



## ***Robotics 1***

# **Trajectory planning**

Prof. Alessandro De Luca

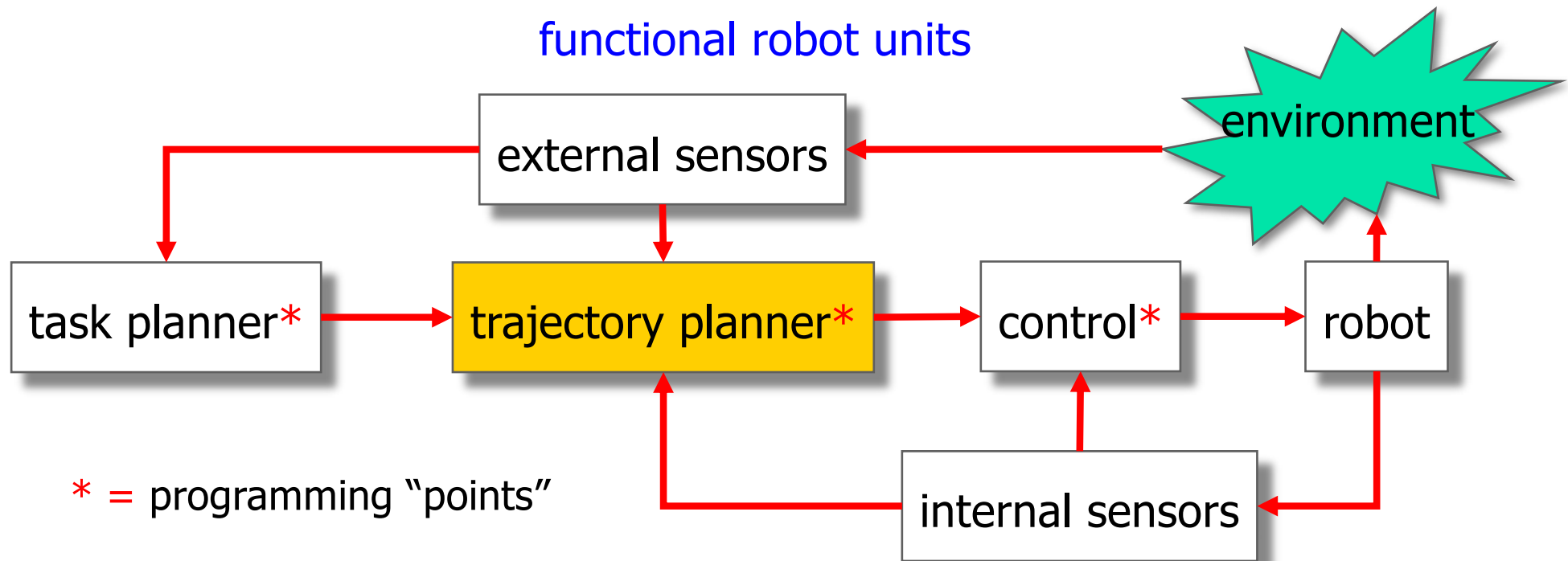
DIPARTIMENTO DI INGEGNERIA INFORMATICA  
AUTOMATICA E GESTIONALE ANTONIO RUBERTI



**SAPIENZA**  
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



# Trajectory planner interfaces



robot **action** described as a sequence of **poses** or **configurations** (with possible exchange of **contact forces**)



TRAJECTORY PLANNER



**reference profile/values** (continuous or discrete) for the **robot controller**





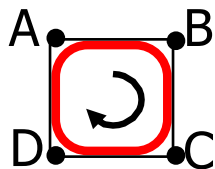
# Trajectory definition

## a standard procedure for industrial robots

1. define Cartesian pose points (position+orientation) using the teach-box
2. program an (average) velocity between these points, as a 0-100% of a maximum system value (different for Cartesian- and joint-space motion)
3. linear interpolation in the joint space between points sampled from the built trajectory

### examples of additional features

a) over-fly



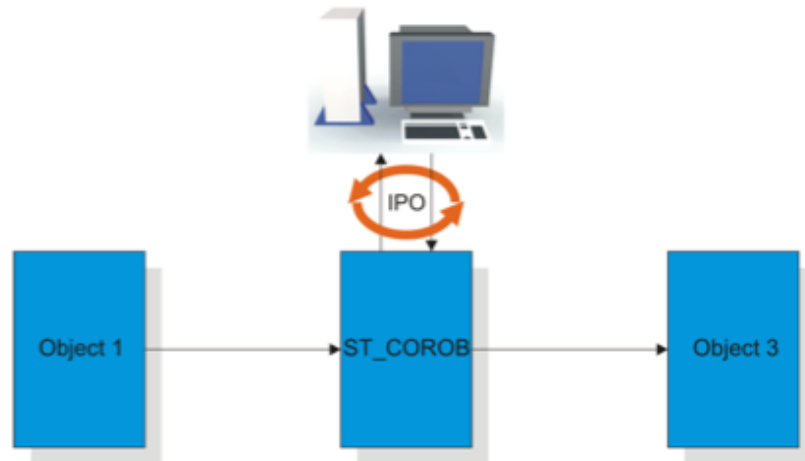
b) sensor-driven STOP

c) circular path  
through 3 points



# KUKA user interfaces

- Teach pendant
- KRL programming
- Ethernet RSI XML (12ms)



- Fast Research Interface (1ms)



Fig. 4-1: Front view of KCP

- |   |                        |    |                       |
|---|------------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 1 | Mode selector switch   | 10 | Numeric keypad        |
| 2 | Drives ON              | 11 | Softkeys              |
| 3 | Drives OFF / SSB GUI   | 12 | Start backwards key   |
| 4 | EMERGENCY STOP button  | 13 | Start key             |
| 5 | Space Mouse            | 14 | STOP key              |
| 6 | Right-hand status keys | 15 | Window selection key  |
| 7 | Enter key              | 16 | ESC key               |
| 8 | Arrow keys             | 17 | Left-hand status keys |
| 9 | Keypad                 | 18 | Menu keys             |



# KRL language

- basic **instruction** set:

Variables and declarations	
DECL	(>>> 10.4.1 "DECL" page 138)
ENUM	(>>> 10.4.2 "ENUM" page 140)
IMPORT ... IS	(>>> 10.4.3 "IMPORT ... IS" page 141)
STRUC	(>>> 10.4.4 "STRUC" page 141)

Motion programming	
CIRC	(>>> 10.5.1 "CIRC" page 143)
CIRC_REL	(>>> 10.5.2 "CIRC_REL" page 144)
LIN	(>>> 10.5.3 "LIN" page 146)
LIN_REL	(>>> 10.5.4 "LIN_REL" page 146)
PTP	(>>> 10.5.5 "PTP" page 148)
PTP_REL	(>>> 10.5.6 "PTP_REL" page 148)

Program execution control	
CONTINUE	(>>> 10.6.1 "CONTINUE" page 150)
EXIT	(>>> 10.6.2 "EXIT" page 150)
FOR ... TO ... ENDFOR	(>>> 10.6.3 "FOR ... TO ... ENDFOR" page 150)
GOTO	(>>> 10.6.4 "GOTO" page 151)
HALT	(>>> 10.6.5 "HALT" page 152)
IF ... THEN ... ENDIF	(>>> 10.6.6 "IF ... THEN ... ENDIF" page 152)
LOOP ... ENDLOOP	(>>> 10.6.7 "LOOP ... ENDLOOP" page 153)
REPEAT ... UNTIL	(>>> 10.6.8 "REPEAT ... UNTIL" page 153)
SWITCH ... CASE ... ENDSWITCH	(>>> 10.6.9 "SWITCH ... CASE ... ENDSWITCH" page 154)
WAIT ... FOR	(>>> 10.6.10 "WAIT FOR" page 155)
WAIT ... SEC	(>>> 10.6.11 "WAIT SEC" page 156)
WHILE ... ENDWHILE	(>>> 10.6.12 "WHILE ... ENDWHILE" page 156)

Inputs/outputs	
ANIN	(>>> 10.7.1 "ANIN" page 157)
ANOUT	(>>> 10.7.2 "ANOUT" page 158)
DIGIN	(>>> 10.7.3 "DIGIN" page 159)
PULSE	(>>> 10.7.4 "PULSE" page 160)
SIGNAL	(>>> 10.7.5 "SIGNAL" page 164)

Subprograms and functions	
RETURN	(>>> 10.8.1 "RETURN" page 165)

Interrupt programming	
BRAKE	(>>> 10.9.1 "BRAKE" page 166)
INTERRUPT	(>>> 10.9.2 "INTERRUPT" page 166)
INTERRUPT ... DECL ... WHEN ... DO	(>>> 10.9.3 "INTERRUPT ... DECL ... WHEN ... DO" page 167)
RESUME	(>>> 10.9.4 "RESUME" page 169)

Path-related switching actions (=Trigger)	
TRIGGER WHEN DISTANCE	(>>> 10.10.1 "TRIGGER WHEN DISTANCE" page 170)
TRIGGER WHEN PATH	(>>> 10.10.2 "TRIGGER WHEN PATH" page 173)

Communication	
(>>> 10.11 "Communication" page 176)	

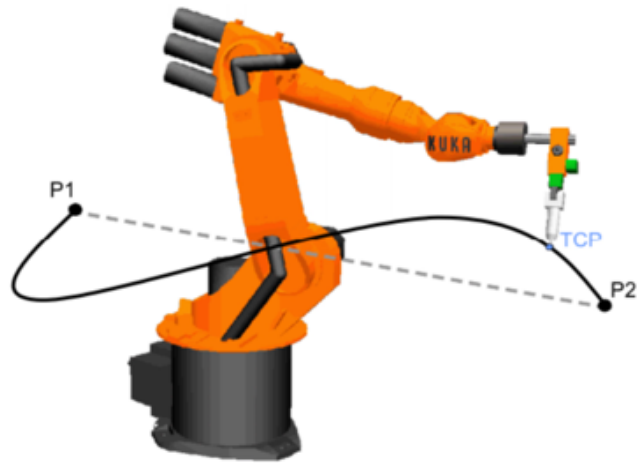
System functions	
VARSTATE()	(>>> 10.12.1 "VARSTATE()" page 176)

