Table of Contents

Essay 1: Dimensional Analysis of Models and Data Sets: Similarity Solutions and Scaling Analysis

1 About dimensional analysis **4**

1.1 The goal and the plan 4

1.2 About this essay 5

2 Models of a simple pendulum **5**

2.1 A physical model 6

2.2 A mathematical model 6

2.3 Models generally 8

3 An informal dimensional analysis **9**

3.1 Invariance to a change of units 9

3.2 Natural units 11

3.3 Extra and omitted variables 12

4 A basis set of nondimensional variables **13**

4.1 The mathematical problem 13

4.2 The null space 15

4.3 A basis set for the simple, inviscid pendulum 16

5 The viscous pendulum **18**

5.1 A physical model of the viscous pendulum 19

5.2 Drag on a moving sphere 20

5.2.1 Zero order solution 21

5.2.2 The other nondimensional variables: remarks on the Reynolds number 22

5.3 A numerical simulation 23

5.4 An approximate model of the decay rate 25

6 A similarity solution for diffusion in one dimension **27**

6.1 Honing the physical model 28

6.2 A similarity solution 28

7 Scaling analysis **31**

7.1 A nonlinear projectile problem 31

7.2 Small parameter $\rightarrow$ small term? 34

7.3 Scaling the dependent variable 36

7.4 Approximate and iterated solutions 37

8 Summary and closing remarks **39**

Essay 2: The Coriolis force

1 The defining characteristic of large-scale, geophysical flows. 3

1.1 Classical mechanics on a rotating Earth . . . 5

1.2 The goal and the plan . . . 6

1.3 About this essay . . . 7

2 Noninertial reference frames and inertial forces. 8

2.1 Kinematics of a translating reference frame . . . 8

2.2 Kinematics of a rotating reference frame . . . 10

2.2.1 Transforming the position, velocity and acceleration vectors . . . 12

2.2.2 Stationary $\Rightarrow$ Inertial; Rotating $\Rightarrow$ Earth-Attached . . . 17

2.2.3 Remarks on the transformed equation of motion . . . 18

3 Inertial and noninertial descriptions of elementary motions. 19

3.1 Switching sides . . . 20

3.2 To get a feel for the Coriolis force . . . 22

3.2.1 Zero relative velocity . . . 22

3.2.2 With relative velocity . . . 23

3.3 An elementary projectile problem . . . 25

3.3.1 From the inertial frame . . . 25

3.3.2 From the rotating frame . . . 26

3.4 Summary . . . 28

4 Application to the rotating Earth. 29

4.1 Cancelation of the centrifugal force . . . 29

4.1.1 Earth's figure . . . 29

4.1.2 Vertical and level in an accelerating reference frame . . . 31

4.1.3 The equation of motion for an Earth-attached frame . . . 31

4.2 Coriolis force on motions in a thin, spherical shell . . . 32

4.3 Why do we insist on the rotating frame equations? . . . 34

4.3.1 Inertial oscillations from an inertial frame . . . 34

4.3.2 Inertial oscillations from the rotating frame . . . 36

5 Adjustment to gravity, rotation and friction. 38

5.1 A dense parcel on a slope . . . 38

5.2 Dense parcels on a rotating slope . . . 41

5.3 Inertial and geostrophic motion . . . 41

5.4 Energy budget . . . 43

6 Summary and closing remarks. 45

7 Appendix A: Circular motion and polar coordinates 47

8 Appendix B: Adjustment to gravity and rotation in a single fluid layer 49

Essay 3: Lagrangian and Eulerian Representations of Fluid Flow: Kinematics and the Equations of Motion

1 The challenge of fluid mechanics is mainly the kinematics of fluid flow. 4

1.1 Physical properties of materials; what distinguishes fluids from solids? 5

1.1.1 The response to pressure — in linear deformation liquids are not very different from solids 6

1.1.2 The response to shear stress — solids deform and fluids flow 9

1.2 A first look at the kinematics of fluid flow 13

1.3 Two ways to observe fluid flow and the Fundamental Principle of Kinematics 14

1.4 The goal and the plan of this essay; Lagrangian to Eulerian and back again 17

2 The Lagrangian (or material) coordinate system. 19

2.1 The joy of Lagrangian measurement 21

2.2 Transforming a Lagrangian velocity into an Eulerian velocity 23

2.3 The Lagrangian equations of motion in one dimension 24

2.3.1 Mass conservation; mass is neither lost or created by fluid flow 24

2.3.2 Momentum conservation; F = Ma in a one dimensional fluid flow 28

2.3.3 The one-dimensional Lagrangian equations reduce to an exact wave equation 30

2.4 The agony of the three-dimensional Lagrangian equations 31

3 The Eulerian (or field) coordinate system. 33

3.1 Transforming an Eulerian velocity field to Lagrangian trajectories 34

3.2 Transforming time derivatives from Lagrangian to Eulerian systems; the material derivative . . 35

3.3 Transforming integrals and their time derivatives; the Reynolds Transport Theorem 38

3.4 The Eulerian equations of motion 41

3.4.1 Mass conservation represented in field coordinates 41

3.4.2 The flux form of the Eulerian equations; the effect of fluid flow on properties at a fixed position 44

3.4.3 Momentum conservation represented in field coordinates 46

3.4.4 Fluid mechanics requires a stress tensor (which is not as difficult as it first seems) . . . 47

3.4.5 Energy conservation; the First Law of Thermodynamics applied to a fluid 53

3.5 A few remarks on the Eulerian equations 54

4 Depictions of fluid flows represented in field coordinates. 55

4.1 Trajectories (or pathlines) are important Lagrangian properties 55

4.2 Streaklines are a snapshot of parcels having a common origin 58

4.3 Streamlines are parallel to an instantaneous flow field 58

5 Eulerian to Lagrangian transformation by approximate methods. 60

5.1 Tracking parcels around a steady vortex given limited Eulerian data 60
5.1.1 The zeroth order approximation, or PVD 60
5.1.2 A first order approximation, and the velocity gradient tensor 61
5.2 Tracking parcels in gravity waves 63
5.2.1 The zeroth order approximation, closed loops 64
5.2.2 The first order approximation yields the wave momentum and Stokes drift 64

6 Aspects of advection, the Eulerian representation of fluid flow. 67
6.1 The modes of a two-dimensional thermal advection equation 68
6.2 The method of characteristics implements parcel tracking as a solution method 70
6.3 A systematic look at deformation due to advection; the Cauchy-Stokes Theorem 74
6.3.1 The rotation rate tensor 77
6.3.2 The deformation rate tensor 79
6.3.3 The Cauchy-Stokes Theorem collects it all together 81

7 Lagrangian observation and diagnosis of an oceanic flow. 82

8 Concluding remarks; where next? 86

9 Appendix: A Review of Composite Functions 87
9.1 Definition 88
9.2 Rules for differentiation and change of variables in integrals 89