

ENG252 Dynamics: Practical 1

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1 Introduction

Consider an object, on Earth's surface, being launched into the air with an initial velocity at some angle with the horizontal. This very simple motion event is best analysed by considering it in two discrete parts: the object acceleration to the initial velocity; and the subsequent trajectory once the object is airborne.

1.1 Acceleration to initial velocity

If forces are denoted as \mathbf{F} , acceleration as \mathbf{a} , object mass as m , and time as t , then the object's acceleration can be modelled using the standard fare of Classical Mechanics: Newton's Second Law of Motion. This is shown in equation (1).

$$\sum \mathbf{F}(t) = m\mathbf{a}(t) \quad (1)$$

The object could be accelerated along any curvilinear path, however, for the sake of simplicity let's assume the object is accelerated along a linear path. We note that acceleration can be formally defined as:

$$\mathbf{a} = \frac{d\mathbf{v}}{dt} \quad (2)$$

Rearranging equation (1), substituting this into equation (2) and taking the integral of with respect to t , from the initial time, t_0 , to the final time, t , yields the following:

$$\int_{\mathbf{v}_0}^{\mathbf{v}(t)} d\tilde{\mathbf{v}} = \frac{1}{m} \int_{t_0}^t \sum \mathbf{F}(\tau) d\tau \quad (3)$$

Assuming that the force is constant over the duration of time $t - t_0$, equation (3) can be simplified as follows:

$$\mathbf{v}(t) = \mathbf{v}_0 + \frac{(t - t_0)}{m} \sum \mathbf{F} \quad (4)$$

If the motion is planar then equation (4) can be decomposed according to a conveniently chosen two dimensional rectilinear orthonormal basis which describes the vector space. Typically, we use $\hat{\mathbf{e}}_{\mathbf{x}}$, and $\hat{\mathbf{e}}_{\mathbf{y}}$, such that $\hat{\mathbf{e}}_{\mathbf{y}}$ is aligned with the force due to gravity, but any arrangement could be used.

1.2 Trajectory once airborne

Once airborne, there are typically only a few forces acting on the object: force due to gravity; and force opposing motion due to friction between the object and air. The force due to gravity can be calculated using another *greatest hit* from the Classical Mechanics cannon: Newton's Law of Universal Gravitation. If we denote the mass of our object as m , the mass of the Earth as M , the Euclidean distance between their centres as r , and G as a gravitational constant $6.67410^{11} \text{N(m/kg)}^2$ then the attractive force due to gravity is given by:

$$\mathbf{F} = G \frac{mM}{r^2} \quad (5)$$

Assuming that the object trajectory does not take large excursions from the Earth's surface it is reasonable to assume that r is constant, implying that the force due to gravity is also constant. If the force due to air resistance is assumed to be negligible, then the object is said to be undermoving constant acceleration g , which is approximately 9.81m/s^2 . A 2D orthonormal basis describing the vector space of the motion, say $\hat{\mathbf{e}}_{\mathbf{x}}$ and $\hat{\mathbf{e}}_{\mathbf{y}}$, can be aligned such that $\hat{\mathbf{e}}_{\mathbf{y}}$ is parallel to the direction of g . Under these assumptions the equations of motion describing the object trajectory can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: text

Equations of motion (x)	Equations of motion (y)
$s_x(t) = (s_0)_x + (v_0)_x t$	$s_y(t) = (s_0)_y + (v_0)_y t - \frac{1}{2}gt^2$
$v_x(t) = (v_0)_x$	$v_y(t) = (v_0)_y - gt$
$a_x(t) = 0$	$a_y(t) = -g$

The parametric displacement equations in Table 1 describe the trajectory of the object as it travels through the air. Letting $s_x(t) = x$ we can rearrange the horizontal displacement equation as:

$$t = \frac{x - (s_0)_x}{(v_0)_x} = \frac{1}{(v_0)_x}x - \frac{(s_0)_x}{(v_0)_x} \quad (6)$$

Substituting this into the vertical displacement equation, and letting $s_y(t) = y$, we see that:

$$y = (s_0)_y + (v_0)_y \left(\frac{1}{(v_0)_x}x - \frac{(s_0)_x}{(v_0)_x} \right) - \frac{1}{2}g \left(\frac{1}{(v_0)_x}x - \frac{(s_0)_x}{(v_0)_x} \right)^2 \quad (7)$$

Expanding equation (7) and simplifying results illustrates the trajectory shape in the 2D plane is quadratic.

