

Parallel Transport
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Let $\vec{x}(u, v)$ is a coordinate chart for the surface M with $F = 0$. Let $\vec{E}_1 = \vec{x}_u/|\vec{x}_u|$ and $\vec{E}_2 = \vec{x}_v/|\vec{x}_v|$. For every point \vec{p} in the image of \vec{x} , the pair (\vec{E}_1, \vec{E}_2) is an orthonormal basis for the tangent space of M at \vec{p} . Let $\vec{\alpha}(t)$ be a unit speed curve in the image of \vec{x} . Since $\vec{E}_1 \cdot \vec{E}_1 = 1$, $\vec{E}_2 \cdot \vec{E}_2 = 1$, and $\vec{E}_1 \cdot \vec{E}_2 = 0$, it follows that there is a scalar function $\omega(t)$ such that for all t , $\nabla_{\vec{\alpha}'(t)} \vec{E}_1 = \omega(t) \vec{E}_2$ and $\nabla_{\vec{\alpha}'(t)} \vec{E}_2 = -\omega(t) \vec{E}_1$.

Theorem. Let $\vec{\alpha}$ be a unit speed curve on the surface M , $\vec{\alpha} : [0, b] \rightarrow M$. Given a vector $\vec{V}_0 \in T_{\vec{\alpha}(0)}M$ there exists a unique parallel vector field \vec{V} on M along $\vec{\alpha}$ such that $\vec{V}(0) = \vec{V}_0$.

Proof. If \vec{V} is a parallel vector field along $\vec{\alpha}$, we can assume \vec{V} is a unit vector field, and so we can write $\vec{V} = \cos \theta \vec{E}_1 + \sin \theta \vec{E}_2$. Then

$$\begin{aligned} \nabla_{\vec{\alpha}'} \vec{V} &= -\sin \theta \frac{d\theta}{dt} \vec{E}_1 + (\cos \theta) \omega \vec{E}_2 + \cos \theta \frac{d\theta}{dt} \vec{E}_2 - (\sin \theta) \omega \vec{E}_1. \\ &= -\sin \theta \left(\frac{d\theta}{dt} + \omega \right) \vec{E}_1 + \cos \theta \left(\frac{d\theta}{dt} + \omega \right) \vec{E}_2. \end{aligned}$$

Thus

$$\nabla_{\vec{\alpha}'} \vec{V} = 0 \iff \frac{d\theta}{dt} = -\omega,$$

and so \vec{V} is uniquely determined by the condition

$$\theta(t) = \theta(0) - \int_0^t \omega(s) ds.$$

(If the image of $\vec{\alpha}$ is not contained in a single coordinate chart, then one subdivides the domain of $\vec{\alpha}$ and applies the preceding argument to each subinterval of the domain.) \square