

**AQA, Edexcel, OCR**

**A Level**

# A Level Physics

**MECHANICS: Newton's Laws  
(Answers)**

Name:



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Total Marks: /30

1. Newton's Laws.

Total for Question 1: 7

- (a) State Newton's first law.

[1]

**Solution:** An object will remain at rest or continue to move with constant velocity unless acted upon by an imbalanced external force (WTTE).

- (b) State Newton's second law, both in words and mathematically.

[2]

**Solution:** The net force acting on an object is directly proportional to the rate of change of its momentum and is in the same direction:  $F \propto \frac{\Delta p}{\Delta t}$

- (c) State Newton's third law.

[1]

**Solution:** When two bodies interact, they exert equal and opposite forces on each other (WTTE).

- (d) Newton's second law is often written as  $F = ma$ . In what circumstances is this special case valid? Show how it can be obtained from your answer to Part b.

[3]

**Solution:** Valid when mass is constant:  
$$F = \frac{\Delta p}{\Delta t} = \frac{m(v-u)}{t} = ma$$

2. Peter, a 65 kg swimmer, is practising his tumble-turns. Upon completion of the turn, he pushes against the wall with his legs and is set in motion for the next length. For this question, ignore the effects of water resistance.

Total for Question 2: 7

- (a) Identify a 'third law pair' in this scenario (that is, a pair of forces of equal magnitude but opposing direction acting between two bodies). [1]

**Solution:** (a) Peter pushing against the wall with a force; (b) the wall will exert a force on Peter too, of the same magnitude.

- (b) The motion of the wall is imperceptible. Explain, in the context of Newton's second law, why this is so. [2]

**Solution:** The wall is 'fixed' to Earth. For a given mass, it is clear from Newton's second law that heavy things accelerate only a little whilst light things accelerate a lot (inverse proportionality). To make the wall accelerate perceptibly we would therefore require a huge force, as we must accelerate the Earth, to which the wall is fixed.

- (c) To accelerate at  $5 \text{ ms}^{-2}$ , with what force must Peter push off the wall? [1]

**Solution:** 325 N

- (d) Peter's speed increases throughout the entirety of his 5 m underwater glide, during which he makes no further efforts. Given the acceleration above, if the glide takes 1 s, at what speed does Peter emerge at the surface? [2]

**Solution:**  $5 \text{ ms}^{-1}$

- (e) The mass of Earth is approximately  $5.97 \times 10^{24} \text{ kg}$ . What acceleration is induced by Peter's turn? [1]

**Solution:**  $5.44 \times 10^{-23} \text{ ms}^{-2}$



3. Qamar is stood still on a set of weighing scales. They read 490 N.

Total for Question 3: 4

(a) She is handed a ball with a mass of 2 kg. What do the scales now read?

[1]

**Solution:** 510 N

(b) Draw a schematic graph of how the scales' reading changes with time when Qamar forcefully throws the ball downwards and explain using Newton's laws why the changes occur.

[3]

**Solution:** Initially the weight will decrease to below 490 N. It will then rise again and settle at its initial level of 490 N.



**MEGA LECTURE**

4. A canon is fired vertically upwards. At its highest point of 150 m, the 3 kg canon-ball explodes into six pieces of equal mass. These are ejected along three orthogonal axes, one of which is oriented vertically. Along each axis two pieces travel in opposite directions. All fragments initially have a speed of  $20 \text{ ms}^{-1}$ . Ignore the effects of air resistance.

Total for Question 4: 12

- (a) The symmetry of this explosion is not mere coincidence. Explain, using your knowledge of Newton's laws, why it is necessarily symmetric. [3]

**Solution:** A statement of the conservation of momentum can be derived from Newton's third law by considering the impulse experienced by a pair of objects. Thus, along any axis, the net momentum must be zero since the canon-ball was at rest when it exploded.

- (b) Calculate both the vertical component of the velocity and the speed of each piece as it makes landfall. For this you will need to use a SUVAT equation. [4]

**Solution:** (a) The four pieces ejected in the horizontal plane: vertical velocity =  $54.2 \text{ ms}^{-1}$ ; speed =  $57.8 \text{ ms}^{-1}$   
(b) The two pieces ejected in the vertical direction: vertical velocity = speed =  $57.8 \text{ ms}^{-1}$ .

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- (c) With what kinetic energy was the canon-ball fired? [2]

**Solution:** 4.41 kJ

- (d) The canon weighs 981 N. When it fires, will it recoil with a smaller or larger acceleration than that of the canon-ball? By what factor will it be different? Make clear any applications of Newton's laws in this calculation. [3]

**Solution:** Smaller by a factor of  $\frac{100}{3}$ .