

Problem Solving

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Sheet of equations useful for the Problem solving paper

”Mo money mo Problems”
- Samson

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1 Mechanics

1.1 Constant acceleration

- For constant acceleration a the equations of motion can be written in three useful forms. The variables here are initial velocity u final velocity v , time t and displacement s :

$$\begin{aligned}v &= u + at \\v^2 &= u^2 + 2as \\s &= ut + \frac{1}{2}at^2\end{aligned}$$

1.2 Force

- The force due to a potential U is:

$$\mathbf{F} = -\nabla U$$

1.3 Friction

- Friction is given by the following expression, where μ is the *co-efficient of friction* and N is the normal force acted on the object by the surface it is sliding across.

$$F_{\text{Frict}} = \mu N$$

1.4 Work

- For constant Force work is just defined $W = \mathbf{F} \cdot \mathbf{s}$. (Force times displacement). If the force is not constant:

$$W = \int_a^b \mathbf{F} \cdot d\mathbf{s}$$

1.4.1 Power

- Power* is defined as:

$$P = \frac{dW}{dt} = \mathbf{F} \cdot \mathbf{v}$$

Where \mathbf{v} is velocity.

1.5 Circular motion & Rotation

- In circular motion the force acting as the *centripetal* force (force pulling towards the center, gravity, tension in rope, etc) is balanced by a *centrifugal* force equal in magnitude but opposite direction, given by:

$$F_{\text{fugal}} = \frac{mv^2}{r} = mr\omega^2, \quad (\text{as } v = \omega r)$$

Where here v is the tangential velocity, r is the radius, m is the mass of the object in motion and ω is the angular velocity.

1.5.1 Rotational Kinetic energy

- Usually kinetic energy is just $\frac{1}{2}mv^2$, but for rigid bodies rotation it is:

$$K = \frac{1}{2}I\omega^2$$

Where I is the moment of inertia. A list of these can be found in the formula and tables booklet for different geometries.

1.5.2 Parallel axis Theorem

- This is the rule that tells us how to add the self rotation moment of inertia I_{self} to the orbital rotation of a mass M at radius R :

$$I_{\text{total}} = I_{\text{self}} + MR^2$$

1.5.3 Torque

- This is defined as:

$$\boldsymbol{\tau} = \mathbf{r} \times \mathbf{F}$$

We also have that:

$$|\boldsymbol{\tau}| = \alpha I$$

Where $\alpha = \frac{d\omega}{dt}$. We can then find that the work done by a source the torque is:

$$W = \int_{\theta_0}^{\theta_1} \tau d\theta, \quad \implies P = \tau\omega$$

Where P is the power.

1.5.4 Angular momentum

- The standard definition is just:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{L} &= \mathbf{r} \times \mathbf{p}, & \text{for a particle} \\ I\omega, & & \text{Ridged body motion} \end{aligned}$$

We can also write the torque as $\boldsymbol{\tau} = \frac{d\mathbf{L}}{dt}$.

1.6 Center of Mass

- This is given by:

$$\mathbf{R}_{CM} = \frac{\sum_i m_i \mathbf{r}_i}{\sum_i m_i}$$

1.7 Stress/strain

- Shear modulus G is:

$$G = \frac{\text{shear stress}}{\text{shear strain}}$$

Where shear stress = F/A (Force per Area) and shear strain = $\frac{\Delta s}{l}$. Length displaced Δs over the length of the object l . The same sort of equation holds for the other moduli. Youngs modulus is G with the word “shear” replaced with “Tensile”. Same goes with Bulk and Elastic.

1.8 Gravitation

- The Gravitational potential energy of a mass m in a gravitational field produced by a body of mass M is:

$$U = -\frac{GMm}{r} \implies \mathbf{F}_{\text{grav}} = -\frac{GMm}{r^2} \hat{r}$$

1.8.1 Acceleration due to gravity

- This is just the gravitational force F_{grav} per unit mass:

$$g = \frac{GM}{r^2}$$

1.9 Orbits

- To find the escape velocity we just find the velocity that makes the total energy 0 when $r = R$, this results in:

$$v_{\text{esc}} = \sqrt{\frac{2GM}{R}}$$

The Schwartzchild radius is when this velocity v is the speed of light c .

1.9.1 Kepler's Period

- This is the orbital period for a body in elliptical motion with semi-major axis a :

$$T^2 = \frac{4\pi^2 a^3}{GM}$$

1.10 Periodic motion

- *Simple Harmonic motion* is defined as motion where the force is:

$$F = -kx$$

- This motion will then have a angular frequency ω , which is related to the period of the motion T , by: $T = 2\pi/\omega$.
- Frequency is defined as one over the period $f = 1/T = \omega/2\pi$.

