CHAPTER 15

Oscillations

15-1 SIMPLE HARMONIC MOTION

Learning Objectives

After reading this module, you should be able to . . .

15.01 Distinguish simple harmonic motion from other types of periodic motion.

15.02 For a simple harmonic oscillator, apply the relationship between position x and time t to calculate either if given a value for the other.

15.03 Relate period T, frequency f, and angular frequency ω.

15.04 Identify (displacement) amplitude x_m, phase constant (or phase angle) ϕ, and phase $\omega t + \phi$.

15.05 Sketch a graph of the oscillator's position x versus time t, identifying amplitude x_m and period T.

15.06 From a graph of position versus time, velocity versus time, or acceleration versus time, determine the amplitude of the plot and the value of the phase constant ϕ.

15.07 On a graph of position x versus time t describe the effects of changing period T, frequency f, amplitude x_m, or phase constant ϕ.

15.08 Identify the phase constant ϕ that corresponds to the starting time ($t = 0$) being set when a particle in SHM is at an extreme point or passing through the center point.

15.09 Given an oscillator's position $x(t)$ as a function of time, find its velocity $v(t)$ as a function of time, identify the velocity amplitude v_m in the result, and calculate the velocity at any given time.

15.10 Sketch a graph of an oscillator's velocity v versus time t, identifying the velocity amplitude v_m.

15.11 Apply the relationship between velocity amplitude v_m, angular frequency ω, and (displacement) amplitude x_m.

15.12 Given an oscillator's velocity $v(t)$ as a function of time, calculate its acceleration $a(t)$ as a function of time, identify the acceleration amplitude a_m in the result, and calculate the acceleration at any given time.

15.13 Sketch a graph of an oscillator's acceleration a versus time t, identifying the acceleration amplitude a_m.

15.14 Identify that for a simple harmonic oscillator the acceleration a at any instant is *always* given by the product of a negative constant and the displacement x just then.

15.15 For any given instant in an oscillation, apply the relationship between acceleration a, angular frequency ω, and displacement x.

15.16 Given data about the position x and velocity v at one instant, determine the phase $\omega t + \phi$ and phase constant ϕ.

15.17 For a spring–block oscillator, apply the relationships between spring constant k and mass m and either period T or angular frequency ω.

15.18 Apply Hooke's law to relate the force F on a simple harmonic oscillator at any instant to the displacement x of the oscillator at that instant.

Key Ideas

- The frequency f of periodic, or oscillatory, motion is the number of oscillations per second. In the SI system, it is measured in hertz: $1\ \text{Hz} = 1\ \text{s}^{-1}$.
- The period T is the time required for one complete oscillation, or cycle. It is related to the frequency by $T = 1/f$.
- In simple harmonic motion (SHM), the displacement $x(t)$ of a particle from its equilibrium position is described by the equation

$$x = x_m \cos(\omega t + \phi) \quad \text{(displacement)},$$

in which x_m is the amplitude of the displacement, $\omega t + \phi$ is the phase of the motion, and ϕ is the phase constant. The angular frequency ω is related to the period and frequency of the motion by $\omega = 2\pi/T = 2\pi f$.

- Differentiating $x(t)$ leads to equations for the particle's SHM velocity and acceleration as functions of time:

$$v = -\omega x_m \sin(\omega t + \phi) \quad \text{(velocity)}$$

and

$$a = -\omega^2 x_m \cos(\omega t + \phi) \quad \text{(acceleration)}.$$

In the velocity function, the positive quantity ωx_m is the velocity amplitude v_m. In the acceleration function, the positive quantity $\omega^2 x_m$ is the acceleration amplitude a_m.

- A particle with mass m that moves under the influence of a Hooke's law restoring force given by $F = -kx$ is a linear simple harmonic oscillator with

$$\omega = \sqrt{\frac{k}{m}} \quad \text{(angular frequency)}$$

and

$$T = 2\pi\sqrt{\frac{m}{k}} \quad \text{(period)}.$$

What Is Physics?

Our world is filled with oscillations in which objects move back and forth repeatedly. Many oscillations are merely amusing or annoying, but many others are dangerous or financially important. Here are a few examples: When a bat hits a baseball, the bat may oscillate enough to sting the batter's hands or even to break apart. When wind blows past a power line, the line may oscillate ("gallop" in electrical engineering terms) so severely that it rips apart, shutting off the power supply to a community. When an airplane is in flight, the turbulence of the air flowing past the wings makes them oscillate, eventually leading to metal fatigue and even failure. When a train travels around a curve, its wheels oscillate horizontally ("hunt" in mechanical engineering terms) as they are forced to turn in new directions (you can hear the oscillations).

When an earthquake occurs near a city, buildings may be set oscillating so severely that they are shaken apart. When an arrow is shot from a bow, the feathers at the end of the arrow manage to snake around the bow staff without hitting it because the arrow oscillates. When a coin drops into a metal collection plate, the coin oscillates with such a familiar ring that the coin's denomination can be determined from the sound. When a rodeo cowboy rides a bull, the cowboy oscillates wildly as the bull jumps and turns (at least the cowboy hopes to be oscillating).

The study and control of oscillations are two of the primary goals of both physics and engineering. In this chapter we discuss a basic type of oscillation called *simple harmonic motion*.

Heads Up. This material is quite challenging to most students. One reason is that there is a truckload of definitions and symbols to sort out, but the main reason is that we need to relate an object's oscillations (something that we can see or even experience) to the equations and graphs for the oscillations. Relating the real, visible motion to the abstraction of an equation or graph requires a lot of hard work.

Simple Harmonic Motion

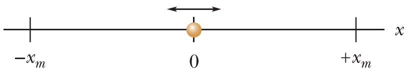


Figure 15-1 A particle repeatedly oscillates left and right along an x axis, between extreme points x_m and $-x_m$.

