

How to read the mathematical and scientific symbols

In this course I try to select and to provide a minimum of mathematical and scientific terms and their abbreviations. In addition to the Common pronunciations (in British English) of the most mathematical and scientific symbols are given. The course aims at developing students' language skills in an English context of mathematics and science with emphasis on reading, and writing of mathematical and scientific symbols.

01-The mathematical symbols

+	plus	/ˈplʌs/
-	minus	/ˈmaɪnəs/
±	plus or minus	/ˈplʌs ɔː ˈmaɪnəs/
x	multiplied by	/ˈmʌltɪplaɪd baɪ/
/	over; divided by	/ˈəʊvə/ /dɪˈvaɪdəd/
÷	divided	/dɪˈvaɪdəd/
=	equals	/ˈiːkwəlz/
≈	approximately, similar	/əˈprɒksɪmətɪli/ /ˈsɪmɪlə tə/
≡	equivalent to; identical	/ɪkˈwɪvələnt tə/ /aɪˈdentɪkl tə/
≠	not equal to	/ˈnɒt ˈiːkwəl tə/
>	greater than	/ˈɡreɪtə ðən/
<	less than	/ˈles ðən/
≥	greater than or equal to	/ˈɡreɪtə ðən ər ˈiːkwəl tə/
≤	less than or equal to	/ˈles ðən ər ˈiːkwəl tə/
⋤	not greater than	/ˈnɒt ˈɡreɪtə ðən/
⋤	not less than	/ˈnɒt ˈles ðən/
≫	much greater than	/ˈmʌtʃ ˈɡreɪtə ðən/
≪	much less than	/ˈmʌtʃ ˈles ðən/
⊥	perpendicular to	/pɜːpənˈdɪkjʊlə tə/
∥	parallel to	/ˈpærələl tə/
≢	not equivalent to, not identical to	/ˈnɒt ɪkˈwɪvələnt tə/ /ˈnɒt aɪˈdentɪkl tə/
≠	not similar to	/ˈnɒt ˈsɪmɪlə tə/
²	squared	/ˈskweəd/
³	cubed	/ˈkjuːbd/
⁴	to the fourth; to the power four	/tə ðə ˈfɔːθ/ /te ðə ˈpaʊə fɔː/
n	to the n; to the nth; to the power n	/tə ði en; tə di enθ; tə ðə paʊə en/
√	root; square root	/ruːt/ /skweə ruːt/
∛	cube root	/kjuːb ruːt/
∜	fourth root	/fɔːθ ruːt/
!	factorial	/fækˈtɔːriəl/
%	percent	/pəˈsent/
∞	infinity	/ɪnˈfɪnəti/
∝	varies as; proportional to	/ˈvɛəriɪz/ /prəˈpɔːʃənəl/
.	dot	/dɒt/
..	double dot	/dʌbl dɒt/
:	is to, ratio of	/reɪʃiəʊ/
f(x) fx	f; function	/ef/ /ˈfʌŋkʃən/
f'(x)	f dash; derivative	/dæʃ/ /dɪˈrɪvətɪv/
f''x	f double-dash; second derivative	/ˈdʌbl dæʃ/ /ˈsekənd dɪˈrɪvətɪv/
f'''(x)	f triple-dash; f treble-dash; third derivative	/ˈtrɪpl dæʃ/ /trebl dæʃ/ /θɜːd dɪˈrɪvətɪv/
f(4)	f four; fourth derivative	/fɔːθ dɪˈrɪvətɪv/
∂	partial derivative, delta	/pɑːʃəl dɪˈrɪvətɪv/ /delta/

