

# Runge-Kutta 4<sup>th</sup> Order Method



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For  $\frac{dy}{dx} = f(x, y), y(0) = y_0$

Runge Kutta 4<sup>th</sup> order method is given by

$$y_{i+1} = y_i + \frac{1}{6}(k_1 + 2k_2 + 2k_3 + k_4)h$$

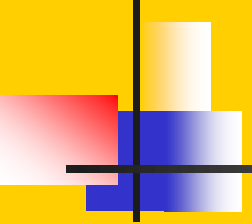
where

$$k_1 = f(x_i, y_i)$$

$$k_2 = f\left(x_i + \frac{1}{2}h, y_i + \frac{1}{2}k_1h\right)$$

$$k_3 = f\left(x_i + \frac{1}{2}h, y_i + \frac{1}{2}k_2h\right)$$

$$k_4 = f(x_i + h, y_i + k_3h)$$



# How to write Ordinary Differential Equation

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How does one write a first order differential equation in the form of

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = f(x, y)$$

**Example**

$$\frac{dy}{dx} + 2y = 1.3e^{-x}, y(0) = 5$$

is rewritten as

$$\frac{dy}{dx} = 1.3e^{-x} - 2y, y(0) = 5$$

In this case

$$f(x, y) = 1.3e^{-x} - 2y$$



# Example

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A ball at 1200K is allowed to cool down in air at an ambient temperature of 300K. Assuming heat is lost only due to radiation, the differential equation for the temperature of the ball is given by

$$\frac{d\theta}{dt} = -2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (\theta^4 - 81 \times 10^8), \theta(0) = 1200K$$

Find the temperature at  $t = 480$  seconds using Runge-Kutta 4<sup>th</sup> order method.

Assume a step size of  $h = 240$  seconds.

$$\frac{d\theta}{dt} = -2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (\theta^4 - 81 \times 10^8)$$

$$f(t, \theta) = -2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (\theta^4 - 81 \times 10^8)$$

$$\theta_{i+1} = \theta_i + \frac{1}{6} (k_1 + 2k_2 + 2k_3 + k_4)h$$



# Solution

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Step 1:  $i = 0, t_0 = 0, \theta_0 = \theta(0) = 1200$

$$k_1 = f(t_0, \theta_0) = f(0, 1200) = -2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (1200^4 - 81 \times 10^8) = -4.5579$$

$$\begin{aligned} k_2 &= f\left(t_0 + \frac{1}{2}h, \theta_0 + \frac{1}{2}k_1h\right) = f\left(0 + \frac{1}{2}(240), 1200 + \frac{1}{2}(-4.5579)240\right) \\ &= f(120, 653.05) = -2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (653.05^4 - 81 \times 10^8) = -0.38347 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} k_3 &= f\left(t_0 + \frac{1}{2}h, \theta_0 + \frac{1}{2}k_2h\right) = f\left(0 + \frac{1}{2}(240), 1200 + \frac{1}{2}(-0.38347)240\right) \\ &= f(120, 1154.0) = 2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (1154.0^4 - 81 \times 10^8) = -3.8954 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} k_4 &= f(t_0 + h, \theta_0 + k_3h) = f(0 + (240), 1200 + (-3.984)240) \\ &= f(240, 265.10) = 2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (265.10^4 - 81 \times 10^8) = 0.0069750 \end{aligned}$$



# Solution Cont

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$$\theta_1 = \theta_0 + \frac{1}{6}(k_1 + 2k_2 + 2k_3 + k_4)h$$

$$= 1200 + \frac{1}{6}(-4.5579 + 2(-0.38347) + 2(-3.8954) + (0.069750))240$$

$$= 1200 + \frac{1}{6}(-2.1848)240$$

$$= 675.65K$$

$\theta_1$  is the approximate temperature at

$$t = t_1 = t_0 + h = 0 + 240 = 240$$

$$\theta(240) \approx \theta_1 = 675.65K$$



# Solution Cont

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**Step 2:**  $i = 1, t_1 = 240, \theta_1 = 675.65K$

$$k_1 = f(t_1, \theta_1) = f(240, 675.65) = -2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (675.65^4 - 81 \times 10^8) = -0.44199$$