Figure 15-1 shows a particle that is oscillating about the origin of an x axis, repeatedly going left and right by identical amounts. The **frequency** f of the oscillation is the number of times per second that it completes a full oscillation (a *cycle*) and has the unit of hertz (abbreviated Hz), where

$$1 \text{ hertz} = 1 \text{ Hz} = 1 \text{ oscillation per second} = 1 \text{ s}^{-1}. \qquad (15\text{-}1)$$

The time for one full cycle is the **period** T of the oscillation, which is

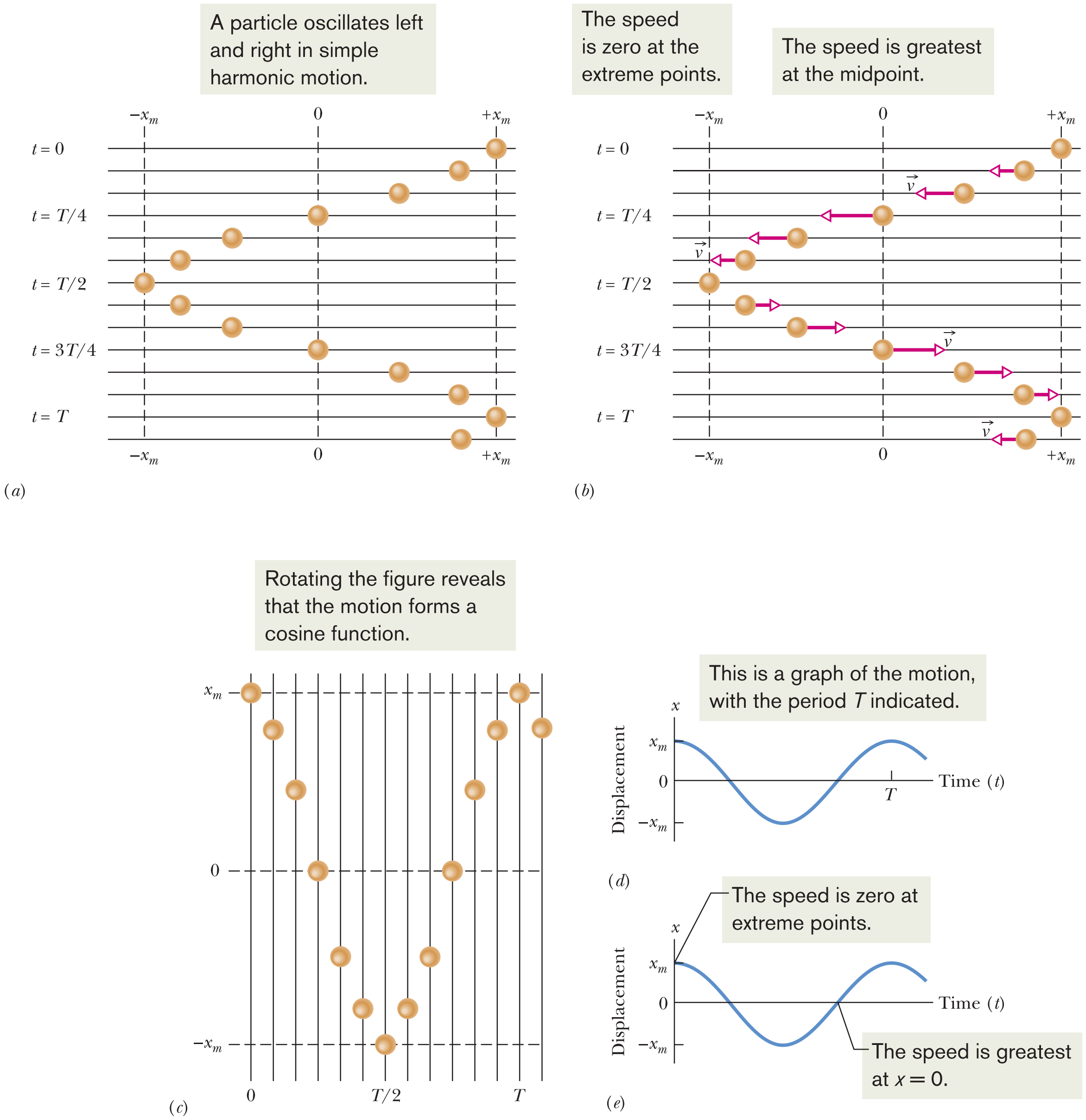
$$T = \frac{1}{f}. \qquad (15\text{-}2)$$

Any motion that repeats at regular intervals is called periodic motion or harmonic motion. However, here we are interested in a particular type of periodic motion called **simple harmonic motion** (SHM). Such motion is a sinusoidal function of time t. That is, it can be written as a sine or a cosine of time t. Here we arbitrarily choose the cosine function and write the displacement (or position) of the particle in Fig. 15-1 as

$$x(t) = x_m \cos(\omega t + \phi) \quad \text{(displacement)}, \qquad (15\text{-}3)$$

in which x_m, ω, and ϕ are quantities that we shall define.

Freeze-Frames. Let's take some freeze-frames of the motion and then arrange them one after another down the page (Fig. 15-2a). Our first freeze-frame is at $t = 0$ when the particle is at its rightmost position on the x axis. We label that coordinate as x_m (the subscript means *maximum*); it is the symbol in front of the cosine



A particle oscillates left and right in simple harmonic motion.

The speed is zero at the extreme points.

The speed is greatest at the midpoint.

Rotating the figure reveals that the motion forms a cosine function.

This is a graph of the motion, with the period T indicated.

The speed is zero at extreme points.

The speed is greatest at $x = 0$.

