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Coursebook

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Contents

Introduction	vii	Chapter 5: Work, energy and power	69
How to use this book	viii	Doing work, transferring energy	71
Chapter 1: Kinematics – describing motion	1	Gravitational potential energy	75
Speed	2	Kinetic energy	76
Distance and displacement, scalar and vector	4	g.p.e.–k.e. transformations	76
Speed and velocity	5	Down, up, down – energy changes	77
Displacement–time graphs	6	Energy transfers	78
Combining displacements	8	Power	80
Combining velocities	10	Chapter 6: Momentum	85
Chapter 2: Accelerated motion	14	The idea of momentum	86
The meaning of acceleration	15	Modelling collisions	86
Calculating acceleration	15	Understanding collisions	89
Units of acceleration	16	Explosions and crash-landings	91
Deducing acceleration	17	Collisions in two dimensions	93
Deducing displacement	17	Momentum and Newton’s laws	95
Measuring velocity and acceleration	18	Understanding motion	96
Determining velocity and acceleration in the laboratory	18	Chapter 7: Matter and materials	101
The equations of motion	20	Density	102
Deriving the equations of motion	22	Pressure	102
Uniform and non-uniform acceleration	24	Compressive and tensile forces	104
Acceleration caused by gravity	25	Stretching materials	105
Determining g	25	Elastic potential energy	108
Motion in two dimensions – projectiles	28	Chapter 8: Electric fields	116
Understanding projectiles	29	Attraction and repulsion	117
Chapter 3: Dynamics – explaining motion	37	The concept of an electric field	118
Calculating the acceleration	38	Electric field strength	119
Understanding SI units	39	Force on a charge	122
The pull of gravity	41	Chapter 9: Electric current, potential difference and resistance	127
Mass and inertia	43	Circuit symbols and diagrams	128
Top speed	44	Electric current	129
Moving through fluids	45	An equation for current	132
Identifying forces	47	The meaning of voltage	134
Newton’s third law of motion	49	Electrical resistance	135
Chapter 4: Forces – vectors and moments	53	Electrical power	136
Combining forces	54	Chapter 10: Kirchhoff’s laws	143
Components of vectors	56	Kirchhoff’s first law	144
Centre of gravity	59	Kirchhoff’s second law	145
The turning effect of a force	59	Applying Kirchhoff’s laws	146
The torque of a couple	63	Resistor combinations	148

Chapter 11: Resistance and resistivity 156

The I - V characteristic for a metallic conductor	157
Ohm's law	158
Resistance and temperature	159
Resistivity	162

Chapter 12: Practical circuits 168

Internal resistance	169
Potential dividers	172
Potentiometer circuits	172

Chapter 13: Waves 178

Describing waves	179
Longitudinal and transverse waves	181
Wave energy	182
Wave speed	183
The Doppler effect	184
Electromagnetic waves	185
Electromagnetic radiation	186
Orders of magnitude	187
The nature of electromagnetic waves	188

Chapter 14: Superposition of waves 192

The principle of superposition of waves	193
Diffraction of waves	194
Interference	196
The Young double-slit experiment	200
Diffraction gratings	203

Chapter 15: Stationary waves 210

From moving to stationary	211
Nodes and antinodes	212
Formation of stationary waves	212
Determining the wavelength and speed of sound	216

Chapter 16: Radioactivity 222

Looking inside the atom	223
Alpha-particle scattering and the nucleus	223
A simple model of the atom	225
Nucleons and electrons	226
Forces in the nucleus	229
Fundamental particles?	229
Families of particles	230
Discovering radioactivity	231
Radiation from radioactive substances	231
Discovering neutrinos	232
Fundamental families	232
Fundamental forces	232
Properties of ionising radiation	233

P1: Practical skills at AS level 239

Practical work in physics	240
Using apparatus and following instructions	240
Gathering evidence	241
Precision, accuracy, errors and uncertainties	241
Finding the value of an uncertainty	243
Percentage uncertainty	245
Recording results	246
Analysing results	246
Testing a relationship	248
Identifying limitations in procedures and suggesting improvements	250

