

**EVALUATING  
ACADEMIC READINESS  
FOR APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING**  
Revised for  
**ACCESS TO APPRENTICESHIP**

**SCIENCE SKILLS  
PROPERTIES AND STATES OF MATTER**

**AN ACADEMIC SKILLS MANUAL  
for**

**The Small Motors Service Trades**

This trade group includes the following trades:  
Marine & Small Powered Equipment Mechanics  
Motorcycle Mechanics, and  
Small Engine Mechanics

*Workplace Support Services Branch  
Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities*

*Revised 2011*

In preparing these Academic Skills Manuals we have used passages, diagrams and questions similar to those an apprentice might find in a text, guide or trade manual.

**This trade related material is not intended to instruct you in your trade. It is used only to demonstrate how understanding an academic skill will help you find and use the information you need.**

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## SCIENCE SKILLS

# PROPERTIES AND STATES OF MATTER

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*An academic skill required for the study of the  
Small Motor Service Trades*

### INTRODUCTION

In the small motor trades, you work with many different kinds of materials. These materials can change from one chemical form to another. When gasoline, a hydrocarbon, ignites in a vehicle engine, it reacts with oxygen to change to carbon dioxide and water (along with small amounts of other chemicals). The materials you use can also undergo physical changes, as when gasoline changes from a liquid to a gas before it ignites.

Materials are recognized by their characteristics or properties. You won't have to know the chemical composition of the materials you use, but you should know the effects of their chemical and physical properties. For example, you don't want to choose a metal that will chemically react with water and corrode if it is being used in a place that is exposed to moisture.

All of the materials you use exist in one of the three possible states: a solid, liquid or gas.

#### **Examples:**

A car frame is a solid made from steel.

Antifreeze is a liquid.

The exhaust coming out of the cylinder consists of several gases.

Some materials must be handled carefully because they can pose a health risk. A cleaning solvent might say, "Volatile solvent. Use only in well-ventilated area." These types of health warning are better understood and followed if you know how these toxic materials become a part of the air that you breathe.

This skills manual describes the properties of solids, liquids and gases, including changes of state. The following topics are included:

- ◆ Chemical properties of matter
- ◆ Physical properties of matter, including
  - physical states
  - changes of state
- ◆ General properties of matter
- ◆ Properties of solids
- ◆ Properties of liquids
- ◆ Properties of gases

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## CHEMICAL PROPERTIES OF MATTER

An **atom** is the smallest building block of matter.

- Atoms are composed of subatomic particles called **protons**, **neutrons** and **electrons**.
- The number of protons in an atom determines what element that atom forms.

An **element** is a substance made up of only one type of atom. An element cannot be broken down any further into other substances.

- Only oxygen atoms form the element oxygen.
- Other examples of elements include: hydrogen, carbon, iron, lead and tin.
- Atoms of an element usually join or bond together with other atoms of the same or different elements to form **molecules**.
- Metals are elements such as iron and copper whose atoms bond together to form a regular crystal structure.
  - They are usually solids at the temperatures found on the earth's surface.
  - Metals can bond chemically with other elements to form compounds.
  - They can also mix physically with other metals to form alloys.

A **molecule** is formed when atoms are joined together by a **molecular bond**. There are forces of attraction between molecules that tend to hold them close together. Molecules must be near each other to feel the effects of this **cohesion**.

- An oxygen molecule is formed when two oxygen atoms bond.
- A carbon monoxide molecule is formed when one oxygen atom and one carbon atom bond.
- A molecule of water consists of one oxygen atom and two hydrogen atoms.
- A molecule of silica consists of two oxygen atoms and one silicon atom

### Chemical changes

A **chemical change** takes place when the atoms making up a substance are rearranged to form a new substance with a different molecular structure and with completely new properties. The molecular makeup of a substance remains unchanged unless there is a chemical reaction.

- Oxygen is a very reactive element that will combine with many other elements. When oxygen combines with another element, the process is called oxidation and the resulting substance is called an oxide.
  - When rusting occurs, the oxygen ( $O_2$ ) in moist air combines with iron (Fe).
  - Four single atoms of iron ( $4Fe$ ) combine with the three oxygen molecules ( $3O_2$ ), resulting in two molecule of iron oxide.
  - Iron oxide is written in its chemical format as  $2Fe_2O_3$ .
  - The chemical formula for rusting of iron is  $4Fe + 3O_2 = 2Fe_2O_3$ .
- Burning in a wood fire is a rapid chemical change in which the carbon molecules in wood bond with oxygen in the air, forming two new molecules each a combination of carbon and oxygen - carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide.

- Gasoline, a liquid substance at room temperature, consists of carbon, hydrogen and other compounds.
  - It will burn readily once it changes to a vapour or a gas.
  - If it is broken into small particles and ignited, it will release a large amount of heat energy that can be used to drive an engine as it undergoes combustion.
  - As the gasoline burns, it changes chemically to carbon dioxide, water and other substances.

A **compound** is a substance that is formed when similar molecules bond together. The molecules are made of two or more different kinds of atoms. The ratio of atoms of one element to another in a compound is always the same for that compound. When atoms come together to make the molecules of a compound, we say that a chemical change takes place.

There are about ten million compounds we know about so far.

- Pure water is a compound. Every molecule of water formed by the bonding of two hydrogen atoms with one oxygen atom.
- Molecules of rust all contain four atoms of iron and 6 oxygen atoms.

Many chemical changes involve another substance called a **catalyst**. Catalysts speed up the rate of a chemical reaction and help organize the molecules involved.

- In a catalytic converter catalyst speed up the rate at which molecules that result from the combustion of gasoline are broken down to less harmful molecules.

