

Problem: A mass $m_1 = 6.3$ kg rests on a frictionless table. It is connected by a massless and frictionless pulley to a second mass $m_2 = 3.2$ kg that hangs freely. What is the magnitude of the acceleration of block 1?

For m_1 :

$$\begin{aligned}\vec{F}_{net} &= m\vec{a} \\ F_t &= m_1a\end{aligned}$$

For m_2 :

$$\begin{aligned}\vec{F}_{net} &= m\vec{a} \\ F_g - F_t &= m_2a \\ F_t &= F_g - m_2a \\ F_t &= m_2g - m_2a\end{aligned}$$

Putting them together (as F_t is already in the same direction for both equations):

$$\begin{aligned}m_1a &= m_2g - m_2a \\ m_1a + m_2a &= m_2g \\ a &= \frac{m_2g}{m_1 + m_2} \\ a &= \frac{(3.2\text{kg})(9.8\frac{\text{m}}{\text{s}^2})}{6.3\text{kg} + 3.2\text{kg}} \\ a &= 3.301\frac{\text{m}}{\text{s}^2}\end{aligned}$$