Figure 15-2 (*a*) A sequence of "freeze-frames" (taken at equal time intervals) showing the position of a particle as it oscillates back and forth about the origin of an x axis, between the limits $+x_m$ and $-x_m$. (*b*) The vector arrows are scaled to indicate the speed of the particle. The speed is maximum when the particle is at the origin and zero when it is at $\pm x_m$. If the time t is chosen to be zero when the particle is at $+x_m$, then the particle returns to $+x_m$ at $t = T$, where T is the period of the motion. The motion is then repeated. (*c*) Rotating the figure reveals the motion forms a cosine function of time, as shown in (*d*). (*e*) The speed (the slope) changes.

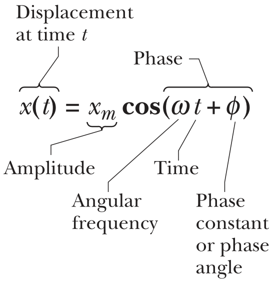


Figure 15-3 A handy guide to the quantities in Eq. 15-3 for simple harmonic motion.

function in Eq. 15-3. In the next freeze-frame, the particle is a bit to the left of x_m. It continues to move in the negative direction of x until it reaches the leftmost position, at coordinate $-x_m$. Thereafter, as time takes us down the page through more freeze-frames, the particle moves back to x_m and thereafter repeatedly oscillates between x_m and $-x_m$. In Eq. 15-3, the cosine function itself oscillates between $+1$ and -1. The value of x_m determines how far the particle moves in *its* oscillations and is called the **amplitude** of the oscillations (as labeled in the handy guide of Fig. 15-3).

Figure 15-2*b* indicates the velocity of the particle with respect to time, in the series of freeze-frames. We'll get to a function for the velocity soon, but for now just notice that the particle comes to a momentary stop at the extreme points and has its greatest speed (longest velocity vector) as it passes through the center point.

Mentally rotate Fig. 15-2*a* counterclockwise by 90°, so that the freeze-frames then progress rightward with time. We set time $t = 0$ when the particle is at x_m. The particle is back at x_m at time $t = T$ (the period of the oscillation), when it starts the next cycle of oscillation. If we filled in lots of the intermediate freeze-frames and drew a line through the particle positions, we would have the cosine curve shown in Fig. 15-2*d*. What we already noted about the speed is displayed in Fig. 15-2*e*. What we have in the whole of Fig. 15-2 is a transformation of what we can see (the reality of an oscillating particle) into the abstraction of a graph. (In *WileyPLUS* the transformation of Fig. 15-2 is available as an animation with voiceover.) Equation 15-3 is a concise way to capture the motion in the abstraction of an equation.

More Quantities. The handy guide of Fig. 15-3 defines more quantities about the motion. The argument of the cosine function is called the **phase** of the motion. As it varies with time, the value of the cosine function varies. The constant ϕ is called the **phase angle** or **phase constant.** It is in the argument only because we want to use Eq. 15-3 to describe the motion *regardless* of where the particle is in its oscillation when we happen to set the clock time to 0. In Fig. 15-2, we set $t = 0$ when the particle is at x_m. For that choice, Eq. 15-3 works just fine if we also set $\phi = 0$. However, if we set $t = 0$ when the particle happens to be at some other location, we need a different value of ϕ. A few values are indicated in Fig. 15-4. For example, suppose the particle is at its leftmost position when we happen to start the clock at $t = 0$. Then Eq. 15-3 describes the motion if $\phi = \pi$ rad. To check, substitute $t = 0$ and $\phi = \pi$ rad into Eq. 15-3. See, it gives $x = -x_m$ just then. Now check the other examples in Fig. 15-4.

The quantity ω in Eq. 15-3 is the **angular frequency** of the motion. To relate it to the frequency f and the period T, let's first note that the position $x(t)$ of the particle must (by definition) return to its initial value at the end of a period. That is, if $x(t)$ is the position at some chosen time t, then the particle must return to that same position at time $t + T$. Let's use Eq. 15-3 to express this condition, but let's also just set $\phi = 0$ to get it out of the way. Returning to the same position can then be written as

$$x_m \cos \omega t = x_m \cos \omega(t + T). \tag{15-4}$$

The cosine function first repeats itself when its argument (the *phase*, remember) has increased by 2π rad. So, Eq. 15-4 tells us that

$$\omega(t + T) = \omega t + 2\pi$$

or

$$\omega T = 2\pi.$$

Thus, from Eq. 15-2 the angular frequency is

$$\omega = \frac{2\pi}{T} = 2\pi f. \tag{15-5}$$

The SI unit of angular frequency is the radian per second.

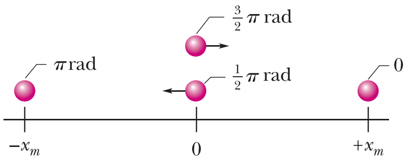
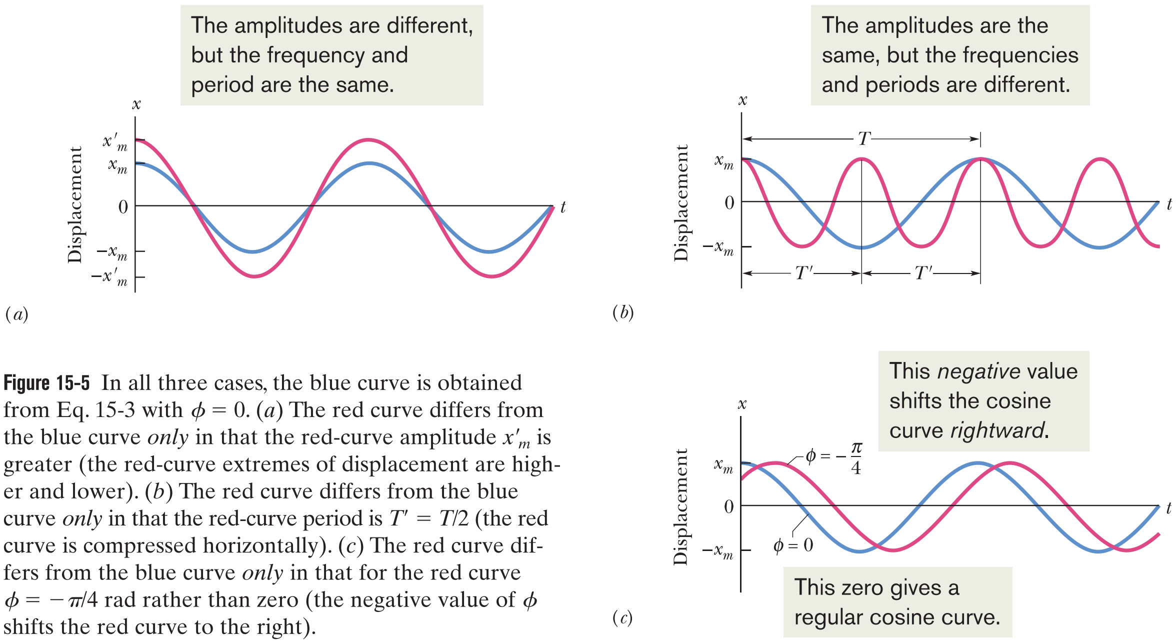