- basic **data** set: frames, vectors + DECLaration

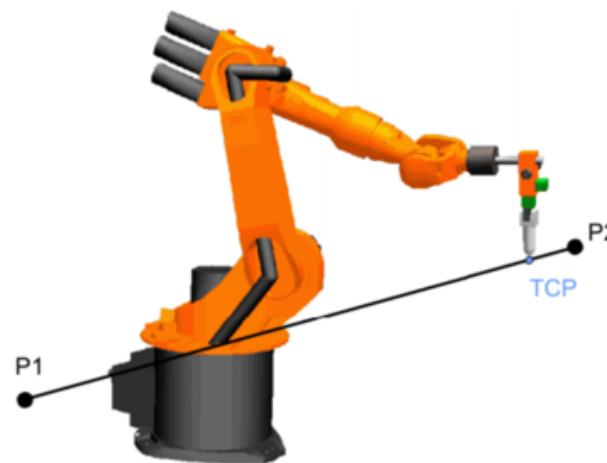


# KRL language

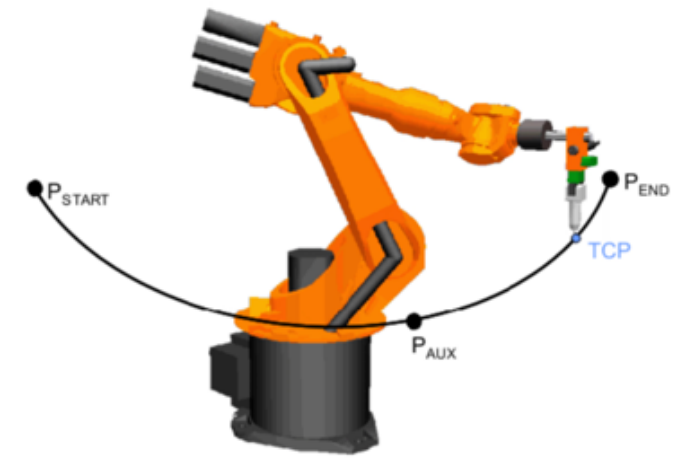
- typical motion primitives



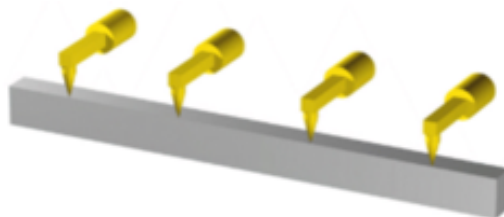
PTP motion  
(point-to-point, linear  
in joint space)



LIN motion  
(linear in  
Cartesian space)

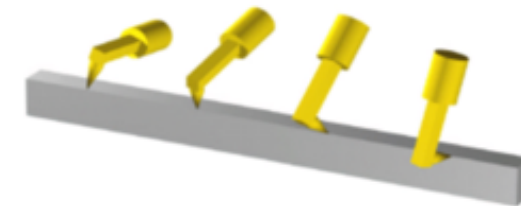


CIRC motion  
(circular in  
Cartesian space)



CONST orientation

end-effector  
orientation

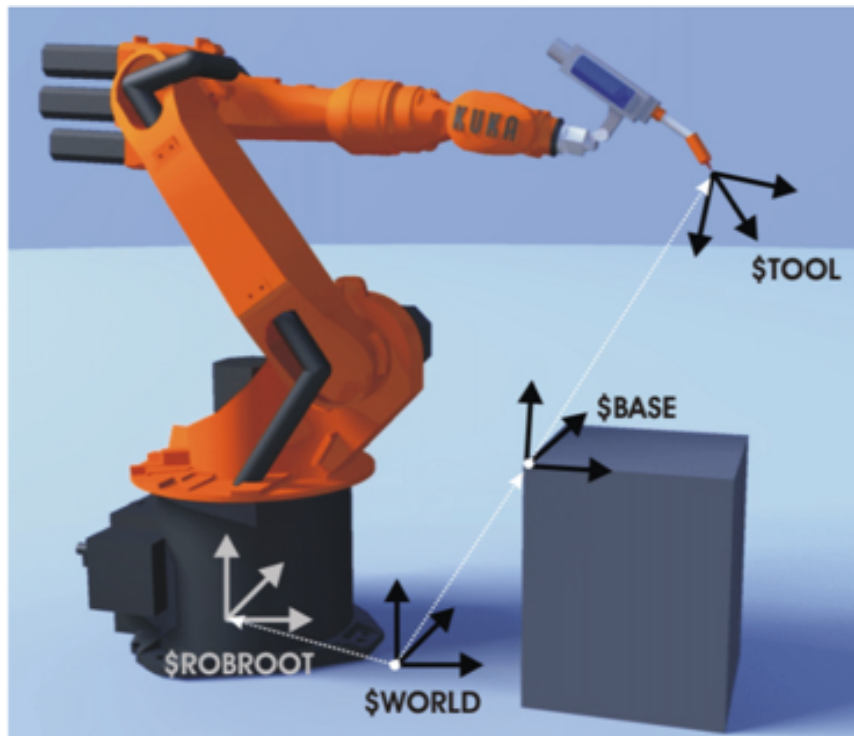


PTP motion  
(linear in RPY angles)



# KRL language

- multiple coordinate frames (in Cartesian space) and jogging of robot joints





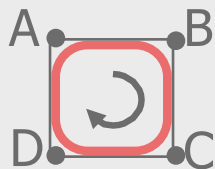
# Trajectory definition

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2. program an (average) velocity between these points, as a 0-100% of a maximum system value (different for Cartesian- and joint-space motion)
3. linear interpolation in the joint space between points sampled from the built trajectory

### examples of additional features

a) over-fly



b) sensor-driven STOP

c) circular path  
through 3 points

### main drawbacks

- semi-manual programming (as in "first generation" robot languages)
- limited visualization of motion



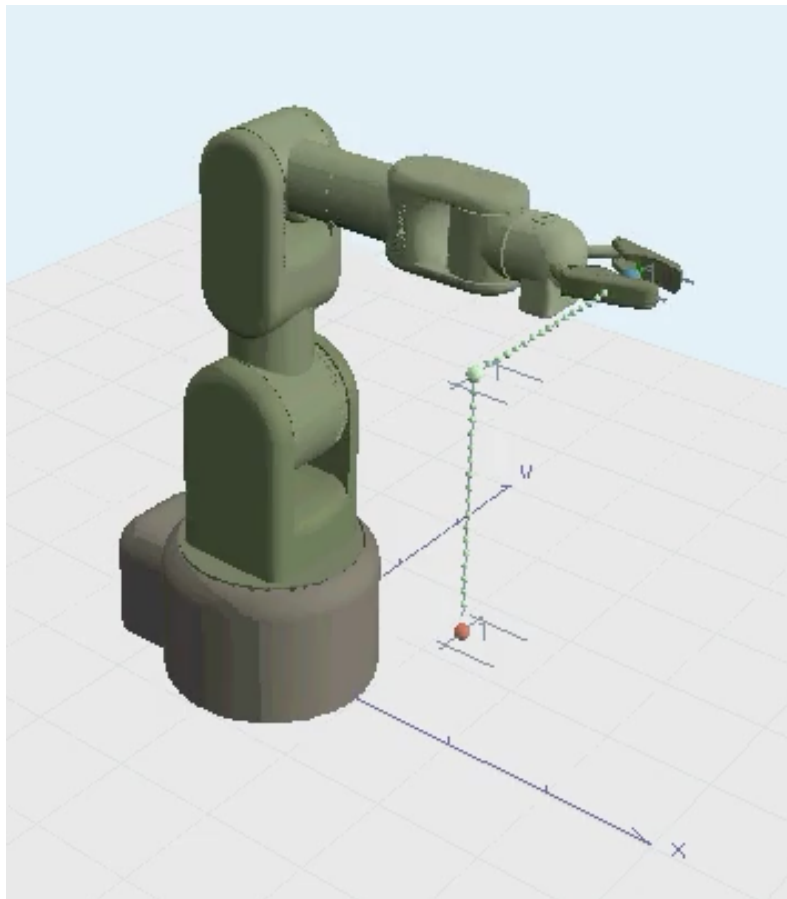
a mathematical formalization of trajectories is useful/needed