1.3 Scope

The scope of this practical is to apply a force to a small electric car, accelerating it along a short linear track. Once the car leaves the track it will follow a quadratic trajectory.

2 Setup

3 Results

Four different angles were selected to provide coverage of the launch angle range available. The angles, in radians, were: $\pi/4$, $7\pi/36$, $5\pi/36$, and $\pi/12$. Setting the track launch angle was not straight forward. Supporting calculations were made to confirm the launch angle. Measurements of the horizontal distance along the track base were taken. This length is shown as T_x in Figure XXXX. Similarly, the launch height was also measured - this is shown as T_y in Figure XXXX. To confirm the launch angle the following calculation was made using basic trigonometry:

$$\theta = \arctan\left(\frac{T_y}{T_x}\right) \quad (8)$$

The calculated results can be seen in Table XXXX. The car was launched off the ramp, at each angle, four times. Each launch saw two measurements taken: the horizontal distance, $(s_f)_x$, the car travelled from the end of the ramp; the time taken, δt , for the car to pass a distance of 0.1m at the end of the ramp. The tabulated results can be seen in Tables XXXX, XXXX, XXXX, and XXXX below.

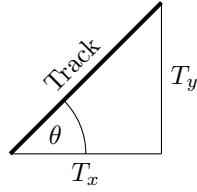


Figure 1: test

Table 2: test

T_x [m]	T_y [m]	θ [rad]
1.01	1.01	$0.785 \approx \pi/4$
1.16	0.83	$0.621 \approx 7\pi/36$
1.275	0.64	$0.465 \approx 5\pi/36$
1.37	0.42	$0.297 \approx \pi/12$

Table 3: Measurements of δt and $(s_x)_f$ taken for the a launch angle of $\pi/4$

Trial No.	δt [ms]	$(s_x)_f$ [m]
1	48.01	1.025
2	46.70	0.985
3	44.60	1.010
4	46.42	1.040
Average		

Table 4: Measurements of δt and $(s_x)_f$ taken for the a launch angle of $7\pi/36$

Trial No.	δt [ms]	$(s_x)_f$ [m]
1	35.66	1.470
2	35.16	1.485
3	33.68	1.520
4	34.04	1.525
Average		

Table 5: Measurements of δt and $(s_x)_f$ taken for the a launch angle of $5\pi/36$

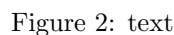
Trial No.	δt [ms]	$(s_x)_f$ [m]
1	30.34	1.590
2	30.39	1.540
3	29.73	1.570
4	29.94	1.575
Average		

Table 6: Measurements of δt and $(s_x)_f$ taken for the a launch angle of $\pi/12$

Trial No.	δt [ms]	$(s_x)_f$ [m]
1	27.27	1.450
2	26.79	1.425
3	26.94	1.410
4	26.92	1.405
Average		

Equation (4) relies on a known force profile, applied to the object, to determine the launch velocity reached at the linear track termination. With some effort, the force could be found using detailed information about the electric motor dynamics and torque speed characteristics. A simpler method of calculating initial launch velocity magnitude would be to calculate average velocity over a short distance towards the track termination, and use this value as an approximate. If the short distance is denoted as Δs , and the time taken to traverse this distance is δt , then average velocity is calculated as:

As outlined in Section XXXX, a small device of approximately 0.1m in length measures the time taken for the car to traverse this distance. Letting $\Delta s = 0.1\text{m}$, and using the average times calculated in Tables XXXX, XXXX, XXXX, and XXXX for δt , we can calculate the approximate launch velocity for each of the ramp angles. The results of these calculations can be found in Table XXXX.


$$(v_y)_0 = |\mathbf{v}_0| \sin(\theta) \quad (11)$$

Multiplying equation (XXXX) throughout by 2, and solving using the quadratic formula yields:

4

5 Discussion

6 Conclusion