \Rightarrow y = (x-1)^2 - 2(x-1) = x^2 - 4x + 3$$

So this parametrized curve is just $\boxed{y = x^2 - 4x + 3}$

E.g.: Consider the parametric curve:

initial time ⇒ initial point is $(f(0),g(0))$

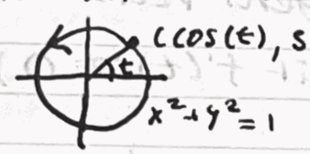
terminal time ⇒ terminal point is $(f(2\pi),g(2\pi))$

$$x = \cos(t), \quad y = \sin(t) \quad \text{for} \quad 0 \le t \le 2\pi$$

How can we visualize this curve?

Notice that $x^2+y^2 = \cos^2(t) + \sin^2(t) = 1$,

so this parametrizes a <u>circle</u> $x^2+y^2=1$.



⇐ here t = angle (in radians) of point $(\cos(t), \sin(t))$ on unit circle

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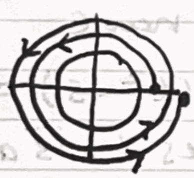
E.g.: What about $x = \cos(2t)$, $y = \sin(2t)$, $0 \le t \le 2\pi$?

Notice we still have $x^2+y^2 = \cos^2(2t) + \sin^2(2t) = 1$,

so the parametrized curve still traces a <u>circle</u>:



⇐ But now the parametrized curve traces the circle <u>twice</u>:
once for $0 \le t \le \pi$
and once for $\pi \le t \le 2\pi$

Can think of this particle as moving "faster" than the last one.

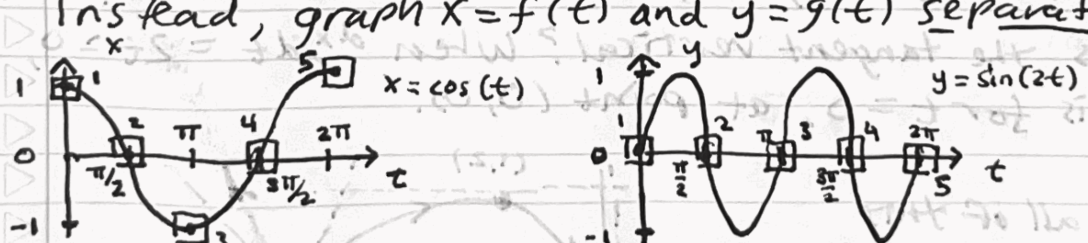
We see <u>same</u> <u>curve</u> can be <u>parametrized</u> in <u>different</u> ways!

E.g.: Consider the curve $x = \cos(t)$, $y = \sin(2t)$.

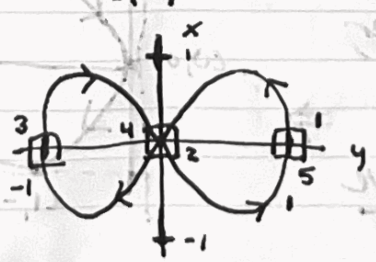
It's possible to eliminate t to get $y^2 = 4x^2 - 4x^4$,

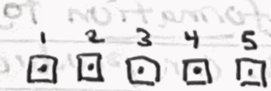
but that equation is hard to visualize.

Instead, graph $x = f(t)$ and $y = g(t)$ <u>separately</u>:



Then <u>combine</u> into one picture showing $(f(t), g(t))$: ⇒





⇐ are "snapshots" of the particle as it traces the curve

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Calculus with parametrized curves §10.2

Much of what we have done with curves of form $y=f(x)$ in calculus can also be done for parametrized curves:

Tangent vectors: Let $(x,y)=(f(t),g(t))$ be a curve. Then, at time t, the slope of tangent vector is given by:

$$\frac{dy}{dx} \underset{\text{chain rule}}{=} \frac{dy/dt}{dx/dt} = \frac{g'(t)}{f'(t)} \quad (\text{if } f'(t) \neq 0)$$

If $dy/dt = 0$ (and $dx/dt \neq 0$) $\Rightarrow$ horizontal tangent

If $dx/dt = 0$ (and $dy/dt \neq 0$) $\Rightarrow$ vertical tangent

E.g. Consider curve $x=t^2$, $y=t^3-3t$.

