Physics for Scientists and Engineers I

PHY 2048, Section 4

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- . General
- II. International System of Units
- III. Conversion of units
- IV. Dimensional Analysis
- V. Problem Solving Strategies

I. Objectives of Physics

- Find the limited number of fundamental laws that govern natural phenomena.

- Use these laws to develop theories that can predict the results of future experiments.

-Express the laws in the language of mathematics.

- Physics is divided into six major areas:
 - 1. Classical Mechanics (PHY2048)
 - 2. Relativity
 - 3. Thermodynamics
 - 4. Electromagnetism (PHY2049)
 - 5. Optics (PHY2049)
 - 6. Quantum Mechanics

UANTITY	UNIT NAME	UNIT SYMBOL	
Length	meter	m s	
Time	second		
Mass	kilogram	kg	
Speed		m/s	
Acceleration		m/s ²	
Force	Newton	N	
Pressure	Pascal	$Pa = N/m^2$	
Energy	Joule	J = Nm	
Power	Watt	W = J/s	
Temperature	Kelvin	К	

II. International System of Units

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POWER	PREFIX	ABBREVIATION
1015	peta	Р
1012	tera	Т
109	giga	G
106	mega	М
10 ³	kilo	k
10 ²	hecto	h
10 ¹	deka	da
10-1	deci	D
10-2	centi	с
10-3	milli	m
10-6	micro	μ
10-9	nano	n
10-12	pico	р
10-15	femto	f

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III. Conversion of units

Chain-link conversion method: The original data are multiplied successively by conversion factors written as unity. Units can be treated like algebraic quantities that can cancel each other out.

Example: 316 feet/h \rightarrow m/s

$$\left(316\frac{feet}{M}\right)\cdot \left(\frac{1h}{3600s}\right)\cdot \left(\frac{1m}{3.28 feet}\right) = 0.027 \, m/s$$

IV. Dimensional Analysis

Example: $x=x_0+v_0t+at^2$

Dimension of a quantity: indicates the type of quantity it is; length [L], mass [M], time [T]

Dimensional consistency: both sides of the equation must have the same dimensions.

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$$\begin{bmatrix} L \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} L \end{bmatrix} + \frac{\begin{bmatrix} L \end{bmatrix}}{\begin{bmatrix} p^2 \end{bmatrix}} \begin{bmatrix} p^2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} L \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} L \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} L \end{bmatrix}$$

Note: There are no dimensions for the constant (1/2)

Units of Area, Volume, Velocity, Speed, and Acceleration					
System	Area (L ²)	Volume (L ³)	Speed (L/T)	$\frac{Acceleration}{(L/T^2)}$	
SI	m^2	m ³	m/s	m/s^2	
U.S. customary	ft^2	ft ³	ft/s	ft/s^2	

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Significant figure \rightarrow one that is reliably known.

Zeros may or may not be significant:

- Those used to position the decimal point are not significant.
- To remove ambiguity, use scientific notation.
- Ex: 2.56 m/s has 3 significant figures, 2 decimal places.
 0.000256 m/s has 3 significant figures and 6 decimal places.
 10.0 m has 3 significant figures.
 1500 m is ambiguous → 1.5 x 10³ (2 figures), 1.50 x 10³ (3 fig.),
 - 1.500 x 10³ (4 figs.)

Order of magnitude \rightarrow the power of 10 that applies.

V. Problem solving tactics

- Explain the problem with your own words.
- Make a good picture describing the problem.
- Write down the given data with their units. Convert all data into S.I. system.
- Identify the unknowns.
- Find the connections between the unknowns and the data.
- Write the physical equations that can be applied to the problem.
- Solve those equations.
- Always include units for every quantity. Carry the units through the entire calculation.
- \bullet Check if the values obtained are reasonable \rightarrow order of magnitude and units.





























