

# Optics and Waves

## Lectures 5-6

- Superposition of waves
- Standing waves

Young and Freedman 15.6; 15.7; 15.8; 16.4; 16.5

## The principle of superposition

When two waves  $y_1$  and  $y_2$  overlap, the displacement at any point on the string is:

$$y(x,t) = y_1(x,t) + y_2(x,t)$$

The wave equation is a linear equation, it contains the function  $y(x, t)$  only to the first power. Hence, if any two functions,  $y_1(x, t)$  and  $y_2(x, t)$  are the solutions of the wave equation, their sum is also a solution.

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

superposition

# Standing Waves

What happens if a sinusoidal wave is reflected at a fixed end of a string?:

standing wave

e

We can derive a wave function for the standing wave by adding  $y_1(x, t)$  and  $y_2(x, t)$  for two waves with equal amplitude, period and wavelength travelling in opposite directions. (page 493 Young)

Incident wave:  $y_1(x, t) = -A \cos(kx + \omega t)$  travels from right to left

Reflected wave:  $y_2(x, t) = A \cos(kx - \omega t)$  travels from left to right

Waves reflected from a fixed end is inverted, hence change of sign for amplitude.

We now add the two waves together.

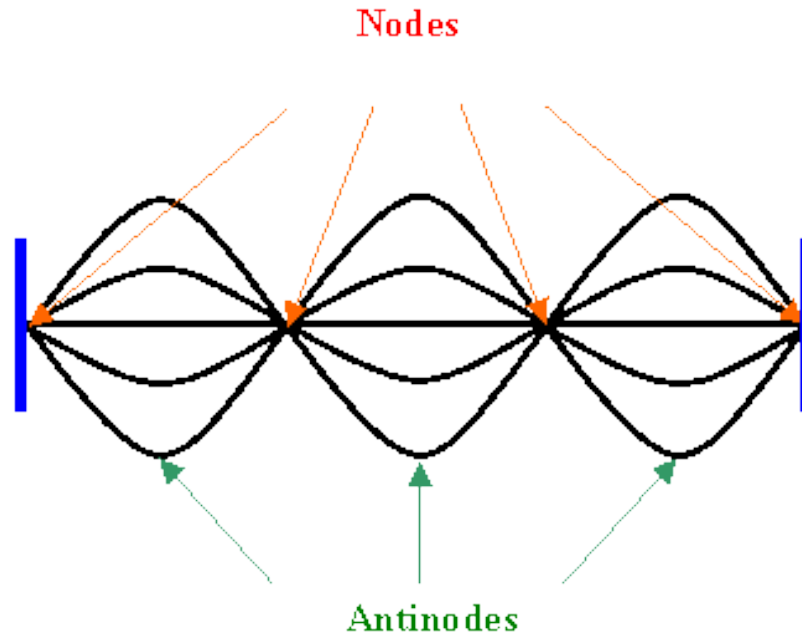
$$y_{total} = y_1 + y_2 = A[-\cos(\underbrace{kx}_{A} + \underbrace{\omega t}_{B}) + \cos(kx - \omega t)]$$

Remember:  $\cos(A \pm B) = \cos A \cos B \mp \sin A \sin B$

$$y_{total} = A[-\cancel{\cos(kx)\cos(\omega t)} + \sin(kx)\sin(\omega t)] + A[\cancel{\cos(kx)\cos(\omega t)} + \sin(kx)\sin(\omega t)]$$

$$y_{total} = 2A\sin(kx)\sin(\omega t)$$

$$y_{total} = 2A \sin(kx) \sin(\omega t) = A[-\cos(kx + \omega t) + \cos(kx - \omega t)]$$



Spatial nodes  
when:

$$\sin(kx) = 0$$

$$kx = n\pi$$

$$n = 0, 1, 2, 3, \dots$$

Nodes, independent of time

Each point moves up and down with amplitude  $2A \sin(kx)$

$$y(x, t) = 2A \sin(kx) \sin(\omega t) = B(x) \sin(\omega t)$$

The wave does not propagate, it is stationary.

Note: standing waves are also solutions of the wave-equation

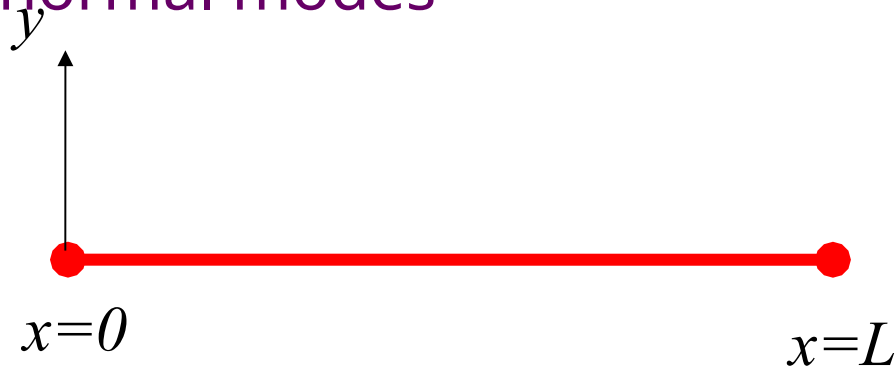
$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial x} = 2Ak \cos(kx) \sin(\omega t) \qquad \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2} = 2A(-k^2) \sin(kx) \sin(\omega t)$$