\int	integral	/ˈɪntɪgrəl/
Σ	sum	/sʌm/
w.r.t.	with respect to	/wɪð ˈrɪspekt/
log	log	/lɒɡ/
$\log_2 x$	log to the base 2 of x	/lɒɡ tə ðə beɪs tuː əv ɛks/
\therefore	therefore	/ˈðɛəfɔː/
\because	because	/bɪˈkɔːz/
\rightarrow	gives, leads to, approaches	/ɡɪvz/ /liːdz tuː/ /əprəʊtʃəz/
/	per	/pɜː/
\in	belongs to; a member of; an element of	/bɪˈlɒŋz/ /ˈmembə/ /ˈelɪmənt/
\notin	does not belong to; is not a member of; is not an element of	/nɒt bɪˈlɒŋ/ /nɒt ə ˈmembə/ /nɒt ən ˈelɪmənt/
\subset	contained in; a proper subset of	/kənˈteɪnd ɪn/ /ˈprɒpə ˈsʌbset/
\subseteq	contained in; subset	/ˈsʌbset/
\cap	intersection	/ˈɪntəsekʃən/
\cup	union	/ˈjuːnɪən/
\forall	for all	/fə ɔːl/
$\cos x$	cos x; cosine x	/kɒz/
$\sin x$	sine x	/saɪn/
$\tan x$	tangent x	/tæn/
$\operatorname{cosec} x$	cosec x	/ˈkəusek/
$\sinh x$	shine x	/ˈʃaɪn/
$\cosh x$	cosh x	/ˈkɒʃ/
$\tanh x$	than x	/θæn/
$ x $	mod x; modulus x	/mɒd/ /ˈmɒdjuːləs/
$^{\circ}\text{C}$	degrees Centigrade	/dɪˈɡriːz ˈsentɪɡreɪd/
$^{\circ}\text{F}$	degrees Fahrenheit	/dɪˈɡriːz ˈfærənhaɪt/
$^{\circ}\text{K}$	degrees Kelvin	/dɪˈɡriːz ˈkelvɪn/
$0^{\circ}\text{K}, -273.15^{\circ}\text{C}$	absolute zero	/absəluːt zɪːrəʊ/
mm	millimetre	/ˈmɪlɪmiːtə/
cm	centimetre	/ˈsentɪmiːtə/
cc, cm^3	cubic centimetre, centimetre cubed	/ˈkjuːbɪk ˈsentɪmiːtə/ /ˈsentɪmiːtə ˈkjuːbd/
m	metre	/ˈmiːtə/
km	kilometre	/kɪˈlɒmɪtə/
mg	milligram	/ˈmɪlɪɡræm/
g	gram	/ɡræm/
kg	kilogram	/ˈkɪləɡræm/
AC	A.C.	/eɪ siː/
DC	D.C.	/diː siː/

Examples

$x + 1$	x plus one
$x - 1$	x minus one
$x \pm 1$	x plus or minus one
xy	x y; x times y; x multiplied by y
$(x - y)(x + y)$	x minus y, x plus y
x/y	x over y; x divided by y;
$x \div y$	x divided by y
$x = 5$	x equals 5; x is equal to 5
$x \approx y$	x is approximately equal to y
$x \equiv y$	x is equivalent to y; x is identical with y
$x \neq y$	x is not equal to y
$x > y$	x is greater than y
$x < y$	x is less than y
$x \geq y$	x is greater than or equal to y
$x \leq y$	x is less than or equal to y
$0 < x < 1$	zero is less than x is less than 1; x is greater than zero and less than 1
$0 \leq x \leq 1$	zero is less than or equal to x is less than or equal to 1; x is greater than or equal to zero and less than or equal to 1
x^2	x squared
x^3	x cubed
x^4	x to the fourth; x to the power four
x^n	x to the n; x to the nth; x to the power n
x^{-n}	x to the minus n; x to the power of minus n
$\sqrt{\quad}$	root x; square root x; the square root of x
$\sqrt[3]{\quad}$	the cube root of x
$\sqrt[4]{\quad}$	the fourth root of x
$\sqrt[n]{\quad}$	the nth root of x
$(x + y)^2$	x plus y all squared
$(x/y)^2$	x over y all squared
$n!$	n factorial; factorial n
$x\%$	x percent
∞	infinity
$x \propto y$	x varies as y; x is (directly) proportional to y
$x \propto 1/y$	x varies as one over y; x is indirectly proportional to y
\dot{x}	x dot
\ddot{x}	x double dot
$f(x)$ f_x	f of x; the function of x
$f'(x)$	f dash x; the (first) derivative of with respect to x
$f''x$	f double-dash x; the second derivative of f with respect to x
$f'''(x)$	f triple-dash x; f treble-dash x; the third derivative of f with respect to x
$f^{(4)}$	f four x; the fourth derivative of f with respect to x
∂v	the partial derivative of v
$\frac{\partial v}{\partial \theta}$	delta v by delta theta, the partial derivative of v with respect to θ