### Physical change

A **physical change** can take place in substances without changing their underlying molecular structures.

- Liquid oxygen has the same molecular structure as oxygen gas; each molecule is formed by the bonding of two oxygen atoms. They look different but chemically they are the same.
- When molten steel hardens into a solid, it changes its physical state but not its chemical makeup. It is still made of iron, carbon and small additions of metals such as chromium.
- Salt can be dissolved in water but it does not form molecular bond with water molecules.

A **mixture** occurs when two or more substances are blended but do not combine chemically. There is no change in the molecular structure of any of the substances in a mixture. Each substance in the mixture keeps its original structure and properties. Lemonade is a mixture of water, sugar and lemon juice.

- Drinking water is a mixture of pure water (H<sub>2</sub>O) and salts and minerals that are dissolved in it.
- Wet concrete is a mixture of water, Portland cement and aggregates (cleaned sand and/or gravels). It remains a mixture until it begins to cure at which point it undergoes a chemical change. Cured concrete is a compound. .
- Latex paint is a mixture of water, particles of a polymer, or plastic, (which eventually forms the hard paint coat when the paint dries) and. pigments to give the paint color its solid appearance when it has dried.

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## **PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF MATTER**

Physical properties describe conditions such as whether a substance exists as a solid, liquid or gas. They also include properties such as a substance's mass, its volume, its weight and its electrical conductivity. These characteristics determine how a substance will react in different situations.

### **Physical states**

Substances exist in one of three different physical states. These states are called **solid, liquid and gas**. All molecules have a certain amount of vibration or motion. The physical state of a substance depends on the amount of motion or energy it has at a given temperature.

### **Solids**

A **solid** has a definite shape and volume. Molecules in a solid vibrate but do not move from place to place. They are tightly packed, usually in a regular pattern. Most objects you work with are solids.

- Iron usually exists as a solid. It becomes liquid only if a large amount of heat is added to cause it to melt. Once molten steel cools, it becomes solid again.

### **Liquids**

A **liquid** has a definite size or volume but not a definite shape. The molecules in a liquid vibrate, move about, and slide past each other. They are close together with no regular arrangement. A liquid takes the shape of the container in which it is held and presses on the container in the same amount in all directions.

- Many liquids, such as cleaning agents, are solutions with water or a mild acid used as the solvent.

### **Gases**

A **gas** has no definite volume or shape. The molecules in a gas vibrate and move freely at high speeds. They are well separated with no regular arrangement.

- Air, the most common gas found in a building, is actually a mixture of different gases such as oxygen gas and carbon dioxide gas.

### **Heat and physical state**

Heat is the biggest controller of the physical state of substances. Since the range of temperatures on the surface of the earth is quite limited, most of the objects that we are familiar with exist in one state. Usually, metals are solid, water is a liquid and pure oxygen is a gas.

- Water is an important exception. It can exist in any of the three physical states, that is, as a solid, a liquid or a gas, depending on the temperature. Water is a liquid at temperatures from 0 to 100 degrees Celsius. Above 100 °C, it changes into a gas. Below 0 °C, it changes into a solid.
- Gasoline is another substance that can change state. It is liquid at room temperature but it will change to a vapour or gas if the temperature is raised a small amount.

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- Iron and other metals exist as solids. They become liquid only if a large amount of heat is added. After molten iron is mixed with carbon, it cools and becomes solid again.
  - Gases such as oxygen and nitrogen can be liquefied by significant cooling.
  - Propane is a substance that is mainly liquid at room temperature. But, propane in a torch will ignite and steadily change to a gas when the heat of a match starts it burning.

The amount of heat in a substance determines its physical state. *At the molecular level, the amount of **heat** is similar to the amount of **motion** in the molecules making up a substance.*

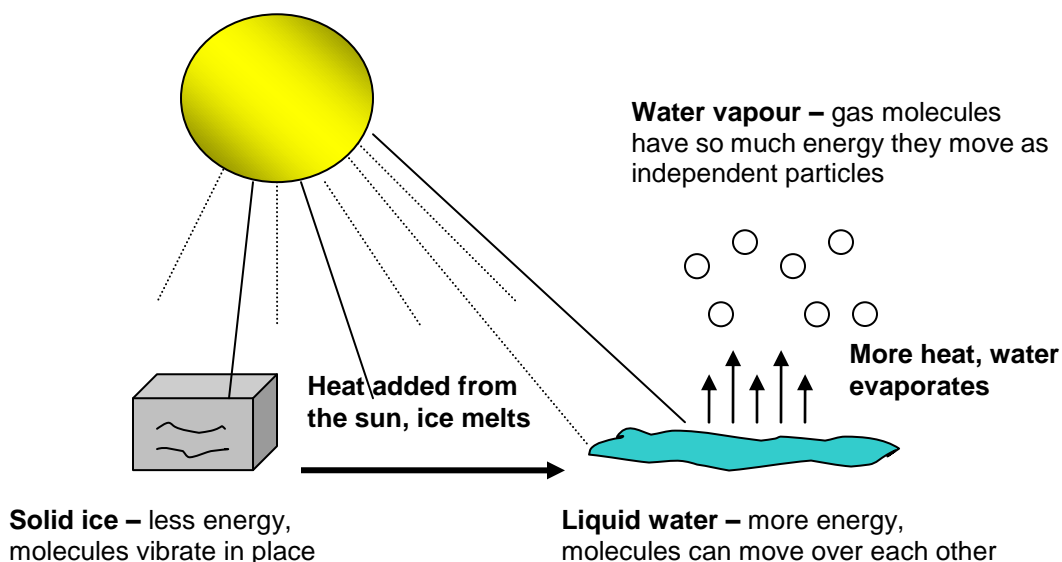
### **Kinetic energy**

*Another name for the motion of an object is its **kinetic energy**.* Every substance has a different amount of kinetic energy for a given temperature. This energy depends on the types and the arrangement of the molecules that make up the substance.

