One explanation for superconductivity is that the electrons that make up the current move in coordinated pairs. One of the electrons in a pair may electrically distort the molecular structure of the superconducting material as it moves through, creating nearby a short-lived concentration of positive charge. The other electron in the pair may then be attracted toward this positive charge. According to the theory, such coordination between electrons would prevent them from colliding with the molecules of the material and thus would eliminate electrical resistance. The theory worked well to explain the pre-1986, lower temperature superconductors, but new theories appear to be needed for the newer, higher temperature superconductors.

** View All Solutions Here **

** CHAPTER 26 CURRENT AND RESISTANCE **

Current  An electric current $i$ in a conductor is defined by

$$i = \frac{dq}{dt}. \quad (26-1)$$

Here $dq$ is the amount of (positive) charge that passes in time $dt$ through a hypothetical surface that cuts across the conductor. By convention, the direction of electric current is taken as the direction in which positive charge carriers would move. The SI unit of electric current is the ampere (A); 1 A = 1 C/s.

Current Density  Current (a scalar) is related to current density $\vec{J}$ (a vector) by

$$i = \int \vec{J} \cdot d\vec{A}, \quad (26-4)$$

where $d\vec{A}$ is a vector perpendicular to a surface element of area $dA$ and the integral is taken over any surface cutting across the conductor. $\vec{J}$ has the same direction as the velocity of the moving charges if they are positive and the opposite direction if they are negative.

Drift Speed of the Charge Carriers  When an electric field $E$ is established in a conductor, the charge carriers (assumed positive) acquire a drift speed $v_d$ in the direction of $E$; the velocity $v_d$ is related to the current density by

$$\vec{J} = (ne) \vec{v}_d. \quad (26-7)$$

where $ne$ is the carrier charge density.

Resistance of a Conductor  The resistance $R$ of a conductor is defined as

$$R = \frac{V}{I}. \quad (26-8)$$

where $V$ is the potential difference across the conductor and $I$ is the current. The SI unit of resistance is the ohm ($\Omega$); 1 $\Omega$ = 1 V/A. Similar equations define the resistivity $\rho$ and conductivity $\sigma$ of a material:

$$\rho = \frac{1}{\sigma} = \frac{E}{J} \quad (26-12, 26-10)$$

where $E$ is the magnitude of the applied electric field. The SI unit of resistivity is the ohm-meter ($\Omega \cdot m$). Equation 26-10 corresponds to the vector equation

$$\vec{E} = \rho \vec{J}. \quad (26-11)$$

The resistance $R$ of a conducting wire of length $L$ and uniform cross section is

$$R = \rho \frac{L}{A}. \quad (26-16)$$

where $A$ is the cross-sectional area.

Change of $\rho$ with Temperature  The resistivity $\rho$ for most materials changes with temperature. For many materials, including metals, the relation between $\rho$ and temperature $T$ is approximated by the equation

$$\rho - \rho_0 = \rho_0 \alpha (T - T_0). \quad (26-17)$$

Here $T_0$ is a reference temperature, $\rho_0$ is the resistivity at $T_0$, and $\alpha$ is the temperature coefficient of resistivity for the material.

Ohm’s Law  A given device (conductor, resistor, or any other electrical device) obeys Ohm’s law if its resistance, defined by Eq. 26-8 as $V/I$, is independent of the applied potential difference $V$. A given material obeys Ohm’s law if its resistivity, defined by Eq. 26-10, is independent of the magnitude and direction of the applied electric field $E$.

Resistivity of a Metal  By assuming that the conduction electrons in a metal are free to move like the molecules of a gas, it is possible to derive an expression for the resistivity of a metal:

$$\rho = \frac{m}{e^2 n \tau}. \quad (26-22)$$

where $n$ is the number of free electrons per unit volume and $\tau$ is the mean time between the collisions of an electron with the atoms of the metal. We can explain why metals obey Ohm’s law by pointing out that $\tau$ is essentially independent of the magnitude $E$ of any electric field applied to a metal.