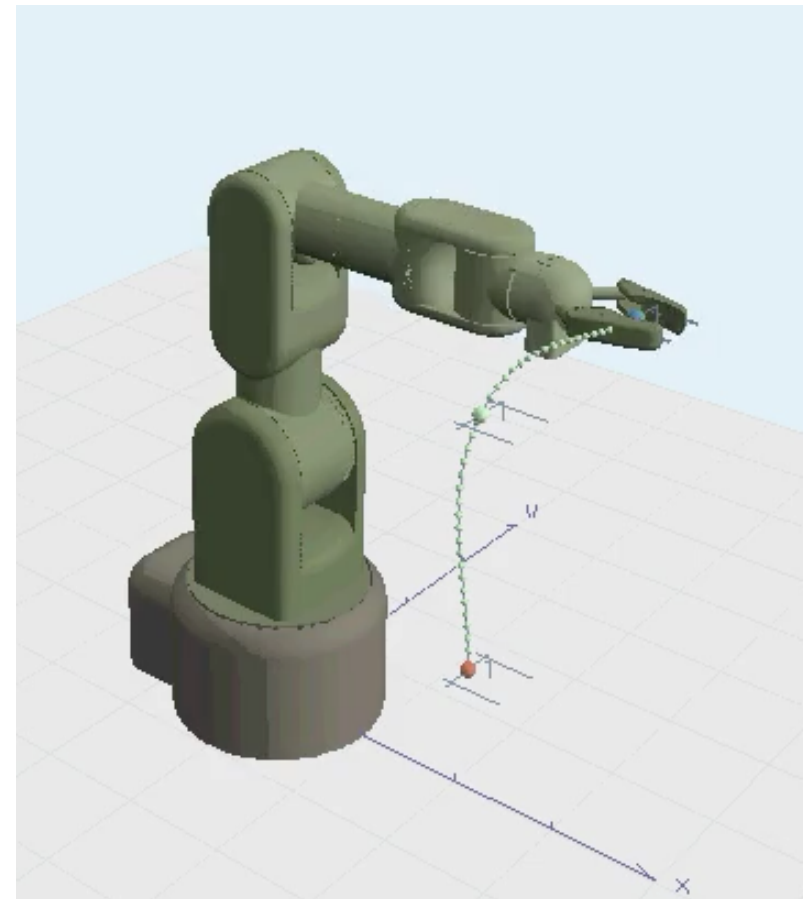
# Some typical trajectories

- Point-to-point Cartesian motion with an **intermediate** point



video

Straight lines as Cartesian path

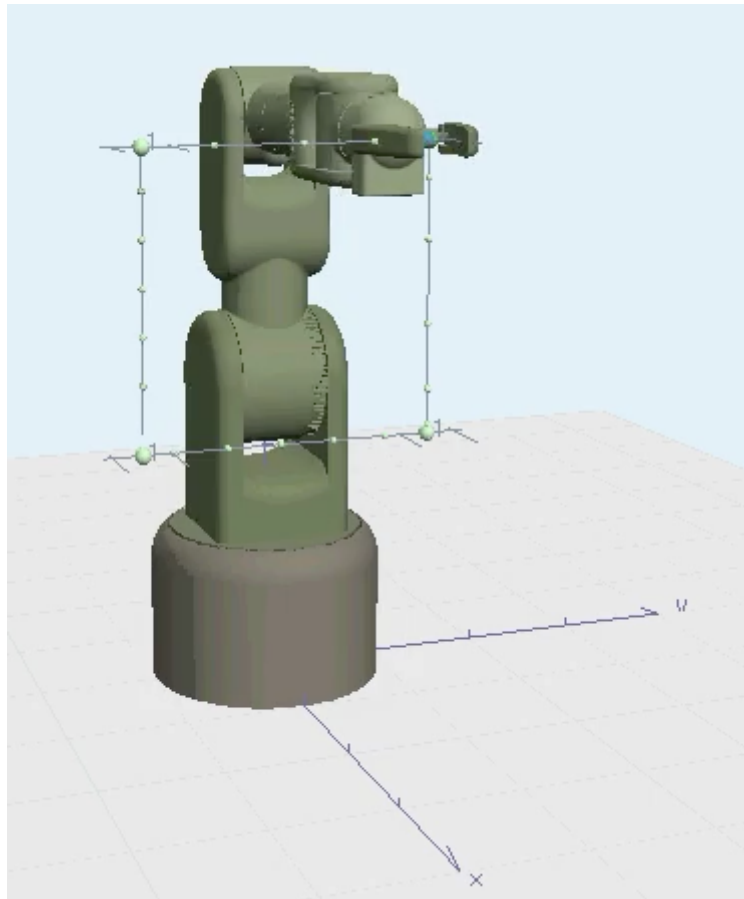


video

Interpolation with Bezier curves

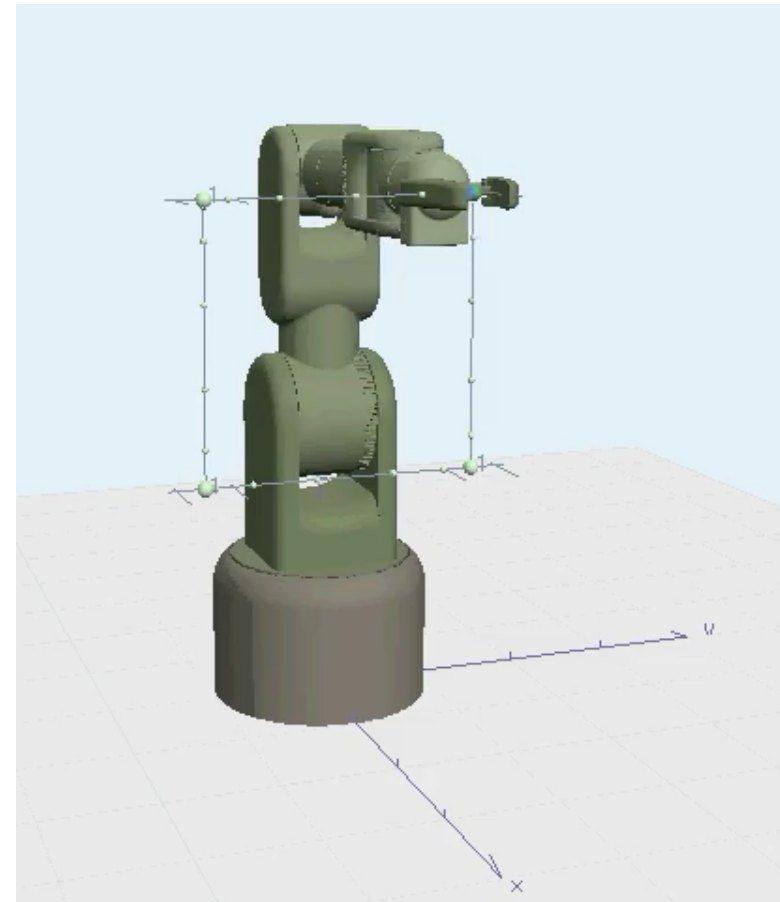
# Some typical trajectories

- Timing laws: Cartesian path with (dis-)continuous tangent



video

Square path at constant speed



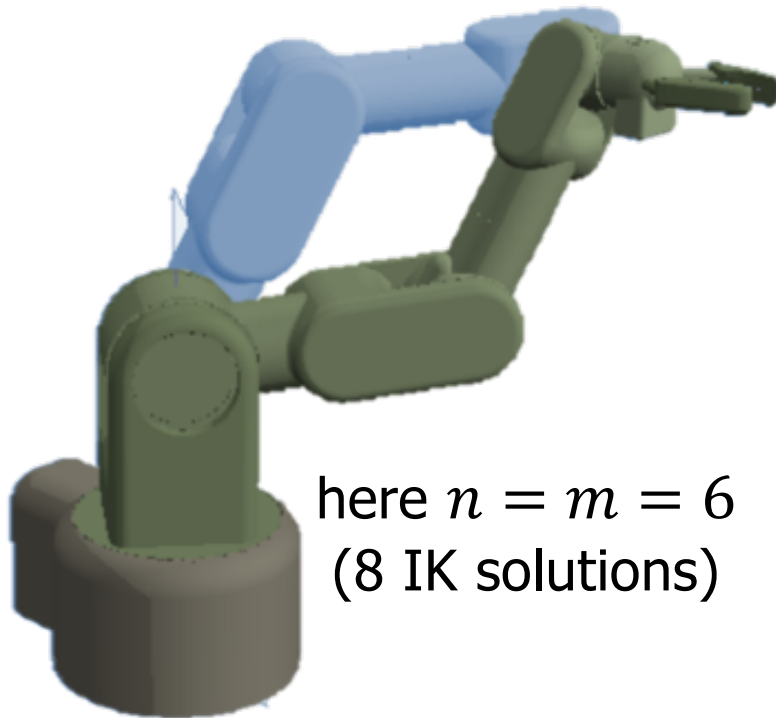
video

Square path with trapezoidal speed profile



# Joint and Cartesian trajectories

- assigned task: arm **reconfiguration** between two inverse kinematic solutions associated to a **given end-effector pose**
  - **initial** and **final** configuration
  - same Cartesian pose (no change!): the motion cannot be fully specified in the Cartesian space
  - to perform this task, the robot should leave the given end-effector pose and then return to it
  - a self-motion could be sufficient
    - if there is (task) redundancy ( $m < n$ )
    - if the robot starts in a singularity



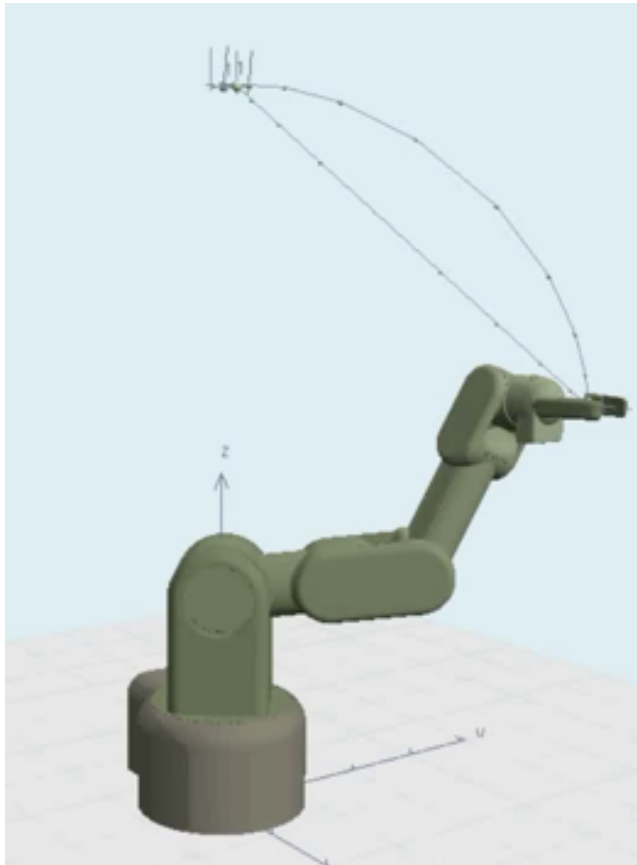
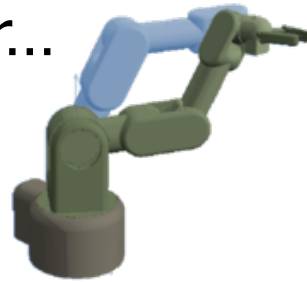
here  $n = m = 6$   
(8 IK solutions)

for “simple” manipulators (e.g., all industrial robots) and  $m = n$ , the execution of these tasks will require the **passage through a singular configuration**



