

Exercise 1. Free radiation field

The radiation field can be written as

$$\vec{A}(\vec{r}, t) = \int \frac{d^3\vec{k}}{(2\pi)^3} \sum_{\lambda} \sqrt{\frac{2\pi\hbar c^2}{\omega_k}} \left(a_{k,\lambda} \vec{\varepsilon}_{k,\lambda} e^{i\vec{k}\cdot\vec{r} - i\omega_k t} + a_{k,\lambda}^* \vec{\varepsilon}_{k,\lambda}^* e^{-i\vec{k}\cdot\vec{r} + i\omega_k t} \right)$$

1. Compute the Hamiltonian $H = \frac{1}{8\pi} \int d^3\vec{r} (\vec{E}^2 + \vec{B}^2)$
2. Compute the Poynting vector $\vec{P} = \frac{1}{4\pi c} \int d^3\vec{r} \vec{E} \times \vec{B}$

Exercise 2. Polarization vectors

Assuming the wave vector points along the z -axis, $\vec{k} = (0, 0, k)$, common choices for the polarization vectors $\vec{\varepsilon}(\vec{k}, \lambda) = \vec{\varepsilon}_{k,\lambda}$ are:

circular polarization: $\vec{\varepsilon}_{k,+} = (-1, -i, 0)/\sqrt{2}$ $\vec{\varepsilon}_{k,-} = (1, -i, 0)/\sqrt{2}$

linear polarization: $\vec{\varepsilon}_{k,1} = (1, 0, 0)$; $\vec{\varepsilon}_{k,2} = (0, 1, 0)$;

1. Show

$$\vec{\varepsilon}^*(\vec{k}, \lambda) \cdot \vec{\varepsilon}(\vec{k}, \lambda') = \delta_{\lambda\lambda'}$$

2. Show

$$\sum_{\lambda} \varepsilon_i^*(\vec{k}, \lambda) \varepsilon_j(\vec{k}, \lambda) = \delta_{ij} - \frac{k_i k_j}{k^2}$$

Exercise 3. Commutation relations

The Lagrangian density of the free radiation field is given by $\mathcal{L} = -\frac{1}{16\pi} F^{\mu\nu} F_{\mu\nu}$ where $F^{\mu\nu} \equiv \partial^{\mu} A^{\nu} - \partial^{\nu} A^{\mu}$ is the field strength tensor.

1. Show that the canonical momentum to \vec{A} is given by $\vec{\pi} = -\frac{1}{4\pi c} \vec{E}$
2. After quantisation of the radiation field, both \vec{A} and $\vec{\pi}$ are operators. Show that the commutation relations

$$\begin{aligned} [\hat{a}(\vec{k}, \lambda), \hat{a}^{\dagger}(\vec{k}', \lambda')] &= (2\pi)^3 \delta(\vec{k} - \vec{k}') \delta_{\lambda\lambda'} \\ [\hat{a}(\vec{k}, \lambda), \hat{a}(\vec{k}', \lambda')] &= [\hat{a}^{\dagger}(\vec{k}, \lambda), \hat{a}^{\dagger}(\vec{k}', \lambda')] = 0 \end{aligned}$$

result in equal-time commutation relations

$$[\hat{A}_i(\vec{x}, t), \hat{\pi}_j(\vec{y}, t)] = i\hbar \int \frac{d^3\vec{k}}{(2\pi)^3} e^{i\vec{k}\cdot(\vec{x}-\vec{y})} \left(\delta_{ij} - \frac{k_i k_j}{k^2} \right)$$

How would these relations simplify if there were three polarizations of the radiation field? Interpret the results.