

SOLVING TRIGONOMETRIC EQUATIONS USING THE AUXILIARY ANGLE METHOD

1 Express each of the following in the form $r \sin(x + \alpha)$.

(a) $\sin x + \cos x = a \sin x + b \cos x$

$$r = \sqrt{a^2 + b^2} = \sqrt{1^2 + 1^2} = \sqrt{2}$$

$$\text{so } \sin x + \cos x = \sqrt{2} \sin(x + \alpha)$$

$$\text{---} = \sqrt{2} [\sin x \cos \alpha + \cos x \sin \alpha]$$

$$\text{So } \sqrt{2} \cos \alpha = 1$$

$$\text{and } \sqrt{2} \sin \alpha = 1$$

(by equating the coefficients of $\sin x$ and $\cos x$)

$$\cos \alpha = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}$$

$$\sin \alpha = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2}$$

$$\text{so } \alpha = \frac{\pi}{4}$$

$$\sin x + \cos x = \sqrt{2} \sin\left(x + \frac{\pi}{4}\right)$$

(c) $5 \sin x + 12 \cos x, 0^\circ < \alpha < 90^\circ$

$$r = \sqrt{5^2 + 12^2} = \sqrt{169} = 13$$

$$\text{so } 5 \sin x + 12 \cos x = 13 \sin(x + \alpha)$$

$$\text{---} = 13 [\sin x \cos \alpha + \cos x \sin \alpha]$$

$$\text{So } 13 \cos \alpha = 5$$

$$\text{and } 13 \sin \alpha = 12$$

(by equating the coefficients of $\sin x$ and $\cos x$)

$$\text{so } \cos \alpha = \frac{5}{13}$$

$$\text{and } \sin \alpha = \frac{12}{13}$$

$$\text{So } \alpha \approx 67.38^\circ$$

$$5 \sin x + 12 \cos x = 13 \sin(x + 67.38^\circ)$$

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2 Express each of the following in the form $r \sin(x - \alpha)$.

(a) $\sin x - \sqrt{3} \cos x = a \sin x - b \cos x$

$$r = \sqrt{1^2 + (\sqrt{3})^2} = \sqrt{1+3} = 2$$

So:

$$\sin x - \sqrt{3} \cos x = 2 \sin(x - \alpha)$$

$$\text{---} = 2 [\sin x \cos \alpha - \cos x \sin \alpha]$$

By equating the coefficients of $\sin x$ and $\cos x$, we obtain:

$$\begin{cases} 2 \cos \alpha = 1 \\ -2 \sin \alpha = -\sqrt{3} \end{cases}$$

OR $\begin{cases} \cos \alpha = 1/2 \\ \sin \alpha = \sqrt{3}/2 \end{cases}$

So $\alpha = \pi/3$

$$\sin x - \sqrt{3} \cos x = 2 \sin\left(x - \frac{\pi}{3}\right)$$

(c) $2 \sin x - \cos x, 0^\circ < \alpha < 90^\circ$

$$r = \sqrt{2^2 + 1^2} = \sqrt{5}$$

So

$$2 \sin x - \cos x = \sqrt{5} \sin(x - \alpha)$$

$$\text{---} = \sqrt{5} [\sin x \cos \alpha - \cos x \sin \alpha]$$

By equating the coefficients of $\sin x$ and $\cos x$, we get:

$$\begin{cases} \sqrt{5} \cos \alpha = 2 \\ -\sqrt{5} \sin \alpha = -1 \end{cases}$$

OR $\begin{cases} \cos \alpha = 2/\sqrt{5} \\ \sin \alpha = 1/\sqrt{5} \end{cases}$

$\alpha \approx 26.56^\circ$

$$2 \sin x - \cos x = \sqrt{5} \sin(x - 26.56^\circ)$$

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3 Express each of the following in the form $r \cos(x - \alpha)$.

(a) $\cos x + \sin x = a \cos x + b \sin x$

$$r = \sqrt{a^2 + b^2} = \sqrt{1^2 + 1^2} = \sqrt{2}$$

So

$$\cos x + \sin x = \sqrt{2} \cos(x - \alpha)$$

$$= \sqrt{2} [\cos x \cos \alpha + \sin x \sin \alpha]$$

By equating the coefficients of $\cos x$ and $\sin x$, we obtain:

$$\begin{cases} \sqrt{2} \cos \alpha = 1 \\ \sqrt{2} \sin \alpha = 1 \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{cases} \sqrt{2} \cos \alpha = 1 \\ \sqrt{2} \sin \alpha = 1 \end{cases}$$

