

Coulomb Forces and Electric Field Intensity

Coulomb Law

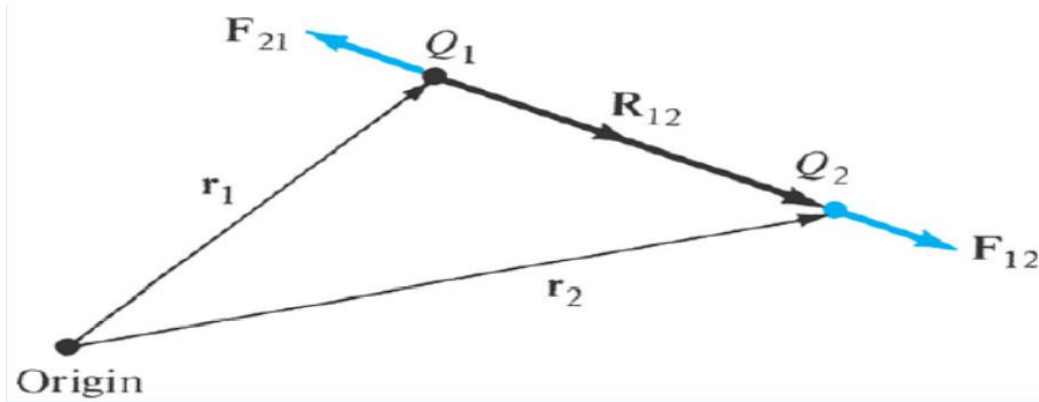
There is a force between two charges which is directly proportional to the charge magnitude and inversely proportional to the square of the separation distance.

$$F = \frac{KQ_1Q_2}{R^2} = \frac{Q_1Q_2}{4\pi\epsilon_0R^2}$$

The force is in newtons (N), the distance is in meters (m), and the (derived) unit of charge is the coulomb (C). ϵ_0 is the permittivity of free space farads per meter (F/m),

$$\epsilon_0 = 8.85 \times 10^{-12} \cong \frac{10^{-9}}{36\pi} \text{ F/m}$$

$$k(\text{constant}) \rightarrow K = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \cong 9 \times 10^9 \text{ m/F}$$



→ The force F_{12} on Q_2 due to Q_1 is:

$$\vec{F}_{12} = \frac{Q_1Q_2}{4\pi\epsilon_0R^2} \mathbf{a}_{R_{12}} = \frac{Q_1Q_2}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{(\mathbf{r}_2 - \mathbf{r}_1)}{|\mathbf{r}_2 - \mathbf{r}_1|^3}$$

$$\text{where } \mathbf{a}_{R_{12}} = \frac{\vec{R}_{12}}{R} = \frac{\mathbf{r}_2 - \mathbf{r}_1}{R}, \quad R = |\vec{R}_{12}|$$

→ The force F_{12} on Q_2 due to Q_1 is:

$$\vec{F}_{21} = |F_{12}| \mathbf{a}_{R_{21}} = |F_{12}| (-\mathbf{a}_{R_{12}})$$

$$\text{or } \vec{F}_{21} = -\vec{F}_{12}$$

$$a_{R_{12}} = -a_{R_{21}}$$

Electric Field Intensity (E):

The electric field intensity (or electric field strength) E is the force per unit charge when placed in an electric field.

$$E = \frac{F}{Q_t}$$

$$F = \frac{Q Q_t (r - r')}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |r - r'|^3}$$

(Source) Q

(test charge) Q_t

Origin

\mathbf{r}'

$\mathbf{R} = \mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'$

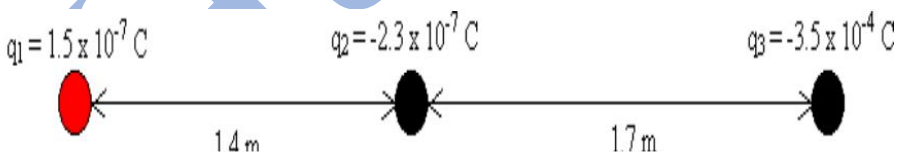
\mathbf{r}

\mathbf{F}

$$\rightarrow E = \frac{F}{Q_t} = \frac{Q (r - r')}{4\pi\epsilon_0 |r - r'|^3} = \frac{Q}{4\pi\epsilon_0 R^2} \mathbf{a}_R \text{ (Newton/Coulomb) or (V/m)}$$

E: Electric field intensity at point r due to a point charge (Q)

Example 1: The following three charges are arranged as shown below. Determine the net force acting on the charge on the far right (q_3):



$$F_e = \frac{k q_1 q_3}{r^2} = \frac{8.99 \times 10^9 (1.5 \times 10^{-7})(3.5 \times 10^{-4})}{3.1^2} = 0.049112903 \text{ N}$$

$$F_e = \frac{k q_2 q_3}{r^2} = \frac{8.99 \times 10^9 (2.3 \times 10^{-7})(3.5 \times 10^{-4})}{1.7^2} = 0.250413495 \text{ N}$$

$$F_{\text{NET}} = -0.049112903 \text{ N} + 0.250413495 \text{ N} = 0.201300592 = 0.20 \text{ N}$$

Example 2: A point charge $Q_1 = 2 \text{ mC}$ is located at $p_1(-3, 7, -4)$ while $Q_2 = 5 \text{ mC}$ at $p_2(2, 4, -1)$. Find F_{12} and F_{21} .

