

CN 30: Sine Series and Cosine Series

The first two examples produced only cosines; the third function $f(x) = x$ produced only sines. There will be no mystery if we look again at even and odd functions:

$$f \text{ is even if } f(-x) = f(x) \quad \text{for all } x$$

$$f \text{ is odd if } f(-x) = -f(x) \quad \text{for all } x$$

In either case it is enough to know f over the half-period $0 \leq x < \pi$, since in the other half its graph is either a mirror image (the even case) or its negative.

Cosines are even and sines are odd. The function x^k is even if k is even, and odd if k is odd. Exponentials e^{ikx} and most other functions are neither. But every function has an even part and an odd part,

$$f = f_e + f_o, \quad \text{with } f_e(x) = \frac{f(x) + f(-x)}{2} \quad \text{and } f_o(x) = \frac{f(x) - f(-x)}{2}$$

The even part yields the cosine terms and the odd part yields the sines.

4B If f is odd then all a_k are zero and all b_k can be computed from the half-period between 0 and π :

$$b_k = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} f(x) \sin kx \, dx = \frac{2}{\pi} \int_0^{\pi} f(x) \sin kx \, dx. \quad (13)$$

Similarly b_k is zero if f is even, and a_k comes from a half-period.

That idea can be turned around. Suppose f is known over the half-period $0 < x < \pi$. Then the b_k from (13) are the coefficients in its **Fourier sine series**

$$f(x) = b_1 \sin x + b_2 \sin 2x + b_3 \sin 3x + \dots \quad (14)$$

This series will produce f on the other half-period, where it was originally not known, provided f is extended in the right way: Since the sines are odd, f should extend past $x = 0$ as an odd function. Then the Fourier series for f has no cosine terms and (14) is correct over the whole period.

That is an odd periodic extension of f . The opposite case keeps only the cosine coefficients

$$a_0 = \frac{1}{\pi} \int_0^{\pi} f(x) \, dx \quad \text{and} \quad a_k = \frac{2}{\pi} \int_0^{\pi} f(x) \cos kx \, dx.$$

These give the **Fourier cosine series**, and it matches f over a whole period provided f is extended to be even: $f(-x) = f(x)$.

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