

# Electrostatic potential and Capacitance.

DATE

**Electrostatic potential**  $\rightarrow$  Electrostatic pot. at a point is d/o total amount of work done in bringing the unit +ve charge from  $\infty$  to that point in the electrostatic field of any charge.

**Expression**  $\rightarrow$

Consider a pt. charge  $q$  at any pt.  $Q$ . Suppose we want to find out the Electrostatic pot at any pt  $A$  in the electric field of  $q$  lying at a distance  $x$  from  $q$ .

Suppose a point  $P$  at distance  $r$  from  $q$ . Thus EF at pt.  $P$  due to charge  $q$  is.

$$E = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

Thus small amount of w.d. in bringing a unit +ve charge from  $P$  to  $Q$  through a small distance  $dr$  is

$$dW = \vec{F} \cdot d\vec{r}$$

$$= \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{r}$$

$$\left\{ \because \vec{E} = \frac{\vec{F}}{q_0} \text{ and here } q_0 = 1 \right.$$

$$= E dr \cos 180^\circ$$

$$= -E dr$$

$$= -\frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} dr$$

Thus total w.d. in bringing the unit +ve charge from  $\infty$  to  $A$  is.

$$W = \int_{\infty}^A dW = \int_{\infty}^x -\frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} dr$$

$$\text{classmate} = -\frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \int_{\infty}^x r^{-2} dr$$



$$\begin{aligned}\Rightarrow W &= \frac{-q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left| \frac{1}{r} \right|_a^x \\ &= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left| \frac{1}{r} \right|_a^x \\ &= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{1}{x} - \frac{1}{a} \right)\end{aligned}$$

$$\Rightarrow W = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{x} \quad \left\{ \because \frac{1}{a} = 0 \right.$$

As per definition this work done is equal to electrostatic pot. at pt. A.

$$\text{i.e. } \boxed{V_A = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{x}}$$

$$\text{or } \text{Electric pot} = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{\text{charge}}{\text{distance}}$$

⊗ Since  $W = \text{Work done}$ .

∴ Electric pot is a scalar quantity.

### Electrostatic pot. Difference $\rightarrow$

Electrostatic pot. diff. b/w two points is d/o the total work done in moving a unit +ve charge from one point to another point in the electrostatic field of any other charge.

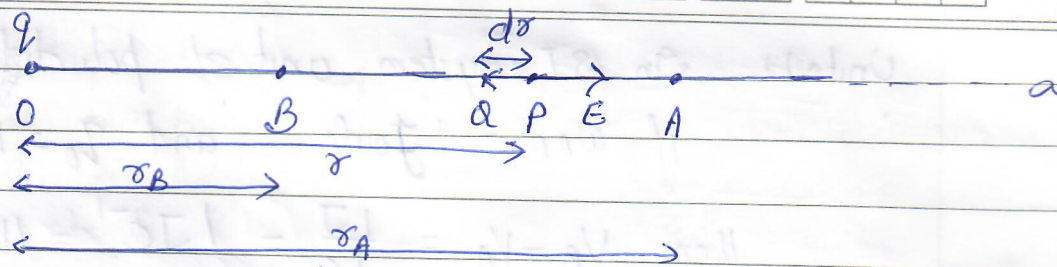
#### Expression $\rightarrow$

Consider a point charge  $q$  at any point  $O$ . In order to find the Electrostatic pot. diff. b/w point  $A$  and  $B$ , consider a point  $P$  at distance  $r$  from the charge  $q$  as shown.

Thus E.F.I at pt.  $P$  is given as

$$E = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} \quad \text{--- (1)}$$





Thus small amount of WD in moving the unit +ve charge from pt P to Q is

$$dW = \vec{F} \cdot d\vec{s} = \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{r} \quad \left\{ \because \vec{E} = \frac{\vec{F}}{q_0} \text{ \& here } q_0 = 1 \right.$$

$$\Rightarrow dW = E dr \cos 180^\circ$$

$$= -E dr$$

$$dW = -\frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} dr \quad \left\{ \text{using } \textcircled{1} \right\}$$

Thus total WD in moving the unit +ve charge from point A to B is

$$\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = \int_{r_A}^{r_B} -\frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} dr$$

$$= -\frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \int_{r_A}^{r_B} r^{-2} dr$$

$$= -\frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left| \frac{r^{-1}}{-1} \right|_{r_A}^{r_B}$$

$$= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left| \frac{1}{r} \right|_{r_A}^{r_B}$$

$$= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left| \frac{1}{r_B} - \frac{1}{r_A} \right|$$

$$\Rightarrow \frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r_B} - \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r_A}$$

$$\Rightarrow \boxed{\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = V_B - V_A}$$



Units  $\rightarrow$  In SI system unit of pot. diff. is volt.

