

Source: [KBPhysicsMasterIndex](#)

## 1 | Special Relativity

- If events are apart for observers to see, two observers have to record the time and compare notes
- It will take time (sound/light) from an event to get from the event to the observer; the travel time needs to be taken into account, and if the objects are moving, calculating time travel would be extremely tricky
- Human senses also have certainty

### 1.1 | Space and Time

- Because it is impossible to observe a result independent of a reference point, each observer would ideally want a clock of identical construction
- Laws of inertia (Newton's first law) is not true for every coordinate system, i.e....
  - The rotation of the Earth, if we set the coordinate 0,0 at the center of Earth, causes everything around Earth to seem to be rapidly rotating around Earth
  - Hence, it would seem like a force would be wildly acting upon all objects around Earth for their velocity to accelerate rapidly
- If an object is translating through one coordinate system, it would be uniformly translating to another coordinate system of the same type that itself is uniformly translated uniformly

### 1.2 | The Principle of Relativity

**Note: this is not the theory of relativity**

*Laws of Physics should be the same in all inertial reference frame.*

- Classical mechanics => does apply
- Electromagnetism => not sure

There is no true rest frame of the universe; because if so, the theories of mechanics would be “wrong” in all other systems other than the rest frame and will need adjustment. Furthermore, if there is a rest frame, the “physics” on the moving frame would need to account for the velocity of the moving frame.

However, measuring the motions of different celestial bodies, it seems like the motion w.r.t. any frame is governed by the same law. i.e. if you are on Earth, your velocity flips (you go around the sun) every half a year. But, w.r.t. Earth's frame at any time of the year, physics is no different. So...

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#### 1.2.1 | But Light

Maxwell's equations of electromagnetism. Speed of a wave light:  $\frac{1}{\sqrt{\epsilon_0 \mu_0}} = 300,000 \text{ km/s}$

But... relative to what? It seems like this is a ground truth relative to some mysterious  $K_0$ , which, shouldn't exist. Meaning, the speed of light should be inconsistent based on which set of rules you are observing. But it isn't.

So how do we reconcile Relativistic principles and the theory of light?

## 1.3 | The Theory of Relativity

### 1.3.1 | When does the same time happen?

Put a guy at the midpoint of two things, put up some mirrors, and observe if two things happen at once.

However, how do we know that light travels at the same speed from two directions? Well, because Relativity Depends on this, we choose that this is true.

Furthermore, if two events are simultaneous to one axis M, they cannot be simultaneous on another axis M' that is moving w.r.t. M. Because.. THINK — if you are on a train, and moving towards a point, the light coming from both ends equal for M would, in the case of M', come quicker from the B side because you are moving towards it.

## 2 | Einstein's train

Observer M stands in the non-moving moment, and looks at two lights shining at A and B. If they are simultaneous, the observer M would see both events  $D/c$  seconds after they happened, where  $D \Rightarrow$  distance between A&B, and  $c \Rightarrow$  speed of light.

Observer M', on the train, would instead see the left light at  $c-V$ , the right  $c+V$ , for M' is moving at a speed of  $V$  towards B

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For the A observer, he would think that the light arrived at  $d/(c-V)$ , and the B observer,  $d/(c+V)$ . The smaller denominator one (A) would have a greater time — and that makes sense: you are moving away from it.

However, we can't just add  $c-V$  and  $c+V$  to the speed of light when you are moving! That's stupid. The speed of light should stay constant for every observer — whether M or M'.

The only way of reconciling this problem, is that, through moving through space-time, M' actually *time traveled* — that's from M's vantage point, A and B did not happen at the same time. In fact, B is more recent than A for M'. In this way, M' could still move, see light at the same speed, but see them at different instants — **simultaneity is relative to the vantage point**.

## 3 | Time Dilation

The process by which, when

Let's say you (obs. M') are standing inside a mirror, and light travels from you + bounces back.

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However, what if even A actually takes place on a moving surface traveling to the right at a speed  $V$  w.r.t. another "stationary w.r.t. ground" observer M?

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First of all, note that distance  $L$  did not change — **distances could only be affected by the direction of light travel, not perpendicular to it.**

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To figure out the distance between event A and the mirror, it is simply  $\frac{\delta t}{2} \times V$  (speed of prime travel times half the distance between A and B).

And lastly, to figure out how much light travels, it is simply the hypotenuse between  $L$  and  $\frac{\delta t}{2} \times V$ .

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Notice! With this roundabout way, we have an equation with  $\delta t$  on both sides: because we could figure out the distance of light travel to mirror, doubling that divided by speed of light will result in  $\delta t$  again!

Doing some algebra to separate the  $\delta t$ , we shall get that:

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But notice! We could divide the top and bottom by  $c$

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Why is  $2L/c = \delta t'$ ? Think! look at the primed (moving) frame. W.r.t. the moving object, the light is traveling exactly perpendicular up and down. So, the change in time in that case is just twice the vertical distance divided by the speed of light.

Physicists tend to define a  $\gamma$  and write the same equation as follows:

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Now.... Notice! If  $v$  is small,  $\gamma = 1$  and hence  $\delta t = \delta t'$

As  $v \rightarrow c$ ,  $\gamma$  increases.