

3-7. Integrals containing trigonometric functions

Example 3.33. *Solve the following integrals.*

$$(i) \int \sin(x) \cos(x)^7 dx.$$

$$(ii) \int \cos(x)^7 dx.$$

$$(iii) \int \cos(x)^4 \sin(x)^5 dx.$$

Solution. (i): We have already seen problems like this in Section 3 (Substitution Rule). We substitute

$$u = \cos(x), \quad du = -\sin(x) dx$$

to get

$$\begin{aligned} \int \sin(x) \cos(x)^7 dx &= - \int u^7 du \\ &= -\frac{u^8}{8} + C \\ &= -\frac{\cos(x)^8}{8} + C. \end{aligned}$$

(ii): We want to make a substitution as in (i), but at first this doesn't seem to have the right form. Using the identity

$$\cos(x)^2 + \sin(x)^2 = 1,$$

we get

$$\cos(x)^7 = (1 - \sin(x)^2)^3 \cos(x),$$

and thus the substitution

$$u = \sin(x), \quad du = \cos(x) dx$$

will work. We compute

$$\begin{aligned} \int \cos(x)^7 dx &= \int (1 - \sin(x)^2)^3 \cos(x) dx \\ &= \int (1 - u^2)^3 du \\ &= \int 1 - 3u^2 + 3u^4 - u^6 du \\ &= u - u^3 + \frac{3u^5}{5} - \frac{u^7}{7} + C \\ &= \sin(x) - \sin(x)^3 + \frac{3\sin(x)^5}{5} - \frac{\sin(x)^7}{7} + C. \end{aligned}$$

(iii): Again we use the identity $\sin(x)^2 + \cos(x)^2 = 1$, and then substitute

$$u = \cos(x), \quad du = -\sin(x) dx,$$

to get

$$\begin{aligned} \int \cos(x)^4 \sin(x)^5 dx &= \int \cos(x)^4 (1 - \cos(x)^2)^2 \sin(x) dx \\ &= - \int u^4 (1 - u^2)^2 du \\ &= \int -u^4 + 2u^6 - u^8 du \\ &= -\frac{u^5}{5} + \frac{2u^7}{7} - \frac{u^9}{9} + C \\ &= -\frac{\cos(x)^5}{5} + \frac{2\cos(x)^7}{7} - \frac{\cos(x)^9}{9} + C. \end{aligned}$$

More generally, using the identity

$$\sin(x)^2 + \cos(x)^2 = 1$$

and substitution, we can solve

$$\int \sin(x)^m \cos(x)^n dx$$

provided that m and n are positive integers, and one of m or n is odd.

What if both m and n are even? To handle these, we will need to make use of angle-sum formulas from trigonometry; we recall these are

$$\begin{aligned}\sin(A) \sin(B) &= \frac{1}{2}(\cos(A - B) - \cos(A + B)), \\ \cos(A) \cos(B) &= \frac{1}{2}(\cos(A + B) + \cos(A - B)), \\ \sin(A) \cos(B) &= \frac{1}{2}(\sin(A + B) + \sin(A - B)).\end{aligned}$$

It is helpful to remember the special cases where $A = B$:

$$\sin(A)^2 = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \cos(2A)),$$

$$\cos(A)^2 = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \cos(2A)),$$

$$\sin(A) \cos(A) = \frac{1}{2} \sin(2A).$$

With these, we can reduce any expression of the form

$$\sin(x)^m \cos(x)^n$$

into something involving only single powers of $\sin(kx)$ and $\cos(kx)$ (for various values of k). In fact, we can even handle *any* product of terms of the form $\sin(kx)$ and $\cos(kx)$.

Example 3.34. Solve the following integrals.

$$(i) \int \sin(x)^2 \cos(x)^2 dx.$$

$$(ii) \int \sin(x) \sin(\sqrt{2}x) \sin(\sqrt{3}x) dx.$$

$$(iii) \int \sin(x)^2 \cos(5x)^2 dx.$$

Solution. (i): Start by reducing the integrand,

$$\begin{aligned}\sin(x)^2 \cos(x)^2 &= \sin(x)^2(1 - \sin(x)^2) \\ &= \sin(x)^2 - \sin(x)^4 \\ &= \frac{1}{2}(1 - \cos(2x)) - \left(\frac{1}{2}(1 - \cos(2x))\right)^2 \\ &= \frac{1}{2} - \frac{\cos(2x)}{2} - \frac{1}{4} + \frac{\cos(2x)}{2} - \frac{\cos(2x)^2}{4} \\ &= \frac{1}{4} - \frac{1}{4} \cdot \frac{1}{2}(\cos(4x) + 1) \\ &= \frac{1}{8} - \frac{\cos(4x)}{8}.\end{aligned}$$