$$\frac{\partial y}{\partial t} = 2A\omega \sin(kx) \cos(\omega t) \qquad \frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial t^2} = 2A(-\omega^2) \sin(kx) \sin(\omega t)$$

$$\frac{\frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial t^2}}{\frac{\partial^2 y}{\partial x^2}} = \frac{2A(-\omega^2) \sin(kx) \sin(\omega t)}{2A(-k^2) \sin(kx) \sin(\omega t)} = \frac{\omega^2}{k^2} = v^2$$

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

# Standing waves; String with fixed ends. normal modes



What standing waves can we have?

$$y(x,t) = 2A \sin(kx) \sin(\omega t)$$

at  $x=0$ ;  $y=0$

at  $x=L$ ,  $y=0$  at all times.

$$\text{i.e. } kL = n\pi \quad (n = 1, 2, 3, \dots)$$

$$y(x,t) = 2A \sin\left(\frac{n\pi}{L}x\right) \sin \omega t$$

$$\lambda = \frac{2\pi}{k} = \frac{2L}{n}$$

superposition



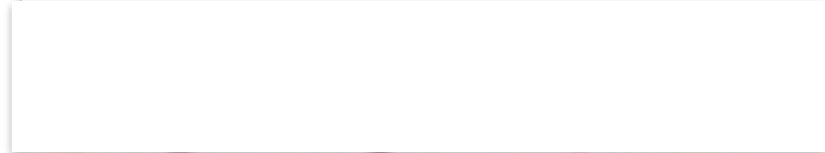
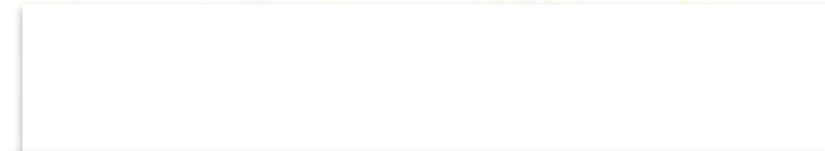
$$\lambda = \frac{2L}{n}, \quad L = n \frac{\lambda}{2}$$

1st thru 5th harmonics of a vibrating string



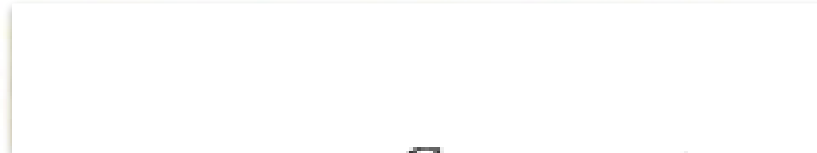
$$\lambda = \frac{2L}{1} = 2L$$

$$\lambda = \frac{2L}{2} = L$$



$$\lambda = \frac{2L}{3}$$

$$\lambda = \frac{2L}{4} = \frac{L}{2}$$



Can you set up a standing wave on  
this string with  $\lambda \neq \frac{2L}{n}$ ?

What conclusions can you make  
about the energy on the string?

# Standing Wave Frequency

$$f_n = \frac{v}{\lambda_n} = \frac{v}{\frac{2L}{n}} = \frac{n}{2L} v$$

$f_1 = \frac{v}{2L}$  is the first harmonic or fundamental.

$f_2 = 2f_1$  is the second harmonic, 1st overtone.

$f_3 = 3f_1$  is the third harmonic, 2nd overtone.

Each of the frequencies corresponds to a **normal mode** of the system.

For each normal mode, the corresponding frequency is also called the **resonant frequency**.

What happens if you drive/excite a system at its resonant frequency?