- The amount of energy needed to melt the solid crystal structure of iron is much greater than the energy needed to melt the solid structure of ice, which has a different molecular arrangement.
- Solid metals don't change state at the normal temperature changes that occur on the earth but they react by expanding when the temperature rises and contracting when it falls.
  - Bimetallic strips used in thermostats are based on the different expansion and contraction rates of metals such as steel and copper.

*Kinetic energy tends to moves molecules apart.* That is why solids expand when the temperature rises. There are also natural forces of attraction between molecules that tend to hold them close together. Molecules must be near each other to feel the effects of these forces.

- Gas molecules have too much kinetic energy to be held together by these forces. They exist as independent particles that move around rapidly.
- The molecules of solid and liquid substances have less kinetic energy or motion in their molecules.
- The amount of kinetic energy in solids and liquids is too weak to allow them to escape the force of attraction between their individual molecules. They are held together by these forces of attraction. See Figure 1.



**FIGURE 1: The Effect of Heat on Water's Physical State**

In other words, there are two different forces working within a substance and these forces are in opposition.

- ◆ The force of attraction causes molecules to stay close together;
- ◆ The force of motion causes molecules to move apart.
- ◆ ***A substance's physical state depends on the relative strength of these two forces***

If the molecules of a substance have a low amount of heat or kinetic energy, the forces that work to hold it together are strong enough to keep its molecules in a fixed position. It exists as a solid.

If a substance gains kinetic energy, its molecules partially escape the bonding forces and begin to move more rapidly. The substance exists as a liquid. Liquid molecules have more energy, enabling them to flow over each other.

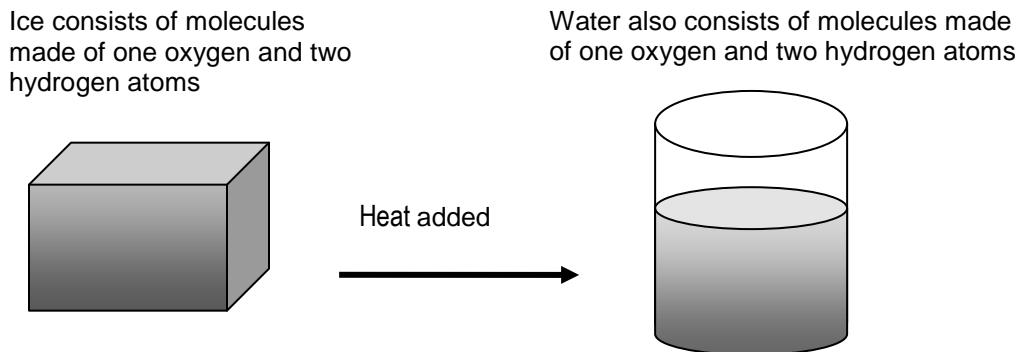
If the molecules of a substance have enough kinetic energy to completely overcome the forces that hold it together as a substance, it will exist as a gas. The molecules forming the gas exist as independent particles that move rapidly in random directions. Gas molecules expand to completely fill the area they are contained in.

If you leave a can containing a volatile substance such as gasoline open in a room, the smell of the liquid quickly fills the room. The gasoline molecules change from a liquid to a gas to become evenly mixed with the other air molecules in the room.

The solvents used in products such as rapidly drying glues can be toxic and they evaporate quickly into the air where you are working. These materials should only be used where there is plenty of ventilation to prevent you from breathing in large amounts. Volatile materials can dry out when their liquid components evaporate, so they should be tightly closed when they are stored.

## Changes of state

When a compound changes from one state to another, it may look and behave differently, but its chemical makeup remains the same. There is no change in the molecules that form the substance.



**FIGURE 2: Chemical Make-Up Stays the Same When Physical State Changes**

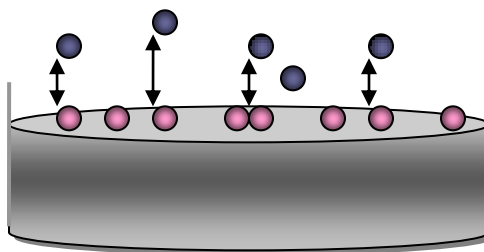
As in Figure 2, when solid ice melts to liquid water, each molecule of water, which consists of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom, remains the same. Only the physical state changes. Ice, liquid water and water vapour have quite different appearances and behave differently, but each water molecule has the same chemical structure – two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen – regardless of the physical state.

The molecules which make up a substance, whether it is a solid, liquid or gas, have an average kinetic energy that depends on the temperature of the substance. Some individual molecules, however, possess a higher or lower amount of energy. For this reason, individual molecules, especially of substances like gasoline or water, can and do change state at any time.

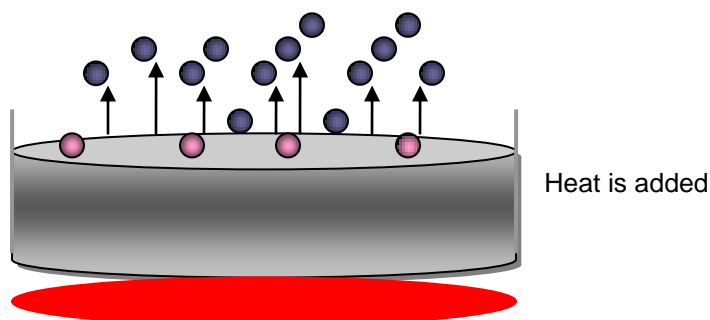
Consider a half empty, closed container of gasoline. When an individual molecule of liquid gasoline gains enough energy, it overcomes the bonding forces that hold it as a liquid and it vaporizes into a gas molecule.