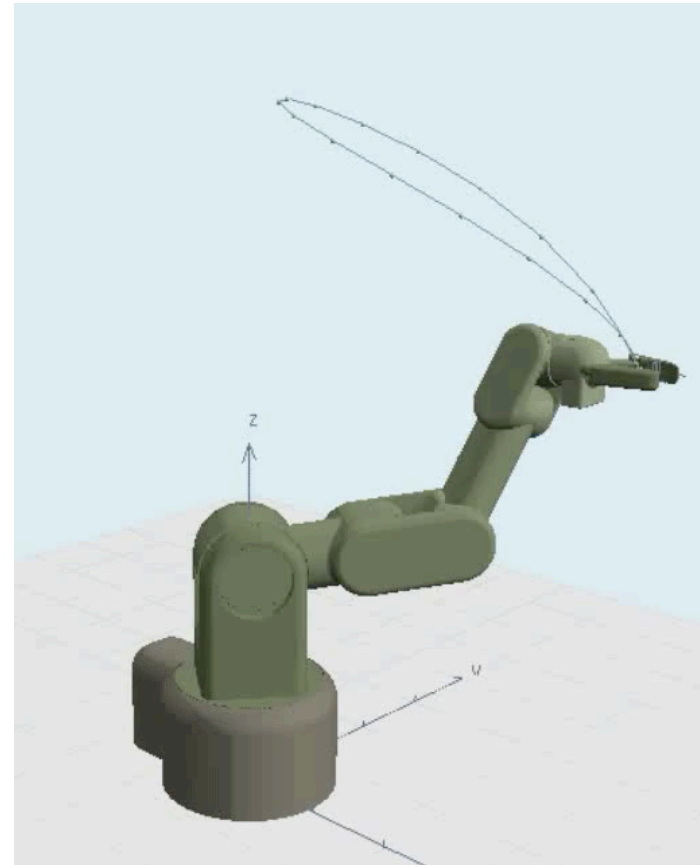
# Joint and Cartesian trajectories

- a reconfiguration task (or... passing through singularity)



video

three-phase trajectory:  
circular path + self-motion + linear path

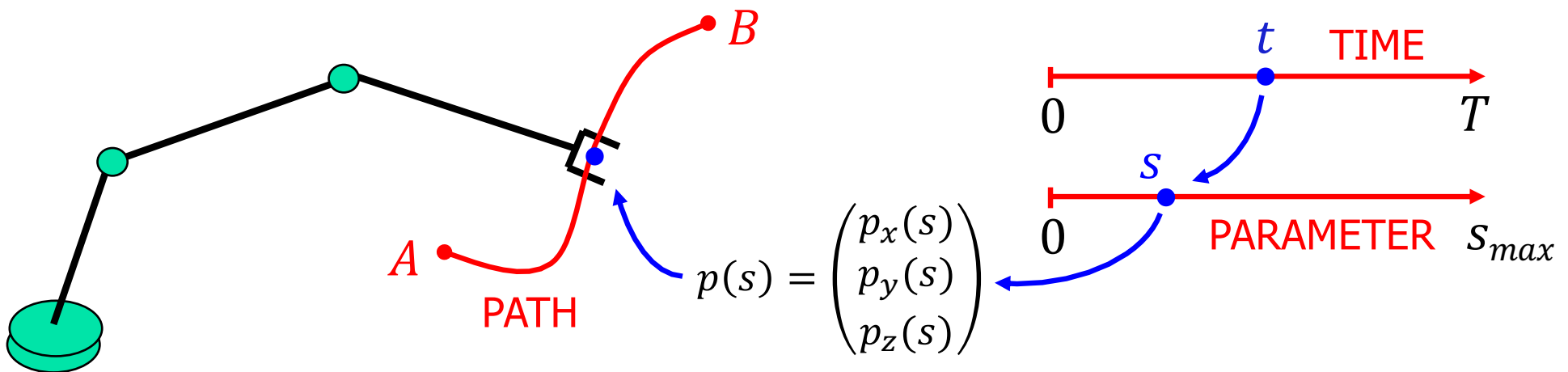
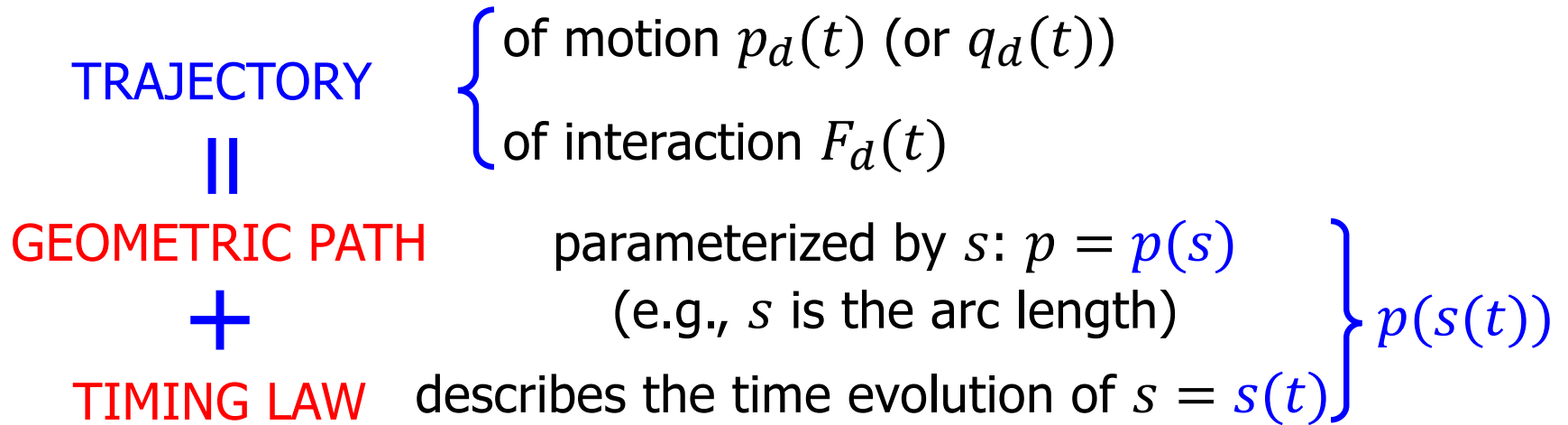


video

single-phase trajectory  
in the joint space (no stops)



