

PHYS11 CH:4 The Three Laws That Run the Universe

From Newton to You

Mr. Gullo

December 2025

Outline

Why does a dolphin jump the way it does?

What invisible rules guide its motion?

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Three simple laws explain ALL motion in the universe.

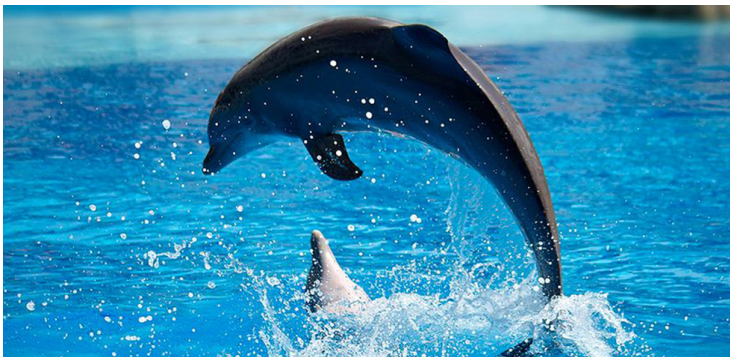
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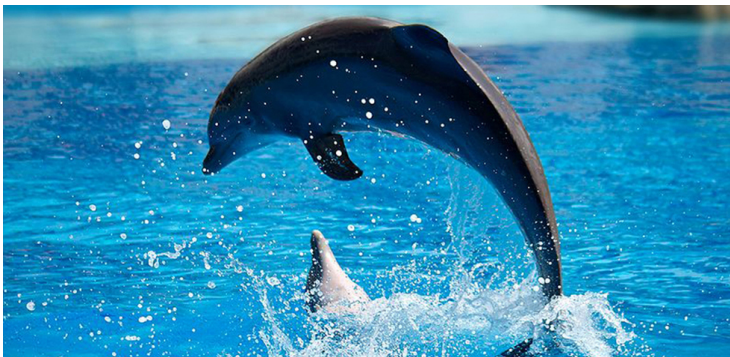
Three simple laws explain ALL motion in the universe.

From dolphins to rockets to you.

Dolphin in Motion



Dolphin in Motion



The Mental Model

The dolphin's path is not random. Physics predicts every curve, every arc.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- **4.1:** Differentiate between force, net force, and dynamics

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By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- **4.1:** Differentiate between force, net force, and dynamics
- **4.1:** Draw a free-body diagram

4.1 The Source Code of Motion

Nature's Operating System

Dynamics is the study of how forces affect motion.

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Force: A push or pull on an object.

Forces have:

- **Magnitude** - how strong
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The Mental Model

Force is like an invisible hand pushing or pulling objects.

4.1 Combining Forces

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The Universal Law

Net Force = sum of all forces acting on an object

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Key Point

Opposite forces can cancel each other out!

4.1 The Free-Body Diagram

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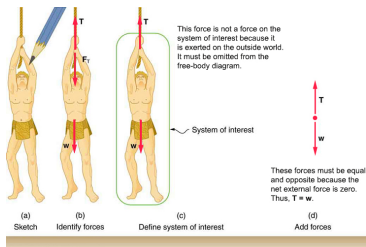
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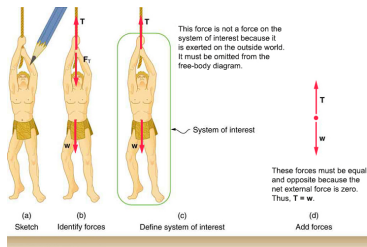
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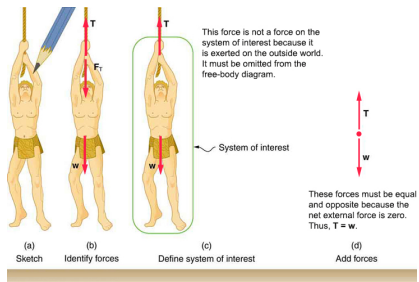
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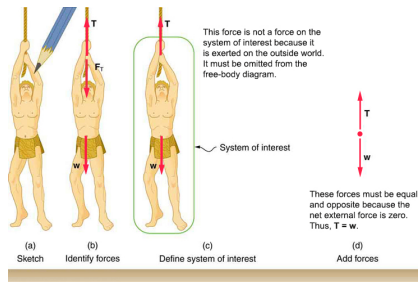
The Tool

Free-body diagrams are the first step to solving ANY force problem.

