

23.3 Coulomb's Law

Point charge \rightarrow of zero volume.

The magnitude of the electric force between two point charges is given by:

$$F_e = k_e \frac{|q_1| |q_2|}{r^2}$$

$r \equiv$ distance between q_1 and q_2

$k_e \equiv$ Coulomb's constant $\sim 9 \times 10^9 \frac{\text{N} \cdot \text{m}^2}{\text{C}^2}$

$$k_e = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0}, \quad \epsilon_0 \equiv \text{permittivity of free space}$$

$$\approx 8.85 \times 10^{-12} \frac{\text{C}^2}{\text{N} \cdot \text{m}^2}$$

See Table 23.1 [electron vs proton vs neutron]

$$|q_e| = |q_p| = 1.6 \times 10^{-19} \text{ C}$$

$$m_p = 1.67 \times 10^{-27} \text{ kg}, \quad m_e = 9.11 \times 10^{-31} \text{ kg}$$

Ex 23.1: $r = 5.3 \times 10^{-11} \text{ m}$ $F_e = ?$, $F_g = ?$

$$F_e = k_e \frac{|q_e| |q_p|}{r^2} = \dots \Rightarrow F_e = 8.2 \times 10^{-8} \text{ N}$$

$$\dots \times 10^{-47} \text{ N}$$

$$F = k_e$$

$$F_g = G \frac{m_e m_p}{r^2} = \dots \Rightarrow$$

$\hookrightarrow = 6.674 \times 10^{-11} \frac{\text{N} \cdot \text{m}^2}{\text{kg}^2}$

$$F_g = 3.6 \times 10^{-47} \text{ N}$$

Note that $\frac{F_e}{F_g} \approx 2 \times 10^{39} !!$

$\hookrightarrow F_g$ between charged atomic particles is negligible compared to F_e .

Force is a vector !!

\vec{F}_{12} : by q_1 on q_2

\vec{F}_{21} : by q_2 on q_1

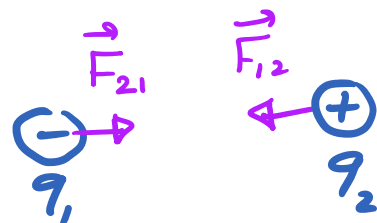


$$\boxed{\vec{F}_{12} = k_e \frac{q_1 q_2}{r^2} \hat{r}_{12}}$$

\Rightarrow Vector form of Coulomb's law

$\hat{r}_{12} \equiv$ unit vector directed from q_1 to q_2 .

Note that $\vec{F}_{21} = -\vec{F}_{12}$



• If you have more point charges !!

• point

↳ For instance, if you have 4 point charges \Rightarrow Net force on q_1 = ?

$$\Rightarrow \vec{F}_1 = \vec{F}_{21} + \vec{F}_{31} + \vec{F}_{41}$$

Question: If the force between Q_1 and Q_2 has a magnitude of F when the distance between the charges is r .
Now if $r \rightarrow 3r \Rightarrow F_{\text{new}} = ?$

$$F = k_e \frac{Q_1 Q_2}{r^2}$$

$$F_{\text{new}} = k_e \frac{Q_1 Q_2}{(3r)^2} = \left(\frac{k_e Q_1 Q_2}{r^2} \right) \frac{1}{9}$$

$$\Rightarrow \boxed{F_{\text{new}} = \frac{F}{9}}$$

QQ 23.3 / Page 696: $q_A = +2 \mu\text{C}$
 $q_B = +6 \mu\text{C}$

Answer is (b)

$$\vec{F}_{AB} = -\vec{F}_{BA}$$