Figure 15-4 Values of ϕ corresponding to the position of the particle at time $t = 0$.



The amplitudes are different, but the frequency and period are the same.

The amplitudes are the same, but the frequencies and periods are different.

This *negative* value shifts the cosine curve *rightward*.

This zero gives a regular cosine curve.

Figure 15-5 In all three cases, the blue curve is obtained from Eq. 15-3 with $\phi = 0$. (*a*) The red curve differs from the blue curve *only* in that the red-curve amplitude x'_m is greater (the red-curve extremes of displacement are higher and lower). (*b*) The red curve differs from the blue curve *only* in that the red-curve period is $T' = T/2$ (the red curve is compressed horizontally). (*c*) The red curve differs from the blue curve *only* in that for the red curve $\phi = -\pi/4$ rad rather than zero (the negative value of ϕ shifts the red curve to the right).

We've had a lot of quantities here, quantities that we could experimentally change to see the effects on the particle's SHM. Figure 15-5 gives some examples. The curves in Fig. 15-5*a* show the effect of changing the amplitude. Both curves have the same period. (See how the "peaks" line up?) And both are for $\phi = 0$. (See how the maxima of the curves both occur at $t = 0$?) In Fig. 15-5*b*, the two curves have the same amplitude x_m but one has twice the period as the other (and thus half the frequency as the other). Figure 15-5*c* is probably more difficult to understand. The curves have the same amplitude and same period but one is shifted relative to the other because of the different ϕ values. See how the one with $\phi = 0$ is just a regular cosine curve? The one with the negative ϕ is shifted rightward from it. That is a general result: negative ϕ values shift the regular cosine curve rightward and positive ϕ values shift it leftward. (Try this on a graphing calculator.)

Checkpoint 1

A particle undergoing simple harmonic oscillation of period T (like that in Fig. 15-2) is at $-x_m$ at time $t = 0$. Is it at $-x_m$, at $+x_m$, at 0, between $-x_m$ and 0, or between 0 and $+x_m$ when (a) $t = 2.00T$, (b) $t = 3.50T$, and (c) $t = 5.25T$?

The Velocity of SHM

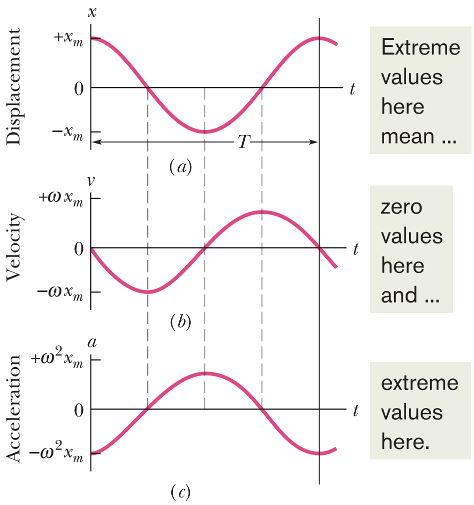
We briefly discussed velocity as shown in Fig. 15-2*b*, finding that it varies in magnitude and direction as the particle moves between the extreme points (where the speed is momentarily zero) and through the central point (where the speed is maximum). To find the velocity $v(t)$ as a function of time, let's take a time derivative of the position function $x(t)$ in Eq. 15-3:

$$v(t) = \frac{dx(t)}{dt} = \frac{d}{dt}[x_m \cos(\omega t + \phi)]$$

or

$$v(t) = -\omega x_m \sin(\omega t + \phi) \quad \text{(velocity)}. \tag{15-6}$$

The velocity depends on time because the sine function varies with time, between the values of +1 and −1. The quantities in front of the sine function



Extreme values here mean ...

zero values here and ...

extreme values here.

Figure 15-6 (*a*) The displacement $x(t)$ of a particle oscillating in SHM with phase angle ϕ equal to zero. The period T marks one complete oscillation. (*b*) The velocity $v(t)$ of the particle. (*c*) The acceleration $a(t)$ of the particle.

determine the extent of the variation in the velocity, between $+\omega x_m$ and $-\omega x_m$. We say that ωx_m is the **velocity amplitude** v_m of the velocity variation. When the particle is moving rightward through $x = 0$, its velocity is positive and the magnitude is at this greatest value. When it is moving leftward through $x = 0$, its velocity is negative and the magnitude is again at this greatest value. This variation with time (a negative sine function) is displayed in the graph of Fig. 15-6*b* for a phase constant of $\phi = 0$, which corresponds to the cosine function for the displacement versus time shown in Fig. 15-6*a*.

Recall that we use a cosine function for $x(t)$ regardless of the particle's position at $t = 0$. We simply choose an appropriate value of ϕ so that Eq. 15-3 gives us the correct position at $t = 0$. That decision about the cosine function leads us to a negative sine function for the velocity in Eq. 15-6, and the value of ϕ now gives the correct velocity at $t = 0$.

