5 · Forces

AQA · GCSE · Physics · Vocabulary in context

Word	Example
scalar /'skeɪlə/	Mass is a **scalar** because it has no direction.
vector /'vektə/	Velocity is a **vector** because it has a direction.
contact /'kɒntækt/	Friction is a **contact** force.
non-contact /nɒn 'kɒntækt/	Gravity is a **non-contact** force.
weight /weɪt/	Your **weight** is the pull of the Earth on you.
centre of mass /'sentə ɒv mæs/	The **centre of mass** of a ruler is in its middle.
resultant force /rɪ'zʌltənt fɔːs/	If the **resultant force** is zero, the speed does not change.
free-body diagram /friː 'bɒdi 'daɪəgræm/	A **free-body diagram** shows all the forces acting on one object.
Elastic /ɪ'læstɪk/	**Elastic** objects go back to their shape when the force is removed.
inelastic /ɪnɪ'læstɪk/	Clay is **inelastic**: it stays bent.
moment /'məʊmənt/	A long spanner gives a larger **moment**.
upthrust /'ʌpθrʌst/	**Upthrust** from the water holds up a boat.
Distance /'dɪstəns/	**Distance** is how far you travel.
Displacement /dɪ'spleɪsmənt/	**Displacement** is distance in a stated direction.

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Speed /spiːd/	**Speed** is the size of the velocity, without the sign.
Velocity /vəˈlɒsɪti/	**Velocity** is speed in a stated direction.
Acceleration /əkˌseləˈreɪʃn/	**Acceleration** is how fast velocity changes.
drag /dræg/	Air resistance is a kind of **drag**.
terminal velocity /ˈtɜːmɪnl vəˈlɒsɪti/	At **terminal velocity**, the falling object stops speeding up.
Inertia /ɪˈnɜːʃə/	**Inertia** is resistance to a change in motion.
momentum /məʊˈmentəm/	A heavy truck has a lot of **momentum**.

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