

More about Langevin's noise

The Langevin equation

$$(1) \quad m \frac{dx^2}{dt^2} = -6\pi\eta r \frac{dx}{dt} + X \quad \leftarrow \begin{array}{l} \text{random} \\ \text{force} \end{array}$$

Denote

$$\gamma = 6\pi\eta r / m$$

and

$$v(t) = \frac{dx}{dt}$$

(Langevin's notation was $\dot{x} = \frac{dx}{dt}$ but we will use v for velocity)

So (1) becomes

$$(2) \quad \dot{v}(t) = -\gamma v(t) + \frac{1}{m} X(t) \quad \leftarrow X \text{ depends on time}$$

If $X(t) = 0$ the solution to (2) is

$$v(t) = v(t_0) e^{-\gamma(t-t_0)}$$

For $X(t) \neq 0$ we need to add a term dependant on $X(t)$

$$(3) \quad v(t) = v(t_0) e^{-\gamma(t-t_0)} + \int_{t_0}^t e^{-\gamma(t-t')} \frac{X(t')}{m} dt'$$

Solution (3) to equation (2) can be obtained using the method of variation of parameters. This method is presented in the book "Ordinary Differential Equations" by E.L. Ince (please see the handouts).

In what follows you will see a physical interpretation of the solution (3).

I. The Equation

$$\ddot{v}(t) = -\gamma v(t) + \frac{1}{m} X(t) \quad (4)$$

has the following property:

if $v_1(t)$ is a solution and $v_2(t)$ is another solution, then $v_1(t) + v_2(t)$ is also a solution (we say that the equation is linear)

II. Based on I we will find the solution to (4) for a complicated $X(t)$ by adding together many solutions that correspond to simple $X(t)$.

III A simple $X(t)$ is $X(t) = 0$

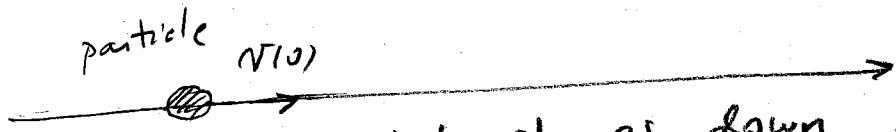
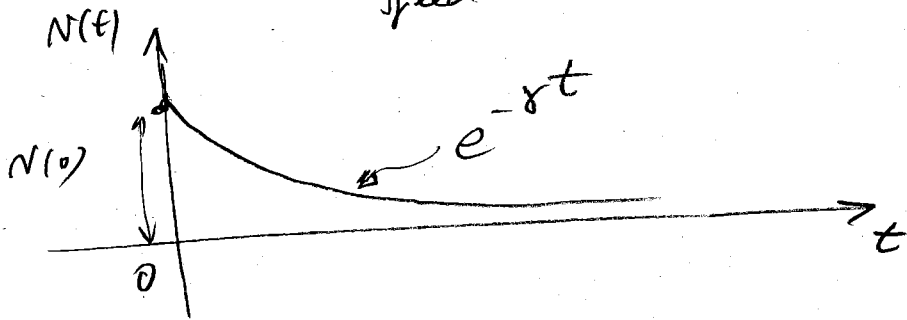
Then

$$\dot{v}(t) = -\gamma v(t)$$

and the solution is

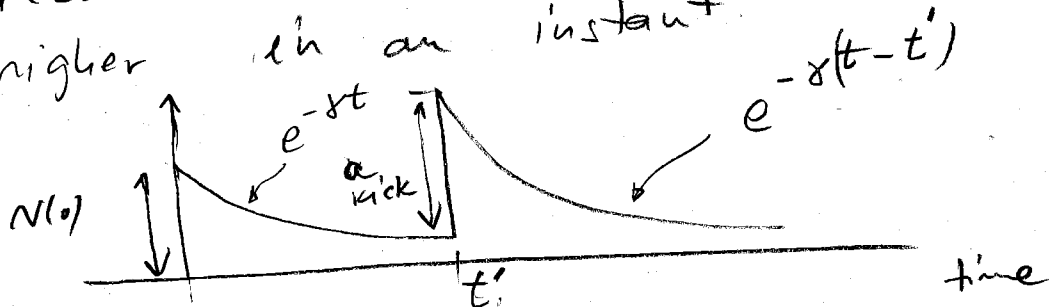
$$v(t) = v(0) e^{-\gamma t}$$

↑
speed at $t=0$.