$$f_n = \frac{v}{\lambda_n} = \frac{n}{2L} v$$

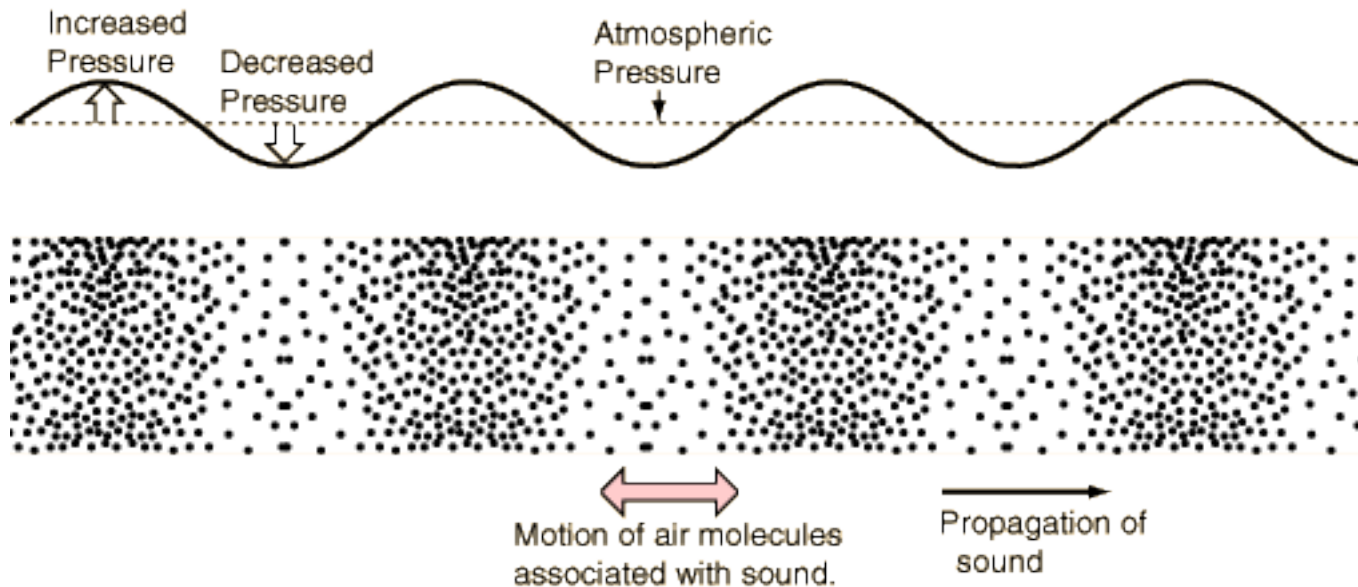
To make high  $f$ , use shorter  $L$ ,  
or high  $v$ .

High  $v$  is achieved with lighter  
strings or higher tension.



# Basics of sound waves

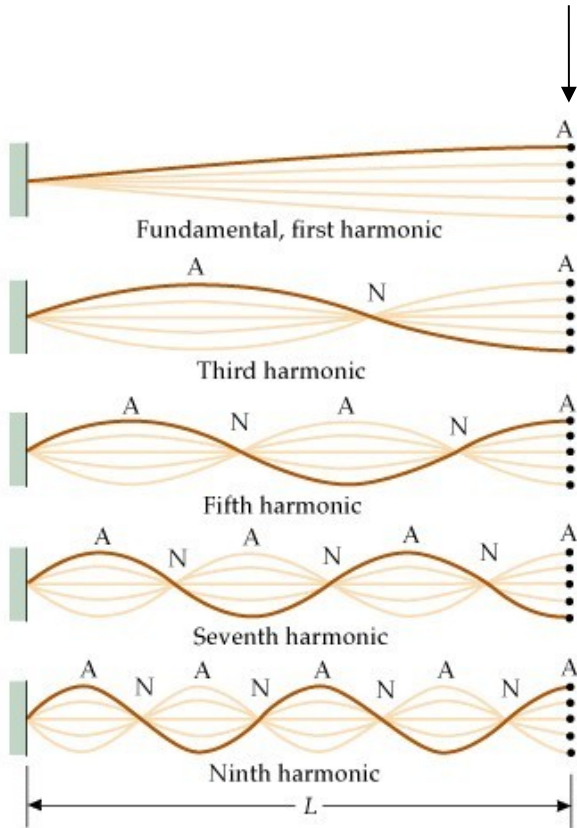
$$s(x, t) = S_m \cos(kx - \omega t)$$



$$\Delta P(x, t) = \Delta P_m \sin(kx - \omega t)$$

# Standing waves of sound

Note: if the boundary conditions are different then we get a different solution for the standing waves. E.g. **String with one end free.**



First harmonic

$$L = 1/4\lambda_1, f_1 = v/4L$$

$$3^{\text{rd}} \text{ harmonic: } L = 3/4\lambda_3, f_3 = 3v/4L = 3f_1$$

$$5^{\text{th}} \text{ harmonic: } L = 5/4\lambda_5, f_5 = 5v/4L = 5f_1$$

Where are the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> harmonics?

