

EX $y'' + y = 0$. We have already solved this equation before using power series. The general solution is

$$y = C_1 \cos x + C_2 \sin x. (*)$$

Now suppose we consider the characteristic equation:

$r^2 + 1 = 0$. It's solutions are $r = \pm i$.

Then e^{ix} and e^{-ix} are solutions! So the general solution is

$$y = C_1 e^{ix} + C_2 e^{-ix}$$

But how is this consistent w/ (*)?

Remember Euler's formula

$$e^{ix} = \cos x + i \sin x.$$

$$\rightarrow e^{-ix} = e^{i(-x)} = \cos(-x) + i \sin(-x)$$

$$\rightarrow = \cos x - i \sin x$$

$$\begin{aligned} \cos(-x) &= \cos x \\ \sin(-x) &= -\sin x \end{aligned}$$

So

$$y = C_1 e^{ix} + C_2 e^{-ix}$$

$$= C_1 (\cos x + i \sin x)$$

$$+ C_2 (\cos x - i \sin x)$$

$$= (C_1 + C_2) \cos x + i(C_1 - C_2) \sin x$$

$$= D_1 \cos x + D_2 \sin x$$

↑
CONSTANTS

More generally:

If r_1, r_2 are two complex roots of ax^2+bx+c of the form

$$r_1 = \mu + \lambda i, \quad r_2 = \mu - \lambda i$$

then the general solution is

$$y = C_1 e^{(\mu + \lambda i)x} + C_2 e^{(\mu - \lambda i)x}$$

We will not present this function like this, but we will use Euler's formula like before:

$$\begin{aligned} & C_1 e^{(\mu + \lambda i)x} + C_2 e^{(\mu - \lambda i)x} \\ &= C_1 e^{\mu x} \cdot e^{i(\lambda x)} + C_2 e^{\mu x} e^{i(-\lambda x)} \\ &= e^{\mu x} \left(C_1 (\cos(\lambda x) + i \sin(\lambda x)) \right. \\ & \quad \left. + C_2 (\cos(\lambda x) - i \sin(\lambda x)) \right) \end{aligned}$$

$$= e^{\mu x} \left((C_1 + C_2) \cos(\lambda x) + i(C_1 - C_2) \sin(\lambda x) \right)$$

$$= e^{\mu x} \left(D_1 \cos(\lambda x) + D_2 \sin(\lambda x) \right)$$

↑ constants ↑

Ex: $y'' - 6y' + 10y = 0$.

Characteristic eqn

$$r^2 - 6r + 10 = 0$$

$$r = 3 \pm \sqrt{3^2 - 10} = 3 \pm i$$

$$\left| \begin{array}{l} \mu = \operatorname{Re}(r) = 3 \\ \lambda = \operatorname{Im}(r) = 1 \end{array} \right.$$

⇒ General solution is

$$y = e^{3x} (C_1 \cos x + C_2 \sin x).$$

Let us summarize:

Want to solve

$$ay'' + by' + cy = 0.$$

First find solutions to the characteristic equation

$$ar^2 + br + c = 0$$

- If r_1, r_2 are two real solutions, the general solution is

$$y(x) = C_1 e^{r_1 x} + C_2 e^{r_2 x}$$

C_1, C_2 are constants

- If $r = \mu \pm \lambda i$ are non-real solutions, the general solution is

Therefore:

$$ay'' + by' + cy = 0$$

if characteristic eqn

$$ar^2 + br + c = 0$$

has two real solutions r_1, r_2

general sol is

$$y = C_1 e^{r_1 x} + C_2 e^{r_2 x}$$

if it has two non-real solutions

$r = \mu \pm \lambda i$ then general sol

is $y = e^{\mu x} (C_1 \cos(\lambda x) + C_2 \sin(\lambda x))$

Remaining case of

a single solution (double root)
is discussed next time!

$$y(x) = e^{\mu x} (C_1 \cos(\lambda x) + C_2 \sin(\lambda x)).$$

Ex: $y'' + 2y' + 5y = 0$

Char equ: $r^2 + 2r + 5 = 0.$

Solutions:

$$\begin{aligned} r &= -1 \pm \sqrt{1-5} = -1 \pm \sqrt{-4} \\ &= -1 \pm 2i \end{aligned}$$

$$\mu = -1, \lambda = 2$$

General solution is:

$$y(x) = e^{-x} (C_1 \cos(2x) + C_2 \sin(2x))$$

There is one remaining case:

The characteristic eqn

$ar^2 + br + c = 0$ can have
a double/repeated solution

Ex $y'' + 2y' + y = 0$

Char equ:

$$r^2 + 2r + 1 = (r+1)^2 = 0$$

has the only solution

$$r = -1.$$

$y_1(x) = e^{-x}$ is a solution

to $y'' + 2y' + y = 0$. Can

verify this by differentiating:

$$\begin{cases} y_1'(x) = -e^{-x} \\ y_1''(x) = e^{-x} \end{cases}$$

$$\leadsto e^{-x} + 2(-e^{-x}) + e^{-x} = 0 \quad \checkmark$$

Can we guess another solution?

It's tricky!

In fact another solution is
 $y_2(x) = x e^{-x}$.

$$y_2'(x) = e^{-x} - x e^{-x}$$

$$\begin{aligned} y_2''(x) &= -e^{-x} - (e^{-x} - x e^{-x}) \\ &= -2e^{-x} + x e^{-x} \end{aligned}$$

$$y_2''(x) + 2y_2'(x) + y_2(x)$$

$$\begin{aligned} &= (-\cancel{2e^{-x}} + x e^{-x}) + 2(\cancel{e^{-x}} - x e^{-x}) \\ &\quad + (x e^{-x}) \end{aligned}$$

$$= x e^{-x} - 2x e^{-x} + x e^{-x} = 0 \quad \checkmark$$

General solution is therefore

$$\begin{aligned} y(x) &= C_1 e^{-x} + C_2 x e^{-x} \\ &= (C_1 + C_2 x) e^{-x}. \end{aligned}$$

This happens in general!

Ex: $y'' - 4y' + 4y = 0$

Characteristic equation is

$$r^2 - 4r + 4 = 0$$

$$(r - 2)^2$$

$r = 2$ repeated solution

General solution is therefore

$$y(x) = (c_1 + c_2 x) e^{2x}$$

Let's summarize!

To solve the ODE

$$ay'' + by' + cy = 0 \quad \text{for}$$

a, b, c constants

we first solve the characteristic equation

$$ar^2 + br + c = 0$$

Three cases:

① If r_1, r_2 are two different real roots, the general sol is

$$y(x) = C_1 e^{r_1 x} + C_2 e^{r_2 x}$$

② If $r = \mu \pm \lambda x$ are two non-real roots, the general sol is

$$y(x) = e^{\mu x} (C_1 \cos(\lambda x) + C_2 \sin(\lambda x))$$

③ If r is a repeated root, the general sol is

$$y(x) = (C_1 + C_2 x) e^{rx}$$