

**Relativistic Velocity Composition Derived using 4-Vectors**

4-Vector (generic)	$\mathbf{V} = V^\mu = (\text{temporal component}, \text{spatial component})$	
4-Velocity	$\mathbf{U} = U^\mu = \gamma(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}) = c\mathbf{T} \quad [\text{m/s}]$	$\gamma = 1/\sqrt{[1 - \boldsymbol{\beta} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}]} \quad [1] : \boldsymbol{\beta} = \mathbf{u}/c \quad [1]$
4-“Unit”Temporal	$\mathbf{T} = T^\mu = \gamma(1, \boldsymbol{\beta}) = \mathbf{U}/c \quad [1]$	The 4-“Unit”Temporal is dimensionless

with

Speed of Light	$c$
3-velocity	$\mathbf{u} = (u_x, u_y, u_z)$
Relativistic beta	$\boldsymbol{\beta} = \mathbf{u}/c = (\beta_x, \beta_y, \beta_z)$
Relativistic gamma	$\gamma = 1/\sqrt{[1 - \boldsymbol{\beta} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}]} = 1/\sqrt{[1 - \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{u}/c^2]}$

Lorentz Scalar Products give invariant magnitudes

$$\mathbf{U} \cdot \mathbf{U} = \gamma(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}) \cdot \gamma(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}) = \gamma^2(c^2 - \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{u}) = c^2$$

$$\mathbf{T} \cdot \mathbf{T} = \gamma(1, \boldsymbol{\beta}) \cdot \gamma(1, \boldsymbol{\beta}) = \gamma^2(1 - \boldsymbol{\beta} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}) = 1$$

However, one can also take the Lorentz Scalar Products of the 4-Vectors of different particles.

$$\mathbf{U}_1 \cdot \mathbf{U}_2 = \gamma_1(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}_1) \cdot \gamma_2(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}_2) = \gamma_1 \gamma_2 (c^2 - \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2) = \gamma_2(c^2) \{\text{when } \mathbf{u}_1 = \mathbf{0}\} = \gamma_1(c^2) \{\text{when } \mathbf{u}_2 = \mathbf{0}\} = \gamma_{12}(c^2) = \gamma_{rel}(c^2)$$

$$\gamma_1 \gamma_2 (c^2 - \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2) = \gamma_{rel}(c^2)$$

When measuring two different 4-Velocities, the Lorentz Scalar Product is proportional to their relative Lorentz gamma factor  $\gamma_{12} = \gamma_{rel}$ .

These are all Lorentz Scalar Invariants. All observers must agree on their values.

$\mathbf{U}_1 \cdot \mathbf{U}_2 = \gamma_{12}(c^2) = \gamma_{rel}(c^2)$	$\mathbf{U} \cdot \mathbf{U} = c^2$
$\mathbf{T}_1 \cdot \mathbf{T}_2 = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{rel}$	$\mathbf{T} \cdot \mathbf{T} = 1$

One can obtain the relativistic "addition" of velocities using these relations:

$$\mathbf{U}_1 \cdot \mathbf{U}_2 = \gamma_1 \gamma_2 (c^2 - \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2) = \gamma_{rel} c^2$$

$$\mathbf{T}_1 \cdot \mathbf{T}_2 = \gamma_1 \gamma_2 (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) = \gamma_{rel}$$

$$\gamma_1 \gamma_2 (c^2 - \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2) = \gamma_{rel} c^2$$

$$\gamma_1 \gamma_2 (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) = \gamma_{rel}$$

$$\gamma_1^{-2} \gamma_2^{-2} (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)^{-2} = \gamma_{rel}^{-2}$$

$$(1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_1)(1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_2 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)(1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)^{-2} = (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel})$$

$$(\boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel}) = 1 - (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_1)(1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_2 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)(1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)^{-2}$$

$$(\boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel})^2 = [(1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)^2 - (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_1)(1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_2 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)](1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)^{-2}$$

$$(\boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel})^2 = [(\boldsymbol{\beta}_1)^2 - 2(\boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) + (\boldsymbol{\beta}_2)^2](1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)^{-2}$$

$$(\boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel})^2 = [(\boldsymbol{\beta}_1) - (\boldsymbol{\beta}_2)]^2 (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2)^{-2}$$

$$\boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel} = [\boldsymbol{\beta}_1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_2] / (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) : \boldsymbol{\beta}_{additive} = [\boldsymbol{\beta}_1 + \boldsymbol{\beta}_2] / (1 + \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) \text{ by letting } \boldsymbol{\beta}_2 \rightarrow -\boldsymbol{\beta}_2$$

$$\mathbf{u}_{rel} = [\mathbf{u}_1 - \mathbf{u}_2] / (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) : \mathbf{u}_{additive} = [\mathbf{u}_1 + \mathbf{u}_2] / (1 + \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2 / c^2) \text{ by letting } \mathbf{u}_2 \rightarrow -\mathbf{u}_2$$