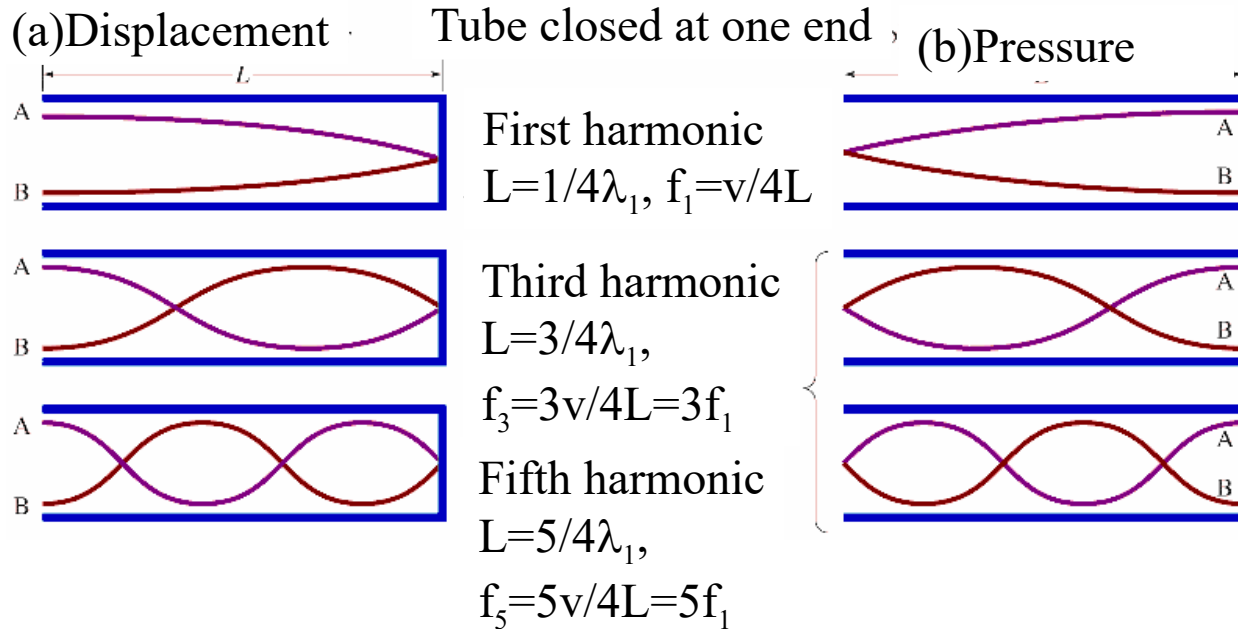
**Even harmonics do not exist!**

**Not allowed by boundary conditions**

Not practical for string instruments:

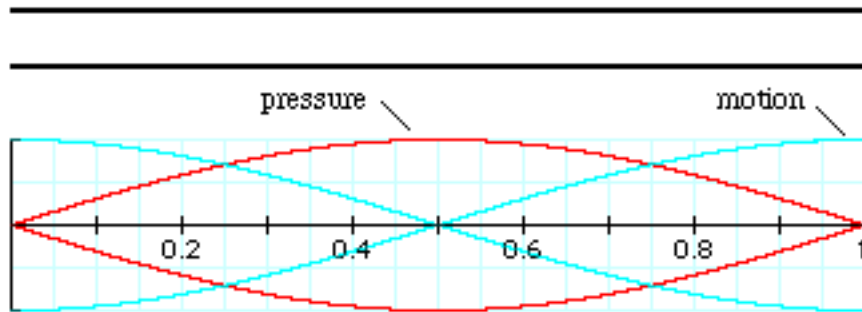
High Tension not possible, only low  $f$ .

# Sound waves in a pipe/tube

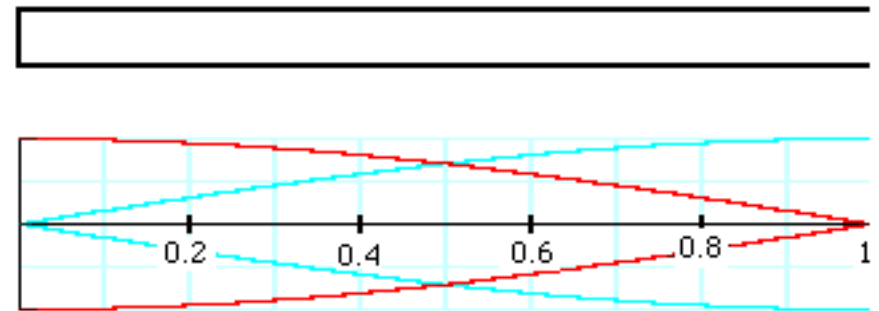


For pipes with one end closed, there are only odd harmonics ( $f_1, f_3, f_5, \dots$ ), no even harmonics ( $f_2, f_4, f_6, \dots$ )

