

1. Let $\vec{E} = \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^3}(2 \cos \theta \hat{r} + \sin \theta \hat{\theta})$, where p is a constant, be the electric field in a region expressed in the spherical polar coordinate system. Find the potential difference between the points

$$\vec{r}_1 : (r = r_1, \theta = 0, \phi = 0) \text{ and } \vec{r}_2 : (r = r_2, \theta = \theta_2, \phi = 0). \quad (5)$$

soln:

Method 1:

$$\begin{aligned} -\vec{\nabla} \Phi &= \vec{E} = \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^3}(2 \cos \theta \hat{r} + \sin \theta \hat{\theta}) \\ \therefore -\frac{\partial \Phi}{\partial r} \hat{r} - \frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial \Phi}{\partial \theta} \hat{\theta} &= \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^3}(2 \cos \theta \hat{r} + \sin \theta \hat{\theta}) \\ \therefore \frac{\partial \Phi}{\partial r} &= -\frac{p \cos \theta}{2\pi\epsilon_0 r^3} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial \Phi}{\partial \theta} = -\frac{p \sin \theta}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^3} \end{aligned}$$

This gives $\Phi = \frac{p \cos \theta}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^2} + h(\theta)$ and $\Phi = \frac{p \cos \theta}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^2} + g(r)$.

Comparing the two expressions of Φ we get

$$\Phi = \frac{p \cos \theta}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^2} + c$$

where c is a constant.

\therefore the potential difference between \vec{r}_1 and \vec{r}_2 is

$$\Phi_2 - \Phi_1 = \frac{p \cos \theta_2}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r_2^2} - \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r_1^2} = \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[\frac{\cos \theta_2}{r_2^2} - \frac{1}{r_1^2} \right]$$

Method 2:

Consider a curve $r = f(\theta)$ on the plane $\phi = 0$ connecting \vec{r}_1 to \vec{r}_2 . Then $f(0) = r_1$ and $f(\theta_2) = r_2$.

$$\int_{\vec{r}_1}^{\vec{r}_2} \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} = \int_{\vec{r}_1}^{\vec{r}_2} E_r dr + \int_{\vec{r}_1}^{\vec{r}_2} E_\theta r d\theta$$

Along the chosen path $dr = f'(\theta)d\theta$.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \therefore \int_{\vec{r}_1}^{\vec{r}_2} \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} &= \int_0^{\theta_2} \frac{2p \cos \theta}{4\pi\epsilon_0 f^3(\theta)} f'(\theta) d\theta + \int_0^{\theta_2} \frac{p \sin \theta}{4\pi\epsilon_0 f^3(\theta)} f(\theta) d\theta \\
 &= \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[2 \int_0^{\theta_2} \frac{f'(\theta) \cos \theta}{f^3(\theta)} d\theta + \int_0^{\theta_2} \frac{\sin \theta}{f^2(\theta)} d\theta \right] \\
 &= \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \int_0^{\theta_2} \frac{2f'(\theta) \cos \theta + f(\theta) \sin \theta}{f^3(\theta)} d\theta \\
 &= \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \int_0^{\theta_2} d \left[-\frac{\cos \theta}{f^2(\theta)} \right] \\
 &= -\frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[\frac{\cos \theta_2}{f^2(\theta_2)} - \frac{1}{f^2(0)} \right] \\
 &= -\frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[\frac{\cos \theta_2}{r_2^2} - \frac{1}{r_1^2} \right] \\
 \therefore \Phi_2 - \Phi_1 &= - \int_{\vec{r}_1}^{\vec{r}_2} \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} = \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[\frac{\cos \theta_2}{r_2^2} - \frac{1}{r_1^2} \right]
 \end{aligned}$$

Method 3:

The path from \vec{r}_1 to \vec{r}_2 is broken into two parts. The first from $(r_1, 0, 0) \rightarrow (r_2, 0, 0)$ and then from $(r_2, 0, 0) \rightarrow (r_2, \theta_2, 0)$. So we have