4.1 Balanced Forces

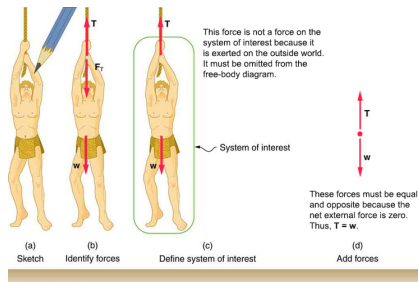


4.1 Balanced Forces



Tension force (up) = Weight force (down)

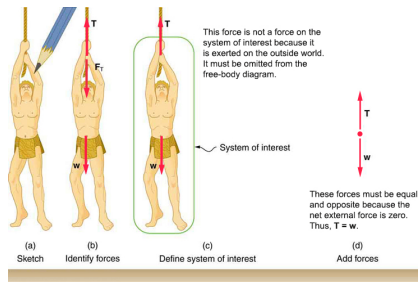
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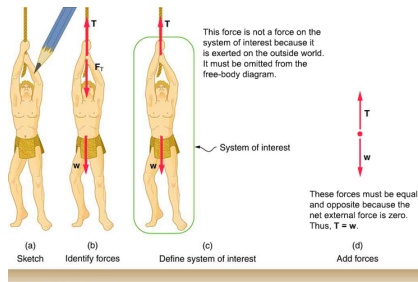


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Net force = ZERO

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Object hangs motionless.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- **4.2:** Describe Newton's first law and friction

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- **4.2:** Discuss the relationship between mass and inertia

The Law of Laziness

Objects don't like to change what they're doing.

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Universal Law I: Newton's First Law

- ① A body at rest stays at rest
- ② A body in motion stays in motion at constant velocity

...unless acted on by a net external force.

The Intuition Trap

What Your Brain Gets Wrong

Your brain says: Moving objects naturally slow down and stop.

Reality: A hidden force is slowing them down.

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That hidden force is **friction**.

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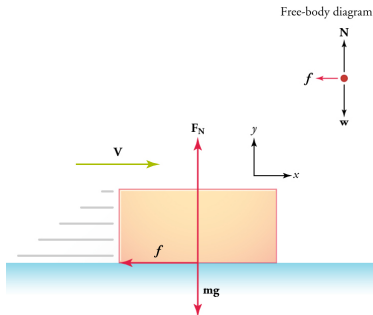
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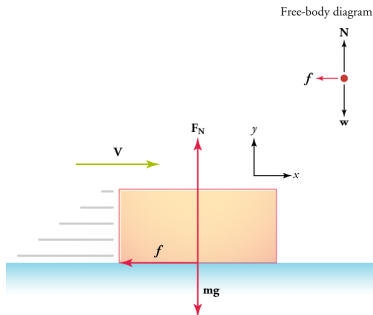
That hidden force is **friction**.

Without friction, objects would glide forever at constant velocity.

4.2 Friction: The Hidden Resistance

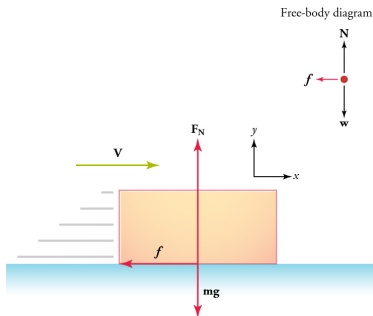


4.2 Friction: The Hidden Resistance



Friction acts opposite to the direction of motion.

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It's why things slow down on their own (seemingly).

4.2 Constant Velocity Means Zero Net Force

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Why? Newton's first law says constant velocity means net force = 0.

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The Answer

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Why? Newton's first law says constant velocity means net force = 0.

$$+50\text{ N} + (-50\text{ N}) = 0$$

4.2 Inertia: The Resistance to Change

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Changing the motion of a truck is harder than changing the motion of a skateboard.

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In the Real World

Changing the motion of a truck is harder than changing the motion of a skateboard.

Mass is the measure of inertia.

4.2 Mass vs Weight

Civilian View vs. Reality

Civilian: Mass and weight are the same thing.

Physicist: Mass is matter. Weight is gravitational force.

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Mass: Amount of matter (same on Earth and Moon)

Weight: Gravitational force (changes on Moon)

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By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- **4.3:** Describe Newton's second law, both verbally and mathematically

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- **4.3:** Use Newton's second law to solve problems

What happens when net force is NOT zero?

