

Mathematics of the Faraday cage

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Everybody has heard of the Faraday cage effect, in which a wire mesh does a good job of blocking electric fields. Surely the mathematics of such a famous and useful phenomenon has been long ago worked out and written up in the textbooks?

It seems to be not so. One reason may be that that the effect is not as simple as one might expect: it depends on the wires having finite radius. Nor is it as strong as one might imagine: the shielding improves only linearly as the wire spacing decreases.

This talk will present results by Jon Chapman, Dave Hewett and myself including (a) numerical simulations, (b) a theorem proved by conformal mapping, (c) a continuous model derived by multiple scales analysis, (d) a discrete model derived by energy minimization, (e) a connection with the periodic trapezoidal rule for analytic integrands, and (f) a physical explanation.

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