First, notice that when $t=\pm\sqrt{3}$ we have

$$x=t^2=3 \quad \text{and} \quad y=t^3-3t=t(t^2-3)=0,$$

so curve passes thru $(3,0)$ at two times $t=\sqrt{3}$ and $t=-\sqrt{3}$.

We then compute that:

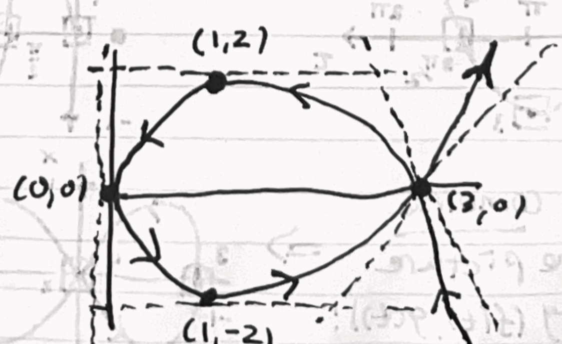
$$dy/dx = \frac{dy/dt}{dx/dt} = \frac{3t^2-3}{2t} \begin{cases} = -6/2\sqrt{3} = -\sqrt{3} \text{ at } t=-\sqrt{3} \\ = 6/2\sqrt{3} = \sqrt{3} \text{ at } t=\sqrt{3} \end{cases}$$

So two tangent lines, of slopes $\pm\sqrt{3}$, for curve at $(3,0)$.

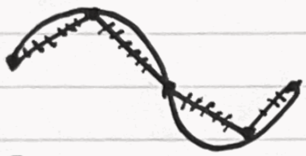
When is the tangent horizontal? When $dy/dt = 3t^2-3=0$ which is for $t=\pm 1$, at points $(1,2)$ and $(1,-2)$.

When is the tangent vertical? When $dx/dt = 2t = 0$, which is for $t=0$, at point $(0,0)$.

Putting all of this information together, we can produce a pretty good sketch of the curve $\Rightarrow$



Arc lengths: We saw several times how to find lengths of curves by breaking into line segments:

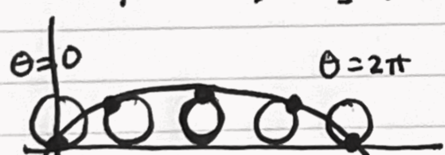


$\Leftarrow$ recall length of each small segment $= \sqrt{(\Delta x)^2 + (\Delta y)^2}$

For a parametrized curve $(x,y) = (f(t), g(t))$ with $\alpha \le t \le \beta$ we get that length of curve $= \int_\alpha^\beta \sqrt{(dx/dt)^2 + (dy/dt)^2}\, dt = \boxed{\int_\alpha^\beta \sqrt{f'(t)^2 + g'(t)^2}\, dt.}$

Exercise: Using parametrization $x = \cos(t)$, $y = \sin(t)$, $0 \le t \le 2\pi$, show circumfrence of unit circle $= 2\pi$ using this formula.

E.g. The cycloid is the path a point on unit circle traces as the circle rolls:



$\Leftarrow$ think of this as an animation of a rolling circle, with point • marked where angle θ = "time"

The cycloid is parametrized by:

$$x = \theta - \sin\theta, \quad y = 1 - \cos\theta \quad \text{for } 0 \le \theta \le 2\pi$$

Q: What is the arclength of the cycloid?

