

P2 – Electricity

Current, resistance and potential difference

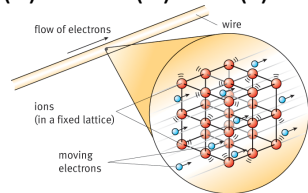
Electrical current is the flow of electrical charge.

Current is measured in amps (A), charge is measured in Coulombs (C).

The size of the current depends on the rate of the flow of charge – ie how many coulombs of charge per second.

$$Q = I t$$

Charge = Current x time
(C) (A) (s)



Ohms Law

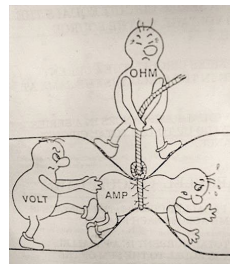
The current through a component depends on the potential difference and the resistance of the component.

If a component has high resistance, the current will be smaller for a given potential difference

potential difference = current x resistance

$$V = I R$$

pd is measured in volts (V), resistance in Ohms (Ω)



Hypothesis 'the length of the wire affects resistance'

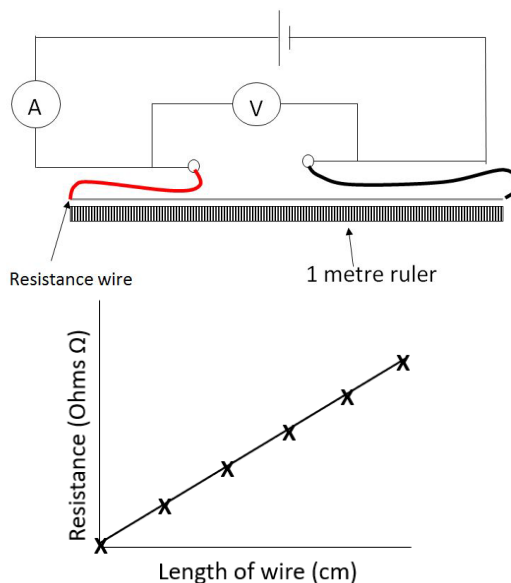
Independent variable – length of wire

Dependent variable – resistance

Control variables – type of wire, temperature of the wire, diameter of the wire

1. Set up the circuit as shown, with an ammeter in the circuit and a voltmeter connected across the wire
2. Use crocodile clips to change the length of the wire in the circuit
3. Make the wire 10cm long and read the current and pd. Switch off the current between readings or the wire will get hot, increasing the resistance.
4. Repeat for 20, 30, 40, 50 cm. (5 minimum)
5. Calculate resistance using Ohms Law $R = V/I$

Plot length of wire (IV) against resistance (DV)

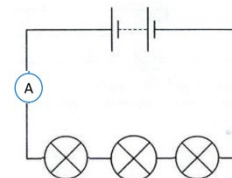


The relationship is directly proportional

Series and parallel circuits

Series circuits:

A series circuit is one single loop

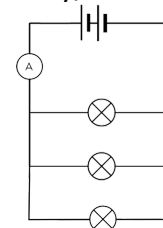


In a series circuit:

- the current is the same at all points in the circuit.
- potential difference is shared between components (equally if components are identical resistance)
- total resistance = sum of all resistors

Parallel circuits

A parallel circuit consists of more than one loop from the battery/cell.



In a parallel circuit:

- The current is shared amongst the branches
- The potential difference is the same across all components
- Resistance in the whole circuit is LESS than that of the smallest resistor

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Current, resistance and potential difference

1. What is current?
2. What is the unit for charge?
3. What is the unit for current?
4. What is the equation linking charge, current and time?
5. What is the equation linking current, potential difference and voltage?
6. If a component's resistance increases, what happens to current through that component?
7. What is the unit for resistance?

Hypothesis 'the length of the wire affects resistance'

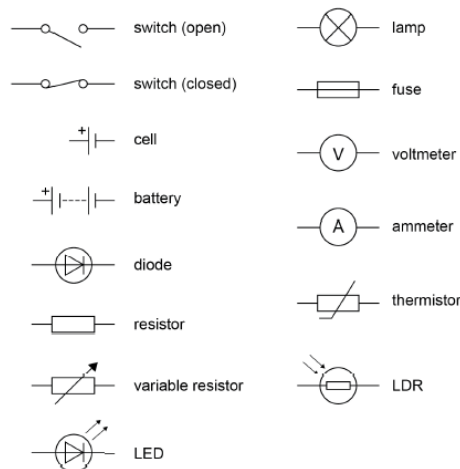
1. What is the independent variable in this investigation?
2. What is the dependent variable?
3. What is the minimum number of readings needed for a line graph?
4. What two readings are taken?
5. How is resistance calculated?
6. What sort of relationship is seen?
7. Why is it important to turn off the power in between readings?