$x \in A$	x belongs to A; x is a member of A; x is an element of A
$x \notin A$	x does not belong to A; x is not a member of A; x is not an element of A
$A \subset B$	A is contained in B; A is a proper subset of B
$A \subseteq B$	A is contained in B; A is a subset of B
$A \cap B$	A intersection B
$A \cup B$	A union B
$\cos x$	cos x; cosine x
$\sin x$	sine x
$\tan x$	tangent x, tan x
$\operatorname{cosec} x$	cosec x
$\sinh x$	shine x
$\cosh x$	cosh x
$\tanh x$	than x
$ x $	mod x; modulus x
18 °C	eighteen degrees Centigrade
70 °F	seventy degrees Fahrenheit
$\frac{\partial^2 v}{\partial \theta^2}$	delta two v by delta theta squared; the second partial derivative of v with respect to θ
dv	the derivative of v
$\frac{dv}{d\theta}$	d v by d theta, the derivative of v with respect to theta
$\frac{d^2 v}{d\theta^2}$	d 2 v by d theta squared, the second derivative of v with respect to theta,
\int	integral
\int_0^∞	integral from zero to infinity
Σ	sum
$\sum_{i=1}^n$	the sum from i equals 1 to n
w.r.t.	with respect to
$\log_e y$	log to the base e of y; log y to the base e; natural log (of) y
\therefore	therefore
\because	because
\rightarrow	gives, approaches
$\Delta x \rightarrow 0$	delta x approaches zero
$\lim_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0}$	the limit as delta x approaches zero, the limit as delta x tends to zero
$Lt_{\Delta x \rightarrow 0}$	the limit as delta x approaches zero, the limit as delta x tends to zero
m/sec	metres per second

Fractions

Decimal Fractions

½	a half	/ə 'hɑ:f/
¼	a quarter	/ə 'kwɔ:tə/
¾	three quarters	/θri: 'kwɔ:təz/
⅓	a third	/ə 'θɜ:d/
⅔	two thirds	/tu: 'θɜ:dz/
⅕	a fifth	/ə 'fɪfθ/
⅔	two fifths	/tu: 'fɪfθs/
⅝	three fifths	/θri: 'fɪfθs/
⅘	four fifths	/fɔ: 'fɪfθs/
⅙	a sixth	/ə 'sɪksθ/
⅚	five sixths	/faɪv 'sɪksθs/
⅛	an eighth	/ən 'eɪtθ/
⅜	three eighths	/θri: 'eɪtθs/
⅝	five eighths	/faɪv 'eɪtθs/
⅞	seven eighths	/sevən 'eɪtθs/

