



Where do spherical waves come from?

Where do plane waves come from?



Plane waves based on sines and cosines constitute a basis within which other waves can be expressed

Spherical wave solutions based on Bessel functions constitute a different basis

$$\mathbf{E}(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{l,m} \left[a_{\pm}(l,m) j_l(kr) \mathbf{X}_{lm} + \frac{i}{k} b_{\pm}(l,m) \nabla \times j_l(kr) \mathbf{X}_{lm} \right]$$
$$c\mathbf{B}(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_{l,m} \left[\frac{-i}{k} a_{\pm}(l,m) \nabla \times j_l(kr) \mathbf{X}_{lm} + b_{\pm}(l,m) j_l(kr) \mathbf{X}_{lm} \right]$$

Spherical wave decomposition of a plane wave







Diffraction – Understandable by breaking down sources into collections of point sources producing spherical waves