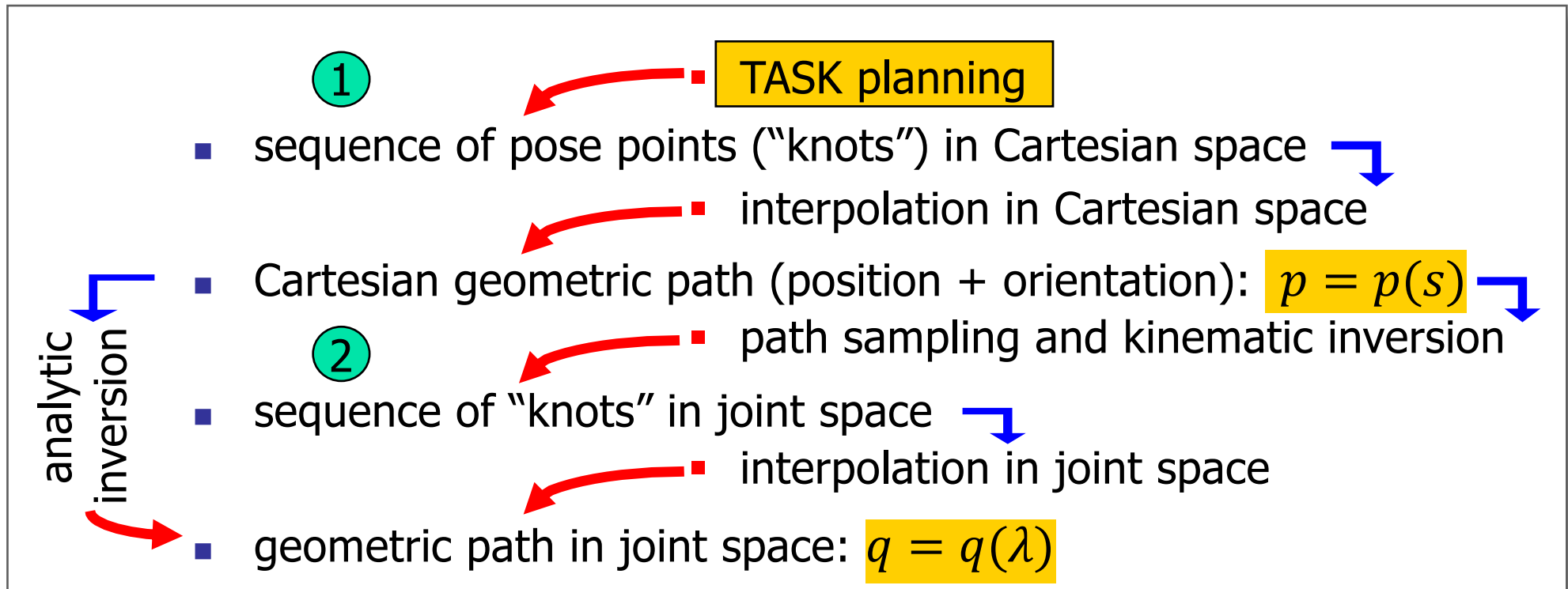
# From task to trajectory



example: TASK planner provides  $A, B$   
TRAJECTORY planner generates  $p(t)$



# Trajectory planning operative sequence

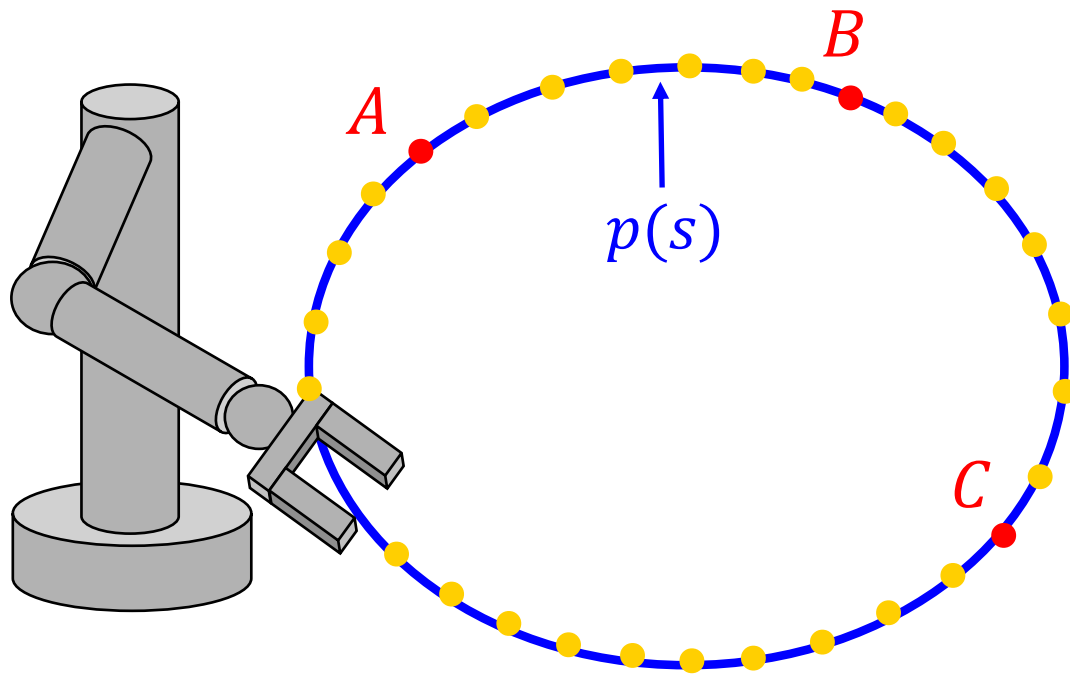


additional issues to be considered in the planning process

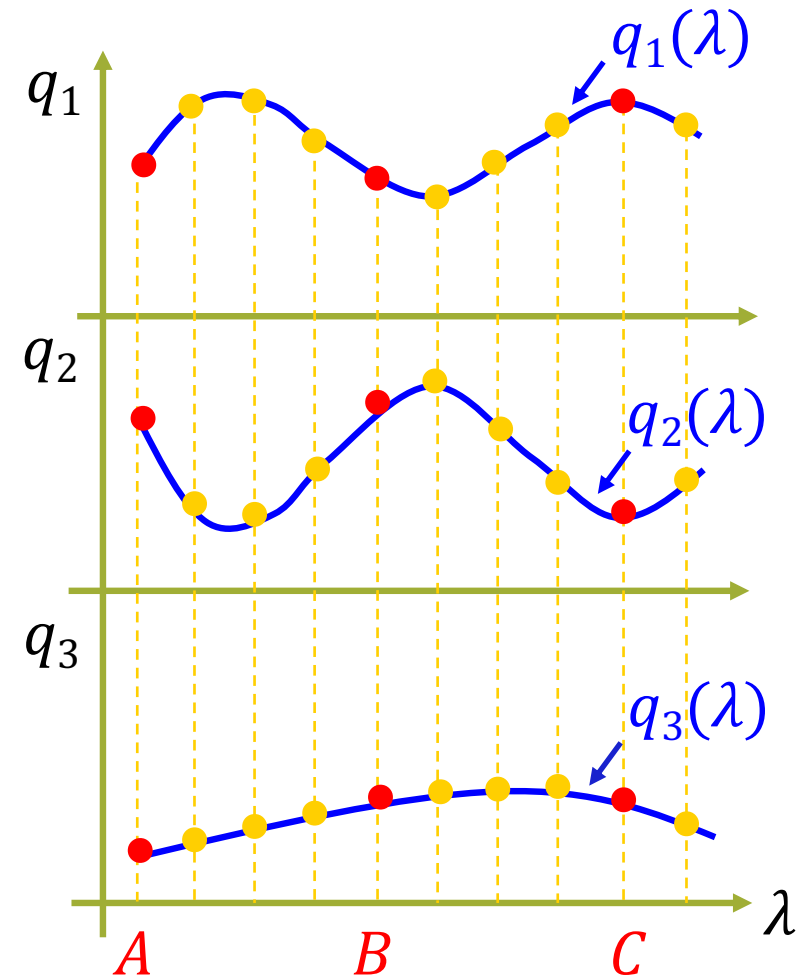
- obstacle avoidance
- on-line/off-line computational load
- sequence ② is more "dense" than ①



# Example



Cartesian space



joint space



# Path and timing law

- after choosing a **path**, the trajectory definition is completed by the choice of a timing law

$$p = p(s) \quad \Rightarrow \quad s = s(t) \quad (\text{Cartesian space})$$

$$q = q(\lambda) \quad \Rightarrow \quad \lambda = \lambda(t) \quad (\text{joint space})$$

- if  $s(t) = t$ , path parameterization is the **natural** one given by time
- the **timing law**
  - is chosen based on **task specifications** (stop in a point, move at constant velocity, and so on)
  - may consider **optimality criteria** (min transfer time, min energy,...)
  - **constraints** are imposed by actuator capabilities (max torque, max velocity,...) and/or by the task (e.g., max acceleration on payload)

**note:** on parameterized paths, a **space-time decomposition** takes place

e.g., in Cartesian space

$$\dot{p}(t) = \frac{dp}{ds} \dot{s} \quad \ddot{p}(t) = \frac{dp}{ds} \ddot{s} + \frac{d^2p}{ds^2} \dot{s}^2$$





# Trajectory classification

- space of definition
  - Cartesian, joint
- task type
  - point-to-point (PTP), multiple points (knots), continuous, concatenated
- path geometry
  - rectilinear, polynomial, exponential, cycloid, ...
- timing law
  - bang-bang in acceleration, trapezoidal in velocity, polynomial, ...
- coordinated or independent
  - motion of all joints (or of all Cartesian components) **starts and ends at the same instants** (say,  $t = 0$  and  $t = T$ ) = **single timing law**  
or
    - motions are timed **independently** (according to the requested displacement and robot capabilities) – mostly only in the **joint space**



# Cartesian vs. joint trajectory planning

- planning in **Cartesian space**
  - allows a more direct visualization of the generated path
  - obstacle avoidance, lack of “wandering”
- planning in **joint space**
  - does not need on-line kinematic inversion
- issues in kinematic inversion
  - $\dot{q}$  and  $\ddot{q}$  (or higher-order derivatives) may also be needed
    - Cartesian task specifications involve the geometric path, but also bounds on the associated timing law
  - for redundant robots, choice among  $\infty^{n-m}$  inverse solutions, based on optimality criteria or additional auxiliary tasks
  - off-line planning in advance is not always feasible
    - e.g., when **environment interaction** occurs or when **sensor-based** motion is needed



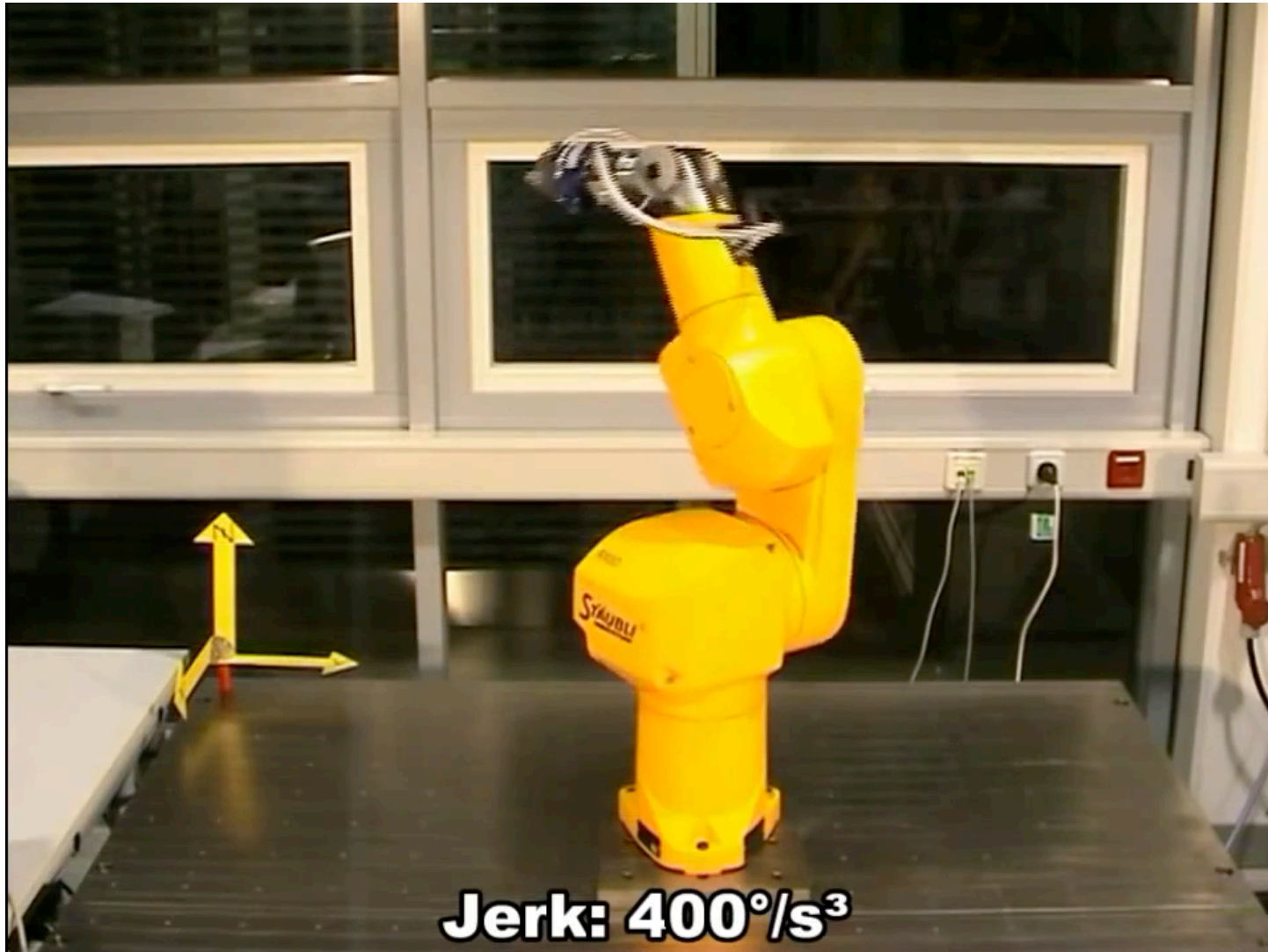
# Relevant characteristics

---

- computational **efficiency** and **memory** space
  - e.g., store only the coefficients of a polynomial function
- **predictability** and **accuracy**
  - vs. “wandering” out of the knots
  - vs. “overshoot” on final position
- **flexibility**
  - allowing concatenation of primitive segments
  - over-fly
  - ...
- **continuity**
  - in space and/or in time
  - at least  $C^1$ , but also up to jerk = third derivative in time



# A robot trajectory with bounded jerk



video



# Trajectory planning in joint space

- $q = q(t)$  in **time** or  $q = q(\lambda)$  in **space** (then with  $\lambda = \lambda(t)$ )
- it is sufficient to work **component-wise** ( $q_i$  in vector  $q$ )
- an **implicit** definition of the trajectory, by solving a problem with specified **boundary conditions** in a given **class of functions**
- typical classes: **polynomials** (cubic, quintic,...), trigonometric (cosine, sines, combined, ...), clothoids, ...
- **imposed conditions**
  - passage through points = interpolation
  - initial, final, intermediate velocity (or **geometric tangent for paths**)
  - initial, final acceleration (or **geometric curvature**)
  - continuity of time-(or **space-**)derivative up to the  $k$ -th order: class  $C^k$

many of the following methods and remarks can be directly applied also to Cartesian trajectory planning (and vice versa)!



