

Sound Waves

September 17, 2025

What are sound waves?

- Oscillations of pressure.
- Oscillating molecules "Displacement amplitude" \rightarrow "A" (Typically very tiny... microscopic)
Instead we used "Pressure Amplitude"

$$P_{max} = BkA$$

Where B is the bulk modulus, K is the wave number $k\lambda = 2\pi$, and A is the displacement amplitude.

A	\rightarrow	very small
B	\rightarrow	very large
P_{max}	\rightarrow	reasonable

String waves?

$$v = \sqrt{\frac{\text{tension}}{\mu \leftarrow \text{linear density}}}$$

$$\text{Power} = \frac{1}{2} \mu v \omega^2 A^2$$

In general...

Definition 0.1.

$$v = \sqrt{\frac{\text{"elastic factor"}}{\text{"inertial factor"}}}$$

Back to sound waves, let's start with an idealized example. A air tube.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{mass} &= \text{density} \cdot \text{volume} \\ m &= \rho \cdot S \cdot vt \\ \text{momentum} &= \text{mass} \cdot \text{velocity} \\ &= \rho S vt \cdot v_y \end{aligned}$$

Pressure in a medium...

$$\begin{aligned}
 P &= -B \frac{\Delta V}{V} \\
 &= B \frac{S v_y t}{S v t} \\
 &= B \frac{v_y}{v}
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Force} &= P \cdot S \\
 F &= B \frac{v_y}{v} \cdot S
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Impulse} &= F \cdot t \\
 &= B \frac{v_y}{v} \cdot S \cdot t \\
 \rho S v t \cdot v_y &= B \frac{v_y}{v} \cdot S \cdot t
 \end{aligned}$$

Definition 0.2.

$$\boxed{\rho v = B \quad v = \sqrt{\frac{B}{\rho}}}$$

What are the units for all of these values though?

Density?	SI Unit		$\frac{kg}{m^3}$
B?	SI Unit	Pascal	$\frac{N}{m^2}$