Series and parallel circuits

1. What is a series circuit?
2. In a series circuit, the current is.....
3. How do you find total resistance in a series circuit?
4. The potential difference is shared equally among components as long as.....
5. What is a parallel circuit?
6. What is true about potential difference across all of the components in a parallel circuit?
7. How is total current calculated in parallel?
8. What is true for total resistance in a parallel circuit?

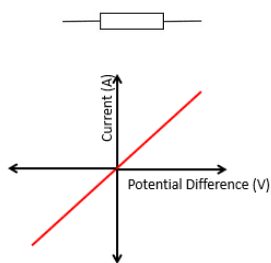
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Components

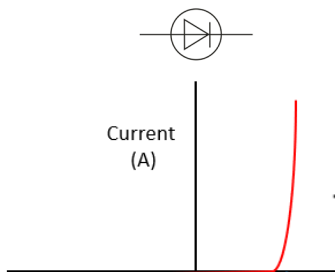


- A **diode** only allows current to flow one way in a circuit
- A **resistor** is a component that provides a fixed resistance in the circuit – e.g a $5\ \Omega$ resistor
- A **variable resistor** is a component whose resistance can be changed (e.g a dimmer switch)
- A **thermistor** is a resistor whose resistance changes with temperature – the higher the temperature the lower the resistance
- An **LDR** (light dependent resistor) has resistance that changes
- An **LED** (light emitting diode) is a light that only allows the flow of current one way

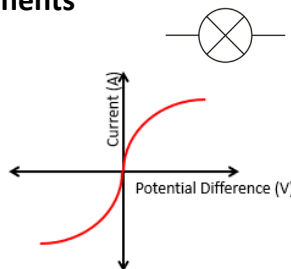
Current, potential difference and resistance for different components



A fixed (ohmic) resistor has fixed resistance
current is directly proportional to potential difference
Resistance remains constant (at constant temp)

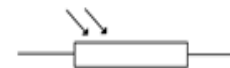


A diode very high resistance in one direction.
Only when the potential difference is positive does current flow



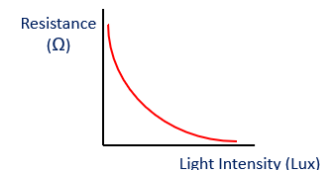
A filament bulb contains a thin wire that glows as current flows.
As the pd increases, the current initially increases.
However, at higher pd, the wire gets hot
The ions in the wire move faster and collide with the moving charges
Resistance increases, so current stops increasing

LDR

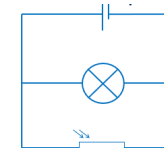


A light dependent resistor has varying resistance.

As the light intensity increases, the resistance decreases



LDRs can be used to switch on lights at night time.



In this circuit, when it is day time, the resistance in the LDR is low, so all current flows through the LDR.

As light levels fall, resistance increases, until eventually there is less resistance in the bulb than the LDR, so current flows through the bulb – switching it on.

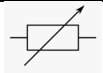

Thermistor



As the temperature increases, the resistance in a thermistor decreases.

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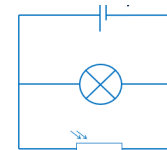
Components

Symbol	Name
	Cell
	
	fuse
	
	Voltmeter

1. Complete the table opposite
2. Which component has a resistance that decreases as light intensity increases?
3. Which component only allows current to flow one way?
4. What is a fixed resistor?

LDR

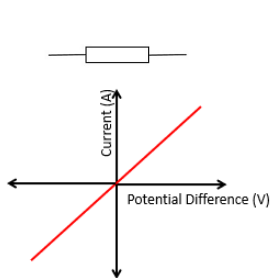
1. Draw the symbol for an LDR
2. Draw the pattern you would expect for resistance as the light intensity increases.
3. The circuit below is for a night light. What is resistance in the LDR like during the day time? (high light levels)



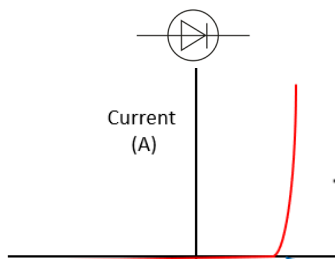
4. Why does the light switch on when it goes dark?
5. Draw the symbol for a thermistor
6. Describe the relationship between temperature and resistance in a thermistor

Current, potential difference and resistance for different components

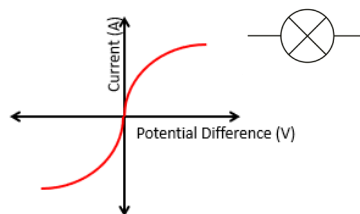
1. What readings would you need to take from a circuit to calculate resistance?