The relativistic composition of velocities law

$$\boldsymbol{\beta}_{rel\ 12} = [\boldsymbol{\beta}_{10} - \boldsymbol{\beta}_{20}] / (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_{10} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_{20}) \text{ with 0 considered the origin frame}$$

by letting  $\boldsymbol{\beta}_2 \rightarrow -\boldsymbol{\beta}_2$

$$\boldsymbol{\beta}_{additive\ 12} = [\boldsymbol{\beta}_{10} + \boldsymbol{\beta}_{02}] / (1 + \boldsymbol{\beta}_{10} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_{02}) \text{ with 2 considered the origin frame}$$

The definition of the Lorentz Gamma Factor is contained in this.

$$\mathbf{U} \cdot \mathbf{U} = \gamma(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}) \cdot \gamma(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}) = \gamma^2(c^2 - \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{u}) = c^2$$

Solving for gamma factor:

$$\gamma^2(c^2 - \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{u}) = (c^2)$$

$$\gamma^2 = (c^2) / (c^2 - \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{u})$$

$$\gamma^2 = 1 / (1 - \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{u} / c^2) = 1 / (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta})$$

$$\gamma = 1 / \sqrt{[1 - \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{u} / c^2]} = 1 / \sqrt{[1 - \boldsymbol{\beta} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}]}$$

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$$\mathbf{u}_{\text{additive}} = [\mathbf{u}_1 + \mathbf{u}_2] / (1 + \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2 / c^2)$$

Taking the classical limiting-case of  $(\mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2) \ll c^2$

$$\mathbf{u}_{\text{additive}} = [\mathbf{u}_1 + \mathbf{u}_2] / (1 + \sim 0)$$

$$\mathbf{u}_{\text{additive}} = [\mathbf{u}_1 + \mathbf{u}_2]_{\text{classical}}$$


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4-Velocity  $\mathbf{U} = \mathbf{U}^\mu = \gamma(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}) = c\mathbf{T}$  [m/s]

4-“Unit”Temporal  $\mathbf{T} = \mathbf{T}^\mu = \gamma(1, \boldsymbol{\beta}) = \mathbf{U}/c$  [1]

4-ProbabilityFlux  $\mathbf{J} = \mathbf{J}^\mu = (\rho c, \mathbf{j} = \rho \mathbf{u}) = \rho_0 \mathbf{U}$  [#m/s]

$$\gamma = 1/\sqrt{1 - \boldsymbol{\beta} \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}} \quad [1] : \boldsymbol{\beta} = \mathbf{u}/c \quad [1]$$

The 4-“Unit”Temporal is dimensionless

$$\mathbf{U}_1 \cdot \mathbf{U}_2 = \gamma_{12}(c^2) = \gamma_{\text{rel}}(c^2)$$

$$\rho_{o1} \mathbf{U}_1 \cdot \rho_{o2} \mathbf{U}_2 = \rho_{o1} \rho_{o2} \gamma_{\text{rel}}(c^2)$$

$$\mathbf{J}_1 \cdot \mathbf{J}_2 = \rho_{o1} \rho_{o2} \gamma_{\text{rel}}(c^2)$$

$$\gamma_1 \gamma_2 (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$$

$$\rho_{o1} \rho_{o2} \gamma_1 \gamma_2 (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) = \rho_{o1} \rho_{o2} \gamma_{\text{rel}}$$

$$\rho_1 \rho_2 (1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \cdot \boldsymbol{\beta}_2) = \rho_{o1} \rho_{o2} \gamma_{\text{rel}}$$

4-Vector (generic)	$\mathbf{V} = \mathbf{V}^\mu = (\text{temporal component}, \text{spatial component})$	
4-Momentum	$\mathbf{P} = \mathbf{P}^\mu = (\mathbf{E}/c, \mathbf{p}) = (m\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{p}) = m_0 \mathbf{U}$	$[\text{kg}\cdot\text{m/s} = \text{N}\cdot\text{s}]$
4-Velocity	$\mathbf{U} = \mathbf{U}^\mu = \gamma(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{u}) = c\mathbf{T}$	$[\text{m/s}] \quad \gamma = 1/\sqrt{[1 - \boldsymbol{\beta}\cdot\boldsymbol{\beta}]} \quad [1] : \boldsymbol{\beta} = \mathbf{u}/c \quad [1]$
4-“Unit”Temporal	$\mathbf{T} = \mathbf{T}^\mu = \gamma(1, \boldsymbol{\beta}) = \mathbf{U}/c$	$[1] \quad \text{The 4-“Unit”Temporal is dimensionless}$

