

Problem 33

In SI units, speeds are measured in meters per second (m/s). But, depending on where you live, you're probably more comfortable of thinking of speeds in terms of either kilometers per hour (km/h) or miles per hour (mi/h). In this problem, you will see that 1 m/s is roughly 4 km/h or 2 mi/h, which is handy to use when developing your physical intuition. More precisely, show that (a) $1.0 \text{ m/s} = 3.6 \text{ km/h}$ and (b) $1.0 \text{ m/s} = 2.2 \text{ mi/h}$.

Solution

Multiply by the appropriate conversion factors to get the desired units.

$$1.0 \frac{\text{m}}{\text{s}} = 1.0 \frac{\cancel{\text{m}}}{\cancel{\text{s}}} \times \frac{1 \text{ km}}{1000 \cancel{\text{m}}} \times \frac{60 \cancel{\text{s}}}{1 \cancel{\text{min}}} \times \frac{60 \cancel{\text{min}}}{1 \text{ h}} = 3.6 \frac{\text{km}}{\text{h}}$$

$$1.0 \frac{\text{m}}{\text{s}} = 1.0 \frac{\cancel{\text{m}}}{\cancel{\text{s}}} \times \frac{1250 \cancel{\text{ft}}}{381 \cancel{\text{m}}} \times \frac{1 \text{ mi}}{5280 \cancel{\text{ft}}} \times \frac{60 \cancel{\text{s}}}{1 \cancel{\text{min}}} \times \frac{60 \cancel{\text{min}}}{1 \text{ h}} \approx 2.2 \frac{\text{mi}}{\text{h}}$$