



Math for the people, by the people.

spheroid

Canonical name	Spheroid
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Entry type	Definition
Classification	msc 51M05
Synonym	ellipsoid of revolution
Defines	triaxial
Defines	oblate
Defines	prolate

A *spheroid* or *ellipsoid of revolution* is an ellipsoid such that two of the axes are equal in length. The name ellipsoid of revolution refers to the fact that such a shape is rotationally symmetric about the third axis. By way of contrast, the term *triaxial ellipsoid* is used to specify that the three axes are of different lengths. Also, the term *oblate* is used to describe spheroids in which the two axes of equal length are longer than the third (think of a doorknob) whilst the term *prolate* is used to describe spheroids for which the two equally long axes are shorter than the third axis (think of a cigar).