Chapter 17: Circular motion 258

Describing circular motion	259
Angles in radians	260
Steady speed, changing velocity	261
Angular velocity	261
Centripetal forces	262
Calculating acceleration and force	264
The origins of centripetal forces	265

Chapter 18: Gravitational fields 271

Representing a gravitational field	272
Gravitational field strength g	274
Energy in a gravitational field	276
Gravitational potential	276
Orbiting under gravity	277
The orbital period	278
Orbiting the Earth	279

Chapter 19: Oscillations 285

Free and forced oscillations	286
Observing oscillations	287
Describing oscillations	288
Simple harmonic motion	289
Representing s.h.m. graphically	291
Frequency and angular frequency	292
Equations of s.h.m.	293
Energy changes in s.h.m.	296
Damped oscillations	297
Resonance	299

Chapter 20: Communications systems 309

Radio waves	310
Analogue and digital signals	314
Channels of communication	317
Comparison of different channels	319

Chapter 21: Thermal physics	327	Chapter 27: Charged particles	422
Changes of state	328	Observing the force	423
Energy changes	329	Orbiting charges	423
Internal energy	331	Electric and magnetic fields	427
The meaning of temperature	332	The Hall effect	428
Thermometers	334	Discovering the electron	429
Calculating energy changes	336		
Chapter 22: Ideal gases	345	Chapter 28: Electromagnetic induction	435
Particles of a gas	346	Observing induction	436
Explaining pressure	348	Explaining electromagnetic induction	437
Measuring gases	348	Faraday's law of electromagnetic induction	441
Boyle's law	349	Lenz's law	443
Changing temperature	350	Using induction: eddy currents, generators and transformers	445
Ideal gas equation	351		
Modelling gases – the kinetic model	352	Chapter 29: Alternating currents	451
Temperature and molecular kinetic energy	354	Sinusoidal current	452
		Alternating voltages	453
Chapter 23: Coulomb's law	359	Power and a.c.	455
Electric fields	360	Why use a.c. for electricity supply?	457
Coulomb's law	360	Transformers	458
Electric field strength for a radial field	362	Rectification	460
Electric potential	363		
Comparing gravitational and electric fields	366	Chapter 30: Quantum physics	466
		Modelling with particles and waves	467
Chapter 24: Capacitance	372	Particulate nature of light	468
Capacitors in use	373	The photoelectric effect	471
Energy stored in a capacitor	375	Line spectra	475
Capacitors in parallel	377	Explaining the origin of line spectra	476
Capacitors in series	378	Photon energies	477
Comparing capacitors and resistors	379	Electron energies in solids	478
Capacitor networks	380	The nature of light – waves or particles?	480
		Electron waves	480
Chapter 25: Electronics	386	Chapter 31: Nuclear physics	489
Components of an electronic sensing system	387	Balanced equations	490
The operational amplifier (op-amp)	393	Mass and energy	491
The inverting amplifier	397	Energy released in radioactive decay	494
The non-inverting amplifier	398	Binding energy and stability	494
Output devices	398	Randomness and decay	496
		The mathematics of radioactive decay	497
Chapter 26: Magnetic fields and electromagnetism	406	Decay graphs and equations	499
Producing and representing magnetic fields	407	Decay constant and half-life	501
Magnetic force	409		
Magnetic flux density	411		
Measuring magnetic flux density	411		
Currents crossing fields	413		
Forces between currents	415		
Relating SI units	416		
Comparing forces in magnetic, electric and gravitational fields	417		

Chapter 32: Medical imaging	506
The nature and production of X-rays	507
X-ray attenuation	509
Improving X-ray images	511
Computerised axial tomography	513
Using ultrasound in medicine	516
Echo sounding	518
Ultrasound scanning	520
Magnetic resonance imaging	522
P2: Planning, analysis and evaluation	529
Planning	530
Analysis of the data	532
Treatment of uncertainties	536
Conclusions and evaluation of results	538
Appendix 1: Physical quantities and units	542
Prefixes	542
Estimation	542
Appendix 2: Data, formulae and relationships	543
Data	543
Conversion factors	543
Mathematical equations	544
Formulae and relationships	544
Appendix 3: The Periodic Table	545
Glossary	546
Index	555
Acknowledgements	564
Terms and conditions of use for the CD-ROM	566