The Acceleration of SHM

Let's go one more step by differentiating the velocity function of Eq. 15-6 with respect to time to get the acceleration function of the particle in simple harmonic motion:

$$a(t) = \frac{dv(t)}{dt} = \frac{d}{dt}[-\omega x_m \sin(\omega t + \phi)]$$

or

$$a(t) = -\omega^2 x_m \cos(\omega t + \phi) \quad \text{(acceleration).} \tag{15-7}$$

We are back to a cosine function but with a minus sign out front. We know the drill by now. The acceleration varies because the cosine function varies with time, between $+1$ and -1. The variation in the magnitude of the acceleration is set by the **acceleration amplitude** a_m, which is the product $\omega^2 x_m$ that multiplies the cosine function.

Figure 15-6*c* displays Eq. 15-7 for a phase constant $\phi = 0$, consistent with Figs. 15-6*a* and 15-6*b*. Note that the acceleration magnitude is zero when the cosine is zero, which is when the particle is at $x = 0$. And the acceleration magnitude is maximum when the cosine magnitude is maximum, which is when the particle is at an extreme point, where it has been slowed to a stop so that its motion can be reversed. Indeed, comparing Eqs. 15-3 and 15-7 we see an extremely neat relationship:

$$a(t) = -\omega^2 x(t). \tag{15-8}$$

This is the hallmark of SHM: (1) The particle's acceleration is always opposite its displacement (hence the minus sign) and (2) the two quantities are always related by a constant (ω^2). If you ever see such a relationship in an oscillating situation (such as with, say, the current in an electrical circuit, or the rise and fall of water in a tidal bay), you can immediately say that the motion is SHM and immediately identify the angular frequency ω of the motion. In a nutshell:

> In SHM, the acceleration a is proportional to the displacement x but opposite in sign, and the two quantities are related by the square of the angular frequency ω.

Checkpoint 2

Which of the following relationships between a particle's acceleration a and its position x indicates simple harmonic oscillation: (a) $a = 3x^2$, (b) $a = 5x$, (c) $a = -4x$, (d) $a = -2/x$? For the SHM, what is the angular frequency (assume the unit of rad/s)?

The Force Law for Simple Harmonic Motion

Now that we have an expression for the acceleration in terms of the displacement in Eq. 15-8, we can apply Newton's second law to describe the force responsible for SHM:

$$F = ma = m(-\omega^2 x) = -(m\omega^2)x. \tag{15-9}$$

The minus sign means that the direction of the force on the particle is *opposite* the direction of the displacement of the particle. That is, in SHM the force is a *restoring force* in the sense that it fights against the displacement, attempting to restore the particle to the center point at $x = 0$. We've seen the general form of Eq. 15-9 back in Chapter 8 when we discussed a block on a spring as in Fig. 15-7. There we wrote Hooke's law,

$$F = -kx, \tag{15-10}$$

for the force acting on the block. Comparing Eqs. 15-9 and 15-10, we can now relate the spring constant k (a measure of the stiffness of the spring) to the mass of the block and the resulting angular frequency of the SHM:

$$k = m\omega^2. \tag{15-11}$$

Equation 15-10 is another way to write the hallmark equation for SHM.

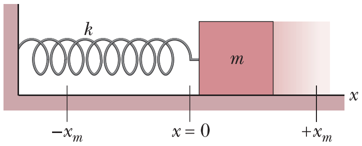


Figure 15-7 A linear simple harmonic oscillator. The surface is frictionless. Like the particle of Fig. 15-2, the block moves in simple harmonic motion once it has been either pulled or pushed away from the $x = 0$ position and released. Its displacement is then given by Eq. 15-3.

> Simple harmonic motion is the motion of a particle when the force acting on it is proportional to the particle's displacement but in the opposite direction.

The block–spring system of Fig. 15-7 is called a **linear simple harmonic oscillator** (linear oscillator, for short), where *linear* indicates that F is proportional to x to the *first* power (and not to some other power).

If you ever see a situation in which the force in an oscillation is always proportional to the displacement but in the opposite direction, you can immediately say that the oscillation is SHM. You can also immediately identify the associated spring constant k. If you know the oscillating mass, you can then determine the angular frequency of the motion by rewriting Eq. 15-11 as

$$\omega = \sqrt{\frac{k}{m}} \quad \text{(angular frequency).} \tag{15-12}$$

(This is usually more important than the value of k.) Further, you can determine the period of the motion by combining Eqs. 15-5 and 15-12 to write

$$T = 2\pi\sqrt{\frac{m}{k}} \quad \text{(period).} \tag{15-13}$$

Let's make a bit of physical sense of Eqs. 15-12 and 15-13. Can you see that a stiff spring (large k) tends to produce a large ω (rapid oscillations) and thus a small period T? Can you also see that a large mass m tends to result in a small ω (sluggish oscillations) and thus a large period T?

Every oscillating system, be it a diving board or a violin string, has some element of "springiness" and some element of "inertia" or mass. In Fig. 15-7, these elements are separated: The springiness is entirely in the spring, which we assume to be massless, and the inertia is entirely in the block, which we assume to be rigid. In a violin string, however, the two elements are both within the string.

Checkpoint 3

Which of the following relationships between the force F on a particle and the particle's position x gives SHM: (a) $F = -5x$, (b) $F = -400x^2$, (c) $F = 10x$, (d) $F = 3x^2$?

Sample Problem 15.01 Block–spring SHM, amplitude, acceleration, phase constant

A block whose mass m is 680 g is fastened to a spring whose spring constant k is 65 N/m. The block is pulled a distance $x = 11$ cm from its equilibrium position at $x = 0$ on a frictionless surface and released from rest at $t = 0$.

(a) What are the angular frequency, the frequency, and the period of the resulting motion?