At the same time, any of the escaped vapour molecules floating above the liquid might lose energy so that they condense back into the liquid. If the temperature remains constant, there are usually the same number of molecules changing into a higher state as there are changing into a lower state. The substance remains in *equilibrium* until the temperature changes. See Figure 3.

Temperature is constant and, system is at equilibrium. Molecules are changing to a gas from a liquid in same numbers as are changing to a liquid from a gas.



Temperature is raised; more liquid molecules change to gas molecules. Water evaporates.



**FIGURE 3: Effects of Heat on a System at Equilibrium**

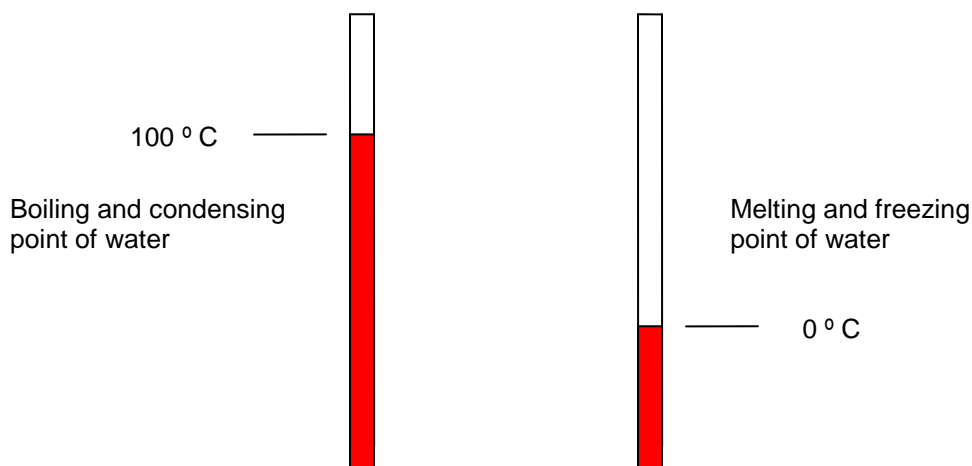
If the system is not enclosed, the molecules that change to a gas escape into the air and move away from the surface of the container. This continues until all the liquid molecules have evaporated or changed into gas molecules.

**Evaporation** is the process where liquid molecules slowly change into gas molecules. When a substance such as caulking is exposed to the air, the water molecules evaporate and the caulking hardens. When the temperature of a liquid is raised because outside heat is applied to it, liquid molecules start changing more rapidly to vapour molecules.

At a certain temperature, all the liquid molecules change quickly into gas molecules. This is called the **boiling or vapourization point**. Each different substance has its own boiling point.

When gas molecules are cooled rapidly, they change back into liquid molecules at a certain temperature called the **condensation point**. For an individual substance, this is the same temperature as its boiling point.

When a solid changes to a liquid, we say it melts. The temperature at which a solid melts rapidly into a liquid is called the **melting point**. Similarly, when a liquid changes to a solid, we say it freezes. The temperature at which this occurs rapidly is called the **freezing point**. Each substance has an individual freezing point that is the same temperature as its melting point.



**FIGURE 4: Water Boils and Condenses at 100 °C. It Melts and Freezes at 0 °C**

The freezing point of a substance can change if different chemicals are added to it. For example, water freezes at 0°C but if antifreeze is added to it, its freezing point becomes much lower. Adding antifreeze to the radiator of a vehicle in winter keeps the liquid coolants from freezing.

#### **In Brief:**

- ◆ Solids change to liquids at the *melting point*.
- ◆ Liquids change to solids at the *freezing point*.
- ◆ Liquids change to gases at the *boiling point*.
- ◆ Gases change to liquids at the *condensation point*.
- ◆ In most substances, the melting and the freezing point occur at the same temperature.
- ◆ In most substances, the boiling and the condensation point occur at the same temperature.

Molecules in solid substances can change directly into a gas without changing into a liquid first. For example, ice on a pane of glass can change directly into water vapour. When molecules change from a solid directly to a gas, the change is called *sublimation*.

Controlling moisture is important when working with metals that can rust. Iron alloys usually don't rust when water or oxygen are present. But when both are present, the metal will form oxides and corrode.

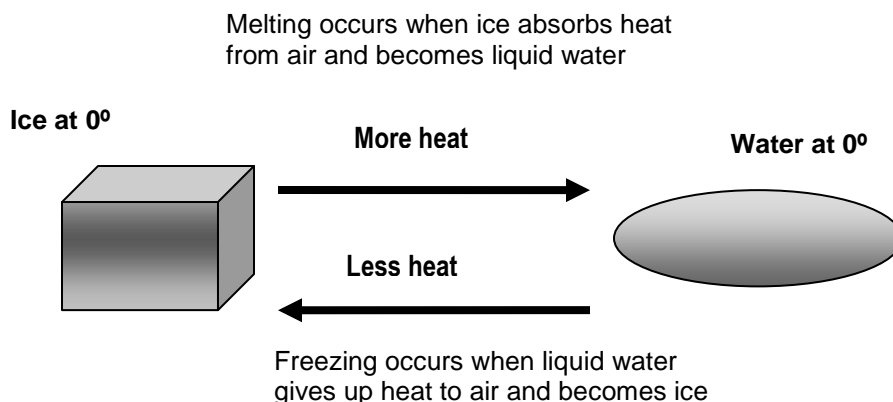
#### **Direction of change of state**

*Heat always flows "downhill" from hotter molecules to cooler molecules.* In an enclosed area, heat will move from warmer places or objects to cooler areas until they are all the same temperature. An equilibrium is established where all objects have the same amount of heat.