$$\begin{aligned} k_2 &= f\left(t_1 + \frac{1}{2}h, \theta_1 + \frac{1}{2}k_1h\right) = f\left(240 + \frac{1}{2}(240), 675.65 + \frac{1}{2}(-0.44199)240\right) \\ &= f(360, 622.61) = -2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (622.61^4 - 81 \times 10^8) = -0.31372 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} k_3 &= f\left(t_1 + \frac{1}{2}h, \theta_1 + \frac{1}{2}k_2h\right) = f\left(240 + \frac{1}{2}(240), 675.65 + \frac{1}{2}(-0.31372)240\right) \\ &= f(360, 638.00) = 2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (638.00^4 - 81 \times 10^8) = -0.34775 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} k_4 &= f(t_1 + h, \theta_1 + k_3h) = f(240 + (240), 675.65 + (-0.34775)240) \\ &= f(480, 592.19) = 2.2067 \times 10^{-12} (592.19^4 - 81 \times 10^8) = -0.25351 \end{aligned}$$



# Solution Cont

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$$\theta_2 = \theta_1 + \frac{1}{6}(k_1 + 2k_2 + 2k_3 + k_4)h$$

$$= 675.65 + \frac{1}{6}(-0.44199 + 2(-0.31372) + 2(-0.34775) + (-0.25351))240$$

$$= 675.65 + \frac{1}{6}(-2.0184)240$$

$$= 594.91K$$

$\theta_2$  is the approximate temperature at

$$t_2 = t_1 + h = 240 + 240 = 480$$

$$\theta(480) \approx \theta_2 = 594.91K$$



# Solution Cont

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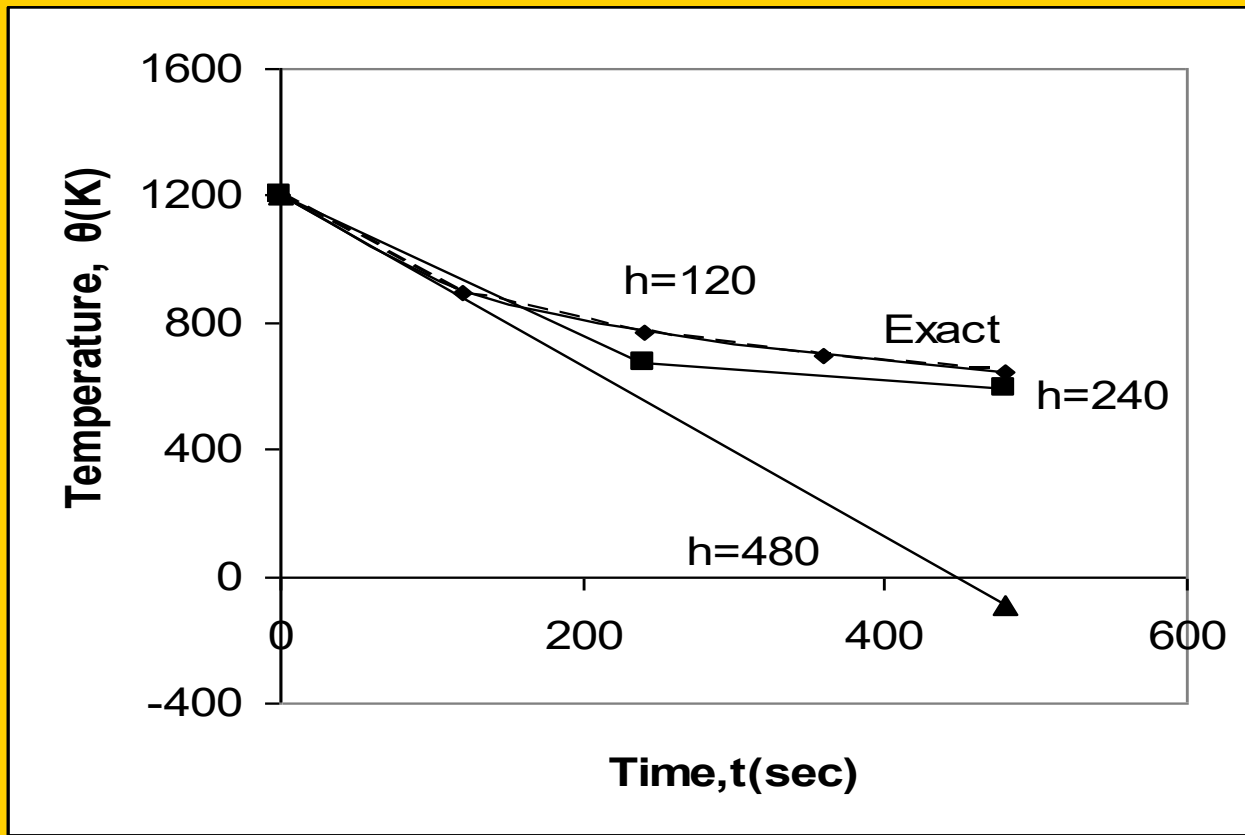
The exact solution of the ordinary differential equation is given by the solution of a non-linear equation as

$$0.92593 \ln \frac{\theta - 300}{\theta + 300} - 1.8519 \tan^{-1}(0.00333\theta) = -0.22067 \times 10^{-3} t - 2.9282$$

