Vector Differential: Rectangular Coordinates:

Find the general form for $d\vec{r}$ in rectangular coordinates by determining $d\vec{r}$ along the specific paths in the figure below.

- Path 1:

  $d\vec{r} =$

- Path 2:

  $d\vec{r} =$

- Path 3:

  $d\vec{r} =$

If all three coordinates are allowed to change simultaneously, by an infinitesimal amount, we could write this $d\vec{r}$ for any path as:

$d\vec{r} =$

This is the general line element in rectangular coordinates.

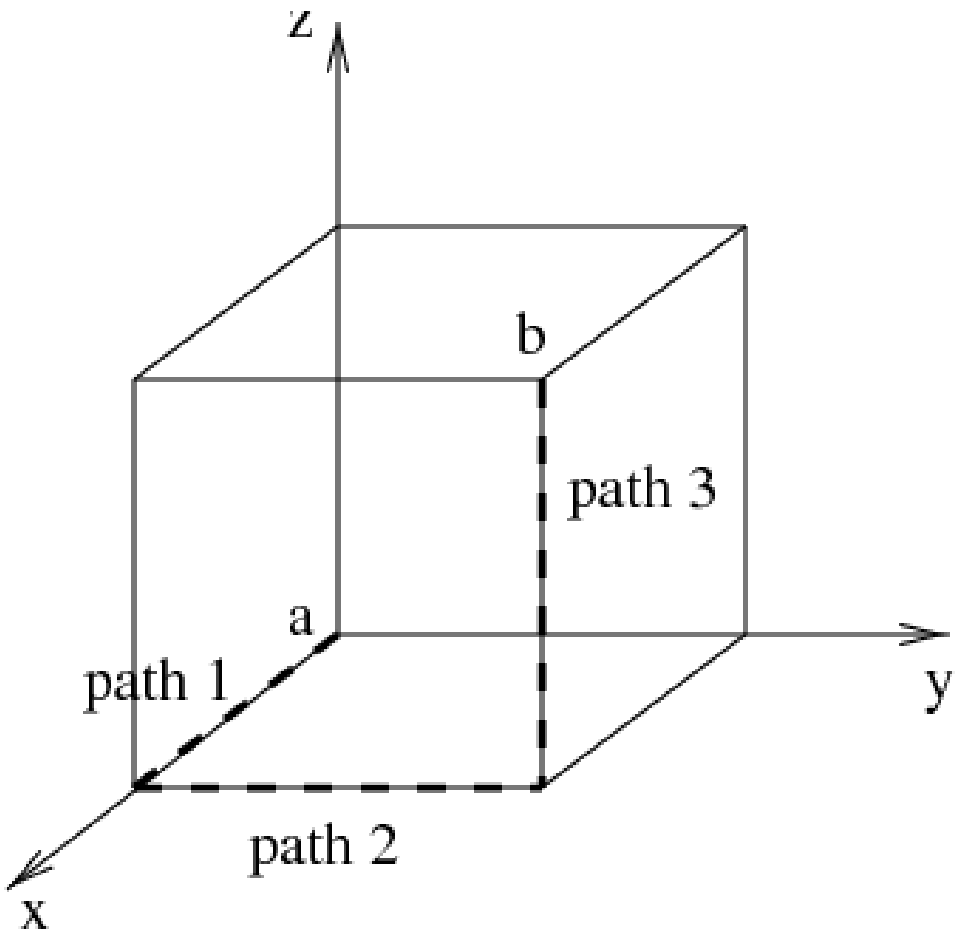


Figure 1: Figure 1: $d\vec{r}$ in rectangular coordinates