

# Theory of 2D-Rockets basically

Zhao H.Q.

January 30, 2026

## 1 Assumption

1. 2Dimensional motion: Our rockets only consider 2Dimension, x-z flat (The z-axis points upward, and the x-axis is horizontal.)
2. rigid body: The rocket is treated as a rigid body, meaning it does not deform during flight.
3. Translation and rotation: The rocket's motion includes both translation (movement through space) and rotation (spinning around its center of mass).
4. Aerodynamic force only acts as drag.
5. Gravity acts downward along the z-axis with a constant acceleration of  $g = 9.81 \text{ m/s}^2$ .
6. constant air density of  $\rho = 1.225 \text{ kg/m}^3$  (sea level standard conditions).

## 2 Coordinate system and state variables

### 2.1 1. Definition of system coordinate

1. Inertial frame of reference: origin at launch point
2. Body axis system: origin at the center of gravity (CG),  $\hat{x}_b$  forward along the rocket's longitudinal axis,  $\hat{y}_b$  laterally (right-hand rule), and  $\hat{z}_b$  upward.

### 2.2 2. State variables

We can use 6 variables to describe the state of the rocket at any time  $t$ :  $s(t) = \begin{bmatrix} x(t) \\ z(t) \\ v_x(t) \\ v_z(t) \\ \theta(t) \\ \omega(t) \end{bmatrix}$

where:

- $x(t)$ : Horizontal position of the rocket's center of mass (CG) at time  $t$ .
- $z(t)$ : Vertical position of the rocket's center of mass (CG) at time  $t$ .
- $v_x(t)$ : Horizontal velocity component of the rocket at time  $t$ .
- $v_z(t)$ : Vertical velocity component of the rocket at time  $t$ .
- $\theta(t)$ : Pitch angle of the rocket relative to the horizontal axis at time  $t$ .
- $\omega(t)$ : Angular velocity (rate of change of pitch angle) of the rocket at time  $t$ .

$$\omega = \frac{d\theta}{dt}$$

## 3 Force Analysis

### 3.1 Thrust Force $\vec{T}$

- Direction: Along the rocket's longitudinal axis (body x-axis).
- Magnitude: Given by the rocket motor's thrust profile  $T(t)$ .