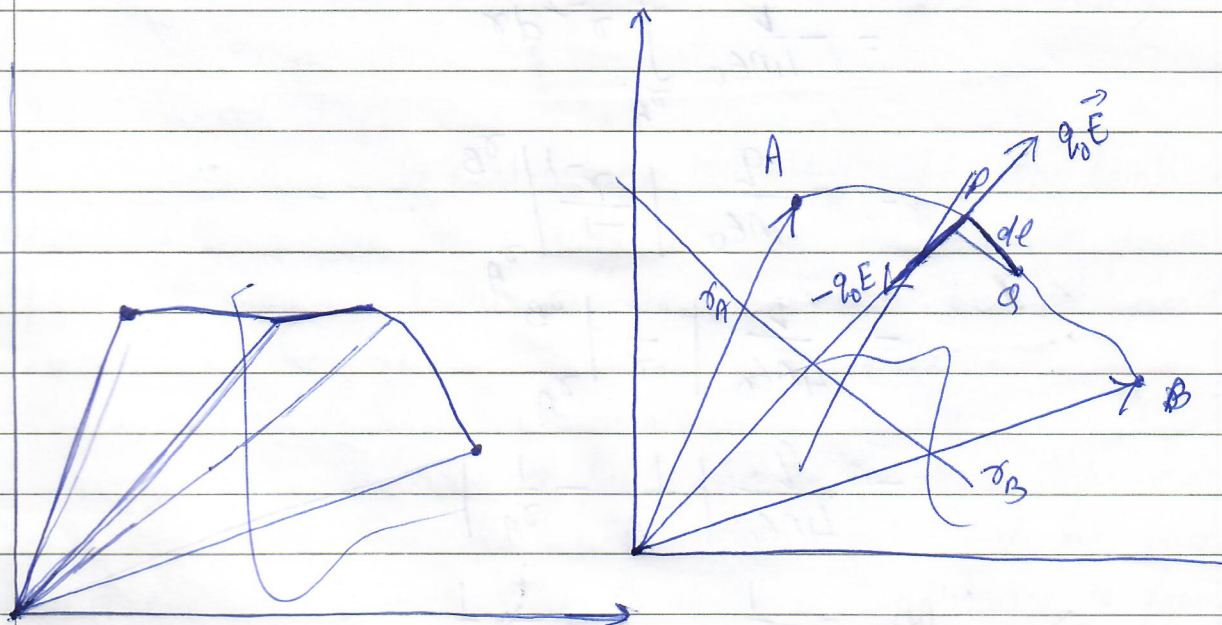
if  $W_{AB} = 1 \text{ Joule}$  and  $q_0 = 1 \text{ C}$

$$\text{then } V_B - V_A = \frac{1 \text{ J}}{1 \text{ C}} = 1 \text{ J C}^{-1} = 1 \text{ V.}$$

Thus pot. diff b/w two points is said to be 1 if 1J of work is done in moving 1C of charge from one point to another point.

Question  $\rightarrow$  Show that WD in moving a unit +ve charge from one point to another point ~~is~~ <sup>against</sup> the electrostatic field on any other charge is independent of path followed and depends only upon positions of the two, or.

Show that line integral of  $E \cdot dl$  b/w two pts independent of the shape of the line and depends only upon initial and final point of the line.

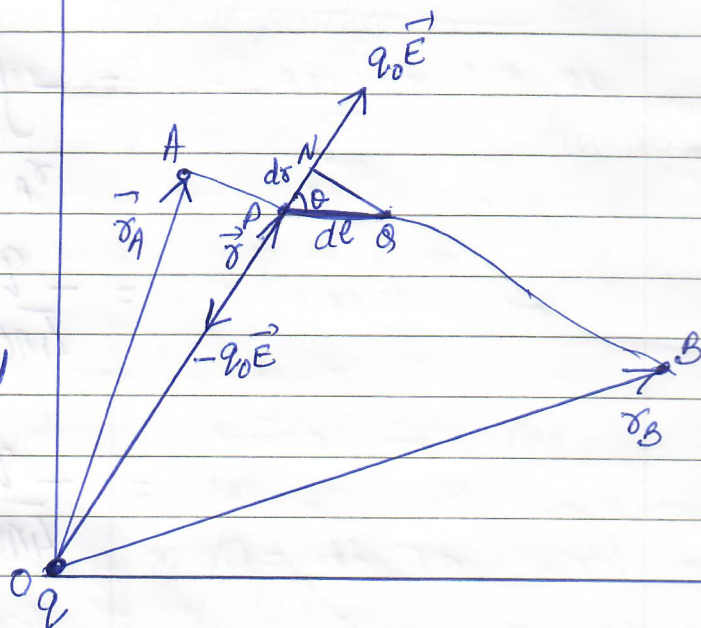




Consider a charge  $q$  at Origin  $O$ .  
 The EFI at any point  $P$  having PV  $r$  due to charge  $q$  is

$$|\vec{E}| = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

$q_0 \vec{E}$  is force exerted on any test charge  $q_0$  at pt  $P$ .  
 Thus  $-q_0 \vec{E}$  will be the required force to move the test charge  $q_0$  against the Electrostatic field of charge  $q$ .