# Cubic polynomial in space

$$\boxed{q(0) = q_0} \quad \boxed{q(1) = q_1} \quad \boxed{q'(0) = v_0} \quad \boxed{q'(1) = v_1} \quad \leftarrow 4 \text{ conditions}$$

$$q(\lambda) = q_0 + \Delta q (a\lambda^3 + b\lambda^2 + c\lambda + d)$$

$$\Delta q = q_1 - q_0$$
$$\lambda \in [0, 1]$$

4 coefficients  $\rightarrow$  "doubly normalized" polynomial  $q_N(\lambda)$

$$q_N(0) = 0 \Leftrightarrow d = 0$$

$$q_N(1) = 1 \Leftrightarrow a + b + c = 1$$

$$q'_N(0) = dq_N/d\lambda|_{\lambda=0} = c = v_0/\Delta q \quad q'_N(1) = dq_N/d\lambda|_{\lambda=1} = 3a + 2b + c = v_1/\Delta q$$

special case:  $v_0 = v_1 = 0$  (zero tangent)

$$q'_N(0) = 0 \Leftrightarrow c = 0$$

$$q_N(1) = 1 \Leftrightarrow a + b = 1$$

$$q'_N(1) = 0 \Leftrightarrow 3a + 2b = 0$$

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} a + b = 1 \\ 3a + 2b = 0 \end{array} \right\} \Leftrightarrow \begin{array}{l} a = -2 \\ b = 3 \end{array}$$



# Cubic polynomial in time

$$\boxed{q(0) = q_{in}} \quad \boxed{q(T) = q_{fin}} \quad \boxed{\dot{q}(0) = v_{in}} \quad \boxed{\dot{q}(T) = v_{fin}} \quad \leftarrow 4 \text{ conditions}$$

$$q(\tau) = q_{in} + \Delta q (a\tau^3 + b\tau^2 + c\tau + d)$$

$$\Delta q = q_{fin} - q_{in}$$
$$\tau = t/T \in [0,1]$$

4 coefficients  $\rightarrow$  "doubly normalized" polynomial  $q_N(\tau)$

$$q_N(0) = 0 \Leftrightarrow d = 0$$

$$q_N(1) = 1 \Leftrightarrow a + b + c = 1$$

$$q'_N(0) = dq_N/d\tau|_{\tau=0} = c = \frac{v_{in}T}{\Delta q}$$
$$q'_N(1) = dq_N/d\tau|_{\tau=1} = 3a + 2b + c = \frac{v_{fin}T}{\Delta q}$$

special case:  $v_{in} = v_{fin} = 0$  (rest-to-rest)

$$q'_N(0) = 0 \Leftrightarrow c = 0$$

$$q_N(1) = 1 \Leftrightarrow a + b = 1$$

$$q'_N(1) = 0 \Leftrightarrow 3a + 2b = 0$$

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} a + b = 1 \\ 3a + 2b = 0 \end{array} \right\} \Leftrightarrow \begin{array}{l} a = -2 \\ b = 3 \end{array}$$



# A trigonometric alternative

$$q(0) = q_{in} \quad q(T) = q_{fin} \quad \dot{q}(0) = 0 \quad \dot{q}(T) = 0$$

boundary conditions  
(rest-to-rest)

$$q(\tau) = q_{in} + \Delta q \frac{1 - \cos \pi \tau}{2}$$

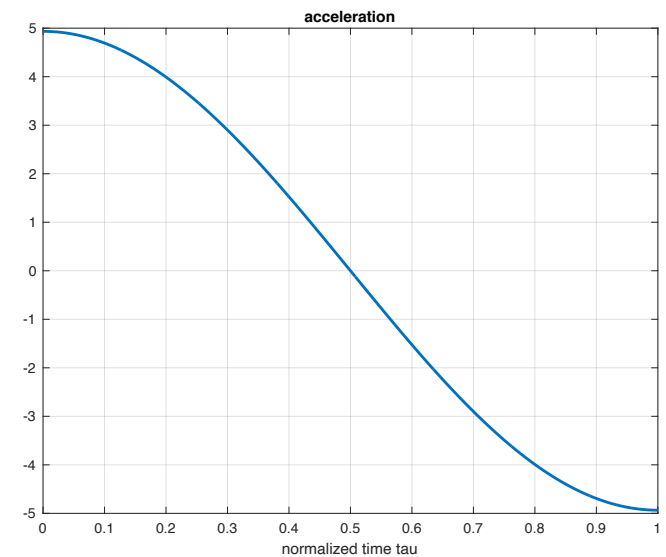
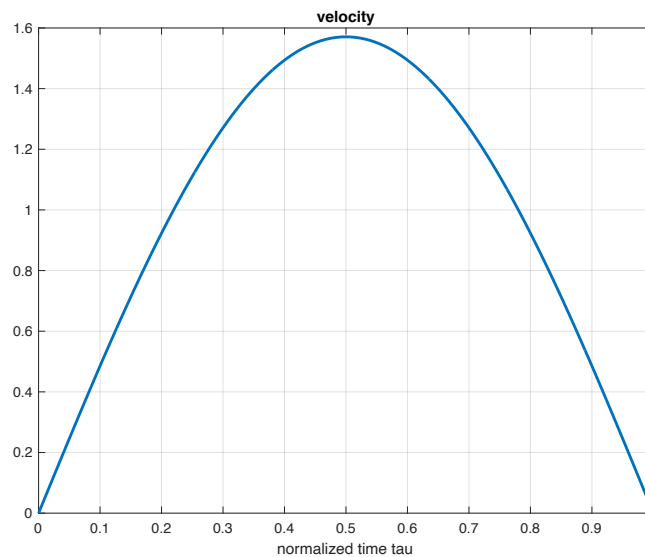
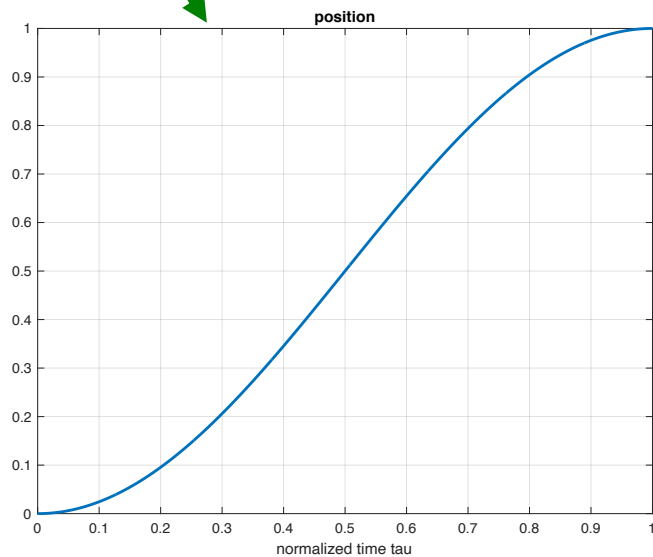
$$\Delta q = q_{fin} - q_{in}$$

$$\tau = t/T \in [0,1]$$

doubly  
normalized

$$\dot{q}(\tau) = \frac{\Delta q \pi}{T} \frac{1}{2} \sin \pi \tau$$

$$\ddot{q}(\tau) = \frac{\Delta q \pi^2}{T^2} \frac{1}{2} \cos \pi \tau$$



$$\max \dot{q}(\tau) = \dot{q}(0.5) = \frac{\Delta q \pi}{T} \frac{1}{2}$$

$$\max |\ddot{q}(\tau)| = \ddot{q}(0) = -\ddot{q}(1) = \frac{\Delta q \pi^2}{T^2} \frac{1}{2}$$





# Quintic polynomial

$$q(\tau) = a\tau^5 + b\tau^4 + c\tau^3 + d\tau^2 + e\tau + f \quad \text{6 coefficients}$$

$$\tau \in [0, 1]$$

allows to satisfy **6 conditions**, for example (in normalized **time**  $\tau = t/T$ )

$$q(0) = q_0 \quad q(1) = q_1 \quad q'(0) = v_0T \quad q'(1) = v_1T \quad q''(0) = a_0T^2 \quad q''(1) = a_1T^2$$

$$q(\tau) = (1 - \tau)^3(q_0 + (3q_0 + v_0T)\tau + (a_0T^2 + 6v_0T + 12q_0)\tau^2/2) \\ + \tau^3(q_1 + (3q_1 - v_1T)(1 - \tau) + (a_1T^2 - 6v_1T + 12q_1)(1 - \tau)^2/2)$$

**special case:**  $v_0 = v_1 = a_0 = a_1 = 0$

$$q(\tau) = q_0 + \Delta q(6\tau^5 - 15\tau^4 + 10\tau^3) \quad \Delta q = q_1 - q_0$$



# Higher-order polynomials

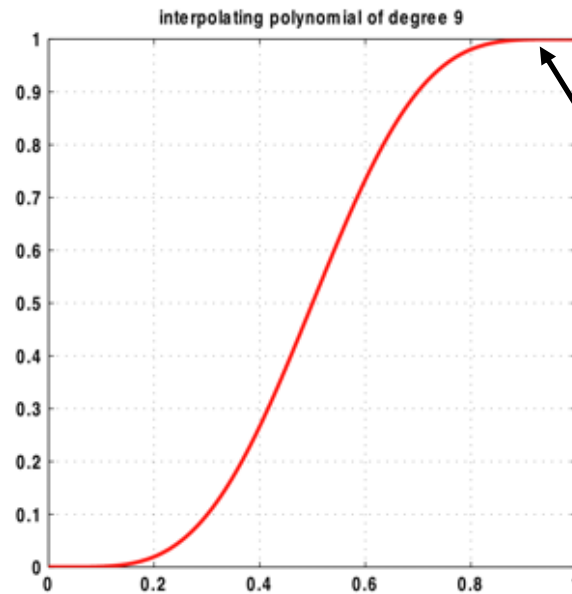
- a suitable solution class for satisfying **symmetric** boundary conditions (in a PTP motion) that **impose zero** values on higher-order derivatives
  - the interpolating polynomial is always of **odd** degree
  - the coefficients of such (**doubly normalized**) polynomial are always **integers, alternate in sign**, sum up to unity, and are zero for all terms up to the power =  $(\text{degree}-1)/2$
- in all other cases (e.g., for interpolating a large number  $N$  of points), their use is **not** recommended
  - there is a unique polynomial of degree  $N - 1$  interpolating  $N$  points
  - $k$ -th degree polynomials have  $k - 1$  maximum and minimum points
  - oscillations arise out of the interpolation points (**wandering**)



