The SI System of units

Primary Units

The six **primary** units of the SI system are shown in the table below:

Quantity	SI Unit	Dimension
length	metre, m	L
mass	kilogram, kg	M
time	second, s	T
temperature	Kelvin, K	θ
current	ampere, *A*	I
luminosity	candela	Cd

Derived Units

There are many **derived** units all obtained from combination of the above **primary** units. Those most used are shown in the table below:

Quantity	SI Unit		Dimension
velocity	m/s	ms^{-1}	LT^{-1}
acceleration	m/s^2	ms^{-2}	LT^{-2}
force	N $kg\ m/s^2$	$kg\ ms^{-2}$	$M\ LT^{-2}$
energy (or work)	Joule J N m, $kg\ m^2/s^2$	$kg\ m^2s^{-2}$	ML^2T^{-2}
power	Watt W N m/s $kg\ m^2/s^3$	Nms^{-1} $kg\ m^2s^{-3}$	ML^2T^{-3}
pressure (or stress)	Pascal P, N/m^2, $kg/m/s^2$	Nm^{-2} $kg\ m^{-1}s^{-2}$	$ML^{-1}T^{-2}$
density	kg/m^3	$kg\ m^{-3}$	ML^{-3}
specific weight	N/m^3 $kg/m^2/s^2$	$kg\ m^{-2}s^{-2}$	$ML^{-2}T^{-2}$
relative density	a ratio no units		1 no dimension
viscosity	$N\ s/m^2$ kg/m s	$N\ sm^{-2}$ $kg\ m^{-1}s^{-1}$	$M\ L^{-1}T^{-1}$
surface tension	N/m $kg\ /s^2$	Nm^{-1} $kg\ s^{-2}$	MT^{-2}

1.2.1 Systems of Units

In addition to the qualitative description of the various quantities of interest, it is generally necessary to have a quantitative measure of any given quantity. For example, if we measure the width of this page in the book and say that it is 10 units wide, the statement has no meaning until the unit of length is defined. If we indicate that the unit of length is a meter, and define the meter as some standard length, a unit system for length has been established (and a numerical value can be given to the page width). In addition to length, a unit must be established for each of the remaining basic quantities (force, mass, time, and temperature). There are several systems of units in use, and we shall consider three systems that are commonly used in engineering.

International System (SI). In 1960 the Eleventh General Conference on Weights and Measures, the international organization responsible for maintaining precise uniform standards of measurements, formally adopted the *International System of Units* as the international standard. This system, commonly termed SI, has been widely adopted worldwide and is widely used (although certainly not exclusively) in the United States. It is expected that the long-term trend will be for all countries to accept SI as the accepted standard and it is imperative that engineering students become familiar with this system. In SI the unit of length is the meter (m), the time unit is the second (s), the mass unit is the kilogram (kg), and the temperature unit is the kelvin (K). Note that there is no degree symbol used when expressing a temperature in kelvin units. The kelvin temperature scale is an absolute scale and is related to the Celsius (centigrade) scale (°C) through the relationship

$$K = {}^{\circ}C + 273.15$$

Although the Celsius scale is not in itself part of SI, it is common practice to specify temperatures in degrees Celsius when using SI units.

The force unit, called the newton (N), is defined from Newton's second law as

$$1\ N = (1\ kg)(1\ m/s^2)$$

In mechanics it is very important to distinguish between weight and mass.

Thus, a 1-N force acting on a 1-kg mass will give the mass an acceleration of 1 m/s^2. Standard gravity in SI is 9.807 m/s^2 (commonly approximated as 9.81 m/s^2) so that a 1-kg mass weighs 9.81 N under standard gravity. Note that weight and mass are different, both qualitatively and quantitatively! The unit of *work* in SI is the joule (J), which is the work done when the point of application of a 1-N force is displaced through a 1-m distance in the direction of a force. Thus,

$$1\ J = 1\ N \cdot m$$

The unit of *power* is the watt (W) defined as a joule per second. Thus,

$$1\ W = 1\ J/s = 1\ N \cdot m/s$$

Prefixes for SI Units

Factor by Which Unit Is Multiplied	Prefix	Symbol	Factor by Which Unit Is Multiplied	Prefix	Symbol
10^{15}	peta	P	10^{-2}	centi	c
10^{12}	tera	T	10^{-3}	milli	m
10^{9}	giga	G	10^{-6}	micro	μ
10^{6}	mega	M	10^{-9}	nano	n
10^{3}	kilo	k	10^{-12}	pico	p
10^{2}	hecto	h	10^{-15}	femto	f
10	deka	da	10^{-18}	atto	a
10^{-1}	deci	d			

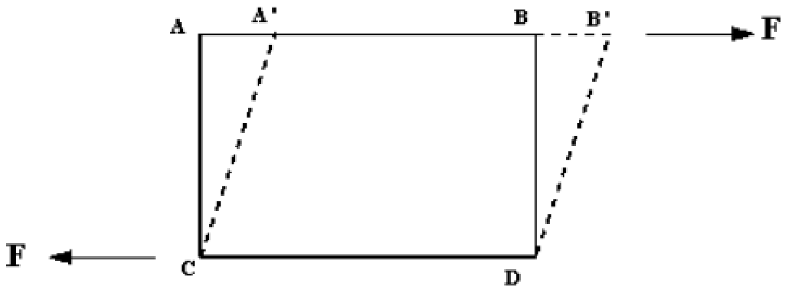
Fluids

There are two aspects of fluid mechanics which make it different to solid mechanics:

1. The nature of a fluid is much different to that of a solid
2. In fluids we usually deal with *continuous* streams of fluid without a beginning or end. In solids we only consider individual elements.

We normally recognise three states of matter: solid; liquid and gas. However, liquid and gas are both fluids: in contrast to solids they lack the ability to resist deformation. Because a fluid cannot resist the deformation force, it moves, it *flows* under the action of the force. Its shape will change continuously as long as the force is applied. A solid can resist a deformation force while at rest, this force may cause some displacement but the solid does not continue to move indefinitely.

The deformation is caused by *shearing* forces which act tangentially to a surface. Referring to the figure below, we see the force F acting tangentially on a rectangular (solid lined) element ABDC. This is a shearing force and produces the (dashed lined) rhombus element A'B'DC.



Shearing force, F, acting on a fluid element.

A Fluid is a substance which deforms continuously, or flows, when subjected to shearing forces.

If a fluid is at rest there are no shearing forces acting. All forces must be perpendicular to the planes which the are acting.

Liquids vs. Gasses

- A liquid is difficult to compress and often regarded as being incompressible.
  A gas is easily to compress and usually treated as such - it changes volume with pressure.

- A given mass of liquid occupies a given volume and will occupy the container it is in and form a free surface (if the container is of a larger volume).
  A gas has no fixed volume, it changes volume to expand to fill the containing vessel. It will completely fill the vessel so no free surface is formed.