

Note on Euler formula

We have the Maclaurin series of the function e^x

$$e^x = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n!} x^n \quad (1)$$

The imaginary unit i has the property that $i^2 = -1$. Let us expand the function e^{ix} in the Maclaurin series. We may write then

$$\begin{aligned} e^{ix} &= \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n!} (ix)^n = \frac{1}{0!} (ix)^0 + \frac{1}{1!} (ix)^1 + \frac{1}{2!} (ix)^2 + \frac{1}{3!} (ix)^3 \\ &\quad + \frac{1}{4!} (ix)^4 + \frac{1}{5!} (ix)^5 + \frac{1}{6!} (ix)^6 + \frac{1}{7!} (ix)^7 + \dots \\ &= \frac{1}{0!} + i \frac{1}{1!} x - \frac{1}{2!} x^2 - i \frac{1}{3!} x^3 + \frac{1}{4!} x^4 + i \frac{1}{5!} x^5 - \frac{1}{6!} x^6 - i \frac{1}{7!} x^7 + \dots \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

Now in the equation (2) we have terms without i and with i and we can rewrite the Maclaurin series of e^{ix} as

$$\begin{aligned} e^{ix} &= \frac{1}{0!} - \frac{1}{2!} x^2 + \frac{1}{4!} x^4 - \frac{1}{6!} x^6 + \dots \\ &\quad + i \left(\frac{1}{1!} x - \frac{1}{3!} x^3 + \frac{1}{5!} x^5 - \frac{1}{7!} x^7 + \dots \right) \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

We recognize in equation (3) the patterns for expansion of functions $\cos(x)$ and $i \sin(x)$ in Maclaurin series. Therefore we have the relation

$$e^{ix} = \cos(x) + i \sin(x) \quad (4)$$

which is known as the Euler formula.

Based on equation (4) we have the formulas

$$e^{i\pi} = -1 \quad (5)$$

or

$$e^{i\pi} + 1 = 0 \quad (6)$$

The above equation (6) joins the numbers e , i , π , 1 and 0 in an interesting way.

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