Introduction

This book covers the entire syllabus of Cambridge International Examinations AS and A Level Physics. It is designed to work with the syllabus that will be examined from 2016. It is in three parts:

- Chapters 1–16 and P1: the AS level content, covered in the first year of the course, including a chapter (P1) dedicated to the development of your practical skills
- Chapters 17–32 and P2: the remaining A level content, including a chapter (P2) dedicated to developing your ability to plan, analyse and evaluate practical investigations
- Appendices of useful formulae, a Glossary and an Index.

The main tasks of a textbook like this are to explain the various concepts of physics that you need to understand and to provide you with questions that will help you to test your understanding and prepare for your examinations. You will find a visual guide to the structure of each chapter and the features of this book on the next two pages.

When tackling questions, it is a good idea to make a first attempt without referring to the explanations in this Coursebook or to your notes. This will help to reveal any gaps in your understanding. By working out which concepts you find most challenging, and by spending more time to understand these concepts at an early stage, you will progress faster as the course continues.

The CD-ROM that accompanies this Coursebook includes answers with workings for all the questions in the book, as well as suggestions for revising and preparing for any examinations you take. There are also lists of recommended further reading, which in many cases will take you beyond the requirements of the syllabus, but which will help you deepen your knowledge and explain more of the background to the physics concepts covered in this Coursebook.

In your studies, you will find that certain key concepts come up again and again, and that these concepts form ‘themes’ that link the different areas of physics together. It will help you to progress and gain confidence in tackling problems if you take note of these themes. For this Coursebook, these key concepts include:

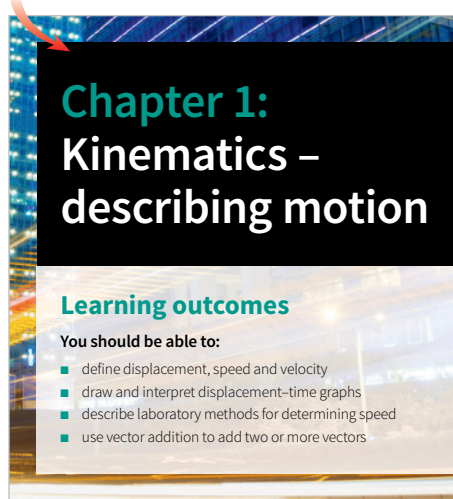
- Models of physical systems
- Testing predictions against evidence
- Mathematics as a language and problem-solving tool
- Matter, energy and waves
- Forces and fields

In this Coursebook, the mathematics has been kept to the minimum required by the Cambridge International Examinations AS and A Level Physics syllabus. If you are also studying mathematics, you may find that more advanced techniques such as calculus will help you with many aspects of physics.

Studying physics can be a stimulating and worthwhile experience. It is an international subject; no single country has a monopoly on the development of the ideas. It can be a rewarding exercise to discover how men and women from many countries have contributed to our knowledge and well-being, through their research into and application of the concepts of physics. We hope not only that this book will help you to succeed in your future studies and career, but also that it will stimulate your curiosity and fire your imagination. Today’s students become the next generation of physicists and engineers, and we hope that you will learn from the past to take physics to ever-greater heights.

How to use this book

Each chapter begins with a short list of the facts and concepts that are explained in it.



There is a short context at the beginning of each chapter, containing an example of how the material covered in the chapter relates to the 'real world'.

Describing movement

Our eyes are good at detecting movement. We notice even quite small movements out of the corners of our eyes. It's important for us to be able to judge movement – think about crossing the road, cycling or driving, or catching a ball.

Figure 1.1 shows a way in which movement can be recorded on a photograph. This is a stroboscopic photograph of a boy juggling three balls. As he juggles, a bright lamp flashes several times a second so that the camera records the positions of the balls at equal intervals of time.

