

Evaluate the expression

$$\int_0^L \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx$$

For  $n$  and  $m$  both being non-negative integers using the trigonometry identity

$$\cos a \cos b = \frac{1}{2} [\cos(a+b) + \cos(a-b)]$$

In attacking this problem, we need to be careful of three cases:

Neither  $a-b$  or  $a+b$  equal zero ( $m \neq n$ )

$a+b=0$  ( $m=n=0$  is the only way this can happen with non-negative integers)

$a-b=0$  ( $m=n$ , we will focus on  $m=n \neq 0$  to differentiate from previous case)

For any case, we use the suggested trig identity to simplify the original integral

$$\int_0^L \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx = \int_0^L \frac{1}{2} \left[ \cos \frac{(n+m)\pi x}{L} + \cos \frac{(n-m)\pi x}{L} \right] dx$$

For the first case ( $m \neq n$ ):

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \left[ \cos \frac{(n+m)\pi x}{L} + \cos \frac{(n-m)\pi x}{L} \right] dx \\ & \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \cos \frac{(n+m)\pi x}{L} dx + \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \cos \frac{(n-m)\pi x}{L} dx \\ & = \frac{1}{2} \sin \frac{(m+n)\pi x}{L} \Big|_0^L + \frac{1}{2} \sin \frac{(m-n)\pi x}{L} \Big|_0^L \end{aligned}$$

Since  $\sin(2\pi n)$  for any integer  $n$  (or sum/difference of integers) is equal to 0:

$$\frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \left[ \cos \frac{(n+m)\pi x}{L} + \cos \frac{(n-m)\pi x}{L} \right] dx = 0$$

For the second case ( $m=n=0$ ):

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \left[ \cos \frac{(n+m)\pi x}{L} + \cos \frac{(n-m)\pi x}{L} \right] dx \\ & = \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L (\cos 0 + \cos 0) dx \\ & = \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L 2 dx \\ & = \frac{1}{2} 2x \Big|_0^L \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \left[ \cos \frac{(n+m)\pi x}{L} + \cos \frac{(n-m)\pi x}{L} \right] dx = L$$

For the third case ( $m=n \neq 0$ ):

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \left[ \cos \frac{(n+m)\pi x}{L} + \cos \frac{(n-m)\pi x}{L} \right] dx \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \left[ \cos \frac{2\pi n x}{L} + \cos 0 \right] dx \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L \cos \frac{2\pi n x}{L} dx + \frac{1}{2} \int_0^L 1 dx \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \sin \frac{2\pi n x}{L} \Big|_0^L + \frac{1}{2} x \Big|_0^L \\ &= \frac{1}{2} [\sin(2\pi n) - \sin(0)] + \frac{1}{2} L \end{aligned}$$

Since  $\sin(0)$  and  $\sin(2\pi n)$  for any integer  $n$  are still equal to 0:

$$\int_0^L \cos \frac{n\pi x}{L} \cos \frac{m\pi x}{L} dx = \frac{L}{2}$$