KEY IDEA

The block–spring system forms a linear simple harmonic oscillator, with the block undergoing SHM.

Calculations: The angular frequency is given by Eq. 15-12:

$$\omega = \sqrt{\frac{k}{m}} = \sqrt{\frac{65\text{ N/m}}{0.68\text{ kg}}} = 9.78\text{ rad/s}$$
$$\approx 9.8\text{ rad/s}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

The frequency follows from Eq. 15-5, which yields

$$f = \frac{\omega}{2\pi} = \frac{9.78\text{ rad/s}}{2\pi\text{ rad}} = 1.56\text{ Hz} \approx 1.6\text{ Hz}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

The period follows from Eq. 15-2, which yields

$$T = \frac{1}{f} = \frac{1}{1.56\text{ Hz}} = 0.64\text{ s} = 640\text{ ms}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

(b) What is the amplitude of the oscillation?

KEY IDEA

With no friction involved, the mechanical energy of the spring–block system is conserved.

Reasoning: The block is released from rest 11 cm from its equilibrium position, with zero kinetic energy and the elastic potential energy of the system at a maximum. Thus, the block will have zero kinetic energy whenever it is again 11 cm from its equilibrium position, which means it will never be farther than 11 cm from that position. Its maximum displacement is 11 cm:

$$x_m = 11\text{ cm}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

(c) What is the maximum speed v_m of the oscillating block, and where is the block when it has this speed?

KEY IDEA

The maximum speed v_m is the velocity amplitude ωx_m in Eq. 15-6.

Calculation: Thus, we have

$$v_m = \omega x_m = (9.78\text{ rad/s})(0.11\text{ m})$$
$$= 1.1\text{ m/s}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

This maximum speed occurs when the oscillating block is rushing through the origin; compare Figs. 15-6*a* and 15-6*b*, where you can see that the speed is a maximum whenever $x = 0$.

(d) What is the magnitude a_m of the maximum acceleration of the block?

KEY IDEA

The magnitude a_m of the maximum acceleration is the acceleration amplitude $\omega^2 x_m$ in Eq. 15-7.

Calculation: So, we have

$$a_m = \omega^2 x_m = (9.78\text{ rad/s})^2(0.11\text{ m})$$
$$= 11\text{ m/s}^2. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

This maximum acceleration occurs when the block is at the ends of its path, where the block has been slowed to a stop so that its motion can be reversed. At those extreme points, the force acting on the block has its maximum magnitude; compare Figs. 15-6*a* and 15-6*c*, where you can see that the magnitudes of the displacement and acceleration are maximum at the same times, when the speed is zero, as you can see in Fig. 15-6*b*.

(e) What is the phase constant ϕ for the motion?

Calculations: Equation 15-3 gives the displacement of the block as a function of time. We know that at time $t = 0$, the block is located at $x = x_m$. Substituting these *initial conditions,* as they are called, into Eq. 15-3 and canceling x_m give us

$$1 = \cos\phi. \qquad (15\text{-}14)$$

Taking the inverse cosine then yields

$$\phi = 0\text{ rad}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

(Any angle that is an integer multiple of 2π rad also satisfies Eq. 15-14; we chose the smallest angle.)

(f) What is the displacement function $x(t)$ for the spring–block system?

Calculation: The function $x(t)$ is given in general form by Eq. 15-3. Substituting known quantities into that equation gives us

$$x(t) = x_m\cos(\omega t + \phi)$$
$$= (0.11\text{ m})\cos[(9.8\text{ rad/s})t + 0]$$
$$= 0.11\cos(9.8t), \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

where x is in meters and t is in seconds.

WILEY PLUS Additional examples, video, and practice available at *WileyPLUS*

Sample Problem 15.02 Finding SHM phase constant from displacement and velocity

At $t = 0$, the displacement $x(0)$ of the block in a linear oscillator like that of Fig. 15-7 is -8.50 cm. (Read $x(0)$ as "x at time zero.") The block's velocity $v(0)$ then is -0.920 m/s, and its acceleration $a(0)$ is $+47.0\ \text{m/s}^2$.

(a) What is the angular frequency ω of this system?

KEY IDEA

With the block in SHM, Eqs. 15-3, 15-6, and 15-7 give its displacement, velocity, and acceleration, respectively, and each contains ω.

Calculations: Let's substitute $t = 0$ into each to see whether we can solve any one of them for ω. We find

$$x(0) = x_m \cos\phi, \tag{15-15}$$

$$v(0) = -\omega x_m \sin\phi, \tag{15-16}$$

and

$$a(0) = -\omega^2 x_m \cos\phi. \tag{15-17}$$

In Eq. 15-15, ω has disappeared. In Eqs. 15-16 and 15-17, we know values for the left sides, but we do not know x_m and ϕ. However, if we divide Eq. 15-17 by Eq. 15-15, we neatly eliminate both x_m and ϕ and can then solve for ω as

$$\omega = \sqrt{-\frac{a(0)}{x(0)}} = \sqrt{-\frac{47.0\ \text{m/s}^2}{-0.0850\ \text{m}}}$$

$$= 23.5\ \text{rad/s}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

(b) What are the phase constant ϕ and amplitude x_m?