OR $\begin{cases} \cos \alpha = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} \\ \sin \alpha = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} \end{cases}$

$$\alpha = \pi/4$$

$$\cos x + \sin x = \sqrt{2} \cos\left(x - \frac{\pi}{4}\right)$$

METHOD 2 $r = \sqrt{2}$ $a = 1$ and $b = 1$

$$\tan \alpha = \frac{b}{a} = \frac{1}{1} = 1$$

so $\alpha = \pi/4$

$$\cos x + \sin x = \sqrt{2} \cos\left(x - \frac{\pi}{4}\right)$$

(d) $3 \cos x + 2 \sin x, 0^\circ < \alpha < 90^\circ$

$$r = \sqrt{a^2 + b^2} = \sqrt{3^2 + 2^2} = \sqrt{13}$$

So

$$3 \cos x + 2 \sin x = \sqrt{13} \cos(x - \alpha)$$

$$= \sqrt{13} [\cos x \cos \alpha + \sin x \sin \alpha]$$

By equating the coefficients of $\cos x$ and $\sin x$, we obtain:

$$\begin{cases} \sqrt{13} \cos \alpha = 3 \\ \sqrt{13} \sin \alpha = 2 \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{cases} \sqrt{13} \cos \alpha = 3 \\ \sqrt{13} \sin \alpha = 2 \end{cases}$$

OR $\begin{cases} \cos \alpha = \frac{3}{\sqrt{13}} \\ \sin \alpha = \frac{2}{\sqrt{13}} \end{cases}$

$$\alpha \approx 33^\circ 41'$$

$$3 \cos x + 2 \sin x = \sqrt{13} \cos(x - 33^\circ 41')$$

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5 Which expression is equivalent to $8 \sin x - 15 \cos x$?

A $17 \cos(x - 61^\circ 56')$

B $17 \sin(x - 61^\circ 56')$

C $17 \cos(x + 61^\circ 56')$

D $17 \sin(x + 61^\circ 56')$

We try any value ($x=0$ for example) $8 \sin 0 - 15 \cos 0 = -15$
 So cannot be **A** (as it's >0) nor **C**, nor **D** (both positive when $x=0$)
 So it has to be **B**

6 Find (i) the maximum and (ii) the minimum value of the following expressions. Also find the smallest positive values of x for which the maximum and minimum occur.

<p>(a) $\sin x - \sqrt{3} \cos x = E$</p> <p>we try to put the expression in the form $r \sin(x + \alpha)$</p> $r = \sqrt{1^2 + (\sqrt{3})^2} = \sqrt{4} = 2$ <p>The maximum value is $+2$ and the minimum value is -2</p> $\sin x - \sqrt{3} \cos x = 2 \sin(x + \alpha)$ $= 2 [\sin x \cos \alpha + \cos x \sin \alpha]$ <p>So by equating the coefficients of $\sin x$ and $\cos x$ on both sides, we obtain</p> $\begin{cases} 2 \cos \alpha = 1 \\ 2 \sin \alpha = -\sqrt{3} \end{cases}$ $\begin{cases} \cos \alpha = 1/2 \\ \sin \alpha = -\sqrt{3}/2 \end{cases} \quad \alpha = -\pi/3$ $E = 2 \sin(x - \pi/3)$ <p>So maximum occurs when $\sin(x - \pi/3) = 1$ or $x - \pi/3 = \pi/2$ i.e $x = \frac{5\pi}{6}$ and minimum when $x - \pi/3 = -\pi/2$ $x = -\frac{\pi}{6}$ (or $x = \frac{11\pi}{6}$)</p>	<p>(c) $2\sqrt{3} \cos x - 2 \sin x = E$</p> <p>again, we try to express as $r \sin(x + \alpha)$</p> $r = \sqrt{(2\sqrt{3})^2 + (-2)^2} = \sqrt{12 + 4} = \sqrt{16} = 4$ <p>Maximum value is 4, minimum is (-4)</p> $2\sqrt{3} \cos x - 2 \sin x = 4 \sin(x + \alpha)$ $= 4 [\sin x \cos \alpha + \cos x \sin \alpha]$ <p>By equating the coefficients of $\sin x$ and $\cos x$, we obtain:</p> $\begin{cases} 4 \cos \alpha = -2 \\ 4 \sin \alpha = 2\sqrt{3} \end{cases}$ $\begin{cases} \cos \alpha = -1/2 \\ \sin \alpha = \sqrt{3}/2 \end{cases} \quad \alpha = \frac{2\pi}{3}$ $E = 4 \sin(x + \frac{2\pi}{3})$ <p>Maximum is when $x + \frac{2\pi}{3} = \frac{\pi}{2}$ $(x = \frac{-\pi}{6} \text{ or } \frac{11\pi}{6})$ Minimum when $x + \frac{2\pi}{3} = -\frac{\pi}{2}$ $x = -\frac{7\pi}{6} \text{ or } \frac{5\pi}{6}$ i.e $x = \frac{5\pi}{6}$ (minimum value)</p>
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7 Solve:

<p>(a) $\cos x + \sin x = 1, 0 \leq x \leq 2\pi$</p> <p>We are going to put the LHS as $r \sin(x + \alpha)$.</p> <p>$r = \sqrt{1^2 + 1^2} = \sqrt{2}$, so</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow \sqrt{2} \left[\frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} \cos x + \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} \sin x \right] = 1$</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow \sqrt{2} \left[\sin \frac{\pi}{4} \cos x + \cos \frac{\pi}{4} \sin x \right] = 1$</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow \sqrt{2} \sin \left(x + \frac{\pi}{4} \right) = 1$</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow \sin \left(x + \frac{\pi}{4} \right) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} = \sin \frac{\pi}{4}$</p> <p>The general solution of this equation is $x + \frac{\pi}{4} = (-1)^n \frac{\pi}{4} + n\pi$ (n integer).</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow x = (-1)^n \frac{\pi}{4} - \frac{\pi}{4} + n\pi$</p> <p>$n=0$ gives: $x = 0$ which is an acceptable solution</p> <p>$n=1$ gives: $x = \frac{-\pi}{4} \times 2 + \pi = \frac{\pi}{2}$ which is also acceptable.</p> <p>$n=2$ gives: $x = \frac{\pi}{4} - \frac{\pi}{4} + 2\pi = 2\pi$ which is also acceptable.</p> <p>Other values of n give values outside the interval $[0, 2\pi]$.</p> <p>So 3 solutions: $0, \frac{\pi}{2}$ and 2π</p>	<p>(h) $\cos x - \sin x = -1, -\frac{\pi}{2} \leq x \leq \frac{3\pi}{2}$</p> <p>We transform the LHS as $r \sin(x + \alpha)$</p> <p>$r = \sqrt{1^2 + (-1)^2} = \sqrt{2}$, so</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow \sqrt{2} \left[\frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} \cos x - \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} \sin x \right] = -1$</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow \sin \frac{3\pi}{4} \cos x + \cos \frac{3\pi}{4} \sin x = -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}$</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow \sin \left(x + \frac{3\pi}{4} \right) = \sin \frac{5\pi}{4}$</p> <p>General solution is:</p> <p>$x + \frac{3\pi}{4} = (-1)^n \times \frac{5\pi}{4} + n\pi$ where n is an integer.</p> <p>$\Leftrightarrow x = (-1)^n \frac{5\pi}{4} - \frac{3\pi}{4} + n\pi$</p> <p>$n=0$ gives: $x = \frac{5\pi}{4} - \frac{3\pi}{4} = \frac{\pi}{2}$ which is an acceptable solution</p> <p>$n=1$ gives: $x = \frac{-5\pi}{4} - \frac{3\pi}{4} + \pi = -\pi$ which is not an acceptable solution.</p> <p>$n=2$ gives: $x = \frac{5\pi}{4} - \frac{3\pi}{4} + 2\pi$ No good.</p> <p>$n=-1$ gives: $x = \frac{-5\pi}{4} - \frac{3\pi}{4} - \pi$ No good</p> <p>$n=3$ gives: $x = \frac{-5\pi}{4} - \frac{3\pi}{4} + 3\pi = \pi$ which is acceptable.</p> <p>Other values of n gives values of x outside $[-\frac{\pi}{2}, \frac{3\pi}{2}]$.</p> <p>So 2 solutions: $\frac{\pi}{2}$ and π</p>
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- 8 Sketch the graph of $f(x) = \sqrt{3}\cos x - \sin x$, $0 \leq x \leq 2\pi$. Use your sketch to find the values of x for which:
 (a) $f(x) = 1$ (b) $f(x) > 1$