# Interpolating $N = 2$ knots

with high-order polynomials and zero boundary conditions

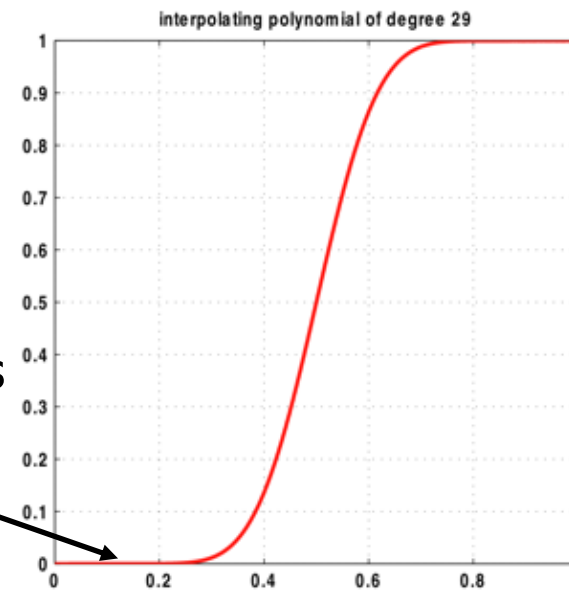
9th degree



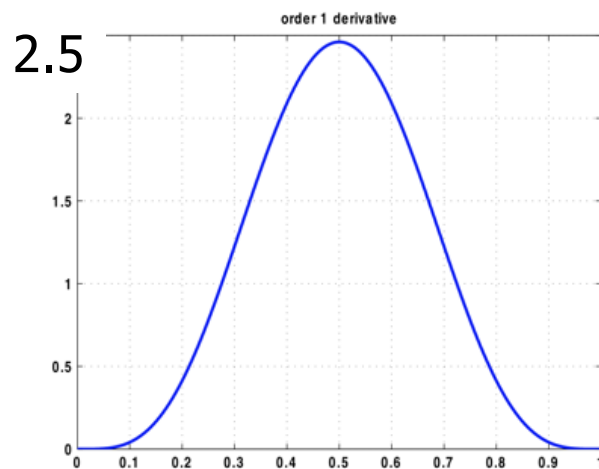
4 derivatives are zero

14 derivatives are zero!

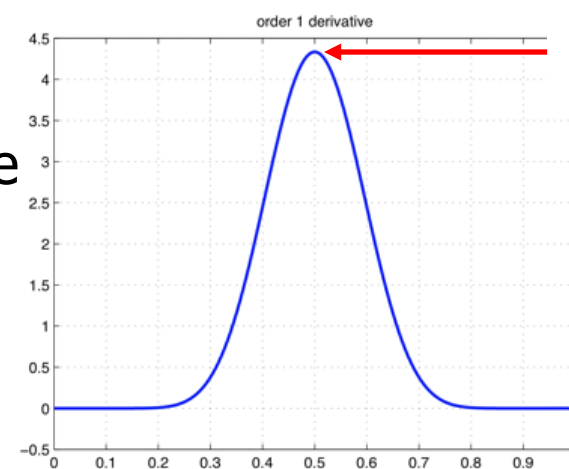
29th degree



no overshoot nor wandering



normalized first derivative (velocity in time)



peaking at midpoint



# Interpolating $N$ knots $q_1 \dots q_N$ with a **unique** polynomial of degree $N - 1$

$N = 2 \Rightarrow$  a **line**

$$q(\tau) = a_0 + a_1\tau \\ = q_1 + (q_2 - q_1)\tau$$

$N = 3 \Rightarrow$  a **quadratic**

$$q(\tau) = a_0 + a_1\tau + a_2\tau^2$$

$$a_0 = q_1$$

$$a_1 = \frac{(q_3 - q_1)\tau_m^2 - (q_2 - q_1)}{\tau_m(\tau_m - 1)}$$

$$a_2 = \frac{(q_2 - q_1) - (q_3 - q_1)\tau_m}{\tau_m(\tau_m - 1)}$$

$$\tau_m \in (0,1), \quad q(\tau_m) = q_2$$

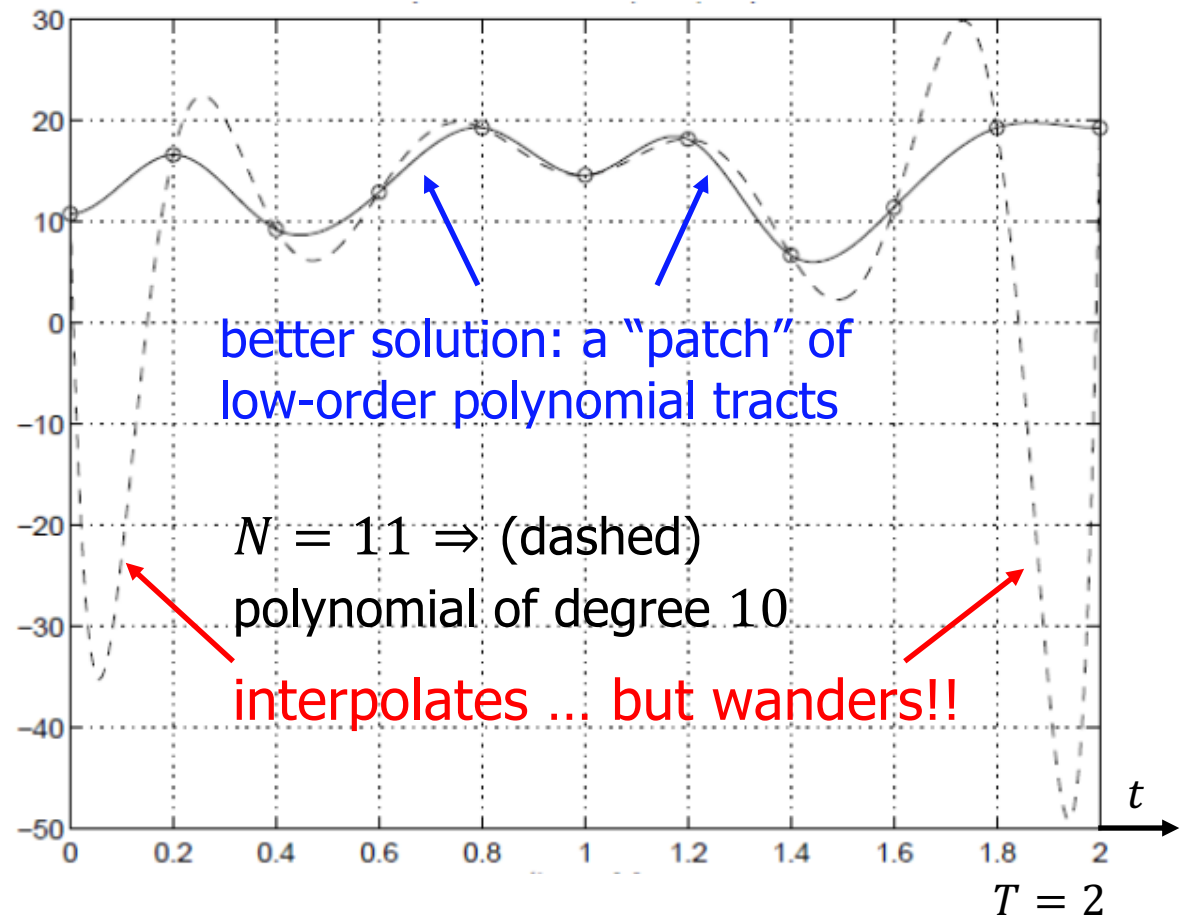
$N = 4 \Rightarrow$  a **cubic**

$$q(\tau) = a_0 + a_1\tau + a_2\tau^2 + a_3\tau^3$$

$N \Rightarrow$  a polynomial of degree  $N - 1$

$$q(\tau) = a_0 + a_1\tau + \dots + a_{N-1}\tau^{N-1}$$

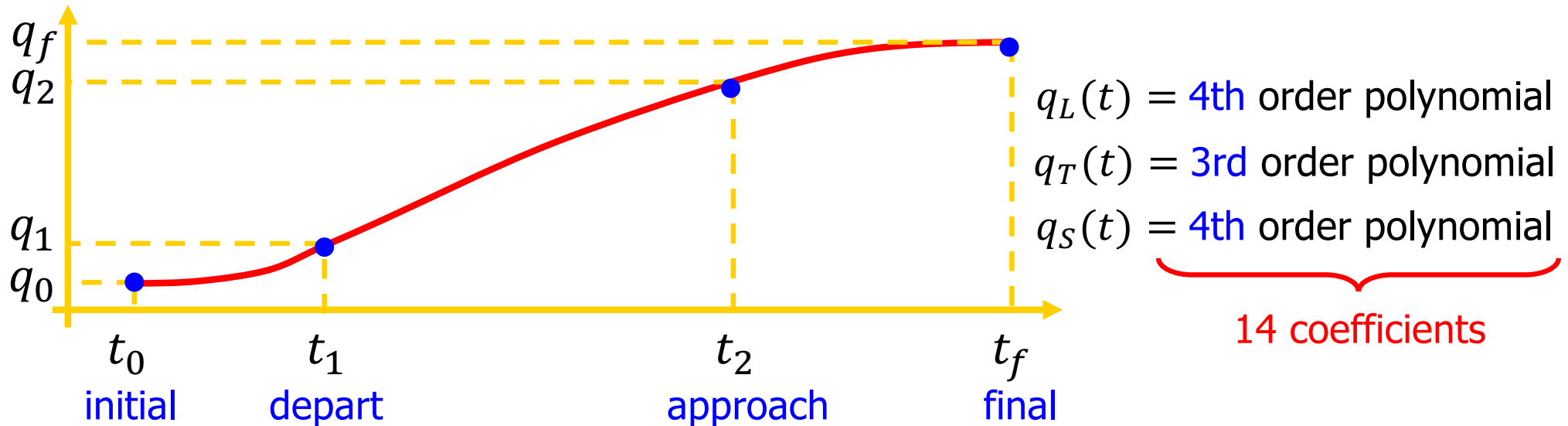
$$\tau = \frac{t}{T} \in [0,1]$$





# 4-3-4 polynomials

three phases (Lift off, Travel, Set down) in a pick-and-place operation **in time**