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned}\int \sin(x)^2 \cos(x)^2 dx &= \int \frac{1}{8} - \frac{\cos(4x)}{8} dx \\ &= \frac{x}{8} - \frac{\sin(4x)}{4 \cdot 8} + C.\end{aligned}$$

(ii): Simplify the integrand:

$$\begin{aligned}\sin(x) \sin(\sqrt{2}x) \sin(\sqrt{3}x) &= \frac{1}{2}(\cos(x - \sqrt{2}x) - \cos(x + \sqrt{2}x)) \sin(\sqrt{3}x) \\ &= \frac{1}{4}(\sin(x - \sqrt{2}x + \sqrt{3}x) - \sin(x - \sqrt{2}x - \sqrt{3}x) \\ &\quad - \sin(x + \sqrt{2}x + \sqrt{3}x) + \sin(x + \sqrt{2}x - \sqrt{3}x)),\end{aligned}$$

Hence,

$$\begin{aligned}\int \sin(x) \sin(\sqrt{2}x) \sin(\sqrt{3}x) dx &= \frac{1}{4} \int \sin(x - \sqrt{2}x + \sqrt{3}x) - \sin(x - \sqrt{2}x - \sqrt{3}x) \\ &\quad - \sin(x + \sqrt{2}x + \sqrt{3}x) + \sin(x + \sqrt{2}x - \sqrt{3}x) dx \\ &= \frac{1}{4} \left(-\frac{\cos((1 - \sqrt{2} + \sqrt{3})x)}{1 - \sqrt{2} + \sqrt{3}} \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \frac{\cos((1 - \sqrt{2} - \sqrt{3})x)}{1 - \sqrt{2} - \sqrt{3}} \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \frac{\cos((1 + \sqrt{2} + \sqrt{3})x)}{1 + \sqrt{2} + \sqrt{3}} \right. \\ &\quad \left. - \frac{\cos((1 + \sqrt{2} - \sqrt{3})x)}{1 + \sqrt{2} - \sqrt{3}} \right)\end{aligned}$$

(iii): Reduce the integrand,

$$\begin{aligned}\sin(x)^2 \cos(5x)^2 &= \frac{1}{4}(1 - \cos(2x))(1 + \cos(10x)) \\ &= \frac{1}{4}(1 - \cos(2x) + \cos(10x) - \cos(2x)\cos(10x)) \\ &= \frac{1}{4}(1 - \cos(2x) + \cos(10x)) - \frac{1}{8}(\cos(12x) + \cos(8x)).\end{aligned}$$

Thus,

$$\begin{aligned}\int \sin(x)^2 \cos(5x)^2 dx &= \frac{1}{4} \int 1 - \cos(2x) + \cos(10x) dx \\ &\quad - \frac{1}{8} \int \cos(12x) + \cos(8x) dx \\ &= \frac{1}{4} \left(x - \frac{\sin(2x)}{2} + \frac{\sin(10x)}{10} \right) \\ &\quad - \frac{1}{8} \left(\frac{\sin(12x)}{12} + \frac{\sin(8x)}{8} \right) + C.\end{aligned}$$

What if we have something of the form $\int \sin(x)^m \cos(x)^n dx$, where one (or both) of m, n are negative integers?

It is often helpful as a first step to rewrite the integrand in terms of

$$\begin{aligned}\sec(x) &= \cos(x)^{-1}, & \csc(x) &= \sin(x)^{-1}, \\ \tan(x) &= \frac{\sin(x)}{\cos(x)}, & \cot(x) &= \frac{\cos(x)}{\sin(x)}.\end{aligned}$$

(Often the question will already be in terms of these functions.) The identities

$$\begin{aligned}\tan(x)^2 + 1 &= \sec(x)^2, \\ \cot(x)^2 + 1 &= \csc(x)^2\end{aligned}$$

are useful. Also, common substitutions in these cases are

$$\begin{aligned}u &= \tan(x), & du &= \sec(x)^2 dx, \\ u &= \sec(x), & du &= \sec(x) \tan(x) dx, \\ u &= \cot(x), & du &= -\csc(x)^2 dx, \quad \text{or} \\ u &= \csc(x), & du &= -\csc(x) \cot(x) dx.\end{aligned}$$