The solution to this nonlinear equation at  $t=480$  seconds is

$$\theta(480) = 647.57 K$$

# Comparison with exact results



**Figure 1.** Comparison of Runge-Kutta 4th order method with exact solution



# Effect of step size

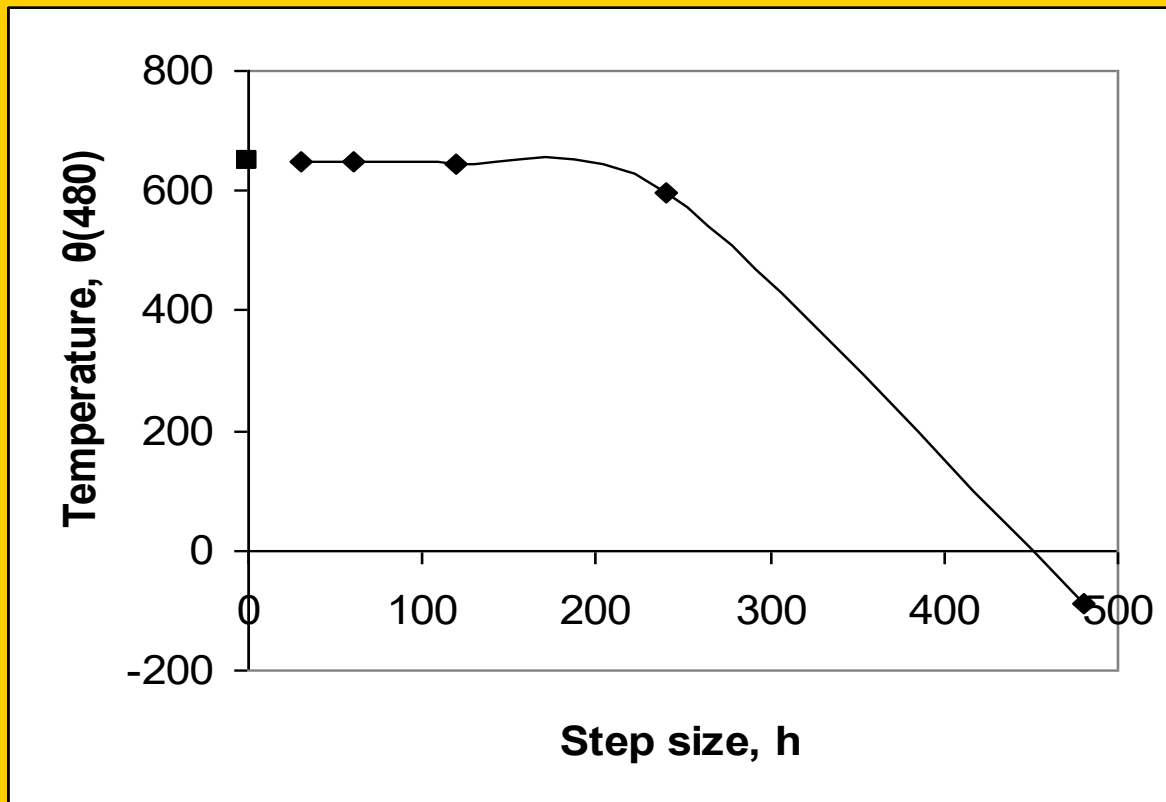
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**Table 1. Temperature at 480 seconds as a function of step size,  $h$**

Step size, $h$	$\theta(480)$	$E_t$	$ \epsilon_t \%$
480	-90.278	737.85	113.94
240	594.91	52.660	8.1319
120	646.16	1.4122	0.21807
60	647.54	0.033626	0.0051926
30	647.57	0.00086900	0.00013419

