

College Physics I

Lab 7: Friction and Energy Conservation

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Fall 2016

You will do a supplement to Lab 6: Collisions, figuring out how to compensate for the energy losses due to friction.

Activity 1: Friction

Hook up *two* motion detectors to the green Vernier box. Make sure they are set to be used with carts. Then double-click on the **Logger Pro** application on the Desktop. Once it gets going, go the **File** menu and choose **Open**. Then go to folder **Physics with Vernier**. Select **03 Cart on a Ramp.cmbl**. You will send *one* cart down the ramp, and see it slow down due to friction.

When you do a run, look at the acceleration vs time graph, for the part of the motion where it has a constant acceleration. The a vs. t graph will be jagged, so you will need to get the mean (average) value of a for when it is roughly constant. Click and drag on the region you want to average on the a vs. t graph, then go to the “Analyze” menu item and pick “Statistics.” This will put a box on your graph which includes the mean value. Use this for a . Now look at the beginning time t_i and end time t_f of your shaded area. Find x_i and x_f , and v_i and v_f . Print out your screen.

Now find the work done by friction. First measure the mass of your cart, m , on the electronic scale. The friction is then $f = ma$. The work is $W = f\Delta x = ma(x_f - x_i)$.

ACTIVITY 2: COLLISION

Also find the change in kinetic energy $\Delta K = \frac{1}{2}m(v_f^2 - v_i^2)$. Is this the same as W ? (Should it be?)

To hand in for activity 1

- Printout of the screen graph,
- Measured quantities: m , a , x_i , x_f , v_i , v_f ,
- Calculations for W and ΔK .

Activity 2: Collision

Now open [18 Momentum Energy Coll.cmbl](#). You will do an *elastic* collision between two carts, with no extra weight on. You will again pick times before the collision and after the collision, record the velocities of the carts at these times, and calculate initial and final total kinetic energies. But this time around, you'll check if energy conservation holds in this form:

$$K_{1i} + K_{2i} = K_{1f} + K_{2f} + \Delta E_{th}$$

You will obtain ΔE_{th} by accounting for the work done by friction on both carts, just like in part (a): $\Delta E_{th} = -(W_1 + W_2)$.

You will also need the acceleration graph for your motion after you collect your data. To get this, go to the “Insert” menu item and choose “Graph.” This will give you a graph of a_2 . Double click on the label “Acceleration 2,” and also check “Acceleration 1” on the list of what should be included in the graph. You can get the average a_1 and a_2 before and after the collision this way; this allows you to determine the friction forces $f_1 = m_1 a_1$ and $f_2 = m_2 a_2$.

You will also need v_{1i} , v_{2i} , v_{1f} , v_{2f} , plus x_{1i} , x_{2i} , x_{1f} , x_{2f} , which you can read off the original x and v graph windows for the appropriate times. Print out your graphs.

Now check energy conservation. Provide all details of your calculation. Note that you need to use the reasoning that went into Activity 1 to do all this correctly.

To hand in for activity 1

- Printouts of the screen graphs,
- Measured quantities: m_1 , a_1 , x_{1i} , x_{1f} , v_{1i} , v_{1f} and the same for cart 2,
- Calculations for all relevant K and W values, and ΔE_{th} ,
- Check of energy conservation.