Drawing & Adding Vectors

Motion - involves a change in the position of an object over time.

Motion can be described in **scalar** or **vector** terms. '**Scalar'** means there is no reference to direction (distance, speed & acceleration). '**Vector'** means one takes note of direction (displacement, velocity & acceleration). Physicists prefer vectors. In symbol form, how do you know a variable is a vector?

Working with NESW reference coordinates

Quite often we use north/south/east/west reference coordinates but the object is moving or is positioned obliquely (ie: NOT due north,south,east or west). So we might say the position is 25 km [E 35° S]. To translate this, start pointing east, then drop 35° towards south. This is the direction! There are other ways to describe direction, but I prefer this way since you follow the directions in order!

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Vectors are represented by a line with an arrowhead at the end in the direction of travel. The tail is the origin (start) and the tip is the end or arrowhead.



200 m [E] 150 m [W 45° S] 300 m [N 10° E]

Adding <u>Collinear</u> vectors – these are vectors that are drawn in 1 plane. In other words, in 1 dimension (1D) or in a straight line. (north and south vectors, up and down vectors). Simply draw (add) them tail-to-tip style. The resultant vector (the sum, the answer) is draw from the tail of the first vector to the tip of final vector. It is dotted -----

ie: 2 cm [right] + 3 cm [right] + 6 cm [left] would look like this:



+ ----- = the resultant. You could measure, but logic tells you it's 1 cm [left].

You can also use scale drawings (OK) or math (**preferable**). Math results would use integers in 1 dimension. ie: set [right] = +ve. Therefore, you would have:

(+2 cm) + (+3 cm) + (-6 cm) = -1 cm [right].

* you always set the final [direction] as the one you set +ve. You can reverse the direction.
So... -1 cm [right] = +1 cm [left] Notice: I switch the sign AND the direction!

Adding <u>Non-Collinear</u> vectors – these are vectors that are drawn in 2 planes. In other words, in 2 dimensions (2D) or **not** in a straight line. (north and east vectors, up and left vectors). Simply draw (add) them tail-to-tip style. The resultant vector (the sum, the answer) is draw from the tail of the first vector to the tip of final vector. (tail-to-tip) It is dotted.

<u>Try this one</u>: I start at reference point A and travel 300 m [W], then 100 m [N] and then 300 m [N] at which point I stop. This is point B. Label these points.

What is the distance travelled? $\Delta d =$ _____. How do I calculate the displacement? $\Delta d =$ _____.

Remember it is the *straight line* change in position. You will need to do a tip-to-tail scale drawing. *Hint*: look at Fig. 1.8 on page 10 of your text. Tail-to-tip connect 'A' to 'B'. Try!



1 cm = 50 m

*start

Remember: include scale and reference coordinates! Accuracy counts! **Mathematic solutions are preferred**. Do you know how to do this? **Ask for help if uncertain!**