

Multiple forces can be applied to an object (for AP Physics 1 and 2)

First principles

A **force** is a push or a pull exerted on an object by another object.

$$[F] = \text{N}$$

Newton I

The sum of all external forces acting on a material object equals zero only for all times when the object's velocity is staying constant.

$$\sum \vec{F} = \vec{0} \Leftrightarrow \text{constant } \vec{v}$$

Newton II

The velocity of a material object changes at a rate proportional to the sum of all external forces on the object and inversely proportional to the object's inertial mass.

$$[m_1] = \text{kg}$$

$$\vec{a} = \frac{\sum \vec{F}}{m_1}$$

Newton III

Each force has a partner force of equal magnitude and opposite direction, with the roles of the object doing the pushing and the object being pushed exchanged.

$$\text{There exists } \vec{F}_{\rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 1} \\ \Rightarrow$$

$$\text{there also exists} \\ \vec{F}_{\leftarrow 1 \rightarrow 2} = -\vec{F}_{\rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 1}$$

Common forces

Origin	Force	Label	Magnitude formula	Direction relative to object being acted on		
Peripheral proximity to Earth	Gravitational (Newtonian)	F_G	$m_G g$	From object toward Earth		
Proximity to massive object			$\frac{Gm_{G,1}m_{G,2}}{r^2}$	From object to other mass		
Contact with stretched string	Tension	T	No memorized formula	From object back into string		
Contact with surface	Normal	N	No memorized formula	\perp to contact plane, pushes back into object		
			Static friction	f_s	Less than greatest sustainable (for a given N) $f_s < \mu_s N$	\parallel to contact plane, opposes interfacial slippage
					Greatest sustainable (^{un}) $f_s = \mu_s N$	
Kinetic friction	f_k	Unsustainable (^{un}) $f_s > \mu_s N$	$\mu_k N$			
Contact with spring	Spring (Hookean)	F_{SPR}	$k \Delta x $	Opposes spring deformation		
Contact with fluid medium	Drag	F_{DRAG}	$\uparrow v_{OBJ,FL} \Rightarrow \uparrow F_{DRAG}$	Opposes motion of object through fluid		
	Buoyant	F_{BUOY}	$\rho_{FLUID} V_{REPL} g$	Opposes weight		
Proximity to other charge	Electric (Coulomb)	F_E	$\frac{k q_1 q_2 }{r^2}$	Opposites attract; like repel		
			$ q E$	$\vec{F}_E \parallel \vec{E}$ for (+) test charge		
Proximity to other moving charge(s)	Magnetic (Lorentz)	F_B	$ q v \sin \theta B$	RHR		
			$I\ell \sin \theta B$			

There is **no such force as "the net" force**. The phrase "the net force" refers to the sum of all *actual* forces acting on a system.

Problem-solving algorithm

- Carefully **read** problem three times.
- Sketch system(s)** of interest enclosed in **dashed bubble(s)** and sketch relevant aspects of the **environment**.
- List any **givens** not already sketched. List requested **unknowns**.
- For each system** of interest, draw a **dot diagram** with **signed Cartesian axes**.
 - Include all actual forces. Ask the following questions and obtain, as needed, *labels* from the table of common forces.
 - Is the **Earth nearby**?
 - Is **anything touching** the system?
 - Other than the Earth, are any **massive objects nearby**?
 - Any **charges nearby**?
 - Any **moving charges nearby**?
 - Do not include extraneous forces. All forces on a dot diagram must act **on** the object represented by the dot.
 - Populate a spreadsheet of force components (e.g. F_x and F_y)
 - If dot diagrams for multiple systems are drawn, recognize each **interaction force pair** (equal magnitudes).
 - Sum up forces** in each column of spreadsheet ($\sum F_x = ma_x$ etc.)
- Solve** resulting system of equations for unknowns (or determine unknowns directly in cells of spreadsheet). Sometimes, substituting *formulas* for magnitudes might be necessary.
- Remember: **Base your reasoning on Newtonian principles**, not on "what it feels should be the case."