The particle slows down as it moves to the right

IV At a later time t' , the particle receives a kick so its speed gets higher in an instant.

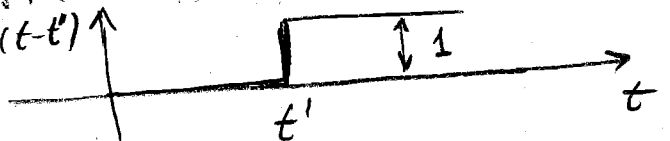


We can write then

$$(5) \quad v(t) = v_0 e^{-\gamma t} + v' \theta(t-t') e^{-\gamma(t-t')}$$

that show a number the intensity of the kick in speed

this is the step function $\theta(t-t')$



V Now we will find the acceleration of the speed from IV; from acceleration we will find the force that created the instantaneous kick.

$$\dot{v}(t) = -\gamma v_0 e^{-\gamma t} + v' \delta(t-t') e^{-\gamma(t-t')} +$$

Dirac's delta because

$$\frac{d}{dt} \theta(t) = \delta(t)$$

$$+ v' \theta(t-t') (-\gamma e^{-\gamma(t-t')})$$

So

$$\dot{v}(t) = -\gamma v(t) + v' \delta(t-t') e^{-\gamma(t-t')}$$

Using the property that

$$\delta(t-t') f(t) = f(t')$$

for every function $f(t)$, we get

$$\dot{v}(t) = -\gamma v(t) + v' \delta(t-t')$$

Compare with

$$\dot{v}(t) = -\gamma v(t) + \frac{X(t)}{m}$$

and get

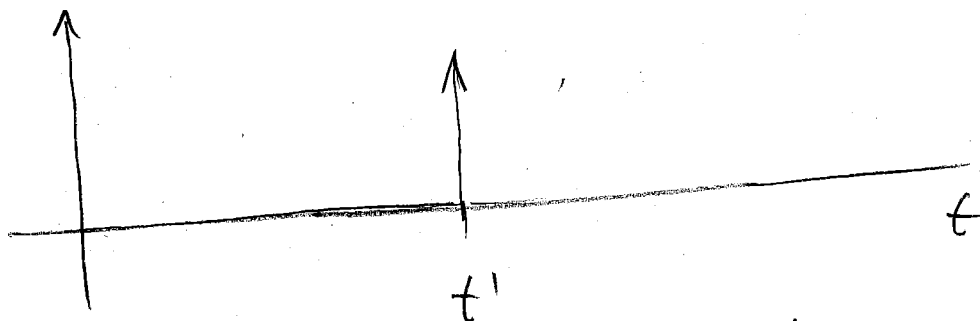
$$X(t) = v' m \delta(t-t')$$

The product $v'm$ is the intensity of the instantaneous force that is applied at the time t' . The force is instantaneous because it is a Dirac's delta function.

$$X(t) = X' \delta(t-t')$$

$$X' = v'm$$

Dirac Pulse
Force



VI The instantaneous force $X' \delta(t-t')$ is useful only if we can represent any force $X(t)$ as a sum of many (even if infinitely many) superpositions of instantaneous forces.