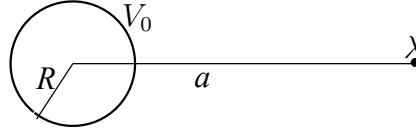
$$\begin{aligned}
 \int_{\vec{r}_1}^{\vec{r}_2} \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} &= \int_{\vec{r}_1}^{(r_2, 0, 0)} \vec{E} \cdot \hat{r} dr + \int_{(r_2, 0, 0)}^{\vec{r}_2} \vec{E} \cdot \hat{\theta} r d\theta \\
 &= \int_{r_1}^{r_2} \frac{2p \cos(0)}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^3} dr + \int_0^{\theta_2} \frac{p \sin \theta}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r_2^3} r_2 d\theta \\
 &= -\frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[\frac{1}{r^2} \right]_{r_1}^{r_2} + \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r_2^2} [-\cos \theta]_0^{\theta_2} \\
 &= -\frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[\frac{1}{r_2^2} - \frac{1}{r_1^2} + \frac{\cos \theta_2}{r_2^2} - \frac{1}{r_2^2} \right] \\
 &= -\frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[\frac{\cos \theta_2}{r_2^2} - \frac{1}{r_1^2} \right] \\
 \therefore \Phi_2 - \Phi_1 &= - \int_{\vec{r}_1}^{\vec{r}_2} \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} = \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[\frac{\cos \theta_2}{r_2^2} - \frac{1}{r_1^2} \right]
 \end{aligned}$$

2. An infinite line charge with charge density λ is placed at a distance a from the axis of an infinite conducting cylinder of radius $R < a$, maintained at a potential $V_0 = -\frac{\lambda}{2\pi\epsilon_0} \ln \left(\frac{a}{R} \right)$. The line charge is parallel to the axis of the cylinder.

(a) Find the potential at all points outside the cylinder.

(3)

soln:



A combination of parallel line charges λ and $-\lambda$ produces equipotential circular cylinders. Since we want the potential outside the given cylindrical conductor, let us consider an image charge as a line charge $-\lambda$ at a distance b from the axis within the cylinder. The potential due to λ and $-\lambda$ everywhere is given as $V = -\frac{\lambda}{2\pi\epsilon_0} \ln(s_1/s_2)$ where s_1 and s_2 are distances of a point from λ and $-\lambda$ respectively.

We want the potential of the given cylinder as V_0 . Consider a point P on the cylinder that lies on the line joining the two line charges. For P , $s_1 = a - R$, $s_2 = R - b$.

$$\therefore -\frac{\lambda}{2\pi\epsilon_0} \ln \frac{a - R}{R - b} = V_0$$

$$\therefore \frac{a - R}{R - b} = e^{-2\pi\epsilon_0 V_0 / \lambda}$$

This gives $b = R^2/a$. We may verify that this will make the potential at all points of the cylinder equal to V_0 .

Now we can find the potential at all points outside the cylinder due to λ and $-\lambda$. This is given as $V = -\frac{\lambda}{2\pi\epsilon_0} \ln(s_1/s_2)$. In cartesian coordinates where we take the line charges along the z axis we have $s_1 = \sqrt{(x - a)^2 + y^2}$ and $s_2 = \sqrt{(x - b)^2 + y^2}$.

$$\begin{aligned} V &= -\frac{\lambda}{2\pi\epsilon_0} \ln \frac{\sqrt{(x - a)^2 + y^2}}{\sqrt{(x - b)^2 + y^2}} \\ &= -\frac{\lambda}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \ln \frac{(x - a)^2 + y^2}{(x - b)^2 + y^2} \end{aligned}$$

- (b) Find the equation of the surface with potential 0. (2)

soln:

The surface with $V = 0$ will be given by $s_1 = s_2$, i.e., $(x - a)^2 + y^2 = (x - b)^2 + y^2$.

This gives $x = \frac{a+b}{2}$.

Substituting for b we get $x = \frac{a^2 + R^2}{2a}$. This is equation of a plane parallel to the yz plane midway between the line charge λ and its image $-\lambda$.

3. When an amount of charge Q is placed on a piece of conductor it attains a potential V . Find the electrostatic energy stored in the conductor by evaluating the integral

$$\frac{\epsilon_0}{2} \int_{\text{all space}} |E|^2 d\tau$$

where \vec{E} is the electric field created in the region surrounding the conductor due to the charge Q on it. (5)

soln:

The electric field within the conductor is 0. So the energy will be given by the integral becomes

$$\mathcal{E} = \frac{\epsilon_0}{2} \int_{\text{outside}} |E|^2 d\tau$$

$$E^2 = \vec{E} \cdot \vec{E} = \vec{\nabla} \Phi \cdot \vec{\nabla} \Phi = \vec{\nabla} \cdot (\Phi \vec{\nabla} \Phi) - \Phi \nabla^2 \Phi$$

This gives

$$\mathcal{E} = \frac{\epsilon_0}{2} \int_{\text{outside}} \vec{\nabla} \cdot (\Phi \vec{\nabla} \Phi) d\tau - \frac{\epsilon_0}{2} \int_{\text{outside}} \Phi \nabla^2 \Phi d\tau$$