0.1	nought point one	/no:t pɔɪnt wʌn/
0.01	nought point oh one	/no:t pɔɪnt əʊ wʌn/
0.0001	nought point oh oh oh one	/ten pɔɪnt əʊ əʊ əʊ wʌn/
1.1	one point one	/wʌn pɔɪnt wʌn/
1.2	one point two	/wʌn pɔɪnt tu:/
1.23	one point two three	/wʌn pɔɪnt tu: θri:/
1.0123	one point oh one two three	/wʌn pɔɪnt əʊ wʌn tu: θri:/
10.01	ten point oh one	/ten pɔɪnt əʊ wʌn/
21.57	twenty-one point five seven	/'twentɪ wʌn pɔɪnt faɪv 'sevən/
2.666666666....	two point six recurring	/tu: pɔɪnt sɪks rɪ'kɜ:rɪŋ/
2.612361236123...	two point six one two three recurring	/tu: pɔɪnt sɪks wʌn tu: θri: rɪ'kɜ:rɪŋ/
2.5 million	two point five million	/tu: pɔɪnt faɪv 'mɪljən/

Greek alphabet

A α	alpha	B β	beta	Γ γ	gamma	Δ δ	delta	E ε, ε	epsilon
Z ζ	zeta	H η	eta	Θ θ, θ	theta	I ι	iota	K κ	kappa
Λ λ	lambda	M μ	mu	N ν	nu	Ξ ξ	xi	O ο	omicron
Π π, π	pi	P ρ, ρ	rho	Σ σ, σ	sigma	Τ τ	tau	Υ υ	upsilon
Φ φ, φ	phi	X χ	chi	Ψ ψ	psi	Ω ω	omega		

Important sets

∅	empty set	
N	natural numbers	{0, 1, 2, ...}
N ⁺	positive integer numbers	{1, 2, ...}
Z	integer numbers	{..., -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, ...}
Q	rational numbers	{m/n : m ∈ Z, n ∈ N ⁺ }
R	real numbers	(-∞, +∞)
R ⁺	positive real numbers	(0, +∞)
C	complex numbers	{x + iy : x, y ∈ R} (i is the imaginary unit, i ² = -1)

02- The scientific symbols

Number	Derived from number words in		
	Greek	Latin	Old English
¼	-	-	-
½	Hemi-	semi-/demi-	
1	Mono-	uni-	
1½		sesqui-	
2	di-	Duo-/bi-	twi-

3	tri-	tre-/ter-		15	pent(a)deca- pendeca-	quinde(c)	
4	tetra-/tetr-	quadri-/quadr- /quart		16	hexadeca-	Sede(c)	
5	Penta-/pent-	quinque- /quingu-/ quint		17	Heptadeca	septende(c)	
6	hexa-/hex-	sexa-/sex-/se		18	Ocatadeca	decennoct	
7	Hepta-/hept-	Sept		19	Enneadeca-	decennov	
8	Octa-/octo-/oct-			20	icos(a)-	Vige-/vice-	
9	ennea-	nona-/non- /novem		100	hecto-/hect-	Centi-/cente-	
10	deka-/deca-	deci-/dec(a)-		1000	chilia-/kilo-	milli-/mille-	
11	hendeca-	undec-/unde-		10000	myria-		
12	Dodeca-	duodec-/duode-					
13	triskaideca, trideca	tredec, tridec					
14	Tetrakaideca- /tetradeca	Quatuordec					