We transform $f(x)$ as $r \sin(x + \alpha)$

$$r = \sqrt{(\sqrt{3})^2 + (-1)^2} = \sqrt{3+1} = \sqrt{4} = 2$$

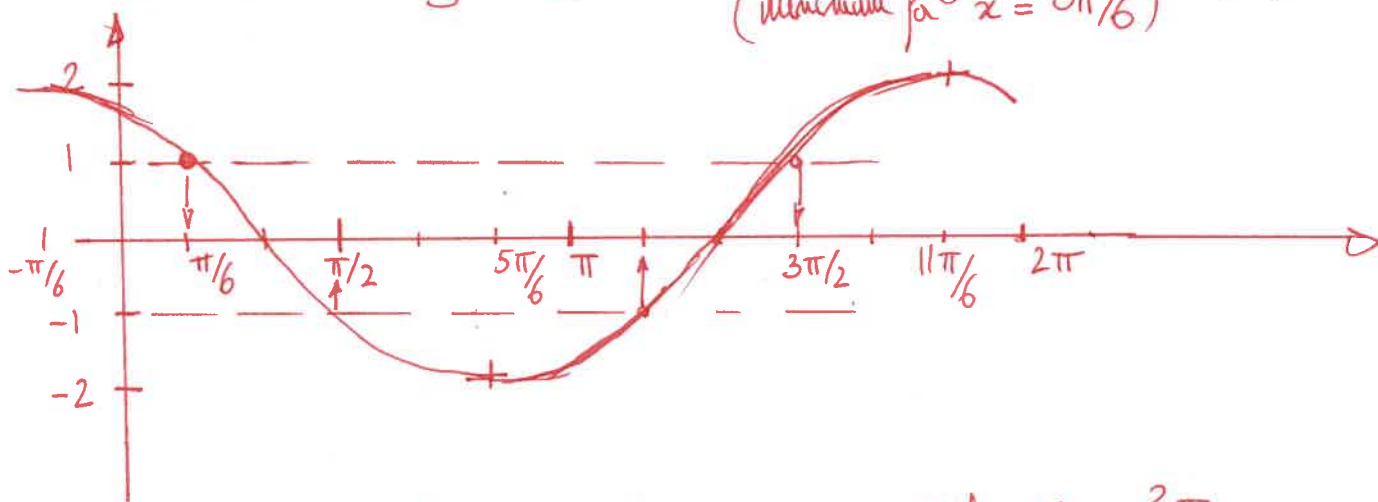
$$\sqrt{3}\cos x - \sin x = 2 \sin(x + \alpha)$$

$$= 2[\sin x \cos \alpha + \cos x \sin \alpha]$$

$$\text{So } \begin{cases} 2\cos \alpha = -1 \\ 2\sin \alpha = \sqrt{3} \end{cases} \quad \text{OR} \quad \begin{cases} \cos \alpha = -\frac{1}{2} \\ \sin \alpha = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} \end{cases} \quad \alpha = \frac{2\pi}{3}$$

$$\text{So } \sqrt{3}\cos x - \sin x = 2 \sin\left(x + \frac{2\pi}{3}\right).$$

$f(x)$ varies between (-2) and $(+2)$ and is maximum for the 1st time when $x + \frac{2\pi}{3} = \frac{\pi}{2}$ i.e. $x = -\frac{\pi}{6}$ (or $x = \frac{11\pi}{6}$).
 (minimum for $x = \frac{5\pi}{6}$)



It looks like $f(x) = 1$ for $x = \frac{\pi}{6}$ and $x = \frac{3\pi}{2}$

$$\text{indeed } f\left(\frac{\pi}{6}\right) = \sqrt{3}\cos\frac{\pi}{6} - \sin\frac{\pi}{6} = \sqrt{3} \times \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} - \frac{1}{2} = \frac{3}{2} - \frac{1}{2} = 1$$

$$f\left(\frac{3\pi}{2}\right) = \sqrt{3}\cos\left(\frac{3\pi}{2}\right) - \sin\left(\frac{3\pi}{2}\right) = \sqrt{3} \times 0 - (-1) = 1$$

for $f(x) = -1$ $x = \frac{\pi}{2}$ and $x = \frac{7\pi}{6}$

$$\text{indeed } f\left(\frac{\pi}{2}\right) = \sqrt{3}\cos\left(\frac{\pi}{2}\right) - \sin\left(\frac{\pi}{2}\right) = 0 - 1 = -1$$

$$\text{and } f\left(\frac{7\pi}{6}\right) = \sqrt{3}\cos\left(\frac{7\pi}{6}\right) - \sin\left(\frac{7\pi}{6}\right) = \sqrt{3}\left(-\frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}\right) - \left(-\frac{1}{2}\right) = \frac{-3}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = -1 \quad \text{YES!}$$