The Universal Pushback

What happens when net force is NOT zero?

The object **accelerates**.

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Universal Law II: Newton's Second Law

$$\vec{F}_{\text{net}} = m\vec{a}$$

Net **force** equals mass times **acceleration**.

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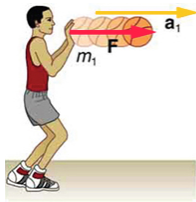
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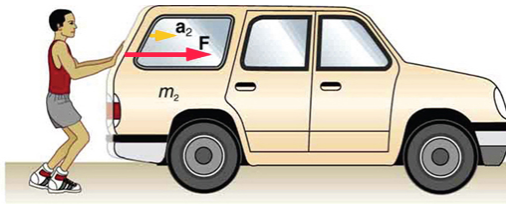
Key Insight

Same **force** on different masses produces different **accelerations**!

4.3 Same Force, Different Results



(a)



(b)

The free-body diagrams for both objects are the same.

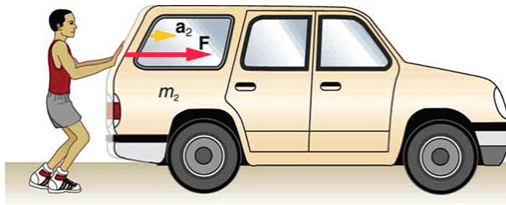


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Same **force**, different masses, different **accelerations**.

4.3 The Newton

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In the US: $1 \text{ N} = 0.225 \text{ lb}$

4.3 Weight: A Special Force

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The Universal Law

$$W = mg$$

Weight equals mass times gravitational **acceleration**.

4.3 Weight Changes, Mass Doesn't

On Earth: $g = 9.8 \text{ m/s}^2$

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Example: 1.0-kg mass

- Earth: $W = (1.0)(9.8) = 9.8 \text{ N}$

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Same mass, different **weight!**

Attempt: Decoding Lawn Mower Motion



The Challenge

Net external force: 51 N

Mass: 24 kg

Find: Acceleration a

3 min, silent - Can you predict its acceleration?

Compare: Lawn Mower Strategy

Turn and talk (2 min):

- 1 What equation did you start with?
- 2 How did you rearrange it to solve for acceleration?
- 3 What units should your answer have?

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Reveal: The Math of Acceleration

Self-correct in a different color:

E - Equation: $F_{\text{net}} = ma$

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Check: Speed increases by 2.1 m/s every second. Reasonable for a person pushing!

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Why does punching a wall hurt *your* hand?

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The wall punched you back.

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The Mental Model

You cannot touch something without being touched back.

Universal Law III: Newton's Third Law

The Law of Action and Reaction

$$\vec{F}_{A \rightarrow B} = -\vec{F}_{B \rightarrow A}$$

When object A exerts a **force** on object B,
object B exerts an equal and opposite **force** on object A.

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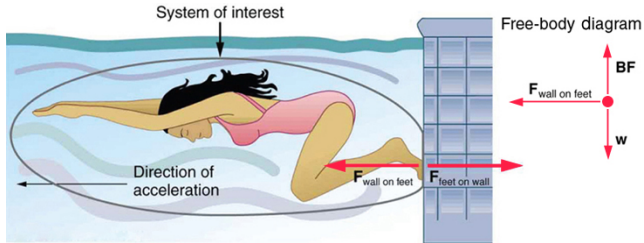
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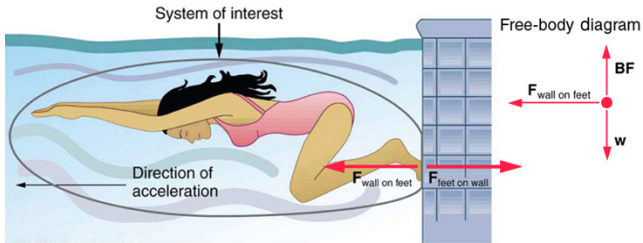
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Equal magnitude, opposite direction.