Power  The power $P$, or rate of energy transfer, in an electrical device across which a potential difference $V$ is maintained is

$$P = iV \quad (rate \ of \ electrical \ energy \ transfer). \quad (26-26)$$

Resistive Dissipation  If the device is a resistor, we can write Eq. 26-26 as

$$P = i^2 R = \frac{V^2}{R} \quad (resistive \ dissipation). \quad (26-27, 26-28)$$

In a resistor, electric potential energy is converted to internal thermal energy via collisions between charge carriers and atoms.

Semiconductors  Semiconductors are materials that have few conduction electrons but can become conductors when they are doped with other atoms that contribute free electrons.

Superconductors  Superconductors are materials that lose all electrical resistance at low temperatures. Recent research has discovered materials that are superconducting at surprisingly high temperatures.

** View All Solutions Here **
1. Figure 26-15 shows cross sections through three long conductors of the same length and material, with square cross sections of edge lengths as shown. Conductor $B$ fits snugly within conductor $A$, and conductor $C$ fits snugly within conductor $B$. Rank the following according to their end-to-end resistances, greatest first: the individual conductors and the combinations of $A + B$ ($B$ inside $A$), $B + C$ ($C$ inside $B$), and $A + B + C$ ($C$ inside $A$ inside $C$).

![Fig. 26-15](image)

**Fig. 26-15** Question 1.

2. Figure 26-16 shows cross sections through three wires of identical length and material; the sides are given in millimeters. Rank the wires according to their resistance (measured end to end along each wire’s length), greatest first.

![Fig. 26-16](image)

**Fig. 26-16** Question 2.

3. Figure 26-17 shows a rectangular solid conductor of edge lengths $L$, $2L$, and $3L$. A potential difference $V$ is to be applied uniformly between pairs of opposite faces of the conductor as in Fig. 26-8b. First $V$ is applied between the left–right faces, then between the top–bottom faces, and then between the front–back faces. Rank those pairs, greatest first, according to the following (within the conductor): (a) the magnitude of the electric field, (b) the current density, (c) the current, and (d) the drift speed of the electrons.

![Fig. 26-17](image)

**Fig. 26-17** Question 3.

4. Figure 26-18 shows plots of the current $i$ through a certain cross section of a wire over four different time periods. Rank the periods according to the net charge that passes through the cross section during the period, greatest first.

![Fig. 26-18](image)

**Fig. 26-18** Question 4.

5. Figure 26-19 shows four situations in which positive and negative charges move horizontally and gives the rate at which each charge moves. Rank the situations according to the effective current through the regions, greatest first.

![Fig. 26-19](image)

**Fig. 26-19** Question 5.

6. In Fig. 26-20, a wire that carries a current consists of three sections with different radii. Rank the sections according to the following quantities, greatest first: (a) current, (b) magnitude of current density, and (c) magnitude of electric field.

![Fig. 26-20](image)

**Fig. 26-20** Question 6.

7. Figure 26-21 gives the electric potential $V(x)$ versus position $x$ along a copper wire carrying current. The wire consists of three sections that differ in radius. Rank the three sections according to the magnitude of the (a) electric field and (b) current density, greatest first.

![Fig. 26-21](image)

**Fig. 26-21** Question 7.

8. The following table gives the lengths of three copper rods, their diameters, and the potential differences between their ends. Rank the rods according to (a) the magnitude of the electric field within them, (b) the current density within them, and (c) the drift speed of electrons through them, greatest first.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rod</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Diameter</th>
<th>Potential Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$L$</td>
<td>$3d$</td>
<td>$V$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2L$</td>
<td>$d$</td>
<td>$2V$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$3L$</td>
<td>$2d$</td>
<td>$2V$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 26-22** Question 9.

9. Figure 26-22 gives the drift speed $v_d$ of conduction electrons in a copper wire versus position $x$ along the wire. The wire consists of three sections that differ in radius. Rank the three sections according to the following quantities, greatest first: (a) radius, (b) number of conduction electrons per cubic meter, (c) magnitude of electric field, (d) conductivity.