Example 3.35. Solve the following integrals:

$$(i) \int \frac{\sin(x)^5}{\cos(x)^4} dx.$$

$$(ii) \int \frac{\sin(x)^4}{\cos(x)^6} dx.$$

$$(iii) \int \tan(x) dx.$$

$$(iv) \int \tan(x)^2 dx.$$

$$(v) \int \sec(x) dx.$$

$$(vi) \int \sec(x)^3 dx.$$

Solution. (i): We have $\sin(x)$ to an odd power, so we can use the substitution

$$u = \cos(x), \quad du = -\sin(x) dx.$$

With this we get

$$\begin{aligned} \int \frac{\sin(x)^5}{\cos(x)^4} dx &= \int \sin(x) \cdot \frac{(1 - \cos(x)^2)^2}{\cos(x)^4} dx \\ &= - \int \frac{(1 - u^2)^2}{u^4} du \\ &= - \int \frac{1}{u^4} - \frac{2}{u^2} + 1 du \\ &= \frac{1}{3u^3} - \frac{2}{u} - u + C \\ &= \frac{1}{3 \cos(x)^3} - \frac{2}{\cos(x)} - \cos(x) + C. \end{aligned}$$

(ii): Here we don't have an odd power on either $\sin(x)$ or $\cos(x)$. However, we may rewrite the integrand as

$$\tan(x)^4 \sec(x)^2,$$

which suggests we could try to substitute either $u = \tan(x)$ or $u = \sec(x)$. Since $\tan(x)$ has an even exponent, we can't substitute $u = \sec(x)$, so we use

$$u = \tan(x), \quad du = \sec(x)^2 dx.$$

This yields

$$\begin{aligned} \int \frac{\sin(x)^4}{\cos(x)^6} dx &= \int \tan(x)^4 \sec(x)^2 dx \\ &= \int u^4 du \\ &= \frac{u^5}{5} + C \\ &= \frac{\tan(x)^5}{5} + C. \end{aligned}$$

(iii): We rewrite $\tan(x) = \sin(x)/\cos(x)$ and then notice that the best substitution is

$$u = \cos(x), \quad du = -\sin(x) dx.$$

Thus,

$$\begin{aligned} \int \tan(x) dx &= \int \frac{\sin(x)}{\cos(x)} dx \\ &= \int \frac{1}{u} du \\ &= \ln |u| + C \\ &= \ln |\cos(x)| + C. \end{aligned}$$

(iv): This one is just a little trick. Using the identity $\tan(x)^2 + 1 = \sec(x)^2$, one gets

$$\int \tan(x)^2 dx = \int \sec(x)^2 - 1 dx = \tan(x) - x + C.$$

(v): This one requires a manipulation of the integrand that isn't obvious.

$$\sec(x) = \frac{\sec(x)(\sec(x) + \tan(x))}{\sec(x) + \tan(x)} = \frac{\sec(x)^2 + \sec(x)\tan(x)}{\sec(x) + \tan(x)}.$$

The numerator is the derivative of the denominator, so this is now amenable to the substitution

$$u = \sec(x) + \tan(x), \quad du = (\sec(x)\tan(x) + \sec(x)^2) dx.$$

We get

$$\begin{aligned} \int \sec(x) dx &= \int \frac{\sec(x)^2 + \sec(x)\tan(x)}{\sec(x) + \tan(x)} dx \\ &= \int \frac{1}{u} du \\ &= \ln |u| + C \\ &= \ln |\sec(x) + \tan(x)| + C. \end{aligned}$$

(vi): Whether we write the integrand as $\sec(x)^3$ or $1/\cos(x)^3$, it seems that there is no substitution that will help. Instead we do integration by parts, with

$$\begin{aligned}u &= \sec(x), & dv &= \sec(x)^2 dx \\du &= \sec(x) \tan(x) dx, & v &= \tan(x).\end{aligned}$$

With this we get

$$\int \sec(x)^3 dx = \sec(x) \tan(x) - \int \tan(x)^2 \sec(x) dx \quad (\text{IBP}).$$

At first this might not look like it helps, because we equally can't solve

$$\int \tan(x)^2 \sec(x) dx = \int \frac{\sin(x)^2}{\cos(x)^3} dx$$

using substitutions as before.

The correct next step is to rewrite $\tan(x)^2$ in terms of $\sec(x)$:

$$\begin{aligned}\int \sec(x)^3 dx &= \sec(x) \tan(x) - \int \tan(x)^2 \sec(x) dx \\ &= \sec(x) \tan(x) - \int (\sec(x)^2 - 1) \sec(x) dx \\ &= \sec(x) \tan(x) - \int \sec(x)^3 dx + \int \sec(x) dx \\ &= \sec(x) \tan(x) - \int \sec(x)^3 dx + \ln |\sec(x) + \tan(x)| + C,\end{aligned}$$

where we used (v) to get $\int \sec(x) dx$. Now we rearrange to solve for $\int \sec(x)^3 dx$:

$$\begin{aligned}2 \int \sec(x)^3 dx &= \sec(x) \tan(x) + \ln |\sec(x) + \tan(x)| + C, \\ \int \sec(x)^3 dx &= \frac{1}{2}(\sec(x) \tan(x) + \ln |\sec(x) + \tan(x)|) + C' .\end{aligned}$$