Calculations: We know ω and want ϕ and x_m. If we divide Eq. 15-16 by Eq. 15-15, we eliminate one of those unknowns and reduce the other to a single trig function:

$$\frac{v(0)}{x(0)} = \frac{-\omega x_m \sin\phi}{x_m \cos\phi} = -\omega \tan\phi.$$

Solving for $\tan\phi$, we find

$$\tan\phi = -\frac{v(0)}{\omega x(0)} = -\frac{-0.920\ \text{m/s}}{(23.5\ \text{rad/s})(-0.0850\ \text{m})}$$

$$= -0.461.$$

This equation has two solutions:

$$\phi = -25^\circ \quad \text{and} \quad \phi = 180^\circ + (-25^\circ) = 155^\circ.$$

Normally only the first solution here is displayed by a calculator, but it may not be the physically possible solution. To choose the proper solution, we test them both by using them to compute values for the amplitude x_m. From Eq. 15-15, we find that if $\phi = -25^\circ$, then

$$x_m = \frac{x(0)}{\cos\phi} = \frac{-0.0850\ \text{m}}{\cos(-25^\circ)} = -0.094\ \text{m}.$$

We find similarly that if $\phi = 155^\circ$, then $x_m = 0.094$ m. Because the amplitude of SHM must be a positive constant, the correct phase constant and amplitude here are

$$\phi = 155^\circ \quad \text{and} \quad x_m = 0.094\ \text{m} = 9.4\ \text{cm}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

Additional examples, video, and practice available at *WileyPLUS*

15-2 ENERGY IN SIMPLE HARMONIC MOTION

Learning Objectives

After reading this module, you should be able to . . .

15.19 For a spring–block oscillator, calculate the kinetic energy and elastic potential energy at any given time.

15.20 Apply the conservation of energy to relate the total energy of a spring–block oscillator at one instant to the total energy at another instant.

15.21 Sketch a graph of the kinetic energy, potential energy, and total energy of a spring–block oscillator, first as a function of time and then as a function of the oscillator's position.

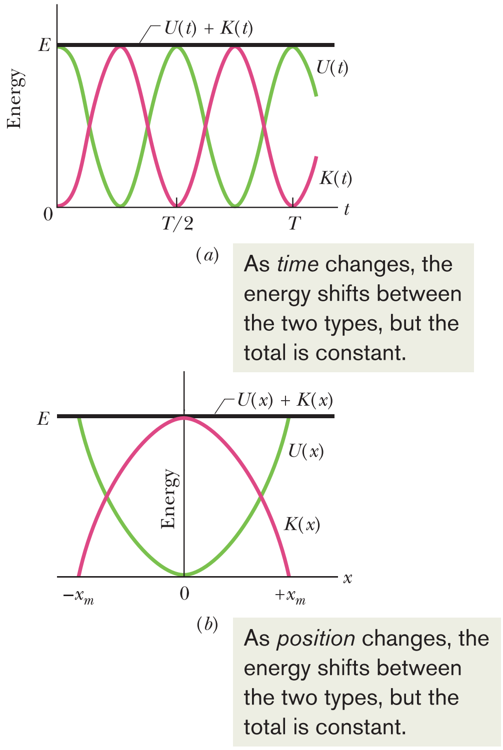
15.22 For a spring–block oscillator, determine the block's position when the total energy is entirely kinetic energy and when it is entirely potential energy.

Key Ideas

- A particle in simple harmonic motion has, at any time, kinetic energy $K = \frac{1}{2}mv^2$ and potential energy $U = \frac{1}{2}kx^2$. If no friction is present, the mechanical energy $E = K + U$ remains constant even though K and U change.

Energy in Simple Harmonic Motion

Let's now examine the linear oscillator of Chapter 8, where we saw that the energy transfers back and forth between kinetic energy and potential energy, while the sum of the two—the mechanical energy E of the oscillator—remains constant. The



As *time* changes, the energy shifts between the two types, but the total is constant.

As *position* changes, the energy shifts between the two types, but the total is constant.

Figure 15-8 (*a*) Potential energy $U(t)$, kinetic energy $K(t)$, and mechanical energy E as functions of time t for a linear harmonic oscillator. Note that all energies are positive and that the potential energy and the kinetic energy peak twice during every period. (*b*) Potential energy $U(x)$, kinetic energy $K(x)$, and mechanical energy E as functions of position x for a linear harmonic oscillator with amplitude x_m. For $x = 0$ the energy is all kinetic, and for $x = \pm x_m$ it is all potential.

potential energy of a linear oscillator like that of Fig. 15-7 is associated entirely with the spring. Its value depends on how much the spring is stretched or compressed—that is, on $x(t)$. We can use Eqs. 8-11 and 15-3 to find

$$U(t) = \tfrac{1}{2}kx^2 = \tfrac{1}{2}kx_m^2 \cos^2(\omega t + \phi). \tag{15-18}$$

Caution: A function written in the form $\cos^2 A$ (as here) means $(\cos A)^2$ and is *not* the same as one written $\cos A^2$, which means $\cos(A^2)$.

The kinetic energy of the system of Fig. 15-7 is associated entirely with the block. Its value depends on how fast the block is moving—that is, on $v(t)$. We can use Eq. 15-6 to find

$$K(t) = \tfrac{1}{2}mv^2 = \tfrac{1}{2}m\omega^2 x_m^2 \sin^2(\omega t + \phi). \tag{15-19}$$

If we use Eq. 15-12 to substitute k/m for ω^2, we can write Eq. 15-19 as

$$K(t) = \tfrac{1}{2}mv^2 = \tfrac{1}{2}kx_m^2 \sin^2(\omega t + \phi). \tag{15-20}$$

The mechanical energy follows from Eqs. 15-18 and 15-20 and is

$$\begin{aligned} E &= U + K \\ &= \tfrac{1}{2}kx_m^2 \cos^2(\omega t + \phi) + \tfrac{1}{2}kx_m^2 \sin^2(\omega t + \phi) \\ &= \tfrac{1}{2}kx_m^2 [\cos^2(\omega t + \phi) + \sin^2(\omega t + \phi)]. \end{aligned}$$

For any angle α,

$$\cos^2 \alpha + \sin^2 \alpha = 1.$$

Thus, the quantity in the square brackets above is unity and we have

$$E = U + K = \tfrac{1}{2}kx_m^2. \tag{15-21}$$

The mechanical energy of a linear oscillator is indeed constant and independent of time. The potential energy and kinetic energy of a linear oscillator are shown as functions of time t in Fig. 15-8*a* and as functions of displacement x in Fig. 15-8*b*. In any oscillating system, an element of springiness is needed to store the potential energy and an element of inertia is needed to store the kinetic energy.