![Fig. 26-22](image)

**Fig. 26-22** Question 9.

10. Three wires, of the same diameter, are connected in turn between two points maintained at a constant potential difference. Their resistivities and lengths are $\rho$ and $L$ (wire $A$), $1.2\rho$ and $1.2L$ (wire $B$), and $0.9\rho$ and $L$ (wire $C$). Rank the wires according to the rate at which energy is transferred to thermal energy, greatest first.
CHAPTER 26 CURRENT AND RESISTANCE

sec. 26-2 Electric Current

1. During the 4.0 min a 5.0 A current is set up in a wire, how many (a) coulombs and (b) electrons pass through any cross section across the wire's width?

2. An isolated conducting sphere has a 10 cm radius. One wire carries a current of 1.000 002 A into it. Another wire carries a current of 1.000 002 A out of it. How long would it take for the sphere to increase in potential by 1000 V?

3. A charged belt, 50 cm wide, travels at 30 m/s between a source of charge and a sphere. The belt carries charge into the sphere at a rate corresponding to 100 μA. Compute the surface charge density on the belt.

sec. 26-3 Current Density

4. The (United States) National Electric Code, which sets maximum safe currents for insulated copper wires of various diameters, is given (in part) in the table. Plot the safe current density as a function of diameter. Which wire gauge has the maximum safe current density? (*Gauge* is a way of identifying wire diameters, and 1 mil = 10^{-3} in.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gauge</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diameter, mils</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe current, A</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. A beam contains 2.0 × 10^8 doubly charged positive ions per cubic centimeter, all of which are moving north with a speed of 1.0 × 10^7 m/s. What are the (a) magnitude and (b) direction of the current density J? (c) What additional quantity do you need to calculate the total current i in this ion beam?

6. A certain cylindrical wire carries current. We draw a circle of radius r around its central axis in Fig. 26-23a to determine the current i within the circle. Figure 26-23b shows current i as a function of r^2. The vertical scale is set by i_0 = 4.0 mA, and the horizontal scale is set by r_0 = 4.0 mm. (a) Is the current density uniform? (b) If so, what is its magnitude?

7. A fuse in an electric circuit is a wire that is designed to melt, and thereby open the circuit, if the current exceeds a predetermined value. Suppose that the material to be used in a fuse melts when the current density rises to 440 A/cm^2. What diameter of cylindrical wire should be used to make a fuse that will limit the current to 0.50 A?

8. A small but measurable current of 1.2 × 10^{-10} A exists in a copper wire whose diameter is 2.5 mm. The number of charge carriers per unit volume is 8.49 × 10^{29} m^{-3}. Assuming the current is uniform, calculate the (a) current density and (b) electron drift speed.

9. The magnitude J(r) of the current density in a certain cylindrical wire is given as a function of radial distance from the center of the wire's cross section as J(r) = Br, where r is in meters, J is in amperes per square meter, and B = 2.00 × 10^5 A/m^2. This function applies out to the wire's radius of 2.00 mm. How much current is contained within the width of a thin ring concentric with the wire if the ring has a radial width of 10.0 μm and is at a radial distance of 1.20 mm?

10. The magnitude J of the current density in a certain lab wire with a circular cross section of radius R = 2.00 mm is given by J = (3.00 × 10^8)r^2, with J in amperes per square meter and radial distance r in meters. What is the current through the outer section bounded by r = 0.900R and r = R?

11. What is the current in a wire of radius R = 3.40 mm if the magnitude of the current density is given by (a) J = J_0r/R and (b) J = J_0(1 - r/R), in which r is the radial distance and J_0 = 5.50 × 10^4 A/m^2? (c) Which function maximizes the current density near the wire’s surface?

12. Near Earth, the density of protons in the solar wind (a stream of particles from the Sun) is 8.70 cm^{-3}, and their speed is 470 km/s. (a) Find the current density of these protons. (b) If Earth's magnetic field did not deflect the protons, what total current would Earth receive?

