

## Problems

Consider an elastic string of length  $L$  whose ends are held fixed. The string is set in motion with no initial velocity from an initial position  $u(x, 0) = f(x)$ . In each of Problems 1 through 4, carry out the following steps. Let  $L = 10$  and  $a = 1$  in parts (b) through (d).

- a. Find the displacement  $u(x, t)$  for the given initial position  $f(x)$ .
- G** b. Plot  $u(x, t)$  versus  $x$  for  $0 \leq x \leq 10$  and for several values of  $t$  between  $t = 0$  and  $t = 20$ .
- G** c. Plot  $u(x, t)$  versus  $t$  for  $0 \leq t \leq 20$  and for several values of  $x$ .
- G** d. Construct an animation of the solution in time for at least one period.
- e. Describe the motion of the string in a few sentences.

1.  $f(x) = \begin{cases} 2x/L, & 0 \leq x \leq L/2, \\ 2(L-x)/L, & L/2 < x \leq L \end{cases}$

2.  $f(x) = \begin{cases} 4x/L, & 0 \leq x \leq L/4, \\ 1, & L/4 < x < 3L/4, \\ 4(L-x)/L, & 3L/4 \leq x \leq L \end{cases}$

3.  $f(x) = 8x(L-x)^2/L^3$

4.  $f(x) = \begin{cases} 0 & 0 \leq x \leq L/2 - 1 \\ 1, & L/2 - 1 < x < L/2 + 1 \text{ (assume } L > 2), \\ 0, & L/2 + 1 \leq x \leq L \end{cases}$

Consider an elastic string of length  $L$  whose ends are held fixed. The string is set in motion from its equilibrium position with an initial velocity  $u_t(x, 0) = g(x)$ . In each of Problems 5 through 8, carry out the following steps. Let  $L = 10$  and  $a = 1$  in parts (b) through (d).

- a. Find the displacement  $u(x, t)$  for the given  $g(x)$ .
- G** b. Plot  $u(x, t)$  versus  $x$  for  $0 \leq x \leq 10$  and for several values of  $t$  between  $t = 0$  and  $t = 20$ .
- G** c. Plot  $u(x, t)$  versus  $t$  for  $0 \leq t \leq 20$  and for several values of  $x$ .
- G** d. Construct an animation of the solution in time for at least one period.
- e. Describe the motion of the string in a few sentences.

5.  $g(x) = \begin{cases} 2x/L, & 0 \leq x \leq L/2, \\ 2(L-x)/L, & L/2 < x \leq L \end{cases}$

6.  $g(x) = \begin{cases} 4x/L, & 0 \leq x \leq L/4, \\ 1, & L/4 < x < 3L/4, \\ 4(L-x)/L, & 3L/4 \leq x \leq L \end{cases}$

7.  $g(x) = 8x(L-x)^2/L^3$

8.  $g(x) = \begin{cases} 0 & 0 \leq x \leq L/2 - 1 \\ 1, & L/2 - 1 < x < L/2 + 1 \text{ (assume } L > 2), \\ 0, & L/2 + 1 \leq x \leq L \end{cases}$

9. If an elastic string is free at one end, the boundary condition to be satisfied there is that  $u_x = 0$ . Find the displacement  $u(x, t)$  in an elastic string of length  $L$ , fixed at  $x = 0$  and free at  $x = L$ , set in motion with no initial velocity from the initial position  $u(x, 0) = f(x)$ , where  $f$  is a given function. *Hint*: Show that the fundamental solutions for this problem, satisfying all conditions except the nonhomogeneous initial condition, are

$$u_n(x, t) = \sin(\lambda_n x) \cos(\lambda_n a t),$$

where  $\lambda_n = (2n-1)\pi/(2L)$ ,  $n = 1, 2, \dots$ . Compare this problem with Problem 15 of Section 10.6; pay particular attention to the extension of the initial data out of the original interval  $[0, L]$ .

10. Consider an elastic string of length  $L$ . The end  $x = 0$  is held fixed, while the end  $x = L$  is free; thus the boundary conditions are  $u(0, t) = 0$  and  $u_x(L, t) = 0$ . The string is set in motion with no initial velocity from the initial position  $u(x, 0) = f(x)$ , where

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} 0 & 0 \leq x \leq L/2 - 1 \\ 1, & L/2 - 1 < x < L/2 + 1 \text{ (assume } L > 2), \\ 0, & L/2 + 1 \leq x \leq L \end{cases}$$

- a. Find the displacement  $u(x, t)$ .
  - G** b. With  $L = 10$  and  $a = 1$ , plot  $u$  versus  $x$  for  $0 \leq x \leq 10$  and for several values of  $t$ . Pay particular attention to values of  $t$  between 3 and 7. Observe how the initial disturbance is reflected at each end of the string.
  - G** c. With  $L = 10$  and  $a = 1$ , plot  $u$  versus  $t$  for several values of  $x$ .
  - G** d. Construct an animation of the solution in time for at least one period.
  - e. Describe the motion of the string in a few sentences.
- G** 11. Suppose that the string in Problem 10 is started instead from the initial position  $f(x) = 8x(L-x)^2/L^3$ . Follow the instructions in Problem 10 for this new problem.

12. Dimensionless variables can be introduced into the wave equation  $a^2 u_{xx} = u_{tt}$  in the following manner:

- a. Let  $s = x/L$  and show that the wave equation becomes

$$a^2 u_{ss} = L^2 u_{tt}.$$

- b. Show that  $L/a$  has the dimensions of time and therefore can be used as the unit on the time scale. Let  $\tau = at/L$  and show that the wave equation then reduces to

$$u_{ss} = u_{\tau\tau}.$$

Problems 13 and 14 indicate the form of the general solution of the wave equation and the physical significance of the constant  $a$ .

13. a. Show that the wave equation

$$a^2 u_{xx} = u_{tt}$$

can be reduced to the form  $u_{\xi\eta} = 0$  by the change of variables  $\xi = x - at$ ,  $\eta = x + at$ .

- b. Show that  $u(x, t)$  can be written as

$$u(x, t) = \phi(x - at) + \psi(x + at),$$

where  $\phi$  and  $\psi$  are arbitrary functions.

14. **G** a. Plot the value of  $\phi(x - at)$  for  $t = 0, 1/a, 2/a$ , and  $t_0/a$  if  $\phi(s) = \sin s$ . Note that for any  $t \neq 0$ , the graph of  $y = \phi(x - at)$  is the same as that of  $y = \phi(x)$  when  $t = 0$ , but displaced a distance  $at$  in the positive  $x$  direction. Thus  $a$  represents the velocity at which a disturbance moves along the string.

- b. What is the interpretation of  $\phi(x + at)$ ?

15. A steel wire 5 ft in length is stretched by a tensile force of 50 lb. The wire has a weight per unit length of 0.026 lb/ft.

- a. Find the velocity of propagation of transverse waves in the wire.
- b. Find the natural frequencies of vibration.
- c. If the tension in the wire is increased, how are the natural frequencies changed? Are the natural modes also changed?