Thus small amount of WD in moving the test charge  $q_0$  against the electrostatic field of  $q$  from pt  $P$  to  $Q$  will

$$\begin{aligned} dW &= \vec{F} \cdot d\vec{l} \\ &= -q_0 \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} \end{aligned}$$

Thus total WD in moving the test charge  $q_0$  from point  $A$  to  $B$  against the electrostatic field of charge  $q$

$$W_{AB} = \int_A^B -q_0 \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l}$$

or Total WD in moving a unit +ve charge from  $A$  to  $B$  against the electrostatic field is

$$\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = - \int_A^B \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} = - \int_A^B E dl \cos\theta \quad \text{--- (2)}$$

In rt. angle  $\Delta PBN$

$$\frac{PN}{PQ} = \cos\theta \Rightarrow \frac{dr}{dl} = \cos\theta$$



$$\begin{aligned}
 \frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} &= - \int_A^B \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{\ell} = - \int_A^B E dr \\
 &= - \int_{r_A}^{r_B} \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} dr \quad \text{(using)} \\
 &= - \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \int_{r_A}^{r_B} r^{-2} dr \\
 &= - \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[ \frac{r^{-1}}{-1} \right]_{r_A}^{r_B} \\
 &= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[ \frac{1}{r} \right]_{r_A}^{r_B}
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = - \int_A^B \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{\ell} = \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{1}{r_B} - \frac{1}{r_A} \right)$$

for Ques 1  
 $\Rightarrow$

$$\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{1}{r_B} - \frac{1}{r_A} \right)$$

ie work done in moving a unit +ve charge from one point to another point is independent of the path point A & B and depends only upon their position vectors (ie positions)

for Ques 2.

$$\Rightarrow - \int_A^B \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{\ell} = \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{1}{r_B} - \frac{1}{r_A} \right)$$

$$\Rightarrow \int_A^B \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{\ell} = \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{1}{r_A} - \frac{1}{r_B} \right)$$

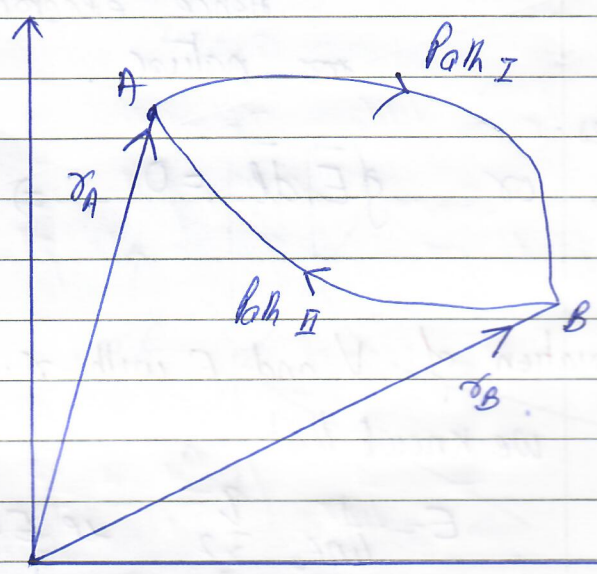


ie line integral of EFI from one pt to other pt is independent of the shape of the line b/w A & B and depends only upon position vectors  $\vec{r}_A$  &  $\vec{r}_B$  of the points (ie initial position & final position).

Ques H Show that electrostatic force is conservative in nature or

Show that line integral of EFI over a closed path is zero.

Ans H Electrostatic force is said to be conservative in nature, if work done in moving a charge against the electrostatic force (is independent of the path followed.) over a closed path is zero.