1.10.1 Pendulum

- For a pendulum of length L we have that $\omega = \sqrt{\frac{g}{L}}$. If this pendulum is a rigid body with moment of inertia I , then this takes the form: $\omega = \sqrt{\frac{mgL}{I}}$.

1.10.2 Damped Harmonic Motion

- The General solution to damped harmonic motion takes the form:

$$x(t) = Ae^{-\gamma t} \cos(\omega' t)$$

Where $\omega' = \sqrt{\frac{k}{m} - \frac{\gamma^2}{4m^2}}$.

1.11 Density and Pressure

- Density is defined as:

$$\rho = \frac{m}{V}$$

- Pressure is in its most general form perpendicular Force F_{\perp} divided by area A :

$$P = \frac{F_{\perp}}{A}$$

1.11.1 Pressure in a fluid

- At a height h below the surface is:

$$P = P_0 + \rho gh$$

1.11.2 Fluid Flow

- For a fluid flowing through a pipe of changing cross sectional area the conserved quantity is the area A times the velocity of the fluid v . ($A_1 v_1 = A_2 v_2$).

1.11.3 Bernoulli's equation

- The relationship between pressure and velocity in a fluid is given by:

$$P + \frac{1}{2}\rho v^2 = \text{constant}$$

1.11.4 Wave equation

- This takes the form:

$$\frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2} = \frac{1}{v^2} \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial t^2}$$

Where $y = y(x, t)$ and $v = \lambda * f$ (wavelength by frequency) is the speed of the wave. The general form to the solutions of this equation are:

$$y(x, t) = A \cos(kx - \omega t)$$

1.11.5 Wave Power

- Given the tension T in a string with mass per length $\mu = m/L$ the wave power is:

$$P = \frac{1}{2} \sqrt{\mu T} \omega^2 A^2$$

1.11.6 Beat frequency

- When there are two sources of oscillatory motion the beat frequency is the difference between the two underlying frequencies $f_{\text{beat}} = |f_1 - f_2|$.

1.11.7 Doppler effect

- The observed frequency of a source emitting a frequency f_0 when the receiver is moving at velocity v_r and the source at velocity v_s is:

$$f = \left(\frac{c \pm v_r}{c \mp v_s} \right) f_0$$

Where we have + in the numerator if receiver is moving towards source and a - for away. And we have a + in the denominator if the source is moving towards the medium and a - if away.

2 Thermodynamics

2.1 Heat

2.1.1 Heat Capacity

- Heat capacity is defined as the temperature derivative of the Energy:

$$C_V = \left(\frac{\partial E}{\partial T} \right)_V$$

For C_P just replace V with P .

- Heat energy change due to a temperature change ΔT for a substance with heat specific capacity $c \equiv C/m$ and mass m :

$$\Delta Q = mc\Delta T$$

2.1.2 Latent Heat

- For a mass m and specific latent heat l :

$$\Delta E = ml$$

2.1.3 Heat Flux

- This is the heat flux radiated by a source of temperature T with emissivity ε :

$$F = \varepsilon \sigma T^4$$

Where σ is the Stephan Boltzmann constant. Flux is also related to power P and area A via:

$$F = P/A$$

2.2 Ideal Gas

- The ideal Gas Law is:

$$PV = NkT$$

N is the number of particles and k the Boltzmann factor.

2.2.1 Energy of a Gas

- The relation for energy of a Gas is:

$$E = \frac{d}{2} NkT$$

Where d is the degrees of freedom of the gas molecules, for ideal Gas this is just $d = 3$.

- This can also be expressed as:

$$E = \frac{1}{2} m N \bar{v}^2$$

Where \bar{v} is the average velocity given by $\bar{v} = \sqrt{\frac{dkT}{m}}$

2.3 Mean free Path

- This is just defined as the velocity of the particles times the mean free time t_{mean} . Which can be expressed as:

$$\lambda = \frac{1}{\sigma n}$$

Where σ is the cross section and n the number of particles per unit volume. This is assuming stationary particles, or that the incoming particle has a much higher velocity than the targets. If this is not the case, i.e. the incoming particle is at thermal equilibrium with the targets then the mean free path changes as the number of collisions becomes $\sqrt{2}$ times that of the stationary case. $l = 1/(\sqrt{2}n\sigma)$.

- The intensity of particles in to a medium falls off exponentially, depending on the mean free path, $I = I_0 e^{x/l}$. The probability can then be calculated from this:

$$dP(x) = \frac{I(x) - I(x + dx)}{dx} = \frac{1}{l} e^{-x/l} dx$$