Flute



Clarinet

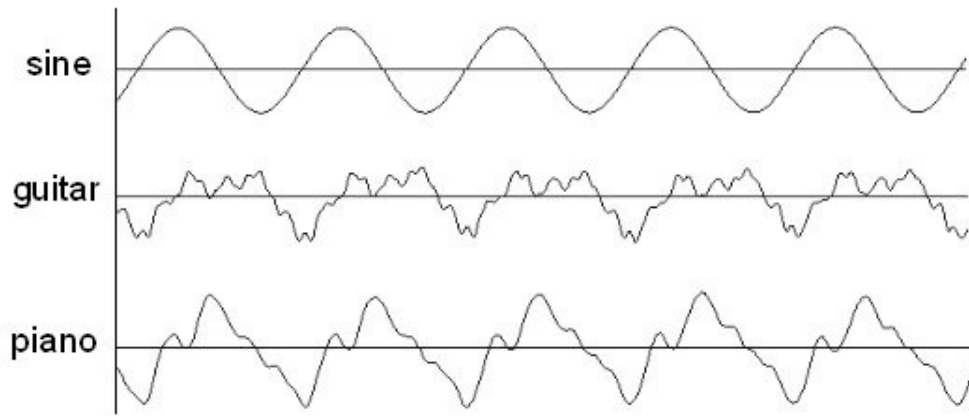




Estimate the frequency of the lowest note produced by a flute

Waves in pipes

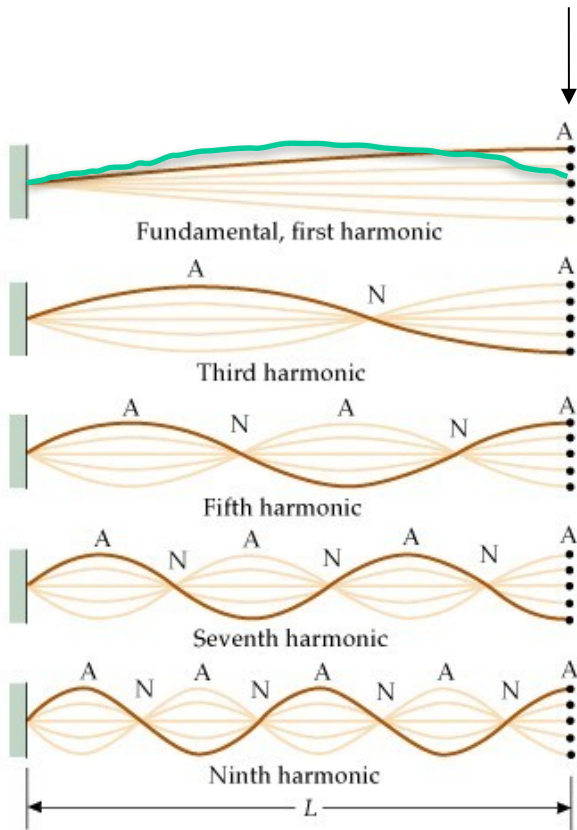
Real soundsnote





<http://newt.phys.unsw.edu.au/jw/brassacoustics.html>

# String with one end free



First harmonic

$$L = 1/4\lambda_1, f_1 = v/4L$$

$$3^{\text{rd}} \text{ harmonic: } L = 3/4\lambda_3, f_3 = 3v/4L = 3f_1$$

# Standing waves

1. Know how to add two travelling waves to make a standing wave.
2. Understand what is a normal mode and how to obtain the frequency of a normal mode.
3. Boundary conditions causing the missing harmonics.
4. Energy in a standing wave.

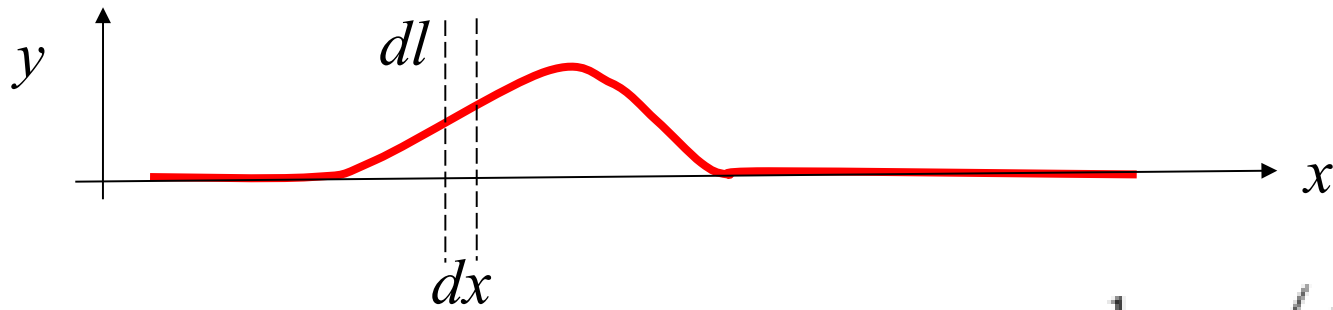
# Optics and Waves

## Lecture 7

- Energy carried by a wave
- Power of a wave

# Energy in waves

Travelling waves (on a string):  $\mu$ ,  $T$



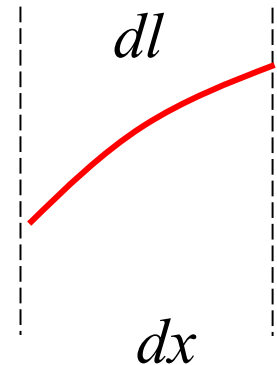
Kinetic energy of element,  $dx$ , of string:  $\Delta KE = \frac{1}{2}(\mu dx) \left( \frac{dy}{dt} \right)^2$

$$\Delta KE = \frac{1}{2}(\mu dx) (A\omega \sin(kx - \omega t))^2 = \frac{1}{2} \mu A^2 \omega^2 \sin^2(kx - \omega t) dx$$