**boundary conditions**

$$q(t_0) = q_0 \quad q(t_1^-) = q(t_1^+) = q_1 \quad q(t_2^-) = q(t_2^+) = q_2 \quad q(t_f) = q_f \quad \left. \vphantom{q(t_0)} \right\} \text{6 passages}$$

$$\dot{q}(t_0) = \dot{q}(t_f) = 0 \quad \ddot{q}(t_0) = \ddot{q}(t_f) = 0 \quad \left. \vphantom{\dot{q}(t_0)} \right\} \text{4 initial/final velocity/acceleration}$$

$$\dot{q}(t_i^-) = \dot{q}(t_i^+) \quad \ddot{q}(t_i^-) = \ddot{q}(t_i^+) \quad i = 1,2 \quad \left. \vphantom{\dot{q}(t_i^-)} \right\} \text{4 continuity up to acceleration}$$

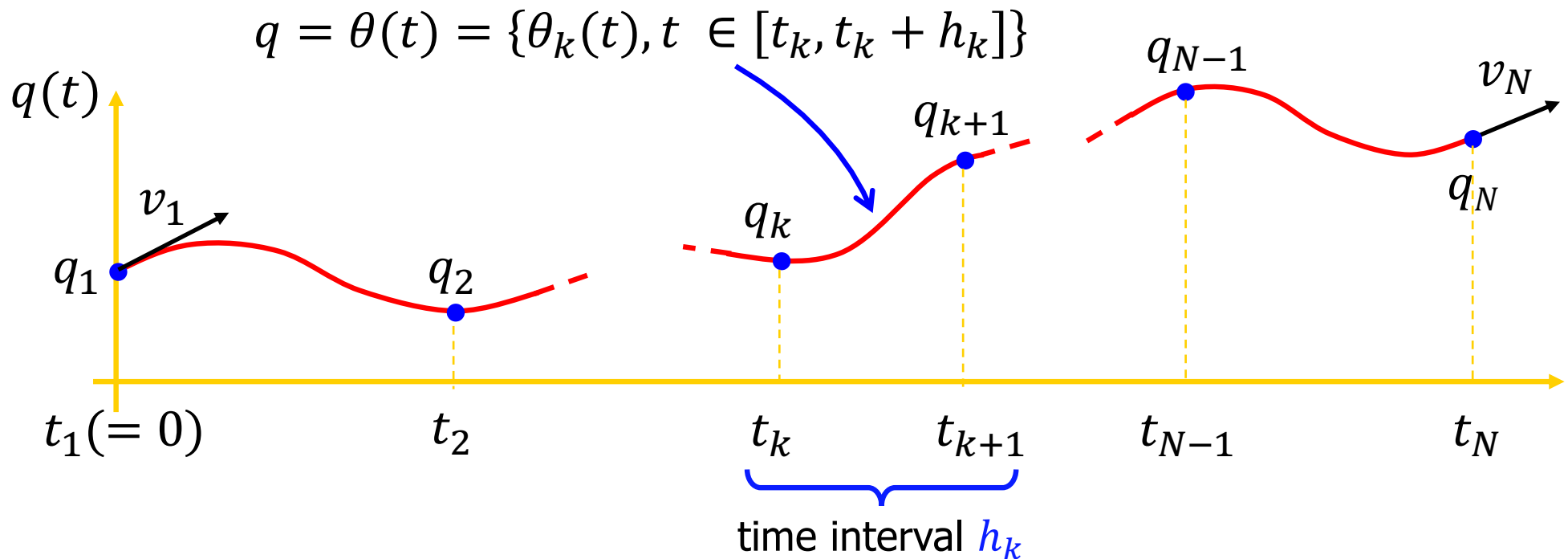


# Interpolation using splines

- **problem**
  - interpolate  $N$  knots, with continuity up to the second derivative
- **solution**
  - spline**:  $N - 1$  cubic polynomials, concatenated so to pass through  $N$  knots, and continuous up to the second derivative at the  $N - 2$  internal knots
- $4(N - 1)$  **coefficients**
- $4(N - 1) - 2$  **conditions**, or
  - $2(N - 1)$  of passage (for each cubic, in the two knots at its ends)
  - $N - 2$  of continuity for first derivative (at the internal knots)
  - $N - 2$  of continuity for second derivative (at the internal knots)
- $2$  **free parameters** are still left over
  - can be used, e.g., to assign initial and final derivatives,  $v_1$  and  $v_N$
- presented next in terms of **time**  $t$ , but similar in terms of **space**  $\lambda$ 
  - **then**: first derivative = velocity, second derivative = acceleration



# Building a cubic spline



$$\theta_k(\tau) = a_{k0} + a_{k1}\tau + a_{k2}\tau^2 + a_{k3}\tau^3$$

$$\tau = t - t_k \in [0, h_k]$$

$$(k = 1, \dots, N - 1)$$

continuity conditions  
for velocity and acceleration



$$\begin{aligned} \dot{\theta}_k(h_k) &= \dot{\theta}_{k+1}(0) \\ \ddot{\theta}_k(h_k) &= \ddot{\theta}_{k+1}(0) \end{aligned} \quad k = 1, \dots, N - 2$$



# An efficient algorithm

1. if all **velocities**  $v_k$  at **internal knots** were known, then each cubic in the spline would be uniquely determined by

$$\begin{aligned} \theta_k(0) = q_k = a_{k0} & & \begin{pmatrix} h_k^2 & h_k^3 \\ 2h_k & 3h_k^2 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} a_{k2} \\ a_{k3} \end{pmatrix} &= \begin{pmatrix} q_{k+1} - q_k - v_k h_k \\ v_{k+1} - v_k \end{pmatrix} \end{aligned} \quad \textcircled{1}$$

2. impose the **continuity for accelerations** ( $N - 2$  conditions)

$$\ddot{\theta}_k(h_k) = 2a_{k2} + 6a_{k3}h_k = 2a_{k+1,2} = \ddot{\theta}_{k+1}(0)$$

3. expressing the coefficients  $a_{k2}, a_{k3}, a_{k+1,2}$  in terms of the **still unknown** knot velocities (see step 1.) yields a linear system of equations that is always solvable

$$\begin{pmatrix} \text{---} \\ \text{---} \\ \text{---} \\ \text{---} \\ \text{---} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} v_2 \\ v_3 \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ v_{N-1} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \end{pmatrix}$$

$\mathbf{A}(h_1, \dots, h_{N-1})$        $\mathbf{b}(h_1, \dots, h_{N-1}, q_1, \dots, q_N, v_1, v_N)$

↑      ↑      ↑

tri-diagonal matrix      unknown      known vector

always invertible

to be substituted then back in  $\textcircled{1}$





# Structure of $A(\mathbf{h})$

$$\left( \begin{array}{ccccccc}
 2(h_1 + h_2) & & & & & & \\
 h_3 & 2(h_2 + h_3) & h_2 & & & & \\
 & \dots & & & & & \\
 & & & \dots & & & \\
 & & & & & \dots & \\
 & & & & h_{N-2} & 2(h_{N-3} + h_{N-2}) & h_{N-3} \\
 & & & & & h_{N-1} & 2(h_{N-2} + h_{N-1})
 \end{array} \right)$$

diagonally dominant matrix (for  $h_k > 0$ )  
 [the **same** tridiagonal matrix for all joints]



# Structure of $b(\mathbf{h}, \mathbf{q}, v_1, v_N)$

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{3}{h_1 h_2} (h_1^2 (q_3 - q_2) + h_2^2 (q_2 - q_1)) - h_2 v_1 \\ \frac{3}{h_2 h_3} (h_2^2 (q_4 - q_3) + h_3^2 (q_3 - q_2)) \\ \vdots \\ \frac{3}{h_{N-3} h_{N-2}} (h_{N-3}^2 (q_{N-1} - q_{N-2}) + h_{N-2}^2 (q_{N-2} - q_{N-3})) \\ \frac{3}{h_{N-2} h_{N-1}} (h_{N-2}^2 (q_N - q_{N-1}) + h_{N-1}^2 (q_{N-1} - q_{N-2})) - h_{N-2} v_N \end{pmatrix}$$



# Properties of splines

- a spline (in **space**) is the solution with **minimum curvature** among all interpolating functions having continuous second derivative
- for **cyclic** tasks ( $q_1 = q_N$ ), it is preferable to simply impose continuity of first and second derivatives (i.e., velocity and acceleration in time) at the first/last knot as “squaring” conditions
  - choosing  $v_1 = v_N = v$  (for a given  $v$ ) doesn’t guarantee in general the continuity up to the second derivative (when in time, the acceleration)
  - in this way, the first = last knot will be handled as all other internal knots
- a spline is **uniquely** determined from the set of data  $q_1, \dots, q_N, h_1, \dots, h_{N-1}, v_1, v_N$
- in **time**, the total motion occurs in  $T = \sum_k h_k = t_N - t_1$
- the time intervals  $h_k$  can be chosen so as to **minimize**  $T$  (linear objective function) under (nonlinear) **bounds** on velocity and acceleration in  $[0, T]$
- spline construction can be suitably **modified** when the second derivative (in time, the **acceleration**) is also assigned at the initial and final knots



# A modification

## handling assigned initial and final accelerations

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- two more parameters are needed in order to impose also the initial acceleration  $\alpha_1$  and final acceleration  $\alpha_N$
- two “fictitious knots” are inserted in the first and the last original intervals, increasing the number of cubic polynomials from  $N - 1$  to  $N + 1$
- in these two knots **only continuity** conditions on **position**, **velocity** and **acceleration** are imposed
  - ⇒ **two** free parameters are left over (one in the first cubic and the other in the last cubic), which are used to satisfy the boundary conditions on acceleration
- depending on the (time) placement of the two additional knots, the resulting spline changes ...



# A numerical example

- $N = 4$  knots (o)  $\Rightarrow$  3 cubic polynomials
  - joint values  $q_1 = 0, q_2 = 2\pi, q_3 = \pi/2, q_4 = \pi$
  - at  $t_1 = 0, t_2 = 2, t_3 = 3, t_4 = 5 \Rightarrow h_1 = 2, h_2 = 1, h_3 = 2$
  - boundary velocities  $v_1 = v_4 = 0$
- 2 added knots to **impose accelerations** at both ends (5 cubic polynomials)
  - boundary accelerations  $\alpha_1 = \alpha_4 = 0$
  - two placements: at  $t'_1 = 0.5$  and  $t'_3 = 4.5$  ( $\times$ ); or at  $t''_1 = 1.5$  and  $t''_4 = 3.5$  ( $*$ )