We know that WD in moving a unit +ve charge from point A to B along path I is

$$\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = - \int_{A \text{ path-I}}^B \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} = \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{1}{r_B} - \frac{1}{r_A} \right) \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

Hly. 
$$\frac{W_{BA}}{q_0} = - \int_{B \text{ path-II}}^A \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} = \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{1}{r_A} - \frac{1}{r_B} \right) \quad \text{--- (2)}$$

Adding (1) & (2) we get.  
Thus  $\frac{W_{ABA}}{q_0} = \frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} + \frac{W_{BA}}{q_0}$

$$\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} + \frac{W_{BA}}{q_0} = - \int_{A \text{ path-I}}^B \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} + \int_{B \text{ path-II}}^A \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{l} = \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{1}{r_B} - \frac{1}{r_A} + \frac{1}{r_A} - \frac{1}{r_B} \right)$$



$$\Rightarrow \boxed{\frac{W_{ABA}}{q_0} = -\oint \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{e} = 0}$$

for Ques no-1  $\Rightarrow$  ~~work done~~  $\frac{W_{ABA}}{q_0} = 0 \Rightarrow$  W.D in moving a unit + charge <sup>against the electrostatic force</sup> over the closed path is equal to zero.

$$\text{or } W_{ABA} = 0$$

Hence electrostatic force is conservative in nature.

for Ques no-2  $\text{or } \oint \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{e} = 0 \Rightarrow$  line integral of EFI over closed path is zero.

Variation of  $V$  and  $E$  with  $r$ .  $\rightarrow$

we know that

$$E = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} \quad \text{ie } E \propto \frac{1}{r^2}$$

$$\text{and } V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r} \quad \text{ie } V \propto \frac{1}{r}$$

$\therefore$  for  $r < 1$

the value of  $E$  is more than  $V$

where as for  $r > 1$

$$E < V$$

and for  $r = 1$

$$E = V$$

$$\text{e.g for } r = \frac{1}{2} \quad E = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{(\frac{1}{2})^2} = 4 \times \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \times q$$

$$\text{w/a } V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{1/2} = 2 \times \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} q$$

classmate

$$\therefore E > V$$



for  $\sigma > 1$  i.e.  $\sigma = 2$ .

$$E = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \times \frac{q}{4}$$

and  $V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{2}$

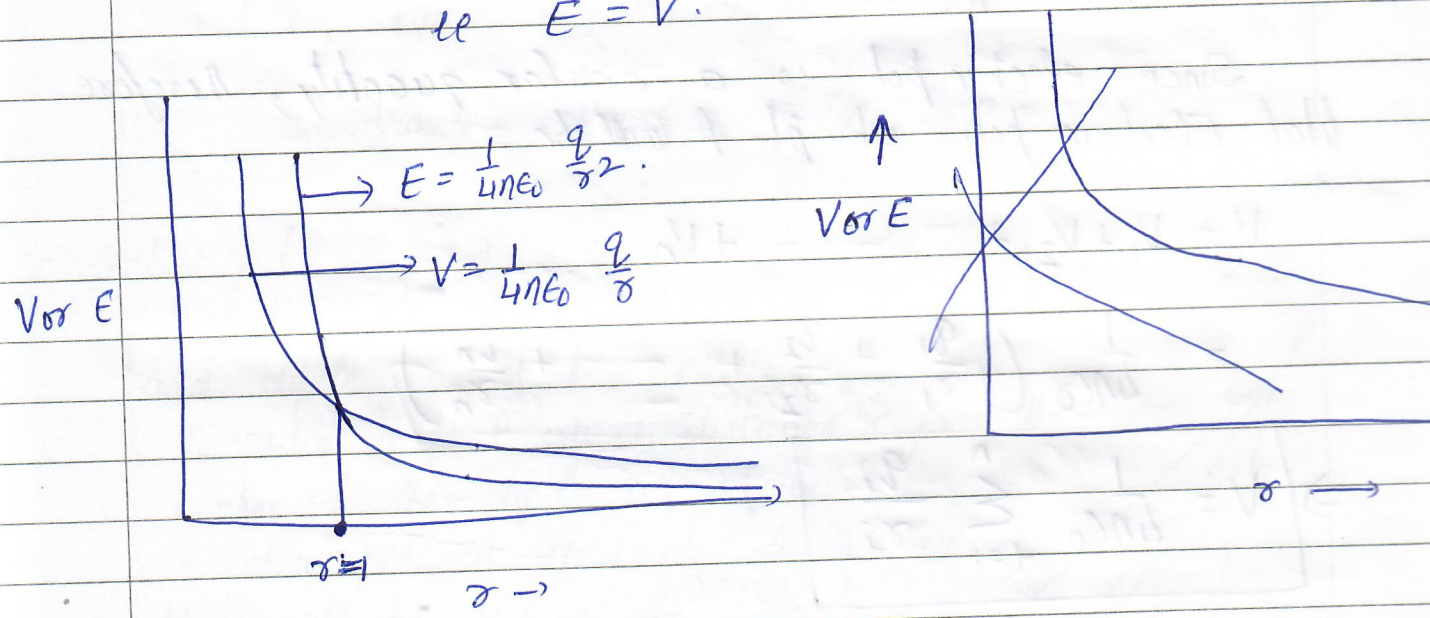
i.e.  $V > E$

for  $\sigma = 1$

$$E = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{r^2} = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{1^2}$$

$$V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{1} = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} q$$

i.e.  $E = V$ .