Strain energy (PE associated with stretching the string from  $dx$  to  $dl$ )

$$(dl)^2 = (dy)^2 + (dx)^2 = (dx)^2 \left( 1 + \left( \frac{dy}{dx} \right)^2 \right)$$

$$dl = dx \left( 1 + \left( \frac{dy}{dx} \right)^2 \right)^{1/2} = dx \left( 1 + \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{dy}{dx} \right)^2 \right) \quad \text{if gradient is small}$$



Extension of string:

$$dl - dr = \frac{1}{r} dr \left( \frac{dy}{dx} \right)^2$$

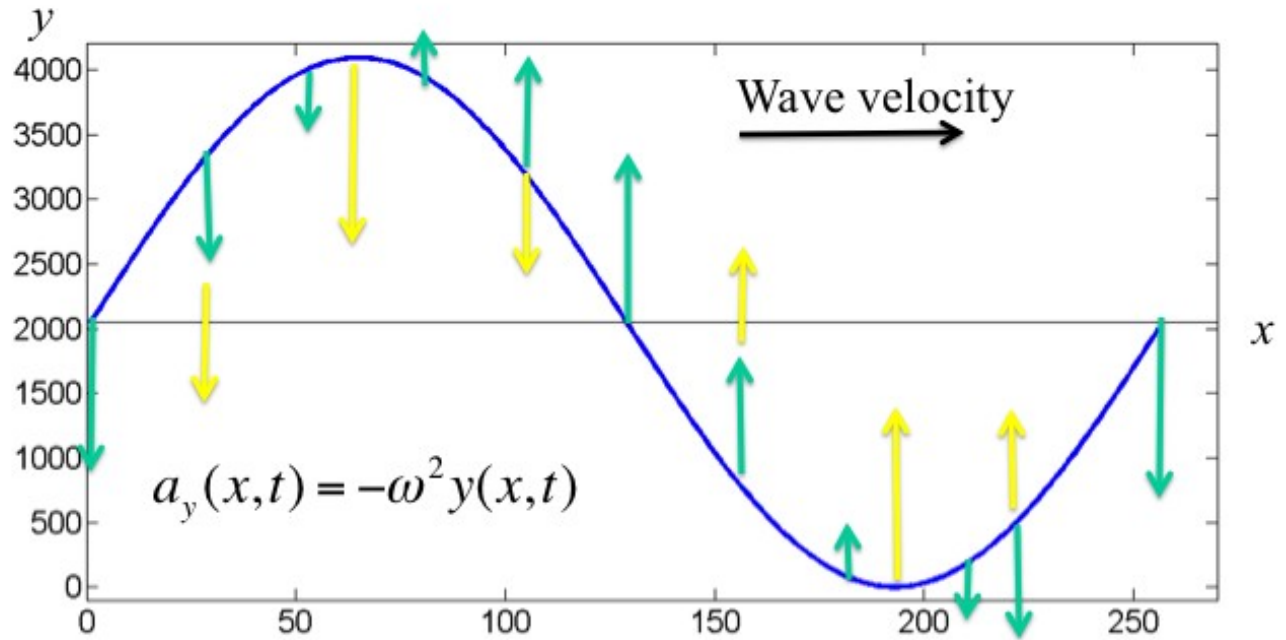
Strain Energy in

$$= \frac{T}{2} dx A^2 k^2 \sin^2$$

$$\Delta U = \frac{1}{2} \mu v^2 dx A^2$$

Since:  $\omega = vk$

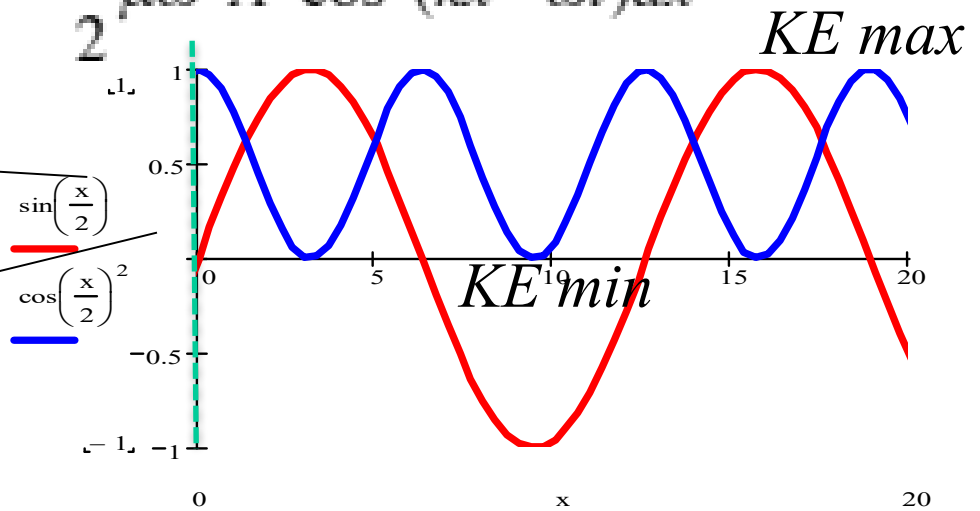
So the strain en  
Diagram below

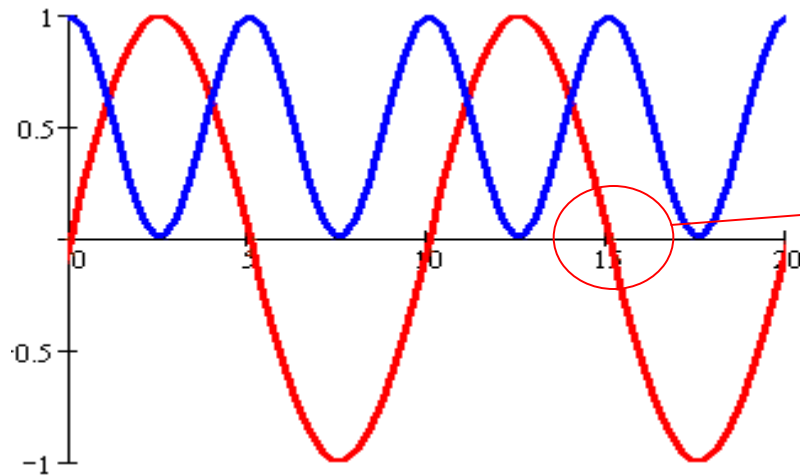


$$y(x, t) = A \sin(kx - \omega t), \text{ and } \Delta U = \frac{1}{2} \mu \omega^2 A^2 \cos^2(kx - \omega t) dx$$

displacement

KE/Strain E





PE max as  
string is stretched  
most here

$$\Delta E = \Delta KE + \Delta U = \mu A^2 \omega^2 \sin^2(kx - \omega t) dx$$

