

A diagram showing a rectangular volume element. The vertical axis is labeled z . The front face has a height A^* and a width V/A^* . The area of the front face is shaded red. Three vertical arrows point upwards from the bottom of the rectangle, indicating its height.

$$A^* \quad \tau_0 = \frac{V}{A^*}$$

\Leftrightarrow

A diagram showing a trapezoidal volume element. The vertical axis is labeled z . The front face has a height A and a width τ_{\max} . The area of the front face is shaded red. Three vertical arrows point upwards from the bottom of the trapezoid, indicating its height. The width of the trapezoid varies with height z , as indicated by the label $\tau(z)$.

$$z \quad A \quad \tau_{\max} = \frac{3V}{2A}$$