**Electrostatic potential due to a charge distribution  $\rightarrow$**

Total electro. pot. at a point due to a charge distribution is equal to the algebraic sum of all the pot. at that point due to all the charges present in charge distribution.

Consider a charge distribution having  $n$  charges  $q_1, q_2, \dots, q_n$  at a distance  $r_1, r_2, \dots, r_n$  resp. from point P as shown.



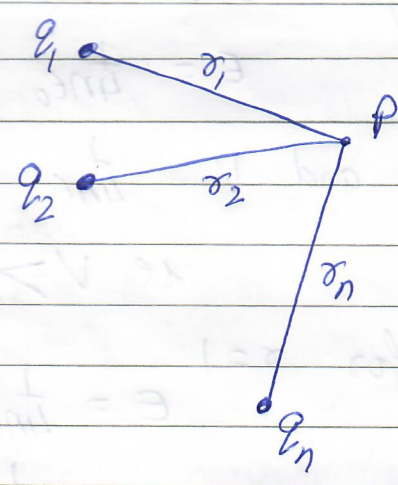
Thus electric pot. at point P due to charge  $q_1$  is.

$$V_1 = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_1}{r_1}$$

Similarly  $V_2 = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_2}{r_2}$

$$\vdots$$

$$V_n = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_n}{r_n}$$



Since electric pot. is a scalar quantity, the total Electric pot. at pt. P will be

$$V = V_1 + V_2 + \dots + V_n$$

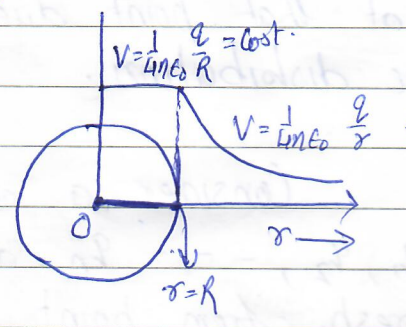
$$= \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( \frac{q_1}{r_1} + \frac{q_2}{r_2} + \dots + \frac{q_n}{r_n} \right)$$

$$\Rightarrow \boxed{V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{q_i}{r_i}}$$

Electric pot. due to a uniformly charged thin spherical shell  $\Rightarrow$ .

Consider a uniformly charged thin sph. shell of rad. R carrying charge Q.

(a) when point P lies outside the shell  $\Rightarrow$  then shell behaves as a pt. charge with entire charge supposed to be concentrated at its centre



classmate  $\therefore V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{Q}{r}$   
ie  $V \propto \frac{1}{r}$



ie pot decreases with increase in distance

(b) When pt. P lies on the surface of shell

ie  $r = R$ .

$$\therefore V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{R}$$

(c) When pt. P lies inside the shell ie  $r < R$

Since  $E=0$  at any pt. P inside the shell is equal to zero therefore pot. at any pt. P inside the shell will be const. (∵  $E = -\frac{dV}{dr}$  and as  $E=0 \therefore V=const$ )

and is equal to its value to that on its surface.

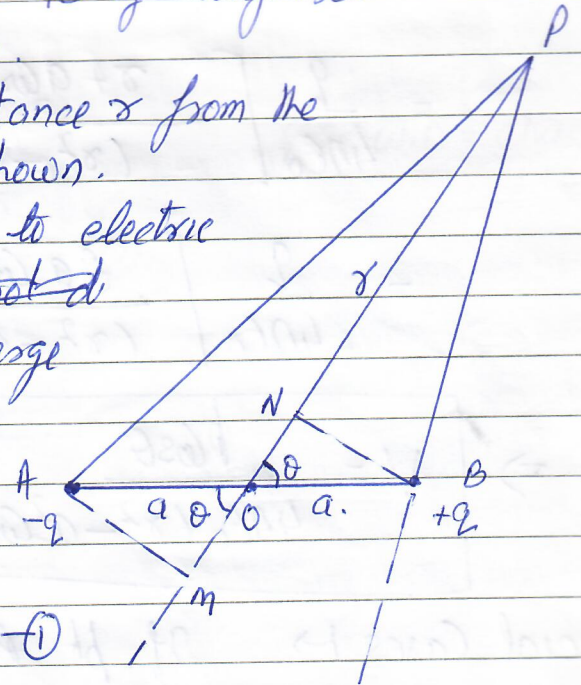
ie  $V_{inside} = V_{surface} = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{R}$ .

**Electric pot. due to an electric dipole**

Consider an electric dipole AB of length  $2a$  and dipole moment  $p = q \times 2a$ .