Symbol	Name	Pronunciation
Ag	Silver	/'silvə/
Al	Aluminium	/æljʊ'mɪniəm/
Au	Gold	/'gəʊld/
Br	Bromine	/'brəʊmi:n/
C	Carbon	/'kɑ:bən/
Ca	Calcium	/'kælsiəm/
Cl	Chlorine	/'klɔ:ri:n/
Cu	Copper	/'kɒpə/
Db	Dubnium	/'dʌbniəm/
F	Fluorine	/'flʊəri:n/
Fe	Iron	/'aɪən/
S	Sulphur	/'sʌlfə/
Si	Silicon	/'sɪlɪkən/
Ti	Titanium	/tɪ'teɪniəm/
U	Uranium	/jʊ'reɪniəm/
Uub	Ununbium	/ju:'nʌnbɪəm/
Xe	Xenon	/'zenən/
Y	Yttrium	/'ɪtriəm/
Yb	Ytterbium	/ɪ'tɜ:biəm/
V	Vanadium	/və'neɪdiəm/
Ga	Gallium	/'gæliəm/
H	Hydrogen	/'haɪdrədʒən/
He	Helium	/'hi:liəm/
Hf	Hafnium	/'hæfniəm/
Hg	Mercury	/'mɜ:kjʊri/
K	Potassium	/pə'tæsiəm/
Kr	Krypton	/'krɪptən/
Md	Mendelevium	/mendə'li:viəm/
Mg	Magnesium	/mæg'ni:ziəm/
Mn	Manganese	/'mæŋɡəni:z/
N	Nitrogen	/'naɪtrədʒən/
Na	Sodium	/'səʊdiəm/
Ni	Nickel	/'nɪkəl/
O	Oxygen	/'ɒksɪdʒən/
P	Phosphorus	/'fɒsfərəs/
Pb	Lead	/'led/
Pt	Platinum	/'plætɪniəm/
Pu	Plutonium	/plu:'təʊniəm/
Ra	Radium	/'reɪdiəm/
Uuh	Ununhexium	/ju:'nən'heksiəm/
Zn	Zinc	/'zɪŋk/

Formulae

CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
CO	Carbon monoxide
NO ₂	Nitrogen dioxide
N ₂ O	Dinitrogen oxide
NO	Nitrogen oxide
N ₂ O ₄	Dinitrogen tetroxide
SO ₂	Sulphur dioxide
SO ₃	Sulphur trioxide
H ₂ SO ₄	Suphuric acid
HCl	Hydrochloric acid
HNO ₃	Nitric acid
PCl ₅	Phosphorus pentachloride

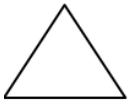
The following table lists the names alkanes from C-1 to C-10. A common "**ane**" suffix identifies these compounds as alkanes. The names **methane** through **decane** should be memorized, since they constitute the root of many names. Fortunately, common numerical prefixes are used in naming chains of five or more carbon atoms.

Examples of Simple Unbranched Alkanes					
Name	Molecular Formula	Structural Formula	Name	Molecular Formula	Structural Formula
methane	CH ₄	CH ₄	hexane	C ₆ H ₁₄	CH ₃ (CH ₂) ₄ CH ₃
ethane	C ₂ H ₆	CH ₃ CH ₃	heptane	C ₇ H ₁₆	CH ₃ (CH ₂) ₅ CH ₃
propane	C ₃ H ₈	CH ₃ CH ₂ CH ₃	octane	C ₈ H ₁₈	CH ₃ (CH ₂) ₆ CH ₃
butane	C ₄ H ₁₀	CH ₃ CH ₂ CH ₂ CH ₃	nonane	C ₉ H ₂₀	CH ₃ (CH ₂) ₇ CH ₃
pentane	C ₅ H ₁₂	CH ₃ (CH ₂) ₃ CH ₃	decane	C ₁₀ H ₂₂	CH ₃ (CH ₂) ₈ CH ₃

Examples of some common **alkyl groups** are given in the following table. Note that the "ane" suffix is replaced by "**yl**" in naming groups. The symbol **R** is used to designate a generic (unspecified) alkyl group

group	CH ₃ -	C ₂ H ₅ -	CH ₃ CH ₂ CH ₂ -	(CH ₃) ₂ CH-	CH ₃ CH ₂ CH ₂ CH ₂ -	(CH ₃) ₂ CHCH ₂ -	CH ₃ CH ₂ CH(CH ₃)-	(CH ₃) ₃ C-	R-
Name	Methyl	Ethyl	Propyl	Isopropyl	Butyl	Isobutyl	<i>sec</i> -Butyl	<i>tert</i> -Butyl	Alkyl

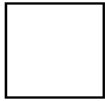
03- Geometry Shapes



triangle

It is a triangle.

It is square.



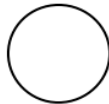
square



rectangle

It is triangular in shape.