If we knew the time between flashes, we could measure the photograph and calculate the speed of a ball as it moves through the air.



Figure 1.1 This boy is juggling three balls. A stroboscopic lamp flashes at regular intervals; the camera is moved to one side at a steady rate to show separate images of the boy.

The text and illustrations describe and explain all of the facts and concepts that you need to know. The chapters, and often the content within them as well, are arranged in a similar sequence to your syllabus, but with AS and A Level content clearly separated into the two halves of the book.

Figure 13.3 or a similar graph of displacement against time illustrates the following important definitions about waves and wave motion:

- The distance of a point on the wave from its undisturbed position or equilibrium position is called the **displacement** x .
- The maximum displacement of any point on the wave from its undisturbed position is called the **amplitude** A . The amplitude of a wave on the sea is measured in units of distance, e.g. metres. The greater the amplitude of the wave, the louder the sound or the rougher the sea!
- The distance from any point on a wave to the next exactly similar point (e.g. crest to crest) is called the **wavelength** λ (the Greek letter lambda). The wavelength of a wave on the sea is measured in units of distance, e.g. metres.
- The time taken for one complete oscillation of a point in a wave is called the **period** T . It is the time taken for a point to move from one particular position and return to that same position, moving in the same direction. It is measured in units of time, e.g. seconds.
- The number of oscillations per unit time of a point in a wave is called its **frequency** f . For sound waves, the higher the frequency of a musical note, the higher is its pitch. Frequency is measured in hertz (Hz), where 1 Hz = one oscillation per second (1 kHz = 10^3 Hz and 1 MHz = 10^6 Hz). The frequency f of a wave is the reciprocal of the period T :

$$f = \frac{1}{T}$$

Waves are called **mechanical waves** if they need a substance (medium) through which to travel. Sound is one example of such a wave. Other cases are waves on strings, seismic waves and water waves (Figure 13.4).

Some properties of typical waves are given on page 183 in Table 13.1.

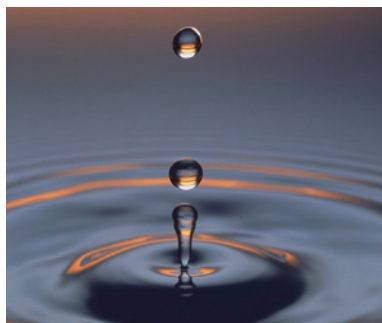


Figure 13.4 The impact of a droplet on the surface of a liquid creates a vibration, which in turn gives rise to waves on the surface.

QUESTION

- 1 Determine the wavelength and amplitude of each of the two waves shown in Figure 13.5.

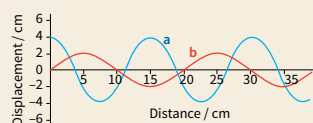


Figure 13.5 Two waves – for Question 1.

BOX 13.1: Measuring frequency

You can measure the frequency of sound waves using a cathode-ray oscilloscope (c.r.o.). Figure 13.6 shows how.

A microphone is connected to the input of the c.r.o. Sound waves are captured by the microphone and converted into a varying voltage which has the same frequency as the sound waves. This voltage is displayed on the c.r.o. screen.

It is best to think of a c.r.o. as a voltmeter which is capable of displaying a rapidly varying voltage. To do this, its spot moves across the screen at a steady speed, set by the time-base control. At the same time, the spot moves up and down according to the voltage of the input.

Hence the display on the screen is a graph of the varying voltage, with time on the (horizontal) x-axis. If we know the horizontal scale, we can determine the period and hence the frequency of the sound wave. Worked example 1 shows how to do this. (In Chapter 15 we will look at one method of measuring the wavelength of sound waves.)

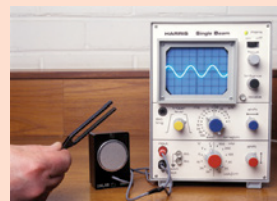


Figure 13.6 Measuring the frequency of sound waves from a tuning fork.

Questions throughout the text give you a chance to check that you have understood the topic you have just read about. You can find the answers to these questions on the CD-ROM.