Consider a pt P at a distance  $r$  from the centre of the dipole as shown.

Electric pot at pt. P due to electric dipole will be sum of the potentials due to  $+q$  charge and  $-q$  charge.



ie  $V = V_A + V_B$

$$V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left( -\frac{q}{AP} + \frac{q}{BP} \right) \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

Now from rt angle  $\Delta AMO$

$$\frac{OM}{AO} = \cos\theta$$

$$\Rightarrow OM = AO \cos\theta$$

classmate  $\Rightarrow OM = a \cos\theta$ .



Since length of the dipole is very small

$$\therefore AP \cong MP$$

$$\Rightarrow AP = OP + OM$$

$$AP = r + a \cos \theta \quad \text{--- (2)}$$

Apply from rt  $\triangle$  ~~from~~ triangle ONP

$$\frac{ON}{OB} = \cos \theta$$

$$\Rightarrow ON = a \cos \theta$$

$$\therefore BP \cong PN$$

$$\Rightarrow BP = OP - ON$$

$$BP = r - a \cos \theta \quad \text{--- (3)}$$

Substitute (2) + (3) in (1) we get

$$V = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{-q}{(r + a \cos \theta)} + \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q}{(r - a \cos \theta)}$$

$$= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[ \frac{r + a \cos \theta - r + a \cos \theta}{(r^2 - a^2 \cos^2 \theta)} \right]$$

$$= \frac{q}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[ \frac{2a \cos \theta}{(r^2 - a^2 \cos^2 \theta)} \right]$$

$$\Rightarrow \boxed{V = \frac{p \cos \theta}{4\pi\epsilon_0 (r^2 - a^2 \cos^2 \theta)}}$$

Special Cases  $\rightarrow$  If pt P lies on the axial line then  $\theta = 0^\circ$ .

$$\therefore \boxed{V_{\text{axial}} = \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0 (r^2 - a^2)}}$$

classmate if  $r \gg a$   
then  $V_{\text{axial}} = \frac{p}{4\pi\epsilon_0 r^2}$



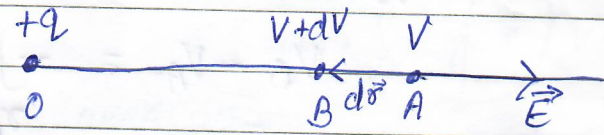
(ii) If point P lies on the equatorial line then  $\theta = 90^\circ$

$$\therefore V_{\text{equi}} = 0$$

$$\left\{ \because \cos 90 = 0 \right.$$

Relation b/w EFI and pot. gradient  $\rightarrow$

Consider a charge  $+q$  at origin O. Let A and B are two points separated by a very small distance  $d\vec{s}$ .



Work done in moving the test charge  $q_0$  from A to B against the electric field  $\vec{E}$  is

$$W = \vec{F} \cdot d\vec{s} = q_0 \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{s} = q_0 E d\theta \cos 180^\circ$$

$$\Rightarrow W = -q_0 E d\theta \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

Also

$$\frac{W}{q_0} = V_B - V_A$$

$$W = q_0 (V_B - V_A)$$

{ i.e.  $W \cdot 0 = \text{charge} \times V$  }

$$\Rightarrow W = q_0 dV \quad \text{--- (2)}$$

from (1) & (2)

$$-q_0 E d\theta = q_0 dV$$

$$\Rightarrow \boxed{E = -\frac{dV}{d\theta}}$$

i.e.  $EFI = -\text{pot. gradient}$ ,

Thus EFI at any point is equal to -ve of pot. gradient at that point.

Also -ve sign shows that direction of EFI is in the direction of decreasing pot.



Computing electric pot. from EFI  $\rightarrow$  If EFI at a point is known then electric pot can be calculated

We know that

$$\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = - \int_{r_A}^{r_B} \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{r} = V_B - V_A$$

$$\therefore V_B - V_A = - \int_{r_A}^{r_B} \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{r}$$

If pt A is at  $r_A$  then  $V_A = 0$

$$\text{then } \therefore V_B = - \int_{r_A}^{r_B} \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{r} \quad \left\{ \text{where} \right.$$