Sol: $\vec{R}_{21} = [2 - (-3)]a_x + [4 - 7]a_y + [-1 - (-4)]a_z$
 $= 5a_x - 3a_y + 3a_z$

$$|R_{12}| = \sqrt{5^2 + (-3)^2 + 3^2} = \sqrt{43}$$

$$R_{12}^2 = 43$$

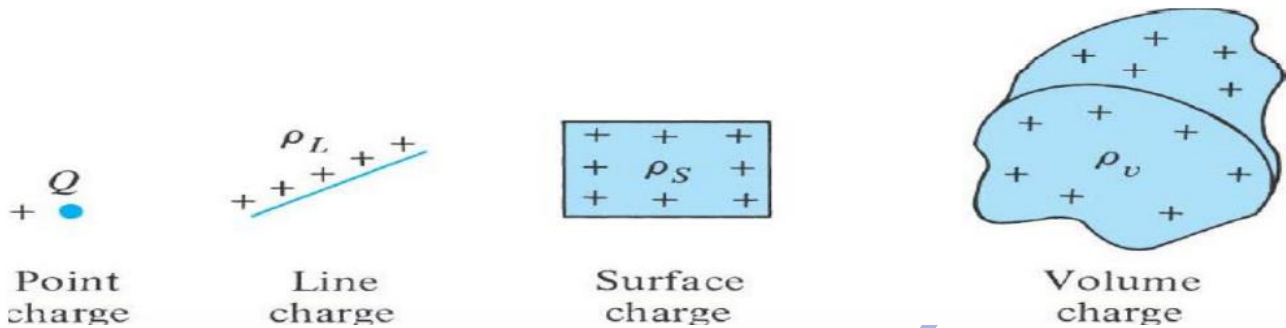
$$aR_{12} = \frac{5a_x - 3a_y + 3a_z}{\sqrt{43}}$$

$$F_{12} = \frac{Q_1 Q_2}{4\pi\epsilon_0 R_{12}^2} aR_{12}$$
$$= \frac{2 \times 10^{-3} \times 5 \times 10^{-3}}{4\pi \times \frac{10^{-9}}{36\pi} \times 43} \times \frac{5a_x - 3a_y + 3a_z}{\sqrt{43}}$$
$$= 1594.7a_x - 957.2a_y + 957.2a_z$$

$$F_{21} = -F_{12}$$
$$= -1594.7a_x + 957.2a_y - 957.2a_z$$

HW: Point charges 1 mC and -2 mC are located at $(3, 2, -1)$ and $(-1, -1, 4)$, respectively. Calculate the electric force on a 10 nC charge located at $(0, 3, 1)$ and the electric field intensity at that point.

CHARGE DISTRIBUTIONS:



To find the charge element dQ :

(Line Charge)

$$dQ = \rho_L dl \rightarrow Q = \int \rho_L dl$$

$$dQ = \rho_S dS \rightarrow Q = \int_S \rho_S dS \quad \text{(Surface Charge)}$$

$$dQ = \rho_V dV \rightarrow Q = \int_V \rho_V dV \quad \text{(Volume Charge)}$$

Line Charge:

If charge is distributed over a (curved) line, each differential charge dQ along the line produces a differential electric field

$$dE = \frac{dQ}{4\pi\epsilon_0 R^2} a_R$$

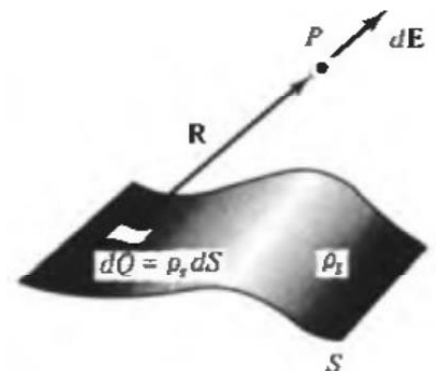
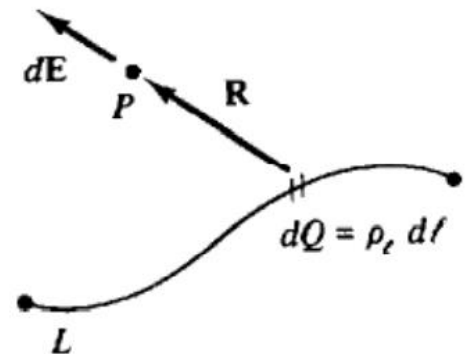
At p in the figure above. And if line charge density ρ_L (in C/m), and no other charge is in the region, then the total electric field at p is:

$$E = \int_L \frac{\rho_L dl}{4\pi\epsilon_0 R^2} a_R$$

Surface (sheet) Charge:

Charge may also be distributed over a surface or a sheet. Then each differential charge dQ on the sheet results in a differential field

$$dE = \frac{dQ}{4\pi\epsilon_0 R^2} a_R$$



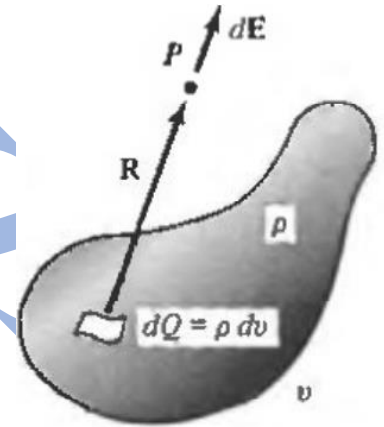
At p in the figure above. And if **surface charge density** ρ_s (in C/m²), and no other charge is in the region, then the total electric field at p is:

$$E = \int_S \frac{\rho_s dS}{4\pi\epsilon_0 R^2} a_R$$

Volume charge:

When charge is distributed throughout a specified volume, each charge element contributes to the electric field at an external point. With reference to volume v in figure shown, each differential charge dQ produces a differential electric field:

$$dE = \frac{dQ}{4\pi\epsilon_0 R^2} a_R$$



At the observation point P. Assuming that the only charge in the region is contained within the volume, the total electric field at P is obtained by:

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