

# Generating function for Hermite polynomials

Marek Wolf

The usual Hermite polynomials  $H_n(x)$  are defined by the Rodrigues formula:

$$H_n(x) = (-1)^n e^{x^2} \frac{d^n}{dx^n} \left( e^{-x^2} \right).$$

The generating functions for polynomials  $H_n(x)$  is

$$(1) \quad G(x, t) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{H_n(x)t^n}{n!}$$

It is possible to obtain closed form for  $G(x, t)$ . Using the Cauchy's differentiation formula

$$f^{(n)}(z_0) = \frac{n!}{2\pi i} \oint_C \frac{f(z)}{(z - z_0)^{n+1}} dz$$

where  $C$  is a contour enclosing the point  $z_0$  and the integral is taken counter-clockwise, we calculate

$$(2) \quad \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{H_n(x)t^n}{n!} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n t^n}{n!} e^{x^2} \frac{d^n}{dx^n} e^{-x^2} =$$
$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n t^n}{n!} e^{x^2} \frac{n!}{2\pi i} \oint_C \frac{e^{-z^2}}{(z - x)^{n+1}} dz = e^{x^2} \frac{1}{2\pi i} \oint_C e^{-z^2} \left( \frac{1}{z - x} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n t^n}{(z - x)^n} \right) dz$$

Summing the geometrical series we obtain finally

$$(3) \quad G(x, t) = e^{x^2} \frac{1}{2\pi i} \oint_C \frac{e^{-z^2}}{z - x + t} dz = e^{x^2} e^{-(x-t)^2} = e^{2xt-t^2}.$$

Indeed, we have after the change of variables  $y = x - t$ ,  $d/dt = -d/dy$ :

$$\frac{\partial^n G(x, t)}{\partial t^n} \Big|_{t=0} = e^{x^2} \frac{\partial^n e^{-(x-t)^2}}{\partial t^n} \Big|_{t=0} = e^{x^2} (-1)^n \frac{d^n}{dy^n} e^{-y^2} \Big|_{t=0} = (-1)^n e^{x^2} \frac{d^n}{dx^n} e^{-x^2} = H_n(x).$$