A: We compute $\frac{dx}{d\theta} = 1 - \cos\theta$, $\frac{dy}{dx} = \sin\theta$ so that

$$\sqrt{(dx/dt)^2 + (dy/dt)^2} = \sqrt{(1-\cos\theta)^2 + (\sin\theta)^2} = \sqrt{2(1-\cos\theta)}$$

using trig identity $\frac{1}{2}(1-\cos 2x) = \sin^2 x$

$$= \sqrt{4\sin^2(\theta/2)}$$
$$= 2\sin(\theta/2)$$

$\Rightarrow$ length of cycloid $= \int_0^{2\pi} \sqrt{\left(\frac{dx}{d\theta}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{dy}{d\theta}\right)^2}\, d\theta$

$$= \int_0^{2\pi} 2\sin\left(\tfrac{\theta}{2}\right) d\theta = \left[-4\cos\left(\tfrac{\theta}{2}\right)\right]_0^{2\pi}$$

$$= ((-4\cdot -1) - (-4\cdot 1)) = \underline{8}.$$

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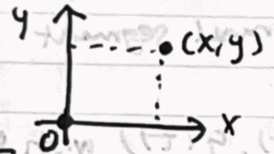
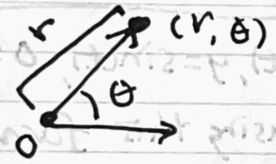
Polar Coordinates §10.3

We are used to working with the "Cartesian" coordinate system where a point on the plane is represented by (x, y)



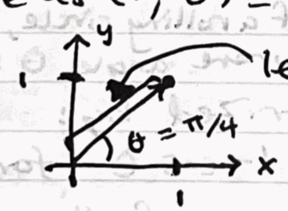
telling us how far to move along two orthogonal axes to reach that point.

The polar coordinate system is a different way to represent points on the plane by a pair (r, θ):



Here we have a fixed axis ray emanating from origin O, and we reach a point (r, θ) by making an angle of θ radians and going out a distance of r.

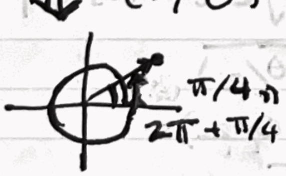
E.g. The point $(x, y) = (1, 1)$ in Cartesian coord's is the same as $(r, \theta) = (\sqrt{2}, \frac{\pi}{4})$ in polar coord's:



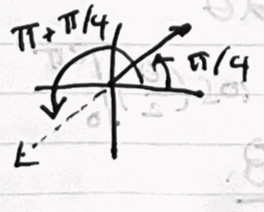
length of hypotenuse $= \sqrt{1^2 + 1^2} = \sqrt{2}$

Notice: There are multiple ways to represent any point in polar coord's because we can add 2π to θ:

$(r, \theta) = (\sqrt{2}, \pi/4)$ same as $(r, \theta) = (\sqrt{2}, 2\pi + \pi/4)$



Also ... can add π to θ and replace r by $-r$:

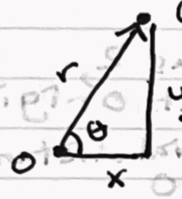


$(r, \theta) = (\sqrt{2}, \pi/4)$ same as $(r, \theta) = (-\sqrt{2}, \pi + \pi/4)$

Negative value of r means go backwards that distance along ray.

Question: How to convert between Cartesian & polar coord's?

Let's draw a right triangle to help us:



$\Leftarrow$ From this picture we see that

$$\boxed{x = r\cos\theta \text{ and } y = r\sin\theta}$$

which gives (x,y) in terms of (r,θ)

We also have that:

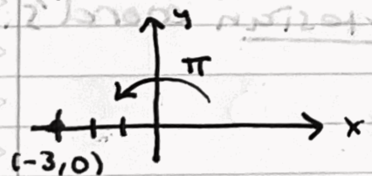
$$\boxed{r^2 = x^2 + y^2 \text{ and } \tan\theta = \frac{y}{x}}$$

which gives us (r,θ) in terms of (x,y):

specifically, $r = \pm\sqrt{x^2+y^2}$ and $\theta = \arctan\left(\frac{y}{x}\right)$.