- If a piece of iron is heated until it melts and then the source of heat is removed, the very hot molten iron gives up heat to the atmosphere until it reaches the same temperature as

its surroundings. As the molten iron cools, it reaches a point at which it rapidly solidifies into a solid object. The now solid iron eventually reaches the same temperature as its environment.

An object will change from a less active to a more active state, from a solid to a liquid or a liquid to a gas, if heat from an outside source, such as the sun or burning fuel, is applied to the object.



**FIGURE 5: Influence of Heat on Direction of Changes of State**

Freezing and melting occur at the same temperature but the direction of the change of state depends on whether heat is given up or if it is absorbed.

- Ice melts into water at 0°C and water freezes into ice at the same temperature.
- If the surrounding air is colder than the water at 0°C, the water will give up heat to the colder air and freeze into ice.
- If the surrounding air is warmer than the water at 0°C, the water will absorb heat from the air and melt to a liquid.

This happens because heat always flows from hotter objects to cooler objects until an equilibrium is reached in which all nearby objects are at the same temperature.

***The condensation point is the same as the boiling point, but the changes are in opposite directions.*** The direction of the change depends on whether heat is given up or absorbed. Water boils at 100°C and water vapour condenses at the same temperature.

- If the surrounding air is colder than water vapour at 100° C, the water vapour loses heat to the air and condenses into a liquid.
- If the surrounding air is warmer than liquid water at 100°C, the water will absorb heat from the air and change to water vapour.

A liquid that is boiling does not increase in temperature if more heat is added. Instead the liquid molecules vaporize more quickly. They use the added heat to gain enough kinetic energy to overcome the bonding forces that keep them in liquid form and they move off as independent gas molecules.

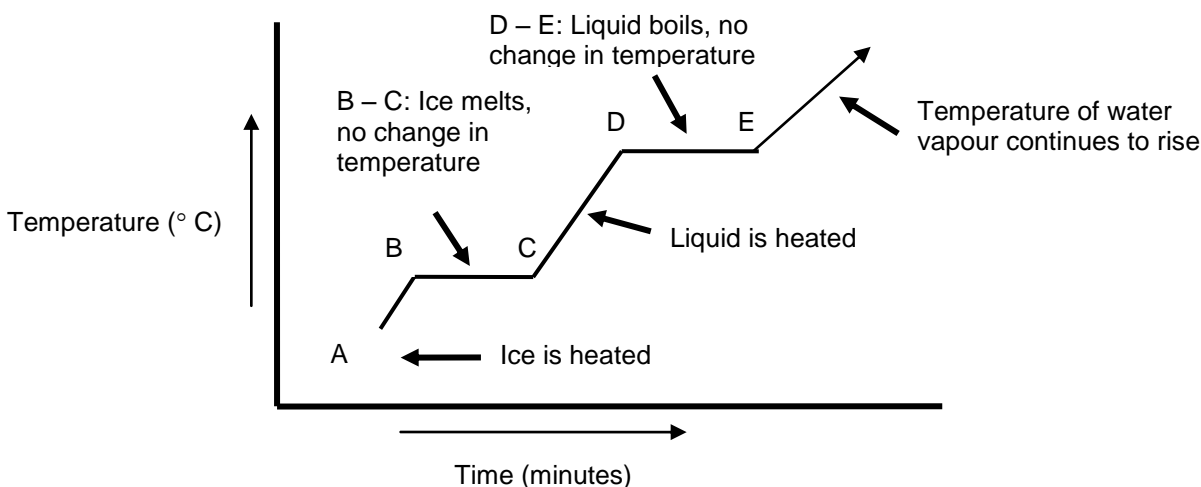
- When water is heated to 100°C, the liquid molecules on the surface have enough energy to vaporize rapidly into water vapour molecules.

- Only when all of the water has been vaporized does the temperature of any substances mixed in the water begin to rise. This is why wet wood is more difficult to burn than dry.

As water vapour molecules rise into the cooler atmosphere, the vapour cools and condenses into clouds of liquid water droplets. When the droplets become too heavy, they fall to earth as rain.

If warm air in a room comes in contact with a colder substance such as a sheet of metal, the water vapour in the air gives up heat to the sheet. If the vapour gives up enough heat, the vapour condenses into liquid water on the metal.

These different processes are shown as a heating or cooling curve in Figure 6.



**FIGURE 6: Graph of Heating Curve Showing How Temperature of Water Changes as Physical State Changes**

The heating curve shows the changes in temperature of solid water (ice) as it gains heat, becomes a liquid at the melting point, continues to gain heat as a liquid and then becomes a gas at the boiling point.

### **GENERAL PROPERTIES OF MATTER**

Properties such as volume, weight, mass, center of gravity, inertia, pressure and density are interconnected. They depend on the types of molecules that make up an object and whether an object is a solid, liquid or gas. For example, an object made of heavy, closely packed atoms such as iron will weigh more and exert more pressure than a similar size object made mostly of carbon atoms.

We will look at some of these properties.

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## Volume

**Volume** is the amount of space an object occupies.

A solid has **definite shape and volume**. The bonding forces that occur between the molecules of a solid hold them in a fixed position. In other words, the space a solid occupies remains relatively constant, as does its external boundaries.

- The volume of a rectangular solid can be calculated by multiplying its length times its width times its height. The volume of an irregular solid can be calculated by measuring the volume of water it displaces.