Since $\nabla^2 \Phi = \frac{\rho}{\epsilon_0} = 0$ outside the second integral doesn't contribute to the energy. Using divergence theorem the first integral can be converted to a surface integral over the surface bounding the region. This surface is the surface of the conductor S and the surface at infinity. At infinity we expect the fields go to zero if the given conductor is finite. So we have

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{E} &= \frac{\epsilon_0}{2} \int_{\text{outside}} \vec{\nabla} \cdot (\Phi \vec{\nabla} \Phi) d\tau \\ &= \frac{\epsilon_0}{2} \oint_S \Phi \vec{\nabla} \Phi \cdot \hat{n} da \end{aligned}$$

Here the normal \hat{n} is directed into the closed surface of the conductor since the region we are integrating over is the outside.

$$\begin{aligned} \therefore \mathcal{E} &= \frac{\epsilon_0}{2} V \oint_S (-\vec{E}) \cdot \hat{n} da \\ &= \frac{\epsilon_0}{2} V \oint_S \vec{E} \cdot (-\hat{n}) da \\ &= \frac{\epsilon_0}{2} V \frac{Q}{\epsilon_0} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} QV \end{aligned}$$

4. Consider a point charge q placed at a distance a above the origin on the z axis. Write down the potential due to this point charge at a point given by the spherical polar coordinates (r, θ, ϕ) for $r > a$. Since this situation has an azimuthal symmetry the potential due to the charge configuration can be written as

$$\sum_{l=0}^{\infty} \left(A_l r^l + \frac{B_l}{r^{l+1}} \right) P_l(\cos \theta)$$

where $P_l(\cos \theta)$ are called the Legendre polynomials in $\cos \theta$. The first few are

$$P_0(\cos \theta) = 1, \quad P_1(\cos \theta) = \cos \theta, \quad P_2(\cos \theta) = \frac{3}{2} \cos^2 \theta - \frac{1}{2},$$

$$P_3(\cos \theta) = \frac{5}{2} \cos^3 \theta - \frac{3}{2} \cos \theta$$

Using the expansion, $\frac{1}{\sqrt{1+x^2-2x \cos \theta}} = \sum_{l=0}^{\infty} x^l P_l(\cos \theta)$, for $x < 1$ find the values of A_l and B_l for all l in terms of q and a .

(5)

You may use the orthogonality relations of the Legendre polynomials

$$\int_0^\pi P_l(\cos \theta) P_m(\cos \theta) \sin \theta d\theta = \frac{2}{2l+1} \delta_{lm}$$

soln:

The potential at the point $P(r, \theta, \phi)$ is given as

$$V(r, \theta) = \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{1}{\sqrt{a^2 + r^2 - 2ar \cos \theta}}$$

Since $r > a$ we express V as

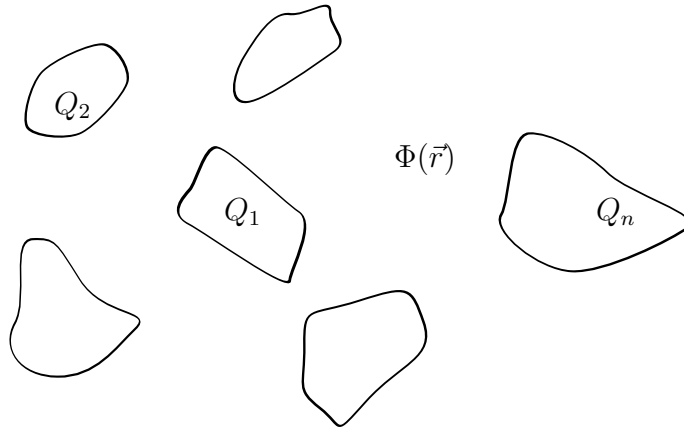
$$\begin{aligned} V &= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r} \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 + (a/r)^2 - 2(a/r) \cos \theta}} \\ &= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r} \sum_{l=0}^{\infty} \left(\frac{a}{r}\right)^l P_l(\cos \theta) \\ &= \sum_{l=0}^{\infty} \frac{qa^l}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^{l+1}} P_l(\cos \theta) \end{aligned}$$

Comparing with $\sum_{l=0}^{\infty} \left(A_l r^l + \frac{B_l}{r^{l+1}}\right) P_l(\cos \theta)$ we find

$$A_l = 0, \quad B_l = \frac{qa^l}{4\pi\epsilon_0}$$

5. A chargeless region is bounded by n conducting surfaces as shown in the figure. When a unit charge is placed on conductor i while all other are chargeless, the potential in the region is given by the function $f_i(\vec{r})$. Now if charges Q_1, Q_2, \dots, Q_n are placed over the n conductors then justify that the potential in the region is given as $\Phi(\vec{r}) = \sum_{i=1}^n Q_i f_i(\vec{r})$ by showing that it satisfies the Laplace's Equation and the appropriate boundary conditions, i.e, this function makes the surfaces of the n conductors equipotential and Gauss's law is satisfied over the surfaces of each conductor.

soln:



(5)

Let us denote the surfaces of the n conductors as S_1, S_2, \dots, S_n .