It is rectangular.



circle

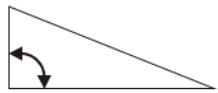
It is elliptic(al)/ oval.



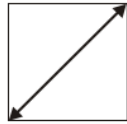
ellipsis/oval



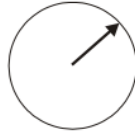
semi-circle



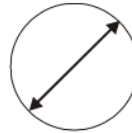
angle



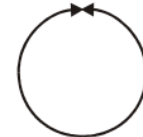
diagonal



radius



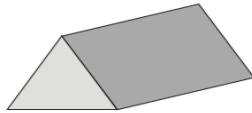
diameter



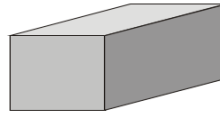
circumference

Three dimensional

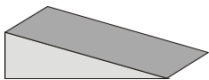
Prism



triangular prism



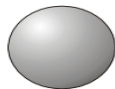
rectangular prism



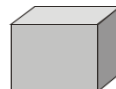
**wedge
wedge-like**



**cylinder
cylindrical**



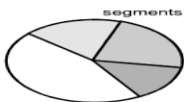
**sphere
spherical**



**cube
cubic(al)**



**cone
conical**



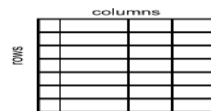
pie chart



line graph



bar chart



table



flow char



straight line



interrupted line



dotted line



curved line



oscillations/fluctuations

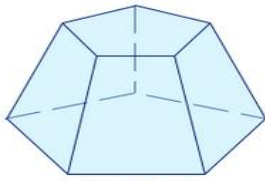


undulations

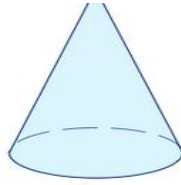
Trigonometric figures



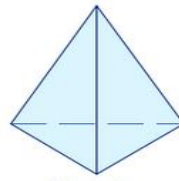
Conical frustum



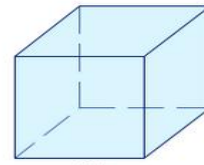
Pentagonal frustum



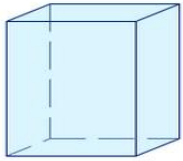
Cone



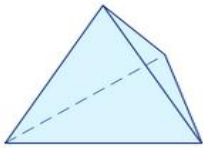
Tetrahedron



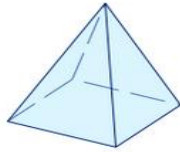
Cube



Rectangular cuboid



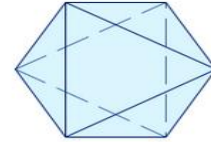
Regular tetrahedron



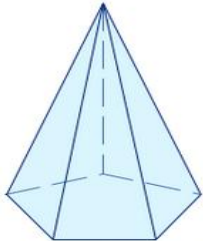
Square pyramid



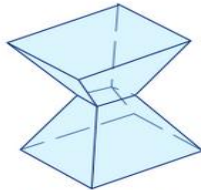
Square frustum



Octahedron



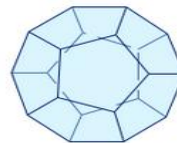
Pentagonal pyramid



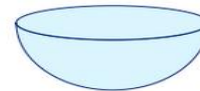
Irregular polyhedron



Icosahedron



Dodecahedron



Hemisphere

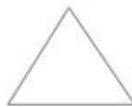
Plane Geometry figures.