13. How long does it take electrons to get from a car battery to the starting motor? Assume the current is 300 A and the electrons travel through a copper wire with cross-sectional area 0.21 cm^2 and length 0.85 m. The number of charge carriers per unit volume is 8.49 × 10^{29} m^{-3}.

sec. 26-4 Resistance and Resistivity

14. A human being can be electrocuted if a current as small as 50 mA passes near the heart. An electrician working with sweaty hands makes good contact with the two conductors he is holding, one in each hand. If his resistance is 2000 Ω, what might the fatal voltage be?

15. A coil is formed by winding 250 turns of insulated 16-gauge copper wire (diameter = 1.3 mm) in a single layer on a cylindrical form of radius 12 cm. What is the resistance of the coil? Neglect the thickness of the insulation. (Use Table 26-1.)

16. Copper and aluminum are being considered for a high-voltage transmission line that must carry a current of 60.0 A. The resistance per unit length is to be 0.150 Ω/km. The densities of copper and aluminum are 8960 and 2600 kg/m^3, respectively. Compute (a) the magnitude J of the current density and (b) the mass per unit length λ for a copper cable and (c) J and (d) λ for an aluminum cable.

17. A wire of Nichrome (a nickel–chromium–iron alloy commonly used in heating elements) is 1.0 m long and 1.0 mm^2 in cross-sectional area. It carries a current of 4.0 A when a 2.0 V potential difference is applied between its ends. Calculate the conductivity σ of Nichrome.
** View All Solutions Here **

** Problems **

** Part 3 **

18. A wire 4.00 m long and 6.00 mm in diameter has a resistance of 15.0 mΩ. A potential difference of 23.0 V is applied between the ends. (a) What is the current in the wire? (b) What is the magnitude of the current density? (c) Calculate the resistivity of the wire material. (d) Using Table 26-1, identify the material.

19. ** SSM ** What is the resistivity of a wire of 1.0 mm diameter, 2.0 cm length, and 50 mA resistance?

20. A certain wire has a resistance R. What is the resistance of a second wire, made of the same material, that is half as long and has half the diameter?

21. ** ILW ** A common flashlight bulb is rated at 0.30 A and 2.9 V (the values of the current and voltage under operating conditions). If the resistance of the tungsten bulb filament at room temperature (20°C) is 1.1 Ω, what is the temperature of the filament when the bulb is on?

22. ** Kiting during a storm. ** The legend that Benjamin Franklin flew a kite as a storm approached is only a legend—he was neither stupid nor suicidal. Suppose a kite string of radius 0.30 mm has a 0.30 mm radius, the magnitude of the current density is 1.4 × 10^4 A/m^2. Find the resistivity of the wire.

23. When 115 V is applied across a wire that is 10 m long and has a 0.30 mm radius, the magnitude of the current density is 1.4 × 10^5 A/mm^2. Find the resistivity of the wire.

24. Figure 26-24a gives the magnitude E(x) of the electric fields that have been set up by a battery along a resistive rod of length 9.00 mm (Fig. 26-24b). The vertical scale is set by E_0 = 4.00 × 10^3 V/m. The rod consists of three sections of the same material but with different radii. (The schematic diagram of Fig. 26-24b does not indicate the different radii.) The radius of section 3 is 2.00 mm. What is the radius of (a) section 1 and (b) section 2?

25. ** SSM ** ** ILW ** A wire with a resistance of 6.0 Ω is drawn out through a die so that its new length is three times its original length. Find the resistance of the longer wire, assuming that the resistivity and density of the material are unchanged.

26. In Fig. 26-25a, a 9.00 V battery is connected to a resistive strip that consists of three sections with the same cross-sectional areas but different conductivities. Figure 26-25b gives the electric potential V(x) versus position x along the strip. The horizontal scale is set by x_s = 8.00 mm. Section 3 has conductivity 3.00 × 10^7 (Ω·m)^{-1}. What is the conductivity of section (a) 1 and (b) 2?