$\mathbf{T}_1 \cdot \mathbf{T}_2 = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:4-Vector form, Particle 1 and Particle 2 as seen from the frame of $\mathbf{T}$
$\mathbf{T}_1^\mu \cdot \mathbf{T}_2^\nu = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Tensor form
$\mathbf{T}_1^\mu \eta_{\mu\nu} \mathbf{T}_2^\nu = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:4-Vector Lorentz Scalar Product = Minkowski Metric
$(\Lambda^\mu_\rho \mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho) \eta_{\mu\nu} (\Lambda^\nu_\sigma \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Identical Lorentz Transform can be applied to both frames, $\mathbf{T}' \rightarrow \mathbf{T}$
$(\Lambda^\mu_\rho \Lambda^\nu_\sigma) \eta_{\mu\nu} (\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:These are all just commutative numbers in tensor format
$(\Lambda^{-1}{}^\mu_\rho \Lambda^\nu_\sigma) \eta_{\mu\nu} (\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Swapping index positions of Lorentz $\Lambda^\mu_\rho$ gives the Inverse Lorentz Transform $\Lambda^{-1}{}^\mu_\rho$
$(\Lambda^{-1}{}^\mu_\rho \Lambda^\nu_\sigma) (\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Minkowski can lower an index
$(\eta_{\rho\alpha} \Lambda^{-1}{}^\alpha_\nu) (\Lambda^\nu_\sigma) (\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Minkowski can raise an index
$\eta_{\rho\alpha} (\Lambda^{-1}{}^\alpha_\nu \Lambda^\nu_\sigma) (\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Commutative
$\eta_{\rho\alpha} (\delta^\alpha_\sigma) (\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	: $(\Lambda^{-1})^\beta_\mu \Lambda^\mu_\nu = \delta^\beta_\nu$
$\eta_{\rho\sigma} (\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Kronecker Delta renames an index
$(\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \eta_{\rho\sigma} \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Commutative
$(\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \cdot \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma) = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:4-Vector Lorentz Scalar Product = Minkowski Metric
$\mathbf{T}'_1{}^\rho \cdot \mathbf{T}'_2{}^\sigma = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:Tensor form
$\mathbf{T}'_1 \cdot \mathbf{T}'_2 = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$	:4-Vector form, Particle 1 and Particle 2 as seen from frame $\mathbf{T}'$

$$(\Lambda^{-1})^\beta_\mu \Lambda^\mu_\nu = \delta^\beta_\nu$$

$$(\Lambda)^\mu_\nu = (\Lambda^{-1})^\mu_\nu$$

The point of all this is that  $\gamma_{\text{rel}}$  is a Lorentz Scalar Invariant, which is actually clear from the very first line,  $\mathbf{T}_1 \cdot \mathbf{T}_2 = \gamma_{12} = \gamma_{\text{rel}}$   
 The Lorentz Scalar Product of any two SR 4-Vectors is a Lorentz Invariant Scalar.

The Relativistic Gamma  $\gamma_{\text{rel}}$  between any two particles/waves/events remains an invariant as seen from any frame.  
 To be clear, this means the difference between two specified frames remains invariant, as measured from any other frame.

$\mathbf{P}_1 \cdot \mathbf{U}_2 = m_{o1} \mathbf{U}_1 \cdot \mathbf{U}_2 = m_{o1} c^2 \mathbf{T}_1 \cdot \mathbf{T}_2 = \gamma_{\text{rel}} E_{o1} = \gamma_{12} E_{o1} = E_{12} =$  Relativistic Energy of Particle 1 as measured by observer in frame 2.  
 Note, this is not the Rest Energy  $E_o$  of the particle, unless the frame 2 observer is at rest wrt. frame 1.

$E_o$  is an invariant, the Energy as measured in the RestFrame.  
 $E = \gamma E_o$  is not an invariant. The gamma is unspecified, and therefore the E is unspecified. Different in different frames.  
 $E_{\text{frame wrt. } o} = \gamma_{\text{rel}} E_o$  is an invariant. The gamma level is specified to a particular frame from the rest frame.

$$\gamma_{\text{rel}} = \gamma_1 \gamma_2 (c^2 - \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2) = \mathbf{U}_1 \cdot \mathbf{U}_2$$

$\gamma_1$  is not invariant,  $\gamma_2$  is not invariant, but the combo  $\gamma_{\text{rel}} = \gamma_1 \gamma_2 (c^2 - \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{u}_2)$  is invariant.

$\mathbf{P} = \hbar \mathbf{K} = (\mathbf{E}/c, \mathbf{p}) = \hbar(\omega/c, \mathbf{k})$   
 Temporal part:  $E = \hbar \omega$  : Einstein Photoelectric  
 Spatial part:  $\mathbf{p} = \hbar \mathbf{k}$  : de Broglie Wave-Particle

E is not invariant,  $\omega$  is not invariant, but the combo  $E/\omega = \hbar$  is invariant.  
 $\mathbf{p}$  is not invariant,  $\mathbf{k}$  is not invariant, but the combo  $|\mathbf{p}| / |\mathbf{k}| = \hbar$  is invariant.

$E_{\text{frame wrt. } o} = \gamma_{\text{rel}} E_o$  is an invariant.  
 Typically, we just use the frame that is the rest frame. Then  $E_{\text{rest-frame}} = (1) E_o$  is an invariant.