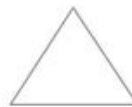
Rectangle



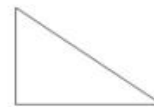
Square



Triangle



Equilateral triangle



Right triangle



Right triangle 2



Right triangle 3



Right triangle, angle box



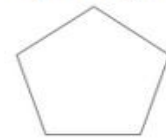
Trapezium



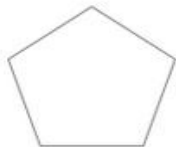
Isosceles Trapezium



Parallelogram



Pentagon



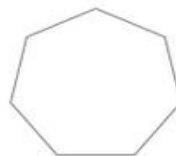
Regular pentagon



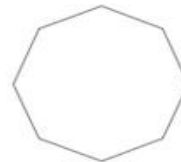
Hexagon



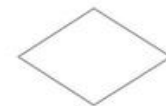
Regular hexagon



Regular heptagon



Regular octagon



Rhombus



Three-pointed star



Four-pointed star



Five-pointed star



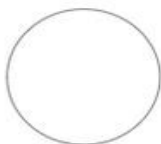
Six-pointed star



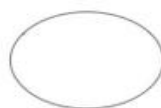
Seven-pointed star



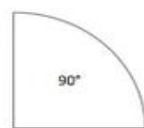
Eight-pointed star



Circle



Ellipse



Circular sector

04- Physics equations

Word equation	Symbol equation
weight = mass × gravitational field strength (<i>g</i>)	$W = m g$
work done = force × distance (along the line of action of the force)	$W = F s$
force applied to a spring = spring constant × extension	$F = k e$
moment of a force = force × distance (normal to direction of force)	$M = F d$
pressure = $\frac{\text{force normal to a surface}}{\text{area of that surface}}$	$P = \frac{F}{A}$
distance travelled = speed × time	$s = v t$
acceleration = $\frac{\text{change in velocity}}{\text{time taken}}$	$a = \frac{\Delta v}{t}$
resultant force = mass × acceleration	$F = m a$
momentum = mass × velocity	$p = m v$
kinetic energy = 0.5 × mass × (speed) ²	$E_k = \frac{1}{2} m v^2$
gravitational potential energy = mass × gravitational field strength (<i>g</i>) × height	$E_p = m g h$
power = $\frac{\text{energy transferred}}{\text{time}}$	$P = \frac{E}{t}$
power = $\frac{\text{work done}}{\text{time}}$	$P = \frac{W}{t}$
efficiency = $\frac{\text{useful output energy transfer}}{\text{total input energy transfer}}$	
efficiency = $\frac{\text{useful power output}}{\text{total power input}}$	
wave speed = frequency × wavelength	$v = f \lambda$
charge flow = current × time	$Q = I t$
potential difference = current × resistance	$V = I R$
power = potential difference × current	$P = V I$
power = (current) ² × resistance	$P = I^2 R$
energy transferred = power × time	$E = P t$
energy transferred = charge flow × potential difference	$E = Q V$
density = $\frac{\text{mass}}{\text{volume}}$	$\rho = \frac{m}{V}$

05- Talking The Present tenses Into A Redox Reaction

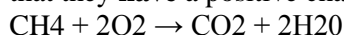
Here an example using the present tenses to explain how the chemical reaction of reduction/oxidation is happened. Try to read it with application of what you have learnt in the above course.

Redox is an acronym that **stands for** reduction/oxidation. During a chemical reaction, or equation, some reactants **are being transformed** into some products. We generally **associate** an oxidation state to the charge an atom would have if all bonds to atoms of different elements were 100% ionic. Thus the oxidation number **is connected** to the charge.

Let's consider, for instance, the molecule of sodium chloride. We know that sodium **is** an alkaline metal and that it **has** one valence electron in group I, while chlorine **is** an halogen of group VII that just **needs** 1 electron to have full 8 valence electrons in its shell.

Consequently, in the formation of NaCl, Na **is going to give** electrons and Cl **is going to get** them. As a result of this we can write Na⁺Cl⁻. Here Na⁺ **means** +1 charge because the sodium **is giving** the electron, while Cl⁻ **means** -1 charge because the chlorine **is getting** it. The bond **is** ionic. But otherwise, if the bond is covalent, we'd better focus on partial positive or negative charges. In the formation of the molecule of water, the oxygen **is gaining** 2 electrons from the 2 hydrogens, which **are losing** them, the Hs being more electropositive and the O being more electronegative.