Alternative method.  $\rightarrow$  W.K.T

$$E = - \frac{dV}{dr}$$

$$\therefore dV = -E dr$$

$$\Rightarrow \int_{V_1}^{V_2} dV = - \int_{r_1}^{r_2} E dr$$

$$\Rightarrow \boxed{V_2 - V_1 = - \int_{r_1}^{r_2} E dr}$$

If pt A is at  $r_A$

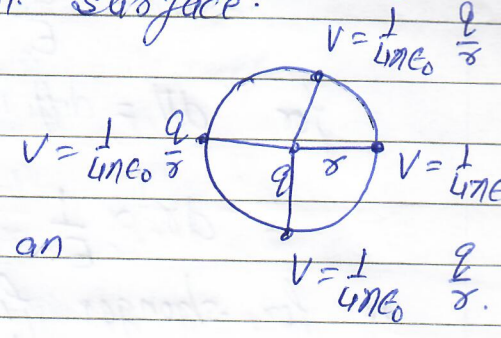
i.e.  $r_1 = r_A$  and  $r_2 = r$  then  $V_A = 0$

$$\therefore V = - \int_{r_A}^{r} E dr$$

and  $V_2 = V$



**Equipotential Surface**  $\rightarrow$  Any surface that has same potential at each and every point on it is called equipotential surface. eg. surface of the sphere carrying charge  $q$  at its centre is equipotential surface.



Properties  $\rightarrow$

① W.O. in moving a charge over an equipotential surface is zero.

W.K.T  $\frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = V_B - V_A$   
 for an equipotential surface  
 $V_A = V_B$

$\therefore \frac{W_{AB}}{q_0} = 0 \Rightarrow W_{AB} = 0$

② EFI at any point on the equipotential surface is normal to the surface.

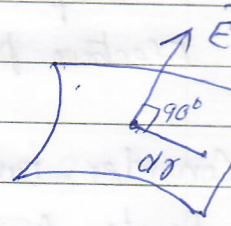
W.K.T  $dV = \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{r}$

since for an equipotential surface

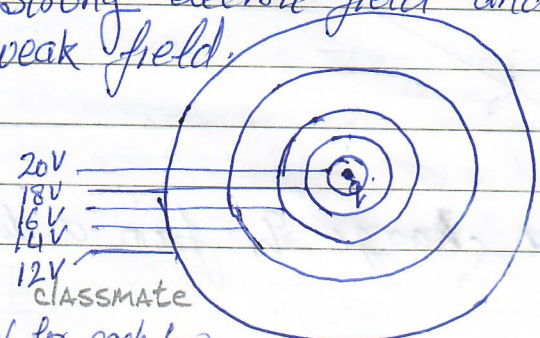
$dV = 0$

$\therefore \vec{E} \cdot d\vec{r} = 0 \Rightarrow E dr \cos\theta = 0$

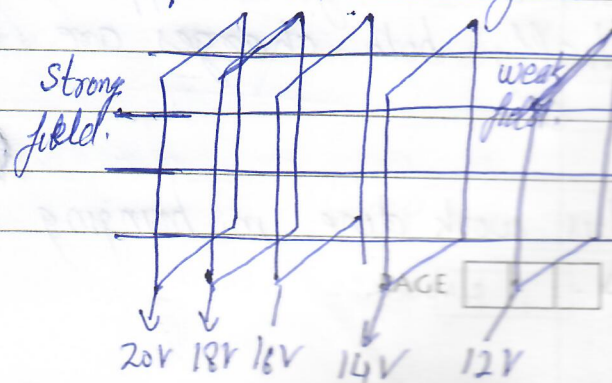
$\Rightarrow \vec{E}$  and  $d\vec{r}$  are  $\perp$



③ Equipotential surfaces are closer together in the region of strong electric field and farther apart in the regions of weak field.



i.e.  $dV$  for each two surfaces is 2V so const.





We know that

$$E = -\frac{dV}{dr}$$

$$\therefore dr = -\frac{dV}{E}$$

for  $dV = \text{diff. in pot b/w two equipot surface} = \text{Const.}$

$$dr \propto \frac{1}{E}$$

i.e. for stronger field  $dr$  (Separation b/w two surf) is small and vice versa.

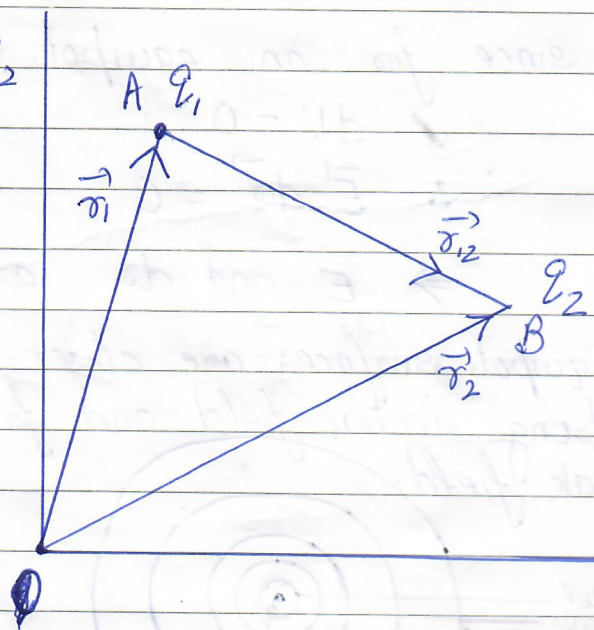
Note  $\rightarrow$  if  $E$  is uniform then equipotential surface will be equidistant.