A liquid has a **definite volume but no definite shape**. The space it occupies (its volume) stays the same no matter what kind of container it is held in but it will flow to take the shape of the container.

- The volume of a liquid is found by pouring it into a graduated measuring cup. We read the amount of volume occupied by the liquid from the measurements on the side.

Gases have **no definite volume or shape**. Gas molecules usually exist as independent particles. Each particle has its own molecular volume. If a gas is confined in an enclosed area, the gas molecules will expand to completely fill the area they are contained in.

- The volume of a gas held in a container depends on the size of the container.
- The volume of a gas in a flexible container is not constant but varies with the temperature and the outside pressure exerted on the container.
  - If a flexible container holding a gas has outside pressure exerted on it, the volume of the gas (and the container) will get smaller as the pressure increases.
  - If the temperature of the gas rises, the gas molecules become more active, increasing the pressure on the container and expanding its walls, thereby increasing the volume of both the gas and the container.

## Weight and mass

In scientific terms, weight and mass are different properties.

The **weight** of an object is a measure of the force of the earth's gravity pulling on its mass. The basic unit of weight in the metric system is the **newton (n)**, while in the imperial system it is the **pound (lb)**. Since the pull of gravity (weight) is a universal force, the units of weight, the pound and Newton, are used as the standard unit for all types of mechanical forces.

- The weight of an object can be found using a spring or digital scale.
  - A solid can be placed directly on the scale and measured.
  - A liquid or a gas must be placed in a container of a known weight before they are measured. The weight of the container is then subtracted from the total weight to get the weight of the liquid or gas.

**Mass** is a measure of the amount of matter in an object. In the metric system, the basic units of mass are the **gram** and the **kilogram**. In the imperial system the basic units of mass are the **ounce** and the **pound**.

- Mass is measured with a balance scale against a standard mass.

- The mass of an object remains constant while its weight can vary, depending on how close the object is to the surface of the earth.
  - The closer to the earth an object is, the stronger the pull of gravity and the greater the weight.
  - In everyday use, we tend to refer to weight and mass as being the same thing.
  - The term kilogram tends to be used for both mass and weight in the metric system, just as the term pound is used for both mass and weight in the imperial system.

### **Inertia**

*Inertia is the resistance of any physical object to a change in its state of motion or rest.*

- This means that an unmoving object will not move unless a force acts on it; and
- an object in motion won't change its speed or direction of motion unless a force acts on it.

The amount of matter or the mass of an object gives it its *inertia*.

- The more mass an object has, the more inertia it has.
  - A bundle of metal rods has more resistance to being moved than a carton of light bulbs because it has more mass and thus it has more inertia.
  - A train is harder to stop than a bicycle.

### **Center of Gravity**

*The weight of an object is considered to be concentrated in a central point called the **center of gravity**. The stability of an object depends on how wide a base it rests on and how low its center of gravity is.*

- A slab of metal that is lying flat is more stable than one that is standing on its end because its weight distributed over a wider area and its center of gravity is lower.
- A newly constructed metal wall frame is more stable when it is still lying on the floor. Once it is raised into position, its center of gravity is high compared to the narrow area of the plate that forms its base. It must be secured by a brace until it is fastened into place.
- When you are up on a ladder, you can't reach over too far. Once the ladder starts to lean, its center of gravity moves away from the support of the wall and then the force of gravity causes it to fall to the ground.

### **Pressure**

*A solid exerts a force in a downward direction over the area it is resting on because of its weight (the pull of the earth's gravity on the object's mass). This force is called **pressure**.*

- The pressure exerted on parts of a building such as the weight of the walls on the foundation or the snow load on the roof must be considered when calculating how strong those parts should be.
- Regulations in the automotive industry are concerned with making sure structures are strong enough to withstand the pressures exerted on them in an accident.

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Pressure is calculated by finding its weight per unit area or by dividing its weight by the area it sits on.

The formula for pressure is:

Pressure = force divided by area

or

$$P = F/a$$

The common unit of pressure in the metric system is the **kilopascal (kPa)**. In the imperial system, the unit of pressure is **pounds per square inch (psi)**.

*Liquids exert a downward force or pressure because of their weight. Liquids also exert pressure in a sideways direction because their molecules flow over each other and move in all directions. If a liquid is completely enclosed, such as in a pipe, it will exert pressure evenly in all directions.*

*Gases confined in a container also exert pressure evenly in all directions. Gas molecules are continually in motion, bouncing off any surface they collide with and then continuing in a new direction. These collisions create a pressure known as gas pressure.*

*The pressure exerted by a gas depends on its volume and its temperature.*

- Gas can be contained in a cylinder under pressure and used to power tools such as air guns, paint sprayers, sandblasters and drills. These tools are called pneumatic tools or air tools. They are driven by compressed air supplied by a gas compressor.

## **Density**

**Density** is defined as the mass or weight per unit volume. Density is the quality of lightness or heaviness of an object. When we pick up an object, we have a feel for whether it is light or heavy. But sometimes we need a more precise definition of heaviness and lightness. In that case, we use the term density.

- During a work day, you might struggle to lift a heavy piece of steel but you can carry several bags of insulation without any problem. The insulation is easy to carry because it is light, while the joists are heavy.
- When there are two cartons the same size, one containing nails and the other containing cleaning cloths, the carton containing the cloths is less dense. Although the volumes of the two cartons are the same, the weights of the objects inside are different, resulting in different densities.
- A cubic centimeter of steel is three times as heavy as a cubic centimeter of aluminum. Steel is denser than aluminum. Wood is less dense than either of these metals and a cubic centimeter of it would weigh less than either the steel or aluminum.