2. Describe the relationship shown



3. Why is there no current on one side of the graph?



4. What happens to current when the pd rises at first?
5. What happens to the current as the pd gets higher?
6. Why does the resistance increase at higher pd?

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Domestic use of electricity

There are two types of electrical supply – direct (DC) and alternating current (AC)

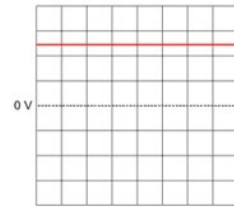
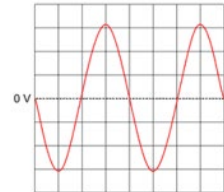
AC

The pd changes direction and magnitude, giving alternating current

The number of times the change of direction happens per second is the frequency.

UK mains is AC - **230V**

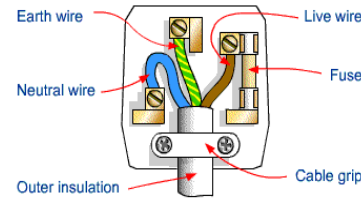
Frequency of **50 Hz**



DC

A direct pd produces current that flows in one direction

Batteries supply DC



Electrical appliances are connected using 3 core cable

- Brown – live wire, with pd of 230V
- Blue – neutral, 0V, completes the circuit
- Yellow and green – Earth wire, is at 0V unless there is a fault, when it will become live

Appliances in the home and power

Power is measured in Watts (W) or kW

Power can be calculated by using:

Power = Voltage x current

$$P = IV$$

Power = current² x resistance

$$P = I^2 R$$

Appliances transfer energy.

Energy is measured in Joules (J) or kJ

The energy transferred can be calculated by using:

Energy = charge flow x potential difference

$$E = QV$$

Energy = power x time

$$E = pt$$

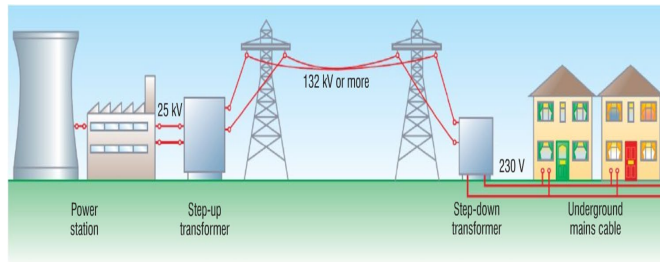
For example

A kettle transfers energy from the thermal store of the filament in the kettle to the thermal store of the water inside.

Some energy is transferred to the thermal store of the surroundings.

The National Grid

The National Grid is a system of cables and transformers connecting power stations to homes and businesses



The National Grid uses very high pd and low current.

High current causes heating in the wires and would result in large energy losses.

Step up transformers increase the pd from the power station (to around 400000V) so that low current can be used to transmit power.

This means the wires don't get hot, so less energy is lost.

Near homes and businesses, step down transformers reduce the pd to 230V for safety.

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Domestic use of electricity

1. What are the two types of current?
2. What type of power supply produces DC current?
3. What are the two differences between AC and DC current?
4. What is the pd of the UK mains supply?
5. What is the frequency of UK mains supply?
6. What colour is the live wire in UK plugs?
7. What is the purpose of the blue wire in UK plugs?
8. When does the yellow and green wire carry a current?

The National Grid

1. What is the National Grid?
2. What sort of pd does the National Grid use to transmit electrical power?
3. What is used to increase the pd from the power station?
4. What is used to reduce the pd near homes and businesses?
5. Why is such a high pd used?

Appliances in the home and power

1. What is the equation linking current, potential difference and power?
2. What is the equation linking current, resistance and power?
3. What two factors affect how much energy an appliance transfers?
4. What is the equation linking energy, power and time?
5. What are the units for power?
6. What is the equation linking charge, energy and potential difference?
7. What are the units for energy?