27. ** SSM ** ** WWW ** Two conductors are made of the same material and have the same length. Conductor A is a solid wire of diameter 1.0 mm. Conductor B is a hollow tube of outside diameter 2.0 mm and inside diameter 1.0 mm. What is the resistance ratio R_A/R_B, measured between their ends?

28. Figure 26-26 gives the electric potential V(x) along a copper wire carrying uniform current, from a point of higher potential V_s = 12.0 μV at x = 0 to a point of zero potential at x_f = 3.00 m. The wire has a radius of 2.00 mm. What is the current in the wire?

29. A potential difference of 3.00 nV is set up across a 2.00 cm length of copper wire that has a radius of 2.00 mm. How much charge drifts through a cross section in 3.00 ms?

30. If the gauge number of a wire is increased by 6, the diameter is halved; if a gauge number is increased by 1, the diameter decreases by the factor 2^{1/6} (see the table in Problem 4). Knowing this, and knowing that 1000 ft of 10-gauge copper wire has a resistance of approximately 1.00 Ω, estimate the resistance of 25 ft of 22-gauge copper wire.

31. An electrical cable consists of 125 strands of fine wire, each having 2.65 μΩ resistance. The same potential difference is applied between the ends of all the strands and results in a total current of 0.750 A. (a) What is the current in each strand? (b) What is the applied potential difference? (c) What is the resistance of the cable?

32. Earth’s lower atmosphere contains negative and positive ions that are produced by radioactive elements in the soil and cosmic rays from space. In a certain region, the atmospheric electric field strength is 120 V/m and the field is directed vertically down. This field causes singly charged positive ions, at a density of 620 cm^{-3}, to drift downward and singly charged negative ions, at a density of 550 cm^{-3}, to drift upward (Fig. 26-27). The measured conductivity of the air in that region is 2.70 × 10^{-14} (Ω·m)^{-1}. Calculate (a) the magnitude of the current density and (b) the ion drift speed, assumed to be the same for positive and negative ions.
** View All Solutions Here **

** A block in the shape of a rectangular solid has a cross-sectional area of 3.50 cm² across its width, a front-to-rear length of 15.8 cm, and a resistance of 935 Ω. The block’s material contains 5.33 × 10²³ conduction electrons/m³. A potential difference of 35.8 V is maintained between its front and rear faces. (a) What is the current in the block? (b) If the current density is uniform, what is its magnitude? What are (c) the drift velocity of the conduction electrons and (d) the magnitude of the electric field in the block?

** sec. 26-7 Power in Electric Circuits

** A copper wire of cross-sectional area 2.00 × 10⁻⁴ m² and length 4.00 m has a current of 2.00 A uniformly distributed across any cross section taken perpendicular to the length. What is the resistance of the cone?

** sec. 26-6 A Microscopic View of Ohm’s Law

** Show that, according to the free-electron model of electrical conduction in metals and classical physics, the resistivity of metals should be proportional to √T, where T is the temperature in kelvins. (See Eq. 19.31.)
** View All Solutions Here **
** View All Solutions Here **

61 SSM A steady beam of alpha particles \((q = +2e)\) traveling with constant kinetic energy 20 MeV carries a current of 0.25 \(\mu\)A. (a) If the beam is directed perpendicular to a flat surface, how many alpha particles strike the surface in 3.0 s? (b) At any instant, how many alpha particles are there in a given 20 cm length of the beam? (c) Through what potential difference is it necessary to accelerate each alpha particle from rest to bring it to an energy of 20 MeV?

62 A resistor with a potential difference of 200 V across it transfers electrical energy to thermal energy at the rate of 3000 W. What is the resistance of the resistor?

63 A 2.0 kW heater element from a dryer has a length of 80 cm. If a 10 cm section is removed, what power is used by the now shortened element at 120 V?