The density of a solid is found by dividing its weight or mass by its volume. The formula for density is:

$$D = w/V$$

or

$$D = m/V$$

**Example:** You have to hoist a load that has a mass of 150 kilograms and a volume of  $.5 \text{ m}^3$ . What is its density?

$$\begin{aligned} D &= m/V \\ &= 150 \text{ kg}/.5 \text{ m}^3 \\ &= 300 \text{ kg/m}^3 \end{aligned}$$

It is important to have a rough idea of the density of an object before deciding how to lift it. A piece of glass is relatively light and can be carried by one person but a large bundle of steel needs to be lifted with a hoist or crane because it is too dense to be lifted safely.

### ***Specific gravity***

Sometimes it is useful to compare the density of one substance to another. The density of water has been chosen as the standard to compare the densities of all solids and liquids. *The ratio of the density of a solid or liquid to the density of water is called its **specific gravity**.*

$$\text{Specific gravity} = \frac{\text{density of substance}}{\text{density of water}}$$

The density of water in the metric system is 1 gram per cubic centimeter. The density of the other substance must also be in the same units as water in order to make the comparison.

- Lead acid batteries produce electrical energy by chemical processes that charge and discharge the battery. The electrolyte inside the battery is made of a solution of sulphuric acid and water. Sulphuric acid is heavier than water, so a mixture of 64% water and 36% acid will be denser than water alone. The liquid in the battery will have a specific gravity of 1.27 at  $27^\circ\text{C}$  when the battery is fully charged. At this point, all the electrical energy is in the form of potential energy.
- As the battery discharges, producing usable electrical energy, the sulphuric acid is transformed in the process. In the discharged state, there is about 83% water and 17% sulphuric acid. The specific gravity of the battery's liquid will now be lower than that of a fully charged battery.
- You can tell how much charge is left on a battery by reading the specific gravity. Most lead acid batteries have built-in hydrometers that read the specific gravity, comparing it to that of a fully charged battery, and telling you the state of charge.

## ***PROPERTIES OF SOLIDS***

### **Hardness and Toughness**

*Solids possess the property of **hardness**, which means resistance to penetration.* Steel is harder than wood. It is easier to saw through a piece of wood than a steel rod.

***Toughness** is the ability to withstand heavy impact forces without fracturing.* Aluminum will bend and break more easily than steel.

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**Durability** relates to the combined properties of hardness and toughness. Steel is more durable than tin.

### **Cohesion and Adhesion**

**Cohesion** is the term used to describe the way a solid remains as an individual object with definite boundaries.

**Tensile strength** is related to cohesion. It is the ability to resist being pulled apart. If a steel wire and a copper wire of the same diameter are pulled with the same force, the copper wire will break first. The steel wire has a greater tensile strength.

**Adhesion** is the ability of one solid to stick to another, the way glue sticks to the surface of a frame. Paint will stick to a surface and it also has fairly low cohesion so it can flow into small cracks.

### **Ductility and Malleability**

**Ductility** means that metal can be pulled through two heavy rollers so its diameter decreases but its length increases.

**Malleability** means that metals can be hammered or rolled so that shape and thickness are changed considerably.

- Because steel has these properties, it can be formed into the shape and strength needed for a specific job.

### **Elasticity and Stiffness**

A solid also has a certain amount of **elasticity**, the ability of an object to resume its original shape after it has been distorted by a force. When a solid's elastic limit is exceeded, the solid breaks or is permanently distorted. The opposite of elastic is **brittle**.

- The metal body of a car can be hammered back into place when it is dented.
- A thin sheet of metal piece can be bent and held in place but it can go back to being flat if it is released.
- A piece of wallboard is brittle and if it is bent, it will usually break.

**Stiffness** is a measure of how much force is required to bend a certain material. A stiff material requires a lot of applied force before it will bend.

- Good structural materials like wood and steel are both stiff and elastic.
- Steel changes in its stiffness depending on its shape and thickness.
- A thin sheet will bend easily while a steel rod is stiff.

**Electrical conductivity** is the ability to carry an electrical current.

- Most metals are good conductors while substances such as rubber, plastic and ceramics are good insulators.

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Different solids conduct heat at different rates.

- Copper conducts heat faster than iron or wood.
- Different materials also expand and contract slightly at different rates when they are heated or cooled.

## ***PROPERTIES OF LIQUIDS***

Liquids at room temperature have enough kinetic energy to *partially* overcome the binding forces that cause solids to remain in their fixed position. The molecules of a liquid are still close together but they can move over each other. This is the reason a liquid can flow and take the shape of its container, while still maintaining a definite volume. Because of this flowing motion, liquids have different properties than solids.

### **Volume**

A liquid has a ***definite volume*** but ***no definite shape***. It occupies the same volume or amount of space no matter what kind of container it is held in, but it flows to take the shape of the container.

### **Surface tension**

Although the bonding force is weaker in a liquid than a solid, it still exists. The bonding force between molecules in a liquid attracts all molecules equally in all directions except the ones on the surface.

For the molecules at the surface, there is only a downward attractive force because there are no other molecules above to provide attraction in an upward direction. This downward force is strong enough to give liquids one definite surface, and is called ***surface tension***. Because of surface tension, liquids can support objects such as a floating boat. This property is called the ***buoyant force*** of liquids.

### **Viscosity**

The friction created as one liquid molecule flows over another is called ***viscosity***. Viscosity has the effect of slowing down the flow of the liquid. As temperature rises, viscosity decreases. Oils used to lubricate automotive parts have varying viscosity ratings depending on their applications. Because they will be used at high temperatures, summer oils are thicker than winter oils which are used at lower temperatures.