This book does not contain detailed instructions for doing particular experiments, but you will find background information about the practical work you need to do in these Boxes. There are also two chapters, P1 and P2, which provide detailed information about the practical skills you need to develop during your course.

Important equations and other facts are shown in highlight boxes.

For an object of mass m travelling at a speed v , we have:

$$\text{kinetic energy} = \frac{1}{2} \times \text{mass} \times \text{speed}^2$$

$$E_k = \frac{1}{2}mv^2$$

Wherever you need to know how to use a formula to carry out a calculation, there are worked example boxes to show you how to do this.

WORKED EXAMPLE

1 In Figure 6.5, trolley A of mass 0.80 kg travelling at a velocity of 3.0 m s^{-1} collides head-on with a stationary trolley B. Trolley B has twice the mass of trolley A. The trolleys stick together and have a common velocity of 1.0 m s^{-1} after the collision. Show that momentum is conserved in this collision.

Step 1 Make a sketch using the information given in the question. Notice that we need two diagrams to show the situations, one before and one after the collision. Similarly, we need two calculations – one for the momentum of the trolleys before the collision and one for their momentum after the collision.

Step 2 Calculate the momentum before the collision:
momentum of trolleys before collision

$$= m_A \times u_A + m_B \times u_B$$

$$= (0.80 \times 3.0) + 0$$

$$= 2.4 \text{ kg m s}^{-1}$$

Trolley B has no momentum before the collision, because it is not moving.

Step 3 Calculate the momentum after the collision:
momentum of trolleys after collision

$$= (m_A + m_B) \times v_{A+B}$$

$$= (0.80 + 1.60) \times 1.0$$

$$= 2.4 \text{ kg m s}^{-1}$$

So, both before and after the collision, the trolleys have a combined momentum of 2.4 kg m s^{-1} . Momentum has been conserved.

Figure 6.5 The state of trolleys A and B, before and after the collision.

Key words are highlighted in the text when they are first introduced.

The metre, kilogram and second are three of the seven SI base units. These are defined with great precision so that every standards laboratory can reproduce them correctly.

You will also find definitions of these words in the Glossary.

base units Defined units of the SI system from which all other units are derived.

There is a summary of key points at the end of each chapter. You might find this helpful when you are revising.

Summary

- Forces are vector quantities that can be added by means of a vector triangle. Their resultant can be determined using trigonometry or by scale drawing.
- Vectors such as forces can be resolved into components. Components at right angles to one another can be treated independently of one another. For a force F at an angle θ to the x -direction, the components are:
 x -direction: $F \cos \theta$
 y -direction: $F \sin \theta$
- The moment of a force = force \times perpendicular distance of the pivot from the line of action of the force.
- The principle of moments states that, for any object that is in equilibrium, the sum of the clockwise moments about any point provided by the forces acting on the object equals the sum of the anticlockwise moments about that same point.
- A couple is a pair of equal, parallel but opposite forces whose effect is to produce a turning effect on a body without giving it linear acceleration.
torque of a couple = one of the forces \times perpendicular distance between the forces
- For an object to be in equilibrium, the resultant force acting on the object must be zero and the resultant moment must be zero.

Questions at the end of each chapter begin with shorter answer questions, then move on to more demanding exam-style questions, some of which may require use of knowledge from previous chapters. Answers to these questions can be found on the CD-ROM.

1 Figure 15.19 shows a stationary wave on a string.

Figure 15.19 For End-of-chapter Question 1.

- On a copy of Figure 15.19, label one **node** (N) and one **antinode** (A). [1]
- Mark on your diagram the wavelength of the standing wave and label it λ . [1]
- The frequency of the vibrator is doubled. Describe the changes in the standing wave pattern. [1]

2 A tuning fork which produces a note of 256 Hz is placed above a tube which is nearly filled with water. The water level is lowered until resonance is first heard.

- Explain what is meant by the term **resonance**. [1]
- The length of the column of air above the water when resonance is first heard is 31.2 cm . Calculate the speed of the sound wave. [2]