64 A cylindrical resistor of radius 5.0 mm and length 2.0 cm is made of material that has a resistivity of 3.5 \(\times\) 10\(^{-5}\) \(\Omega\) \cdot m. What are (a) the magnitude of the current density and (b) the potential difference when the energy dissipation rate in the resistor is 1.0 W?

65 A potential difference \(V\) is applied to a wire of cross-sectional area \(A\), length \(L\), and resistivity \(\rho\). You want to change the applied potential difference and stretch the wire so that the energy dissipation rate is multiplied by 30.0 and the current is multiplied by 4.00. Assuming the wire’s density does not change, what are (a) the ratio of the new length to \(L\) and (b) the ratio of the new cross-sectional area to \(A\)?

66 The headlights of a moving car require about 10 A from the 12 V alternator, which is driven by the engine. Assume the alternator is 80% efficient (its output electrical power is 80% of its input mechanical power), and calculate the horsepower the engine must supply to run the lights.

67 A 500 W heating unit is designed to operate with an applied potential difference of 115 V. (a) By what percentage will its heat output drop if the applied potential difference drops to 110 V? Assume no change in resistance. (b) If you took the variation of resistance with temperature into account, would the actual drop in heat output be larger or smaller than that calculated in (a)?

68 The copper windings of a motor have a resistance of 50 \(\Omega\) at 20°C when the motor is idle. After the motor has run for several hours, the resistance rises to 58 \(\Omega\). What is the temperature of the windings now? Ignore changes in the dimensions of the windings. (Use Table 26-1.)

69 How much electrical energy is transferred to thermal energy in 2.00 h by an electrical resistance of 400 \(\Omega\) when the potential applied across it is 90.0 V?

70 A caterpillar of length 4.0 cm crawls in the direction of electron drift along a 5.2-mm-diameter bare copper wire that carries a uniform current of 12 A. (a) What is the potential difference between the two ends of the caterpillar? (b) Is its tail positive or negative relative to its head? (c) How much time does the caterpillar take to crawl 1.0 cm if it crawls at the drift speed of the electrons in the wire? (The number of charge carriers per unit volume is 8.49 \(\times\) 10\(^{28}\) m\(^{-3}\).)

71 SSM (a) At what temperature would the resistance of a copper conductor be double its resistance at 20.0°C? (Use 20.0°C as the reference point in Eq. 26-17; compare your answer with Fig. 26-10.) (b) Does this same “doubling temperature” hold for all copper conductors, regardless of shape or size?

72 A steel trolley-car rail has a cross-sectional area of 56.0 cm\(^2\). What is the resistance of 10.0 km of rail? The resistivity of the steel is 3.00 \(\times\) 10\(^{-7}\) \(\Omega\) \cdot m.

73 A coil of current-carrying Nichrome wire is immersed in a liquid. (Nichrome is a nickel–chromium–iron alloy commonly used in heating elements.) When the potential difference across the coil is 12 V and the current through the coil is 5.2 A, the liquid evaporates at the steady rate of 21 mg/\(s\). Calculate the heat of vaporization of the liquid (see Section 18-8).

74 The current density in a wire is uniform and has magnitude 2.0 \(\times\) 10\(^6\) \(A/m^2\), the wire’s length is 5.0 m, and the density of conduction electrons is 8.49 \(\times\) 10\(^{28}\) m\(^{-3}\). How long does an electron take (on the average) to travel the length of the wire?

75 A certain x-ray tube operates at a current of 7.00 mA and a potential difference of 80.0 kV. What is its power in watts?

76 A current is established in a gas discharge tube when a sufficiently high potential difference is applied across the two electrodes in the tube. The gas ionizes; electrons move toward the positive terminal and singly charged positive ions toward the negative terminal. (a) What is the current in a hydrogen discharge tube in which 3.1 \(\times\) 10\(^{18}\) electrons and 1.1 \(\times\) 10\(^{18}\) protons move past a cross-sectional area of the tube each second? (b) Is the direction of the current density \(\mathbf{J}\) toward or away from the negative terminal?

** View All Solutions Here **