Time average of energy for  $dx$

$$\langle dE \rangle = \frac{1}{2} \mu A^2 \omega^2 dx$$

Power: energy flow per unit time:

$$P_{aver} = \frac{\langle dE \rangle}{dt} = \frac{1}{2} \mu A^2 \omega^2 \frac{dx}{dt} = \frac{1}{2} \mu A^2 \omega^2 v$$



Another way of working out the energy.

We can treat the wave as a large number of harmonic oscillators: each with a mass  $\mu dx$ , oscillating with amplitude  $A$  and angular frequency  $\omega$

The energy (KE+PE) for an oscillator is  $\frac{1}{2}(\mu dx)A^2\omega^2$

So the energy contained in one wavelength is  $\frac{1}{2}\lambda\mu A^2\omega^2$

This amount of energy is transported in time  $T$ (period), so the power is

$$\frac{1}{2}\lambda\mu A^2\omega^2 / T = \frac{1}{2}\mu A^2\omega^2(\lambda / T) = \frac{1}{2}\mu A^2\omega^2 v$$

# Energy in standing waves

$$\Delta KE = \frac{1}{2} \mu \left( \frac{dy}{dt} \right)^2 dx$$

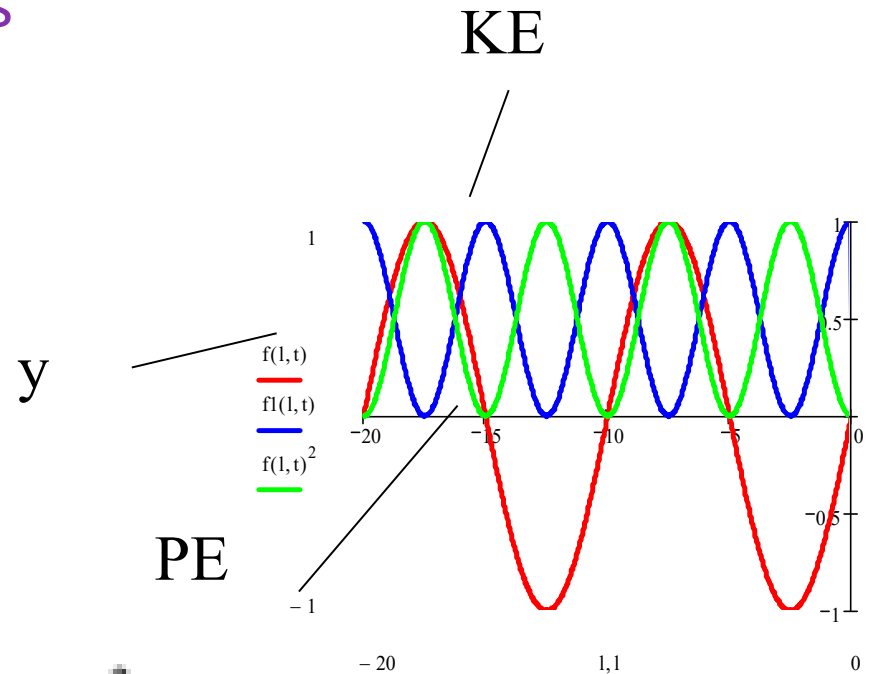
$$\Delta U = \frac{1}{2} T \left( \frac{dy}{dx} \right)^2 dx$$

