

Pre-Lab Assignment for Experiment 6

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1. Derive an equation for the critical angle in terms of n_1 and n_2 when $n_2 < n_1$. Find the critical angle for total internal reflection from water ($n = 1.33$) to air ($n = 1.00$).

Since we know θ_c occurs when the second angle is 90° , we may write:

$$n_2 \sin(\theta_c) = n_1 \longrightarrow \theta_c = \sin^{-1} \left(\frac{n_1}{n_2} \right)$$

For water to air motion, this becomes:

$$\theta_c = \sin^{-1} \left(\frac{1}{1.33} \right)$$

$$\boxed{\theta_c = 48.75^\circ}$$