**Electric potential Energy**  $\rightarrow$  Electric potential energy to a system of point charges may be d/a the work done in bringing all the charges from  $\infty$  to respective locations.

(a) **Electric pot. Energy due to a system of two point charges**

Consider two charges  $q_1$  &  $q_2$  at points A & B having PV  $\vec{r}_1$  &  $\vec{r}_2$  resp.

In order to find the Electric pot. Energy due to these two charges, suppose, initially both charges are at  $\infty$ .



Thus work done in bringing the charge  $q_1$  from  $\infty$  to A is.



$$W_1 = V_A \times q_1$$

{  $\because$  W.D = charge  $\times$  Pot.

$$\Rightarrow W_1 = 0 \quad \text{--- ①}$$

{  $\because$   $V_A = 0$  since both the charges were at  $\alpha$  and  $q_1$  can't exert pot. (or force) on itself. }

Now WD in bringing the charge  $q_2$  from  $\alpha$  to B against the pot of charge  $q_1$  is.

$$W_2 = V_B \times q_2$$

$$= \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_1}{r_{12}} \times q_2$$

$$W_2 = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_1 q_2}{r_{12}} \quad \text{--- ②}$$

Thus total WD and hence the electric pot. Energy

$$U = W_1 + W_2$$

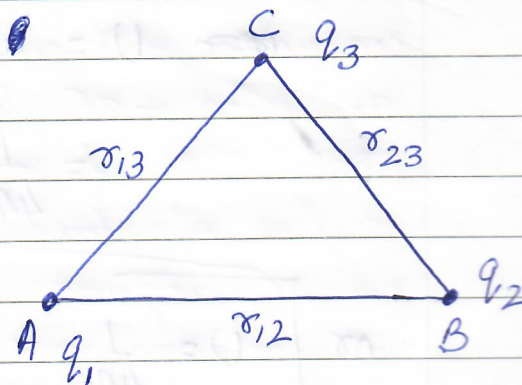
$$U = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_1 q_2}{r_{12}}$$

{ using ① & ② }

(b) Electric pot. energy due to system of three charges

Consider three charges  $q_1, q_2, q_3$  at point A, B & C resp.

In order to find Electric pot. Energy due to these three charges, suppose, initially all three charges are at  $\alpha$



Thus WD in bringing charge  $q_1$  from  $\alpha$  to A is

$$W_1 = V_A \times q_1$$

$$\Rightarrow W_1 = 0 \quad \text{--- ①}$$

{  $\because$   $V_A = 0$  }



Wkly. W.D. in bringing charge  $q_2$  from  $\infty$  to B against the pot. of charge  $q_1$  at pt B is.

$$W_2 = V_B \times q_2$$

$$= \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_1}{r_{12}} \times q_2$$

$$\Rightarrow W_2 = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_1 q_2}{r_{12}} \quad \text{--- (2)}$$

Wkly W.D. in bringing charge  $q_3$  from  $\infty$  to C against the pot. of charge  $q_1$  and  $q_2$  at pt C is

$$W_3 = V_C \times q_3$$

$$= \left[ \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_1}{r_{13}} + \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_2}{r_{23}} \right] \times q_3$$

$$\Rightarrow W_3 = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_1 q_3}{r_{13}} + \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \frac{q_2 q_3}{r_{23}} \quad \text{--- (3)}$$

Thus total W.D. and hence the electro. pot. Energy due to 3 charges is.

$$U = W_1 + W_2 + W_3$$

$$= \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \left[ \frac{q_1 q_2}{r_{12}} + \frac{q_1 q_3}{r_{13}} + \frac{q_2 q_3}{r_{23}} \right]$$

$$\text{or } U = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \times \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^3 \sum_{\substack{j=1 \\ i \neq j}}^3 \frac{q_i q_j}{r_{ij}}$$

or we can also write this as

$$U = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \sum_{\substack{i=1 \\ i < j}}^3 \sum_{j=1}^3 \frac{q_i q_j}{r_{ij}}$$



Similarly for a system of  $n$  charges electric pot. energy can be written as

$$U = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \times \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{\substack{j=1 \\ i \neq j}}^n \frac{q_i q_j}{r_{ij}}$$

$$\text{or } U = \frac{1}{4\pi\epsilon_0} \sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{\substack{j=1 \\ i < j}}^n \frac{q_i q_j}{r_{ij}}$$