$$y = 2A \sin(kx) \sin(\omega t)$$

$$\Delta KE = \frac{1}{2} \mu (2A)^2 (\omega)^2 \sin^2(kx) \cos^2(\omega t) dx$$

$$\Delta U = \frac{1}{2} T (2A)^2 (k)^2 \cos^2(kx) \sin^2(\omega t) dx$$

$$= \frac{1}{2} \mu (2A)^2 (\omega)^2 \cos^2(kx) \sin^2(\omega t) dx$$



For an arbitrary point at  $x$ ,

The energy (KE+PE) over a length  $dx$

$$\Delta KE + \Delta U = \frac{1}{2} \mu (2A)^2 (\omega)^2 [\cos^2 \omega t \sin^2(kx) + \sin^2 \omega t \cos^2(kx)] dx$$

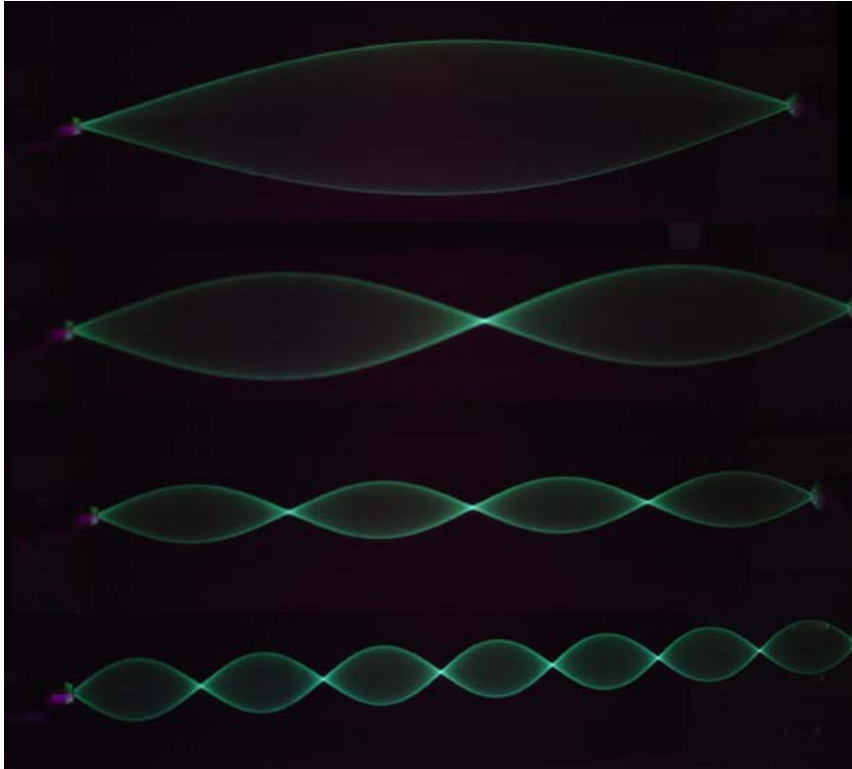
Averaging over one cycle/period, T:

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \Delta KE + \Delta U \rangle &= \frac{1}{2} \mu (2A)^2 (\omega)^2 \left[ \frac{1}{2} \sin^2(kx) + \frac{1}{2} \cos^2(kx) \right] dx \\ &= \mu (A)^2 (\omega)^2 dx \end{aligned}$$

Energy stored in one wavelength:  $\mu A^2 \omega^2 \lambda$

This is twice of that a travelling wave.  $\frac{1}{2} \lambda \mu A^2 \omega^2$

Energy scales with  $\omega^2$



**Wavelength, and thus frequency, is quantized! Energy is quantized.**

**Chladni Plates [normal modes](#)**

**Drum <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4ELxKKT5R>**

**Another interesting site if you have ten minutes to spare:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=67NPGP5A2EI>**

**Chladni: German Physicist and Musician**