

PHYSICAL SCIENCE ALPHABET

A Quick Reference Guide to Fundamental Concepts

A

Atom

The basic unit of a chemical element.

B

Buoyancy

Upward force exerted by a fluid on an object.

C

Convection

Heat transfer through fluid movement.

D

Density

Mass per unit volume of a substance.

E

Energy

The capacity to do work or produce heat.

F

Friction

Resistance encountered when moving over surfaces.

G

Gravity

Force attracting objects toward one another.

H

Half-life

Time for half of a radioactive sample to decay.

I

Inertia

Resistance of an object to change in motion.

J

Joule

The SI unit of work or energy.

K

Kinetic

L

Energy possessed by an object in motion.

Luminescence

Emission of light not caused by heat.

M

Momentum

Product of an object's mass and velocity.

N

Nucleus

The dense central core of an atom.

O

Oxidation

Loss of electrons during a reaction.

P

Photon

A particle representing a quantum of light.

Q

Quark

Fundamental constituent of matter.

R

Refraction

Bending of light as it passes through media.

S

Solubility

Ability of a solute to dissolve in a solvent.

T

Torque

A force that causes rotation.

U

Ultrasound

Sound waves above the range of human hearing.

V

Velocity

Speed of an object in a specific direction.

W

Wavelength

Distance between successive crests of a wave.

X

X-ray

High-energy electromagnetic radiation.

Y

Yield

Amount of product obtained in a reaction.

Z

Zero-point

The lowest possible energy state.