4.4 Swimmer Pushing Off Wall

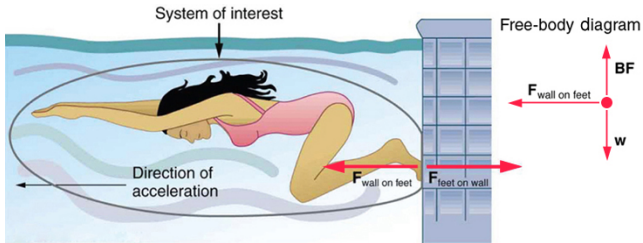


4.4 Swimmer Pushing Off Wall



Swimmer pushes wall backward \rightarrow Wall pushes swimmer forward

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The Paradox

Civilian View vs. Reality

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Bug has tiny mass \rightarrow huge **acceleration** \rightarrow splat

Truck has huge mass \rightarrow tiny **acceleration** \rightarrow barely notices

4.4 The Normal Force

When an object rests on a surface:

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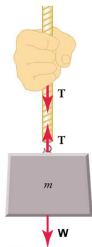
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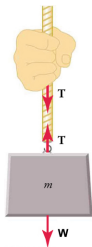
$$N = mg$$

Equal magnitude, opposite direction \rightarrow net **force** = 0

4.4 Tension in a Rope

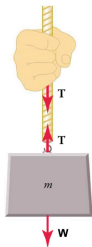


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Tension is the pulling **force** along a connector (rope, string, cable).

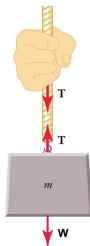
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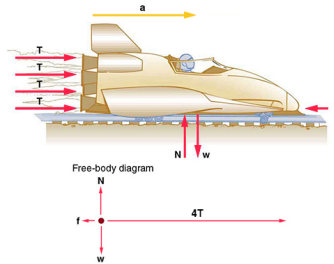


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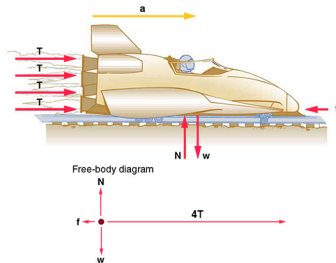
For a stationary mass: $T = W = mg$

Rope pulls up on mass, mass pulls down on rope.

4.4 Thrust: The Rocket Force

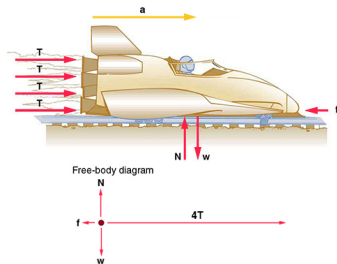


4.4 Thrust: The Rocket Force



Rockets move by expelling gas backward at high velocity.

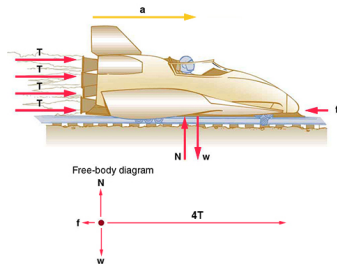
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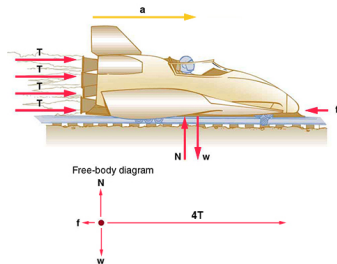


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This forward **force** is called **thrust**.

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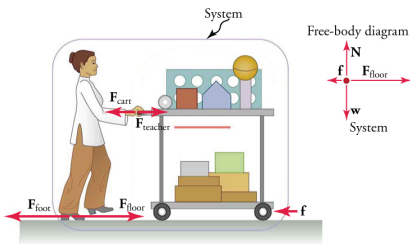
This forward **force** is called **thrust**.

Misconception

Rockets don't push on the ground or air.

They push on the gas they expel!

Attempt: Equipment Cart



The Challenge

Foot applies 150 N backward

Friction: 24.0 N

Mass: 84.0 kg total

Find: Acceleration a

3 min, silent - Can you decode this system?

Compare: Cart Strategy

Turn and talk (2 min):

- 1 What forces act on the system?
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Name wheel: One pair share your approach (not your answer).

Reveal: The Math of Systems

Self-correct in a different color:

Step 1: Find net **force**

$$F_{\text{net}} = F_{\text{floor}} - f = 150 - 24.0 = 126 \text{ N}$$

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Step 1: Find net **force**

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Step 2: Find total mass

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Check: Speed increases by 1.5 m/s every second. Reasonable!

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These three laws explain ALL motion in the universe.

Key Equations

Newton's Second Law: $\vec{F}_{\text{net}} = m\vec{a}$ (1)

Weight: $W = mg$ (2)

Friction: $f = \mu N$ (3)

Normal Force (horizontal): $N = mg$ (4)

Complete the assigned problems
posted on the LMS

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