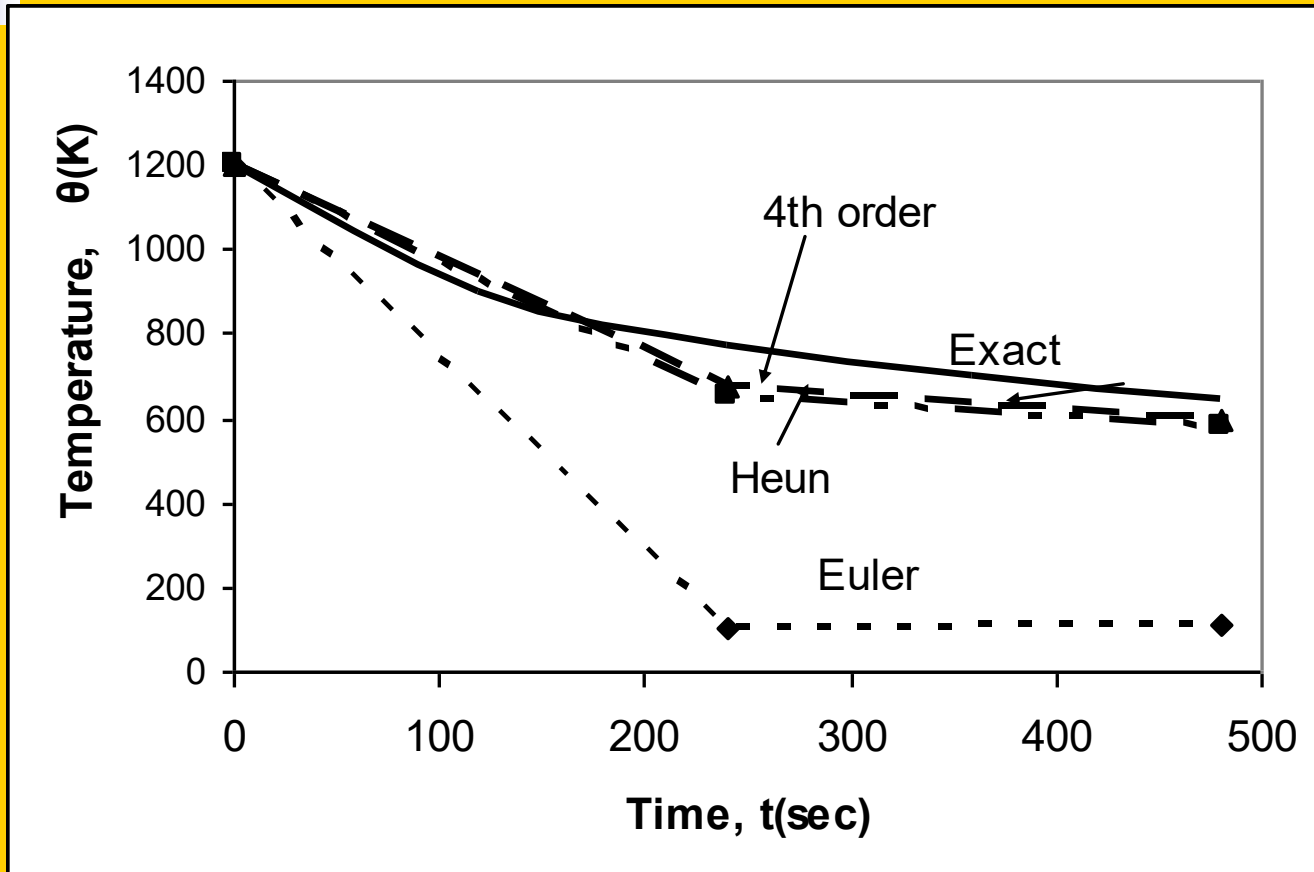
$$\theta(480) = 647.57K \quad (\text{exact})$$

# Effects of step size on Runge-Kutta 4<sup>th</sup> Order Method



**Figure 2.** Effect of step size in Runge-Kutta 4th order method

# Comparison of Euler and Runge-Kutta Methods



**Figure 3.** Comparison of Runge-Kutta methods of 1st, 2nd, and 4th order.

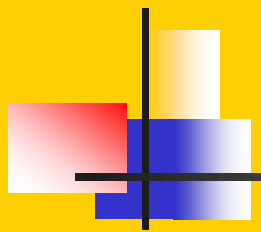


# Additional Resources

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For all resources on this topic such as digital audiovisual lectures, primers, textbook chapters, multiple-choice tests, worksheets in MATLAB, MATHEMATICA, MathCad and MAPLE, blogs, related physical problems, please visit

[http://numericalmethods.eng.usf.edu/topics/runge\\_kutta\\_4th\\_method.html](http://numericalmethods.eng.usf.edu/topics/runge_kutta_4th_method.html)



**THE END**