☑ Checkpoint 4

In Fig. 15-7, the block has a kinetic energy of 3 J and the spring has an elastic potential energy of 2 J when the block is at $x = +2.0$ cm. (a) What is the kinetic energy when the block is at $x = 0$? What is the elastic potential energy when the block is at (b) $x = -2.0$ cm and (c) $x = -x_m$?

Sample Problem 15.03 SHM potential energy, kinetic energy, mass dampers

Many tall buildings have *mass dampers*, which are anti-sway devices to prevent them from oscillating in a wind. The device might be a block oscillating at the end of a spring and on a lubricated track. If the building sways, say, eastward, the block also moves eastward but delayed enough so that when it finally moves, the building is then moving back westward. Thus, the motion of the oscillator is out of step with the motion of the building.

Suppose the block has mass $m = 2.72 \times 10^5$ kg and is designed to oscillate at frequency $f = 10.0$ Hz and with amplitude $x_m = 20.0$ cm.

(a) What is the total mechanical energy E of the spring–block system?

KEY IDEA

The mechanical energy E (the sum of the kinetic energy $K = \tfrac{1}{2}mv^2$ of the block and the potential energy $U = \tfrac{1}{2}kx^2$ of the spring) is constant throughout the motion of the oscillator. Thus, we can evaluate E at any point during the motion.

Calculations: Because we are given amplitude x_m of the oscillations, let's evaluate E when the block is at position $x = x_m$, where it has velocity $v = 0$. However, to evaluate U at that point, we first need to find the spring constant k. From Eq. 15-12 ($\omega = \sqrt{k/m}$) and Eq. 15-5 ($\omega = 2\pi f$), we find

$$\begin{aligned} k &= m\omega^2 = m(2\pi f)^2 \\ &= (2.72 \times 10^5\ \text{kg})(2\pi)^2(10.0\ \text{Hz})^2 \\ &= 1.073 \times 10^9\ \text{N/m}. \end{aligned}$$

We can now evaluate E as

$$\begin{aligned} E &= K + U = \tfrac{1}{2}mv^2 + \tfrac{1}{2}kx^2 \\ &= 0 + \tfrac{1}{2}(1.073 \times 10^9\ \text{N/m})(0.20\ \text{m})^2 \\ &= 2.147 \times 10^7\ \text{J} \approx 2.1 \times 10^7\ \text{J}. \qquad \text{(Answer)} \end{aligned}$$

(b) What is the block's speed as it passes through the equilibrium point?

Calculations: We want the speed at $x = 0$, where the potential energy is $U = \frac{1}{2}kx^2 = 0$ and the mechanical energy is entirely kinetic energy. So, we can write

$$E = K + U = \tfrac{1}{2}mv^2 + \tfrac{1}{2}kx^2$$

$$2.147 \times 10^7\ \text{J} = \tfrac{1}{2}(2.72 \times 10^5\ \text{kg})v^2 + 0,$$

or

$$v = 12.6\ \text{m/s}. \qquad \text{(Answer)}$$

Because E is entirely kinetic energy, this is the maximum speed v_m.

15-3 AN ANGULAR SIMPLE HARMONIC OSCILLATOR

Learning Objectives

After reading this module, you should be able to . . .

15.23 Describe the motion of an angular simple harmonic oscillator.

15.24 For an angular simple harmonic oscillator, apply the relationship between the torque τ and the angular displacement θ (from equilibrium).

15.25 For an angular simple harmonic oscillator, apply the relationship between the period T (or frequency f), the rotational inertia I, and the torsion constant κ.

15.26 For an angular simple harmonic oscillator at any instant, apply the relationship between the angular acceleration α, the angular frequency ω, and the angular displacement θ.

Key Idea

- A torsion pendulum consists of an object suspended on a wire. When the wire is twisted and then released, the object oscillates in angular simple harmonic motion with a period given by

$$T = 2\pi\sqrt{\frac{I}{\kappa}},$$

where I is the rotational inertia of the object about the axis of rotation and κ is the torsion constant of the wire.

An Angular Simple Harmonic Oscillator

Figure 15-9 shows an angular version of a simple harmonic oscillator; the element of springiness or elasticity is associated with the twisting of a suspension wire rather than the extension and compression of a spring as we previously had. The device is called a **torsion pendulum,** with *torsion* referring to the twisting.

If we rotate the disk in Fig. 15-9 by some angular displacement θ from its rest position (where the reference line is at $\theta = 0$) and release it, it will oscillate about that position in **angular simple harmonic motion.** Rotating the disk through an angle θ in either direction introduces a restoring torque given by

$$\tau = -\kappa\theta. \qquad (15\text{-}22)$$

Here κ (Greek *kappa*) is a constant, called the **torsion constant,** that depends on the length, diameter, and material of the suspension wire.

Comparison of Eq. 15-22 with Eq. 15-10 leads us to suspect that Eq. 15-22 is the angular form of Hooke's law, and that we can transform Eq. 15-13, which gives the period of linear SHM, into an equation for the period of angular SHM: We replace the spring constant k in Eq. 15-13 with its equivalent, the constant

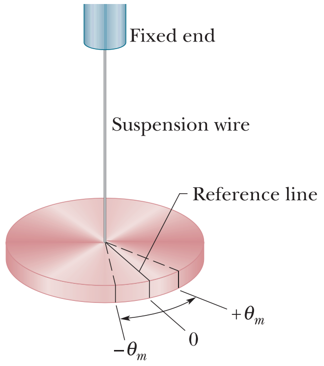


Figure 15-9 A torsion pendulum is an angular version of a linear simple harmonic oscillator. The disk oscillates in a horizontal plane; the reference line oscillates with angular amplitude θ_m. The twist in the suspension wire stores potential energy as a spring does and provides the restoring torque.