

**Answer on Question 38827, Physics, Optics** Maxwells field equations in free space are

$$\begin{aligned}\nabla \cdot \mathbf{E} &= 0 \\ \nabla \times \mathbf{E} &= \frac{\partial \mathbf{B}}{\partial t} \\ \nabla \cdot \mathbf{B} &= 0 \\ \nabla \times \mathbf{B} &= \frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial \mathbf{E}}{\partial t}\end{aligned}$$

To derive wave equation we will take curl of the curl equations and use curl of the curl identity:

$$\nabla \times (\nabla \times \mathbf{E}) = \nabla \cdot (\nabla \cdot \mathbf{E}) - \nabla^2 \mathbf{E}$$

We know that  $\nabla \cdot \mathbf{E}$ . From the other hand, from equations we see that

$$\nabla \times (\nabla \times \mathbf{E}) = -\nabla \times \left( \frac{\partial \mathbf{B}}{\partial t} \right) = -\frac{\partial (\nabla \times \mathbf{B})}{\partial t} = -\frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial^2 \mathbf{E}}{\partial t^2}$$

All together give us

$$\frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial^2 \mathbf{E}}{\partial t^2} - \nabla^2 \mathbf{E} = 0$$

In the very same way we get

$$\frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial^2 \mathbf{B}}{\partial t^2} - \nabla^2 \mathbf{B} = 0$$