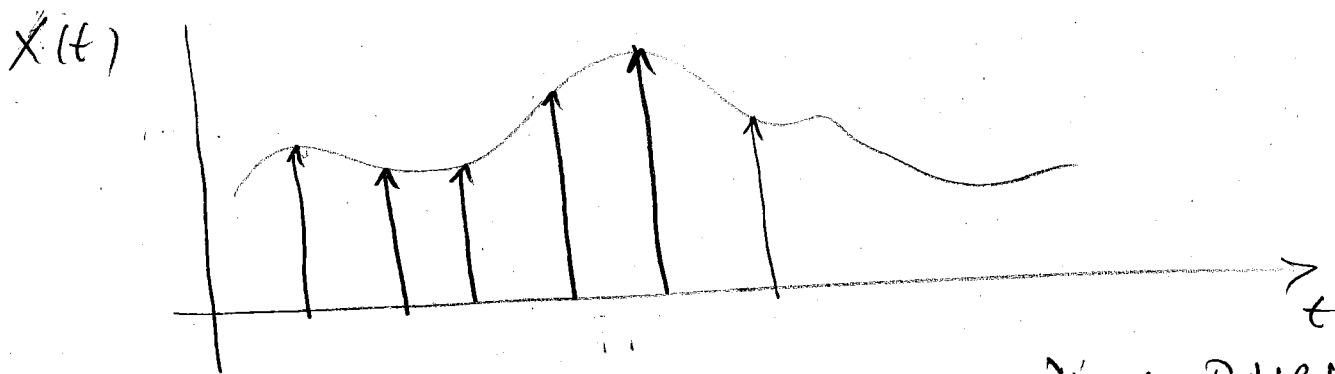


Fig. 1. This is a picture of many Dirac Pulses, with different intensities. Each pulse is located at a different time point.

A property of the Dirac's delta function is

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(t') \delta(t-t') = f(t) \quad (*)$$

The property (*) can be visualized as in Fig. 1. That is, the global function $f(t)$ is a superposition of Dirac pulses, each pulse being located at a different time t' ; you need to sum up (integrate) along the locations of these pulses.

VII Now you are ready to find the solution of $\ddot{v}(t) = -\gamma v + \frac{1}{m} X(t)$

for a general $X(t)$.

First you split the force in many Dirac pulses

$$X(t) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} X(t') \delta(t-t') dt'$$

One pulse of intensity $X(t')$:

Dirac Pulse at t' = $X(t') \delta(t-t')$

will modify the speed according to (5) from step IV

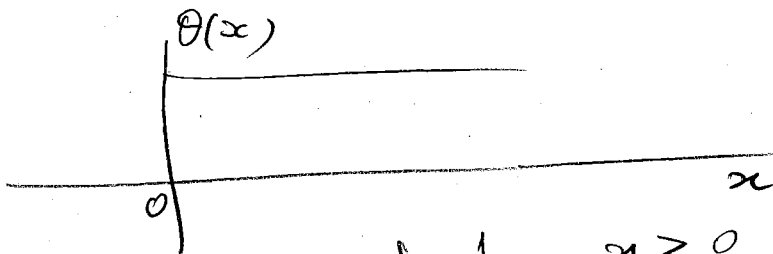
$$v(t) = v_0 e^{-\gamma t} + \frac{1}{m} X(t') \Theta(t-t') e^{-\gamma(t-t')}$$

Now add (integrate) the influences of all pulses

$$v(t) = v_0 e^{-\gamma t} + \int_0^{\infty} \frac{1}{m} X(t') \Theta(t-t') e^{-\gamma(t-t')} dt'$$

Now $\Theta(t-t') = 0$ if $t' > t$

Remember



$$\Theta(x) = \begin{cases} 1 & x > 0 \\ 0 & x \leq 0 \end{cases}$$

$$(6) \quad v(t) = v_0 e^{-\gamma t} + \int_0^t \frac{1}{m} x(t') e^{-\gamma(t-t')} dt$$

because of $\Theta(t-t') = 0$ for $t' > t$.

Also $\Theta(t-t')$ is out of the formula because it's equal to 1 when it is not zero.

Remark

The integral

$$\int_0^t \dots dt$$

goes up to

t because only past kicks ($t' < t$)

can have an influence on the speed at time t ($v(t)$). You cannot have an influence from a future kick ($t' > t$) on $v(t)$.

Conclusion If instead of the reference $t=0$ we use a reference $t=t_0$ as our starting time, the speed is

$$v(t) = v_0 e^{-\gamma(t-t_0)} + \int_{t_0}^t \frac{1}{m} x(t') e^{-\gamma(t-t')} dt$$