

## Levi-Civita Symbol

$$\epsilon_{ijk} = \begin{cases} +1 & \text{if } ijk \text{ is even permutation of } 123 \\ -1 & \text{if } ijk \text{ is odd permutation of } 123 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise, i.e. if any two of the } ijk \text{ are equal} \end{cases}$$

$ijk$  is an  $\begin{pmatrix} \text{even} \\ \text{odd} \end{pmatrix}$  permutation of  $123$  if you can get to it from  $123$  by making an  $\begin{pmatrix} \text{even} \\ \text{odd} \end{pmatrix}$  number of pairwise interchanges.

Example:  $213$  is an odd permutation  $\underbrace{123} \rightarrow 213$   
one switch

$231$  is an even permutation  $\underbrace{123} \rightarrow 213 \rightarrow 231$   
switch switch

If  $\vec{A} = \vec{B} \times \vec{C}$  then  $i$ th component of  $\vec{A}$  is given by

$$A_i = \sum_{j,k=1}^3 \epsilon_{ijk} B_j C_k$$

For example,  $A_1 = \sum_{j,k} \epsilon_{1jk} B_j C_k$

$$= \epsilon_{123} B_2 C_3 + \epsilon_{132} B_3 C_2$$

all other terms vanish

$$A_1 = B_2 C_3 - B_3 C_2 \quad \text{correct!}$$

Similarly

$$\begin{aligned} A_2 &= \epsilon_{231} B_3 C_1 + \epsilon_{213} B_1 C_3 \\ &= B_3 C_1 - B_1 C_3 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} A_3 &= \epsilon_{312} B_1 C_2 + \epsilon_{321} B_2 C_1 \\ &= B_1 C_2 - B_2 C_1 \end{aligned}$$

A very useful relation is

$$\sum_{i=1}^3 \epsilon_{ijk} \epsilon_{ilm} = \delta_{jl} \delta_{km} - \delta_{jm} \delta_{kl}$$

Since  $\epsilon_{ijk} = 0$  unless  $i, j, k$  are all different the above will be non zero only if the pair  $j, k$  has the same numbers as the pair  $l, m$ .

when  $j=l$  and  $k=m$ , the above is  $(\epsilon_{ijk})^2 = +1$

when  $j=m$  and  $k=l$ , the above is  $\epsilon_{ijk} \epsilon_{ckj} = -1$

You can check that both sides of the above equation obey these properties, hence the equality

Example:  $\vec{A} \times (\vec{B} \times \vec{C})$

$i$ th component of above is

$$\sum_{jklm} \epsilon_{ijk} A_j \underbrace{\epsilon_{klm} B_l C_m}_{k\text{th component of } \vec{B} \times \vec{C}}$$

$$= \sum_{jklm} \epsilon_{kij} \epsilon_{klm} A_j B_l C_m$$

$$= \sum_{jlm} [\delta_{ll} \delta_{jm} - \delta_{lm} \delta_{jl}] A_j B_l C_m$$

$$= \sum_j A_j B_l C_l - A_j B_j C_l$$

$$= B_l (\vec{A} \cdot \vec{C}) - C_l (\vec{A} \cdot \vec{B})$$

$$\vec{A} \times (\vec{B} \times \vec{C}) = \vec{B} (\vec{A} \cdot \vec{C}) - \vec{C} (\vec{A} \cdot \vec{B})$$