$f_i(\vec{r})$ is caused by a unit charge on i and 0 charge on the the other conductors.

$$\therefore - \oint_{S_i} \vec{\nabla} f_i(\vec{r}) \cdot \hat{n} da = 1 \quad \text{and} \quad - \oint_{S_j} \vec{\nabla} f_i(\vec{r}) \cdot \hat{n} da = 0 \quad \text{when } j \neq i$$

Each of the functions $f_i(\vec{r})$ are equipotential over all the conducting surfaces.

In the region bounded by the conductors $\vec{\nabla}^2 f_i(\vec{r}) = 0$ since the bounded region is chargeless.

$$\vec{\nabla}^2 \Phi(\vec{r}) = \vec{\nabla}^2 \sum_{i=1}^n Q_i f_i(\vec{r}) = \sum_{i=1}^n Q_i \vec{\nabla}^2 f_i(\vec{r}) = 0$$

$\therefore \Phi(\vec{r})$ satisfies the laplace's Equation.

Consider a conductor j . Over this conductor

$$\Phi(\vec{r}) = \sum_{i=1}^n Q_i f_i(\vec{r})$$

Since each of the function $f_i(\vec{r})$ is constant over the surface of conductor j , $\Phi(\vec{r})$ is also constant over the surface j .

$$\vec{E} = -\text{del}\Phi(\vec{r}) = - \sum_{i=1}^n Q_i \vec{\nabla} f_i(\vec{r})$$

Over the surface of the conductor j

$$\oint_{S_j} \vec{E} \cdot \hat{n} da = -\sum_{i=1}^n Q_i \oint_{S_j} \vec{\nabla} f_i(\vec{r}) \cdot \hat{n} da = -Q_j$$

\therefore the electric field calculated from Φ satisfies the Gauss' law over each conductor.

$\therefore \Phi(\vec{r}) = \sum_{i=1}^n Q_i f_i(\vec{r})$ is the potential in the required region

Gradient, divergence and curl

Spherical polar system

$$\vec{\nabla} F = \frac{\partial F}{\partial r} \hat{r} + \frac{1}{r} \frac{\partial F}{\partial \theta} \hat{\theta} + \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial F}{\partial \phi} \hat{\phi} \quad \vec{\nabla} \cdot \vec{A} = \frac{1}{r^2} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} (r^2 A_r) + \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} (\sin \theta A_\theta) + \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \frac{\partial A_\phi}{\partial \phi}$$

$$\vec{\nabla} \times \vec{A} = \frac{1}{r \sin \theta} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} (\sin \theta A_\phi) - \frac{\partial A_\theta}{\partial \phi} \right] \hat{r} + \frac{1}{r} \left[\frac{1}{\sin \theta} \frac{\partial A_r}{\partial \phi} - \frac{\partial}{\partial r} (r A_\phi) \right] \hat{\theta} + \frac{1}{r} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial r} (r A_\theta) - \frac{\partial A_r}{\partial \theta} \right] \hat{\phi}$$

Cylindrical System

$$\vec{\nabla} F = \frac{\partial F}{\partial s} \hat{s} + \frac{1}{s} \frac{\partial F}{\partial \phi} \hat{\phi} + \frac{\partial F}{\partial z} \hat{z} \quad \vec{\nabla} \cdot \vec{A} = \frac{1}{s} \frac{\partial}{\partial s} (s A_s) + \frac{1}{s} \frac{\partial A_\phi}{\partial \phi} + \frac{\partial A_z}{\partial z}$$

$$\vec{\nabla} \times \vec{A} = \left[\frac{1}{s} \frac{\partial A_z}{\partial \phi} - \frac{\partial A_\phi}{\partial z} \right] \hat{s} + \left[\frac{\partial A_s}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial A_z}{\partial s} \right] \hat{\phi} + \frac{1}{s} \left[\frac{\partial}{\partial s} (s A_\phi) - \frac{\partial A_s}{\partial \phi} \right] \hat{z}$$