



Understanding Physics

Michael Mansfield, Colm O'Sullivan

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Understanding Physics – Second edition is a comprehensive, yet compact, introductory physics textbook aimed at physics undergraduates and also at engineers and other scientists taking a general physics course. Written with today's students in mind, this text covers the core material required by an introductory course in a clear and refreshing way. A second colour is used throughout to enhance learning and understanding. Each topic is introduced from first principles so that the text is suitable for students without a prior background in physics. At the same time the book is designed to enable students to proceed easily to subsequent courses in physics and may be used to support such courses.

Mathematical methods (in particular, calculus and vector analysis) are introduced within the text as the need arises and are presented in the context of the physical problems which they are used to analyse. Particular aims of the book are to demonstrate to students that the easiest, most concise and least ambiguous way to express and describe phenomena in physics is by using the language of mathematics and that, at this level, the total amount of mathematics required is neither large nor particularly demanding.

'Modern physics' topics (relativity and quantum mechanics) are introduced at an earlier stage than is usually found in introductory textbooks and are integrated with the more 'classical' material from which they have evolved. This book encourages students to develop an intuition for relativistic and quantum concepts at as early a stage as is practicable.

The text takes a reflective approach towards the scientific method at all stages and, in keeping with the title of the text, emphasis is placed on understanding of, and insight into, the material presented.

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