### **Pressure**

Like solids, liquids exert a downward force or pressure because of their weight. Liquids also exert a sideways and an upward force because their molecules flow over each other and move in all directions. Pressure is exerted evenly in all directions by a confined liquid. The upward pressure, along with surface tension, creates the buoyant force in liquids. This property also applies to a gas confined in a container.

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## **PROPERTIES OF GASES**

Gases have **no definite shape and no definite volume**. Substances that are gases at room temperature usually consist of molecules formed from a few atoms joined together. *Gas molecules are widely separated, independent particles that travel around at high speeds*. They possess large amounts of kinetic energy. The kinetic energy of a gas molecule is great enough to overcome the forces that bond molecules of solids and liquids together.

Gas molecules expand to completely fill the area they are contained in.

**Example:** If you take the lid off a container of gasoline, the smell of gasoline molecules quickly fills the room. The gasoline molecules that have evaporated move rapidly in all directions to become evenly mixed with the other air molecules in the room.

### **Pressure**

Gas molecules are continually in motion, colliding with each other and the sides of whatever container they are held in. They are very elastic, they bounce off any surface they collide with and then continue in a new direction. The collisions create gas pressure.

**Example:** You can see evidence of gas pressure when you blow air into a balloon. As gas molecules are blown into the balloon, the pressure from the gas causes the flexible balloon to expand.

Gases can also be compressed or forced into a smaller volume. As gases are compressed, the volume and the temperature decrease.

**Example:** These temperature and pressure changes are used to remove heat in refrigerated trailers and in air conditioning units.

**Example:** When a tire is filled, the increasing air pressure inside causes the tire to expand until it is inflated the proper amount. If there is not enough air pressure, the tire is soft and mushy, while too much air pressure can cause a tire to explode.

## **CONCLUSION**

*Substances have both chemical and physical properties*. Chemical properties depend on the types of atoms and their arrangement in a substance. The physical properties of a substance affect its behaviour.

A substance can exist as either a solid, a liquid or a gas if its temperature is raised or lowered enough, but we are mostly concerned with the state of substances as they occur at the earth's temperature.

Many objects around us are solids, keeping a definite shape and volume. Liquids have a definite volume but take the shape of their container. The atmosphere is filled with invisible gases that have no definite shape or volume. Gas molecules exist as independent, fast-moving particles.

Molecules possess differing amounts of heat, which gives them kinetic energy - the ability to vibrate or move. Whether a substance exists as a solid, liquid or gas depends on the kinetic energy of its molecules. The amount of kinetic energy molecules have depends on the amount of heat present. The strength of this active force relative to the bonding force determines in what state a substance exists.

We are familiar with the rigid nature of solid objects. They maintain their shape and volume unless they are broken apart into smaller solids. Because solids have weight, they exert pressure in a downward direction.

A liquid flows but its volume stays the same when it is poured into another container. The flowing movement of liquid molecules exerts pressure in all directions, not just in a downward direction.

Gases are free-moving, independent particles that travel at high speeds in all directions. Because of their rapid motion, gases occupy all of the area in which they are contained. If different types of gases are released into a room, the molecules will move around randomly until they are mixed together evenly.

When a substance changes physically, it still maintains the same chemical properties. When a metal rod is cut in two, the new pieces are weigh less than the original piece but the types and arrangement of atoms in the smaller pieces are the same as when they were in one, larger piece.

However, when a substance undergoes a physical change, it can behave in a different way. For example, molten iron flows while a solid bar is rigid. The unique characteristics of a substance depend on both its chemical and its physical properties.

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**Answer the following questions, looking back if you need to. Answers are on the last page.**

1. The three physical states that matter can exist in are \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The chemical properties of a substance depend on the type of \_\_\_\_\_ it is made up from and their arrangement.
3. When a substance undergoes a chemical change, such as iron changing to rust, it becomes a different \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. Whether a substance exists as a solid, liquid or gas depends on its \_\_\_\_\_ .
5. When a solid changes directly into a gas, the process is called \_\_\_\_\_ .
6. When gas molecules lose enough heat, they \_\_\_\_\_ and change to the liquid state.
7. The melting point of a substance is at the same temperature as the \_\_\_\_\_ point.
8. Water freezes at \_\_\_\_\_ C. This is also the temperature at which ice \_\_\_\_\_ .
9. Water boils at \_\_\_\_\_ C. This is also the temperature at which water vapour \_\_\_\_\_.
10. When ice melts to water, it \_\_\_\_\_ heat from the atmosphere.
11. When water freezes to ice, it \_\_\_\_\_ heat to the air.
12. The molecules of a liquid \_\_\_\_\_ over each other.
13. Solids have a \_\_\_\_\_ shape and volume.
14. Liquids have a definite \_\_\_\_\_ but take the shape of their \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Gas molecules \_\_\_\_\_ to completely fill their container.
16. Solid objects exert pressure only in a \_\_\_\_\_ direction.
17. Gases and liquids in a container exert pressure evenly in \_\_\_\_\_ directions.
18. Liquids stay together because of a downward attractive force on the molecules at the surface. This force is called \_\_\_\_\_ .
19. The viscosity of a liquid affects the rate at which it will \_\_\_\_\_ .

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**Answer page**

1. solid  
liquid  
gas
2. atoms (or elements)
3. substance (or compound)
4. temperature
5. sublimation
6. condense
7. freezing
8. 0°, melts
9. 100°, condenses
10. absorbs
11. gives up
12. flow (or glide, move)
13. definite
14. volume, container
15. expand
16. downward
17. all
18. surface tension
19. flow