E.g. Find the polar coordinates of $(x,y) = (-3,0)$.

To solve this problem, it's easiest to just draw the point.



we see this point is at angle $\theta = \pi$ and radius $r = 3$.

Check: $3^2 = r^2 = x^2 + y^2 = (-3)^2 + (0)^2$

and $\theta = \tan(\theta) = \frac{y}{x} = \frac{0}{-3}$.

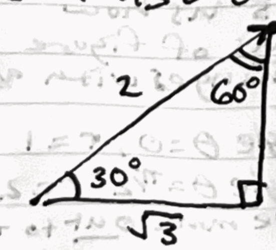
Could have also chosen $(r,\theta) = (-3, 0)$ here...

E.g. Find the Cartesian coordinates of $(r,\theta) = (2, \frac{\pi}{6})$.

Here we have $x = r\cos\theta = 2\cos(\pi/6) = 2\cdot\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} = \sqrt{3}$

and $y = r\sin\theta = 2\sin(\pi/6) = 2\cdot\frac{1}{2} = 1$

Can also draw the right triangle to check:



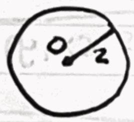
$\Leftarrow$ recall that $\theta = \pi/6$ radians $= 30°$

corresponds to a special "30-60-90" triangle.

Polar equations and curves:

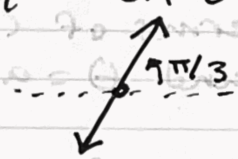
Just like we draw curves $f(x,y)=0$ in Cartesian coord's, we can draw curves $f(r,\theta)=0$ in Polar coord's.

E.g. The equation $r=2$ gives circle of radius 2, centered at origin:



$\Leftarrow$ circle = all points at radial distance 2 from origin O

E.g. The equation $\theta=\pi/3$ gives line at angle $\pi/3$ thru origin:



$\Leftarrow$ line thru origin = all points at given angle

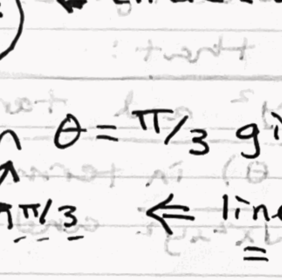
E.g. What about equation $r = 2\cos\theta$?

Here it's easiest to switch to Cartesian coord's:

multiplying by r gives

$$r^2 = 2r\cos\theta$$
$$\Leftrightarrow x^2+y^2 = 2x$$
$$\Leftrightarrow (x-1)^2+y^2 = 1$$

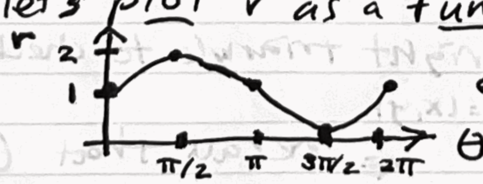
which is a circle of radius 1 centered at $(x,y)=(1,0)$:



$\Leftarrow (x-1)^2+y^2=1$ a.k.a. $r = 2\cos\theta$

E.g. What about $r = 1+\sin(\theta)$?

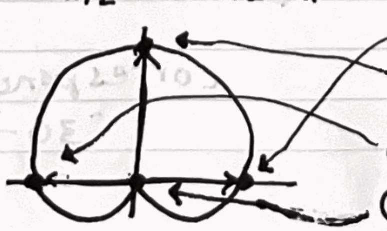
First let's plot r as a function of θ (in Cartesian coord's):



$\Leftarrow$ shows us how radius of figure changes with angle

"cardiod" $\Rightarrow$

this "heart-shaped" curve is polar curve $r = 1+\sin(\theta)$



① at angle $\theta=0$, $r=1$

② at angle $\theta=\pi/2$, $r=2$ so we move out to this point

③ at $\theta=\pi$, back to $r=1$

④ at $\theta=\frac{3\pi}{2}$, radius shrinks to $r=0$