

# Photoelectric Prelab

1) In 3-5 sentences, explain the photoelectric effect.

When light shines on a material, free charges - ~~usually~~ electrons - are emitted. These electrons - called photoelectrons - must have kinetic energy equal to ~~those of the incident photons due to conservation of energy.~~ ~~The incident energy is dependent minus the material's work function, the work function represents the energy required to emit the photon.~~ So our theory accounts for conservation of energy. Using this experimentally shows that increasing the frequency of light increases its energy. ~~It is based on the Using the~~ Einstein was able to derive  $E = h\nu$ .

2) In this lab, we are using the photoelectric effect to measure the stopping potential and the work function.

3) Derive  $V = h\nu - \Phi$  from first principles.

$$U = \frac{kqQ}{r} \pm qE \cdot r = \frac{kqQ}{r} \quad \vec{E} = k \frac{Q}{r^2} \hat{r} \text{ so } U = q\vec{E} \cdot \vec{r}$$

$$V = Er \text{ so } U = eV \quad KE = h\nu$$

$$\text{so } \Phi = E = KE + U = -eV + h\nu \text{ becomes } eV = h\nu - \Phi$$

which becomes  $V = h\nu - \Phi$ .

4) Classically, physicists predicted that the energy of incident light waves would ~~be dependent~~ increase with amplitude and ~~decrease~~ with frequency. The reverse turned out to be true. Similarly, the classical prediction ~~would have been for~~ was that the current would increase with frequency, since frequency was thought to correspond to the rate of photoelectron emission, and be independent of amplitude. However, increasing amplitude increases current ~~but~~ and ~~does not affect~~ changing frequency doesn't affect current. These differences are because classical light is treated only as a wave, ~~but~~ it often interacts (as it does in this case) as a beam of particles (photons).

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5)