Consequently the oxidation number of hydrogen in H₂O **is** +1, while the oxygen's **is** -1. As a result of this we can say that in a molecule of water the hydrogen **are oxidized** by the oxygen: the electrons **are taken away** from them, so that they **have** a positive charge. Now, let's study the following combustion:



Here a molecule of methane **is reacting** with two molecules of oxygen in order to produce a molecule of carbon dioxide plus 2 molecules of water plus some heat (being esothermic, the reaction **produces** more heat than you put into it).

In CH₄ an atom of carbon **is bounded** with 4 hydrogens. While reacting, being more electronegative, the carbon **is taking** 4 electrons from the hydrogens, so its charge **is going** down by four. As a result its oxidation number **is** -4, while the hydrogen's **is** +1. Thus, we can write C⁻⁴H⁺¹. In CO₂, the carbon's oxidation state **is** +4, which **means** that it **is giving up** 4 electrons, and really it only **has** 2 electrons to give up, for it **has** 4 electrons in its valence shell. So, what **is getting** oxidized and what **is getting** reduced? Let's write down the first half reactions: C⁻⁴ → C⁺⁴ + 8e⁻

Here carbon **is going** from an oxidation number of -4 on the left side of this equation, to an oxidation number of +4 on the right side: 8 electrons **are being taken away** from carbon, so it **is being oxidized**. As for the second half reaction 4O + 8e⁻ → 4O⁻²

we **have** 4 oxygens with a zero oxidation state (being in the elemental form) **turning into** 4 oxygens with a -2 oxidation state, so each of these oxygens **are taking** 4 e⁻, the two of them, so that there **are** 8e⁻. The oxidation state, that is the hypothetical charge, **is going down**, or it **is being reduced** by carbon, as well as the carbon above **is being oxidized** by oxygen. Finally, what's the oxidizing agent, what is the thing that is oxidizing? Of course the oxygen is the oxidizing agent, while carbon is the reducing agent. Redox can also be reviewed from a biological point-of-view. Biologists **usually say** oxidation **deals with** losing hydrogen atoms, while reduction **deals with** gaining hydrogen atoms, though the essential meaning **stays** the same.

The reactions within cells which result in the ATP (adenosine triphosphate) synthase using energy stored in glucose **are referred to** as cellular respiration. It **requires** oxygen as the final electron acceptor. The equation for aerobic respiration **is** C₆H₁₂O₆ + 6O₂ → 6CO₂ + 6 H₂O + energy

Here we **are combining** glucose with molecular oxygen so that cellular respiration **is being performed**. We **end up** with 6 carbon dioxides and six molecules of water, while the energy produced **is made up** of some heat and about 38 ATPs. Glucose **is completely broken down** to CO₂ + H₂O though, during fermentation, it **is only partially broken down**.

Let's take a look at the half reactions: H₁₂ → 6 H₂ (read: Hydrogen 12 **yielding** to 6 hydrogens 2) **says** the hydrogen **preserves** a +1 oxidation number (o.n.) on both sides of the equation so that nothing **is happening** with respect to oxidation and reduction, while C₆ → 6C + 24e⁻ **shows** the number of electrons lost by carbon in cellular respiration, the carbon **being oxidized** by the oxygen. Finally, O₆ + 6O₂ + 24e⁻ → 6O₂ + 6O **emphasizes** the fact that these 24 electrons are the same electrons carbon **is losing**, so that oxygen, which **is gaining** electrons, **is being reduced by carbon**.

Hence, where **does the energy come from**? The energy **is produced** because the electrons **are going** from a higher energy state, or level, to a lower one (we know that lower orbitals are more stable): C₆H₁₂O₆ + 6O₂ → 6CO₂ + 6 H₂O ↑ ↓ ↘ ✓ Oxidized reduced e⁻ **are going** to these oxygens that is to say carbon **is losing** hydrogens, while oxygen **is gaining** hydrogens,